

Annotated Bibliography Entry

Source Type:

🍏 reference book 🍏 website 🍏 popular magazine article 🍏 dissertation
🍏 book 🍏 interview ✓ scholarly journal article 🍏 gov't document
🍏 other: _____

Full MLA citation:

Hopkins, Annette B. "Ritson's Life of King Arthur." *PMLA*, vol. 43, no. 1, Mar. 1928, p. 251.,
doi:10.2307/457699.

Brief summary & critical analysis of content:

This article provides a thorough overview of the legends of King Arthur and would benefit a patron looking for information on the history of the legend, the authenticity of the legend, as well as specific aspects of the arthurian legend. This article covers information on Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain which includes the first ever written life to death biography of King Arthur. This book was originally accepted as history which as added to the mystery and confusion of if Arthur was a real king or just based on one or multiple historical figures. A patron looking for the origins of the arthurian legend could cite this article as a resource, as well as gain information about other writings on the topic. Ritson wrote about King Arthur as an actual British hero so this article adds to both Ritson's views, and also how Arthur was perceived to be a real hero. "*Ritson's Life of King Arthur*" covers the sources, both reliable and questionable, that Geoffrey of Monmouth used and claimed to be inspired by. If a patron needed information on the legend of Merlin the wizard, this article would be beneficial as it discusses the historical identification of Merlin. Ritson wrote about Geoffrey's discrepancies in confusing Merlin with Ambrosius Aurelianus. Another point addressed in the article is the birth of King Arthur and the tradition in both the north and the south. Arthur's alleged father, King Uther, is discussed in both who he is based on, as well as the meaning behind the surname Pendragon. If a patron was looking to research the use of surnames in arthurian literature, then this article would be an excellent source to cite. Ritson goes on to censure the integrity of the Triads and states they are too ridiculous to be credible. This resource also address the many battles of

King Arthur and is a credible source on battle in the medieval times. Finally, "*Ritson's Life of King Arthur*" remarks on the validity of Avalon and the mysteries of its history. Those looking to study the myths of the afterlife would benefit from reading this journal. This article concludes by discussing the effects of the legends of King Arthur on people whose lives were greatly affected by it. A historical Arthur, even one more realistic instead of fantastical, continues to inspire both scholars and common readers throughout time and geography. Because "*Ritson's Life of King Arthur*" covers multiple aspects of Arthurian legend, it would be a valuable resource to patrons seeking to learn more about the legend of King Arthur and its impact.

Evaluation of source using criteria & rationale for selection:

Author: Annette B. Hopkins is a distinguished researcher on literary authors. She has written on not only on King Arthur, but also on the Bronte sisters. The author of "*Life of King Arthur*" is Joseph Ritson who was born in 1752 in the UK and died in 1803. He was an English antiquary who is known mainly for his compilation of the legends of Robin Hood. He studied legends and their historical accuracies and also had a great interest in the French.

Date: This article was published in March of 1928. When looking for articles, you want something that is written somewhat recently so it has updated information, but also something that isn't too new so it is verified by time. This date shows that it is credible in more modern times but still stands as a valuable resource of a summary of the legends of King Arthur even in 2021. An article that is written in the present verifies that its contents hold up and prove its longevity.

Publisher: The Modern Language Association of America is often referred to as the Modern Language Association of America. It is the principal professional association in the United States for scholars of language and literature. It was founded in 1883 and has consistently published scholarly articles on literature. A reputable publisher is needed for a credible source and one that focuses on the required genre and topic.

Title: "*Ritson's Life of King Arthur*" is a strong title because it is broad and can appeal to many patrons. The life of King Arthur as a title ensures the article will include all the basic themes and characters as well as the historical accuracy and impact of the legend.

Objectivity: The information that has been researched and presented in this article is given through multiple authors which helps it to be a stronger, validated argument. These facts are based on Ritson's writing, as well as the historical writings of Geoffrey of Monmouth who is a leading authority on the legend of King Arthur. He is also the first author to write a full birth to death biography of King Arthur. This journal approaches the mystery of arthurian legend without a bias and examines the sources of the myths. The main focus of Hopkins' writing on Ritson's unbiased, evidence based reviews, adds credibility to the objectivity of this article.

Writing Style: The writing style of this article is both accessible and logically organized. The language is very readable for most users and the content is presented clearly. The organization is strong and begins with the sources, examines Geoffrey of Monmouth's sources, then analyses the different pieces of arthurian legend. The style of writing splits up the information used on origin, aspects and characters, and timeline of Arthur's alleged life. It follows the mysteries surrounding his birth, his battles and leadership, and then his death and the disappearance into the mists of Avalon.

Reflection:

Through researching and evaluating journals I found an article that would apply to a broad spectrum of aspects of arthurian legend. By searching King Arthur or Arthurian legend, I only found specific parts of the legend. When I added life to the search it provided results which were more inclusive of characters and accounts. I utilized the USF library databases and found this article on JSTOR. I wanted to find an unbiased overview of arthurian legend that would appeal to many different patrons. By finding an article written by one author about the writings of a second author which was analyzing a third author who is an original author from the middle ages, it gave me an objective look at many aspects of King Arthur. Because of the time and popularity of King Arthur, a specific search is required to find information about the origins and first writings. Many people throughout time have written about their beliefs on King Arthur without evaluating the original sources. For finding a resource for this assignment, I looked for an article that acknowledged The History of the Kings of Britain by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Then I read through them to find one that covered birth and death while also discussing the historical accuracies. In searching for this resource I learned to evaluate what content you need to have included, what author perspective its told through, and the necessity for clarity and credibility.

