

## 2019 Belmont Undergraduate Research Symposium

### History

Moderator: Pete Kuryla, Ph.D.

April 11, 2019, 3:30-5:00 PM  
JAAC 5001

3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

#### **William Marshal: The Worth of a Loyal Man**

Tripp Houle

Faculty Advisor: Doug Bisson, Ph.D.

William Marshal, First Earl of Pembroke, is commonly considered the greatest knight who ever lived. His life story reads almost like the Arthurian legends or the Robin Hood tales. Marshal started out as the third or fourth son of a minor noble and worked his way up from a knighthood too, near the end of his life, becoming one of the most prominent and powerful lords in England. At the time of his death he was serving as regent for King Henry III, who owed his throne in no small part to the Marshal. William was a formidable man who knew how to work the feudal system towards his own ends. Most of all however, William Marshal is defined by the loyalty he showed to his liege lord or more specifically, to the royal house of Plantagenet.

Even during the reign of King John, where William's loyalty would be put to the ultimate test, he would remain loyal. Even when significant number of John's Baron's rose up in revolt, he remained loyal. William remained loyal too John, a king who expected loyalty at any cost without any reward, because John was the heir to the house of Plantagenet and William's fervent adherent to the Chivalric code.

3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

#### **Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: The New York Sanitation Dance**

Catey Grizzard

Faculty Advisor: Pete Kuryla, Ph.D.

In the late nineteenth century, the “unwashed masses” became visible to the public in ways different from before. The works of great photographers, such as Jacob Riis and *How the Other Half Lives*, highlighted the conditions in one of America's busiest cities, New York. This increasing awareness also took the form of public commissions and organizations working to clean up slums and encourage public health. Institutions like the Housing Commission, started by then governor Theodore Roosevelt, were integral to the future of these slum areas. Such commissions, in the end, were only marginally effective. Sanitation efforts such as the “White Wings,” an early predecessor to the organized waste works of today, failed to clean streets or safely dispose of dead animals. New Yorkers suffered from dirty, corpse-polluted water in certain areas, while waste and animal refuse contaminated water supplies in others.

A lack of public bathhouses put poor populations at risk for typhoid fever. The infamous Typhoid Mary tested New York City's new public health system, and it failed, resulting in countless deaths. Legislators passed laws to fix the problem of water access, but public opinion worked against them, as the wealthy accused slum dwellers of either stubbornness or ignorance, as if the poor refused to bathe or simply did not know how. Public health and safety institutions failed on many levels in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the idea of that effective systems of public health were necessary persisted nonetheless. Despite growing awareness of germ theory, efforts to eradicate water-borne diseases were ultimately unsuccessful in late 19<sup>th</sup> century New York due to a combination of bureaucratic conflict, divisions between social classes, and incomplete or piecemeal public policy.