

21L.423J/21M.223J

Reading Questions: Session 3

Gerould 84-162; Pound 95-106

Look up “Johnie Cock” (Child 114) in the library (v. 3) or on Lesley Nelson’s site and read the whole ballad before reading Gerould’s treatment of it.

Ditto “Edward” (Child 13) and “Kemp Owyne” (Child 34)—in your volume I.

Why are ballad scholars at such pains to name the literary characteristics of the ballad?

What is the difference between the epic and ballad?

How do ballad narratives use ellipsis, understatement, or “incremental repetition” ? Can you give an example of each? (Use Child if you need to.)

What happens in “The Hunting of the Cheviot” (otherwise known as “The Ballad of Chevy Chase”)?

According to Gerould, ballads often repeat in action what has just been said in speech. Why is that effective? Can you give an example?

What does “leaping and lingering” mean?

What is meant by a “ballad commonplace”?

What are the typical poetic forms of the ballad—in terms of lines and stresses? Is the refrain central to the ballad? Can you give an example of the four/three stress quatrain? Of the two line, seven stress stanza? Which is more typical? What is the difference of effect between them?

Are ballads an accurate historical record of the past? Can they be?

What else can be learned from ballads about human society?

How does magic work in ballads? What is its function?

What was the “class” of people who composed ballads, according to Gerould? Pound?

Judging from Gerould’s rhetoric and references, what are the controversies that he is weighing in on?