

# Michael Norman Salda

KEVIN J. HARTY

Michael Norman Salda, 57, died on October 16, 2015, in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, after an almost decade-long battle with Multiple Sclerosis. Born and reared in Nebraska, Michael received his BA, MA, and PhD from the University of Chicago, where he wrote his dissertation on Chaucer. Salda had taught at The University of Southern Mississippi since 1991, serving in a number of capacities at the university, including Chair of the Department of English. When I subsequently met his colleagues at meetings of the Association of Departments of English, they were all unanimous in their praise for the skill, sensitivity, and just plain common sense that he displayed as department head in a time of great turbulence at the university. He held the rank of Full Professor at the time of his death. Michael was an expert in medieval literature and Arthuriana. Written in part, he always said, thanks to ‘a nudge’ from me, his *Arthurian Animation: A Study of Cartoon Camelots on Film and Television* (McFarland, 2014) defined a new area of study, and will remain the definitive work in that field.

Michael was known throughout the Southern Mississippi campus for his dedication to his students, who encountered him across a wide range of courses in person and on-line. His work in on-line pedagogy garnered the university a Pew Grant and Michael a national award. Those of us who knew Michael professionally benefitted from the friendship of a truly gentle, kind man whose scholarly knowledge, which he freely shared with others, was encyclopedic. His other publications included *The Malory Debate: Essays on the Texts of Le Morte Darthur*, co-edited with Bonnie Wheeler and Robert L. Kindrick (Boydell and Brewer, 2000), and a number of essays in scholarly journals and essay collections. He also regularly reviewed new scholarly books for a variety of journals, including *Arthuriana*, and maintained three online archives: The Jack and the Beanstalk/Jack the Giant Killer Project (1997; rev. 2005); The Little Red Riding Hood Project (1995; rev. 2005); and The Cinderella Project (1995; rev. 1997, 1999, 2005).

A memorial service was held for Michael on December 4, 2015, on the University of Southern Mississippi campus.

Of studie took he moost cure and most heede.  
Noght o word spak he moore than was neede,  
And was seyde in forme and reverence,  
And short and quyke and ful of hy sentence.  
Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,  
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

Geoffrey Chaucer, 'The General Prologue,'  
*The Canterbury Tales*, ll. 305-310

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