

## **2019 Leader Prize Citations (awarded May 2020)**

**Kristina Hildebrand, Fiona Tolhurst, K. S. Whetter**

### **2019 Leader Prize in the new ‘Fair Well-Known’ category: Donald L. Hoffman**

As noted above, many of the contenders for this year’s Leader Prize were retirees who continue to produce outstanding scholarship. As a result, the IAS-NAB has decided to award a second 2019 Leader Prize in the newly inaugurated ‘Fair Well-Known’ category. This category is for retired scholars who are still active researchers. This year, the ‘Fair Well-Known’ prize goes to Donald L. Hoffman for ‘Queer as Folk,’ published in *Arthuriana* 29.2, a special issue in honor of Kevin J. Harty.

In this article, Hoffman offers not only a nuanced and engaging queer reading of ten randomly selected Arthurian films but also a master class in academic writing. The style is chatty yet sophisticated, humorous yet powerful. Hoffman’s breezy style makes the huge amount of work involved in this article seem effortless. This fact is particularly evident in Hoffman’s use of parentheticals, such as when he describes a scene in *Knights of the Round Table*: ‘In his attempt to escape from Modred, Lancelot rides into quicksand. (One might have expected a moat.) He whistles to his steed (probably not named Trigger), and, in a stunt probably as old as D.W. Griffith, Lancelot ropes his horse, who, attached to Lancelot’s lasso (his what?) pulls him out of the quicksand to safety’ (42). Because the article examines the films in reverse chronological order, it forces the reader to consider whether the best Arthurian films really are the older ones. Hoffman’s analysis offers many an insight that will influence future scholarship on Arthurian film, but none more so than this one: ‘Sometimes, the most telling sign of a queer presence in a film is the rigor with which it is suppressed’ (41). For its sophisticated use of queer theory, its major implications for the field of Arthurian film studies, and its stylistic perfection, we are pleased to award the essay ‘Queer as Folk’ the 2019 ‘Fair Well-Known’ Leader Prize.