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â€œIf no Divells, no Godâ€: Devils, D(a)emons and Humankind on the Mediaeval and Early Modern English Stage.

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Abstract

This thesis looks at the relationship that humanity has with the devil, the demonic, and the daemonic as it is represented in plays from the mediaeval to the Early Modern period in England.

While critics have contradictorily seen the devil as a secular figure on the one hand, and as a vestige of sacred drama on the other, I consider the character from an anthropocentric point of view: the devil helps reveal mankindâ€™s emerging independence from religion and the problems that accompany this development.

Chapter I sets the context for the investigation, tracing the broad outlines of the genesis of the figure that turned into the devil, before the main body of the thesis looks at the interaction between the devil and mankind.

Part I considers the devil as master of his own deeds. Chapters II and III look at his development in the mediaeval Mysteries and Moralities, showing how an ever greater independence of the figure simultaneously leads to him being increasingly used as a character designed to educate mankind. Chapters IV and V reveal a similar pattern: the more confident the devil is of himself and the more he believes himself to be in control, the wiler man proves in freeing himself from his influence. Chapter VI sees the exodus of the devil as mankind takes control of its destiny.

Part II looks at plays in which men attempt to control their fate by controlling the fiend and subjecting him to their power. Chronologically, it parallels the evolution traced in Chapters IV to VI. Chapters VII and VIII show that such efforts prove fruitless and counterproductive as long as the power men derive from their association with the devil is not channelled into a positive vision for the future. Only a model of a society that combines access to power and human responsibility, that substitutes a more selfless morality for an egocentric one, can keep the fiend at bay, as seen in Chapter IX.

Finally, Chapter X tests these findings against *The Birth of Merlin*, which defies categorisation and dating.

Item Type: Thesis (Doctoral)

Award: Doctor of Philosophy

Keywords: devil; demon; demonic; daemonic; mystery plays; morality plays; Elizabethan drama; Jacobean drama; Chester; N-Town; Towneley; York; The Castle of Perseverance; Wisdom; Mankind; Everyman; I.T.: Grim the Collier of Croydon; Thomas Dekker: *If This Be Not a Good Play, the Devil Is in It*; Ben Jonson: *The Devil Is an Ass*; Christopher Marlowe: *Doctor Faustus*; Barnabe Barnes: *The Devil's Charter*; William Shakespeare: *The Tempest*; William Rowley: *The Birth of Merlin*

Faculty and Department: [Faculty of Arts and Humanities > English Studies, Department of](#)

Thesis Date: 2010

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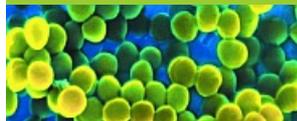
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In a single blink Zombies appeared and mutated monsters began to rampage all throughout the world. Now it was the human species turn to fight for survival and planetary dominance! On the same day that the world descends into chaos we meet Yue Zhong. Initially only hoping to get to his friends and escape to a refugee camp our protagonist sets out, inadvertently building a team along the way. On the same day that the world descends into chaos we meet Yue Zhong. Initially only hoping to get to his friends and escape to a refugee camp our protagonist sets out, inadvertently building a team along the way. After a series of fortuitous events and a few serious hunches our hero decides it's time to do more than just survive!

Early Modern English, Early New English (sometimes abbreviated to EModE, EMnE or EME) is the stage of the English language from the beginning of the Tudor period to the English Interregnum and Restoration, or from the transition from Middle English, in the late 15th century, to the transition to Modern English, in the mid-to-late 17th century. Before and after the accession of James I to the English throne in 1603, the emerging English standard began to influence the spoken and written Middle Scots of The contributions that follow address texts on the devil, demons, and evil, and are drawn from ancient philosophy, the New Testament, early Christian apologetics, hagiography, and history. Covering primarily the patristic period, the volume also contains articles on medieval sources. The introduction discusses the different angles of approach found in the articles in an effort to shed fresh light on this familiar but also uniquely troubling theme.