University of Huddersfield Repository

Anderson, Elizabeth J.

Henry II and His Sons: the Maturation Process of Establishing Adult Masculine status in the Angevin Royal Family c. 1140 – c. 1200

Original Citation


This version is available at http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/4765/

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk.

http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/
My project aims to investigate the medieval concepts of masculinity within the framework of the Angevin royal family, concentrating on the processes involved in the transition from childhood through youth to masculine adulthood of six members of the Angevin royal family over two generations.

Some Key Questions:

• What mechanisms did Henry II and his sons use to establish fully adult male status?

• What kind of formal education did Henry II and his sons receive and how did this affect their transition from boys to men?

• How did Henry II’s experience of establishing his own fully adult male status effect his treatment of his sons during their attempts to move from childhood into the adult world?

• Can fully adult male status be seen to be established in a single (often dramatic) event or was it more often established over a period of time via a series of events?

Military Training

It was not customary for children of royal blood to be educated outside the home. Usually royal males would be educated alongside a few select ‘companions’, either siblings, other family members, any wards of their father’s household or even noble males from other households who would be drafted in specifically to be company for the prince in question during his education.

Educating Males

From childhood to late adolescence it was customary for boys to be trained for kingship, but the age at which this took place varied significantly. Sometimes this process was brought forward significantly in regard to their ages.

Family Relationships

For a young man coming through the stage of ‘youth’ and attempting to establish himself as a fully adult male the influence of a parent on the process could either help or hinder their progress, and this was particularly true of the royal family, with mothers and fathers playing very different roles. Fathers, and especially royal fathers, had the ability and means to stand in the way of their sons’ achieving fully adult male status. This appears to be the case for Henry II and his sons; despite Henry bestowing titles on his sons, often at quite early ages, and holding ceremonies of installation for them Henry in fact gave no real authority to them. The failure of Henry II to share power with his eldest son in the Angevin heartland aroused the youth’s bitterness and in effect led to the Young King seeing his father as thwarting him from reaching full manhood.