BACK TO THE FUTURE: ENGAGING THE PRESENT THROUGH MEDIEVAL STUDIES

A POSTER PRESENTATION

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ABSTRACT

This poster aims to assess the extent to which the study of medieval literary culture can inform and transform a student's understanding of the present. Specifically, introducing students to how medieval narratives about travel, migration, and displacement have generated a number of creative responses to current pressing issues such as the refugee crisis has the potential to increase their civic engagement and their relationship with the local and global community. In order to offer a focused case study, I engage with Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Man of Law's Tale* (14th century), which centres on Constance's multiple and forced journeys at sea, and with a recent BBC adaptation of the Tale (2003) in which the narrative is set in contemporary Britain and the female protagonist is re-imagined as a Nigerian refugee. By considering students' critical reflective writing on the Tale and the adaptation, I am able to demonstrate the extent to which the encounter between past and present has transformed their engagement with important current issues, and re-shaped not just their intellectual knowledge but also their everyday response to such issues. In particular, this transformation in the engagement of both students and faculty with past and current diasporas will come to fruition during a scholarly, creative and socially-engaged symposium entitled 'Women at Sea' which will take place at the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea on 1st July 2016.

SELECT REFERENCES

Hoggan, C., Cranton, P. (2015). Promoting Transformative Learning through Reading Fiction. *Journal of Transformative Education*, *13* (1), 6-25. doi: 10.1177/1541344614561864

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