

Call for Papers

Consuming the Past: Library Resources for PGRs

An Interdisciplinary Conference and Training Day, Monday 28th June 2010

Organised by Northumbria, Durham and Newcastle Universities

As researchers we 'consume' texts, reading, interpreting and reusing material found in archives or specialist electronic resources. Libraries are a key tool in this process. Library-based research is no longer restricted to the book, but also encompasses archived materials, electronic databases and local resources. This conference provides an opportunity to explore both the practical and theoretical issues arising from attempts to understand the past: training sessions will investigate the use of archival resources in the arts and humanities whilst panellists will consider how texts themselves conceptualise and appropriate the past.

Taking place at Northumbria University, this free one-day conference will include a training session by a representative of the British Library, exhibiting new ways of accessing printed texts and manuscripts, as well as a keynote address from Dr Matthew Grenby (Newcastle University). There will also be a wine reception held at the Literary & Philosophical Society – the largest independent library outside London – where a tour and description of the holdings will be offered, providing valuable training in using non-academic archives and resources.

We invite proposals from students and academics for research papers exploring the interpretation, appropriation, and reconstruction of the past. We welcome work which considers all periods and countries, and from all fields of text-based research. Possible themes include (but are not limited to):

- The ways in which historical and artistic depictions of the past are appropriated and consumed within different cultures and time periods.
- The contemporary reconstruction of the past in the historical novel.
- Explorations of the extent to which critical theory may be a useful and/or anachronistic tool for dealing with older texts.
- Rethinking periodization.
- Exploring the boundaries of oral and textual culture.
- The theme of memory in historical writing and fiction.
- The advantages and/or disadvantages of using electronic resources (such as Early English Books Online).
- The ways in which textual editing reconstructs texts through a range of possible interventions.
- Consideration of how far it is realistically possible to access the past.

For those staying in Newcastle there will be an optional visit to Bede's World Museum the next day.

Please e-mail proposals for papers to helen.j.williams@northumbria.ac.uk by 15th April 2010, and include the following information: name, title, position, institution, e-mail address, title of paper, and a 250 word abstract. All papers should be in English, and should last twenty minutes. A provisional programme will be available by 1st June, also the deadline for registration. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.