Florida International University
University Graduate School

Master's Thesis Defense

Abstract

Homoerotic Medievalism: Looking at Queer Desire in the Homosocial Relationships of Chaucer's "The Knight's Tale" and Fletcher and Shakespeare's The Two Noble Kinsmen

by

Juan Espinosa Chávez

The purpose of this thesis is to explore queer interiority within the heteronormative social constructions of late medieval England. Queer interiority is not an occurrence of modernity but rather a response to the social constructions that date back to the Middle Ages. Moreover, it translates to the early modern period through medievalism. Through close readings of Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Knight's Tale" and John Fletcher and William Shakespeare's The Two Noble Kinsmen, as well as historical, psychoanalytic, theoretical, and analytical texts, this paper will account for queerness in medievalism. Writing during the queer reign of Richard II, Chaucer constructs the interior identities of Palamon and Arcite as a reflection of the king and the political norms of England. In the early modern period, Fletcher and Shakespeare adapt Chaucer's story and intensify the two men's interior identity. Furthermore, Lacanian psychoanalysis will be used to explain queerness in medievalism.

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Place: MMC, DM 457

Department: English
Major Professor: Dr. Heather E. Blatt