

Institution: Aberystwyth University		
Unit of Assessment: 27: English Language and Literature		
Title of case study: Historical Literature / Contemporary Debates		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2012–2018		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Professor Richard Marggraf Turley	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Personal Chair	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 1 March 2011–present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014–2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Marggraf Turley worked with key beneficiaries to explore meaningful connections between the work of major historical writers and artists and current societal challenges around food security and surveillance culture. He communicated his interdisciplinary research through public speaking and dialogue, schools visits, interactive workshops, radio broadcasts and media interviews in ways that led to new perspectives on the relation between literature and history and revealed the value of literary analysis to contemporary debate. His work has had an impact on teaching practices, on public understanding, on creative practice and on tourism.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Marggraf Turley's work reveals how historical art and literature can inform our thinking around 1) food justice and sustainability and 2) the impacts of new forms of surveillance. By focusing on canonical poems, paintings and plays from key historical junctures where current anxieties around food and surveillance come into focus, it throws innovative, mutually illuminating light on both the works of art from these epochs and contemporary debates.</p> <p>The first area of research, conducted with early modernist Dr Jayne Archer and geneticist Professor Howard Thomas, draws from diverse areas of interdisciplinary expertise to explore how Shakespeare's tragedy <i>King Lear</i>, John Keats's ode 'To Autumn' and John Constable's painting 'The Hay Wain' are not only embedded in historical debates over equitable food distribution, but can also help to frame, shape and illuminate contemporary public understandings of food security and sustainability in an age of acute environmental crisis.</p> <p>The research, described in a co-authored monograph [3.2], anthologised [3.5] and reported by media internationally, combined literary analysis with food science to produce a holistic ecology of historicist inquiry focused on the politics of food production and systems of distribution. It spurred creative engagement with the agricultural and environmental problems we currently face, at the same time as pushing literary texts directly to the centre of current debates.</p> <p>Related research extended the team's hybrid arts-science methodology to Chaucer's <i>Canterbury Tales</i>, which appeared in two key publications [3.3, 3.4]. Here, the underlying research into historical representations of the food chain was applied to address wider environmental issues (social, cultural, agricultural), and related to contemporary concerns about food security.</p> <p>The second, methodologically related, area of Marggraf Turley's research investigates the extent to which Romantic poems and paintings produced at the beginning of new panoptic forms of surveillance both anticipate and also contribute meaningfully to current debates around surveillance culture. In 2017, Marggraf Turley published the first interdisciplinary essay to bring together research on Romantic literature with the field of Surveillance Studies [3.1], applying the</p>		

latter's theorised discourse to illuminate the relevance of emerging Romantic concepts of mass surveillance to contemporary contexts.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- 3.1** Richard Marggraf Turley, 'Objects of Suspicion: Keats, 'To Autumn' and the Psychology of Romantic Surveillance', in Nicholas Roe (ed.), *John Keats and the Medical Imagination* (Palgrave, 2017)
- 3.2** Jayne Archer, Richard Marggraf Turley and Howard Thomas, *Food and the Literary Imagination* (Palgrave, 2014) – chapters on Shakespeare, Chaucer and Romanticism. Evidence of the quality of this work may be found in a review by Professor Denise Gigante (Stanford University) for *Cultural Geographies* (16 October 2016), where the monograph was described as opening up canonical literature 'in entirely new ways', leading to 'true originality' with 'implications beyond the academy to the very heart of the global environmental crises we face now'. [Submitted to REF2]
- 3.3** Jayne Archer, Richard Marggraf Turley and Howard Thomas, 'The Millers' Tales: Sustainability, the Arts and the Watermill', in Adeline Johns-Putra, John Parham and Louise Squire (eds.), *Literature and Sustainability: Concept, Text and Culture* (Manchester University Press, 2017)
- 3.4** Jayne Archer, Richard Marggraf Turley and Howard Thomas, 'Reading Shakespeare with the Grain: Sustainability and the Hunger Business', in *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism*, vol. 19, no. 1 (2015). For evidence of quality, this essay won the 2013 ASLE-UKI/INSPIRE public essay competition. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14688417.2014.985242>
- 3.5** 'The Autumn King: Remembering the Land in *King Lear*', in Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (eds.), *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, 3rd edn (Wiley, 2017). For evidence of quality, this essay was chosen for anthologising as an example of cutting-edge critical practice and methodology, after first appearing in *Shakespeare Quarterly* in 2012.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The findings of the research brought to the public's attention major historical writers in a renewed context. This led to new ways of understanding the relation between literature and history and revealed the value of literary analysis to contemporary cultural debate. Within this general perspective, the impact of this research has been as follows:

In influencing conceptual understanding and approaches to teaching

Through interactive workshops focusing on the representation of food justice and surveillance in Keats and Shakespeare, Marggraf Turley has regularly communicated his research to GCSE and 'A' level pupils in England and Wales. Feedback from the sessions evidence his impact on theoretical understanding and also on approaches to teaching literary analysis in schools. One session (September 2017) led students to comment on how they '*now see literature and history on the same level*', how the workshop '*showed the links between historical literature and modern day events*', and left them with a '*broader understanding of why the history of English is important*'. A subsequent session at another school (September 2017) evoked similar reactions, with a pupil commenting on how it had '*allowed me to connect them [Keats and Shakespeare] to the real world*' [5.1]. Another workshop in November 2019 demonstrated the '*relevance of Romantic literature, particularly the poetry of Keats, for informing current debates around ... surveillance culture*' and led students to integrate '*context and contemporary readings*' in a more effective way. The same workshop also led to impact on teaching practices, with a curriculum leader noting how the school was '*looking forward to ... implementing aspects of [the author's] historicising approach in the way we teach Keats*' [5.2]. Marggraf Turley was invited back to the college's Sixth Form English Academy to deliver an online workshop on literature and surveillance in December 2020. Similarly, another teacher commented (September 2017) on

how Marggraf Turley's research *'will definitely change the way we teach Keats's ode 'To Autumn' in the future'*, subsequently noting during follow-up dialogue (April 2019) that *'[t]he emphasis on the historical, agricultural and economic conditions ... has much greater resonance with students of this age. They have since found Keats much more accessible and relevant to their own concerns about modern slavery, food banks, etc ... your work has had a significant and lasting effect on the way I teach this particular poem and has helped to develop new approaches for other texts at GCSE and above'* [5.3]. Further impact on teaching practice was identified following another talk in November 2019, with teachers noting how Marggraf Turley's research had offered them *'new approaches we will use in future teaching.... The historicising approach to Shakespeare ... has offered fresh insights for the study of 'King Lear' and should give our students some routes towards integrating meaningful and specific context into their arguments'*. They also went on to note the impact on student understanding, stating how *'we have seen evidence of the impact on their confidence in mock exam work they have produced since the talk'* [5.4].

In informing public understanding / shaping public awareness

Marggraf Turley's research used Romantic authors to develop public understanding on social and ethical issues raised by biometric surveillance technology. He ran interactive demonstrations using biometric devices (smart watches, smart speakers, face recognition, other forms of remote sensing) to measure participants' physical and emotional responses to Romantic poems and paintings. These events included Q&As that discussed how historical literature can inform our understanding of the increased embedding of surveillant devices in our daily lives. Events included 'The Quantified Romantics', featuring 'The Vortex' (an immersive black box experiment) at Ceredigion Museum (November 2015), funded by the *Being Human* festival. Attracting large audiences, 'The Vortex' also subsequently featured at the launch of the 2016 *Being Human* festival in Senate House, London, and ran again at the 'Living Frankenstein' evening in Senate House (May 2018), at the Bath Literature Festival (May 2018) and at the Aberystwyth Steampunk Spectacular (October 2018, 2019). Participant comments attest to the impact of the events on public awareness: *'Interesting meshing of science and humanities'; 'Biometrics was not on my radar before this. Now it is'; 'Previous to this, I knew nothing about the use of biometrics in shops – now I need to research it to find out more'; 'It is a really interesting way of connecting the classics with technology'*. One attendee reported that she would take the conclusions of the research into her professional realm, noting *'I work in measuring biological characteristics ... so, I feel a bit like I have to rethink the moral points of my work'* [5.5]. Marggraf Turley also gave a public lecture about Romanticism and modern surveillance culture at Keats House, Hampstead (September 2019). An audience member noted how their understanding of the relevance of Romanticism to contemporary surveillance culture had increased *'by 100% as it's not something I had considered before'* [5.6].

A rich programme of media appearances accompanied the demonstrations and lectures, further enabling Marggraf Turley's research to reach new audiences. His research has featured in a 30-min *BBC Radio Wales Science Café* (February 2016), a *Guardian* Food Blog interview (May 2014), *The Observer* (November 2015) and *Times Higher Education* (November 2015). In addition, an essay for *The Conversation* (October 2017) garnered 6,856 reads, had 98 Twitter retweets and was shared 174 times on Facebook [5.7]. Responses to the coverage are also indicative of the impact the research has had on public awareness. *The Conversation* essay was re-published (October 2017) by 'The Real Percy Shelley' website (602 reads) and on the website owner's Facebook page (reaching a *'much higher than average'* number of people), and Twitter feed (reaching nearly 15,000 people), leading him to note how Marggraf Turley's post was *'proving to be super popular Lots of comments ... This tells me you have struck a chord with this theme [surveillance]'*. Comments included those of a US high school teacher who reflected on how it was *'an interesting take that could bring some cross curriculum consternation to the Y8/Y9s.... Maybe it'll just help them to understand the world we live in better'* [5.8].

In generating new ways of thinking that influence creative practice

Marggraf Turley delivered a public talk on Keats, Shakespeare, food justice and surveillance at the University of Oxford's 'John Keats in 1819' Day School Lecture (April 2019). In the audience

was the Artistic Director of 2TimeTheatre, Winchester, resulting in follow-up conversations, which in turn led to impact in the way she (as playwright) and performers in 2TimeTheatre approached a new play about the composition of Keats's best-known poem 'To Autumn':

'Richard's work on 'To Autumn' has significantly changed the way I think about the poem... I found [his] research ... immediately thought-provoking and altered my approach to a crucial element of the script. The director shared these important insights with the cast during rehearsals, helping the young actors to grasp the ways in which the themes of the poem connected to the harsh world of 1819' [5.9].

The Managing Director subsequently remarked how she would *'definitely work [Marggraf Turley's] view into my directing of the show and possibly – with due accreditation – into the programme notes'* [5.10]. Independent authors, including Lucasta Miller, have also been enabled in their professional writing careers by Marggraf Turley's research, with his work on Keats mentioned prominently in acknowledgments [5.11].

In contributing to the quality of the tourist experience

Winchester City Council's Visit Winchester 'Sunset Walk' tourist brochure was revised in 2014 to include a 'Did you know?' reference to Marggraf Turley's research on food security and Keats's ode 'To Autumn'. As a result of his research, the brochure now includes St Giles Hill, identified as the probable location that inspired the famous ode, as a walkers' destination. The cover of the brochure was also changed to feature an image taken from the summit of St Giles Hill. The Council noted how Marggraf Turley's contribution allowed *'visitors who may be interested in Keats to know research has been done'*. They confirmed that the walk was *'popular amongst locals and visitors from outside town'* [5.12].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- 5.1** Questionnaire feedback from Shrewsbury High School, 8 September 2017, and Abbots Bromley School, 13 September 2017
- 5.2** Letter of corroboration from English Curriculum Leader, Solihull Sixth Form College, 9 December 2019
- 5.3** Letters of corroboration from English teacher at Abbots Bromley School, 13 September 2017, 26 April 2019
- 5.4** Letters of corroboration from English teachers at Halesowen College, 29 November 2019
- 5.5** Questionnaire feedback from *Being Human* festival Ceredigion Museum event (14 November 2015), 'Living Frankenstein' event, Bath Literature Festival (25 May 2018) and Aberystwyth Steampunk Spectacular (14–15 October 2018)
- 5.6** Questionnaire feedback from Keats House lecture, 12 September 2019
- 5.7** 'Keats's ode To Autumn warns about mass surveillance and social sharing', *The Conversation*, 18 October 2017 (<https://theconversation.com/keatss-ode-to-autumn-warns-about-mass-surveillance-and-social-sharing-84799>)
- 5.8** Direct message from The Real Percy Shelley website owner to corroborate high engagement levels with Marggraf Turley's 2017 blog post on Keats and surveillance, 8 November 2017
- 5.9** Emails from Artistic Director of 2TimeTheatre, Winchester, 19 April 2019, 9 July 2019
- 5.10** Email from Managing Director of 2TimeTheatre, Winchester, 18 April 2019
- 5.11** Screenshots of acknowledgements from Lucasta Miller, author of a new biography *Keats* (Vintage, 2021) and Suzy Grogan, author of *Keats: Poetry, Life and Landscapes* (Pen and Sword, 2020)
- 5.12** Email from Winchester Visitor Information Team, Winchester City Council, 9 March 2021