



Idaho State
University

TEACHING LITERATURE BOOK AWARD

COMMITTEE COMMENDATION

Miriamne Ara Krummel and Tison Pugh, eds. *Jews in Medieval England: Teaching Representations of the Other*, The New Middle Ages Series (Palgrave Macmillan 2018).

This interdisciplinary edited collection examines the teaching of Jewishness within the context of medieval England. It stands out for the excellence of the individual essays, the coherence of the collection as a whole, and the relevance of its chapters to contemporary concerns around attributions of otherness and anti-Semitism. Discussing well-known authors, such as Chaucer, but in original ways, and attending to lesser known texts, the authors demonstrate a range of creative approaches to courses and lessons that help students to grapple with the archaic language and distant cultural norms of the medieval past, while also discerning how the medieval world shaped the intolerance and distrust that led to the Holocaust and continue to this day. As the editors observe, “The lessons derived from a study of medieval Jews, therefore, are relevant to understand the process of othering, both historical and modern.” Beyond its fine fit in medieval studies, the book has much to offer teachers of multicultural literature and religious studies, and it is an informative guide for instructors interested in exploring the historical roots of prejudice with their students. It also offers ways for students from diverse backgrounds to connect modern experiences of cultural difference to the study of the past.

Michelle Hartman, ed. *Teaching Modern Arabic Literature in Translation, Options for Teaching Series* (Modern Language Association 2018)

The edited collection blends thoughtful literary analysis with sophisticated discussions of the challenges and rewards of teaching these texts in a variety of classroom settings. The book stands out for its helpful orientation to non-specialists: An excellent introduction presents a persuasive case for teaching modern Arabic literature in translation, and the individual chapters offer varied and nuanced approaches to individual works. All of the chapters helpfully bring together theory, especially theories of translation, with enough background on the politics and cultural contexts of modern Arabic literature to allow both new and experienced instructors who are not experts in the field to teach these texts.

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The Teaching Literature Book Award is an international, juried prize, awarded biennially by the faculty in the graduate programs in English at Idaho State University. The 2019 external reviewers were: Ben Gunsberg, Associate Professor of English, Utah State University; Roberta Rosenberg, Professor Emerita, Christopher Newport University and Member, Harvard Institute for Learning in Retirement; and Tara Williams, Associate Dean, Honors College, and Associate Professor of English, Oregon State University.

ROAR