



TOWARDS A CLEAR HORIZON

Department:

English Language and Literature

Program:

PhD

Project type:

Collaborative Project

Funded by:

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and The Games Institute

Project co-researchers:

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 Environments of Change



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TOBEN SAMUEL RACICOT

You are a monk stationed at Battle Abbey who has been sent on a strange quest in Southern Medieval England. A Lord's son has been murdered. Phantasms have overtaken the Abbey. Giants threaten pilgrimages. And holy temples have become corrupted. What was once docile has turned hostile. Can you save Battle Abbey and become a hero?

Towards a Clear Horizon is an educational role-playing game crafted by Racicot for high school students to explore social structures, cultural differences, politics, and environmental issues that erupted during the Irish Great Famine of the 1840s.

The game structure is based on Dungeons and Dragons (DnD), a tabletop roleplaying game, where players assume a role of a character and, as a team, explore fantasy worlds together and embark on epic quests. **Towards a Clear Horizon** assigns a character and storyline to the student, immersing them in the fantasy game world inspired by the history, and including the dramatic flair of the supernatural. Players engage with townsfolk, mythical creatures, and real historical figures. The game quests ask students to use a mix of detective skills, social interactions and, potentially, combat, should they choose.

Racicot designed the game to educate students on the history of Druidic festivals, Celtic mythology, the Irish Gaelic, and Early Modern English alphabet and language, local herbalism, and other unique Irish features that are often overlooked and ignored when studying the environmental impacts of the Great Famine. The game expands students' education beyond medieval history so that they also learn soft skills, such as collaboration, critical and creative thinking, and communication.

Interesting fact:

Racicot designed **Towards a Clear Horizon** and **Abbots of Battle** at the same time. Both games are part of the *Environments of Change* SSHRC partnership grant – a transdisciplinary collaboration which explores, from multiple perspectives, the environmental history of late medieval Sussex using emerging digital tools.



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