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Postgraduate supervision in American Studies

Title: **Professor Scott Lucas discusses postgraduate supervision in American Studies (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGlvmfkCtPo)**

Duration: 2:29

I'm Scott Lucas. I'm Professor of American and Canadian Studies at the University of Birmingham.

I've been here for almost 20 years and I've been fortunate for almost all that time to work with some top flight postgraduates, both at masters and phd level. I've been working with them in the fields of American history, British history, contemporary politics going all the way from 1945 up to the present.

I've been working with postgraduates that have been talking about the US and British relationship, there is the Middle East, Central Asia, Latin America. I've also been lucky to consider that notion of politics and history in a much wider sense. Not just what presidents have said to prime ministers or what generals have said to each other, but how history relates to culture, to ideology, to literature, to film.

In other words, when I think of American Studies I think of it as the notion of American in quotation marks. The way that it might be conceived by someone in China or considered by someone in Brazil. It's not a fixed idea, it's one that's always changing, always evolving.

So I'm fortunate then to work with students who in other words are negotiating the idea of America. We're doing this not only through phd work, work that eventually leads to people getting jobs in the academic sector, working for business, working for governments - we're doing so in day-to-day activities. Like the website EA Worldview. One of the top 30 websites in the world for the study of international relations. Day in, day out, not only considering the United State and President Obama, but talking about the world as it's changing in the Middle East, in Iran, in Afghanistan and Eastern Europe.

In other words, I like to work with phds as part of a community where we're working with other people who are using not only the format of the written dissertation, but using audio-visual formats and the internet to actually get out there and to speak with people rather than speaking to them.

I've probably worked with about 50 people now who've completed phds. About 60% of them have jobs at British universities and about another quarter are working abroad. I think it is the crown jewel of my work. I enjoy it day in day out and I hope it is something that continues for some time to come.

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