

Transcript of Steve Ellis discussing postgraduate supervision in English literature

Title: **Steve Ellis discusses postgraduate supervision in English Literature** (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_zW3yIHjXE&feature=channel_video_title)

Duration: 3:18

I'm Steve Ellis, I'm Professor of English Literature at the University of Birmingham.

My own research, my own phd thirty or so years ago, was on the reception of Dante in modern English poetry of the 19th and 20th centuries.

I've retained this as a research interest area. That is Modern Medievalism and the reception in the Modern period of Medieval writers.

Not only Dante, but also Chaucer on whom I wrote a book 'Chaucer at Large' in 2000, which is about Chaucer's reception in the 20th century in literature, film, television, popular culture and so forth.

I've worked also independently on Chaucer and Dante and areas of Medieval literature, though in recent years my interest has switch predominantly to 20th century writing.

My particular areas of study at the moment I would say are canonical Modernist writers, particular TS Eliot and Virginia Woolf.

In 2007 I published a book on Virginia Woolf and the Victorians, which is about Woolf's conflicted relationship with the Victorians. Both love and hate in a sense, the ambivalence of that.

Increasingly, I'm concentrating my research interests in the later careers, the 1930s, early 1940s, of writers like Eliot and Woolf. At present I'm writing a book on the year 1939, which is the long 1939 subtitled 'Literature and the Outbreak of World War II'.

It runs in effect from the Munich crisis to the true engagement, the end of the Phoney War and wartime engagement in the middle of 1940.

At present I'm thinking about writers indeed like Eliot and Woolf in their late careers but also HG Wells, George Orwell, Aldous Huxley and so forth.

I'd be interested really in supervising research in any area I think of Later Modernism shall we say.

At present I'm supervising research students in areas like Fiction of World War II. I'm supervising a student working on Francis Brett Young's wartime epic The Island. Supervising a student working on Ezra Pound and Greece, because I still have an interest in the European context of Modernism as well. And I'm supervising a student working on TS Eliot's association with the New English Weekly in the period in the late 1930s and the start of the Second World War.

So, I'm still interested in Medievalism, Medieval reception in the Modern period, ideas of nationhood and Englishness, particularly as they affect writers like Eliot and Woolf.

Increasingly, I'm historically concentrating on the period of the later thirties and the early forties and the kind of overlap between the previous generation of Modernist writers like Eliot and Woolf and the emerging generation - people like Orwell, Louis MacNeice, Aldous Huxley and so forth.