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# Postgraduate community

The Centre for Modern and Contemporary History offers strong support and resources for those wishing to study or research here.

Academic staff and students share their work together through the Centre's seminar series and other events, while the resources of the department and the **College of Arts and Law (/university/colleges/artslaw/index.aspx)** offer the chance for students to take part in extra-curricular activities and development. Postgraduate students in the Centre run the **History and Cultures Workshop (http://hcworkshop.net/)** alongside their own peer-review journal, The **Journal of History and Cultures (http://historyandcultures.com/)** .

Postgraduate study at the Centre opens up lots more opportunities over the degree programme itself that can benefit both academic and other career paths, helping students achieve their full potential.

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## Staff-run events and seminars.

The Centre holds its own **seminar series (/schools/historycultures/departments/history/research/seminars/contemporary-history.aspx)** during term-time, organised by staff but open to all postgraduate students. Bringing historians fro0m all over Britain and beyond to Birmingham, the seminar series seeks to engage with the main trajectory undertaken within the **MA Contemporary History (/research/activity/moderncontemporary/postgraduate/index.aspx)** and the Centre in general, offering comparative, international and global perspectives on contemporary history.

## History and Cultures workshop

Postgraduate Students also get the chance to attend, organise and present their work through the **History and Cultures Workshop (http://hcworkshop.net/)** .

This series of seminars and workshops are run and organised by students within the **School of History and Cultures (/schools/historycultures/postgraduate/index.aspx)** with a wide range of diverse topics and approaches covered through the papers given by internal and external postgraduate students. It offers the students a chance to direct and lead academic discussion and to present their work in a relaxed, informal environment, providing an excellent preparation for conferences or public speaking in general. It allows students to engage in seeing how other students study contemporary history as having wider global links and flows and develop their understanding of a subject away from the structured elements of the course.

The papers given are of the students own work and the Workshop presents some of the most innovative, thoughtful and cutting-edge research available. Previous papers and talks include:

- Sam Humphries (University of Birmingham) **'Trying to look like Yanks'? Skinheads, the working-classes and white bodies 1968-1972**
- Becky Crites (University of Birmingham) **'Not his fault? The victimisation of the British wife-beater, 1914-1939'**
- Jessica Moody (University of York), **'King John and the Abolition Act: remembering slavery in Liverpool in 1907 and 1957'**
- Andy Jones (University of Birmingham), **'Famine in Ethiopia and the British Media, 1983-1985'**
- Martin Theaker (University of Cambridge), **'Big Science on a Small Island': Britain and European Atomic Science projects, 1945-53'**

The organising is done by a committee and gives students the chance to run a series of seminars and workshops in a creative environment. Students previously involved said it was one of the most rewarding experiences they had in their postgraduate studies and created a strong sense of community that aided both their academic work and personal development. The casual, laid-back nature means students are under no pressure to perform and is a key place to get to know students working on similar areas who are on different courses.

## The Journal of History and Cultures

Postgraduates also get the chance to run the **Journal of History and Cultures (http://historyandcultures.com/)** (JHAC), a peer-reviewed journal that communicates pioneering new research in history and cultures within a multi- and inter-disciplinary forum. Drawing on the latest historical, cultural, political, social, and theoretical analytical research, JHAC's overarching purpose is to foster lively and productive academic debate.

The emphasis on a wide variety of disciplines and subject matter creates a mutually enriching sphere for the interchange of perspectives and ideas. JHAC has a broad scope in both geographic and chronological terms, presenting studies with a range of local, regional, national and global foci from the medieval to contemporary era. This provides the opportunity for research from global contributors to enter a dialogue with the readership in the form of reviews, letters and an online discussion forum.

The Journal gives postgraduates the opportunity to organise and run various jobs the journal requires including

- General, Article and Review Editors
- Website Management
- Press and Marketing Officer
- Copy-editing

All positions rotate on a yearly basis in January, while copy-editing is open at all times and a great way to expand your skills portfolio and take part in running an exciting new journal.

Working with the journal helps understand what is required in putting together a publication and the whole process of peer-review, providing a unique opportunity to understand what is required in an academic career. Alternatively these opportunities allow students to gain valuable skills useful for publishing and marketing careers. It is also a chance to meet and work with equally enthusiastic people on a collaborative project.

## Wider resources and opportunities.

The Centre, as part of the University of Birmingham, has many opportunities for students to develop skills and career paths while studying unavailable elsewhere.

The Journal and Workshop Series are funded by the University's **Roberts Funding (http://www.graduateschool.bham.ac.uk/staff/roberts.shtml)** , a pool of available money for students to set up and run activities. If you have an idea for a new postgraduate venture for the Centre of Modern and Contemporary History then there are the funds available to make it happen.

**The Graduate School (http://www.graduateschool.bham.ac.uk/)** offers excellent support and training workshops for postgraduate researchers, including:

- Procrastination
- Time Management
- Public Speaking
- Personal Branding and Marketing

These are not just ways to open your creativity and potential but an excellent chance to meet other researchers from different colleges and schools and take part in the wider research culture at the University of Birmingham. These skills slot in perfectly with the nature of creative thinking in the department and allow students use their degree in new and different ways beyond academia.

**Enterprise and Initiative (http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/ei/)** also offers courses and training to develop and unlock not just business and entrepreneurial traits but leadership skills; their programmes include:

- Doctoral Researcher Summer School
- Leadership Programme
- Enterprise Business Schools

In preparing for both academic and non-academic carrer paths, BCMCH students are able to use their research and knowledge of the contemporary world alongside their creative thinking to full effect, ensuring that postgraduates do not go into the job market under-developed or lacking wider skills.

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