

The University of Birmingham Series Hay Festival

Posted on Monday 16th April 2012



The 25th Hay Festival of Literature and the Arts took place from 31 May to 10 June 2012.

The Hay Festival celebrates great writing from poets and scientists, lyricists and comedians, novelists and environmentalists, and the power of great ideas to transform our way of thinking.

For the first time the University of Birmingham's College of Arts and Law hosted a series of talks showcasing our top academics and the breadth of arts and humanities subjects studied by our students.

Wendy Scase (</staff/profiles/english/scase-wendy.aspx>) examined the origins and purpose of the unique Vernon Manuscript in her talk, entitled 'The Vernon Manuscript - An e-reader on parchment'. Wendy explored the astonishing treasury of literature written in the dialect of the West Midlands over 600 years

ago, and discussed how it changed the story of English.

Michael Dobson (</staff/profiles/shakespeare/dobson-michael.aspx>) explored theatregoers enjoyment of watching people die and questioned why modern audiences still prefer their destined corpses to speak in Elizabethan English. Chaired by Clemency Burton-Hill the Director of The Shakespeare Institute focused the discussion on Richard II, Othello and King Lear.

The conditions that made homosexuality an easy norm in ancient Greece were discussed by a panel including Classicist **Gideon Nisbet** (</staff/profiles/caha/nisbet-gideon.aspx>), whilst **Niall Livingstone** (</staff/profiles/caha/livingstone-niall.aspx>) explored what the surviving Greek tragedies and comedies, and the information we have about their performances and audiences, teach us about the Classical world.

In her talk 'Cider in 17th Century England', Claire Preston, looked at apples and Herefordshire cider. Wholesome, nutritious, strengthening, and morally pure, cider's virtues nourished the nation, established Empire, and won wars. Claire explained how cider knocked French wine and the Dutch navy into a cocked hat.

From September podcasts of each of these talks will be available to listen to.

[Privacy](#) | [Legal](#) | [Cookies and cookie policy](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Site map](#) | [Website feedback](#) | [Charitable information](#)

© University of Birmingham 2015

