

Dr Christopher A. Farrell

Teaching Fellow in Ancient History

[Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology \(/schools/historycultures/departments/caha/index.aspx\)](/schools/historycultures/departments/caha/index.aspx)

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About

I joined the department of Classics, Ancient History, and Archaeology at Birmingham in September 2013. Previously I taught Ancient History and literature at King's College London and Birkbeck.

Qualifications

- BA in: Classical Archaeology & Ancient History; Politics; History, Summa Cum Laude (Brandeis University, Waltham, MA).
- MA in Ancient History with Distinction, (King's College London, University of London).
- PhD in Classics: Xenophon in Context: Advising Athens and Democracy (King's College London).
- Fellow of the Higher Education Academy - PGCAPHE (King's College London)

Teaching

I currently teach on a wide-range of BA modules focusing on the history, literature and cultures of Greece and Rome. These including: convening the CLC group project in which first-year Classics students develop foundational research and presentation skills while working under my supervision on select topics; a first year 'Project' module, 'the Age of Socrates', which introduces students to a range of 'Socratic' literature from Classical Athens to the late Roman empire as they develop core academic skills; I also co-teach the lectures and seminars for the following first-, second- and third-year core modules: Investigating Greece, Investigating Rome, Introduction to Greek History, Introduction to Roman History, Introduction to Latin Literature, the Study Tour, as well as the Dissertation Preparation module for Ancient & Medieval History students.

At MA level I co-teach the 'Individuals in History' module, on which I lead seminars focusing on the contrasting methodologies of ancient biography and historiography, as well as the works of Plutarch, Suetonius, & Tacitus.

I also am currently supervising undergraduate dissertations on aspects of social and economic history and historiography in Greek, Roman, and Near Eastern civilisations.

Research

Broadly defined my research interests concern the history of ideas in Classical Antiquity, with particular emphasis on ancient political and religious thought. My doctoral thesis, "Xenophon in Context: Advising Athens and Democracy" challenged existing expectations of Xenophon, his works, and political 'ideology'. Employing a contextualist approach, I argued that Xenophon did not reject ancient democratic thought; rather he presented fourth-century Athenians with paradigms inspired by, and compatible with, ancient democratic ideals and sought to realign the Athenian élite with the expectations of democracy. In addition to adapting and expanding the thesis for publication, I currently am working on separate research projects. These include: exploring ancient oligarchic/aristocratic theory and ideology and their impact on modern political thought, a commentary on the Socratic and Xenophontic Epistles, and analysing the contentious role that the Cyrus Cylinder has come to play in the history of human rights and religious toleration

Other activities

Currently I am taking part in the CAHA curriculum review. I also have helped to create an essay bank that allows undergraduates to access examples of previous student work across the full range of marks.

Handouts from previous talks and work-in-progress are available to read on [my profile at academia.edu \(https://bham.academia.edu/ChristopherFarrell\)](https://bham.academia.edu/ChristopherFarrell).

Publications

Peer Reviewed Chapters/Articles

- Farrell, C. 2012. 'Lacoinism and Democracy: Re-reading the *Lakedaimonion Politeia* and Re-thinking Xenophon', in (eds. Joanna Paul et al.) *Governing Diversities: Democracy, Diversity and Human Nature*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing: 10-35.

Book Reviews

- Farrell, C. 2012. Review of J. Shear (2011) *Polis and Revolution: Responding to Oligarchy in Classical Athens*. *Anglo-Hellenic Review* 46 Autumn (2012).
- Farrell, C. 2012. Review of Cassayre (2010) *La Justice dans les cites grecques: De la formation des royaumes hellénistiques au legs d'Attale*. *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 132 (2012).
- Farrell, C. 2012. Review of M. Haake, R. von den Hoff, and C. Mann (eds.) (2009) *Rollenbilder in der athenischen Demokratie: Medien, Gruppen, Räume im politischen und sozialen System*. *JHS* 132 (2012).

