Top secret: the OMGUS files

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The History department and the Main Library have acquired half the OMGUS files (Office of the Military Government, US, in Germany, 1949), in part financed with Circles of Influence funding. Birmingham is the only place in the country to have these files. They will be an invaluable resource for anyone who wants to research into post-war Germany; the development of the Cold War; post-conflict studies; and 'nation building'.

Support from the Annual Giving Fund for the acquisition of the files of the US Military Government (OMGUS) in Germany, 1944-49 means that the timeframe of the purchase can be reduced by several years. The University of Birmingham Library will be the only site in Britain (and only the third in Europe) to hold these files. It will allow research into the American occupation policy in Germany, including aspects of 'Nation Building'; economic reconstruction and democratisation of (West) Germany; inter-Allied differences and co-operations; US-Soviet relations and similar topics, to name but a few. The files will be an excellent source for final student dissertations, second year Group Research modules and a very important source for postgraduate students in History, Political Science and Conflict Studies.

"OMGUS has been the foundation with which I am writing my dissertation on and therefore, I have spent a lot of time using the files. OMGUS has been pivotal to me choosing a dissertation topic which I have a real passion for and without access to these materials I would have not been able to pursue a topic which I have a real interest in. It has enabled me to have the experience of working with archive files and developed key analytical skills which I have utilised in the final year of my degree. OMGUS has been both informative and a really interesting system to work with and I have really enjoyed my time using the files. The OMGUS files provide a huge amount of information and great level of detail which I would not have been able to have access to anywhere else in the country. Overall, I believe OMGUS is an amazing and invaluable source to have access to as a student of the University of Birmingham."
Emma Marks Final Year Undergraduate BA History

"I have been using the OMGUS files over the past six months for my dissertation. That such a extensive range of files is so close to hand and easy to access has enabled me to undertake a substantial and comprehensive study of the relevant material that I would have been otherwise unable to do. This research has enhanced my understanding of my dissertation topic unequivocally, and without this resource, the quality of my findings would have been quite different, and much diminished. I cannot speak too highly of these files, for they have been invaluable to me and my study, and with the continued expansion of the number of files held at Birmingham, it will surely continue to be the case for future students."
James Ansell, Final Year Undergraduate BA History

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