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# Professor Corey Ross MA, PhD

Professor of Modern History
Head of School of History and Cultures

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## About

I am Professor of Modern History and am currently Head of the School of History of Cultures. My primary research interests are in global environmental history and modern European social and cultural history.

## Biography

Since arriving at Birmingham in 1998, I've held an Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship in Berlin, a J. Walter Thompson Fellowship at Duke University and was Professeur invité at the Université Paris-II. I am currently Head of the School of History and Cultures at Birmingham, and am closely involved in the **Birmingham Centre for Contemporary History (/research/activity/moderncontemporary/index.aspx)** .

## Teaching

I currently teach a final-year undergraduate Special Subject on 'Imperialism and the Global Environment' and co-teach the two core modules of the **MA in Contemporary History (/postgraduate/courses/taught/history/contemporary-history.aspx)** : 'Mass Society and Modernity' and 'Globalization since 1945'. I also supervise or co-supervise a number of PhD and Master's students, as well as a handful of undergraduates writing their final-year dissertations.

## Postgraduate supervision

I am able to offer postgraduate supervision in a number of areas, including various aspects of European and global environmental history since the late 19th century, the history of the media and publicity in twentieth-century Europe, and the social and cultural history of Germany since the late nineteenth century.

## Research

My broad interests are in global environmental history and the social and cultural history of twentieth-century Europe. I am currently working on an environmental history of the heyday of European imperialism, from roughly 1880 to 1960. The project explores the environmental transformations and interconnections associated with the explosive growth of commodity production and global trade in the tropical regions under European control - transformations that still visibly shape our world today - and how they fitted into broader patterns of social, cultural and political change. This concerns not only the impact of European (British, French, German, Dutch, Belgian) attempts to harness tropical ecosystems for economic gain, but also the role of indigenous patterns of resource use and colonial conservation efforts. I am also currently co-editing, with Paul Betts, a volume on 'Heritage in the Modern World', which reconsiders the role of historical preservation (of both the man-made and the 'natural') in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from a global perspective.

In a wholly different vein, I have recently co-edited a book (with Fabrice d'Almeida and Pamela Swett) on pleasure and power under National Socialism, which explores the role of consumption, tourism, amusements, luxury goods and the like in sustaining, and at times undermining, Nazi authority.

My previous research has had two principal foci: the history of mass communications, publicity and popular culture; and the history of the former East Germany. In 2008 I completed a social history of the mass media in Germany which focuses on how the rapid expansion of modern communications and commercial entertainment fitted into the wider development of social, political and cultural life from the late Imperial period (c. 1890s) through the Third Reich. I also co-edited a volume with Karl-Christian Führer on media and society in 20th-century Germany. Prior to that, my first book explored the building of socialism in East Germany 'from below', and my second book offered the first overview of historiographic debates surrounding East Germany and its legacy.

## Publications

### Books

- In progress: C. Ross, *Nature and the New Imperialism: Europe and the Ecological Transformation of the Tropical World, 1870-1960* (Oxford University Press, 2015/16).
- In progress: P. Betts, C. Ross (eds), *Heritage in the Modern World: Historical Preservation in Global Perspective* (2015).
- P.Sweet, C.Ross, F.d'Almeida (eds), *Pleasure and Power in Nazi Germany*
- *Media and the Making of Modern Germany: Mass Communications, Society and Politics from the Empire to the Third Reich* (Oxford University Press 2008)
- with K. C. Führer (eds), *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-century Germany*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006)
- *The East German Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives in the Interpretation of the GDR*, (London: Arnold, 2002)
- *Constructing Socialism at the Grass-Roots: The Transformation of East Germany, 1945-65*, (London: Macmillan, 2000)

### Selected articles

- C. Ross, 'The Plantation Paradigm: Colonial Agronomy, African Farmers and the Global Cocoa Boom, 1870s-1940s', *Journal of Global History* vol. 9 (2014), 49-71.

- C. Ross (forthcoming), 'The Tin Frontier: Mining, Empire and Environment in Southeast Asia, 1870s-1930s', *Environmental History* (summer 2014).C. Ross, 'Zwischen geteilter Kultur und zerteilter Gesellschaft: Zur Sozialgeschichte der neuen Medien in der Weimarer Republik', *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* vol. 62 no. 9/10 (Sept/Oct 2011), 530-45
- 'La professionnalisation de la publicité et de la propagande dans l'Allemagne de Weimar', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'Histoire*, no. 101 (Jan-Mar. 2009), pp. 9-26.
- 'Writing the Media into History: Recent Works on the History of Mass Communications in Germany', *German History*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2008), pp. 299-313.
- 'Mass Culture and Divided Audiences: Cinema and Social Change in Inter-war Germany', *Past & Present*, no. 193 (Nov. 2006), pp. 157-95.
- 'Mass Politics and the Techniques of Leadership: The Promise and Perils of Propaganda in Weimar Germany', *German History*, vol. 24, no. 2 (2006), pp. 184-211.
- 'East Germans and the Berlin Wall: Popular Opinion and Political Authority Before and After the Border Closure of August 1961', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 39, no. 1 (2004), pp. 25-43.
- 'Zwischen politischer Gestaltung und sozialer Komplexität. Überlegungen zur Debatte über die Sozialgeschichte der DDR', *Jahrbuch für historische Kommunismusforschung*, vol. 11 (2003), pp. 140-64.
- 'Before the Wall: East Germans, Communist Authority, and the Mass Exodus to the West', *Historical Journal*, vol. 45, no. 2 (2002), pp. 459-80.
- 'Grundmerkmal oder Randerscheinung? Zum Stellenwert von Opposition und Dissenz in der DDR-Geschichte', *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 35, no. 5 (Sept./Oct. 2002), pp. 747-60.
- '"Sonst sehe ich mich veranlasst, auch nach dem Westen zu ziehen": Zum Zusammenhang von Republikflucht, SED-Herrschaft und DDR-Bevölkerung vor dem Mauerbau', *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 34, no. 4 (2001), pp. 613-27.

### Selected chapters in books

C. Ross (forthcoming), ' Tropical Nature as Global *Patrimoine*: Imperialism and International Nature Protection in the Early Twentieth Century', in P. Betts, C. Ross (eds), *Heritage in the Modern World: Historical Preservation in Global Perspective* (2015).

- P. Betts, C. Ross (forthcoming), ' Modern Historical Preservation: Towards a Global Perspective', in P. Betts, C. Ross (eds), *Heritage in the Modern World: Historical Preservation in Global Perspective* (2015).
- C. Ross, ' Mass Media and Commercial Entertainments in Germany and Britain: Global Change and National Contexts before the Second World War', in: Christiane Eisenberg, Andreas Gestrich (eds), *Cultural Industries in Britain and Germany* (Augsburg: Wissner, 2012), 92-109.
- C. Ross, 'Cinema, Radio and "Mass Culture" in the Weimar Republic: Between Shared Experience and Social Division', in: J. A. Williams (ed.), *Revisiting Weimar Culture* (New York: Palgrave, 2011), pp. 23-48.
- C. Ross, 'Radio, Film and Morale: Wartime Entertainment between Mobilization and Distraction', in: C. Ross, F. d'Almeida, P. Swett (eds), *Pleasure, Power in Nazi Germany* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011), pp. 154-74.
- C. Ross, F. d'Almeida, P. Swett, 'Introduction: Pleasure and Power under National Socialism', in: idem (eds), *Pleasure and Power in Nazi Germany* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011), pp. 1-15.
- 'Visions of Prosperity: The Americanization of Advertising in Inter-war Germany', in: P. Swett, J. Wiesen, J. Zatlin (eds.), *Selling Modernity: Advertising in Twentieth-Century Germany,* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2007), pp. 52-77.
- 'Entertainment, Technology and Tradition: The Rise of Recorded Music from the Empire to the Third Reich', in: K. C. Führer, C. Ross (eds.), *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-century*
- *Germany*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), pp. 25-43.
- (with K. C. Führer), 'Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany: An Introduction', in: K. C. Führer, C. Ross (eds), *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-century Germany*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), pp. 1-22.
- 'Projecting England, Selling Germany: Propaganda, Public Relations and Advertising after the First World War', in: Arnd Bauerkämper, Christiane Eisenberg (eds), *Britain as a Model of Modern Society? German Views*, (Augsburg: Wißner-Verlag, 2006), pp. 205-23.
- 'Historians, Unification and the "New National Paradigm"', in: J. Breuilly, R. Speirs (eds.), *The Two German Unifications: A Comparative Analysis*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), pp. 261-73.
- '"Wird der Frieden nicht am Werkbank verteidigt?" Die Soldatenwerbung in der DDR in den 50er und frühen 60er Jahren', in: Hans Ehlert, Matthias Rogg (eds), *Militär, Staat und Gesellschaft in der DDR. Forschungsfelder, Ergebnisse, Perspektiven*, (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2004), pp. 439-57.
- '"Protecting the Accomplishments of Socialism?": The Militarization of the GDR', in: Patrick Major, Jonathan Osmond (eds), *The Workers' and Peasants' State: Communism and Society in East Germany, 1945-71*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 78-93.

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