

CAL Undergraduate Research Scholarships Scheme 2017  
Project Proposal Form

Project Proposer/s:	Deborah Longworth
School/Dept:	EDACS / English Literature
Project Title:	<i>Not So Quiet – The Life-Writing of Female Ambulance Drivers during WW1</i>
<b>Project Summary</b>	
<p>This UGRS project will focus on the life-writing of female ambulance drivers during World War One, specifically Mairi Chisholm, Dorothy Feilding and Elsie Knocker. The scholarship holder will collate and research their diaries and letters, as well as interview transcripts with them, press-cuttings and photographs, producing an online resource gathering their writings on their experiences of WW1 and its aftermath, as well as a Flickr exhibition of photographs and other visual materials.</p> <p>This work will offer important research support for the essay I plan to write in Autumn 2017 analysing the fictional narratives of WW1 women ambulance drivers (Radclyffe Hall's <i>The Well of Loneliness</i> [1928] and Helen Zenna Smith's at the time best-selling <i>Not So Quiet</i> [1930] – both of which purportedly drew upon the memoirs of real women attached to the ambulance corps), alongside extant examples of letters and diaries by Chisholm, Feilding and Knocker, all publically-recognised during the war years.</p> <p>The scholarship work will also contribute to the active nature of research-led teaching on the final year Remembering World War One module in the Department of English Literature. Supported from the outset by relevant training and mentorship, it offers an example of student-led research-based learning and the ways in which this can feed into teaching and support peer-learning on the module, alongside and in synergy with the production of published research by the academic lead.</p>	
<b>What the researcher will do</b>	
<p>The undergraduate researcher will undertake the following activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Collate and transcribe the diaries, letters and recordings of Mairi Chisholm, Dorothy Fielding and Elsie Knocker, held in the Imperial War Museum, London and the Warwick Country Record Office.</li> <li>2) Gather photographs of Chisholm and Knocker, and copies of press-cuttings about their work, held in the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.</li> <li>3) Work with me to produce an online exhibition of materials, for the final year Remembering World War One module Canvas site.</li> <li>4) Write a short essay about the scholarship research for the RWW1 module Canvas site.</li> <li>5) Following the end of the scholarship period, I will also invite the student to co-present two seminars with me focused specifically on the writings of and about WW1 women ambulance drivers; the first on the Remembering World War One module, and the second to Year 12/13 English students at the University of Birmingham School.</li> </ol>	
<b>Skills required by the Scholarship holder</b>	
<p>The undergraduate researcher will be expected to possess:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A strong work ethic and the ability to work independently.</li> <li>2) Excellent attention to detail in transcription.</li> <li>3) Excellent organizational skills.</li> <li>4) Strong command of academic English and MS Word.</li> <li>5) A willingness to create an online exhibition/resource (although training will be given).</li> <li>6) A lively interest in life-writing/women's-writing or WW1.</li> </ol> <p>The successful candidate will need to undertake archive trips to London, Warwick and potentially Edinburgh (travel costs from Birmingham provided by my personal research allowance and the UGRS</p>	

scheme).

How will your Project benefit the Scholarship holder?

This project is ideal for English Literature students intending to take the 'Remembering World War One' special option module in their third year, or with an interest in women's writing or life-writing more broadly. The scholarship holder will gain first-hand experience of collating, transcribing, documenting, and analysing letters and diaries, and will have the opportunity to read critical essays relating to life-writing and women's experience of WW1 in the process. This will help them to enhance their final year study, and to support future research at UG and potentially PG level.

The scholarship holder will also gain experience in producing an online resource for final year teaching and research, and in disseminating their work to different levels of student audience. This is a transferable skill but might also be of particular interest to students considering a career in teaching or academia.

As academic lead on the project I will offer strong mentor support for the scholarship holder, both during the project period and over the student's final year. I see the research for this project as collaborative, and am interested and keen to support the particular interests that the scholarship holder themselves might bring to the project, and ideas they might have for further research. Beyond simply gaining a strong knowledge of the specific research focus, however, I hope to help the student develop transferable skills relevant to their broader academic, career and personal development.

How will the Scholarship benefit your Project?

There are two key and mutually supporting benefits arising from this project:

- 1) The work the scholarship holder will undertake will help me to complete an essay on Helen Zenna Smith's novel *Not So Quiet* (which ostensibly draws upon the diary – never discovered and possibly fictitious - of a female ambulance driver during WW1) in relation to the diaries and letters of Feilding, Chisholm and Knocker. This will be written in Autumn 2017.
- 2) The UGR's work will also help produce a valuable teaching resource, and give an example of the opportunities for active research and research-skills development available to students on research-led modules. Within the current academic environment, it is crucial that the added-value of research-led teaching is recognised. This project will not only demonstrate the contemporary and ongoing research upon which the RWW1 module draws, but also offer an example of the ways in which students themselves can become active researchers, and included in collaborative projects with research staff from their very start.