

The Higher Education Academy

History Subject Centre

NEWSLETTER



In this third Edition of the Newsletter:

- Update on the future of the History Subject Centre
- Update on the History Passion Project
- More information on the Graduates with Impact Project
- News of all upcoming events

**The
Higher
Education
Academy**

THE FUTURE OF DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC SUBJECT CENTRE ACADEMY

The Board of the Higher Education Academy met on 10th November 2010 to decide on the organisation's future structure and focus. The HEA's future work will concentrate on activity that supports institutions and their staff in improving teaching in higher education. The HEA Board has stated that the Academy will continue to support academics in their disciplines. However, they are disbanding the Subject Centre network and, in the future, disciplinary work will be provided by a series of associates on fixed term contracts. These associates will generally be expected to support more than one discipline. The changes are expected to be implemented over the academic year 2011-12 but as we go to press it is unclear whether the History Subject Centre will take part in the transition after August 2011.

SERVICES AND STRUCTURE

Changes in the funding and in student expectations of higher education have focused increased attention on the quality and recognition of teaching. The HEA's future work will concentrate on activity that supports institutions and their staff in improving teaching in higher education.

The decision to restructure was based on a careful appraisal of the HEA's ability to deliver services consistently to the sector and of the costs involved. The new structure will increase the proportion of staff and other resource that is used to work directly with academics and learning support staff in institutions. It also gives greater flexibility to move resources around or change emphasis as the needs of the sector develop and reductions in funding take full effect.

A range of services will be offered to institutions and their staff, in three broad areas:

Teacher excellence
Development of academic practice
Institutional excellence

These services will include the continuation and development of existing work such as:

- Accreditation of initial and continual professional development programmes for staff who teach and support student learning
- Institutional change programmes
- Extension and improvement of the Academy fellowship scheme offering professional recognition to staff who attain the criteria set out in the UK Professional Standards Framework
- The National Teaching Fellowship programme

THE SUBJECT FOCUS

Support at subject level to academics in their discipline communities will remain at the heart of our work. However from 2012, the HEA will no longer be providing grant funding to support the current network of Subject Centres based in a small number of universities.

The Academy is committed to maintaining and building on the work achieved by the Subject Centre network. The programme of subject support will include:

- Small grants to support teaching, educational development projects and to stimulate innovation (available to fellows of the HEA only)
- Workshops and events at subject and discipline level, on key issues in HE identified by subject communities
- Extension of the Academy's change programmes to departmental and subject level within institutions

SUPPORT IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION

- Development of materials and toolkits for use by academics in their teaching, including for example, e-journals, resource banks, short guides and pedagogic support items
- Support at subject level for initial teacher training for graduate teaching assistants and other new staff
- Subject input into continuing professional development programmes
- Extension of formal links with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies and subject associations on issues relating to learning and teaching

HOW THE ACADEMY WILL WORK

An increased proportion of resource will be spent on front-line delivery (although in effect this may amount to a cut in funding given the reduction in the overall HEA budget). More than half the Academy staff will be experienced and respected academics who have taught or continue to teach higher education programmes.

Subject level work will be led by Academic Heads employed directly by or seconded to the Academy, and who will report in to a member of the Academy's Executive team. Subject teams will comprise academic coordinators, employed by or seconded to the Academy, supported by academic associates engaged from across the sector to support specific projects and activities. Flexible employment arrangements will mean that it is possible for many academic staff and associates to be based in HEIs across the UK.

Many of these services and events will be chargeable whilst others will only be available to Fellows of the Higher Education Academy. It is expected that the posts referred to above will be advertised early in 2011.

COMMENTS

The Academy welcomes comments from subject communities about the proposed structure and services. You can send these directly to me sarah.richardson@warwick.ac.uk or to Eric Evans, Chair of the Advisory Board (e.evans@lancaster.ac.uk). The Academy expects to consult with relevant subject associations in the first half of 2011. However, it is important that your voice is heard so that you continue to receive the support you require.

Thank You!

We are very grateful for all the support you have given us since the Subject Centre moved to the University of Warwick in 2008. We are considering ways of sustaining our services and resources beyond the remit of the Higher Education Academy and will be discussing these at our Annual Conference to be held at Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford from 4th-5th April 2011. We are running a full programme of activities for 2010-11 and will keep you in touch with future developments as they become clearer.



**Director,
History Subject Centre**



SUPPORT FROM OUR COLLEAGUES ABROAD

This news is extremely disheartening. I have enthusiastically promoted the subject centre network among my colleagues here in the United States, both in scholarly exchanges and in professional consulting work. The publications and online resources for historians have been simply first-rate, and the conferences and events have provided an invaluable venue for improving history teaching and learning. The proposed cutbacks in history, the arts, and humanities will bring irreparable losses, both in the imminent present and the foreseeable future.

Keith A. Erikson

*Assistant Professor of History
Director, Center for History Teaching & Learning
University of Texas at El Paso*

In the last decade British scholars have been at the forefront of developments around the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL). An important enabler for this contribution, especially in the last five years or so has been the Higher Education Academy's Subject Centres. I first became involved with the Centre associated with my Discipline of History in 2006. As a grass roots enabler that set out to improve teaching practice I thought then and still think now that the subject centre was a sublime idea. With what must still realistically be seen as modest funding the Centre had a quantifiable impact on teachers at the coal face. Its pedagogical power lay in the fact members of the discipline community were speaking to other members of the discipline community about teaching and learning. The centre's played the crucial translation role from abstract educational theory to discipline specific practice that centralised university teaching and learning units had failed so dismally achieve in the previous decade. To hear now that these grass roots enablers will be destroyed to protect a bureaucracy in York that mistakenly thinks it can effect change is quite simply an outrage. Far better to have kept the Centres alive and disestablished the HEA headquarters! Britain's ability to influence the international SOTL debate must decline in the wake of these decisions. I'm already aware of international conferences being forgone by British colleagues and beliefs expressed that the investment many academics placed in teaching in recent years has been for nought. When this is combined with the wider attack on the Humanities in the United Kingdom by the removal of public funding one is left to wonder if in these actions the casual observer can see why so often through history the British manage to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory!

Dr Sean Brawley MACE MPHA

*Professor of History
Associate Dean (Education)
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University New South Wales*

“THRIVING IN DIFFICULT TIMES”



THE 13TH ANNUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING IN
HISTORY CONFERENCE
4TH TO 5TH APRIL 2011

LADY MARGARET
HALL

UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

The
Higher
Education
Academy

History

The Annual Conference of the History Subject Centre has now reached its thirteenth successful year. It is well-established as a key event in the international calendar of activities that focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning within the discipline of History. We pride ourselves on the superb quality of both papers and speakers and their continued and valuable contribution to the development of pedagogical scholarship. Knowledgeable and engaged speakers and delegates are a key element of the conference's ongoing appeal and success. Audience participation is a key component of the Annual Teaching and Learning Conference as presentations often provoke extensive discussions, many of which continue outside the scheduled sessions. The mix of international speakers, experienced academics, postgraduate and early career teachers and undergraduates always ensure that the conference is a thought-provoking and rewarding experience for all.

Papers, panels and workshops will be related to this year's theme: Thriving in Difficult Times and will be on a mixture of the following topics:

- Education for Sustainable Development
- eLearning and Distance Learning
- Employability
- Internationalisation
- Teaching Methodologies

For further information on the conference please visit our website at

www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/events/annualconference2011

HISTORY GRADUATES WITH IMPACT

Graduates History with Impact

“An underlying theme of this conference centres on the demands of supporting a high quality student experience in a time of change and funding uncertainties.”

Report from the 12th Annual conference in April 2010

These words were taken from the final paragraph of the report on our 12th annual conference, detailed in the Subject Centre’s summer newsletter. The level of funding for history, whilst now much clearer, is of great concern as part of the comprehensive cuts facing the arts and humanities in higher education. In the face of such huge changes, the History Subject Centre believe it is important, and timely, to explore and reveal the values and considerations of history in higher education.

A number of projects and activities in this academic year will provide insights, research and updates on the employability of history graduates and teaching and learning pedagogy. Whilst the former is coming ever more sharply into focus in humanities programmes, we feel that the latter is equally important to the ongoing success of the subject in attracting students in the future, and together will enable students to fulfil their potential during and after their studies. The value of a history education is rich and broad: we should celebrate what our subject has to offer and provide examples and experiences of the impact that studying history can involve.

History Graduates With Impact will showcase the varied and innovative work that is being carried out in our subject community, along with reports highlighting teaching, assessment, and issues surrounding graduate skills. The Subject Centre is developing a website: <http://www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/research/gwil> to encompass the work of all the projects, including progress, final reports and useful external links.

HERE'S A LITTLE INFORMATION ABOUT EACH PROJECT SO FAR



The History Passion Project: Pleasure, Purpose and Value in University Teaching.

What makes a university historian into a passionate teacher? What difference does passion make to our students anyway? What contribution does it make to preparing graduates to make a good living in the 21st century? And what can we do to create curricula and class activities that infuse students with a passion for their studies? The project investigates the role of passion in teaching, what inspires and sustains it, how it is demonstrated in interactions with students, and what impact it makes.

An update of this project can be found on page 10.

The Employment of History Graduates

David Nicholls is revising, in light of the current climate, his HEA publication *"The Employment of History Graduates"* to include up-to-date information and examples to inspire our community and prospective students asking the question - "What's the Use of History?"

HISTORY GRADUATES WITH IMPACT

The Assessment of Work Place Learning in UK Undergraduate History Programmes

Although there is a vast literature on work-based learning, there is comparatively little written on the assessment of this form of learning. This project aims to address this omission and offer examples of best practice to support the central importance of assessment to teaching and learning. Initial findings from the academic survey can already be found on the website.

Adding Value: Improving the Numerical Skills of History Undergraduates

This project details the key findings of a three-year investigation into the teaching of numerical skills in history programmes at a time when the decline in numerical competency amongst undergraduates is of major concern.

As this project has now reached its background, conclusions, highlights and full report are already available on our website. Further work will be carried out in the spring to create a portal of resources, providing examples of support and best practice for use across the subject community.

The screenshot shows a website page with a navigation menu on the left containing 'Home' and 'Adding Value'. The main content area features a header 'Adding Value: Improving Numerical Skills' and a large text block that reads: 'THE DECLINE IN NUMERICAL COMPETENCY AMONGST UNDERGRADUATES IS OF MAJOR CONCERN. **EVERY STUDENT COUNTS: PROMOTING NUMERACY AND ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY** IS AN NTFS-FUNDED PROJECT (2007-2010) WHICH HAS INVESTIGATED THE CURRICULA REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT NECESSARY TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' NUMERICAL SKILLS WITHIN UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. DETAILS OF THE HISTORY STRAND OF THE PROJECT ARE PRESENTED HERE. THEY PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON HOW HISTORY STUDENTS MIGHT DEVELOP AND PRACTISE THEIR NUMERACY SKILLS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THEIR STUDIES, ENHANCE THEIR EMPLOYABILITY PROSPECTS AND COPE IN THEIR EVERYDAY LIVES.' To the right of this text is an image of a woman pointing at a flowchart. Below the image is a call to action: 'THE FINAL PROJECT REPORT (HISTORY STRAND) IS AVAILABLE HERE IN FULL: OR SEE BELOW FOR KEY SECTIONS.' On the far right, a sidebar contains the text: 'Find out more about teaching and learning resources on a variety of topics by visiting the main History Subject Centre website.' Below this is the logo for 'The Higher Education Academy History' and the text: 'The eLibrary and Theme Browser facilities have been designed to help your search.' At the bottom of the page, there are four buttons: 'Background to the Project', 'Aims: the History strand', 'Final Report: Executive summary', and 'Recommendations for numeracy provision'. The footer includes 'Signed in as Lisa Lavender (hyask) Sign out' and 'Powered by Sitebuilder © MMX Privacy Accessibility'.



Employability in the History Curriculum

We follow the transformation of a community history module into a broader 'Employability-focused' module: combining WBL, placement within the history/heritage sector, and career management skills.

As an interesting counterpart to the History Passion Project, the new module intends to include talks by academics, private and public sector specialists on how they reached their positions. What are the differences between their academic history degrees and their work in history? How did their degree prepare them for the work, and what are the current issues in their field?

The Hull History Partnership Scheme

will work to enhance the provision of History education in the city of Hull, in schools and higher education.

It aims to show how the History community can work together to recession-proof History graduates and aid in the revitalisation of recession-struck inner city communities. The project has received Subject Centre funding for the development and embedding of an 'Applied History: Work and Community' module.

Work in all the different strands will be completed by June/July 2011. Highlights of developments and findings will be summarised in our summer newsletter, with a comprehensive hard-copy and online publication planned for July. We hope that individual academics and departments will find this work of value in future planning considerations: the Subject Centre will make hard copies freely available to order.

Please visit the **History Graduates with Impact** website for further details and to review progress during 2011.

Graduates
History
with Impact

HISTORY PASSION PROJECT

FANTASTIC RESPONSE TO SURVEY ON TEACHING HISTORY IN HIGHER EDUCATION!

Over 10% of historians in UK history departments completed the survey, more than 40 Professors, 50 Lecturers, 50 Senior Lecturers and a mixture of Readers, Deans and Heads of Department. Responses came from 72 institutions, smaller and larger universities, new and old, the Open University, post-1992 and Russell Group institutions, and from all over the UK (including Dr. Billy Kenefick, the Dundee University winner of the prize draw, who donated his £100 to Farm-Africa www.farmafrica.org.uk). Historians everywhere wrote about what they like about teaching history, what motivates and inspires them, what they think students get from history teaching at its best. They also offered lots of great advice about teaching the subject.



The survey forms part of the 'History Passion Project' which addresses a little explored dimension of historical practice. Relatively little has been written about historians as teachers and learners, and still less about what they think about this role, and what drives them as educators in higher education. How do they engage others in the excitement and discovery that is at the heart of their love of the subject? What helps sustain their creativity and commitment amidst shifting and challenging conditions? How does history teaching at its best help prepare graduates for living well in the 21st century?

HISTORY teaching with passion

We are currently working our way through over 200 responses and are conducting follow-up interviews early in 2011. The project is also taking the opportunity to ask some international historians similar questions and the films from those interviews will be available online. In the meantime, here are some tasters...

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT TEACHING HISTORY?

"It's the most fascinating subject in the curriculum and the way to make sense of ourselves and where we come from. It gives a person perspective and humility about human potential and allows us to escape the curse of presentism and narcissistic self-regard". Watch what David Pace, Professor of History at Indiana University, said in answer to the same question <http://www.vimeo.com/17606410>

WHAT DO STUDENTS GET FROM HISTORY TEACHING AT ITS BEST?

"Students of history learn how to ask questions. We live in a world of information overload, but the student trained in historical analysis can engage critically with that information - whilst also bringing invaluable historical context to many issues." Watch David answer <http://www.vimeo.com/17606594>

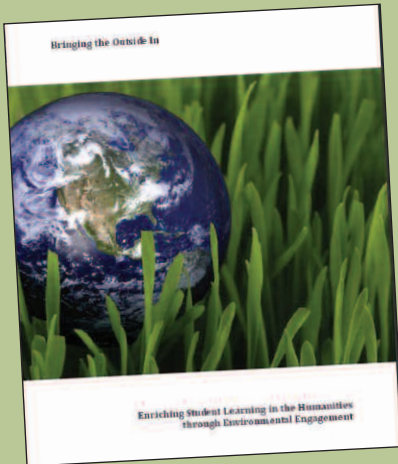
The findings will be presented at the 13th Annual Teaching and Learning in History Conference in April 2011 and there will be an opportunity to discuss issues arising from it with a distinguished panel. More information on the conference can be found at

www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/annualconference2011

If you haven't done so already, you can still join in and complete the survey at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/teachinghistory2010>

NEW PUBLICATIONS

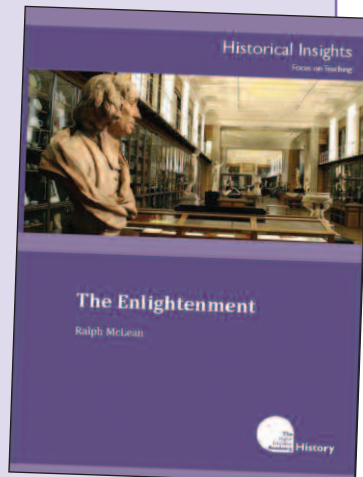


Bringing the Outside In

As part of our 2010 Education for Sustainable Development programme, the History and English Subject Centres launched two initiatives to encourage students and lecturers to engage with the environment beyond the classroom. We wanted to motivate staff and students whose teaching and learning takes place primarily indoors to go out and experience the places that form the context for the subject of study in order to enrich both academic learning and environmental awareness. To this end, we asked students and lecturers from throughout the UK to submit case studies describing how off-campus field-trips and visits enhanced their learning and increased their environmental awareness. We hope these case studies will inspire others to explore learning opportunities beyond the university classroom.

The Enlightenment

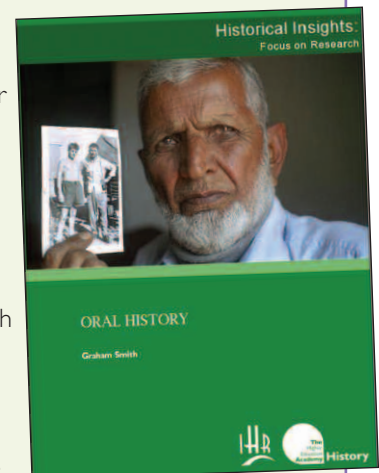
If the Enlightenment has a motto, then it must surely be Immanuel Kant's imperative, 'Dare to know!' But what was it that Kant dared mankind to know? The answer, it appeared, was everything. As one of the greatest intellectual awakenings in Western history, the Enlightenment offered new perspectives upon such diverse topics as: political theory; economics; science and medicine; philosophy; education; literature; and history. It also sought to provide answers to questions about the development and progress of human nature. Indeed, it was hoped that all this accumulated knowledge, spread over a multitude of disciplines, would ultimately improve the lives of mankind and provide practical results that would serve in the general progress of humanity. This guide provides an overview of the most popular topics covered under the theme of "The Enlightenment", including extensive bibliographies.



Oral History

There are very few studies of using oral history in higher education. Partly this is a result of professional historians' past ambivalence towards oral history; ambivalence conceived by the coupling of a fixation with the written document and a misunderstanding of what oral history is about. This guide seeks to address some of this by suggesting how modern approaches to oral history, that are complex and challenging, could be used to contribute towards the broader aim of teaching history.

The first part of this guide is intended for use by a broad spectrum of students in higher education. It is also intended as a way of introducing oral history without tutors having to commit to the relatively resource hungry demands of students undertaking oral history interviews. There are activities described here that are suitable for first and second year undergraduates, as well as additional activities suitable for final year undergraduate study and postgraduates.



For these and other publications, please visit the History Subject Centre website

NEWS FROM THE NETWORKS

History Networks

History is a large discipline with a presence in most higher education institutions, and many further education colleges. In order to best support history educators throughout UK, and to supplement our national activities, History at the HEA supports the development of regional and other history networks. If you would like advice on establishing a history network, please [click here](#).

National Networks

Regional & Themed Networks

Postgraduate & Early Career Networks

Encouraging Networks beyond the Regional Framework

The Subject Centre continues to support the important role played by local, regional events in enabling discipline colleagues to share innovation and best practice. In addition, there has been growing demand to support smaller, but growing areas within history teaching. The new network of teachers of North American History met in the summer and is currently planning a follow-up event for 2011: further details from this initial event can be found below.

Jeremy Taylor (lecturer in Chinese Studies, University of Sheffield), is also seeking to establish a network of people who teach Chinese history (any period, both undergraduate and postgraduate) in the UK – be that in a history, Asian studies or any other department – and for people at any stage of their careers. It is hoped that the network will eventually lead to a series of regular (probably annual) meetings of an informal nature, covering issues such as access to resources. Jeremy also plans to set up a website to support the network in the near future.

If you are interested in participating in this network, please email Jeremy.taylor@sheffield.ac.uk with your institutional affiliation.

Teaching North American History Network

The first meeting of a new network of teachers of North American History took place at Manchester Metropolitan University on 24th June 2010. This event came out of a need expressed by academics to develop and share an understanding of their subject area and to discuss and share best practice amongst colleagues. The workshop sessions included discussing general concerns faced by Americanists, the issues and opportunities faced by postgraduate students in their transition to teachers and on the difficulties of finding primary sources relevant to Americanists. A full report on the session can be found in the History Subject Centre eLibrary – www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/elibrary

The next meeting of the Teaching North American History Network is planned for 18th March 2011 at Keele University. Sessions will look at broad themes such as pod casting, engaging the public in American history and trans-atlantic perspectives on teaching American history. A finalised programme will be available shortly on www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/events/namerican_workshop

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What do these two networks have in common?

They aim to provide a valuable forum for academics who may be teaching on a topic in isolation, or within a very small group within their department. The networks can provide opportunities for collaboration, exploring resources and discussing teaching methods for subjects that do not have a well-established resource-base within many universities. Please contact the relevant network organisers, or take a look at the 'Network' pages on the History Subject Centre website:

<http://www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/getinvolved/networks/>

News from established networks: a Midlands event.

'Preach what You Practise' Workshop held on 14th September at the University of Birmingham.

The title of this workshop was a thoughtful call to share effective teaching practices with colleagues across the Midlands, and a range of institutions were indeed represented amongst both speakers and delegates. September is a busy month in preparing for the new academic year, but one delegate noted, *"I really enjoyed yesterday. We have enrolment week next week, so lots to do, so was in two minds as to whether attending was the best use of my time during a rather frantic period. However, I found it inspiring and now feel fully reinvigorated for the new year ahead."*

Carl Chinn opened the workshop with a very enjoyable talk on understanding your locality and personal history. The importance of using technology and resource effectively were discussed in talks about the HumBox resource website (www.humbox.ac.uk) and the experience at Loughborough of setting up a new history department. Chris Szejnmann stressed that using technology in teaching should not mean that the pedagogy of teaching and learning comes second to technical capabilities. The focus was very firmly on students in the remaining presentations. Richard Hawkins and Harvey Woolf gave details about their investigation into the assessment of workplace learning: an area of growing interest in the present climate. Jolene Debert provided a taster of her student-led teaching techniques (in which the students get to choose the detail and direction of a lecture), and Marcus Collins concluded with a discussion on historiography in schools and HE.

The full event report and powerpoint presentations from the event can be found in our eLibrary -

<http://www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/eLibrary/>

Thank you to the Midlands Network of Historians convenor, Richard Hawkins (Wolverhampton), and Bill Miller and Marios Hadjianastasis from the University of Birmingham for organising the event.

Details of the next Midlands event can be found on p.14



The Northwest Network of Historians Modern British History Seminar plans to organise an event for Postgraduate Students after Easter.

Contact: max.jones@manchester.ac.uk

UPCOMING EVENTS:

What Do History Students Want?

Boosting Undergraduate Recruitment, Engagement and Achievement

HEA History Subject Centre
Midlands Network Workshop,
Loughborough University, 3 June 2011



The doubling of tuition fees and marketisation of higher education threaten to pit history programmes against each other in competition for students. Yet historians have a common interest in identifying ways to attract, retain, train and inspire a sustainable number of high-quality undergraduates. We can't afford our subject to be seen as offering low contact hours, uninspiring courses and few readily identifiable career paths. This HEA History Subject Centre Midlands Network workshop will accordingly address the following questions:

- How are history programmes responding to the post-Browne Report era, and what might they look like in five years' time?
- How do we design history degrees that are attractive to prospective students and enriching to current ones?
- What sorts of teaching – and how much of it – will history students expect in return for high tuition fees?
 - How can we help history students to succeed at university and to find good jobs afterwards?
- Is there a fit between what students want from a history degree and what we think they need?

Please join us and share your experiences and ideas at the last History Subject Centre Midlands Network workshop, to be hosted by the History Programme at Loughborough University from 10.00 to 3.30 on Friday 3 June 2011. Proposals of 200 to 500 words for papers or panels should be emailed to Dr Marcus Collins (marcus.collins@lboro.ac.uk)

no later than Friday 1 April. The workshop is free and open to all. You can reserve your place on the HEA History Subject Centre website:

<http://www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/events>

Teachers of North American History Workshop

DATE: Friday 18th March, 2011



The History Subject Centre Presents:

VENUE:

Claus Moser Building,
Keele University, Keele,
Staffordshire, ST5 5BG

TO BOOK A PLACE:

Visit us online at
www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/events/

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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or Laura Sandy:
l.r.sandy@ams.keele.ac.uk

or visit the History Subject Centre website at:
www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk

SESSIONS TO INCLUDE:

- **Adventures in Pod Casting (Gervase Philips)**
- **Public History and the Americanist (Sam Edwards)**
- **Trans-Atlantic Perspectives on Teaching American History in Higher Education (David Gleeson)**
- **Roundtable Discussion**

Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

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CONFIRMED EVENTS:

- 18th February** – External Examining in the Humanities
University of Sheffield
- 23rd February** – Teaching as a Postgraduate Researcher: London
Institute of Historical Research, London
- 14th March** – Teaching as a Postgraduate Researcher: Northeast
Newcastle University
- 18th March** – Teaching North American History Network Workshop
Keele University
- 4th to 5th April** – 13th Annual Teaching and Learning in History Conference
Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford
- 27th May** – Teaching as an Early Career Historian
University of Loughborough
- 3rd June** – What do History Students Want?
University of Loughborough

■ Further information on all our events can be found on our website at: www.historysubjectcentre.ac.uk/events

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