



2016: Media in the First World War

Fully-funded AHRC PhD studentship

Applications are invited for an AHRC-funded PhD working on Media and the First World War. This studentship is one of eight fully-funded awards made by the newly-established Collaborative Doctoral Partnership managed by the Science Museum Group. The project will be supervised by Professors Jo Fox and Jonathan Long (Durham University) and Colin Harding and Michael Terwey (National Media Museum). The studentship, which is funded for three years full-time equivalent, will begin in September 2013.

The Studentship

This project will explore the ways in which the contemporary British experience of the First World War was shaped by the visual media and material culture. Britons on the home front learned about the significant events of the War through newspaper reporting and photography, through newsreels and film, through art and through gossip, and indeed through the many material manifestations of the conflict that circulated in contemporary British society. Yet despite its highly mediated nature, contemporary Britons' understanding of the war was radically different from how the conflict would be represented by later historians. Historians have tended to focus on the standard media, often focusing on the construction of master propaganda narratives from 'above'. This project seeks to re-cast the history of public engagement with the conflict by addressing the following questions:

- What media were dominant in shaping the public's consciousness of the conduct and progress of the war, and how did these media interact at a grass-roots level?
- How were 'standard' media representations of the war projected, and how did they correlate with non-standard representations, such as those found in material culture or in cultural artefacts produced 'from below'?
- How were these representations experienced and consumed by the public?
- What counter-discourses were in circulation (e.g. gossip and rumour)? How did they circulate? And to what extent and to what purpose were they propagated by the media?
- How does the understanding of the War by Britons on the home front compare with 21st-century public understanding of these events?

The originality of this project lies in the fact that its focus is not on propaganda from above through Crewe House or the Ministry of Information formed in 1917, nor on the battlefield experience as it was subsequently represented by autobiographers, novelists, poets and historians, nor on the political/ military history of the conflict (all of which have been well-served in existing scholarship), but on the social, cultural and material history of everyday media, produced by the people, for the people, and its reception and circulation in wartime Britain. The project will draw extensively on the world class collections National Media Museum, home to the National Photography collection. In particular the Royal Photographic Society Collection, the Horace Nicholls collection, the Charles Urban archive and the Daily Herald Archive are relevant to this project.

How to Apply

Applicants should have a good undergraduate degree and a master's qualification in history, visual culture, or other relevant discipline, and will need to satisfy AHRC academic and residency eligibility criteria.

Applicants should submit a short curriculum vitae and a brief letter outlining qualifications for the studentship in the form of a single Word file no more than three pages in total. The names and contact details of two academic referees should also be supplied. Applications should be sent to June Hedley (june.hedley@dur.ac.uk) no later than **12 June 2013**.

Interviews are scheduled to be held in the National Media Museum, Bradford, on the 19th or 20th June

For further information concerning the project, please contact
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