

## PhD Studentship in 18th Century Chapbooks

PhD studentship opportunity available now in the School of Historical Studies

**National Identity, Popular Culture, and Eighteenth-Century Chapbooks**

### Start/duration dates

Start 1st October 2010 or as soon as possible thereafter; studentship duration 3 years (full time)

### Location

School of Historical Studies, University of Leicester, UK.

### Funding

The studentship covers fees only at the home/EU rate. International students are encouraged to apply but will have to find their own resources to cover the difference in fees between the HEU and International rates. The successful applicant will be guaranteed teaching in the School of Historical Studies for which a fee is paid. They will also be encouraged to be able to apply for funds to cover research expenses from external sources, for example, the Bibliographical Society or the Economic History Society.

### Supervisors

Professor Roey Sweet (School of Historical Studies) and Dr Kate Loveman (School of English)

**Project title: National identity, popular culture and eighteenth-century chapbooks.**

The final title of the arising PhD thesis will be decided by the student.

### Project Summary

This studentship offers an exciting opportunity for research in eighteenth-century cultural history through an analysis of eighteenth-century chapbooks. Chapbooks were small, cheap publications aimed at a popular market, sold by booksellers but also distributed by chapmen and pedlars. They were generally printed on poor paper, often with old type and woodblocks, cost 6d or less and were highly ephemeral. Their survival rate is low, but they were consumed by a far broader section of the population than other more expensive forms of print culture in this period. Their subject was wide-ranging, including ballads, city cries, dreadful, fables, fairy tales, garlands, nursery rhymes and primers and abridgements of novels and works of history or natural history. Their purpose could be moralising, entertainment, didactic or a combination. Chapbooks have already been used by historians such as Tessa Watt and Margaret Spufford in studies of seventeenth-century popular culture, and in particular, popular religious belief, but they have been largely neglected as a genre by historians of eighteenth-century culture. This PhD will build upon an interdisciplinary pilot project on chapbooks undertaken in 2009, funded by the Bibliographical Society, led by Prof Roey Sweet (Historical Studies), Dr Kate Loveman (English) and Dr John Hinks (Historical Studies). The PhD will investigate the ways in which chapbooks articulated a sense of national identity (for example, through recounting historical narratives, or the celebration of national achievements) or reflected themes such as naval or maritime traditions which have already been strongly identified with the expression of eighteenth-century national identity. This research will make an important contribution to the study of national identities in the eighteenth century and, more broadly, the extent of mediation between elite and popular culture during this period.

Supervision will be carried out by Prof Roey Sweet (Historical Studies) and with Dr Kate Loveman (English) as the second supervisor. Dr Hinks, who is an honorary fellow with the School of Historical Studies, has generously agreed to offer advice and share his expertise with the student.

### **Further Information**

School of Historical Studies <http://www.le.ac.uk/hi/>

School of English <http://www.le.ac.uk/ee/>

### **Eligibility**

To be appointed candidates will be expected to have a good (2:1 or better) undergraduate degree in a relevant subject and a Master's-level (or equivalent) training. Any other qualifications will be discussed with prospective applicants. Experience/knowledge of research in one or more of the following areas will be beneficial:

- ▶ 18<sup>th</sup> century British social, cultural or economic history
- ▶ History of the Book

### **Appointment**

The closing date for applications is 29 January 2010. Interviews will be held in late February 2010. For further details or to apply for this position please contact the Principal Supervisor directly:

Professor Roey Sweet School of Historical Studies, University of Leicester

Email: [rhs4@le.ac.uk](mailto:rhs4@le.ac.uk) Telephone: 0116 252 2592/2837

All applicants will be asked to apply on-line using the standard University of Leicester postgraduate application form. To start your application go to:

<http://www.le.ac.uk/pgprospectus/courses/research/historicalstudies/research.html>

Instructions for online applicants are at: <http://www.le.ac.uk/pgprospectus/pgapplying.html>

References from two academic referees will be required, one of which should have experience of your work at Masters level. Candidates invited to interview will be asked to provide an example of their written work.

### **Further Information on the School of Historical Studies**

The School was established in 2003 as an amalgamation of the former departments of History and Economic & Social History. The School is rated excellent for teaching by TQA and in RAE 2008 50% of its output was judged at 4\* and 3\* standard. It is one of the largest and most diverse Schools of Historical Studies in the United Kingdom with 33 members of academic staff and several members of research staff. It teaches more than 1000 undergraduate students and has a thriving postgraduate and research community based in the Marc Fitch Historical Institute in Salisbury Road, about 10 minutes walk from the University's main campus.

The following research centres are based in the School: the Centre for Urban History, the Centre for English Local History and the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust Studies. Each Centre has a Director who administers and reports on its research programme which typically includes research seminars, symposia, conferences and externally-funded projects. In addition there are School seminars and the postgraduate-run New History Lab, so that in a typical session the School runs approximately six seminar series. Inter-disciplinary research is encouraged through the Centre for American Studies, the Medieval Research Centre and the Victorian Studies Centre.

Further details about the School, including its teaching and research, can be found at <http://www.le.ac.uk/hi/>.