Legacies & *futures*

The History Workshop and Radical Education

The recent opening up of the History Workshop archive at Ruskin College – in addition to the Raphael Samuel Archive at the Bishopsgate Institute – provides new opportunities for thinking about History.

The History Workshops held in the 1960s, 70s and 80s provided particular opportunities for wide-ranging discussions of History and its application in the present. The History Workshop Movement was seen as a radical movement dedicated to political change and new ways of thinking about the past and present.

While discussion of the past in the public domain has arguably opened up extensively, History in schools, colleges, universities and adult education is circumscribed by different constraints to those of the early years of the History Workshop.

What are the possibilities now of practising radical history-making? Is democratic scholarship viable – and what forms can it take? What new forms of engagement are possible? What have we learned and what should be left in the past? What different roles might History have in local and community activism?

This one day conference is not intended to be a nostalgic event but to provide an opportunity to think about and discuss visions and practical examples now.

Sponsored by

ruskincollege
learning to make a difference

Plenary Presenters

Dr Anna Davin, *History Workshop Journal*

'History projects and historians : problems and possibilities'

This paper compares two projects: the successful *History Workshop Journal* and the unsuccessful 'Festival of London History', for which extensive and ambitious plans were developed in the early 1980s, but which failed with the sinking of the Greater London Council. These two projects represent different aspects and outcomes of the History Workshop movement which began at Ruskin in the late 1960s and flourished in the 1970s and '80s and raise larger questions about the historian's practice, what they produce and for whom, and the possibilities and problems of funding ambitious historical projects.

Jorma Kalela, Professor (emeritus), University of Turku, Finland.

'The Role of Historians in Breaking the Present Impasse of Western Democracies'

The core of the present impasse of Western democracies is that the realities and discourses of citizens on one hand and of politicians on the other do not overlap. What is pondered in the paper are two possibilities for the historian to make a positive contribution with the concept of shared histories as a starting point. One would be to identify the existing collectives of people whose voice is not heard at the civic forum and the other to suggest ideas for approaches and objectives to be followed.

Marjorie Mayo, Professor of Community Development & Head of the Centre for Lifelong Learning and Community Engagement Goldsmiths ,College, University of London

'Contested histories of radical adult education'

Critics have described the WEA as 'supporting the existing economic and social system in the 'guise' of neutral education', while the National Council's of Labour Colleges approach during the inter-war period has been described as 'mere class-war propaganda and not education at all'. So what might be the relevance of this debate in the context of current approaches to 'Popular Education', 'Lifelong Learning' and marketisation globally?

Ken Jones, Professor of Education, Keele University

'Mobilising histories'

This paper explores current European conflicts about education policy in relation to schools and universities, and discusses the ways in which those who oppose current policy orthodoxy call upon particular versions of the national past in an effort to mobilise broad support for their protests.

Legacies & *futures*

Workshop Presenters

Maggie Andrews	Strange or Incompatible Bedfellows? - Feminism and Popular History
Catherine Bowness	A pleasure seeker, the voiceless and old Boney; public awareness of a national crisis.
Julia Bush	Practical Presentation from Northamptonshire Black History Association
Anthony Buxton	Another country? Educational perspectives on engagement with 'heritage'
John Carman	Archaeology as a creator of radical pasts
Nigel Carter	George Padmore - Pan African Legacies and Futures - the role of Black Publishing in radical history-making
Angela Davis	Women and work in post-war Britain, continuity and change
Stefan Dickers	Exhibition, plus paper on delights and pitfalls of looking after Raphael's archive.
David Douglass	A reading from 'The wheel's still in spin'
Andrew Flinn & Mary Stevens	History workshops: producing community histories in the 21st century
Kynan Gentry	Putting history in its place: historic sites and public history
Hilda Kean	People, historians and public history. Who are the historians? Who are the people?
Jane Martin	Petticoat Government: women and the making of London education, 1870-1990
Paul Martin	They Couldn't Stop The Beat: 1960s popular music research as radical history making – a global perspective
Steve Mills	History from the Bottom Up in a Digitalised Age
Kevin Myers & Ian Grosvenor	Birmingham Stories: from communities of interpretation to communities of understanding
Jon Newman	'Revisiting Archive Collections': democratising the archive.
Joseph Reeves and Herdis Holleland	Creative histories: Public subversion of an archaeological investigation
Vivienne Richmond & Imogen Lee	Democratising History with Tomorrow's Democrats: Integrating academic and public history online.
Daniel Scharf	Indifference to Cold War memory
Lorraine Sitzia	QueenSpark Books: A practical example of radical history-making in the community

Legacies & futures

The Day in Brief

Time	Session
9:00am	Registration
9:30am	Plenary morning session: 'Histories and Historians', Anna Davin and Jorma Kalela.
10:45am	Morning coffee
11:15am	Morning Workshops
12:45pm	Vegetarian Lunch
1:45pm	Plenary afternoon session: 'Mobilising Histories and Contesting Practice', Marjorie Mayo and Ken Jones.
3:00pm	Afternoon tea
3:30pm	Afternoon Workshops
5:00pm	Round table and concluding comments
5:30pm	Drinks

NB: Streams are 1 hour 30 mins in length. Individual papers are to be **c. 20 mins** in length, with remaining time left for questions and discussion at the end of all three papers.

Legacies & futures