



Images from the University of Nottingham's Manuscripts and Special Collections.

The Robin Hood Studies Pathway

V104 - MA in History and V105 - MA in History (Research)

This new and exciting multi-disciplinary pathway provides an opportunity for in-depth exploration of the origins and development of one of England's most enduring legendary figures. The pathway offers an opportunity to:

- ❖ Examine the later medieval Robin Hood tales and ballads by attending to the historical and literary contexts in which they were created.
- ❖ Gain a thorough understanding of the late medieval society and culture in which the stories of Robin Hood became popular.
- ❖ Choose from a truly unique selection of optional modules that address wider, multi-disciplinary, issues connected to the Robin Hood tradition and its contemporary resonances.
- ❖ Conduct original research in this subject by working with medieval documents relating to the Sherwood Forest region housed in the University's Manuscripts and Special Collections Department.
- ❖ Be part of a vibrant research culture in Medieval Studies and a lively international community of researchers centred upon the Nottingham Institute for Medieval Studies.

Compulsory Modules

The pathway has some compulsory elements:

The Robin Hood Tradition: Evidence and Interpretation

The pathway core module will introduce you to the earliest stories of Robin

Hood and provide you with a critical understanding of the late medieval Robin Hood tradition in terms of its social and cultural contexts in late medieval England. It explores a number of themes including notions of authority and the correct ordering of society; crime, violence and the law; morality and religiosity and the physical setting of the Robin Hood stories. The module will go some way towards examining the later development of the Robin Hood tradition from the late sixteenth century to the present day in a variety of popular cultural forms, including film and television, and to critically assess how this shapes understanding of the medieval legend.

Theory and Evidence in History

The purpose of this module is to consider the connections between theory and evidence in the humanities and social sciences. As such the content cuts across disciplinary and chronological divides in order to analyse the commonalities and differences in the way historians think about their work. The specific topics discussed differ each year but in each seminar students consider a particular methodological or philosophical problem and some documents relating to it.

Research Skills for Historians

The module is designed to give students experience of the initial phase of research for a major research project, in this instance a post-graduate dissertation. The content mirrors the process which historians go through in planning research including the discussion of ideas with colleagues, a survey of the extant primary material, the construction of an extensive bibliography of the secondary literature and the preparation of a detailed proposal.

Dissertation

You will be able to choose an aspect of the Robin Hood tradition or related topic in which you are particularly interested and conduct an extended research project under the supervision of a member of staff.



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Optional Modules

In addition to the compulsory elements you will also be able to choose from a range of options. Typical current examples offered by the Schools of History, English Studies, Business, Politics and International Relations and in Film and Television Studies include:

Greenwood: Life in the Medieval Forest

The module explores life within medieval forest environments in the later Middle Ages. It studies the specialised society and economy found in English royal forests and woodland regions between c.1100 and c.1600. It has a strong inter-disciplinary element and will consider recent archaeological and geographical, as well as historical, scholarship on forests. It will cover topics such as: forest law, hunting, woodland settlement and peasant life and agriculture.

Rebels, Dissenters and Outsiders: the Limits of Society in Late Medieval England

The module explores those who put themselves outside the normal bounds of society or who were excluded from the social body in later medieval England, such as outlaws, vagrants, heretics, the poor and the sick and rebels. It examines the ways in which social exclusion and re-inclusion were instrumental in shaping and maintaining conceptions of late medieval society and helped to bolster identity and status.

Service and Identity: the Late Medieval English Gentry

The module considers the role of the gentry in late medieval English politics and society, c.1200-1500. It will examine the gentry's activities in 'national' endeavours, such as politics and warfare and their key role in the government - or misgovernment - of the shires, with particular focus on late medieval Nottinghamshire.

Muslims and Christians in the Medieval Mediterranean

The module covers topics ranging chronologically from the Mediterranean during Islamic expansion in the Seventh Century AD to the surrender of St. Louis to the Mameluks in Egypt in 1250 AD. It will cover topics such as: The Mediterranean World, Christian-Muslim contacts in context, the Crusades, cultural contacts and their legacies and identity and legitimacy.

English Literature 1360-1500

The module offers an opportunity to read and analyse a broad range of late medieval texts. Particular emphasis is laid on the romance and dream-vision genres; on writing by and for women; and on responses of fifteenth-century writers to the work of Chaucer.

Middle English Texts I & II

These modules offer the opportunity to read closely a range of texts from the Middle English period, to attend to wider interpretations and a study of critical approaches to the texts and to edit a short Middle English text. In order to do this you will study the practice of other editors, including the use of electronic media.

Low Intensity Operations and Covert Action

This module is located in the realm of strategic studies and critically examines modern doctrines of low intensity operations in the context of modern conflict and civil-military relations. It analyses the growing importance of irregular warfare and its transformation from mere guerrilla activity into a sophisticated politico-military phenomenon.

Media Memories

This module explores the relationship between memory and cinematic media, considering how film impacts on the experience and meaning of the past in cultural life. Concentrating on Hollywood cinema from the studio era to the present, the module will examine film/memory as it relates to questions of history, politics, technology and genre.

Staff Publications

The pathway is taught by specialists in a number of fields whose research is focused either on the late medieval period or on areas of relevance to the later development of the Robin Hood tradition and its contemporary interpretation.

Recent staff publications in medieval history:

Balzaretti, R., Tyler, E., (eds), *Narrative and History in the Early Medieval West* (2006)

Barrow, J. S., Brooks, N. P. (eds), *St Wulfstan and his World* (Aldershot, 2005)

Dodd, G., *Justice and Grace: Private Petitioning and the English Parliament in the Late Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2007)

Goddard, R., *Lordship and medieval urbanisation: Coventry, 1043-1355* (Woodbridge, 2004)

Lutton, R. *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England: Reconstructing Piety* (Woodbridge, 2006)

Taylor, C. K., *Dualist Heresy in Aquitaine and the Agenais, c.1000 to c.1250* (Woodbridge, 2005)

Funding

As with all our pathways we are eager to cooperate with applications for funding to the AHRC Research Preparation Masters Scheme. You may also apply for our two half fee-waivers. Please contact Amanda Samuels.