

## Report - Voice of Humanities 2010

The annual Voice of Humanities conference gives MPhil and PhD students an opportunity to present their work to other students across the humanities disciplines. This year's conference was certainly a great success, attracting a record number of applicants and a fantastic range of presentations.

Open to all Humanities researchers, the conference was organised with the primary aim of enabling students to develop skills key to succeeding in academic life and beyond. Whether presenting a paper or a poster - or even just attending to add to the wide-ranging discussion - the day was an excellent chance for everyone to gain valuable experience. In addition, in drawing together students from a range of schools and other institutions, the conference offered the opportunity to meet fellow students and share research and experiences.

The importance of gaining experience in presenting your work was reiterated by the conference's keynote speaker, Cardiff School of History & Archaeology Lecturer, Dr Toby Thacker. In his keynote address, 'Talking about the Great Demagogue: Joseph Goebbels', Dr Thacker also spoke of his own experiences, good and bad, and offered some handy advice to presenters.



Throughout the day the standard of talks and posters was excellent. All of the presentations demonstrated how it is possible to communicate research to non-specialists in an engaging way. Any number of presentations could have won the prizes awarded for Best Poster and Best Spoken Presentation. With an emphasis on accessibility to a broad and non-specialist audience, the judges were looking at both the methods of presentation, whether spoken or visual, as well as the content presented. After much deliberation, the prizes were duly awarded to, Cardiff University School of European Studies student, Iain Mossman for his poster 'Culpable Victims? Collective Memory of the French Conscripts of the Algerian War' and, Swansea University student, Simon Eckstein for his paper 'Fantasy Literature and Modernism: Responses to Modernity and Trauma.'

Speaking to the winners after the conference both commented on how successful the day had been. Iain Mossman, who also gave a talk during the day, said that the conference was a "very useful opportunity to present research and meet post graduate students from other

schools and universities”. Simon Eckstein concurred, adding that the conference really showed “the benefits of an interdisciplinary approach to research”.



Indeed, if there was one thing that stood out during the conference it was the importance of making research accessible to a wide range of people. Whilst it is undoubtedly useful in itself, clarity and accessibility in writing evidently opens up the possibility for collaboration and inter-disciplinary research. The range of subjects presented on and the discussions that these provoked clearly demonstrated this. The conference steering committee is sure this lively questioning and cross-disciplinary debate will lead to some exciting work in the future.

**The Voice of Humanities is organised by a panel of Cardiff University’s students with the support of the University Graduate College. If you would like to be on the Voice of Humanities 2011 organising committee or would like to inquire about presenting at a future conference, please email [VoiceofHumanities@cf.ac.uk](mailto:VoiceofHumanities@cf.ac.uk)**