

Oxford Centre for Early Modern Studies Year in Review: 2017-18



Oxford is home to the largest concentration of early modern scholars in the world. Working not only across different departments—including History, Philosophy, Music, English, French, Italian, Spanish, and German—but also at different colleges, researchers are spatially and organisationally dispersed, which can make it difficult for interdisciplinary networks to form.

The goal of CEMS has been to contribute to the sense of an early modern community at Oxford by disseminating information about lectures, events, and opportunities organised by different disciplines, and from groups both within and beyond the University. By gathering a wide range of research activities in one place, we aim to provide a greater sense of interdisciplinary awareness and collaboration.

This report describes the communications work carried out by CEMS over the last year, encompassing our newsletters, online presence, and funding competition.

1.) Weekly CEMS newsletter

At least once per week, but often more frequently, the CEMS research coordinator sends an email timetabling research events, lectures, and seminars taking place in the following week.

Since September 2017, 38 'What's On' emails have been distributed, providing details of 195 papers given in 34 different seminar series. These events are often only advertised by individual faculties; the CEMS mailing list and website provide a way of seeing these events listed in one place. Recipients have praised the clear layout of the weekly timetables which have been compared favourably to faculty communications in terms of legibility and ease of use.

Week 4, Trinity 2018			
Monday 14	12 noon	Public Role of History Seminar Catherine Fletcher (Swansea University) 'trade publishing'	Roy Griffiths Room, Keble College
Tuesday 15	4.30-6pm	Seminar on Reproducibility and Open Research Prof Aileen Pye (University of St Andrews) 'Open Access in the Age of Print: Circulating the Royal Society's Publications, c. 1750-1950'	Wharton Room, All Souls College
"	5.00pm	The Hensley Henson Lectures 2018 Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch (University of Oxford) 'The Religion of Thomas Cromwell (2)'	Exam Schools

2.) Changes to the CEMS website

The latest incarnation of the CEMS [website](#), which was launched in the 2016/17 academic year, uses Oxford's new Mosaic content management system. Over the past year, some small additions and improvements to the site have been made, including making it possible to browse events both by week and by seminar series:

What's On This Week?

Trinity 2018

✚ Expand All

What's On in Week 6? (28 May - 1 June)

What's On in Week 5? (21 May - 25 May)

Seminar Programmes

Trinity 2018

✚ Expand All

Early Modern English Literature Seminar

Literature and History in Early Modern England Seminar

This has meant that the CEMS blog, which previously featured weekly round-ups along with other content such as interviews and features in an accordion format, now provides links to features hosted on individual pages. By having a separate URL for

each blog article, it is now possible to create permanent links to CEMS content, making it easier to share:

 <https://earlymodern.web.ox.ac.uk/article/introducing-professor-katherine-ibbett>

Another feature added to the site this year is the 'Notices' page, which advertises CFPs, jobs, and events that were initially distributed via the CEMS mailing list. The new page keeps these notices available online until they expire, providing external links or downloadable documents with additional details:

[Workshop]	'New perspective on sources: What can historians learn from bridging across time periods and regions?' Oxford History Faculty, 5 June 2018 cgisworkshop_1.docx 
[Event Invitation]	Early Modern Re-Formations King's College London, 11-12 June
[Job]	Stipendiary Lectureship in French St Catherine's College, Oxford (Closes 29 May)

A 'Recent Publications' page has also been added to the home screen. This page features a moving carousel of titles published in the past five years by scholars based in Oxford. Each jacket image is linked to its page on the publisher's website, allowing users to retrieve additional details about any title with ease:

Recent Publications



CEMS has also republished content related to Professor David Norbrook's ongoing edition of the works of Lucy Hutchinson. These pages—which were originally created for a previous incarnation of the CEMS website—have been reformatted to work with the new Mosaic platform, and once again make available Mark Burden's [John Owen](#):

[Learned Puritan](#), which provides a comprehensive bibliography of Owen's works and correspondence:

The Works of Lucy Hutchinson

Welcome to the website of the Lucy Hutchinson Project! On these pages you will find:

[Information about the 4-volume OUP edition of *The Works of Lucy Hutchinson*](#), with notes on the editors and contributors

[Notes on the Life of Lucy Hutchinson](#)

[A chronology of Lucy Hutchinson and her writings](#)

[A bibliography of Lucy Hutchinson](#)

[John Owen, *Learned Puritan*](#), a bibliography and introduction to a prolific Congregational writer who influenced Hutchinson's writing



3.) CEMS Funding Competition

The centre usually arranges its own interdisciplinary conference(s) during the summer—in 2017, CEMS organised both 'Mimesis on Trial' and 'Cultures of Collecting'. This year, the centre opted to use its conference funds to support CEMS members organising their own events, making available £1500 to early modernists hosting interdisciplinary research activities in Oxford.

Applications were judged by an independent panel, and the funds were allocated to three conferences taking place in the summer of 2018:

Literary Form After Matter, 1500-1700

22 June, The Queen's College

This one-day conference aims to address the topic of 'literary form' in light of the recent scholarly turn toward examining texts as material objects. Aiming to bring together scholars working at the (potentially fraught) interface of form and materiality, this conference will provide a platform for highly focussed 10-minute papers that draw together the methodologies and aims of both approaches, as well as work that attempts to identify the limits of each. The conference is organised by early career researchers Dr Katherine Hunt and Dr Dianne Mitchell (both Queen's), and will feature keynotes from Dr Sophie Butler (University of East Anglia) and Professor Adam Smyth (Balliol).

Digitizing Enlightenment III

19-20 July, Maison Francaise d'Oxford

The third instalment in this international conference series (the first two were held in Sydney and Nijmegen in 2016 and 2017) focusses on historical prosopography and network analysis of scientific, literary and artistic networks in western Europe from c.1600-1800. Taking a narrower focus than the first two events, this two-day conference will bring together researchers from across the world to identify and work

collaboratively on shared research problems relating to the digital study of early modern intellectual networks. The conference is co-ordinated by Professor Howard Hotson (St Anne's) and will bring together participants from a wide range of overlapping research organisations and Digital Humanities projects, including the Voltaire Foundation, the Newton Project, the Electronic Enlightenment, Cultures of Knowledge and EMLO.

[Beyond Truth: Fiction and \(Dis\)information in the Early Modern World](#)

17-18 September, New College

Taking its cue from the widespread concern that we are currently living in a 'post-truth' era, this two-day conference calls into question the idea that 'fake news' is a uniquely modern phenomenon precipitated by the rise of the internet. Instead, this event calls on speakers to explore the ways that improvements in transportation, postal services, and information networks also facilitated the spread of rumours, disinformation and falsehood in the early modern world. Organised by DPhil candidates in History at New College, Thomas Goodwin and Luca Zenobi, along with Dr Emma Claussen (Career Development Fellow and Tutor in French), the conference aims to bring together researchers working on both European and Non-European topics.

4.) CEMS Blog

This year, the blog has primarily functioned as a platform for showcasing the projects individual researchers associated with CEMS are working on, and as a way of introducing new members of staff in a more personal and detailed way than departmental bio pages typically afford.

Here are some of the highlights:

[Katherine Ibbett](#), Fellow and Tutor in French



"My mum taught English at a polytechnic, teaching students of all backgrounds and ages. She often came home sighing about cuts but as often laughing over things that had happened in seminars, and I'm probably an academic because of that early sense that amazing things happen when you gather very different people together to talk about books. I am very glad my first experience of HE was what's now called a post-92 – there was a political energy to it that was a lasting influence."

[Joe Moshenska](#), Associate Professor and Tutorial Fellow in English



"In my darker moments, when the Humanities feel beleaguered and constantly under pressure to fit into methods and values originating in the hard sciences or the corporate world, undertaking work aimed at a non-academic audience has been a welcome reminder to me that there are large numbers of non-specialists who care about the things that my colleagues, students and I tend to care about: art, poetry, history, words, ideas."

[Dianne Mitchell](#), Junior Research Fellow in English



"Over the last four years or so I've scoured archives across the US and Britain for artifacts I call "letter-poems": lyrics that bear signs of postal transmission. Letter-poems tell us that, in practice, contact between poets and their addressees was mediated by scribes and bearers, made communal by sharing with other friends, and distanced by the material conventions of transmission."

[Beatrice Montedoro](#), DPhil Candidate in English



"The aim of the digital project DEx: A Database of Dramatic Extracts is to help researchers to overcome these challenges by engaging the archives with digital tools, in order to open up the early modern theatre archive and make it more accessible and usable. DEx seeks to facilitate and promote the study of the role of dramatic extracts in theatre history, audience reception, early modern print and manuscript culture, and the history of reading, but it also hopes to appeal to researchers from across the full range of disciplines represented by CEMS."