

<b>Institution: University of Roehampton</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Panel D, UoA 30 History
<b>Title of case study:</b> John Tosh, Citizen Scholars and the Practical Application of History
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>This case study concerns the public understanding of history as a practical discipline. Through a series of high-profile research publications, popular articles, and textbooks, Professor John Tosh's research has had an impact in two distinct ways. Firstly, these publications have been incorporated into teaching and lecturing practice internationally, influencing students' understanding of the discipline. Secondly, they have had an impact on wider public understanding of history as a practical discipline. The <b>reach</b> and <b>significance</b> of this impact is demonstrated by publication sales and readership figures, high-profile critical reception, political debate and wider public discourse.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Professor John Tosh (2000 to date) has conducted research in two distinct areas that pursue the common theme of demonstrating the social relevance of history. Tosh's pioneering research on the history of masculinities in modern Britain has advocated the use of history as a critical resource for current debates about men, masculinity and the family. His historiographical research, on the other hand, has further explored the current scope of the discipline and its place in public discourse. More recently, this work examined the public role of historians and the practical application of history in broad contexts, which offers a critical perspective on informed citizenship. In both areas of research, Tosh has contended that history is a discipline that has a wide application and offers important perspectives on today's world.</p> <p>This advocacy of the social relevance of history is evident in <i>A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-class Home in Victorian England</i> (Yale University Press, 1999), and was developed further at the University of Roehampton and published in <i>Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Britain</i> (Pearson: Harlow, 2005). In particular chapter one of this publication illustrates the ways in which masculinity has been a changing social construct over time, and that as a consequence this process has practical implications in a contemporary context. In making the argument that the discipline of history should not be valued simply for the purpose of equipping students with 'transferrable skills', the chapter suggests that history serves a wider purpose that enhances 'modes of thought that give us greater purchase on the world around us', which is crucial for 'informed and critical citizens'. Tosh's research into masculinities in the context of nineteenth century Britain has also drawn on, and fed into, his historiographical research.</p> <p>This research was developed further and presented in <i>Why History Matters</i> (2008). The research for this publication was conducted primarily on the programmatic statements of British and American historians, and on a variety of public policy issues to which a historical perspective was applied, or could have been applied, with advantage. This publication established two connected arguments. Firstly, that thinking historically has a crucial part to play in the intellectual equipment of the active, concerned citizen. Secondly, that the civic role of history is currently ill served by the media, schools, and by academic historians themselves. In order to substantiate these arguments, Tosh identified and analysed the key practical perspectives that have been generated from within the discipline of history, and showed how they have been present in the practice of historians over several generations. In particular, Tosh presented practical historicism as an essential component of citizenship, and promoted the idea that citizens' ability to understand and to act in this capacity is enhanced by a grasp of historicity.</p> <p>Drawing on wide-ranging scholarship, and covering the scope and direction of the discipline Tosh's <i>The Pursuit of History</i> was originally published in 1984. Since this initial publication, new editions of this publication have drawn on Professor John Tosh's research over a period of over twenty-five years (early 1980s-2008). Research for the third, fourth and fifth editions were completed while Tosh was a Professor at the University of Roehampton. The revised third edition (2002) contained a new preface analysing the significance and impact of E.H. Carr's <i>What is History?</i> (1961) and</p>

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reflections on historical awareness in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade buildings, and the David Irving trial for Holocaust denial (pp. ix-xvii). The fifth edition contained new sections on global history (pp. 80-1), comparative history (pp. 164-6), post-colonial history (pp. 285-99), and a much-expanded section on cultural history (pp. 246-58). This publication has interrogated the social utility of history for non-specialists, and was aimed at students of history and an informed public.

### 3. References to the research

John Tosh, 'Hegemonic Masculinity and the History of Gender', in K. Hagemann, S. Dudink & J. Tosh (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War*, (Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 41-58.

John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Pearson, 2005), pp. 219.

John Tosh, *Why History Matters* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 192.

John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History* (Longman, 2010, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed.), pp. 368.

John Tosh, 'The History of Masculinity: An Outdated Concept?' in J. H. Arnold and S. Brady (eds.) *What is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 17-35.

#### Indicators of Quality:

AHRC Research Leave, 2006. 'History and Citizenship: Resources for a Critically Empowered Public. PID 126718; AID 112732.

### 4. Details of the impact

This underpinning research has been widely disseminated through numerous leading publications, articles and on-line forums, which has led to enhanced public awareness of history's claims to practical relevance. Since 2008, Tosh's research publication *Why History Matters* has been marketed to a public audience. This publication of high-quality historiographical research acted as an advertisement of the social utility of history for non-specialists, and has occasioned the broader dissemination of Tosh's research insights amongst a large number of teaching institutions and a public audience. In this sense *Why History Matters* has complemented the well-established use of *The Pursuit of History*, and the updated editions published since 2008, in teaching A-level students and undergraduates more broadly. Taken together, these publications have drawn on, and substantially developed, insights generated from Tosh's more specialised research to have the following impacts:

#### **Influencing the delivery of curriculum and syllabi through the widespread use of *The Pursuit of History* and *Why History Matters***

*The Pursuit of History* has contributed towards maintaining the infrastructure of the discipline of history. In particular, it answers to the principle laid down in the Benchmarking Statement that reflexivity should be an integral aspect of all undergraduate programmes. In order to meet this *The Pursuit of History* book is prescribed or recommended reading extensively in History BA and PGCE courses, and it is also used widely in further education courses, including A-Levels. *Why History Matters* is also being widely used in historiography courses at universities (examples include: the University of Southampton, HIST1112 'Historians and History'; the University of Sheffield, HST202 'History and Historians'; Trinity College, Dublin (TCD), 201 'Thinking History'; Stanford University, History 200H History Colloquium; Keele University, HIS-10026 'History, Media, Memory: The Presentation of the Past in Contemporary Culture'; University of Northumbria, Newcastle Cultural Heritage Management MA, HI0727 'Heritage and History'; the University of Oxford, Diploma in Local History; Edge Hill University also uses *Why History Matters* during the interview process for prospective PGCE History students).

Indicators of **reach** of this impact include the distribution of the publications and sales figures. Currently, over **600** public and university libraries hold the books internationally (source: worldcat.org), reaching a wide audience. Sales figures since 2008 also indicate the wide influence of the research:

	<i>The Pursuit of History</i> (all editions)	<i>Why History Matters</i> (2008)
2008	4970	2105
2009	9265	1306
2010	10626	506
2011	5611	706
2012	4324	584
2013 (to 31 <sup>st</sup> July)	642	Data not available
<b>Total</b>	<b>35438</b>	<b>5207</b>

Evidence of the importance of these publications as an educational resource internationally includes their translations into Swedish, Serbian, Turkish, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian and Chinese since 2008.

The widespread usage of both *Why History Matters* and *The Pursuit of History* in introductory modules to the discipline is complemented by the effect it has on students' understanding of history. A blog of reviews of Tosh's publications by students at the University of Mary Washington demonstrates an enhanced understanding of the processes and contexts of history:

'our thought processes need to be adjusted to fit the context', 'I now understand that history is a great tool to explain how we got to where we are today, but is not meant to predict where we are going', 'I now have a better understanding of the process of historical study, but realizing how we as historians tend to use our social memory more than our historical awareness. This reading especially caught my attention'.

Evidence of the usage of the research for secondary teaching includes general reference to both publications, for example at the Historical Association and by the History Teachers Association of Ireland, when demonstrating the value of history for students. Tosh has been active in communicating his research on the theme of 'Why History Matters' directly to secondary school teachers at events held in conjunction with the Historical Association (for example, in February, May, June 2009).

### **Contributing to the wider public understanding of history as a practical discipline:**

This research has continued to underpin wider public engagement, in particular through public lectures and popular writing. For example, to coincide with the launch of *Why History Matters* in May 2008, Tosh delivered a briefing paper at a History and Policy event, (<http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/policy-paper-79.html>) whilst other key contributors also formally responded to the research and its relevance for public audiences. Similarly, in August 2008, Tosh addressed an audience on the theme of 'Critical citizens: reflections on history's public role in Britain' at the Australia House in London. This lecture was subsequently broadcast on ABC radio in Australia. Tosh has utilised this research in two articles in *History Today*, advocating the role of history in citizenship: 'A greater degree of value' (*History Today* Vol. 60, Issue 1, 2009), and 'Citizen scholars' (*History Today* Vol. 62, Issue 7, 2012) in order to reach a more diverse engaged audience. Further media engagement includes Tosh's contribution to a radio programme focusing on masculinities through the prism of Captain Scott ('Amanda Vickery on ... Men', BBC Radio 4, 9 Sep. 2012).

The reception of *Why History Matters* (2008) amongst politicians and policy makers demonstrates the **significant** contribution of the work to a wider public understanding of history as a practical

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discipline. The book has been reviewed widely, including by leading historians on the History and Policy website, which is explicitly directed at a non-academic audience. Gordon Marsden MP, and former editor of *History Today*, commented on the importance of the book in his review: 'he is particularly sensitive to – and sensible on – how history can give us a proper assessment of changes over time – crucial to today's opinion-formers and policy-makers', 'he is onside for popularizing history but not bastardizing it', and recommended that 'policy-makers, media men and women and, dare I say it, politicians, should all read'.

Evidence of the **significance** of Tosh's research includes engagement at a policy-making level and the citation of Tosh's historiographical works in a briefing paper for the House of Lords written by Ian Cruse (14<sup>th</sup> October 2011, LLN 2011/030). The paper was circulated in advance of the debate to 'call attention to the teaching of history in schools'. In particular, Tosh's research was used to explore the value of studying History in the 'Why Study History?' section of the document. Subsequent debate in the House of Lords drew on the document.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

- 1) Data on sales figures of *The Pursuit of History* available from Pearson Education.
- 2) Data on sales figures of *Why History Matters* available from Palgrave Macmillan.
- 3) Evidence of usage on history teaching websites:

<http://www.htai.ie/links.html>

Usage at the University of Mary Washington, 'HIST299: Introduction to the Study of History', September 2012. <http://hist299.umwblogs.org/?s=john+tosh>

[http://www.history.org.uk/news/news\\_322.html](http://www.history.org.uk/news/news_322.html)

- 4) Popular reviews, including:

Gordon Marsden MP, *History Today* (Dec. 2008): <http://www.historytoday.com/gordon-marsden/why-history-matters>

Penelope J. Corfield, review in *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 Nov. 2008: <http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/reviews/history/article750108.ece>

John Arnold, <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/policy-paper-81.html>

Ludmilla Jordanova, <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/policy-paper-80.html>

- 5) Evidence of media engagement:

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/hindsight/history-citizenship-and-national-identity/3200114#transcript>

'Amanda Vickery on ... Men', BBC Radio 4, originally broadcast 03 September 2012: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01mbztm>

Ian Cruse, Library Note (14 October 2011, LLN 2011/030) providing background reading for the House of Lords debate held on Thursday 20 October: "To call attention to the teaching of history in schools": <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-library/Library%20Notes/2011/LLN%202011-030%20TeachingHistorySchoolsFP2.pdf>