



GUIDELINES

FOR FEATURE CONTRIBUTORS

The aim of the blog is to provide a forum for discussion informed by the historical study of charity, campaigning and civil society (broadly defined) in Britain and beyond. This does not mean contributors need to be undertaking academic research themselves.

The format of blog 'features' is short essays of around 1,000 words in length, usually presenting research findings, profiling an archival collection or providing historical context to a current debate. Please do contact the editor before drafting a feature essay if you are unsure whether or not your idea fits this format.

The readership of the blog is hard to ascertain with any certainty, but it seems to largely include academics working in the fields of history, social science and voluntary sector studies, as well as voluntary sector practitioners and volunteers, archivists and those with a personal interest in the history of voluntary action.

The style of features must, therefore, be accessible. They should be informed by historical understanding but not written exclusively for an academic audience. It is important that little if any background knowledge is assumed and that any technical language is omitted where possible or otherwise explained. Quotations should be given using 'inverted commas' and quotations within quotations should be marked 'using "speech marks" within inverted commas'.

References should, as a general rule, be omitted. Where quoting or citing a particular historian or other writer, a name or description of the source should be given, and where appropriate the book or other publication named, in the text. If significant use is made of a particular archival source(s), it is acceptable to include a brief note on the source at the end of the essay. In the case of a book review or where named scholarly texts are cited, it is acceptable to include page references to the named text in brackets at the end of a sentence, as demonstrated here (p. 12).

Weblinks should be used when possible and this offers a more appropriate online alternative to formal referencing. For example, when quoting a historian, a link from their name can take the reader to either an online summary page for the journal article quoted or a relevant page for the book, which might be the book's Google Books page or the title's page on the publisher's website. Adding in weblinks will be done by the editor, but providing useful webpage details can be extremely helpful and ensure your readers get linked to the most appropriate sources of further information online.

Images are used in of our all blog features. These might include photographs of the contributor or the event being discussed, or the front page of the book being reviewed. Alternatively they may be images relevant to the historical or current affairs topic under discussion. Again, the editor will take responsibility for the inclusion of appropriate images. However, it is helpful and can help you to have more of a say over how your feature essay looks if you provide your own images. Where the images are subject to copyright, it is also helpful if you are able to contact the copyright holder and request permission to use the image. We are always happy to include credits and/or weblinks.

Blog contributors' details are given on a separate page of the website, but a link is given to this page from the contributor's name at the top of each feature. We will therefore require a short biography of each new contributor. This should give their current position and institutional affiliation, where appropriate; any key publications in the field of voluntary action history; any current or former association with the VAHS, including any VAHS seminar given or podcasts available; and, finally, a brief summary of the topics on which they contribute to the blog. The editor will finalise the text of this, but providing the information can be very helpful.

Submitting a proposal for a blog feature is done by emailing the blog editor. If timing is not important, please feel free to send the full written piece to the editor. If you would like to see it posted quickly, perhaps while an issue is still topical or to coincide with an event or publication, it is advisable to contact the editor as soon as possible with a suggestion, ahead of writing, as we do often have features lined up well in advance.

Before contacting the editor, please make sure you have read through these guidelines and browsed the blog itself to ensure your contribution would be in keeping with the aims and the style of the blog.

Proposals, suggestions and queries should all be directed to the blog editor.

Current editor: Dr George Campbell Gosling

Email contact: george.gosling@liverpool.ac.uk

December 2012