Graeme Thomson (University of Glasgow, UK)

Title: Renewing the Revolution: Presidential Rhetoric and the Maintenance of National Identity

Graeme Thomson is in the final year of his PhD at the University of Glasgow, studying the significance of allusions to the founding era in American presidential rhetoric since 1945. With interests straddling history, politics and language, his thesis considers both the relationship between this rhetoric and national identity, and the political value perceived in aligning oneself with America’s founding heritage. Graeme has written two related book reviews for the Journal of American Studies, has an essay pending publication on ‘The Revolution in American Life’, and has recently contributed commentary on the forthcoming US election in the Scottish media.

Philip Gannon (University of Durham, UK)

Title: Presidential Memory and the United Kingdom: Kennedy and Obama's Memories of British Policies and the Impact of those Memories on their Presidencies

Bio: Philip Gannon came to the School of Government and International Affairs at the University of Durham after receiving his MA in Politics and Contemporary History from the University of Nottingham. At Durham, his present work is focusing on Great Britain’s international relations and the Special Relationship of the US and the UK. He has particular interest in the Premiership of Gordon Brown, in joint British and American security strategy and in international relations theory with particular attention to the English School. In addition to his PhD research Mr Gannon has also undertaken research into Anglo-American relations during the early Cold War period.

Michael Espinoza (University College London UK)

Title: Myth, Memory and the Reagan Legacy: Taxes and the GOP

Bio: My PhD thesis focuses on conservative Republican criticism of Democrats in post-Cold War America. From the conservative perspective, Democrats support policies that favour government over the free-market. Conservative rhetoric uses key words to further bolster their assertions. This rhetoric accuses Democrats of supporting core ideals which are liberal, socialist and un-American
in their tendencies. The intent of conservatives is to portray their party as the party that will defend true and authentic American values against the liberal values of big government Democrats. In each chapter I analyse how Republican conservatism now embodies a movement that is much more flexible and extremist in its language, and as a result makes modern day Democrats (and even Republicans of previous eras) out to be supporters of socialism.