

Urban History Group  
Annual Conference,  
2-3 April 2009, University of Warwick, UK

## **First Call for sessions and papers:**

### **Crises and the City**

This conference will explore the concept of urban crises at a variety of scales. The theme is interpreted broadly to encompass not only those crises relating to urban growth but also the way that individuals and institutions in cities experience and manage such events. It also invites papers that seek to explore the way that crises can generate new opportunities in the urban context.

Until relatively recently, historians have primarily considered cities in the context of growth – in relation to population increase, economic expansion and opportunity, political freedoms, social liberation and cultural formation. As recent events in the global economy have highlighted, however, growth is not necessarily always the case. Downturns in economic activity, shifts in the organisational structure of capitalism, changes and restrictions in personal freedoms, and cultural conservatism at times have been as important in structuring cities and urban life. How have these crises impacted on cities and what role have cities played in generating these crises? What opportunities arise in the wake of crises? What kinds of institutional arrangements emerged to manage such crises and how effective have they been in responding to the changes they faced? How have individuals experienced those crises and in what way have they responded both as individuals and collectivities? What forms of assistance and institutions developed to manage such a range of personal crises?

Possible themes include

- Responding to economic recession
- Crises as opportunity
- Disaster management
- Mutual aid and institutional assistance
- Ideological and managerial responses to crises
- The impact of war and social conflict

The conference committee invites proposals for individual papers as well as for additional sessions. Abstract of up to 500 words, including a title, name, affiliation and contact details should be submitted to the conference organiser and should indicate clearly how the content of the paper addresses the broad conference theme. Those wishing to propose additional sessions should provide a brief statement that identifies the ways in which the session will address the conference theme, a list of speakers and paper abstracts. The deadline for expressions of interest for sessions and papers is 21 November 2008.

In addition, the conference will also host a new researchers' forum. This is aimed primarily at those who are at an early stage in a research project and who wish primarily to discuss ideas rather than present findings. New and current postgraduates working on topics unrelated to the main theme, as well as those just embarking on new research, are particularly encouraged to submit short papers for this forum.

Graduate students can obtain a bursary to offset some of the expenses associated with attending the conference. Please send an e mail application to Richard Rodger at [richard.rodger@ed.ac.uk](mailto:richard.rodger@ed.ac.uk) and ask your PhD supervisor to also send a message confirming your status as a registered PhD student. The Urban History Group would like to acknowledge the Economic History Society for its support for these bursaries.

For further details please contact:

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