

## Helen O'Shea

I am a Staff Tutor and Senior Lecturer in History. Originally from Co. Cork in Ireland and based in Edinburgh since 2003, I was awarded my PhD in history from the University of Edinburgh in 2010. I first started working as an Associate Lecturer in History with the Open University in 2012 and since then have also worked as a Lecturer in Modern History at the University of Dundee. I currently cluster manage A111 (*Discovering the Arts & Humanities*) and A113 (*Revolutions*) modules and I'm a member of the A225 module team (*The British Isles and the Modern World: 1789-1914*). I was also on the production team for our new module A328 (*Empire: Power, Resistance, Legacies*) authoring two units on British formal and informal imperialism in the Middle East.

My research has been supported by grants from the British Academy, the Leverhulme Trust and the Royal Society of Edinburgh. I am a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and the Royal Historical Society.

My research interests include comparative decolonization, insurgency and counter-insurgency in the British Empire, the British colonial legal service and modern Irish history in transnational and comparative contexts. My first book was published in 2015 under the title [\*Ireland and the End of the British Empire: The Republic and Its Role in the Cyprus Emergency\*](#) and was reprinted in paperback in 2020 by Bloomsbury Publishing. It has since been updated and translated into Greek and published by Aigaion (Nicosia, 2023) and a recent appraisal of it can be found in the [Cyprus Review](#). My current research explores the history of emergency law and order in the post-WW2 British Empire and its impact on civil liberties. Within the OU's research clusters, I'm a member of the [Centre for the History of Crime, Policing and Justice](#) and the [Centre for Empire and Postcolonial Studies](#).

Lately, I've also been revisiting the history of women's work in Scotland, which I first became interested in when working for the National Union of Students in Scotland, prior to entering academia. Along with fellow colleagues at the Open University in Scotland, I've collaborated with the STUC on an OpenLearn project around these issues entitled [Women and Workplace Struggles: Scotland 1900-2022](#) and was one of the academic leads for the BBC Scotland three-part series [Women Who Changed Modern Scotland](#) presented by Kirsty Wark which first aired in

February 2023. Building on several of the themes raised in this series, I've guest-edited the latest edition of [\*Scottish Affairs\*](#) ahead of International Women's Day 2024 with Prof. Kim Barker.

Over the years I've taught on several modules encompassing Irish, British and imperial history and continue to teach on [\*A225 \(The British Isles and the Modern World, 1789-1914\)\*](#). One of the most rewarding aspects of my role is the opportunity to transfer this knowledge through BBC-Open University co-productions. Alongside Prof. Gerry Mooney and Dr Dan Taylor, I was an OU-nominated academic on [\*Union\*](#), a four-part BBC2 series presented by Professor David Olusoga which aired in October 2023.

In the field of HE policy, I'm interested in issues of student access, retention and progression in the context of higher education and under-represented adult learners, especially unpaid carers.