

CFP: Domestic production and work in poor British homes, c. 1650-1850

Thursday 12th September 2019, University of Derby

Keynote Speaker: Professor John Styles, University of Hertfordshire

In recent decades the 'home' has come to the forefront of historical investigations. Domestic production and work, such as spinning and farming, has received some renewed attention as part of this, yet there remain gaps in the literature and issues that need addressing.

Our most detailed understanding of the domestic sphere comes from studies of the middling sort and elite, and much less research has been conducted on the domestic activities of the poor, who (defined in their broadest sense) made up well over half of the contemporary population. There has been something of a growth in the study of the poorer sorts over the past decade, but more is still needed. For example, domestic work such as spinning and farming has been subject to historical study for long periods of time; however they are often considered almost in isolation of other activities, while other forms of production such as brewing and baking have not received quite the same attention. This is surprising considering that being involved in myriad activities was crucial for many to make ends meet.

This conference aims to address these issues by bringing speakers together who research a diverse range of domestic work. This will allow us to create a dialogue between people working on various aspects and develop a holistic understanding of the relative importance of different types of domestic production and work in poor British households.

Proposals for 20-minute papers are invited from both new and established researchers to contribute to this discussion. Suggested topics for papers include, but are not limited to:

- Domestic activities such as spinning, weaving, knitting, carding, brewing, distilling, baking, dairy work, cleaning, washing, cooking, and food preservation such as salting meats.
- The extent to which the country underwent an 'industrious revolution'.
- Critiques of the literature/applicability of the concept 'proto-industrialisation'.
- Gendered and age-related dynamics of domestic work.
- Time management and the seasonality of domestic production.
- The relationship between domestic production and the industrial revolution.
- Urban, rural, regional and other geographical differences in domestic production.
- By-employment.
- The productivity of various types of domestic work.
- The uses of home-produced goods (e.g. for personal use, commercial use etc).

Proposals should comprise a 300-word abstract and a biography. Please email proposals to Joe Harley at j.harley@derby.ac.uk by **30 April 2019**. Travel grants of up to £75 will be available for postgraduate and early career researchers. Please indicate in your proposal if you would like to be considered.

This conference has been kindly funded by the Economic History Society, Past and Present Society, and the Royal Historical Society.



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