THE PAST IN THE PRESENT

THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Tuesday 14th May 2019
9:30am - 4:30pm

Rendall Building, Lecture Theatres 1, 2 and 3

‘The Past in the Present’ is an exploration of innovative and interdisciplinary methodological approaches to history, facilitating the development of ideas on the role of the past in the present.

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL
Panel One: 9:30 – 10.30

New questions and approaches: Working With Archives and challenging data-sets

Chair: Peter Buckles

Ashleigh Hawkins: Sundry but by no means insignificant: Creating a dataset from an historic Sundry Enquiries Book

Even the most inconspicuous of historic records can reveal hidden worlds yet these records themselves are often little understood and not easily accessible. Digital humanities methods provide new tools and opportunities for discovering, interpreting and sharing these hidden (hi)stories, yet applying them to analogue records raises significant challenges. By focusing on a case study of the process of transforming the information within a single volume of a Bank of Liverpool Sundry Enquiries Book into a digital dataset, this paper will examine the challenges and implications of preparing historical data for potential exploitation through digital humanities methods. It will question how one maintains the archival integrity of the record, not only its content but also its context, when breaking down the information it contains into data. Finally, it will consider the implications of such a close reading of a single record, necessitated by the process of creating a dataset, for understanding its use in the past, extending our understanding of historic banking networks in the present, and examining its potential for further exploitation in the future.

Ashleigh Hawkins is in the first year of an Arts and Humanities Research Council funded Collaborative Doctoral Award with the University of Liverpool and Barclays Group Archive. Her research examines how Barclays Group Archive could better exploit its historic customer information through the creation of historic datasets and the application of Digital Humanities methods, and questions what value the creation of such datasets might bring to individual banks or the banking sector generally.

Emily Gibbs: ‘Thank god this is anonymous’: Data Protection, oral history and the future of the archive

This proposed paper forms part of the work I will be doing at an NWCDTP Internship in Edinburgh in the summer, 2019. Within this placement I will be working on a data protection policy briefing and the work I have done in preparation for this project has brought to light some of the issues that may lie in the future of oral history and its storage in the archive. This paper shall argue that when we conduct and use oral history interviews, historians must consider the new channels of knowledge that exist in the 21st century and the ways in which these inform and influence the interview. In the ‘age of the internet’ and through new privacy anxieties, the processes and ethics of oral history must change to ensure the protection and confidentiality of participants.

Emily Gibbs is currently completing her second year of an AHRC NWCDTP-funded PhD at the University of Liverpool. Her research focuses on the ways in which local, urban communities experienced, represented and expressed ‘nuclear anxiety’ in the United Kingdom, 1952-1989.
Harry Roberts: When the archives turn: archival politicisation and the (re)writing of the past

This paper considers the ways in which the politics of the present enact upon the histories of the past, specifically focusing on the politicised nature of the archival encounter, and its deep implications for historical research. Considering the National Archive’s controversial decision to withdraw United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) files from the public domain, alongside recent budget cuts which have severely curtailed the accessibility and records of local archives, this paper will explore the relationship between the research encounter, present-day politics, and the process of (re)creating the past in the present.

Harry Roberts is a second year PhD student studying the social, cultural, and emotional impact of the Cold War within rural Britain, particularly focusing on the experiences of citizens living in close proximity to the nuclear site ‘Sellafield’ (formerly ‘Windscale’) in West Cumbria. Examining the interplay between the nuclear state and its citizenry at the local level, my research documents the British public’s complex relationship with nuclear technologies and the role of nuclear technology in the formation and continuation of rural identities.

Panel Two: 10:30 – 11.30
Revisiting politics on the Left in the 1970s
Chair: Tom Morrissey

David Grealy: Rhodesia, 1977-79: David Owen, the Labour Party and the Human Rights ‘Breakthrough’

This paper explores British foreign policy towards the former colony of Rhodesia during David Owen’s tenure as Labour Foreign Secretary (1977-1979). While Owen’s focus on expediting Rhodesian independence – predicated upon majority rule and constitutional human rights provisions – may have been framed as part of a global human rights ‘breakthrough’ during the 1970s, in its attempts to solve this “most intractable of our post-colonial problems” Owen’s initiative should not be viewed in isolation from long-standing debates concerning race relations in Britain and the Labour Party’s claim to moral leadership via the reflection of the party’s domestic imperatives on the world stage.

David Grealy is a third-year PhD candidate at the University of Liverpool where he received his BA in history (2014) and a Master’s degree in twentieth century history (2015). His dissertation (‘Human Rights and British Foreign Policy, 1977-1995: An Intellectual Biography of David Owen’) aims to contribute to the rapidly expanding historiography of the human rights ‘breakthrough’ and to contemporary debates regarding conflict resolution and the intellectual foundations of humanitarian intervention.


My research project aims to analyse the changing nature of British intervention in El Salvador during the years 1970-2009; a period of repression, civil war and post-conflict reconstruction. It analyses how political and human rights agendas affected the nature of British intervention and the ways in which such aid was distributed and used. My research aims to establish the factors that prompted the UK’s involvement in El Salvador, to explore Britain’s actions during the civil war, and then the changing nature of its involvement. It will examine the extent and impact of state-perpetrated human rights violations in El Salvador and the corresponding nature of UK intervention in, and aid to, the country.
Research into the impact of human rights abuses on the UK’s aid policies has relevance today – concerns about the UK’s foreign policy priorities and their continued support of repressive regimes are consistently raised by human rights groups.

Emily McIndoe is a PhD candidate at The University of Liverpool funded by the NWSSDTP. Her research interests focus on British foreign policy, Latin American history, human rights and humanitarian aid.

Kerrie McGiveron: ‘We’ll Have to Fight Any Government’: Big Flame, the Ford Strike and Socialist Unity, 1978-1979

The industrial dispute at Ford Motors in September 1978 marked the beginning of the so-called ‘Winter of Discontent,’ a period in characterised by industrial disputes, and clashes between trade union and government. This culminated in the collapse of the Labour government and the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979. Historians examined the Ford dispute as a catalyst for widespread industrial action, with little attention paid to the involvement of the far-left. Big Flame emerged as a revolutionary organisation in 1970. Influenced by second-wave feminism and Italian Marxism, they intervened in strikes ‘to fight for working-class interests against the interests of the ruling class.’ In 1978-1979, they were involved in strikes at Fords, as well as an electoral coalition, fielding candidates in the 1979 general election as Socialist Unity.

Existing scholarship focuses on trades union class-based organising in the workplace. This paper shifts the focus to explore the far-left, and specifically Big Flame as a unique organisation influenced by both class-based politics and the Women’s Liberation Movement. Examining the effects of far-left activism, including attention from the so-called ‘Spy Cops’ and MI5 profiling, it explores how Big Flame incorporated not just socialism and feminism, but also anti-racism and an internationalist outlook.

Kerrie McGiveron is a second-year AHRC-funded PhD candidate in History at the University of Liverpool. Her research focuses on New Left socialist feminist activism, second-wave feminism and specifically UK-based far-left organisation Big Flame (1970 - 1984).

Break: Tea, Coffee & Biscuits: 11:30 – 11:45

Panel Three: 11:45 – 12:45

Crises and Uncertainties: Collisions of the Past in the Present

Chair: Dominic Bridge

Tom Morrissey: ‘The English Reformation was the First Brexit’: Comparing Brexit and the English Reformation in Contemporary Media

The use of historical comparisons and analogies by politicians and political commentators has become an established part of our modern political discourse with the political uncertainty surrounding Brexit arguably encouraging these attempts at historical soul searching. The English Reformation, alongside other events in British history such as the second world war, has become a common point of historical reference for media commentators on both side of the political spectrum with regards to Brexit. This paper will consider the current comparisons between Brexit and the English Reformation and the use of comparing our current political situation to an event so far removed from contemporary politics.
Tom Morrissey is currently a PhD candidate at The University of Liverpool funded by a graduate teaching fellowships. Their research interests focus on the gentry and the English Reformation.

Peter Buckles: Uncertainty and Business in the Eighteenth Century and the Present

Uncertainty has been a feature of British political and economic life for the past few years. The failure of Britain’s political elites and parliamentary factions to form agreement on the Brexit process, and the failure of the British government to negotiate a deal with the European Union that could pass through parliament, has left businesses uncertain as to how to prepare for Britain’s departure. While this situation is at present particularly pressing, historical research shows us that businesses will always be victims of political uncertainty. This paper, which focuses on sugar-importing firms in Bristol, shows how uncertainty in the Age of Revolutions, including America’s exit from the British Empire, could disrupt business operations. Using various macro- and micro-level datapoints, as well as the testimonies of merchants themselves, this paper explores how merchants were affected by – and attempted to cope with – uncertainty.

Peter Buckles is currently a PhD candidate at The University of Liverpool Funded by the ESRC NWSSDTP. His research interests focus on war and Atlantic trade in the Eighteenth Century.

Ian Jones: Barclays’ use of history and the role of the corporate archive

The use of history by organisations to achieve objectives ranging from building corporate identity, encouraging employee loyalty, and pursuing strategic goals has received increased attention since the ‘historic turn’ in organisation and management studies. However, the role of the archive as a repository of knowledge and source of legitimacy for these narratives has often been ignored. Indeed, how these use of history strategies legitimise their narratives in the eyes of their intended audiences more generally is not something that has received attention. This paper will argue that the use of Barclays Group Archives (BGA) as a repository of knowledge, and as a source of physical records and artefacts was an important part of creating legitimacy for the narratives that formed Barclays Bank plc's (Barclays) use of history strategy. It will analyse how BGA contributed to Barclays’ use of history during the launch of their corporate values in 2012 following, and how this strategy evolved as demonstrated by their 325th anniversary celebration at their AGM in 2015.

Ian Jones is currently a 3rd year PhD candidate at The University of Liverpool funded by the AHRC and Barclays through a CDA. Their research interests focus on how Barclays Group Archives (BGA) contribute to the competitiveness of Barclays bank. In particular, the research focuses on how BGA affects how Barclays bank understand and make use of their history.

Lunch: 12:45 – 13:30

Poster Session (Lecture Theatre 3): 13:30 – 14:00
Panel Four: 14:00 – 15:00

Bodies, Emotions, and Experiences: Histories of confinement in a moment of mass incarceration

Chair: David Grealy

Deborah Molyneux: Navigating the Asylum: Emotions, Experience and Learning Disabilities 1870-1948

My current research examines the life histories of individuals with learning disabilities 1870 – 1948. Due to segregation and exclusion this group of individuals experienced in society during this period there is limited written documentation, excluding institutional records. Efforts to reveal their hidden histories have so far concentrated upon institutional histories. However, these studies’ focus on administrative accounts, based on reception orders and admission registers, resulting in institutional discharge and life histories beyond the asylum being overlooked. Thus, while offering valuable insights into the ways these emerging institutions restricted patients’ lives, these studies often still define patients with learning disabilities during this period purely as objects of segregation policies. Therefore, my project restores agency to those who were confined due to learning disabilities and challenges dominant views and stereotypes about people with learning disabilities. The paper will discuss the methods I am currently utilizing within my research to reveal their experiences and hidden histories.

Patricia Harrison: ‘A One Act Extravaganza’: Prison Suicide in England and Wales 1865 – 1895

Rising suicide rates in our prisons are cause for serious concern and yet penal philosophy has changed little since the nineteenth century. The period 1865 – 1895 was arguably the most punitive of the age and represents the inauguration of our current prison system. I will be speaking about the suicide of Timothy Cain in Hull Prison in 1872 and contextualising his death within some of the contemporary attitudes and concerns of prisons, prison doctors and the Press towards prisoners and prisoner suicide. While it is not always possible or even advisable to attempt to speak for those denied voice, it is essential to try to listen to what they have to tell us. I will show how the use of a range of sources can be read to access how Timothy Cain’s response to a system and ideology that persists to this day, can assist in balancing out the official narrative.

Patricia Harrison is currently a 2nd Year PhD student at University of Liverpool and is funded by AHRC. My research interests are nineteenth century crime and punishment, prison reform and the marginalisation of offenders.

Catherine Tully: 'To hang a woman is an enormity, to hang an imbecile is a crime': Public Resistance to the Execution of Mary Ann Ansell (1899)

Mary Ann Ansell, aged 22, was the last woman to be hanged in 19th century England. This paper will explore both the texture of public resistance to her death and the Home Office response to its destabilizing potential by examining Ansell’s criminal case file housed at the National Archives, Kew.

Catherine Tully is a PhD candidate at The University of Liverpool. Her research works on unpacking public resistance to the death penalty in Britain between 1868, when state executions were first privatised, and 1968, shortly after the death penalty was abolished. She focuses on the executions of what were regarded as 'deviant' women, namely those who flouted perceived gender norms by killing.

Break: Tea, Coffee & Biscuits: 15:00 – 15:15
Panel Five: 15:15 – 16:15

Language, Memory and the Senses: Regulating the Body over Time
Chair: Ian Jones

Heather Cowan: ‘She could call nothing her own’: Reproductive Language in Legislation and Medical Literature between 1624 and 1651.

This paper explores how the female reproductive body was presented within legislation and medical texts, and the changes and continuities in the gendered language used from the introduction of the Infanticide law of 1624 to the end of the English Civil War. During this timeframe, the sources presented are reflective of domineering Puritan concerns surrounding the maintenance of moral order and the lengths seventeenth-century officials went to regulate the female body. Focusing on the treatment of women and the systematic insecurity they held, revealing fears early modern people held to ensure social stability. Concurrently, England endured political turmoil as a by-product of the English Civil War, which subsequently prompted a reconsideration of the gendered body, as evident by its presence within the emerging vernacular print culture. The significance such sources hold is twofold; they illuminate the increasing surveillance around the female body, and the utilisation of reproduction as a political tool during civil unrest.

Heather Cowan graduated from the University of Liverpool in 2018 with a degree in History and returned the following academic year to undergo a Master of Research. Her current research is based around how seventeenth-century women responded emotionally to pregnancy, exploring Protestant and Puritan perceptions of reproduction and motherhood, incorporating ideas of whether the Reformation increased pressures for married couples to conceive. This involves exploring themes such as early modern religion and culture, and more specifically bodies, emotion, gender and reproduction. This project is a continuation of my undergraduate dissertation which focused on early modern children and how their experiences were documented within print culture in Elizabethan and Jacobean England and moves onto female perceptions of pregnancy within a patriarchal and religious society.

Emma Copestake: ‘And this was condoned by the boss’: Memories of Health and Safety on the Docks in Twentieth-Century Liverpool.

This paper examines how the dangers of dock work in Liverpool have been remembered in oral history interviews conducted in the 1980s and in the last two years. Firstly, the content of these interviews reveal that a collective memory exists among the dock community which emphasises the need to protect the body against the unchecked power of the employer. This is illustrated by recollections that include the accident James Sexton, General Secretary of the National Union of Dock Labourers 1893-1921, suffered in 1881. Stories of accidents were passed from father to son to reiterate the need to look after one another. Drawing upon National Dock Labour Board records, this paper then demonstrates how intergenerational memories have been shaped by the ongoing struggle for ownership at work. The similarities between interviews conducted forty years apart underline the ways in which a shared past continues to shape contemporary meanings.

Emma is a second-year PhD History candidate at the University of Liverpool. Her research examines humour, emotions and occupational wellbeing among dock communities in Liverpool and Glasgow 1964-89. The aim of this research is to understand how key changes in the port transport industry - including health and safety legislation and containerisation - were negotiated, understood and experienced by workers. Emma’s broader research interests include the history of emotions, labour history, class, gender and occupational health.
Frank Thorpe: Body odour and our discontents: attitudes towards smell in personal hygiene in modern Britain

From the 1930s, soaps and deodorants tackling ‘BO’ were marketed at British consumers. Classic British products such as Lever Brothers'/Unilever’s Lifebuoy soap moved, alongside ideas and practices in British society around cleanliness, from the medical contexts of infectious disease towards the social contexts of careers and relationships. Increasingly, to be a civilised Briton involved having a deodorised body. Deodorisation was not merely encouraged by advertisers, friends and internal insecurities but was also enforced by employers wanting olfactorily hygienic workforces. Yet, deodorants did not find their ways into our lives and routines seamlessly. Scepticism and concerns about efficacy, safety and the social connotations of using deodorants, particularly among men, meant that the British ‘affluent society’ of the post-war period was well behind its peerless American counterpart in the deodorised league tables until recent decades. This paper will sketch out how and why British attitudes towards smell in personal hygiene shifted over the course of the twentieth century.

Frank Thorpe completed his undergraduate degree in History at Downing College, the University of Cambridge, in 2014, before going on to take an MA in Eighteenth-Century Studies at the University of Sheffield. After completing teacher training and then teaching in a secondary school he returned to academia in 2018 to undertake a PhD in History at the University of Liverpool.

Closing Remarks: 16:15 – 16:30
Panel One: 9:30 – 10.30

*Chronicling the Recent Past: New Histories of Commemoration, Professions and Charities*

Chair: Louise Roberts

**Liam Markey:** Mediating Militarism: Chronicling 100 years of British ‘military victimhood’ from print to digital, 1918-2018

No one definitive example of militarism exists throughout history, as each manifestation of the concept varies in one way or another, be it in a social, political or geopolitical capacity. What can be agreed, however, is that the fundamental basis for militarism is the glorification of the military and the self-serving activities of the military man in peacetime, alongside the predominance of the military within the social sphere. From this basis, militarism manifests itself in a myriad variety of ways that depend heavily on contemporary politics and social developments. No two forms of militarism are identical but share intrinsic components.

It is therefore useful when discussing the definition of militarism to outline that the varied forms of what we can refer to as *militarisms* are aligned with specific historical time periods and modes of society. This paper aims to chronicle the development of the concept of militarism and its relationship with advancements in the methods of waging war from the 19th Century to the present day.

By outlining the 4 main stages of warfare that have taken place during this time frame, I will discuss the relationship between technological advancements in warfare and militarism, and how this relationship has impacted wider society and politics.

*Liam Markey is a first-year postgraduate researcher at the University of Liverpool working in the Department of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology. My area of research focuses on militarism and the commemoration of the First World War, as well as the concept of ‘military victimhood.’ Thus far, his research has taken the form of a chronicling of British commemoration of the First World War since 1918, as well as an analysis of the literature surrounding the issue of militarism, outlining its definition and its impact on society.*

**Felix Goodbody:** General Practice in Liverpool: 1930-1948

This paper considers the routes into general practice taken by Liverpool doctors prior to the introduction of the NHS in 1948. Following qualification, many doctors joined established practices as assistants or partners, and subsequently purchased or inherited a practice of their own. General practice often involved managing a diverse portfolio of patients, some covered by the national insurance ‘panel’, alongside wealthier private patients.

This paper outlines the economic and social status of this group of doctors, and their working conditions and professional aspirations. Most general practices were run from the home of the doctor, and the often ‘single-handed’ GP would provide the full range of medical services to the patients on their list. Despite the threat of financial ruin to GPs unable to establish an economically viable practice,
the period also saw the growth of professional autonomy and independence that would subsequently become the source of opposition to state intervention in 1948.

Felix Goodbody has a BA in History and an MSc in History of Science, Technology and Medicine from the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine at the University of Manchester. He is currently PhD candidate and undergraduate seminar tutor with a focus on twentieth century British history, the welfare state and the NHS.

Zoë Chapman: A History of North West Cancer Research

Cancer charities have been in existence in Britain since the Imperial Cancer Research Fund was established in 1902. With the notable exception of Joan Austoker’s ‘History of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund’ in 1988, there have been few other analyses into the history of any other British Medical research charity.

North West Cancer Research (NWCR) is a charity which was established in Liverpool in 1948, building on earlier initiatives. The historical records of NWC until recently were stored in a near-derelict basement of a former office. They consist of uncatalogued meeting minute books, ledgers and photographs. Although there have been a couple of informal histories written by former staff, there has been no focused historical analysis.

I hold a ESRC 1+3 CASE studentship in collaboration with NWCR which has allowed me access to the historical records. I have formulated a history of the charity which will be presented here.

Zoë Chapman is currently a PhD candidate at The University of Liverpool, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Her research interests focus on the experiences and expectations of lung cancer in Liverpool since 1948.

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Panel Two: 10:30 – 11.30
Spectacular Historical Bodies in Film and Television
Chair: Matt McCall

Louise Roberts: Le Freak C'est Chic: ‘The Greatest Showman’ and Modern Identity Politics

In 1932, Tod Browning produced his one of a kind film ‘Freaks’, a film that prompted its audience to revaluate its attitude towards those who had previously been disavowed by society as ‘Freaks’. Famously the film featured performers that at that time were still performing in Barnum and Baileys Circus, yet ultimately the film was banned in the UK for 30 years, deemed as unsavoury by its reviewers.

Over 80 years later we see the first significant new cinematic foray into the world of the ‘Freak Show’ with the 2017 musical ‘The Greatest Showman’, which unlike its predecessor, has achieved popular acclaim and significant box office success. So what has changed?

In this paper, through the use of critical reviews of the film, I will explore how modern identity politics has played a key role in the reframing of the story of Barnum and his ‘Freak show’. This has resulted, regardless of the negative critical reception, in the story of Barnum’s ‘Freak Show’ being praised and promoted as a positive story of strength, body positivity and acceptance for today's viewing audience. The rebranding of Barnum as a modern day progressive figure, and the reframing of the ‘Freak Show’ as a place of acceptance and expression for marginalised figures, poses the question, what is the role of historical film?
Louise Roberts is currently third-year PhD candidate and Graduate Teaching Fellow at The University of Liverpool. Her work focuses on the rise and decline of the British freak show circa 1840-1940, particularly in relation to Race on display and the influences and impact of empire on the construction and representation of such exhibits. Furthermore, she is also interested in the ways in which such exhibits have impacted the construction of British identity and the concept of ‘Englishness’, by influencing how we interact with race, disability and gender.

Cat Crossley: Shifting the Final Frontier: Medieval Monstrous Men and the Star Trek Universe

Medieval illustrated manuscripts and fictional space exploration may not seem an obvious pairing, but there are a shocking number of parallels between depictions of medieval monstrous men — the almost-human beings believed to inhabit the edges of the earth — and the extraterrestrial lifeforms encountered in the Star Trek universe, if you take the time to find them.

In this paper, I will be utilising Star Trek as a lens through which to re-examine, reframe and reappraise some fundamental issues within my continuing research into medieval depictions of monstrous men. We will examine the notion of ‘humanoid’ lifeforms placed on the edges of the known world, the restrictions of artistic media in representing these lifeforms, and the key questions raised by the perceived existence of nearly-human beings, among other things.

In comparing such temporally disparate artistic outputs as medieval manuscripts and early-90s TV shows, the approach of this paper is inherently of the longue durée, and I hope to demonstrate that the impulse to depict and discuss ‘humanoid’ beings is timeless and universal. By reframing my research with reference to a familiar medium of entertainment, I also aim to underscore the relevance of medieval manuscripts studies to the modern world.

Cat Crossley is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Liverpool, funded by the Department of History. Her research interests focus on medieval representations of monstrous men (a.k.a. the ‘Plinian Races’), as found in thirteenth-century ‘encyclopaedic’ texts in particular.

Danica Ramsey-Brimberg: ‘Just Give Me a Good Old Viking Funeral’: Depictions of Viking Age Burials in Movies

When conjuring a mental depiction of a Viking burial, the most prevalent one that comes to mind is the boat burning at the end of the 1958 Hollywood epic movie, The Vikings. This and other movies focusing on this group of peoples have impacted the modern mind-set, sometimes reinforcing stereotypes and other times countering them. While other scholars have studied other aspects of the Viking Age in film or have analysed graves in specific television series, such as Vikings, The Last Kingdom and Game of Thrones, no known study has been done on Viking Age furnished burials in movies. This presentation hopes to unpack some of the depictions of furnished burials in the Viking Age on the big screen, so as to better understand both the underlying motivations behind their construction and their broader impact in popular culture and within society.

Danica Ramsey-Brimberg is a third year PhD student in the Department of History at the University of Liverpool. Her research focuses on furnished burials in or near ecclesiastical sites in the Irish Sea Area from the 9th-11th centuries. She is co-leader of the M6 Medieval Reading Group and a fundraising coordinator for the Liverpool Marrow Society. She earned both her BA in History with an Irish Studies minor and her MEd in Secondary Education from Boston College and her MA in Medieval Archaeology from the University of York.
Laurence Westgaph: Revealing the Presence of Black People in Early Nineteenth-Century Liverpool

The few academic historians of the early black presence in Liverpool have laboured under the assumption that there was a period of discontinuity of black settlement in the port during the first half of the nineteenth century. Longmore has suggested that apart from the burials of blacks registered at St John’s cemetery in the 1770s and 80s “There is little other evidence of the black presence in eighteenth-century Liverpool and it therefore seems unlikely that the current black community dates from this period.” This is not borne out in primary records. Numerous sources, document the continued presence of blacks in early nineteenth-century Liverpool, some of whom were the children of eighteenth century settlers. Using fragmentary sources, in this paper I will scrutinise the evidence of the continued presence of black people during the earlier nineteenth century, using newspapers, wills, parish registers, war office records and various other materials. These sources show that not only were black people present and contributing to everyday life in the port throughout this time period, but that some were also amongst the most prominent and well respected individuals the town had to offer.

Billie-Gina Thomason: Exploring the lives of Gender Passing Individuals in the Nineteenth Century British Press

In 1859, Harry Stokes was found dead in the River Irwell supposed suicide. Twenty years previous Harry had appeared in the press having been exposed as biologically female by his then wife. Although the press has historically vilified LGB&T+ people, nineteenth century press reported on gender passing individuals like Harry Stokes in a positive way. They acknowledged their industrious attitude and their ability to become a breadwinner. Was this because the nineteenth century press was more liberal? Or perhaps, the interest from the press was focussed on how biological women elevated their social status to live as men, irrespective of their gender identity? This paper draws upon examples of female to male gender passing individuals in the nineteenth century and debates how newspapers discussed their lives. Finally, I will reflect upon how the press showed solidarity to individuals compared with some of the newspaper stories we read today.

Billie-Gina Thomason is a third year PhD candidate at Liverpool John Moores University where she completed her BA Joint Honours degree in History and English and her MRes in Modern History. Her research interests include nineteenth century gender politics and female to male gender passing. Her thesis explores how gender passing individuals performed a gender contrary to their biological identity in nineteenth century Britain, utilising the press, pamphlets and available census material.
Helen Houghton-Foster: The Environment and Justice: Staffordshire c. 1550-1750

The civil and criminal functions of the justice system in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries are widely understood, however they have not been examined as a means of understanding how early modern communities interacted with their environment. Recent work in environmental history has examined flooding in the early modern period, viewing it as a “socio-natural phenomenon” (Morgan, 2015). However, work has focused more on coastal flooding than a landlocked county such as Staffordshire. The rich archival material for Staffordshire makes it an ideal candidate for examining how environmental issues were mediated and water was managed through the justice system in a period which social historians have often characterised as extremely litigious. I will discuss how communities used the mechanisms of law to assign responsibility and manage their environment. I will also compare with existing flood chronologies to ask whether apparently petty grievances were in fact symptomatic of larger flood events.

Helen Houghton-Foster studied English and History at the University of York, then completed a Masters in Renaissance and Early Modern Studies. She is currently in the third year of my PhD on a collaborative doctoral award with the Staffordshire Record office, and joint between the departments of geography and history. Her PhD is focused on the challenges of using archives for environmental research, and how archivists can solve them, using flooding and water management in early modern Staffordshire as a case study.

**Lunch: 12:45 – 13:30**

**Poster Session (Lecture Theatre 3): 13:30 – 14:00**

**Panel Four: 14:00 – 15:00**

*New Themes and Methods in the History of the Book: Publishers, Texts and their Readers in the long 18th Century*

Chair: Ashleigh Hawkins

Hannah Kelly: Eighteenth-Century Readers and Their Books Abroad: Books in Estates Inventories, Commonplace Books, and Empire in India, 1780-1833

Though some research on the kinds of books agents of the East India Company and their families were bringing to and reading in India has been conducted for the 1820s and after, little has been written for the period immediately following the coming of Empire in 1757. My research hopes to provide fresh insight into the content and uses of the Anglo-Indian’s literary diet by consulting largely untouched evidence of book ownership contained within the East India Companies records of wills, estates and inventories for 1780 onwards. Taken alongside surviving records of library catalogues and the testament of eighteenth-century readers themselves, this material provides a unique opportunity to variously support, revise, and nuance some of our current conclusions on the dissemination of imperial ideology developed with the methods of reader-response theory. While only in its early stages, the findings of this project at present suggest both the continuation of literary trends from eighteenth-century Britain (i.e. the popularity of history and the ascendancy of the novel) in India, as well as the prevalence of highly specialised choices in reading material made to suit the needs of military life and civil administration.”
Hannah Kelly is a first year postgraduate student reading eighteenth-century colonial history in British India, in particular specialising in book history. At present, the title of her thesis is “Colonial Readers in Eighteenth-Century India: The Book Trade, Empire and Scenes of Reading”.

Dominic Bridge: Beyond the score: musical para-text in the long eighteenth century

Musicology is a field that tends to keep to itself. It is true that the specialist knowledge required to decipher musical notation does limit its accessibility to the outside world, but this is too often held up by musicologists and music historians to legitimise their self-imposed academic isolation. Largely because of this, music and literary publishing history have been treated independently in academia. These disciplinary boundaries shape our interpretations of print culture and distort our understanding of the past.

This paper intends to challenge the imposition of these boundaries on the eighteenth-century print trade by putting aside the musical elements of the score and analysing the non-musical para-text with the aim of resituating musical print amongst its literary counterparts. It will explore the role of music publications in social, religious and political life and hopes to rectify the neglect of the musical score as a rich historical source.

Dominic Bridge is an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership PhD student at The University of Liverpool and The British Library. His PhD focuses on music publishing in the British Isles during the long eighteenth century using book history methods to re-contextualise musical publications into wider print culture.


The anti-Jacobin novel of the 1790s and early 1800s has only recently emerged as a separate genre of literary study. The work of Mathew Grenby and Kevin Gilmartin has reassessed the nature and extent of conservative literature in Regency Britain arguing that it both outnumbered and outlasted similar radical fiction. This has been mirrored by a similar reappraisal of conservatism in general and the differing forms of political involvement in eighteenth century politics that can be analysed by historians.

This paper will seek to raise further questions as to the role of conservatism in British politics at the turn of the nineteenth century by moving the focus away from a sole analysis of the text to a study of the printers and publishers involved in the creation of anti-Jacobin novels and the genre’s growing popularity. This will involve an investigation into the methods and motives of anti-Jacobin publishers, the relationship between a repressive political centre and established printing dynasties as well as the wider political climate of Britain after 1789.

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Break: Tea, Coffee & Biscuits: 15:00 – 15:15

Closing Remarks: 16:15 – 16:30