

Programme Day 1 · Thursday 19 April

10.00-10.15 Welcome

10.15-11.00 Industrious Women

Jan de Vries

The Women of the Industrious Revolution

The paper focuses on the critical place of 'women's work' in the industrious revolution model. I will discuss the limited and sometimes distorted evidence available to chart the scope and timing of entry and departure of women, especially married women, from the paid labor force and assess whether my claims of a decade ago still hold up.

11.00-11.30 morning Coffee

11.30-1.00 Women & Work in the Past

Carmen Sarasua

The Eighteenth-century Economy and the Transformations in the Organization of Work

The eighteenth century was the origin of a series of demographic, technological, cultural, and economic changes that paved the way for the rise of modern economies, where growing consumption and improved living standards coexisted with widespread poverty and unemployment that became a favorite subject of reformists. This paper focuses on the changes occurred in the organization of work, including the reshaped gender segregation of occupations; the increasing involvement of all family members, including children, in market work, and the expansion of non-agricultural occupations, particularly textile manufactures and domestic service, crucial for sustaining rural families at times of increasing demographic pressure on the land and low wages.

Kathryne Crossley

Laundresses and Lodging House Keepers: Family Labour Networks and Female Labour Force Participation in 19th Century Oxford

Using a variety of archival sources, many of them previously unknown, patterns of family labour networks and the labour force participation of women are reconstructed to offer an alternative view of college service in nineteenth century Oxford. Of particular interest is the role of bargaining in the service contract, college servants, both male and female, actively negotiated nearly every aspect of their employment – from working hours and beer allowances to pension provisions. The employment of women as laundresses is mentioned in the earliest college statutes, and women continued in this work well into the twentieth century. Other types of employment have hitherto received little attention. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, women worked alongside their husbands, fathers and sons in colleges, performing a variety of jobs. Although women are observed in senior positions only very rarely, records show they were a constant presence in colleges. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, a different picture emerges. The licensing of University lodging houses in 1868 created employment for hundreds, if not thousands, of women and children. Colleges had always preferred to employ older married and widowed women and found a ready supply of lodging house keepers in the wives of their servants. Employment opportunities for women in college dwindled as they opened their homes to undergraduates and by the end of the nineteenth century, very different patterns of family networks and labor force participation emerge.

1.00-2.00 Sandwich Lunch in Hall

2.00-3.30 Women, Work & the Household

Brian A'Hearn

Distribution and Rural Living Standards in Fascist Italy

The paper uses household microdata to study the distribution of living standards in rural Italy during the 1930s, when the country was still predominantly agricultural. Lack of data and the lack of any coherence in Fascist agricultural policy have left us with a very muddled picture up to now. Provisional estimates for the 1880s put the 1930s in a longer-term historical perspective.

Linda McDowell

Coming of Age under Hitler and Stalin: Growing Up in Occupied Latvia

At the end of World War II, the British Government introduced a scheme to recruit young single women as waged workers in hospitals and the textile industry. Many of the recruits were from Latvia. The young women were termed Baltic Cygnets and were transformed from refugees (in their own view) into economic migrants by a governmental decree. I have collected the life histories of 25 'cygnets' – by then elderly women – whose recollections of adolescence and early adulthood during the war when Latvia was occupied by both the Reich and the Soviet Union form the basis of this presentation. I explore how the transition from adolescence into independent adulthood was affected by these occupations, looking at daily life in Latvia between 1939 and 1944, as well as their experiences as refugees in Germany before they came to the UK.

3.30-4.00 Afternoon Tea

4.00-5.30 Women & Work in the Present

Jill Rubery

Perversity and Contradictions in the Path Towards Dual Breadwinning and Equal Opportunities

Jane Humphries's work on gender, class and socio-economic change is both seminal and bold. She is one of the few feminist scholars to discuss and analyse the positive as well as the negative impacts of the male family wage and breadwinner status on the life and experiences of women as members of the working class (Humphries 1977). This approach courted controversy particularly in the early stages of her career when feminist debates were perhaps the more intense. She was also a pioneer in introducing control of sexuality as a factor in the explanation of gender segregation at work. Despite introducing controversial and novel themes, Jane has avoided grand theorising, insisting on empirical investigation and on the likelihood of finding variation over time and place and contradictory and even at times perverse effects. This paper seeks to continue this approach, by looking at the path towards dual breadwinning and equal opportunities in the UK, to assess the benefits but also the associated downsides from the perspectives of both class and gender in the current context. The paper will focus on three main contemporary issues that address themes in Jane's mainly historical work: how and at what price have women 'won' the right to be considered full members of the working age population; what are the consequences of moving beyond the family wage, with claims for living wages now applied to both men's and women's pay; and what is the role now played by sexuality in patterns of gender segregation, now that reproduction and sexuality can be more easily disconnected? This paper will not, however, aim to imitate Jane's painstaking empirical investigations but seeks more to set an agenda for

further research and understanding of how women's progress tends to be characterised more as two steps forward and one step backward- even in the good times.

Kanchana Rwanpura & Benjamin Brown

SDG8: Decent Work and Economic Growth: A Gendered Analysis

SDG 8 calls for promoting 'sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all'. In doing so, it makes visible some significant tensions, even as it highlights the importance of labour rights for all. We note that despite many critiques of narrow measures of growth, the focus here remains on GDP and per capita growth. This is problematic, we argue, because the GDP productive boundary excludes much of social reproductive work. This puts SDG8 in tension with SDG 5 which calls for the recognition of the value of unpaid care and domestic work. There has been a significant increase in the rate of working women in the formal and informal sector. However, there has not been a subsequent gender shift in the doing of social reproductive work. So, SDG 8's focus on decent work and economic growth, while committing to achieving full and productive employment and decent work to all men and women by 2030, we argue, needs to take into account the value and costs of social reproduction without which the debate on decent work remains incomplete. In our review, we trace key historical debates on work to argue that both gender and labour rights have to underpin SDG 8 if its promise of inclusive, sustainable and decent work is to be realized.

5.30-7.00 Drinks Reception at All Souls

7.00+ Conference Dinner at All Souls