Lecture: Landscape and Lead-Mining

Professor John Barrell
Centre for Eighteenth Century Studies, University of York
Chair: Professor Richard Read, University of Western Australia

Webb Lecture Theatre
Ground Floor Geography Building, UWA

This lecture is co-sponsored by the UWA Institute of Advanced Studies

Followed by a wine reception
sponsored by the
Perth Medieval and Renaissance Group
7 p.m. Old Senate Room
# Conference Programme

**Friday 11 June**  
Trinity Conference Centre, UWA

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<th>Time</th>
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<td>9.00 AM</td>
<td><strong>REGISTRATION</strong> (COFFEE AND TEA AVAILABLE)</td>
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| 9.30-10.00| **INSCRIBING POVERTY**  
*Chair: James Smith* | **HELP FOR THE POOR**  
*Chair: Deborah Seiler* |
| 9.30-10.00| Shane McLeod                             | Jennifer Hole                             |
| 10.00-10.30| Lauren Meaney                           | Sabina Rahman                             |
| 10.30-11.00| Mark Amsler                              | Mike Nolan                                |
| 11.00-11.30| MORNING TEA AND COFFEE                   |                                          |
| 11.30-11.45| **CONFERENCE WELCOME AND OFFICIAL OPENING** |                                          |
| 11.45-1.00| **PLENARY PAPER**  
*Chair: Philippa Maddern*  
*Poverty and its relief in the English countryside before the modern Poor Laws, 1300-1536*  
CHRISTOPHER DYER |                                          |
| 1.00-2.00 | **LUNCH**                                 |                                          |
| 2.00-2.30 | James Smith                              | Kate Riley                                |
| 2.30-3.00 | Anne Scott                               | Lesley Silvester                          |
| 3.00-3.30 | Peter Denney                             | Lisa Keane Elliott                        |
| 3.30-4.00 | **AFTERNOON TEA AND COFFEE**             |                                          |
| 4.00-5.15 | **PLENARY PAPER**  
*Chair: Jacqueline Van Gent*  
*The politics of poverty: The Hôtel-Dieu de Paris in the sixteenth century*  
SUSAN BROOMHALL |                                          |
| 7.00     | **SYMPOSIUM DINNER AT GRECO’S ON BROADWAY** |                                          |
# Conference Programme

Saturday 12 June  
Trinity Conference Centre, UWA

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<td>8.45 AM</td>
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| 9.00-10.30 | **RIGHTS OF THE POOR**  
*Chair: Philippa Maddern*                       |                                                                                   |
| 9.00-9.30  | Jason Taliadoros                                                          |                                                                                   |
| 9.30-10.00 | Nicholas Brodie                                                           |                                                                                   |
| 10.00-10.30| Michael Bennett                                                           |                                                                                   |
| 10.30-11.00| **MORNING TEA AND COFFEE**  
In celebration of the publication of the late Patricia Crawford’s book, “Parents of Poor Children in England, 1580 – 1800” Oxford University Press 2010 |                                                                                   |
| 11.00-12.15| **PLENARY PAPER**  
*Chair: Christopher Wortham*
*Representing the Rural Poor in North Wales in the 1790s* 
*JOHN BARRELL* |                                                                                   |
| 12.15-1.15 | LUNCH                                                                     |                                                                                   |
| 1.15-2.45  | **POOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**  
*Chair: Anne Scott* | **LIVES IN POVERTY**  
*Chair: Lesley O’Brien* |
| 1.15-1.45  | Philippa Maddern                                                        | Margaret Dorey                                                                      |
| 1.45-2.15  | Stephanie Tarbin                                                        | Joanne McEwan                                                                       |
| 2.15-2.45  | Ann Minister                                                             | Gail Thomas                                                                         |
| 2.45-2.50  | BRIEF BREAK                                                              |                                                                                   |
| 2.50-4.15  | **POETICS AND THEOLOGY**  
*Chair: Michael Champion* |                                                                                   |
| 2.50-3.15  | Megan Levy                                                               |                                                                                   |
| 3.15-3.45  | Heather Kerr                                                             |                                                                                   |
| 3.45-4.15  | Andrew Lynch                                                             |                                                                                   |
| 4.20       | CLOSING REMARKS: Michael Champion                                         | AND AFTERNOON TEA                                                                   |
SESSION DETAILS

Friday 11 June (Morning Session)

9.00  Registration and coffee / tea

9:30  Short papers in parallel sessions

Session A: Inscribing Poverty
Shane McLeod, University of Western Australia
The poverty of migrants or a poverty of evidence?  Norse migration to England c.865-900
Lauren Meaney, University of Sydney
Voluntary Poverty as Heresy
Mark Amsler, University of Auckland
Poverty as a Literacy Wedge: Dives and Pauper, Lollards, and Waldensians.

Session B: Help for the Poor
Jennifer Hole, University of Western Australia
The Control of Wealth in Late Medieval English Towns
Sabina Rahman, University of Sydney
‘For he was a good outlawe, / And dyde pore men moch god’: Poverty in the Early Robin Hood Ballads
Mike Nolan, La Trobe University.
The Gifts of the Poor: worth and value, poverty and excess in Robert Daborne’s “The Poor Man’s Comfort.”

11.00 Morning tea

11.30 Conference Welcome and Official Opening

11.45 Plenary Paper 1
Christopher Dyer, University of Leicester
‘Poverty and its relief in the English countryside before the modern Poor Laws, 1300-1536’.

Chaired by: Philippa Maddern

1.00 Lunch
SESSION DETAILS

Friday 11 June (Afternoon Session)

2.00  Short papers in parallel sessions

Session C: Perceptions of Poverty

James Smith, University of Western Australia
“So the satiated man hungers, the drunken thirsts”: The topos of spiritual nutrition within high medieval thought.

Anne Scott, University of Western Australia
Le Chastel de Labour [La Voie de Povreté ou de Richesse]

Peter Denney, Griffith University
“The Sounds of Population Fail”: Changing Perceptions of Rural Poverty and Plebeian Noise in Eighteenth-Century Britain

Session D: Managing Economic Hardship and Poverty

Kate Riley, University of Western Australia
‘The burden of ebbing & declyned estates’: economic decline and impoverishment in rural South Cheshire in the 1620s and 30s

Lesley Silvester, University of Western Australia
Survival strategies of single women in Early Modern Norwich: “Rank beggars, Gresse Maydes and Harlots”

Lisa Keane Elliott, University of Western Australia
Charity and the Single Girl; The Nevers Foundation, Paris c1588

3.30  Afternoon tea

4.00  Plenary Paper 2

Susan Broomhall, University of Western Australia
The politics of poverty: the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris in the sixteenth century

Chaired by: Jacqueline Van Gent

7.00  Conference Dinner, Greco’s on Broadway
SESSION DETAILS

Saturday 12 June (Morning Session)

8.45  Registration and coffee / tea

9.00  Session E: Rights of the poor

   Jason Taliadoros, Monash University
   ‘Poverty and Individual Rights in Tierney’s Medieval World’

   Nicholas Brodie, University of Tasmania
   ‘This p[ar]ishe doth dyschardge it self’: new perspectives on collections for the poor

   Michael Bennett, University of Tasmania
   ‘Can man or woman be said to be free, who is commanded to take a distemper, sometimes
   at least mortal …?’ (William Cowper, 1788).
   The inoculation of the poor against smallpox in eighteenth-century Britain.

10.30 Morning tea
   In celebration of the publication of the late Patricia Crawford’s book,
   “Parents of Poor Children in England, 1580 – 1800”
   Oxford University Press 2010

11.00 Plenary Paper 3
   John Barrell, University of York
   Representing the Rural Poor in North Wales in the 1790s
   Chaired by: Christopher Wortham

12.15 Lunch
SESSION DETAILS

Saturday 12 June (Afternoon Session)

1.15  Short papers in parallel sessions

**Session F: Poor children and families**

Philippa Maddern, University of Western Australia


Stephanie Tarbin, University of Western Australia

*Education, training and work: poor children in the later sixteenth century*

Ann Minister, University of Western Australia

*Pauper apprenticeship in south Derbyshire*

**Session G: Lives in poverty**

Margaret Dorey, University of Western Australia

*Reckless endangerment? Feeding the poor prisoners of Newgate*

Joanne McEwan, University of Western Australia

‘Through the Wainscot: Close living conditions and knowledge about each other’s lives amongst London’s working poor, c.1730-1800’.

Gail Thomas, Independent Scholar

*Poverty and the insecurity of life in rural Carmarthenshire, South Wales, 1780s-1830s*

2.45  Brief break

2.50  **Session H Poetics and Theology**

Megan Levy, (Notre Dame University, Australia)

*The Preferential Option for the Poor - Liberation Theology, a Call to Action*

Heather Kerr, University of Adelaide

*Charlotte Turner Smith's poetics of subsistence.*

Andrew Lynch, University of Western Australia

’S. Francis in Australia: Francis Webb’s “The Canticle” (1953)’

4.20  Afternoon tea and concluding remarks
PUBLIC LECTURE

Professor John Barrell
University of York

Landscape and Lead-Mining

In 1794 the Welsh-speaking artist Edward Pugh (1763-1813), the son of a country barber, published in London a series of six engravings of the area around his home town Ruthin in Denbighshire. By focussing on one, the image of a tract of common land on the Flintshire-Denbighshire border, this lecture will examine the conflicts and compromises involved in making them: between the expectations of a metropolitan audience and the local and provincial nature of the material; between Pugh’s status as an aspiring artisan-class artist and the genteel Welsh squirearchy to which he looked for patronage; between the anti-industrial ideology of the ‘picturesque’ and his concern for the development and modernisation of the Welsh economy; between the grand style to which as a relatively humble artist he did not aspire, and what Henry Fuseli dismissed as ‘tame delineations of a given spot’.

PLENARY PAPERS

PLENARY 1

Professor Christopher Dyer
University of Leicester

'Poverty and its relief in the English countryside before the modern Poor Laws, 1300-1536'

How did the poor survive before the system of state directed poor relief was developed in the 16th and 17th centuries? Poverty was probably reduced in the period 1350-1520 because living standards in general improved, but the poor were still a problem, and caused much alarm. This paper reviews the various devices, practices and measures which provided the poor with resources, and argues in particular that the poor laws of modern times were preceded by measures which used similar methods, though without co-ordination by the state. Many of the principles of the modern Poor Laws, such as local responsibility, selection of those who deserved help, and fund raising techniques, were not complete novelties.
Professor Susan Broomhall
University of Western Australia

The politics of poverty: the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris in the sixteenth century
This paper explores the complex history of the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris during the sixteenth century, a century of profound changes in the notions, practices and perceived recipients of charity in France. The Hôtel-Dieu was the most important healthcare institution of its day, in the largest and most influential city in the realm. Developments here would resound across the nation, with implications for hospitals, poor relief and religious movements in the early modern period. In this century, the institution underwent seemingly radical changes in its relationships with the Church, crown, parlement, and town council as well as internally between religious personnel, secular governors, medical practitioners and its clientele. In this period the crown sought to expand its influence in hospitals, reducing the power of religious orders and administrators, justifying its interventions due to misuse of charitable funds. Scholars have consequently painted a dark picture of this period, of an impoverished institution buckling under the pressure of a massive increase in pauper numbers. This paper explores why such changes occurred, how they were experienced by the institution's personnel and finally, their implications for those who received its assistance.

Professor John Barrell
University of York

Representing the Rural Poor in North Wales in the 1790s
The rural poor in North Wales in the last decades of the eighteenth century, and especially in the 1790s, were very considerably poorer that their counterparts in England, who themselves were poor enough. Most of the representations of them that have come down to us, in pictures and in writing, were made by English tourists, who between 1793 and 1815 were unable to travel in Europe and obliged to holiday at home. Many hundreds of accounts of the tours they made have survived, some printed, but mostly in manuscripts that would have been circulated widely among family and friends. We can think of this as a literature of first contact. Unable to converse with the Welsh-speaking small farmers, tenant-farmers and labourers they encounter, and entirely ignorant of the constraints under which they lived and worked, the tourists, with a few striking exceptions, invent and perpetuate a narrative by which the North Welsh poor have allowed themselves to be degraded into poverty largely through their own idleness. In this context, I want to look at some images by the London-based but Welsh-speaking artist Edward Pugh, whose work offers a rather different account of the situation, the behaviour, even the idleness of the rural poor.
Poverty as a Literacy Wedge: Dives and Pauper, Lollards, and Waldensians.

Throughout much of modern history, poverty and literacy have been inversely related to each other. If we increase people’s literate abilities and opportunities, we can decrease the levels of grinding poverty and empower people to direct and improve their lives.

In this paper, I argue that in the central and later Middle Ages the relations between poverty and literacy were theoretically and practically different, although literacy was still very much connected to social power and symbolic action. For one thing, Christian poverty could be condition to aspire to rather than escape. Also, the figure of apostolic poverty was an anchor for several dissenting discourses, including those of the Waldensians (13th c) and the Lollards (14th-15th cc). Finally, fraternal preaching, hermeneutics, and interpretive authority were predicated on the importance of apostolic and celibate poverty, even as antifraternal and anticlerical satire used the ideals of poverty and literacy to critique some friars’ and clergy’s literate arrogance and presumption as purveyors of public interpretation.

The ideal of literate poverty, then, was a mobile sign within a contested discursive space. Poverty could be associated with Latin and with the vernacular. Poverty as a signifier of virtue and authority were deployed both by elite discourses and modes of literacy and by dissenting literate discourses in Latin and the vernaculars.

'Can man or woman be said to be free, who is commanded to take a distemper, sometimes at least mortal ...?' (William Cowper, 1788).

The inoculation of the poor against smallpox in eighteenth-century Britain

From the 1720s the British aristocracy protected their children against smallpox by the costly and dangerous practice of smallpox inoculation. The middle decades of the eighteenth century saw a range of initiatives for the gratuitous inoculation of the poor. This paper considers the inoculation of foundlings, 'general inoculations' of parishes under the poor law, and the provision of inoculation in urban settings. This paper examines the motives, the logistics, and the politics of the inoculation of the poor. It considers the use of foundlings in clinical trials, the calculus of cost and benefit at parish level, and the debate over inoculation in urban settings. The gratuitous inoculation schemes saved a great many lives and a great deal of suffering. Though by no means wholly philanthropic, they represent some of the earliest initiatives to extend a health benefit to people without the means to pay. Still, many people deplored the coercive element. 'Were I asked who is the most arbitrary sovereign on earth?' asked William Cowper in relation to a general inoculation in 1788, 'I should answer, neither the king of France, nor the Grand Signior, but an overseer of the poor in England'. Curiously enough, however, after the introduction of vaccination and moves to outlaw inoculation after 1800, there were radical and plebeian assertions of the right of Britons to continue to avail themselves of the old practice, notwithstanding the hazard it posed to the community.
Nicholas Brodie
University of Tasmania

'This p[ar]ishe doth dyschardge it self: new perspectives on collections for the poor

This paper addresses various nuances of the parish collection system in 1560s Exeter through an analysis of the Accounts of the Poor. Providing a counterpoint of note to the famed Norwich Census of 1570, this paper explores Exeter’s development of a collection for the poor in the decade before the better known Norwich scheme. Paupers and parishioners can be explored in a unique manner through the Exeter Accounts, and this paper will highlight some of the key outcomes of this analysis. Similarly novel, this document enables a financial history of an Early Modern urban collection to be written, the first of its kind for such an early period.

Peter Denney
Griffith University

'The Sounds of Population Fail': Changing Perceptions of Rural Poverty and Plebeian Noise in Eighteenth-Century Britain

The eighteenth century in Britain witnessed the triumph of a range of modernising processes which dramatically altered the profile of the acoustic environment, and changed the way people valued, experienced and imagined different kinds and levels of sound. To take just one example, the advance of enclosure not only transformed the visual appearance of the land; it also undermined the customary soundscape of its inhabitants. Indeed, opponents of common-field agriculture reclassified many forms of previously acceptable sound, from gossip to cursing, as undesirable noise, which the spread of private property rights would help to eliminate, to the advantage of public order and prosperity. Conversely, critics of enclosure believed that agricultural improvement was imposing a lamentable quietness on the countryside, fatal to civic virtue. In this and many other ways, the eighteenth century can be regarded as a period when the distinction between sound and noise became a source of considerable controversy, often resonating with arguments over the consequences of commercial modernity.
Margaret Dorey  
University of Western Australia  

Reckliss endangerment?: Feeding the poor prisoners of Newgate

This paper explores a previously neglected question about the experiences of poor debtors within the early modern justice system: the plight of those without funds or friends to feed them in a period when prisoners had no legal right to be fed at the public expense. The situation of poor prisoners has received much less attention than studies stressing prisoner agency, which highlight the permeability of the prisons and the ability of well connected debtors to access luxury food and drink while in jail. Even in studies that do discuss possible sources of supply to the poor, such as R. B. Pugh’s description of Newgate in the early eighteenth century, which outlined the rates magistrates were authorized to levy under the Vagabonds Act and charitable bequests to be distributed for the subsistence of poor prisoners, contemporary questions and concerns about the food supplied to the poorer debtors have been ignored. This paper examines a series of petitions from the early eighteenth century from poor prisoners in the London gaols complaining about the quality of food supplied. These show variations of concerns articulated in a 1710 complaint lodged by the poor debtors at Newgate to the Court of Aldermen in London against the baker Thomas Reckliss for supplying ‘very unwholsom Bread not fit to be Eaten’. Focusing on this rare glimpse into the experiences of this group of the London poor, I will discuss the way in which prisoners’ expressed their rights to basic necessities of survival, and perceived the food supplied. At the same time, I will explore questions these petitions raise about both the agency of prisoners and the possible conflict evidenced in the mismatch between prisoner expectations of relief based on customary practice and their legal position which denied their right to be fed at the public expense.

Jennifer Hole  
University of Western Australia  

The Control of Wealth in Late Medieval English Towns

This paper will explore notions of justice and the common good and question whether or not they were referred to in addressing the needs of the poor. The doctrine of avarice will also be examined as it sought to control the desire for wealth. However, universal poverty was not encouraged by some theologians, notably Aquinas. There was concern that large-scale poverty was a threat to social order.

Much of the language used in late medieval moral texts concerning usurers, forestallers, regrators and those who over-charged, described them as those who sought to profit from the need of others, and to deprive the poor. Similar language can be found in some court judgements, especially breaches of the assize of bread. With the assizes of bread and ale, the approach seemed to be to prevent bakers and brewers from taking advantage of naturally occurring shortages by over-pricing staple items in the diet of the poor.

Other legislation tried to enforce common pricing, by forbidding private dealing and insisting that trade is carried out in the designated markets. This will be discussed in relation to notions of the just price.

Two principal questions will be discussed. Firstly, was such legislation directly for the benefit of the poor or did it also serve as defensive measures to prevent social disorder? Secondly, did this legislation imply an idea of levelling, that is, that all should have enough for their needs? If so, how was such a notion reconciled to contemporary ideas of the necessity of preserving social hierarchy?
Lisa Keane Elliott  
University of Western Australia  

Charity and the Single Girl; The Nevers Foundation, Paris c1588

In 1573, the Duke and Duchess of Nevers established a charitable foundation designed to provide “soixante pauvres filles” (sixty poor girls) with the means to affect a good marriage. The Paris Hôtel-Dieu had the responsibility of the financial administration of the foundation, however, as the document under examination in this paper reveals, the foundation spread beyond the boundaries of France’s capital. *La Fondation faicte par Mes-seigneur et Dame, les Duc, et Duchesse de Nivernois et de Rethelois…*, published in 1605, thirty-two years after the establishment of the foundation, outlined the procedures for the proper administration of the foundation, as well as to promote the benefit of Christian charity toward the “soixante pauvres filles”. Through this document we can see not only the French attitude toward single poor girls in the sixteenth century, but also a model for expressing one’s true Christian charity. This paper will examine what this document reveals about the perception of and attitude toward charity in sixteenth-century France. How is ‘charity’ presented in this document? Other than the obvious benefits of charity for the recipient, what benefits were there for the charitable Christian? Was charity seen simply as an obligation or were there other motivations at work? And turning to the recipients themselves: What reasons were given for providing this “perfection of Christian charity” for the poor girls of France? Why was marriage seen as the best means of charitable assistance for these poor girls? Does the document reveal any terms of obligation or eligibility criteria and who decided which poor girls were deserving of assistance?

Heather Kerr  
University of Adelaide  

Charlotte Turner Smith’s poetics of subsistence.

This paper extends on my recent study of Charlotte Smith’s late eighteenth-century “bioregional poetic imaginary”. Smith’s poetry is attentive to subsistence economies and to the tensions between apparently arbitrary legal and ecosystem boundaries. I’m interested in the non-proprietal attachments to place and bioregion, the shared “commons” of particular landscapes, and the ethical imperative of fellow-feelings that might comprise Smith’s poetics of subsistence. As Donna Landry’s eco-critical analysis of early modern women’s "green languages" points out, Charlotte Smith "demonstrated that poetry could be natural history and that natural history could lead to ethical statements and social comment".
Megan Levy  
The University of Notre Dame Australia

The Preferential Option for the Poor

The Option for the Poor is an Augustinian concept, an obligation to give and to share, for those who wish to live not only justly, but with love. Augustine’s preoccupation with acting rightly towards the poor is enforced at the end of almost all of his homilies.

This paper considers the widespread failure of community practice, from medieval times to the present, to allow the poor the dignity, consideration and love that Augustine enjoined. Should the treatment and understanding of poverty be seen as a political issue? Is it principally a social problem? Or should it be seen as a personal commitment which each of us has failed to uphold? The paper suggests that contemporary Liberation Theology responds to these questions about poverty through its instruction to find and serve the marginalized among us, and to find Christ within us in order to take the option for the poor. If time, history and geography have demonstrated that kings, politicians and their political systems have failed to removed poverty and oppression from the world, is it not then time to try individual change, and in line with Liberation Theology not only to take the option for the poor but to be one with them?

Andrew Lynch  
University of Western Australia

'S. Francis in Australia: Francis Webb's "The Canticle" (1953)'

The poet Francis Webb was unemployed, isolate and poor when he wrote a long verse-sequence on S. Francis of Assisi, 'The Canticle' (1953). This paper examines how Webb constructed his medieval Australian Francis in relation to a long and divided tradition of historiography, from the time of S. Bonaventure to the present, centring on the problem posed by the doctrine of radical poverty to wealthy religious and secular institutions. The sources of which Webb made most use included Francis’ own ‘Canticle of the Sun’, the ‘Little Flowers’, a collection of early Franciscan stories, and Bonaventure’s New Legend. Other influences came from James Adderley’s Francis: The Little Poor Man of Assisi (1900), a recently translated biography by Omer Englebert (1950), G. K. Chesterton’s much reprinted St Francis of Assisi (1923), and Otto Karrer’s St Francis of Assisi: The Legends and Lauds (1945, trans. 1947). Adderley and Englebert were strongly influenced by Paul Sabatier’s radical Life of St Francis of Assisi (1894), the first modern text to make use of surviving pre-Bonaventuran sources. Through a reading of ‘The Canticle’, I shall argue that Webb aligned himself within and towards Franciscan tradition in a way that appropriated the medieval saint for a critique of post-war Australian social and cultural norms. His Francis resists the authority of the European centre, rejecting an imperialist and colonialist mentality fostered by church and state. Meditating on Francis as a marginalised and scandalous figure, Webb’s multi-vocal poem creates an alternative, de-institutionalised congregation of the poor and disempowered, members of what Sabatier had called ‘the spiritual priesthood’, to represent the Franciscan spirit as he saw it.
Philippa Maddern  
University of Western Australia  


Though illegitimacy in the middle ages was not synonymous with poverty for either the mother or the child, it seems that in a significant number of cases poorer women who bore illegitimate children were thereby subject to severe economic disadvantage. This paper will survey the options for single mothers and their children as they appear in the ecclesiastical court records in England, 1350-1500, raising such questions as: how and where could single mothers live and support their children? What sources of income could they access? Who cared for the children?

Joanne McEwan  
University of Western Australia  

‘Through the Wainscot’: Close living conditions and knowledge about each other’s lives amongst London’s working poor, c.1730-1800.

In eighteenth-century London, living space was at a premium. The heavy demand caused by high levels of in-migration and population increase was not met by an adequate supply of new housing stock, and compromises regarding space had to be made. To accommodate the large proportion of the population who could be described as the ‘working poor’, existing houses were frequently subdivided, additional rooms were annexed to buildings and ad-hoc dwellings were constructed in alleys and courtyards. Within these dwellings the use of space was also maximised. Lodging arrangements and multiple occupancies were common, and domestic spaces were routinely shared. This meant that the majority of Londoners lived in very close proximity to other people, to whom they were variously connected by social or economic or relational ties. As a result of their physical proximity, they were regularly privy to information about each other’s lives that was not necessarily apparent to people outside the household or its immediate vicinity. By and large, they acquired general details and familiarity with each other’s daily routines by virtue of what they saw or overheard within the confines of their living spaces. At other times, people described actively seeking to advance their knowledge by peeking through holes in the wall or surreptitiously listening at doors and windows when they suspected mischief was afoot.

When crimes were alleged to have taken place within domestic spaces, witness testimonies from neighbours and other household members can shed light on this network of information acquisition and transfer. Drawing on examples from statements given in evidence at the Old Bailey, this paper will explore some of the social implications of crowded living conditions for the poor. In particular, how did such familiarity affect social relations between Londoners and their neighbours? And, did ‘insider knowledge’ foster expectations regarding action?
Shane McLeod
University of Western Australia

The poverty of migrants or a poverty of evidence? Norse migration to England c. 865-900

Migration theory regularly assesses the motivations for migration in terms of ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors. The most commonly applied factor is economic: most people are thought to migrate to access economic opportunities unavailable in their country of origin. Migration theory also posits that the majority of migrants are neither the poorest nor richest members of their home community: the wealthy have less motivation to leave whilst the very poor can rarely afford to. But can such theories based on modern migrations be applied to a proto-historic migration, specifically that of the Norse migrants who settled in eastern England from 865 to c. 900? Is the evidence required to evaluate the social status of the migrants available? Unfortunately the answer to the last question is no, yet finds of low-status Norse-influenced jewellery in the Norse settlement areas has led some scholars to revive an earlier notion of a peasant migration. Furthermore, if the origins of the migrants, primarily Norse-controlled areas in Ireland and probably northern Francia, are considered some plausible economic reasons for migrating to England do emerge. In this paper the available evidence will be evaluated in an effort to bring us closer to the status of the Norse migrants, and an understanding of their possible motivations for risking all to move to England.

Lauren Meaney
University of Sydney

Voluntary Poverty as Heresy

The later Middle Ages saw the flourishing of Western Christianity into countless forms of expression. A key development in this proliferation of devotional forms was the emergence of voluntary poverty as a religious observance. Evangelical groups such as the Humiliati and the Waldensians solidified the place of poverty in the religious life in the later twelfth century, but it was not until Francis of Assisi founded his movement in the early thirteenth that material indigence and social inferiority were elevated to the status of imperative spiritual pursuits. By the time Franciscan poverty had been fully enumerated and institutionalised into an official clerical order, however, tensions began to show in the relationship of holy poverty to ecclesiastical expectations bearing on both thought and deed. This paper will discuss the highpoint of intersection between voluntary poverty and heresy – late thirteenth, early fourteenth century France and Italy – by looking at the careers of four prominent poverty heresies. The most renown of these to the historical record, and thus to modern memory, is of course the Spiritual Franciscans: a name modern historiography employs to group a number of fractious factions within the order who called for a greater or more sincere degree of poverty than was being observed. The Spirituals in turn engendered a popular heresy among the laity through their relations with southern French tertiaries and penitents, called Beguins. The ultimate failure of the radical poverty cause within the order resulted in groups of descendant Spirituals who indeed broke away from the order, the fraticelli. Finally, a poverty heresy sprung up even outside the Franciscan order – a lay penitent movement, the Order of Apostles, was so troublesome to ecclesiastical sensibilities as to have a crusade called against them. This paper will use inquisitorial documents as well as material from the heretics themselves to reconstruct the emotions surrounding affected religious poverty, and in doing so aims to unlock the relationship between voluntary poverty and heresy.
**Ann Minister**  
University of Western Australia

**Pauper apprenticeship in south Derbyshire**

Apprenticeship generally, and pauper apprenticeship specifically, has not had a particularly good press. Images remain of uncaring parish officials arranging for bulk apprenticeship of very young children to far distant cotton mills during the latter part of the eighteenth century. This paper will ask if that reputation is deserved with relation to the apprenticeship of children from families of the labouring poor in south Derbyshire during the period 1750-1834.

Using pauper apprentice records from the parishes of Melbourne, Repton and Ticknall in the agricultural south of the county I will focus on three aspects of pauper apprenticeship. I will explore the type of apprenticeship undertaken, the location of the apprenticeship and the age of the apprentices. Using these results it may be possible to consider whether pauper apprenticeship in this area could be viewed in a more positive light.

**Mike Nolan**  
La Trobe University

**The Gifts of the Poor: worth and value, poverty and excess in Robert Daborne's “The Poor Man's Comfort.”**

While the correspondence between Philip Henslowe and Robert Daborne reveals the Jacobean playwright's often desperate pleas for financial assistance, his play, “The Poor Man's Comfort,” is not so much concerned with poverty as the lack or absence of possessions and wealth as it is with the processes of exchange that can exist between the poor and the rich. This paper will examine how Daborne questions assumptions underlying notions of value, worth and merit, and how he explores the nature of the relationship between the possessors and the dispossessed, and the connection between poverty and justice. Eschewing a simplistic or sentimental approach to the poor, he considers also the circumstances where there is some mitigation of the power imbalance that exists between 'the haves' and the 'have-nots.'
Sabina Rahman
University of Sydney

For he was a good outlawe, / And dyde pore men moch god’: Poverty in the Early Robin Hood Ballads.

The name ‘Robin Hood’ has become directly linked to the concept of poverty, the prominent adaptations of the tales depicting as they so often do a struggle between the wealthy and the poor and Robin Hood himself acting as an equaliser between these two sectors of the community by so famously stealing from the rich to give to the poor. However, the noble ideals of equal distribution of wealth which have become so mired in the Robin Hood tradition are notably absent from the earliest records of the myth. Using the medieval ballads of the popular outlaw, this paper will examine Robin Hood’s interaction with the wealthy and the poor, what constitutes a poor man in the ballads, his dealings with money, business and enterprise, and his own substantial wealth to argue that the early Robin Hood was not the bastion of hope to the commoner as he is now seen to be. Furthermore, I will examine the depiction of spirituality and religious piety in an effort to highlight the spiritual poverty of his victims as a justification for his own morally corrupt behavior by willfully and consistently breaking the commandment of not stealing.

Kate Riley
University of Western Australia

‘The burden of ebbing & declyned estates’: economic decline and impoverishment in rural South Cheshire in the 1620s and 30s

Historians have long asserted that the early modern period witnessed the ruin or extinction of many old gentry families of northern England. A case study in this phenomenon, this paper is concerned with landowners’ experiences of economic struggle and decline and their encounters with poverty during the 1620s and 30s in the traditionally prosperous agricultural region of South Cheshire. It focuses on the manor of Shavington, home of the Woodnoth family, situated just east of the market town of Nantwich. John Woodnoth’s accounts of his family’s difficulties shed light on the practical, social and emotional consequences of their dwindling fortunes, and his descriptions of the demise of neighbouring farms and the shrinking of village communities illustrate some of the negative experiences of demographic change in rural England during the seventeenth century.
**Anne Scott**  
University of Western Australia

**Le Chastel de Labour [La Voie de Povreté ou de Richesse]**

The double title of this short poem: *Le Chastel de Labour or La Voie de Povreté ou de Richesse* – says much about the shift in attitudes towards poverty that was taking place in Europe throughout the fourteenth century. The tenor of legislation starting in the middle of the century was to pillory the most disadvantaged poor – the vagrants and beggars – as if they were responsible for their condition, alongside an older tradition that regarded the poor as especially beloved of God, and poverty as one of the Beatitudes. Work was now regarded as virtuous and was increasingly set in opposition to poverty, as though socio-economic poverty could be negated solely by work.

This short poem, written by Jacques Bruyant around 1342, makes an interesting contribution to the debate which other texts such as *Winner and Wastour*, and *Piers Plowman* also develop. There are only 11 extant manuscripts of the text, of which a copy in Philadelphia is the most lavish and the only one with illuminations (Free Library, Widener MS 1). These early-fifteenth-century miniatures promote work over poverty as the new measure of virtue.

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**Lesley Silvester**  
University of Western Australia

**Survival strategies of single women in Early Modern Norwich: “Rank beggars, Gresse Maydes and Harlots”**

Finding the voices and experience of women in historical documents has always had its difficulties and these difficulties are exacerbated when studying records dealing with poor women. Most documentary sources tend to be those that stem from authority, usually male authority. Comments are limited to how those in authority perceived the poor and therefore are often biased and pejorative. For married women, their identity is often obscured by the tendency to refer to them by their husband, for instance “William Smith’s wife”. They may also be referred to by status, “Mother Jones”, “Goodwife Brown” or “Widow Baker”. In early modern England, women who were not married were looked on in different ways, dependant on whether they were never married, or widows. Yet in the 1570 Norwich Census of the Poor there are a large number either living alone, or living with parents, children or other women. That is, a number of women in the census were to all intents and purpose heads of households. This paper focuses on the single women who make up 15 percent of the total women in the census. Using genealogical methodologies and nominal record linkage I reveal the true identities of some of these single women documented in the Census and illustrate the role they played in early modern Norwich.
James Smith
University of Western Australia

“So the satiated man hungers, the drunken thirsts”: The topos of spiritual nutrition within High medieval thought.

The experience of thirst is, for the mind, an instinctive desire for replenishment. Amplified by the cravings of the body, it symbolizes the desire to remain extant, to sustain our vitality and indeed, our very life-force. It is, in short, the most powerful driving force of our existence, the instinct for life over death, satiety over want and wholeness over deficiency. The malnutrition, sickness and eventual death that result from a failure to cater for the basic need of the human body to drink is perhaps one of the most compelling images that spring to mind when we imagine an experience of poverty. Within the medieval imagination, the experience of thirst was not confined to the physical and material world, for one felt a powerful abstract thirst for the requirements of the spirit mirroring a corresponding thirst of the body.

Through symbols of nutritive spirituality, the bodily need for its fundamental requirements, was transformed into a spiritual quest for that which sustained it, the instinctive reaching of humanity towards the ultimate source of life. Thirst represented a profound longing for a quality required for satiety, a lack or defect of the soul. Without the apprehension of that which sustained and nourished the soul, the human race was doomed to an eternity of the spiritual poverty that it had felt since the Fall.

Within this paper, I will discuss a series of High medieval imaginings of spiritual thirst, and its representation through a transference of symbolism from the physical realm. The work of a variety of writers from this period including Guibert of Nogent, Alan of Lille and Godfrey of St. Victor will serve as primary source examples in a discussion of what is was to feel thirst within the spirit, and to experience poverty within the soul.

Jason Taliadoros
Monash University

‘Poverty and Individual Rights in Tierney’s Medieval World’

Tierney’s 1959 work Medieval Poor Law: A Sketch of Canonical Theory and its Application in England posited the development by twelfth-century canon lawyers of a doctrine of poor relief, which was brought into practice with local ecclesiastical legislation in the thirteenth century. In a subsequent paper published in 1989, and again in 1997 with little amendment, Tierney argued that these discussions by canonists on medieval poor law constituted but one aspect of their development of more broadly applicable individual rights. Today, somewhat anachronistically, we might label these ‘human’ or ‘universal’ socio-economic rights.’ My paper concerns itself with exploring other potential non-canonistic sources to twelfth-century notions of individual rights and poor law, and more generally interrogating the limitations and insights of Tierney’s findings. Following from this, my paper seeks to reflect on the criticisms that such attempts to trace the ‘history of ideas’ face—criticisms that make the historian’s task more rigorous and intellectually demanding, but not futile.
Stephanie Tarbin  
University of Western Australia  

**Education, training and work: poor children in the later sixteenth century**

For many early modern children, the experiences of leaving home and becoming a worker were closely related. Children entered other households as apprentices, servants and fosterlings, where they were expected to acquire skills and training to become productive adults. Some aspects of the experiences of poor children were distinctive: they tended to leave home at a younger age than their middling counterparts, received less skilled kinds of training and were placed in training for longer periods. This picture emerges most clearly from the fuller records of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly relating to pauper apprenticeships.

But debate about average ages for leaving home and the extent of life-cycle service suggest that there was also great diversity in these. This paper explores the education, training and work of poor children in the later-sixteenth century, drawing on the evidence of hospital records and surveys of poor households. What kinds of education and training were available to poor children? At what ages did children start work and what sorts of work did they do? How did gender make a difference to children’s experiences of learning and working life?

Gail Thomas  
Independent Scholar

**Poverty and the insecurity of life in rural Carmarthenshire, South Wales, 1780s-1830s**

Between the late 18th century and early 19th century, rural industrialisation in South Wales grew to meet the domestic demands and military requirements of England, particularly for coal and wood. Pockets of industrial activity developed within farming communities and on the outskirts of towns. With the movement from pastoralism to industrialisation, hardship was experienced within many farming communities. The Enclosure movement at the beginning of the 19th century resulted in rioting and unrest. A sharp increase in the cost of living was coupled with a doubling of the price of corn and rising tenancy rates meant that poorer tenant farmers were forced to become labourers. Many combined working on the land with working at sea.

Life was precarious in the rural areas of Carmarthenshire during this time. Many people led a subsistence life in which the illness or death of the breadwinner could threaten the survival of a family. Employment could be spasmodic and it was difficult to save for emergencies. Living conditions for many were humble, with primitive housing, limited food, high rates of infant and maternal mortality and a life of hard work and deprivation. There was limited assistance available and the last resort was the dreaded workhouse.

This paper will explore the impact of poverty on people living in rural Carmarthenshire between the 1780s and 1830s. The lives of individuals, families and communities will be explored, with a focus on the uncertainty of life at this time.

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