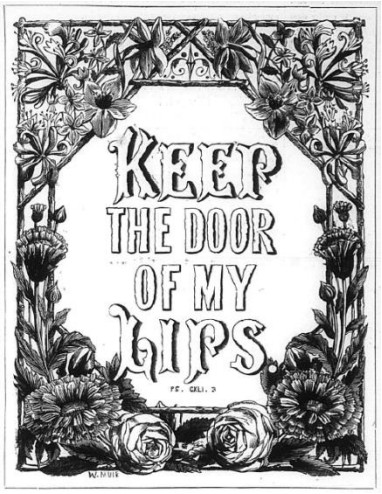
Keep the Door of My Lips

An exhibition curated by Andrew King and Connie Gallagher



11 July – 14 August 2019

Stephen Lawrence Gallery

Stockwell Street, Greenwich, London, SE10 9BD

The Stephen Lawrence Gallery

2019

For more information, queries or comments about anything in this booklet, email BLT19@blt19.org

Stephen Lawrence Gallery

Stockwell Street, Greenwich, London, SE10 9BD, UK

ISBN: 978-0-9573430-5-4

Work, working conditions, the effects of work, escape from work, being without work, gender and work, ethnicity and work, class and work are standing items on the news media agenda. The workplace and the structures of work are the foundation of hit shows from *The Office* to *Casualty,* from *Star Trek* to *Killing Eve* and *Lucifer*. Work is embedded in the story of our lives.

We talk about work endlessly. But what *is* 'work'? Where do our ideas about it come from?

This exhibition – by turns beautiful, heroic, shocking, comforting, unsettling – wants to get us to think about what work means for us by colliding images from Victorian periodicals with powerful and provocative art by four contemporary women: Catherine Hoffman, Emmanuelle Loiselle, Sarm Miccichè & 'Home is not My Home' by Dr Joyce Jiang, Tassia Kobylinska & The Voice of Domestic Workers.

The title 'Keep the Door of my Lips' comes from an illustration in the *British Workwoman*, a Victorian women's temperance periodical which Deborah Canavan writes about below. It struck the curator Connie Gallagher and me that it summed up what we wanted to do: by highlighting our guarded silences about our ideas of work and their history to open discussion of their effects on us.

The idea is the result of a decade of research into the history of trade and professional periodicals which, despite their ubiquity, had never really been researched before. It is part of a project I set up called BLT19 – Nineteenth-Century Business, Labour, Trade and Temperance periodicals – aimed at helping us understand the history of our thinking about work.

Working and speaking with young people today I see a very powerful return to Victorian conceptions of work, not least in the casualisation of the relationship between employer and employee, and in ideas of self-worth and practical possibility more generally. Victoria Tunn, a recent graduate from Greenwich, became very aware of this while working as an intern on BLT19.org. Utilitarian conceptions of education aimed to manufacture good workers now dominate at every level, as John Morton points out in his essay below. Deborah Canavan, meanwhile, raises the still important question of gender: how far have our conceptions of different work for men and women *really* changed? This latter question is closely bound to an anxiety about other kinds of work often not formally recognised as 'work' – the work of transforming others through parenthood and the labour of transforming oneself to actualise some idea of potential perfect happiness.

By colliding the hope and promises that the Victorian images suggest with the visceral outcries of today's artists we want to make audible what each does not say, as well as lend an ear to what they do. Through encouraging seeing and listening, we want to remove the guard of our lips so we begin to share thoughtfully our stories about work, its costs and its pleasures.

Andrew King **BLT19@BLT19.org**

Contents

Opening Our Lips: Meeting Ourselves

Andrew King
Professor of English, University of Greenwich

Ours is an age of work.

We are told there is lower unemployment than for decades and that's a good thing.

We are told that universities and schools must educate students and pupils for the world of work and we are measured accordingly.

We live in a culture of long hours and low pay at work, which we are told is damaging our health.

Many of us don't have a choice.

But what exactly is 'work'? How do we understand it today?

We can think of 'work' very generally as transforming something or someone through effort.

Parents work to bring up children just as a jeweller or miner transforms a mineral into something useful or beautiful.

An advertiser transforms a machine into an image that promises to save the purchaser labour costs (time and money), or a luxury into a necessity.

Domestic workers transform the homes of their employers into a status symbol. They operate like artists. As the Cleaner in Sally Potter's 2004 film *Yes* puts it, cleaners might be called 'cosmetic artists,' or 'dirt consultants.'

In what linguistics calls their 'conative' function, words and images, like music, architecture and social work, work to transform those who engage with them.

This exhibition suggests that ideas about work that the Victorians promoted through the mass media of the time – mainly magazines – are still with us, even if what we actually do on a day-to-day basis has changed dramatically.

There are as many silences in the Victorian magazines as there are statements, just as contemporary art, like all art, has to remain silent over some issues that the Victorians voiced.

In the exhibition, there probably isn't much that we will recognise from our daily lives, but we may recognise many of the same relationships between machines and people, men and women, adults and children, employers and employees, between emotion and art, love, pain and loss, and the different kinds of work all these do.

Above all, we see the sacrifice that the work of transformation involves.

We aren't talking just of terrible working conditions where Victorian children labour in noxious mines and factories surrounded by dangerous machinery. We know all that from school, visit to industrial heritage sites and many a television documentary.

Terrible working conditions may in many cases now be illegal but they haven't gone away. The Voice of Domestic workers video tells us that employers go to some lengths to ensure their workers do not speak out about them – clearly, not always with success. That video, like Catherine Hoffman's, shows us too that the cost of work and worklessness is not only financial. It can involve intense feeling and often suffering, both physical and emotional, for family members.

Work for the Victorians meant sacrifice in a very wide sense – sacrifice of time, sacrifice of identities, comfort and desires, and even sacrifice of lives. The Victorian images here valorise and heroise sacrifice; the contemporary art focusses on its cost. Is such a change of emphasis the main difference between then and now?

Suffering and remaining stoically silent – or better, converting that sacrifice and suffering to joy, 'leaning in' to the pain and learning from it to overcome it – was the ideal for the Victorians.

It has a precedence in the Christian martyrs whose closeness to God was signalled by their ecstatic embrace of suffering. One doesn't have to be a Christian to be affected by this story, and one doesn't have to be Victorian.

The image of the lifeboatman comes from the *British Workman*, a monthly temperance magazine that cost just a penny (less than half of 1p). It was in theory available to all. It was lavishly illustrated with prints like this. The very high quality of the prints (several of which you see in this exhibition) seemed to far outweigh the cost of the magazine.

The quality of the prints was a sign of how much work went into making them and the low cost was a mark that such labour was virtually being given away – sacrificed – to the greater good to us, for us, consumers.

The clear signs that the magazine took a lot of trouble to make such prints available to the public for so little validated the ideas of work and self-sacrifice the magazine promoted in its words.

To give more than you are paid was (and often still is) promoted as the highest form of work. The novelist (and civil servant) Anthony Trollope advised his male readers that such sacrifice lent status and dignity to their occupations – as long as they did not talk about it:

> For every half-crown that you receive, be careful to give work to the value of three and sixpence, and then do not care a straw for any man … That you may obtain your object, - that manly independence without which no profession can be pleasant, - it is not necessary that all the world should know the amount of return you make.
>
> Trollope, 'The Civil Service as a Profession,' *Cornhill Magazine*, February 1861, 214-28, p. 219.

The Manchester novelist Elizabeth Gaskell was all too aware of the class-based luxury of such an idea. In her 1854 novel *North and South*, the father of six children commits suicide when he is unable to find work: not only can he not give work above and beyond what he's paid for (possible, of course, only for those who are not already stretched to the limit by what their job requires), but he can't get a job at all. He has failed as a man. The shame kills him. His wife is left to bring up the children on her own. That is her work. Suicide is not an option for her.

Suicide is only an extreme form of the sacrifice such ideas demand. More usually we learn to merge our selves with machines, or at least adopt a persona that makes us fit into the mechanics of the work place. We must 'keep the door of our lips.' Catherine Hoffman wittily and bravely comments on this in terms of being accepted into a higher social class, and isn't it the meaning of the curiously blank serving maid here? She seems a robot smoothly intent on her task. She seems to run on perfectly balanced casters not feet. The artist has repressed her walk – that progress based on imbalance leading to another imbalance. The artist has repressed her potential for imbalance, whether psychological, physical or social. She is rendered a machine. Obedient to the *British Workwoman*'s call for self-denial (see p. 29 below), the ideal domestic worker has sacrificed her difference from her role. She *is* her social role.

How far do we still believe that to work well in society (in all senses of that phrase) we must sacrifice our selves and *welcome* that sacrifice? How far do we think there is a pressure to believe this – and for whom? Unpaid interns of both sexes? Those on temporary or zero hours contracts? Domestic workers? Mothers and fathers?

The question the contemporary artists we have put in dialogue with the Victorian material all ask is whether we still think that, and, perhaps, whether we were ever able to think that at all.

By colliding past and present, this exhibition offers a mirror to reflect on our thinking about work.

Victoria Tunn
BLT19.org graduate intern 2018, BA History
University of Greenwich

Work, Money and Drinking:

The Victorian Drunkard's and the Millennial's Spending Habits

Our enduring preoccupation with money is proliferated in numerous articles that we are bombarded with on social media and in the press. What is striking about some of the titles in the Victorian temperance magazine, the *British Workman*, is that they could be interchangeable for articles written today. For example, 'Take Care of the Pence and the Pounds Will Take Care of Themselves' (*British Workman* 1 May 1864, p. 450) mirrors the dominant discussion about the spending habits of young working people today. The articles we see today perpetuate the notion that millennials are financially irresponsible in the same way as people who spent their money on beer in Victorian times.

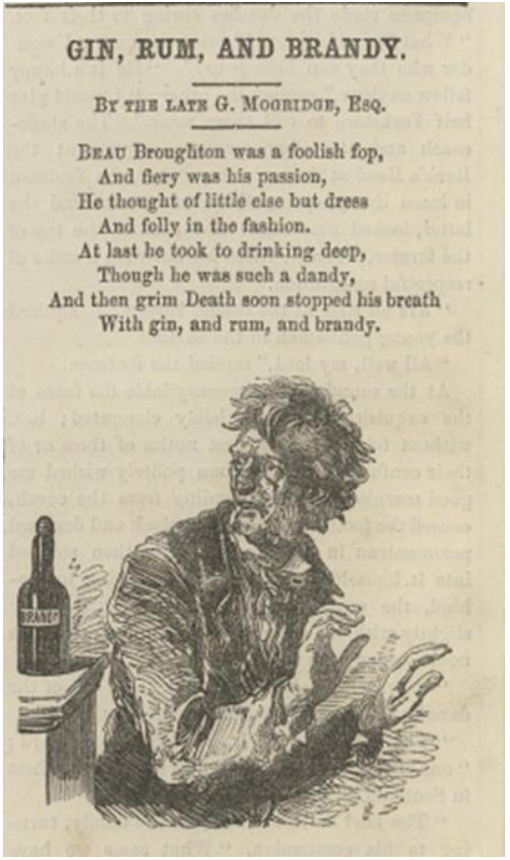
The assertion that 'People are more tempted to extravagance in small than in great matters' was made in 1864 but would be applicable in any modern article about how millennials spend their money. The crackdown in the press on apparent millennial indulgence in everything from coffee, sandwiches and avocados, (*Lifestyle Inquirer*, 17 Jan 2017; *Evening Standard* 14 Nov 2017; *Guardian* 15 May 2017) mirrors the nineteenth-century temperance movement. The *British Workman* frequently warned of the dangers of drinking for the underpinning reasons that it damaged the integrity of the

honest husband, it was financially negligent, and ultimately damaged ability to work. The attitudes presented in both the current press and in the *British Workman* are, in fact, underpinned by the theme of workplace security and the lack of it: be a good workman and save money or you'll be in trouble.

The *British Workman* promotes the values of 'honest' work, and 'sensible' living to *disguise* the inherently unstable world of work. It doesn't suggest that working conditions should themselves be changed; it's the individual who is in charge of their fate. In the same way, articles that flippantly discuss millennial spending and saving habits, with titles such as 'This is why millennials can't have nice things (or save any money)', (*Market Watch* 17 Nov 2017) are disconnected from the day-to-day realities of casualised low-paid labour. Articles in similar vein that proclaim millennials do not have the work ethic of the baby boomer (CNN 16 May 2016) perpetuate the idea that millennials struggle for success simply because they don't work as hard as their parents.

These generalisations silence the inherent inequalities that graduates face which many studies have demonstrated are a concrete reality. (*Independent* 13 April 2016) Articles that condemn the millennials' work ethic (*Mail Online* 16 February 2017) provide far too simple a solution to a complex process of entering the world of work.

They ultimately dilute the complexity and uncertainty of finding a place that, if it doesn't reward you with a lot of money, at least works for you.


GIN, RUM, AND BRANDY.

BY THE LATE G. MOORIDGE, ESQ.

BEAU Broughton was a foolish fop,
And fiery was his passion,
He thought of little else but dress
And folly in the fashion.
At last he took to drinking deep,
Though he was such a dandy,
And then grim Death soon stopped his breath
With gin, and rum, and brandy.

'Buy Your Own House'

"BUY YOUR OWN HOUSE!"

DURING the last twelve months, we have received several interesting accounts of working-men, who are striving, by their industry and frugality, to live "*rent-free*," that is, they are building or buying *their own homes*.

A gentleman in Chesterfield has kindly favoured us with a sketch of the above pretty little row of houses erected by a hard-handed Derbyshire miner. The "'tis buts" and money which "the Successful Collier" formerly spent in drink and tobacco, having been safely deposited in the Savings'-bank have, in the course of years, accumulated to "a good round sum," sufficient to purchase the above houses and shop, which the owner has not inappropriately named "Providence Row."* Working men! put your "*'tis buts*" into the Savings'-bank, and in the course of years, *you* may *buy your own homes!*

It has become somewhat antagonistic to young people to call them 'millennials'. Some twenty-somethings refuse to be defined by it and resent the generalisation of experience that comes with it. The label can, however, be a positive thing. Overlooking the eye-roll-inducing headlines, the label can create a shared identity of a group of working professionals who, perhaps due to changes in the workplace, have common experiences.

In their contorted efforts to relate to the concerns of the young working millennial, however, the majority of the media misses the mark. Articles that generalise the impact of millennial ethics on the workplace are indicative of how most of the press serves the interests of the employer rather than of young working people. The press does not address millennials but talks about them as a fictitious entity instead of a group of people with a very present voice in the workplace. In this the press of 2018 is simply continuing the practices of the mid-Victorian *British Workman*. Both attempt to regulate the behaviour of working people. Even the formats of many of the pieces are remarkably similar.

Amongst suggestions of preserving good health through good morals, exercise and washing well, an article from 1856 entitled 'How to Live Long and Live Well' encourages 'Work for two hours before breakfast; rest for two hours before sleep.' The

HOW TO LIVE LONG AND LIVE WELL.

Suggested by the perusal of Hufeland's Work on the Art of prolonging Life, edited by Sir Benjamin Brodie.

HEALTHY PARENTAGE; a healthy stock makes a strong and healthy race; as you could not select your parents, get health yourself, that you may give it to those who follow you.

GOOD MORALS preserve good health.

DWELLINGS on high ground in a dry situation and away from the town, are more healthful than those on low ground in damp situations and in close streets.

GOOD VENTILATION and good drainage are of the first importance to health.

PREVENT BAD SMELLS, which are unpleasant and dangerous to life.

TEMPERATURE from 60° to 65° most healthful.

EXERCISE is necessary to health, both of body and mind, and both should be actively employed; if your business confines you to the house, endeavour to obtain exercise in the open air, either before your labours begin or when they have ended; gardening combines profit with exercise; cricket and manly games exhilarate and strengthen the mind as well as the body.

AIR is to the lungs what food is to the body; therefore, breathe all the fresh air you can.

RISE EARLY and retire early to rest; let your bed-room be as clean as possible, and as free from boxes, curtains and furniture. It is most healthful to imitate the birds, they roost above the reach of the vapours of the ground.

WASH WELL; let your first waking act be to wash your body, teeth, face, hands, and feet; use plenty of soap, rub it on your skin with your hands or a piece of flannel, then rinse it off well with fresh water, and dry the skin well with a clean cloth; if your occupations be dusty or dirty wash before you sleep.

FOOD; be regular with your meals and eat them slowly; three meals are enough for every one, breakfast, dinner, and supper; the tea as a separate meal, is bad; tea and supper should be one.

WORK for two hours before breakfast; rest two hours before sleep.

EAT AND DRINK moderately; to be light and bright at your work, carry a light load. Take nothing between meals; if you be thirsty drink water.

SPIRITS are wholly unnecessary; the Indians call them fire-water, for they burn up the vital organs.

TOBACCO is very injurious; its use a wanton waste; waste of health, waste of time, waste of money.

CLOTHING should be clean and sweet; woollen in winter, cotton in summer. To keep your head cool and your feet warm is a wise maxim.

THE CHEST should not be exposed to damp and cold, for in it are the lungs and the heart. For the same reason the chest should have free play, and the clothes should be hung from the shoulders and not from the waist.

PRESSURE ROUND THE WAIST of any kind is hurtful and dangerous to life; this custom is as injurious to women as tobacco is to men.

BE CHEERFUL. Laugh and grow fat is a good adage; cheerfulness begets health, and health begets cheerfulness; and both, thankfulness for God's mercies.

TO BE ANGRY is to be contemptible, it destroys self-respect and spoils digestion.

OCCUPATIONS that compel close confinement, stooping, leaning, &c., and those that injure the breathing, or expose to unhealthy influences, must be counteracted by a strict observance of the rules of health.

motivations of these 'rules to live by' are to create a healthy working population. This list format is not unlike the array of clickbait articles that offer, for example, the '10 Best Pieces of Career Advice for Millennials.' (Dan Schawbel, *Forbes Magazine* 17 October 2013) Both the 1856 and the 2013 pieces instruct the reader in how to conduct themselves, for even if the *British Workman* piece claims to be about 'How to Live Long and Live Well,' in the context of the magazine that advice is really about how to work most effectively.

A clear parallel between the content of the *British Workman* and the current press is that neither is primarily produced by the average worker. This is incredibly important to acknowledge when understanding the material and what ideas and sentiments it perpetuates. As I've written previously, when an article from the *British Workman* claims that 'working-men, who are striving, by their industry and frugality, to live "rent-free," … are building or buying their own homes' – by saving pennies, this is exactly like an article by upmarket estate agent Strutt & Parker that 'proves' that millennials could save for a deposit on a house if they gave up coffees and takeaways. (Lawrie Holmes, 'Tough choices for first-time buyers to help save a deposit,' *The Residential*, 10 Nov 2017)

Despite the incentive to provoke shock reaction to such statements and thus make money by going viral, such sentiments demonstrate that there is a continued relationship between the association of work and home ownership as markers of success.

Victorian ideas are still with us.

British Universities in 2019:

Working on Employment / Facilitating Potential?

Dr John Morton
Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences Employability Lead
University of Greenwich

One thing shared by many recent novels set on University campuses is a satire on the modern University's supposed tendency to value career planning over traditional study. Even in an undisputed masterpiece such as J.M. Coetzee's Booker prize-winning *Disgrace* (1999), we find a slightly lazy critique of South African higher education: following what is termed the 'great rationalisation,' a former professor of modern languages is presented to us teaching two modules, one on 'communication skills', and one on Romantic literature.

Despite this satire being over the top and somewhat detached from the still generally very academically-focused teaching in the UK of, for instance, English Literature (my discipline), nonetheless it is the case that in recent years the concept of the 'outcomes' of Higher Education in the UK has somewhat narrowed in its focus. It is not unfair to say that post-graduation employment is the main concern of the current government in how it grades the 'quality' of an institution.

What I want to do in this short piece is first to explain what graduate 'Employability' is. How is it defined, who defines it and why? These are questions we constantly ask in English Literature of all sorts of terms and they seem as apposite here as they do when the Victorians extoll the virtues of 'work.' The media make it sound so simple and obvious, but

it's actually based on certain notions that not everyone shares. I'll explore that notion of graduate employability before thinking about what effects it has on what we and students do at university.

TALKING OF TEF …

The Teaching Excellence Framework ('TEF'), introduced in 2016, was designed to 'give students clear, understandable information about where the best teaching is on offer.' From the start it focused on quantifiable metrics rather than actual inspections or teaching observation. Many academics have noted that the exercise cannot really gauge the quality of *teaching* if it is focused largely on statistics about student experience and post-graduation jobs ('destinations'), and yet as the exercise has developed, it has more squarely focused on the latter as an indicator of the merits of a University and a degree programme. This is reflected in its current title: 'Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework' (which is still abbreviated to 'TEF').

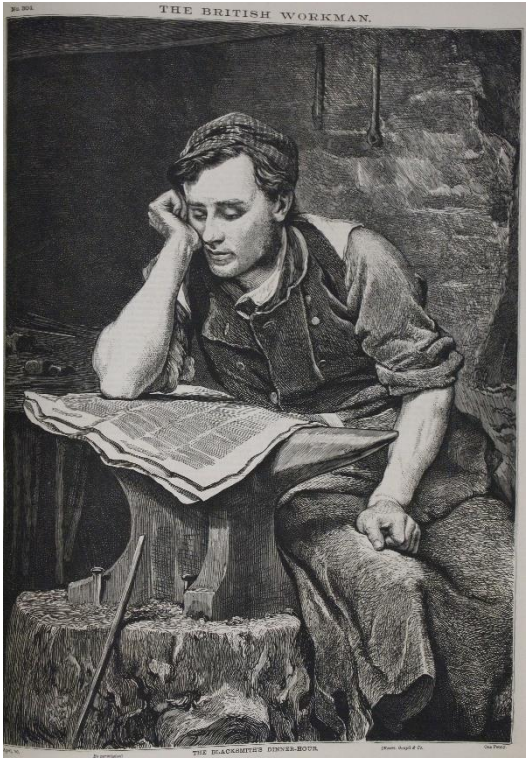
To many academics, the idea that teaching excellence should be gauged primarily via metrics, let alone (as we shall see) metrics about type of employment after 6 months, and salary over time, is absurd. As the graduate intern Victoria Tunn is aware in this booklet, it is indeed the case that many other factors – chief among them pre-existing capital of various forms – come to bear on post-graduation success, and as such the employment outcome cannot entirely (or even mainly) reflect the way a course of study was delivered or the quality of its teaching. Yet at the same time, it is also the case that some academics deny the impact that degree-level study can have on the development of varying forms of capital, and thus, potentially, on employment outcomes. They can also at times deny a link which most students continue to believe in, that their degree subject and future earning potential are closely connected.

The Universities Minister recently spoke at an event entitled 'The Secret Life of Students,' and noted that 'not all students want a high paying career or even have a career plan.' Despite the TEF's continuing focus on potential earnings as a benchmark of a degree's quality, it was nonetheless cheering to hear this from such a senior figure. This welcome acknowledgment illustrates the mixed responsibility which Universities have on employability. High performance on graduate outcomes statistics is central to the way HE institutions are 'graded' externally, and often how departments

and degree courses are rated internally; yet universities have, for many years (if not centuries), acted as facilitators for the development of students' potential after they graduate.

The question, though, of how the facilitation of potential is defined and measured is a controversial one. For a good while, the dominant measure was the Destinations of Leavers of Higher Education survey. This survey informed most of the media discussion of 'graduate jobs' even though its nature was not widely understood. It was a survey of the occupations of graduates on a single day six months after their graduation, where universities were responsible for their own returns, and which also took for granted that graduates who responded were providing accurate information not just on their main occupation but on their salaries, addresses of employers, and other details.

Even if one were to accept the veracity of all this information, we should also look at what use the data is put to. Most prospective students and their parents would want the end result of three years of study to be a 'graduate-level job.' However, the definition of a 'graduate-level job' is probably not what one would expect; certainly when I have run training sessions on this for colleagues there has been some surprise. Instead of a 'graduate-level job' being one which requires an honours degree as a pre-requisite, it instead meant (and indeed still means) a job which fell into the 'professional/managerial' classification in a 2010 list of occupations produced by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). It would probably be a surprise to many



'The Blacksmith's Lunch Hour,'
The British Workman, April 1880
Even in leisure time the dutiful worker improves himself.

people that, thanks to the inflexibility of the ONS definitions, a job such as a Graduate Teaching Assistant – a solid, paid route into a teaching career, which has a degree as a pre-requisite – would not be classified as 'graduate-level,' whereas an entertainer at children's birthday parties definitely would.

Such very obvious problems led to a new survey, Graduate Outcomes, being launched. This survey asks graduates what they are doing over the course of a week 15 months after graduation. This has, in general, been welcomed, reflecting as it does the difficulties of finding a job one is happy with so soon after graduation in a crowded labour market and a frequently underperforming economy. There are, though, a couple of caveats. The first is that the Gradate Outcomes survey will still rely on the curious ONS definitions of 'graduate-level' work; the other is that it will be complemented by statistics on salary from a different source, the 'Longitudinal Education Outcomes' survey (LEO). This consists of data on salary over time gathered from HMRC (the 'tax people'). This 'LEO' data can be considered relatively accurate, yet by its nature it is not up to date, and since not all occupations attractive to graduates provide high salaries, it can be somewhat distorting as a guide to the 'value' of a degree.

FACILITATING POTENTIAL, WORKING ON EMPLOYABILITY

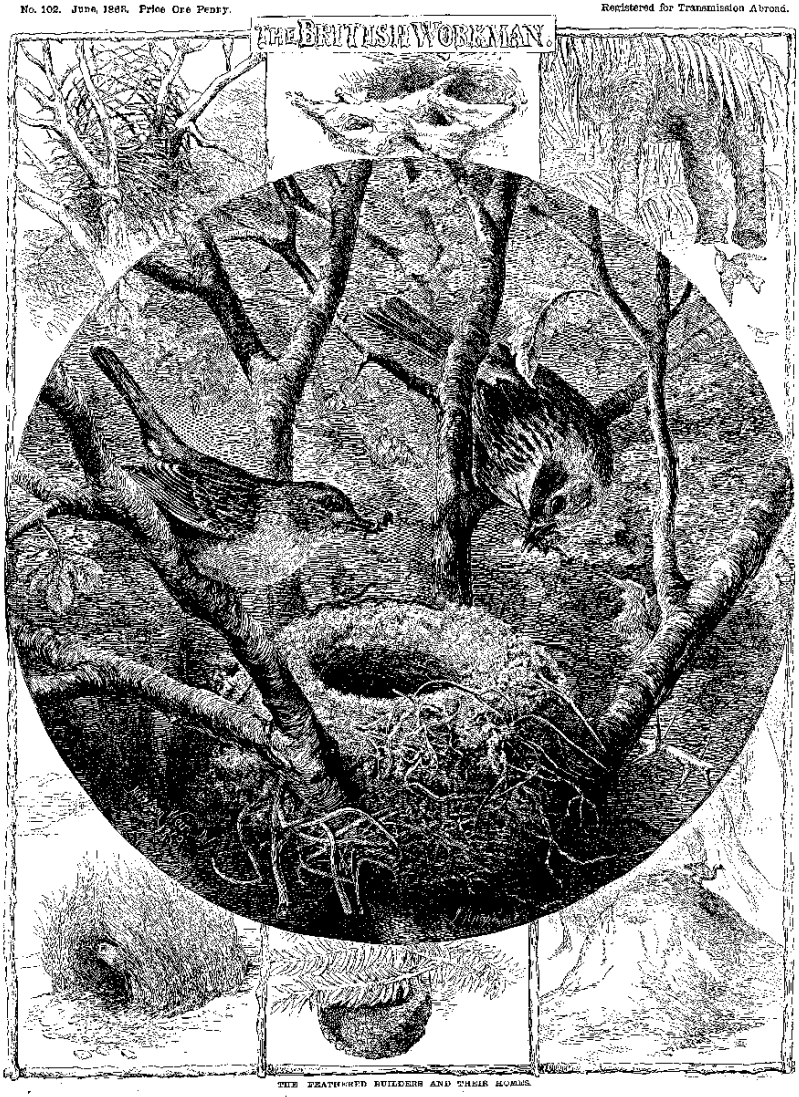
Such then is the landscape in which Universities operate, in relation to what is frequently termed 'Employability'. In the second part of this piece I will discuss some of the ways in which Universities – both in terms of degree courses and in terms of wider student support – can help to support their students' preparation for life after graduation, and also to improve (or maintain) their own positions in exercises such as the TEF and in league tables. I will inevitably focus in part on my own University, of whose work in Employability I am proud, but much of what I will say of Greenwich is true of others.

Despite many newspaper commentaries on universities assuming that most students are assessed primarily by exams in their final years (possibly belying the dominance in journalism of Oxbridge graduates who left University some time ago), it is now the case that degree programmes proactively design their assessments with a view to developing and gauging various skills in their students. This means that, moving away from the typical essay/exam assessment style (notwithstanding the continuing importance of these assessment types), degrees now assess students in ways which can help them to both showcase and develop many other skills necessary after graduation – increasingly necessary in a rapidly

changing employment world. For instance, since the year the ONS published its list of graduate occupations in 2010, the job description of, for instance, 'Journalist' has changed quite radically. An aspiring writer on politics or sports will now need to not only know intimately the worlds they wish to write about and to research and produce high-quality written copy, but will also need to have a solid brand and following on at least three social media platforms (and to be relied on to respond instantly, and on brand, to queries and news stories), to be capable of producing video content of fairly high quality, as well as being able to record and contribute to audio material, not least podcasts – this at the very least.

This example demonstrates that universities, in preparing students for life after graduation, need to help their students develop a variety of skills, both subject-specific (like writing clearly and logically according to the conventions of different subjects and understanding technical terms) and to also develop adaptability and resilience. Examples of such assessment at the University of Greenwich are myriad. Students can make podcasts involving their historical research; they can produce marketing packs for imagined editions of literary texts; they can produce real-life business models, work on legal cases, and produce professional-standard films, along with longer-form pieces of creative and critical writing. Some of these creative pieces have been developed, after graduation, into prizewinning published work, while business models produced for assessment have led to successful companies being founded. On a wider level, students can develop a portfolio of work and demonstrate a capacity to innovate and adapt which they can showcase to potential employers. The accounts of successful graduates of their performance at interview suggests that this can be highly effective in distinguishing them from other candidates.

In addition to such programme-based assessments, UK Universities also typically offer support outside of the seminar room. The traditional forms of employer engagement remain – the annual careers fair featuring stalls hosted by (typically) multinational employers, plus the 'milk-round' of presentations by similar companies, along with the summer internships offered by such employers. However much these traditional gateways remain with us, the typical student nowadays might find it hard to abandon a long-term part-time paid job for a month or two as an unpaid intern in the summer. As a result, universities are increasingly encouraging students, regardless of programme of study, to take a 'sandwich year' – previously often termed a 'year in industry' – between their second and third years.



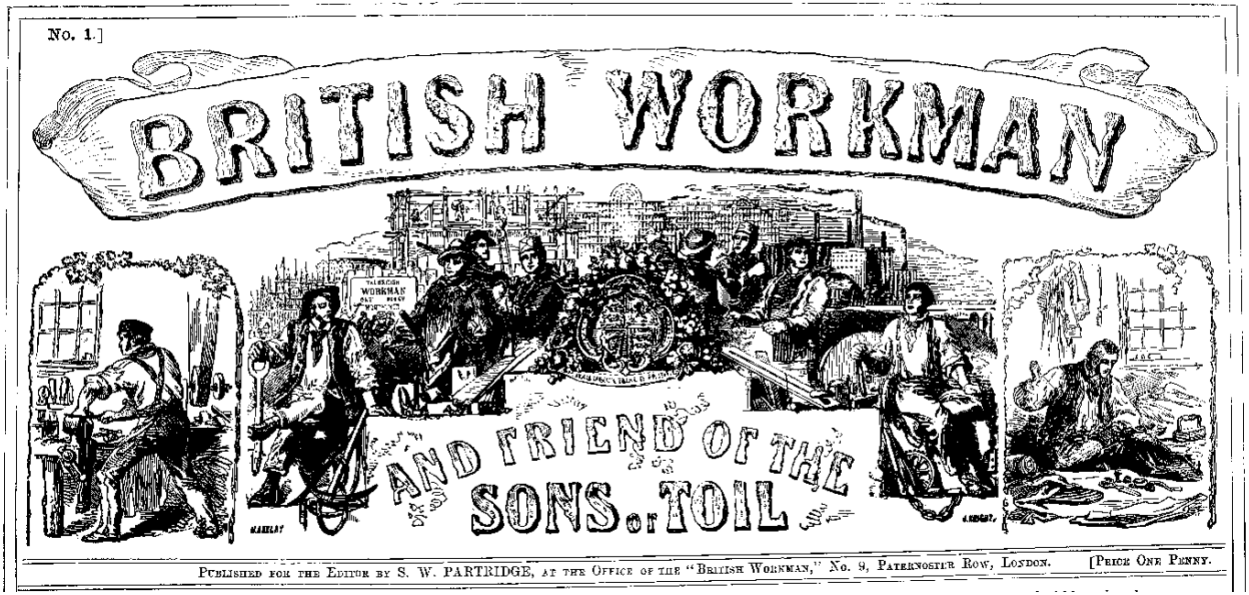
Front page of the British Workman *June 1863. Animals 'working' - a graphic 'proof' of the magazine's argument that work is natural, cooperative and fundamentally domestic – a long way from graduate outcomes.*

This is frequently much more attractive to students than the summer internships traditionally offered, and such years have a very impressive track record of securing jobs after graduation. Again, for some students this is too much of a commitment, and Universities endeavour to accommodate this as well, offering, for instance, work-based learning modules where students spend time at an employer and then produce coursework related to their experiences.

All of the above opportunities, from career fairs to placements, are often brokered by dedicated staff at universities. There has long been an organisation dedicated to such staff (AGCAS, the Association of Careers Advisory Services, of which my grandfather, Colin Slipper, was a founder member), offering its own training and related events, though in recent years there has been an increased shift towards career advisors at Universities having backgrounds in recruitment, enabling a wider offering of advice to undergraduates.

Almost all graduates are entitled to continue using the career service of their alma mater some time after graduation, and this in turn helps to maintain a relationship between graduates and institutions which can help produce, for instance, mentors for current undergraduates. Indeed, being mentored can be one of the most productive ways for undergraduates to develop their networks and workplace experience while keeping on top of their studies. A mentor offers a figure that students can relate to, and of whom they can ask questions which they might be less comfortable raising at a career fair or on a paid internship.

For many students (and indeed many employers), however, the primary contacts at university are lecturing staff. It is very difficult for any of the activities I've described to take place without the cooperation and support of lecturers, and it is lecturers who will typically be called on as referees for the positions which graduates apply for once they have left. This means that a strong personal tutoring system can be the motor of graduate success, and, increasingly, the one-to-one meetings which have always taken place are complemented by electronic applications, such as Learning Analytics, Personal Tutor Management Systems, and schemes such as the Greenwich Employability Passport, where students upload evidence of the extracurricular activities which are so vital to standing out in a crowded graduate labour market. Lecturers 'approve' these if true and appropriate, and also get to know their tutees better, while the tutees gain points which go towards rewards such as professional headshot photographs and invitations to networking events.

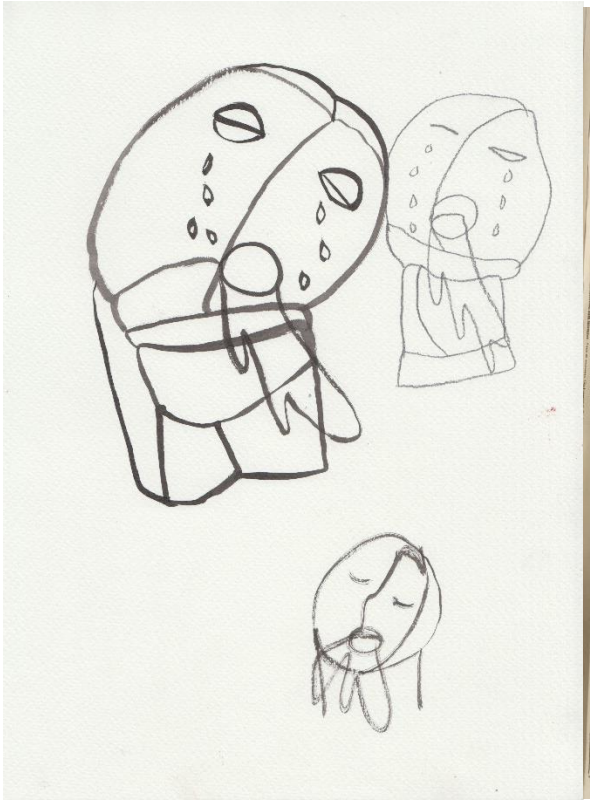


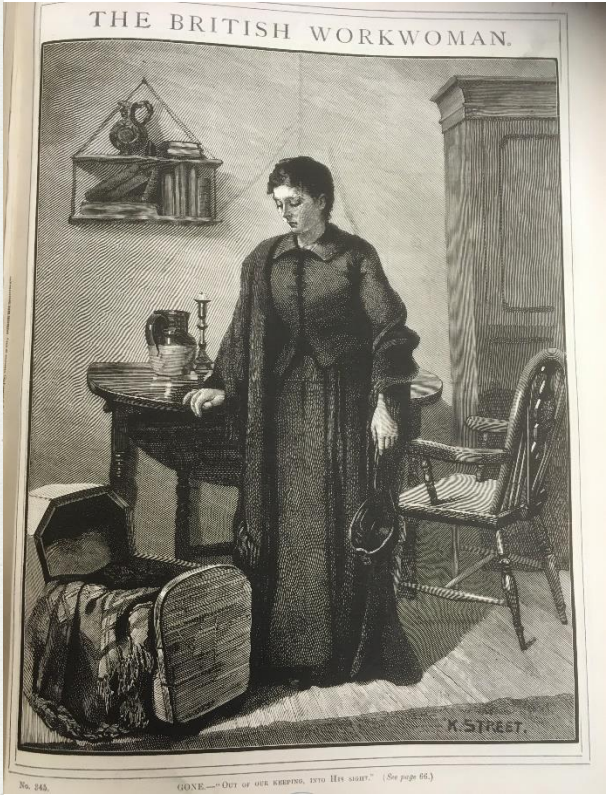
The masthead of the 1st issue of the British Workman, *1855. See BLT19.co.uk*

The world of employment in the twenty-first century is very different from that of the mid to late nineteenth, and several of the blogposts on the BLT19 website establish this in very interesting ways, as does the contrast of the artists' work with the images from the Victorian periodicals in this exhibition.

On the front page of the first edition of the penny monthly magazine, the *British Workman*, published next door to the *British Workwoman*, various terms are used for the intended (male) audience – in addition to 'workman,' we have 'sons of toil,' 'employers and employed,' and 'working classes.' And unlike the images in the *British Workwoman*, even the masthead offers a big range of jobs men could do. But, like the ONS definitions, they were still arbitrary and limited in what they regarded as worthwhile 'work.' While our undergraduates today would identify as 'students' by and large, irrespective of age or sex, for the most part they are also united in seeing themselves as 'future employees' and indeed 'future employers.' We want to help them realise those aspirations and not bind them to specific jobs depicted as worthy on a masthead or a 2010 ONS list. While there is still much to do, UK universities are responding in a proactive manner to what is best for the student, not the statistics.

In such a rapidly-changing marketplace both in higher education and wider employment, resting on one's laurels or, like Coetzee's professor, fencing Employability into 'communication skills' courses – or heroic or domestic images and energetic mastheads - is simply not an option. The fostering of employability, conceived as the wider facilitation of our students' potential, is everywhere in what we do for students at Greenwich today, and something we are passionately committed to.




THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN.
K. STREET.
No. 245.
GONE.—"Out of our keeping, into His sight." (See page 66.)

The *British Workwoman* (1863-1913): Educating Women in Work?

Deborah Canavan
Funded PhD Student working on BLT19
School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Greenwich

When the *British Workwoman* was launched in November 1863, it stood out from other women's magazines with its large broadsheet format, its bold masthead, and its striking front-page wood-engraved illustrations. Priced at one penny (1d = less than ½p today), this monthly evangelical Christian temperance magazine aimed to grab the attention of working-class women across Britain. The *British Workwoman* was designed for sharing and reading aloud to fellow workmates. Its stunning front-page illustrations – some of which are reproduced here and in the exhibition – were intended for posting on the walls of the reader's home.

The *British Workwoman* was not affiliated to any particular religious, temperance, or women's organisation. It was founded and run by a small all-male group of publishers, most notably Job Caudwell (1820-1908) and the editor Richard Willoughby (1801? -1879). Both were well-connected to the Christian and temperance publishing network in London. Lord Shaftesbury (1801-1885) supported and endorsed the magazine which proudly displayed his quotation alongside its editorial column: 'I believe that any improvement which could be brought to bear on the mothers, would effect a greater

amount of good than anything that has yet been done.' (*British Workwoman* Nov 1863, p. 2) Although there is limited information about the circulation figures for the magazine, its fifty-year longevity suggests that it was popular. Not many copies survive simply because the magazine was designed not just to be read but to be *used* in various material ways.

The origins of the magazine can be best understood if we look at the many public concerns dominating British society at that time. Public anxieties were heightened in mid-Victorian Britain with the rapid expansion of the cheap and popular press, considered to be immoral and seditious by religious organisations. The low attendance at church services identified in the 1851 religious census also raised questions around working-class estrangement from organised religion. High levels of visible prostitution and intemperance amongst the working class, particularly in London and major towns, also caused concern. Not least, the growth of industrial capitalism had a dramatic impact on women in relation to the family, home, and work, which caused many within the political and religious establishments the greatest consternation. Women were drawn to the new employment opportunities which brought relative freedoms and higher wages when compared to the other major employment options such as dressmaking or domestic service. The long hours young women were committing to the factories and workshops raised worries that they would be ill-equipped for the domestic responsibilities needed for married life and motherhood. And, if married mothers were working, they were thought to be neglecting their 'real work' at home to the detriment of the children and their husbands.

The results of the 1861 occupation census, published not long before the launch of the magazine, had shown that high numbers of working-class women were employed in a broad range of jobs in the expanding industries across Britain. While the magazine accepted that many married women had to work to support their families, an equally strong sentiment presented was that a husband's wages should be sufficient on its own, provided the money was spent judiciously and not wasted on fashionable frippery or beer. In response to a reader's money worries in March 1869, the magazine responded that 'A family man would find it necessary to do without many things you and your husband enjoy. The old saying 'cut your coat according to your cloth' is applicable.' (*British Workwoman* March 1869, p. 136) However, if women had to work to keep the family from destitution, then the magazine advocated work which could be carried out at home, such as needlework and basket making, to fit around their domestic and moral duties. This idea is very visible in its illustrations, not one of which shows a woman working in an industrial setting.

The *British Workwoman* believed that it was principally a woman's influence over her husband and children that upheld the moral and religious health of a civilised Christian society. In accordance with society's views at this time, the magazine believed that women were morally and spiritually superior to men. It praised women for their strength and endurance upholding this burdensome responsibility, especially amongst those sisters in the poorest sections of society. The *British Workwoman* valued women's moral influence and guidance more highly than any paid work. As women's influence was so powerful (so it claimed), the magazine believed they did not need the vote. In February 1867 it stated that

> 'it will, perhaps, never be known to what extent laws have been made and nations ruled by women. Is there an election where she has not taken part in her influence despite not having the vote? *British Workwoman* Feb 1867, p.318

In parallel, or possibly in reaction, to the fears over women's increasing progression into many new areas of the paid workforce, British society witnessed the rise in a virulent domestic ideology which propagated the belief that women's natural domain was the home and family. Men's domain was considered to be the public sphere of work, politics, and governance. The ideology of 'separate spheres' was presented as axiomatic across all strands of nineteenth-century society: politics, religion, public policy, literature and the arts. As British society at this time was deeply patriarchal, with power and privilege reserved for men, the separate spheres narrative fully supported the inequitable status quo. Women were excluded from public office, most professional jobs, higher education, and could not take part in national elections.

As we have seen, in reality and irrespective of anxieties or the dominant domestic ideology, most working-class women had little choice but to seek external paid work to support their households. There was little job security for working-class men, and a survey carried out in 1904 showed that four out of five married women worked because of financial necessity (Ann Oakley, *Housewife*, Penguin 1974, p. 50). Nevertheless, the domestic ideology was powerful and played a central role in the ethos of the *British Workwoman*.

The *British Workwoman* was aimed at working-class women because it believed many were at risk of corruption through the nature of the work or the workplace itself. It feared that women working in mining and heavy manual labour would be 'unsexed'. And if female factory workers worked alongside men, the magazine believed it would lead to women's

moral degradation. Many examples were cited of young women adopting foul language and drinking habits from men. Working outside the home was also considered to heighten women's sense of independence which drew them away from their moral duties and responsibilities at home.

Above all, women's moral integrity had to be protected. In a debate about women and children's employment in the mines in 1842, Lord Shaftesbury stated that 'it is bad enough if you corrupt the man, but if you corrupt the woman, you poison the waters of life at the very fountain' (Lord Shaftesbury (then Lord Ashley) House of Commons Debate, 7 June 1842, *Hansard* 63 cc1320-64).The magazine therefore offered its readers religious instruction and moral guidance by every means possible: not only through advice columns but through stories, songs, poems, maxims, proverbs and, of course, illustrations.

Its editorials offered women readers advice about issues they would experience as mothers and workers, but they also sometimes strayed into broader political areas, such as when the magazine referred to the American Civil War in the June 1865 issue. It was glad that slavery had been abolished and linked the conflict to 'our own war' between employers and employees caused by the impact of the American Civil war on the cotton industry in Lancashire (*British Workwoman*, June 1865, p. 157). Reference to education reform and an emphasis on the importance of educating the young was another strong theme of the editorial columns. For example, in 1870 the magazine strongly supported the proposed Education Act which was progressing through Parliament that year. However, most of the editorial columns offered moral guidance to women about their role within the family, their behaviour and attitudes when in paid employment or when outside of the home. It spoke to mothers, daughters and young single women whether they worked in a factory or in service away from home.

An example of the kind of advice meted out can be read in an 'Out from Home' editorial article in July 1864. The question 'What shall we do in the evenings?' was easily addressed for those women with families to look after, as naturally, the magazine insisted, they should be at home. However, 'young women in factories' should be careful what they did with their spare time:

> They may walk about the streets in the twilight – flirting or chatting, with noisy mirth. They may read some of the cheap trashy novels, of which there is such a large class within their reach … But, O, we entreat all British Workwomen, away from home, to beware of these ways of spending their evenings.
>
> *British Workwoman* July 1864, p. 68

Unsurprisingly, the magazine castigated idleness. In a New Year's greeting to women in January 1865 it addressed daughters living at home:

> those who do not work, but fritter their time away over the worthless operations of embroidery, or the unedifying perusal of novels, while their mothers are slaving for them, do not deserve to be very happy, – and we do not think they will be. But all brisk, bustling girls … these are the girls to be happy … [girls working in factories] who cannot afford time to be idle, you may be far happier than the rich who have the misfortune to have nothing to do.
>
> *British Workwoman* Jan 1865, p. 116

Attending to the sick and needy in their local communities was considered a fundamental duty for any committed Christian woman. It was also made clear that this charitable work was the best use of the half-day Saturday 'holiday' many working women were entitled to from 1867: women's work never ceased!

Many stories involved the trope of the damascene conversion of a young woman, who, previously distracted by worldly pursuits, had seen the error of her ways and transformed herself from a self-centred individual to an altruistic carer – that is, she had learned to embrace her role and to love the sacrifice of her self.

SERVING, SILENCE, SACRIFICE

The expansion of the middle-classes in Britain from the 1820s saw the demand for domestic servants rapidly grow. The number of female domestic servants increased twice as fast as the population between 1851 and 1871 (Angela John, *Unequal Opportunities: Women's Employment in England 1800-1918*. Blackwell 1986, p. 12). Vast numbers of young women

flocked from rural areas to the mostly middle-class homes in London and large towns. These young women, often as young as thirteen, were away from their families for the first time (Pamela Sharpe. *Adapting to Capitalism*: *Working Women in the English Economy 1700-1850,* Macmillan 1996, pp.102-106). Mostly working within a middle-class patriarchal family, young female domestic servants were under the strict control of their 'social betters' and answerable to the male head of the family, the butler or steward (Gerry Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain since 1840*, Routledge 2005 p.20).

The *British Workwoman* proffered more support and guidance to domestic servants than to any other workers. From the very first issues of the magazine, domestics were regularly and directly addressed through articles and series such as 'Friendly Counsel' and 'The Hardships of Service and How to Bear Them.' The *British Workwoman* was blunt in the advice it offered servants in recognition that many found the job difficult. In the January 1864 issue, 'Friendly Counsel No.3' was addressed to 'Female Domestic Servants. The Maid of all Work.' The preamble to the advice is illuminating but makes dismal reading:

> Servants in this capacity have need of a large share of patience and self-denial...They are compelled to lead a very secluded life; their work is multifarious and laborious, there is not always that consideration on the part of the employer which there should be, and the best are often disheartened... *British Workwoman* Jan 1864, p.23

The advice went on to instruct the servant to be obedient, courteous, methodical, keep her temper, and finally to be religious: to keep the door of her lips indeed.

In a 'Hints to Servants' article in March 1869, servants were encouraged to save. The magazine informed readers that a recent survey at one of the London workhouses had established that out of the thousand people living there as paupers, over 300 had previously been in-door servants. The article claimed that there were few people more careless about saving, due to the servants' position of always having a meal and a bed provided. The piece went on to spell out explicitly how servants were *not* supposed to present themselves: 'a dirty servant, with twisted hair, greasy fingers, torn boots, stockings with holes and gown with the hooks-and-eyes endeavouring to part company is a disgusting sight, especially at meals.' Avoiding bad company, being respectful and loyal to the family was paramount. In respect of gratuities, the

magazine warned that 'the only perquisites which a servant is entitled to, are such things as those which could be destroyed but for her extra care. Bones saved from the dust-heap, waste grease from the kitchen are usually allowed' (*British Workwoman*, March 1869 p. 130). The 'Voice of Domestic Workers' shows such attitudes exist still.

In addition to direct advice the magazine regularly included stories directed at domestic servants. Many aimed to encourage those who might be homesick; others intended to top up words of advice. For instance, in the December 1868 issue, Lizzie experienced 'a first going out into life'. She left home at fourteen to become a nursemaid for a local family. The difficulties of service were outlined, including working with young children and a mistress who might be hard to please. The advice proffered Lizzie was simply to do her best and leave the rest with God (*British Workwoman* Dec 2868, p. 110). In the July 1869 issue, a 'Letter from Sister Martha to Sister Jenny' appeared, with a note to inform the reader that Jenny had just gone into service. Martha offered sage advice to Jenny. She equated service as a maid-of-all work to the service they would give to 'our Saviour' if they had been in the house of Bethany. Martha suggested Jenny's place was good, and that Jenny was 'well off' earning £8 a year. Her mistress was kind except when she 'is cross'. Martha instructed Jenny 'to be patient. You must keep quiet and if something unjustly sharp is said to you. Remember it is not your mistress speaking, but temper and the headache' (*British Workwoman*, July 1869, p. 164). The individual worker has to work on themselves, transforming their resistance into acceptance.

During the last decade of the magazine in the early twentieth century, the publishing and editorial responsibilities were apparently taken over by 'Mary Southwell Ltd'. Original copies of these later issues of the magazine are in the process of restoration at the British Library. When they are available, it will be fascinating to uncover what changes Mary Southwell brought to the magazine at the turn of the twentieth century. Was the name merely a different cover for men trying to sound more convincing by claiming to speak as a woman? I am determined to find out.

The Victorian Press and Work: a Picture Essay

Andrew King
Professor of English, University of Greenwich

The second half of the nineteenth century saw an explosion of new types of magazine and newspaper dedicated to the professions and trades, and BLT19 seeks to map their growth and thinking. Surprisingly, no-one had ever done this before, despite their ubiquity. While there are numerous studies of leisure magazines – those devoted to literature and the arts – periodicals devoted to the trades and the professions had never been mapped.

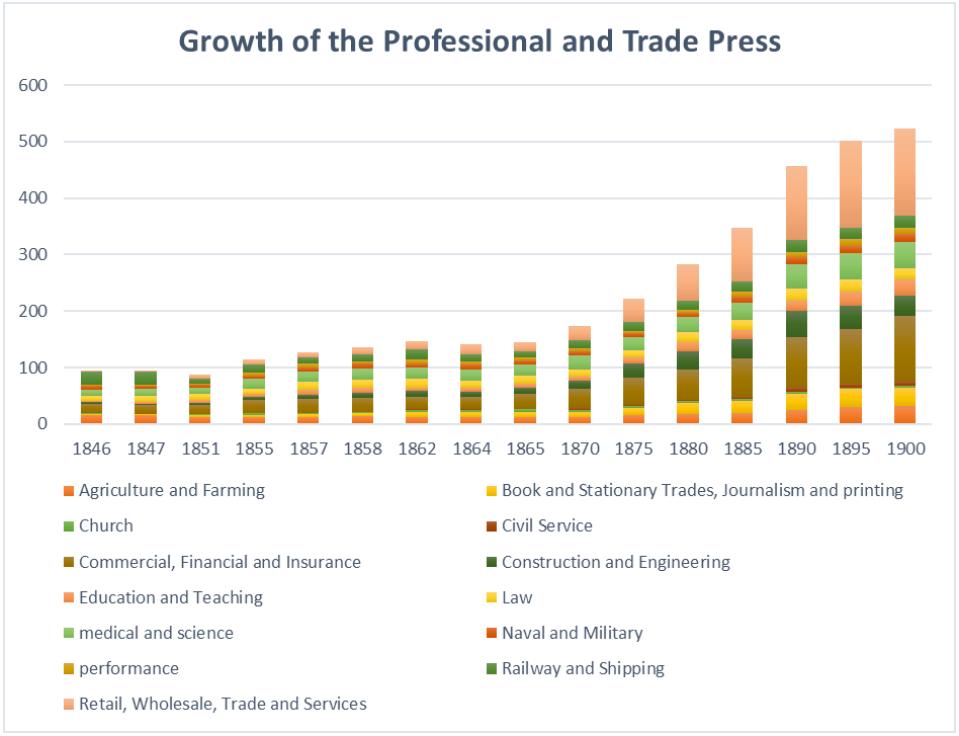
There is a curious silence about them. They are not glamorous. They are tainted with commerce. We in literature and media history feel we have not been trained to understand the stories they tell. We think they are boring.

Individual trade magazines have been raided for 'facts' and 'data' by economic historians, and professional magazines have been scoured by historians of medicine with the same idea, but no-one has looked at such periodicals from a literary historical perspective – with a view to understanding how they tell their stories, what stories they choose to tell or why, or how their conventions and the social networks behind them determine what information they give.

Neither have we considered what role boredom plays in our relations to them. Why *are* we so bored by their repetitive stories and in jokes? If we are bored it is because we feel such magazines do not relate to us. We do not understand the language they employ, the technical terms and references. That isn't accidental.

Such magazines haven't always been boring. Early nineteenth-century ones had lists of commodity prices (not dull to economic historians), but they were also full of scurrilous and entertaining stories about business rivalries and scandals. Then the power of boredom was discovered. It was much easier for a group – let's call them bankers – to maintain their power if their journals were sober and dull and couched in technical jargon so that only bankers would want to read them. There was no need to be secretive to keep one's operations from critical scrutiny: just boring.

Source of the table: Andrew King, 'The Trade and Professional Press,' *Edinburgh History of the British and Irish Press*, volume 2, ed. David Finkelstein, Edinburgh University Press, 2019.



Other publications this exhibition is based on include:

Andrew King, 'Periodical Economics,' *Routledge Handbook to Nineteenth-Century Periodicals and Newspapers*, 2016.

Living Work, a collection of essays on Victorian magazines and the conception of work edited by Andrew King, Fiona Snailham and Elizabeth Tilley, Routledge, due out in 2021.

Andrew King, 'Army, Navy, Medicine, Law,/ Church, Nobility, Nothing at all': Towards the study of gender, the professions and the press in the nineteenth century.' *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies*, 5.2. (2009) available free at http://www.ncgsjournal.com/issue52/king.htm

More information (and digital copies of the magazines which are the sources of the images) can be found at BLT19.co.uk.

British Printer

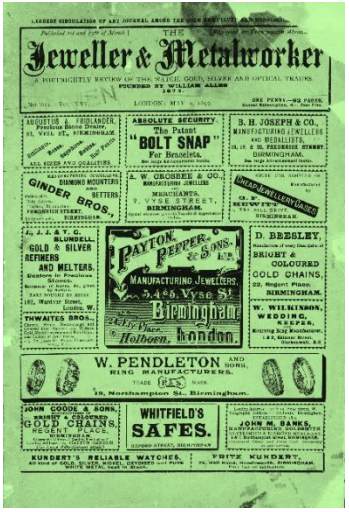
This lavishly illustrated monthly, demonstrating all the latest techniques in printing (including colour and even gold) was launched in 1888 and lasted until 2000, changing its title to *Printing World* in the twentieth century. As it said on the first page of its first number, '*The British Printer* appears in response to a widely expressed desire among *British printer*s to possess an organ of their own which shall represent the higher aspirations of the craft in the manner so ably illustrated' by technologically advanced *American* printing magazines. Trade magazines were always conscious of global competition and were often set up to ensure that Britain led the world commercially.

From *BLT19.co.uk*

Jeweller and Metalworker

Costing a penny and with 92 pages – mainly adverts – the *Jeweller and Metalworker* came out twice a month between 1873 and 1912. It claimed to be 'the largest and cheapest Journal of the kind published in this or any country, and the popularity it has secured is a conclusive proof of the value of its literary contents.' It didn't only cover jewellery, but also the work of opticians, work we think today to be completely different from jewellery making – though some of us still have older relatives who remember the two combined. The magazine is typical in its reliance on advertising income to survive. Obviously, it was risky for editorial copy to criticise or investigate the companies who advertised in it, and in the magazine's interest to promote its most regular advertisers in its articles (or at least remain silent about their faults).

From *BLT19.co.uk*



British Workman

The *British Workman* (1855-1921) was a richly-illustrated penny monthly with usually a very striking image on its first page. It was not connected to the *British Workwoman* directly, though the latter borrowed its format. Its founder and editor, Thomas Bywater Smithies (1817-1883), thought that pictures were the best way to communicate improving messages. A characteristic was the use of animals to show how 'natural' the magazine's vision of work was and to convey moral lessons about it (the dog below is loyal to his master, just as employees should be). Smithies' mother was the founder of The Band of Mercy, a charity devoted to educating children about animal welfare which the RSPCA took over when Smithies died. While the *British Workman* does offer some pictures of men (and women) at work, few of its splendid front-page images do so: they are mainly concerned with after-work encounters that emphasise the pleasures of home, or with portraits of heroes who sacrificed their lives for others. Stories on the inner pages explain the pictures: you could only understand the pictures properly by opening the magazine, and that meant buying it.

For more on animals in the *British Workman*, see http://www.blt19.co.uk/secondary-materials/topics/animals/


THE
MEAT TRADES' JOURNAL
AND
CATTLE SALESMAN'S GAZETTE.
THE COLONIAL CONSIGNMENT INVESTING COMPANY, LTD.
New Zealand Australian Meat.
THOS. BORTHWICK,
RIVER PLATE MUTTON.
H. MARESDALE & CO.,
Jas. Nelson, & Sons, Ltd.
HIDE, SKIN & FAT BROKERS.
New Zealand River Plate Mutton.
W. & R. FLETCHER, Ltd.,
Frozen Meat Importers and Live Stock Agents.
REFRIGERATING & ICE MAKING MACHINERY.
OVER 3000 MACHINES SOLD.
JOHN PECK & Co.,
Hunters Clothing.
The London Butchers' HIDE & SKIN Co., Ltd.,

Meat Trades' Journal

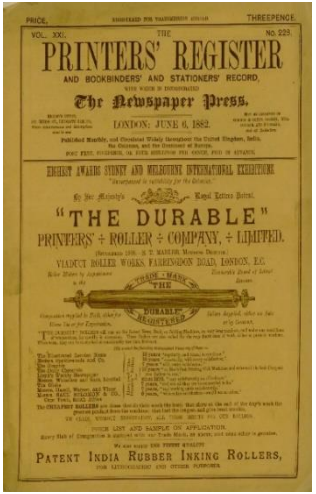
A very successful weekly penny trade magazine for butchers and meat wholesalers launched in May 1888. It ceased publication just short of its 130th anniversary in January 2018. Trade journals like this made their money not from subscriptions but from advertisements that promised their readers to gain competitive advantage over their rivals. The import of meat from the colonies (from 1889 especially from New Zealand) was very lucrative, helped by adverts in the *Meat Trades Journal*. Before advertising was regulated, however, it was possible to advertise meat as top-quality "New Zealand lamb" that was poor quality and came from elsewhere. Many adverts were for labour-saving devices to enable butchers to increase their profits: were their promises like those for "New Zealand lamb"?

Printers' Register

A monthly 3d trade magazine for the printing trade begun in 1853 and lasting until 1956. The *Printers' Register* is one of the chief sources of information used for the history of the printing trade. Like all trade magazines, it covered trade news, relations between employers and employed, relevant foreign news, specimens, legal notes, companies, personal, correspondence, business notices, obituaries and so on.

Characteristic of this kind of magazine is the repeated printing of adverts in the same place month after month. On the right, as an example, is a regular front-page ad for 'The Durable,' a roller used in printing machines. Victorian advertising textbooks (yes, they really existed) emphasised the importance of repeat advertising so that the product would impress itself on readers' minds automatically, exactly like printing machines making impressions on paper time after time. The textbooks really do assume readers' brains work and think like machines.

BLT19.co.uk has digitised a copy with and-written notes by the then editor, Andrew Lang, a close friend of the novelist Henry Rider Haggard (who benefited from Lang's experience in the trade).


PRICE. THREEPENCE.
VOL. XX. THE No. 223.
PRINTERS' REGISTER
AND BOOKBINDERS' AND STATIONERS' RECORD.
The Newspaper Press.
LONDON: JUNE 6, 1882.
"THE DURABLE"
PRINTERS' ROLLER COMPANY, LIMITED.
VIADUCT ROLLER WORKS, FARRINGDON ROAD, LONDON, E.C.
PATENT INDIA RUBBER INKING ROLLERS,

From *Meat Trades' Journal*, 15 April 1897

While what we are taught suggests that images of terrible factory conditions were everywhere in Victorian times, that's not actually true. They are very uncommon.

Outside the *British Workman* and *British Workwoman* (where images of people actually working at paid jobs were anyway quite rare and almost always idealised), the commonest kind of image of 'work' was the advertisement for new machines.

Most Victorian advertisements for new machines in trade magazines show them with no-one using them. The machines seem to operate themselves.

They are designed to save the purchaser – the capitalist employer – time and effort.

Showing the machines without people suggests that humans are either not necessary or an inconvenience to the grand aims of capitalism.

The ads sell us an idea of a world in which human work, and perhaps humans themselves, have been sacrificed to the efficiency of the machine.

This ideal was exactly the fear Samuel Butler expressed in his futuristic novel *Erewhon* in 1871:

> How many men at this hour are living in a state of bondage to the machines? How many spend their whole lives, from the cradle to the grave, in tending them by night and day? … Are we not ourselves creating our successors in the supremacy of the earth?
>
> Samuel Butler, *Erewhon*, 1871, pp. 200-201

It's a nightmare vision we'll recognise from many a science-fiction narrative, from *The Matrix* to the Borg in the *Star Trek* franchise.

Many of us attached to our phones will understand all too well.

SIZE: INSIDE CHASE, 8-in. by 12-in.

THE "HATTON"

SIZE: INSIDE CHASE, 10-in. by 15-in.

New Patent Platen Printing Machine,

FOR STEAM OR TREADLE.

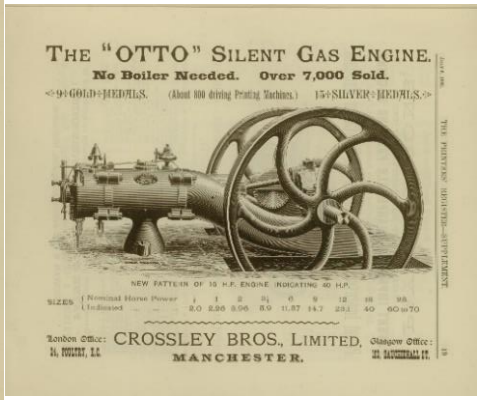
MADE IN TWO SIZES.

SIZE, INSIDE CHASE, 8-in. by 12-in. Price £33.

SIZE, INSIDE CHASE, 10-in. by 15-in. Price, fitted for Steam Complete, £60.

Multi-Colour Arrangement,

JOSEPH RICHMOND & CO., 31 and 32, Kirby Street, Hatton Garden, London, E.C.



THE "OTTO" SILENT GAS ENGINE.

No Boiler Needed. Over 7,000 Sold.

9 GOLD MEDALS. (About 800 driving Printing Machines.) 15 SILVER MEDALS.

NEW PATTERN OF 10 H.P. ENGINE INDICATING 40 H.P.

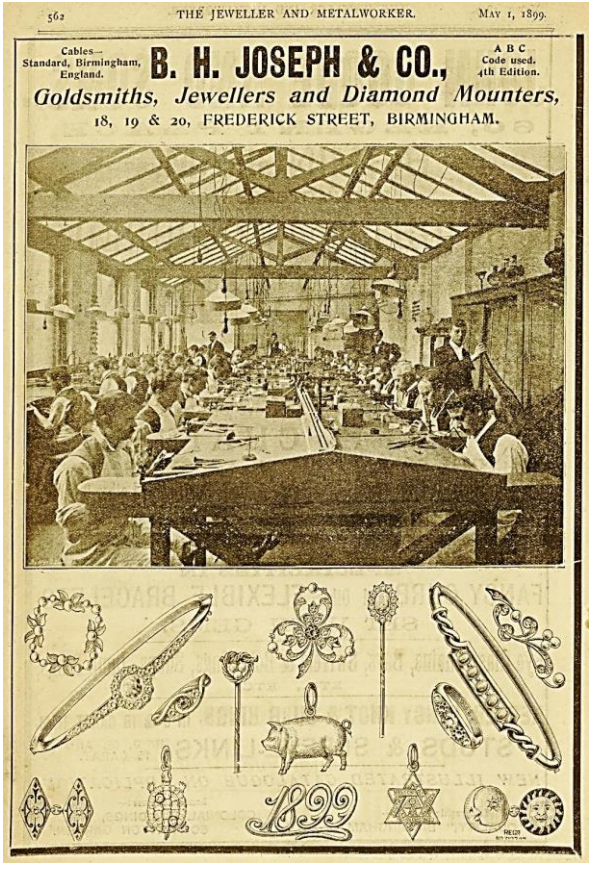
SIZES	Nominal Horse Power	¼	1	2	3½	6	9	12	18	28
	Indicated		2.0	2.26	3.96	8.9	11.87	14.7	23.1	40	60 to 70

London Office: 16, POULTRY, E.C.

CROSSLEY BROS., LIMITED, MANCHESTER.

Glasgow Office: 22, BUCHANAN ST.

From *Printers' Register* 6 July 1882.



Very unusually, this ad from the *Jeweller and Metalworker* (1 May 1899) shows a photograph of men at work.

The ad celebrates the light, clean space and the neat arrangement of the men in rows, all intent on the same task.

The men are disciplined by the space into sacrificing their individuality at work.

They know their place. They are part of the Great Machine of Industry.

No-one is shown wearing the products of their work. The jewellery they are making seems to drop magically from their workshop into the space below: cufflinks, charms, bangles, rings, hatpins. The objects aren't photographed: photos (including fashion) were considered too individual and specific to be effective ads. Advertised goods for the Victorian ad industry were *ideas* and *ideals*, not just things, and drawing was considered better at representing the ideal.

Photographs were used *evidentially*: the photo here acts as proof of how efficiently the jewellery was made.

The ad tells us that we viewers, in our roles as Jewellers ourselves (for this ad is aimed at Jewellers), stand to profit from efficiently made products without the mess and effort of having to enter into face-to-face, human, relations with the makers. Everything runs on castors (see p. 8 above).

'A Well-to-do Cab Driver.' *British Workman*, December 1874.

A splendid print of a prosperous cab-driver. Just look at the labour that has gone into depicting the falling snow and the freezing air behind him!

Why is the cab-driver 'well-to-do'?

He is out in all weathers, sacrificing his comfort.

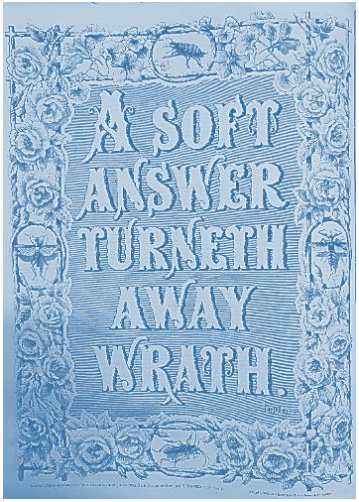
Does he look like the kind of man who would exploit you for his own benefit or serve you to *your* best advantage, not his? Perhaps you see his game: that he will make you think that that's the case, charge you over the odds and you'll still be grateful as he has made your journey so pleasant.

Perhaps he has learnt to be happy in his place and wants to share his joy with you.

Happiness is not the only reward for his sacrifices. He's 'well-to-do,' prosperous. The picture tells us that society rewards him in multiple ways for sacrificing his immediate desires and needs.

By a strange logic, the idea of work we have inherited form the Victorians declares that self-sacrifice allows us to assert ourselves. By sacrificing ourselves, we win. That is our reward. That is the social contract we do not speak of.

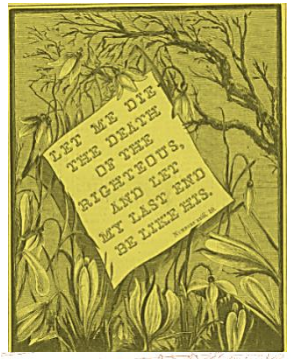
Our long-hours culture and emphasis on customer focus and service have a long history.


A SOFT
ANSWER
TURNETH
AWAY
WRATH.

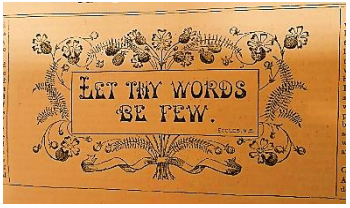

BE PATIENT

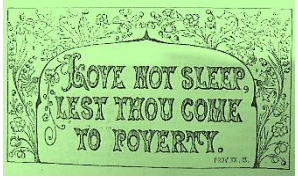

GET WISDOM.

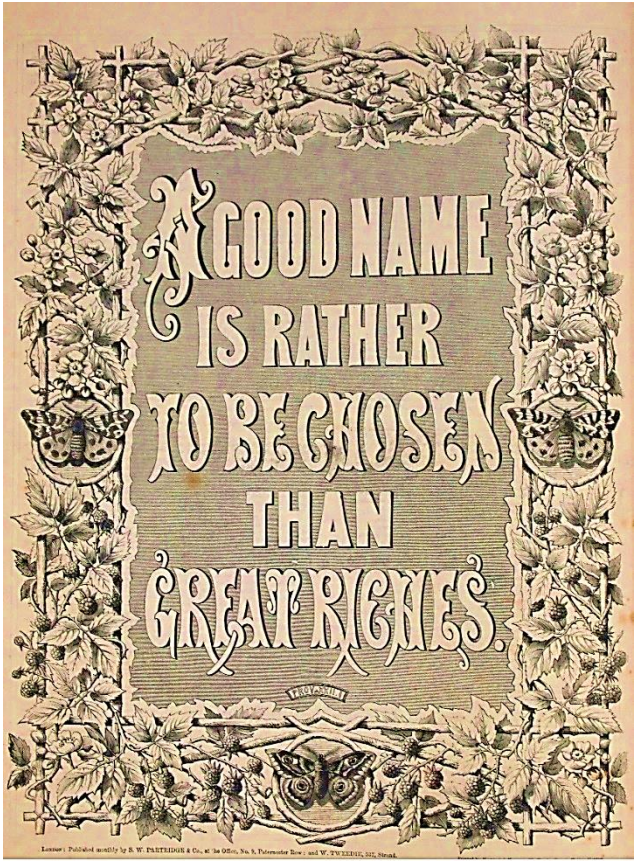

BEFORE HONOUR
IS
HUMILITY.


LET ME DIE
THE DEATH
OF THE
RIGHTEOUS,
AND LET
MY LAST END
BE LIKE HIS.


BE VIGILANT.


LET THY WORDS
BE FEW.


SLEEP NOT SLEEP,
LEST THOU COME
TO POVERTY.



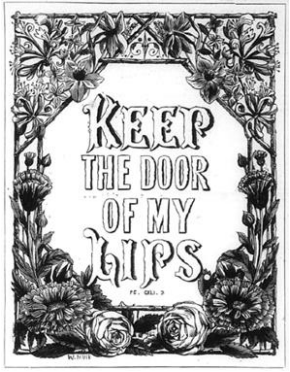
Every week the *British Workman* and the *British Workwoman* would include beautifully printed mottos like these (usually taken from the Bible). They wanted readers to cut them out and stick them into albums or onto their walls.

The decorative frames are always of the natural world, as if the words come directly from nature. Sometimes they imitate carvings on wood – see especially 'Be Patient' on the opposite page. They are all, in reality, prints made from wood blocks, so the imitation of wood mirrors the actual material the imitation had been made with – an in-joke for the printers no doubt.

As we see on the next two pages, you could even use these mottos as templates for needlework and printed cloth. While the printers and art critics may have their jokes, these mottos are not just decorative: they want to transform us.

For the Victorians, words needed to *work*.

Today we can still find plenty of stationary and websites with inspirational mottos like these. The language and the visual style might have changed – but not all the messages.



MR. MIMPRISS' PATCHWORK QUILTS.

ONE of the best friends of the youth of England has been called away to his eternal rest. The pen of Mr. Mimpriss, the celebrated author and Sunday-school worker, has written its last word, but the *influence* of that pen will long be felt, even in the remotest parts of the British dominions. We desire to call attention to the *last* great effort of this noble-hearted Christian. For three years prior to his death he devoted his attention to the printing and engraving of texts of Scripture on cloth that would bear washing in cold or hot water without injury.

After many failures he at last succeeded. Shortly before his death the good man called upon us, and with great joy showed us an outline of a beautiful quilt which he had "nearly ready." Before, however, the various pieces could be sewn together, Mr. Mimpriss was seized with sickness and died. We are glad, however, to find that Mr. Whitehead, the friend and executor of Mr. Mimpriss, has arranged to carry out "the patchwork quilt work" for the benefit of the bed-ridden widow. Mr. Whitehead is now sending out the sets of texts for which orders were given during Mr. Mimpriss' lifetime, and we rejoice that in many homes both aged and juvenile fingers have already made up many very beautiful quilts. The perfection of the lettering has both astonished and delighted us. We hope that Mr. Mimpriss' quilts will soon be found in thousands of homes. Those who desire to have ready made up quilts or sets of the texts should write to Mr. F. Whitehead, Crayford, Kent, for list of prices.

Any of our readers can *see* one of these quilts on inquiring of the attendants in Messrs. S. W. Partridge & Co.'s tract and book saloon, No. 9, Paternoster Row.

We would suggest that the rich should present quilts for the beds of the aged inmates of hospitals, workhouses, almshouses, &c.

CHEERFUL TEMPER.

A CHEERFUL temper, joined with innocence, will make beauty attractive, knowledge delightful, and wit good-natured. It will lighten sickness, poverty, and affliction; convert ignorance into an amiable simplicity, and render deformity itself agreeable.—*Addison.*

HARD WORDS.

HARD words are like hailstones in summer, beating down and destroying what they would nourish were they melted into drops.—*Anon.*

'Mr Mimpriss' Patchwork Quilts,' *British Workman*, Sept 1876, p. 88

The story of Mr Mimpriss is revealing on many fronts. Not only is it the typical fable of try and try again until you succeed (beloved both of the Victorians and us) but it shows a marked division of labour: the men manage the women making the products at home. Like some of today's conceptual artists, Mr Mimpriss came up with an idea that others execute. But unlike them his cleverly commercial concept was founded on the idea of getting others to work for what he regarded as the social good. The article is essentially an advertorial: the publishers, themselves part of the Mimpriss network, display samples in their salesroom.

British Workman November 1872.

A sick man in a hospital reads a quilt covered in messages such as those you've seen on previous pages.

Someone - almost certainly a woman - has worked hard to make such a fine object to donate to the hospital.

Her hard work has paid off. The quilt is not only materially useful (pun intended) but its messages have clearly worked too – they've made the patient see the light (he's literally in the light in contrast to his sleeping fellow patient who is in shadow).

Isn't the quilt like the *British Workman* and *British Workwoman*, full of beautifully made images that are very clearly the products of hard work?

The image shows too the ideal result of 'work' we know so well – that we have transformed the lives of people, made them better, even if we've never met them.

Is the happiness we derive from this ideal a major reason we sacrifice our time and keep the door of our lips quite as much as we do?

Or is it only a reason we comfort ourselves with *after* our obedient sacrifices?

British Workwoman no 280.

Deborah Canavan showed that women's work in the magazines (just like what we see of Victorian women in films and TV) rarely matched what women did in reality: the majority of Victorian women worked outside their own homes, millions in factories.

The *ideal* women's work was not to make things, however, but people. This is what Deborah Canavan referred to as 'influence.'

Here a woman is telling her obedient children Bible stories (see the cheap copy of the Bible on her lap). She is making and transforming the new generation by educating them.

The spinning wheel behind her shows another kind of 'work' she can do at home: spinning thread for the garment industry (a huge driver of the Victorian economy).

In such images, spinning and other textile work (including making quilts and nets) is always symbolic: here the mother is 'spinning stories' for her children ('text' has the same historical root as 'textile', as the Victorians well knew). She has to ensure that the stories she's telling are as good and useful as the thread she's making.

Making good thread, good stories and good people are all connected in Victorian women's work. Emmanuelle Loiselle and Sarm Micciché still play on this idea in their art.

British Workwoman, no. 286
'Jubilee issue'

We've seen how for the Victorians words needed to work. Images needed to do the same.

The Victorians knew perfectly that everything could be commercialised. Here the firm of Mellin's (Baby) Food is using the print that had appeared 6 months previously in the *British Workwoman*. It cuts down the edges and replaces the Bible with a baby holding a bottle; it covers the pewter plates with the phrase 'The way to make your home happy: bring up your children … on …', and blocks the light-filled window with 'Mellin's Food.'

One cannot imagine Emmanuelle Loiselle's vision of motherhood being turned into an advert even while it incorporates commercial products into itself.

Is it in their refusal of the commercial and the utilitarian that contemporary and Victorian art differ? Almost all the Victorian images you see in the exhibition are either adverts or could be transformed into ads: could any of the contemporary art?

Yet clearly the contemporary art wants to transform us – to change the law or to make us think, at the very least.

Which do we want? Which do we need?

The Artists

Catherine Hoffman

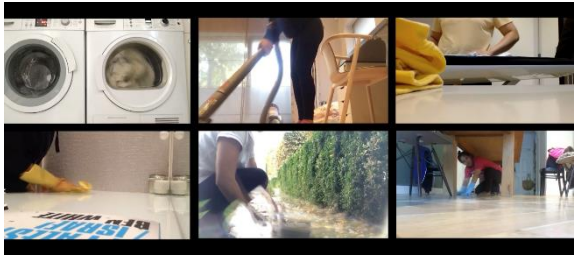
Catherine is an award-winning artist who trained at Dartington College of Arts and the Ecole de Mime Corporel Dramatique. In her work she explores the intersection between performance art, theatre, absurd humour and music with a focus on psychological fragility and attempts to create order out of chaos.

In the video she is showing here, a recording of a performance of *Free Lunch with the Stenchwench*, she explores the personal and shared experiences of growing up as one of the 'feral underclass' in 'Austerity Britain' and what led up to it in the 70s and 80s. She re-enacts conversations and investigates family and social history, working to make sense of where shame developed. She scrutinizes the microcosm of how a family functions within English society as the site of work and resistance to it, its values and what is considered acceptable or not.

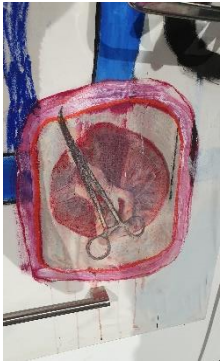
Now, fully fledged, Catherine strives to overcome the humiliation of 'lack' – of job and the rewards society gives the obedient – and celebrates our spirit of community and hope at a time of even greater disparity between the privileged and the hard-up.

'Home is not My Home' by Dr Joyce Jiang, Tassia Kobylinska & The Voice of Domestic Workers

Dr Joyce Jiang is a Lecturer in Human Resource Management and Sociology of Work at The York Management School, University of York; Tassia Kobylinska is a lecturer in digital media production at Goldsmiths, University of London, and a community filmmaker; The Voice of Domestic Workers is a London-based charity organisation protecting the rights of migrant domestic workers in the UK. It provides educational and community activities for domestic workers, including English lessons, drama and art classes, and employment advice, and provides support for domestic workers who exit from abusive employers.



My Home is Not My Home emerged as a response to the invisibility and marginality of migrant domestic workers due to their class, gender and ethnic positions. Each year the Home Office issues approximately 16,000-19,000 visas under its 'domestic workers in private households' scheme, which allows foreign families to bring domestic workers to the UK. Such workers rarely have the opportunity to share their stories of hardship, struggle and disempowerment. The exhibition presents a combination of video interviews and mobile phone footage offering a glimpse into their everyday work and lives.



Emmanuelle Loiselle

Emmanuelle is an award-winning multidisciplinary artist trained at the City & Guilds Art School, London. She is influenced by Robert Rauschenberg in her combination of materials and objects but uses the technique to explore feminist ideas about domesticity, womanhood and motherhood, raising questions about women's contemporary conditions of living. For this exhibition she has produced pieces exploring what are traditionally silenced and invisible aspects of the work of motherhood: its physical effects on the mother, including what is aptly named 'labour' itself.

Sarm Micciché

Sarm is an award-winning multimedia artist trained in California and at the City & Guilds Art School in London. Through the textile church that she has made especially for this exhibition she explores women's work in multiple forms. Not only does she pick up the themes of religion and of women's work with textiles that the Victorian images depict, but she also takes up the emotional labour that women have traditionally performed: the work of mourning and memorialisation. Her still and self-contained piece encourages us to pause and to reflect on that work of emotional transformation that, if we are lucky, we all experience at some point in our lives.