

Institution: The University of Manchester		
Unit of Assessment: 28 (History)		
Title of case study: Transforming public understanding and engagement, improving staff and volunteer practice, and increasing revenue in the National Trust's north of England region		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2000-2016		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Hannah Barker	Professor of British History	2000-present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2015-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>A major ESRC-funded collaboration between Barker and the National Trust at Quarry Bank in Cheshire led to several operational benefits for the Trust and improved visitor engagement and experience. Barker directed a large-scale historical interpretation project that brought to life the experience of residents and workers during the estate's industrial heyday. Benefits of this collaboration included: visitor numbers rose by 53% between 2015 and 2020; income increased by GBP680,100 between 2015 and 2020; and significant practice change by over 250 staff and volunteers. It led directly to a follow-on AHRC Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) project that delivered these benefits more widely in the Trust. The pilot stage for the KTP between 2018 and 2019 was explicitly linked by the Trust to an increase in annual sales turnover of just over GBP20,000,000 in the North region.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Barker has carried out two major ESRC-funded research projects on the social history of the industrial revolution in England: 'Women, work and trade in the English Industrial Revolution' (2000-2001) and 'Family and business in north-west England, 1760-1820' (2008-2010). Both projects were centrally concerned with the role of women in promoting economic growth during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the importance of small businesses in economic development, and the dynamics of familial relationships and use of domestic space in the 'household family' of those in trade.</p> <p>The research illustrated how small businesses were at the heart of the economic growth and social transformation that characterised the industrial revolution in Britain. Whilst those engaged in craft-based manufacturing, retailing and allied trades constituted a significant proportion of the urban population, historians have generally overlooked them. Instead, historical analysis of the world of business has focussed on narratives of particularly successful firms, by those involved in new modes of production, and by men. By examining some of the forgotten businesses of the industrial revolution, and the men and women who worked in them, Barker's work exposed a largely unfamiliar commercial world and provided new insights into the lives of ordinary men and women in trade, whose relatively mundane lives are easily overlooked, but who were central to the story of a pivotal period in British history [1-4]. She also demonstrated that the advent of modern capitalism did not marginalise women in trade, who remained an integral and visible part of urban economies throughout early industrialisation [5].</p> <p>Barker's research on trading households examines the buildings they occupied, where the commercial and the domestic continued to co-exist under the same roof throughout the period of the industrial revolution. It explores individual experiences of space by examining personal testimony, and reveals that hierarchies within trading households were often expressed in terms of access to different interior spaces. She demonstrates that gender was a powerful organisational concept amongst those in trade, but generational hierarchies were more important in terms of the control of space. Variations between households were linked both to different understandings of the family, and to the physical constraints of the households concerned. Barker shows that in these small businesses, household settings privacy was not conceived in terms of personal space. Instead, upholding standards of decency meant the gendered and temporal separation of domestic spaces. Ensuring this sort of privacy meant that individuals had to abide by sets of</p>		

unwritten rules about behaviour and conduct or risk the breakdown of household familial relations [1, 5].

3. References to the research

1. Hannah **Barker**, *Family and Business During the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford University Press, 2017). ISBN 9780198786023. 256 pp. Open Access. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198786023.001.0001>
2. Hannah **Barker**, 'A grocer's tale: class, gender and family in early nineteenth-century Manchester' *Gender and History*, 21, 2 (2009), pp. 340-57. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0424.2009.01552.x>
3. Hannah **Barker**, 'Soul, purse and family: middling and lower-class masculinity in eighteenth-century Manchester', *Social History*, 33, 1 (2008), pp. 12-35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071020701833309>
4. Hannah **Barker**, *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760-1830* (Oxford University Press, 2006). ISBN 0199299714. 202 pp. Available from HEI on request.
5. Hannah **Barker**, 'Living above the shop: home, business, and family in the English "Industrial Revolution"', with Jane Hamlett (PDRA on ESRC project), *Journal of Family History*, 35 (2010), pp. 311-28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0363199010373544>

Key research grants (all Barker sole PI):

- 2017-2019 GBP155,196 AHRC Knowledge Transfer Partnership Award to work with the National Trust in the north of England.
- 2016-2017 GBP19,275 ESRC Impact Acceleration Account Award for 'The Quarry Bank Project' funding a 0.2 placement for Barker with the National Trust to act as Historical Advisor.
- 2008-2010 GBP228,296 ES/E023967/1 ESRC grant to fund the project 'Family and business in north-west England, 1760-1820'.
- 2003 GBP12,035 from the AHRC Research Leave Scheme to complete *Business of Women* monograph.
- 2000-2001 GBP41,994 from the ESRC to fund the research project 'Women, work and trade in the English industrial revolution'.

Research for Barker's 2006 OUP monograph, *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760-1830* [4], was funded by both the ESRC and AHRC. Reviewers have commented on the importance of her reassessment of the impact of industrialisation on women's employment, and specifically the degree to which the advent of modern capitalism marginalised female workers. A reviewer in the *Economic History Review* (2007) asserted 'The Business of Women *puts to rest old arguments about the effects of industrialisation on the economic life of non-elite women. Old dichotomies of continuity or change look too simplistic in the light of Barker's excellent study*'. Barker's 2017 OUP monograph, *Family and Business During the Industrial Revolution* [1], was awarded the Social History Society Book Prize in 2019, recognising 'innovative scholarship in the fields of social and cultural history' as 'the best original work of historical research' published in 2017. The judges commented that '*the book revises accepted wisdom in various fields ... the argument about the vibrancy of small family businesses during the industrial revolution is compelling ... The material history of housing is judged as particularly interesting and original*'.

4. Details of the impact

The National Trust is the largest membership organisation in the UK, with a turnover in 2020 of GBP613,400,000. Barker's collaboration with the National Trust began in 2015 at Quarry Bank in Cheshire. It was initiated by the Trust as a result of her research reaching a wide public and professional audience beyond academia, and because the Trust needed specific research expertise. Barker's research, particularly her work on familial relationships and the use of space in household families in the trading classes during the early industrial revolution, meant she was ideally placed to inform a major reinterpretation of the site. This programme of work developed further through an AHRC Knowledge Transfer Partnership (2017-2019), which linked researchers and National Trust teams across the north of England region. The collaboration has generated a

range of benefits for the Trust and its visitors, including: enhanced interpretation and visitor engagement; new learning and capacity building among staff and volunteers, leading to practice change; and increased revenue for a major heritage charity.

Impact at Quarry Bank

Quarry Bank is a site of major historical importance. Built in the late eighteenth century, it incorporates a large cotton mill, a farm, an entire village purpose-built to house the mill workforce and the homes and workplaces of the owner, mill manager and apprentices. The Quarry Bank Project (2015-2019; GBP9,400,000, National Lottery Heritage Fund and donors) comprised major capital work and reinterpretation of the entire site. It was one of the largest projects in the National Trust's history.

Economic benefits

The project changed the way in which the historical story of Quarry Bank was told, and the reinterpretation of the site – which the Trust described as key to the project's success [A] – improved visitor engagement and feedback and in turn supported the financial viability of the site through increased visitor numbers, greater 'dwell time' and onsite spend, and a rise in repeat visits. Significant visitor growth has been achieved through the project: from 185,000 visitors in 2015 to 283,474 by the start of 2020 – a rise of 53% [A]. The economic impact of this change has been a GBP680,100 (27.9%) increase in property income between 2015 and February 2020, which, in turn, funds future investment in conservation, maintenance and project work. The Quarry Bank Project also produced 12 new permanent jobs at the site, and increased both seasonal employment opportunities and the breadth and depth of volunteering opportunities at Quarry Bank, with 29 new volunteer roles resulting from the project [A].

Interpretation

Barker took a leading role in the Quarry Bank Project's Interpretation Design Team, which had responsibility for directing the reinterpretation of the entire site, including those buildings and places that had not formerly been open to the public, such as the Styal Village Hub and 13 Oak Cottages (a former worker's cottage). Drawing on her research on the lives of those in trade during the early industrial revolution — the period of Quarry Bank's heyday — she produced the main storylines for the new interpretation and wrote detailed new guidance underpinning the interpretation for use by National Trust staff and volunteers. The key characteristics of the new interpretation are the use of a social historical approach to telling the stories of former inhabitants at Quarry Bank that built directly on the individuals, families and analysis contained within Barker's published research on northern towns during the early industrial revolution. Thus new storylines focus on the nature of household familial relationships, including hierarchies of age and gender, on the use of domestic and working spaces, and on the very different ideas of privacy and decency during the late Georgian period and how they affected the way in which people lived and viewed the world [1-5]. This transformed the narrative for visitors at a Trust site that had previously focused almost entirely on the previous owners of the mill, and on the production of cotton and the working lives of the cotton workers. As the former Quarry Bank General Manager has noted, Barker's involvement has been '*absolutely crucial to our interpretation strategy which is key to the success of the whole project*' [A].

The research has also informed the National Trust's programming. An exhibition on women's work at Quarry Bank in 2017, titled 'A woman's work is never done', was directly based upon Barker's 2006 monograph on women traders during the early industrial revolution and would not have been possible without this research which explored women traders and their relationships with the estate [4].

Visitor engagement

The new interpretation has enhanced learning and emotional engagement among visitors to Quarry Bank. Barker's interpretation at Styal Village Hub and 13 Oak Cottages (a former worker's cottage which was not open to the public before 2016) has been especially powerful. Visitors learn much more about the lived experience of former inhabitants, and particularly about past meanings of home and family, and different understandings of privacy and decency during the eighteenth

and nineteenth centuries [B]. A survey of 153 visitors in 2019 found that 98% had learned something new from their visit, with the majority of visitors interested in learning about living conditions as re-imagined with Barker's research insights [B, C]. Visitor feedback shows that these new learning opportunities have also strengthened the emotional engagement that visitors feel with past Quarry Bank workers, making for a more meaningful experience. Over half of those surveyed expressed fascination and curiosity on visiting, while other powerful emotional responses, such as pity, sadness and anger were also described by many visitors. The Trust states that this enhanced emotional engagement has helped it meet its aims to improve visitor satisfaction, lengthen dwell time and encourage membership loyalty [A]. 'Visitor enjoyment' scores have also risen significantly during the period of the Quarry Bank Project.

Staff/volunteer learning and practice

The new interpretation and associated training and documentation have impacted upon the experiences, learning and practice of approximately 250 staff and volunteers since 2017 and have also brought about a practice change in the way the Quarry Bank National Trust site engages with historical research [A]. Barker led staff and volunteer training in 6 half-day workshops between 2017 and 2019, which covered the historical underpinning for the new interpretation, including not just a summary of findings and analysis but also allowing attendees to study for themselves many of the primary sources used [D]. Staff and volunteers were engaged in the historical process and found this to be valuable for their understanding of interpretive decisions across the site. They were also empowered and enthused to share their new knowledge and tools for challenging history with visitors [D]. 96% of participants surveyed in 2019 reported that they either 'learned a lot' or 'quite a bit' from this training, with 70% of participants having 'learned a lot' [D]. These activities met the National Trust's objective of *'giving front-facing Trust representatives the awareness of historical critical thinking, of emerging ideas, of alternative interpretations and of how to extract these from academic work and convey this to the public'* [B]. In 2018, staff and volunteer experiences of engagement with the research and the new interpretation were evaluated through in-depth interviews with 7 staff members and 8 volunteers. These interviews revealed the way in which engagement with the research had opened up new ways of understanding the site and enhanced interactions with visitors. One volunteer described *'constantly reading the [research] documents. It's surprising how often you can read through the same document and pick up bits, as your knowledge grows, other things make more sense and you can put the story together yourself better when you're talking to people'* [B]. A volunteer surveyed in 2019 also commented on the learning opportunities offered by the training: *'It has been extremely useful and great to have such an open and frank exchange of information. It has inspired me to find out more and shone a new light on what I previously knew - education - coloured clothes - living conditions'*, whilst another wrote of the new knowledge that underpinned some of the changes in the way the site was presented to the public as a result of Barker's input: *'I enjoyed learning about the latest research on clothing/room wage/living arrangements and in particular how this is going to affect our interpretation going forward. I also appreciated looking at the inventories to consider the furniture and daily lives of these people for ourselves. I'll no longer look at the red cloaks in the girls dormitory and think they look wrong'* [D]. In a film made in 2019 to document the research-based collaboration, a Trust staff member commented: *'We have so many people coming here [to Styal] who want to talk, and the research [...] give[s] us the platform to talk'* [E]. Another staff member reflected on the importance of the research contribution, commenting that it had been *'great to have that level of academic support to our role'* and that Barker's research documents were the *'foundation of the stories that we would tell'* about the site [E]. A third talked about how the training had opened up the emotional experiences of people who had lived in Styal, allowing him to draw on those experiences when leading tours of the cottage [E]. Staff and volunteers had changed their views about research collaboration (*'It's given me a passion for discovery and working in partnership with experts'*), had been inspired to work differently, and even conduct their own research [B, C]. In 2019 40% of participants in Barker's training said they were inspired to do their own research as a result of attending a session [D]. In addition, there were rises in measurable 'staff satisfaction' and 'volunteer recommendation' scores directly linked to the outcomes of the Quarry Bank Project programme of (re)interpretation [A]. Underhill writes that the project has *'served to motivate and inspire staff and volunteers: staff satisfaction and volunteer*

recommendation scores (both 71%) at the close of the project (2018 survey) were high compared to the National Trust average' [A].

Impact on the National Trust in the north region through an AHRC KTP

The transformational importance of the Quarry Bank project for the Trust, and Barker's key role in changing practice there, is further demonstrated by a subsequent AHRC Knowledge Transfer Partnership award (2017-2019) led by Barker. The KTP addressed the National Trust's lack of research capability; promoted the potential of academic researchers to enhance the Trust's interpretation practice and Experiences programme; established models of best practice for collaboration between academics and Trust properties which draw heavily on the Quarry Bank project; and created structured long-term partnerships between the Trust and Universities. Pilots for these new models of working were run in 5 other Trust sites (Lyme, Speke Hall, Dunham Massey, Sizergh and Nostell Priory), and a wider informal research network of other Trust sites was created to promote collaborative working which involved 203 academics at 23 universities and led directly to the formation of 6 collaborative PhD studentships, 12 Masters or PhD student placements and linked to the development of 7 major AHRC-funded projects.

The KTP created new toolkits to better facilitate engagement in the future that will be rolled out nationally during 2021-2022 [F, G, H]. In addition, 2 new academic engagement posts at the Trust were created, with 9 more planned nationally. The Trust identified the KTP activities, in addition to the collaboration at Quarry Bank, as directly contributing to its successful bid for Independent Research Organisation status in 2019, with the new collaborative research projects coordinated by the KTP valued at approximately GBP1,400,000. The Trust explicitly linked the pilots to an increase in annual sales turnover in the North region of just over GBP20,000,000 and to an increase in annual profits of GBP89,000 between 2018 and 2019, due to an increase in visitor numbers of 20,073 and increases in dwell time, secondary spend in catering and retail, plus increased membership sales of GBP61,080 *'that come from a deeper, more enjoyable experiences, and increased feeling of relevance and emotional engagement'* [G]. Innovate UK, which oversees KTP projects on behalf of UKRI, judged the completed KTP as 'Outstanding'.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- A. Letter from former General Manager, Quarry Bank, now Assistant Director of Operations, National Trust (6 October 2020). Documenting Barker's contributions to the Quarry Bank Project, the impact of these contributions and the outcomes and significance of the project for the Trust and its visitors.
- B. National Trust evaluation report: Styal Village Hub and Cottage Evaluation, Anna Fielding, 2018.
- C. National Trust evaluation report: Styal Village Hub and Cottage Evaluation, Our Stories Heritage Consultancy, 2019.
- D. National Trust evaluation report: Evaluation of Staff and Volunteer Sessions, Our Stories Heritage Consultancy, 2020.
- E. Film: Family Life During the Industrial Revolution: An academic research collaboration with the National Trust at Styal, National Trust site:
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank/features/discover-the-stories-of-the-workers-in-styal-village>
- F. Knowledge Transfer Partnership toolkits for academics wanting to work with the National Trust and for Trust staff wanting to work with academics:
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/work-with-us-guidance-for-academics>
- G. Knowledge Transfer Partnership Final Company Partner Report, 2019.
- H. University of Manchester film documenting the KTP and its impact on Quarry Bank and the National Trust:
<https://www.manchester.ac.uk/collaborate/business-engagement/knowledge-exchange/case-studies/national-trust/index.htm>