

<b>Institution:</b> University of Winchester		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 28 History		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Ruling in an Era of Conquest: Changing Public Awareness of the Past and Underpinning Cultural Heritage		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2014-2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Professor Ryan Lavelle	Professor of Medieval History	2006-current
Dr Katherine Weikert	Senior Lecturer in Early Medieval European History	2014-current
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2015-2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> <del>Y</del> /N		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</b></p> <p>This case study shows how innovative research into rulership in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman England has enriched and enhanced public interaction with and understanding of the past. Lavelle and Weikert have engaged with community stakeholders, heritage groups and history enthusiasts to develop new approaches to heritage interpretation and local tourism ventures. Through pioneering research, the team have furthered understanding of key aspects of early medieval rulership, such as women in power and places of power: areas that have tremendous public appeal and relevance to modern audiences.</p> <p>The historians' research has notable impact, bringing social, cultural and economic benefits to heritage institutions and enhancing the experiences of history-consuming public on a global scale. The team has impacted public understanding of the past by informing audiences of millions in the UK and beyond through international broadcast, online and print media outlets. In the city of Winchester, the team's research has had substantial impact on the cultural and tourism programming of heritage organisations, such as Hampshire Cultural Trust and Heritage Open Days, contributing to their economic security and long-term sustainability.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</b></p> <p>What did it mean to be a leader in the medieval period? How did social unrest impact what the medieval world thought about authority? Did a time of conquest c. 800-1200 change ideas about governance – and why does it matter today?</p> <p>Ryan Lavelle's and Katherine Weikert's multi- and interdisciplinary research into rulership seeks to answer these questions. The team's research is driven by motivations to understand shifting forms, displays, and loss of power in a medieval period defined by conflict and conquest. While Lavelle focusses on masculine power through displays of military prowess and actions, underpinned by theoretical approaches to the importance of place and landscape, Weikert's research draws on gender and place to understand the role that elite women could play in the medieval past. Both researchers seek to further understanding of the importance of place — landscapes, buildings, and more — in the display, maintenance and even loss of power in the middle ages.</p> <p>As well as the institutional home for this research, the city of Winchester is a critical subject for any engagement with early medieval England. As the home of royal and ecclesiastical</p>		

power in the transitional centuries of c. 800-1200, Winchester was central to these 'Ages of Conquest'.

Lavelle's work on Anglo-Saxon England has been internationally recognized through publications in this area, altering ideas about early medieval kingship in Anglo-Saxon England, particularly in considering the methods of kingship, leadership and military command during the first and second Viking age, addressing such issues as the projections of power and its contestation [R1-3]. His monograph *Alfred's Wars* [R1], for example, was the recipient of the 2012 Verbruggen Prize for best book on medieval military history. His 2020 monograph *Places of Contested Power* [R3] demonstrates and creates a wider understanding of displaying power in rebellions and revolts in the period. Lavelle's creative and innovative research approaches in landscape history provide new insights to the nature of war and power in the period. Overall, Lavelle's body of work underpinning the impact relates insights and findings about the nature of rule in Anglo-Saxon England, shifting the understanding of leadership on and off the battlefield in the period, particularly addressing the manner in which mechanisms of power and authority operated within the landscape.

Weikert's work on late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman England works to demonstrate a sense of authority below the king's level as a sense of display and action, as well as reworking narratives of rulership and authority with feminist readings of understanding women's authoritative roles in the period. This particularly alters ideas of gendered rulership and society in the period. Articles published about the Empress Matilda (2016, 2018) demonstrate that ideas of gendered medieval authority play a part in forming modern ideas of feminism and leadership [R4, R5]. Her 2020 monograph *Authority, Gender and Space in the Anglo-Norman Worlds* [R6] challenges ideas of gendered roles of authority in England and Normandy c. 900-1200 by intersecting gender and status to better understand the ways and expressions of elite authority and demonstrates the nature of authority as a performance for the ruling elite. Using buildings and the technique of spatial analysis, Weikert introduces new and exciting ways of understanding the built environment of the Conquest centuries.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

**R1** Lavelle, Ryan (2012). *Alfred's Wars*. Woodbridge: Boydell.  
Monograph

Winner of the 2012 Verbruggen Prize for Best Book in Medieval Military History; included in undergraduate reading lists in the UK and Germany.

'Lavelle weaves...a thorough, measured and largely convincing discussion between warfare, the state and more broadly society in the later Anglo-Saxon period' (Charles Insley, *History* 97:2, 2012)

'It will likely stand for many years as the seminal work on its subject' (Kelly DeVries, *Journal of British Studies* 53:3, 2014)

**R2** Lavelle, Ryan (2016) *Danes in Wessex, the Scandinavian impact on southern England ca 800 - 1100*. Edited with Simon Roffey. Oxford: Oxbow.  
Edited volume. Submitted in REF2

'impressive forensic questioning...of international excellence' (anonymous REF reviewer)  
'...fascinating and significant series of studies' (Alexandra Sanmark, *Speculum* 93:1)

**R3** Lavelle, Ryan (2020) *Places of Contested Power*. Woodbridge: Boydell.  
Monograph. Submitted in REF2

## Impact case study (REF3)

**R4** Weikert, Katherine (2016) 'The Empress Matilda and Motherhood in Popular Fiction, 1970s to the Present,' in *Virtuous or Villainess? The Image of the Royal Mother from the Early Medieval to the Early Modern Eras*, edited by Elena Woodacre and Carey Fleiner. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chapter in edited volume

'persuasively argue[d]' (Erica O'Brien, *Royal Studies Journal* IV, 2017)

**R5** Weikert, Katherine (2018) 'Feminism, Fiction and the Empress Matilda,' in *Premodern Rulers and Postmodern Viewers: Gender, Sex, and Power in Popular Culture*, edited by Janice North, Karl Alvestad and Elena Woodacre. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chapter in edited volume

**R6** Weikert, Katherine (2020) *Authority, Gender and Space in the Anglo-Norman Worlds*. Woodbridge: Boydell.

Monograph. Submitted in REF2

'...a very important book that could radically alter the ways in which historians, especially, view the medieval social landscape' (Linda E. Mitchell, *Journal of British Studies* [forthcoming 2021])

#### **4. Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)

Lavelle and Weikert's research into place and power in the early middle ages has informed the team's desire to share and collaborate with heritage organisations and contemporary heritage-seekers. Furthermore, the researchers' reputations as world-leading experts in this field has attracted significant broadcast production teams — such as the BBC's 'The Last Kingdom' — seeking their input as historical contributors and consultants. Their impact and engagement are in two main areas: public understanding of the past, and heritage and tourist organisations.

##### **Impact on public understanding**

Lavelle's work as the historical consultant on the BBC/Netflix programme 'The Last Kingdom' has been ongoing since 2014, and is underpinned by **R1-3**. In his role he provides advice and consultation on the historical aspects of Anglo-Saxon and Viking cultures and society, and in particular on concepts of warfare, rebellion, and the historical figures of King Alfred and Aethelwold (**E1**). Lavelle's consultation on the programme, which includes site visits with the crew and cast, regular script commentaries, interventions and suggestions, the creation of realistic texts as props, and advice to the producers about warfare and leadership in the period, has deeply influenced the representation of the Anglo-Saxon past in this programme (**E1**). During production development, Lavelle was in contact with the producers weekly; this consultation increased to two to three times per week during production. Further, Lavelle's work on Anglo-Danish relations (**R2**) was used for briefing notes in cast meetings for the second season of the series. Series 1 on BBC Two averaged 2.7 million total viewers (**E6**). Netflix does not release viewing numbers but in December 2018, 'The Last Kingdom' tracked 23.3 million demand expressions (indicative of an audience demand expressed for this TV programme) (**E6**), indicating the further reach of public awareness of early medieval rulership via Lavelle's historical consultancy.

Building on her research on Empress Matilda (**R4-5**), Weikert's television work has allowed an enhanced cultural understanding of the early medieval past. Through this, she has also contributed to an increased understanding of gender equality in the past and how it relates to the present. Weikert's 2018 appearance on Channel 4's 'Britain's Most Historic Towns' discussed authority and ruling during the Anglo-Norman Civil War, particularly Empress Matilda and Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester. This segment closed the episode and provided a conclusion to the Norman period under examination in the programme. This appearance altered viewers' view of the city of Winchester and the Norman past with viewers tweeting that they learned about the past through Weikert's presentation, including

that they 'would never look at [Winchester] the same again' (E2). The viewing audience for this episode of the series is estimated at 350,000 as of its first airing in April 2018, outside of its online presence on All 4 (E6). Weikert's expertise in late Anglo-Saxon England has additionally appeared on two episodes of 'The Bone Detective' in 2020 (Series 1, Episode 3 and Series 2, Episode 1), discussing aspects of Anglo-Saxon law and justice to explain execution skeletons, underpinned by her work in how authority is dispersed in the period (R6). As the series airing was disrupted by Covid-19, viewing numbers are yet not available for the programme.

Both Lavelle and Weikert regularly adapt academic works (R1-3, 6) for popular presses. Lavelle has published in *History Today* (2016), *BBC History Magazine* (2012, 2015, 2018, 2020) and as an invited contributor to the Spanish popular history magazine *Desperta Ferro* (2020), with Weikert in *History Today* (2016). The *Desperta Ferro* edition to which Lavelle was invited to contribute an article based on his research (R3) totals 12,300 in print circulation (E8). *History Today* had an average circulation of 20,333 in 2013 and 20,490 in 2014, whilst *BBC History Magazine* has a 2012 print circulation of 72,271 and 2015 print circulation of 97,500 (including 11,500 US subscribers) and online page impressions of over 1.1 million per month, indicating vast readership of Lavelle's and Weikert's public works (E8). Lavelle's 2020 online contributions to *BBC History Magazine*, invited in response to his work on *The Last Kingdom*, had an average viewing time of 4 minutes and 44 seconds, which is 'impressive' and indicates 'a good sign that people are engaging with the article' (E8). Lavelle's work in *BBC History Magazine* has further been used in cast readthroughs for *The Last Kingdom* to inform and influence the actors' portrayals of historical figures (E1).

#### Impact on heritage organisations and tourism

Impact work has been undertaken with Heritage Open Days and Hampshire Cultural Trust, which has also developed stimuli to cultural tourism and contributed to the quality of tourist experiences. This is also sustainable work as it is undertaken annually by Lavelle and Weikert, as well as co-productive events that are programmed by Lavelle and Weikert such as in the case of history symposia (discussed below). Underpinned by R4-5, Weikert has provided advice and programming for the Heritage Open Days in 2017-2019, and further provided advice and consultation for the exhibition about historical women of Hampshire in 'Extraordinary Women' at Winchester's Great Hall in 2017. Weikert's contribution led to 'great confidence in the medieval sections of the exhibit' according to the organisers (E5). This exhibit had a total audience of 'thousands', with further impact via a planned book from the exhibition aimed for a popular audience as well as a Blue Plaque scheme for Winchester, extending the impact of Weikert's contribution (E5). Both Lavelle and Weikert have also led public history tours of Winchester through the Heritage Open Days and BBC History Weekends, drawing audiences of hundreds from across the UK, utilising their research on early medieval Winchester and Winchester in the twelfth centuries (R1-6). These tours include information about sites such as the castle, Bishop's Palace, St Giles Hill, Godbegot House, the Cathedral, Abbey House and more in connection with Weikert's and Lavelle's research with links to the 'Anarchy,' Earl Waltheof's execution, the exercise of authority in medieval wartime, and women's roles of authority in the central middle ages (R1-6). These walks have further encouraged public engagement with their locality and their past, with participants indicating they were 'inspired to visit another heritage site' (85%), they had learned something new (89%) and that they were 'more proud of their local area' (88%), with participants indicating follow-up learning via new books (E3, 5). The physical evidence of the city's significance during this period remains to this day, helping to draw more than 5 million tourists annually. As such, Lavelle and Weikert's research not only furthers the understanding of gender, authority and power for global researchers and history-lovers, but also reshapes how local residents and international tourists experience the physical remnants of this history.

Lavelle (R1-3) and Weikert (R6) gave expertise and public engagement in a fundraising event for the Winchester Heritage Open Days with Professor Michael Wood titled Alfred's Legacy: The Anglo-Saxons and the Birth of England in which ideas about late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman rulership were explored for a public audience, drawing on Lavelle's

expertise on Alfred and his successors (R1-3) and Weikert on the later Norman kings (R4-6). This event raised £1687.50 for Heritage Open Days which has been used to support programming and internships for the 2019 event, providing a change to cultural enrichment and securing Heritage Open Days' future programming (E5). The programme was also favourably received by 180 audience members who indicated new knowledge was gained, changing public perception of the past at an event that was 'thoughtful, nuanced and tremendously interesting' (E7, 9).

Lavelle and Weikert (R1-6) have shared their expertise in early medieval rulership in a number of public events with the Hampshire Culture Trust, an independent charity that manages and supports the museums and galleries formerly run by the Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council. These events include panel discussions on the 2016 theme of 'Royal Blood,' where more than 80% of all attendees indicated they were inspired by the discussion and keen to learn more (E9). The Winchester Discovery Centre, venue for the event, also indicated that the audience included 'many of our regular customers' but also that the venue was 'welcoming many people through our doors for the first time,' indicating new audiences to both the Discovery Centre and to the researcher's work, as well as the Discovery Centre's 'delight' in partnering with the Hampshire Cultural Trust and the University (E9). Further programming with Hampshire Cultural Trust includes two symposia in 2018 and 2019, organised and chaired by Lavelle with Weikert speaking in both sessions; the Covid-19 pandemic delayed a 2020 symposium which is currently scheduled for 2021, demonstrating the ongoing commitment between the Hampshire Cultural Trust and the researchers. (E4, 9) Lavelle's and Weikert's work has formed the cornerstones for these events, providing a valuable opportunity for public engagement with their research, as well as having an impact on the programming and reach of the Hampshire Cultural Trust (E5).

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

E1 Portfolio: email correspondence between Lavelle and producers of 'The Last Kingdom' indicating his direct influence on the production; letter from Carnival Productions.

E2 Portfolio: social media records of influence of Weikert's appearance on 'Britain's Most Historic Towns'.

E3 Portfolio: information and attendance on public walks given by Lavelle and Weikert for BBC History Weekends, Heritage Open Days.

E4 Individual users to corroborate claims: senior representative from Hampshire Cultural Trust.

E5 Individual users to corroborate claims connected to Heritage Open Days, Winchester.

E6 Portfolio: viewing numbers for 'The Last Kingdom' and 'Britain's Most Historic Towns'.

E7 Portfolio: social media feedback on History Open Days, BBC History and Hampshire Cultural Trust events.

E8 Portfolio: subscription and circulation numbers for History Today, BBC History Magazine and Desperta Ferro; emails from commissioning editors.

E9 Audience feedback surveys from three Heritage Open Days events, 'Royal Blood' in 2016 and 'Winchester and the Norman Conquest' in 2019.