

Home Comforts: physical and emotional meanings of home in Europe, 1650-1900

Chetham's Library, Manchester
5-6 October 2017

Home is widely recognised as a place of emotional attachment, often expressed and articulated through material objects which lie at the heart of attempts to uncover what made a house into a home. One important aspect of this is the notion of comfort, both in a physical and emotional sense; yet comfort is a relative term, its fulfilment dependent upon a wide range of economic, social, cultural, environmental and psychological factors – from wealth to the weather, and from family to fashion.

Building on a two-year Marie-Curie Fellowship held by Cristina Prytz at Manchester Metropolitan University which examined comfort in English and Swedish country houses, this conference explores the various ways in which ideas and ideals of comfort were expressed in and through the home. It also assesses how these changed over time and space, and whether it is possible to identify a European conceptualisation of home and comfort. The conference draws together scholars, museum curators and heritage professionals from Britain, Ireland, France, Sweden and Italy to discuss comfort in its various meanings, from servants and sofas to family and friends.

Programme

Thursday 5th October

- 10.00-11.00 Registration and coffee
- 11.00-11.10 **Welcome** – *Jon Stobart*
- 11.10-12.00 **Keynote 1:** How to 'live comfortable': northern English tradesmen in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, *Hannah Barker, University of Manchester*
- 12.00-13.15 **Panel 1: Family, sociability and the emotions of comfort** (Chair: *Serena Dyer*)
Emotional labour and the household in 17th and 18th century England – *Dominic Birch, King's College, London*
Samuel Pepys, comfort and social accounting – *Jamie Graves, University of Sheffield*
Middle-class fathers, sons and domestic comfort in Victorian England – *Laura Ugolini, University of Wolverhampton*
- 13.15-14.10 Lunch
- 14.10-15.50 **Panel 2: Modern, convenient and efficient houses** (Chair – *Jon Stobart*)
Masters and servants in the 18th century: parallel worlds? – *Aurélien Davrius, Paris-Malaquais*
Powdering rooms and water closets: marketing home comforts in Georgian Dublin – *Conor Lucey, University College Dublin*
Modern comforts and medieval décor: the Gothic revival home in the UK and France – *Alizée Cordes, Université Clermont-Auvergne*
The clientele of Dauvergne's agency: search for amenities and yearning for modernity in the Indre in the late 19th century – *Olivier Prisset, Université François-Rabelais, Tours*
- 15.50-16.15 Tea/coffee

- 16.15-17.30 **Panel 3: Making a home from Home** (Chair: *Laura Ugolini*)
 Comfort, domesticity and social display on the Netherlandish Grand Tour, 1585-1750 – *Gerrit Verhoeven, Universiteit Antwerpen*
 Comfort in the college: wallpaper and the student room as a domestic haven in 19th-century Cambridge, *Serena Dyer, Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture*
 Morale, morality, fashion and subversion: the home comforts of the late Victorian Barracks – *Rowena Willard-Wright, English Heritage*
- 17.35-18.00 **Intermission 1:** The comfort of animal things – *Julie-Marie Strange, University of Manchester*
- 18.00-19.00 Reception
- 20.00 Conference dinner (venue to be confirmed)

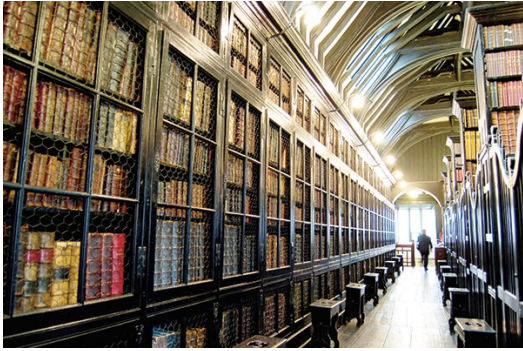
Friday 6th October

- 9.30-10.20 **Keynote 1:** Northern comfort and discomfort: distribution of spaces and display of objects in Swedish country houses, c.1740–1800, *Johanna Ilmakunnas, University of Turku*
- 10.20-11.10 **Panel 4: Singular comforts: bachelor homes** (Chair – *Jonathan Spangler*)
 “What a dislocation of comfort is comprised in that word moving”: comfort disrupted in the domestic and emotional life of an 18th-century Bachelor – *Helen Metcalfe, University of Manchester*
 Comfort compromised? The domestic lives of Finnish bachelors at the turn of the 20th century – *Laika Nevalainen, European University Institute*
- 11.10-11.30 Tea/Coffee
- 11.30-12.45 **Panel 5: Technologies of comfort: heat, plumbing and light** (Chair – *Conor Lucey*)
 The invention of thermal comfort in 18th century France – *Olivier Jandot, Université d’Artois*
 Technique, form and comfort: John Soane, a pioneer – *Diego Bocchini, M. Beatrice Bettazzi and Giovanni Mochi, Università degli Studi di Bologna*
 Where fairies seem to superintend ... the breakthrough of comfort in 19th-century Antwerp homes – *Britt Denis, Universiteit Antwerpen*
- 12.45-13.40 Lunch
- 13.40-14.55 **Panel 6: Ideal homes? Furnishing for comfort** (Chair – *Johanna Ilmakunnas*)
 The ideal home, 1737: the toy or baby house as a place of retreat – *Patricia Ferguson, British Museum and National Trust Advisor*
 “Sophas in abundance”: from inconvenience to comfort at Chiswick House – *Esmé Whittaker, English Heritage*
 Pleasing the new wife: creating female comfort in a Hungarian country house – *Kristof Fatsar, Writtle University College*
- 15.00-15.30 **Intermission 2:** Exploring notions of comfort through collections: plans for the new Home Gallery at the Geffrye Museum– *Eleanor John, Geffrye Museum*
- 15.30-15.45 **Last words on comfort**



Venue

The conference will take place at Chetham's Library in Manchester – the oldest public reference library in the UK, established in 1653. It holds over 100,000 volumes, more than half them published before 1851, and is open to readers free of charge. We hope that you'll have the opportunity to visit the library during the course of the conference.



Our conference will take place in the baronial hall, which is part of the original Manor House acquired with the bequest made by Humphrey Chetham for use as a free library and charity school.

A map showing the location of Chetham's Library can be found [here](#).

Registration

Please note that all speakers need to register for the conference. We are restricted in the number of people that the room will hold, so please register early!

You can register [here](#). The registration fee is £75 with a reduced fee of £35 for PhD students. This covers all lunches and refreshments during the conference, and the reception; accommodation and the conference dinner (which will be held in a nearby restaurant) are not included in the registration fee.

