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Session ID

4

Session Title

New feminisms? Radical post-humanist archaeologies

Start Time

Mon Dec 16 13:30:00

Room

826

We live in volatile political times: white supremacy is rising, xenophobic attitudes shape politics, homophobic and transphobic discrimination continues and the pervasive and powerful nature of the patriarchy runs through all of these. Intersectional feminist, queer, and post-colonial discourses in broader society have resurge

15:40 Ben Jervis, Cardiff University

Misogyny, Patriarchy and Female
Labour in the Medieval Household

Medieval people were well aware of the power of materials in shaping ideas of selfhood and negotiating otherness. However, archaeologists' engagement with medieval material has traditionally focussed around representational ideas of identity; at their best these approaches explore the implication of objects in identity work but at their worst they lead to objects standing for static and homogenising categories. Here I focus on a specific set of material engagements, the processing of grain and textiles, which were fundamental to economic development in medieval England. These tasks, typically organised at the domestic scale, have often been classed as female work and situated within a gendered dichotomy in which women occupy indoor, domestic spaces and their layout is termed 'by-work', a term which is intrinsically misogynistic in belittling the economic contribution of women. The paper draws on a range of historical and archaeological evidence from non-elite medieval households gathered through the Living Standards and Material Culture in English Rural Households (1300-1600) project. This evidence is read through the writing of Rosina