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CALL FOR PAPERS, *EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STUDIES* SPECIAL ISSUE ON "PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT"

Guest Editors
Ruth Mack (University at Buffalo, SUNY)
Crystal B. Lake (Wright State University)



Henry William Bunbury, A tailor riding on the back of a goose; representing an exploited worker (1780?)

Famously and influentially, Aristotle severed theory from practice, epistêmê from technê. By epistêmê, Aristotle meant to designate those forms of knowledge derived by reasoning and characterized by universality; technê, in contrast, designates the kinds of hands-on know-how one acquires by labor and handicraft. This special issue of *Eighteenth-Century Studies* seeks to address the fate of Aristotle's division in formulations of Enlightenment knowledge and expand revisionary accounts of the Enlightenment recently advanced by Paola Bertucci's work on French artisan-philosophers, Abigail Zitin's on practical aesthetics, and Ruth Mack's on handicraft philosophies, among others. Is empiricism as practical as Bacon's embrace of the artisan makes it out to be? At this historical moment, what kinds of thinking count as theory? What, after all, is the meaning of practice? How is practice related to work and society, and who has access to theory, to practice, or to creative combinations of the two?

We welcome essays from all disciplinary perspectives that document and reassess the kinds of practical knowledge that occasioned, responded to, or resisted the philosophical ideals we commonly associate with the Enlightenment. Contributions might focus on the period's genres of instruction; developments in labor, agriculture, and manufacturing; the material cultures of science and philosophy; the everyday experiences of church or state; the techniques employed in the literary, visual, and performing arts; or the recovery of Indigenous knowledges. We are keen to read essays that attend to the bodies, gestures, and skills implicated in acts of doing and making—and that specify how practical knowledge relates to broader structures of class, gender, race, and empire.

Given the inherently interdisciplinary nature of this topic, we hope to draw together scholarship from history, literary studies, art history, performance studies, and musicology. We aim to curate a conversation that not only investigates epistemic practices but also reflects critically on how practical knowledge operated within the Enlightenment—and how attention to such knowledge might reshape our understanding of the period's legacies in the scholarly work we do today.

The journal welcomes new research in papers of 7,500 to 9,000 words by June 1, 2026. Please submit to ec.studies@ubc.ca and feel free to contact special issue editors Ruth Mack (rmack@buffalo.edu) and Crystal B. Lake (crystal.lake@wright.edu), or journal editor Ramesh Mallipeddi (ramesh.mallipeddi@ubc.ca), with questions or ideas for this issue.