

Megan Ronayne

Doctoral Researcher

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About

Title of PhD: Manufacturing Economic and Regional Resilience: Differentiation and Competitiveness by Design

Supervisor: [Professor John Bryson \(/staff/profiles/business/bryson-john.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/business/bryson-john.aspx) and [Dr Julian Clark \(/staff/profiles/gees/clark-julian.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/gees/clark-julian.aspx)

Megan Ronayne is undertaking ESRC funded doctoral research to understand the geographical dimensions of manufacturing survival and competitiveness in the UK. This project is part of a much larger research programme that is emphasising the competitive dynamism of manufacturing in the UK and elsewhere.

Manufacturing still matters in the UK, but 'manufacturing has evolved and our understanding of it has not' (Livesey, 2006:1). Manufacturers are now inventors, innovators, designers, global supply chain managers and service providers (Livesey, 2006). However, there is limited research on the working practices and procedures of traditional 'low tech' manufacturing companies. In the UK, many of these surviving 'low tech' manufacturing firms will have been transformed into knowledge-based, design intensive manufacturing businesses. This research project is exploring the economic geographies and competitive dynamics of manufacturing and, specifically, the production of high value added consumer products. The project will explore the ways in which British-owned manufacturing firms are developing, adopting and adapting cutting edge services, products, processes and introducing new methods of working. Issues to be explored include the role design plays in the competitiveness of British manufacturing firms and also constraints on firm performance including skill shortages and hard-to-fill vacancies. This will provide an understanding on long-term survival and competitive strategies of manufacturing firms that have continued to remain profitable and competitive whilst continuing to produce in a high cost developed market economy like the UK.

Qualifications

2010 – 2011: MSc Enterprise, Environment and Place (Distinction)

2007- 2010 BA Geography (1st Class Honours)

Biography

2011: Started PhD

2010 – 2011: MSc Enterprise, Environment and Place (Distinction)

August 2010: Received 1+3 Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Funding

2007- 2010: BA Geography (1st Class Honours)

Awards

The W.A. Cadbury Prize for the most distinguished final year student

The Harry Thorpe Prize for the final year student showing the most promise in field work and project work in Human Geography

Research

Megan's research interests are within the discipline Economic Geography. Her key research interest concerns understanding developed market manufacturing firms' resilience and competitiveness in the twenty-first century.

Recent research

The survival and resilience of the UK carpet industry. This project examined the interconnection between production and consumption in firms' production systems and the competitive strategies UK carpet manufacturing firms have deployed to sustain their resilience against low cost producers.

Manufacturing and Ageing Demographics: Survival and employment issues within manufacturing firms based in Derbyshire. This project explored manufacturing and demographic issues of firms within the context of globalisation and an ageing population, to investigate the consequences of both on manufacturing firms in Derbyshire.

Other activities

- Associate member of the joint centre of service industries and urban development (the University of Birmingham and Guangzhou University)
- Student Representative for Society, Economy and Environment and Urban and Regional Studies Research Groups

