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Department of History
University of Wisconsin
Semester 2, 1986-87

The Social History of the English People, 1450-1780

Prof. Michael MacDonald
Office: Humanities 5118

Humanities 1131
TR 2:25-3:40

This course surveys the social history of England from the later Middle Ages until the Industrial Revolution. Two main themes dominate the history of this long period: the landed elite's successful effort to maintain its hold on power in a changing society and the interplay of continuity and change in the lives of ordinary people.

Students taking the class for three units will read the books listed below and take three examinations, two mid-terms and a final. Students taking the class for four units will also do an additional project, either a term paper or another activity approved by the instructor. An alternative activity might, for example, be the assembly of visual materials to illustrate changes in the role of the aristocracy over the centuries.

Examinations: Mid-terms will be held in class, at the usual hour, on February 26 and April 9. The final will be held on Sunday, May 10 at 7:25 PM. All examinations will be essay tests.

Required readings:

Keith Wrightson, English Society, 1580-1680
Lawrence Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy
Margaret Spufford, Small Books and Pleasant Histories
J.A. Sharpe, Crime in Early Modern England, 1550-1750
Roy Porter, English Society in the Eighteenth Century
Lawrence Stone, An Open Elite?

Recommended:

D.M. Palliser, The Age of Elizabeth

Week/Date	Lecture topics and reading assignments
I: 1/20-1/22	Introduction Social structures Reading: Wrightson, 11-118
II: 1/27-1/29	The facts of life The economy Reading: Wrightson, 121-221
III: 2/3-2/5	The enclosure movement Aristocratic power Reading: Stone, <u>Crisis</u> , 1-134

- IV: 2/10-2/12 The state
The family
Reading: Stone, Crisis, 135-248
- V: 2/17-2/19 No class
Education
Reading: Stone, Crisis, 249-357
- VI: 2/24-2/26 Religion
Exam I (2/26)
Reading: Spufford, 1-128
- VII: 3/3-3/5 Revolution
Popular culture I
Reading: Spufford, 129-261
- VIII: 3/10-3/12 Popular culture II
Witchcraft
Reading: Sharpe, 1-93
- IX: Spring Recess
- X: 3/24-3/26 Crime
Suicide
Reading: Sharpe, 94-188
- XI: 3/31-4/2 Popular rebellions
Power
Reading: Porter, 15-158
- XII: 4/7-4/9 "The Making of the English Landscape"
Exam II (4/9)
Reading: Porter, 159-268
- XIII: 4/14-4/16 Economic growth
Women
Reading: Porter, 269-379
- XIV: 4/21-4/23 Urbanization
Cultural change
Reading: Stone, Open Elite, 3-110
- XV: 4/28-4/30 The landed elite
Aristocratic culture
Reading: Stone, Open Elite, 111-196
- XVI: 5/5-5/7 Madness
Conclusion: Continuity and Change, 1500-1800
Reading: Stone, Open Elite, 199-308
- Final examination: May 10, 7:25 PM