

History 491: Living and Dying in Late Medieval London

Fall 2021

Professor Katherine French

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 9.30-11.30 (most office hours will be via zoom—a few will be in person because of my meeting schedule) See Canvas for zoom link

History Labs are project-based courses. While I have defined the focus and sources, you will decide what questions you want to ask, how you will answer these questions, and how you will present your findings. This particular History Lab will work with the London Metropolitan Archive (LMA) to explore daily life in medieval London through last wills and testaments. Thousands of ordinary men and women wrote last wills. Wills reveal a great deal about Londoners' mobility, family life, religion, material culture, professional networks, and the different priorities of men and women. The wills we will be working with come from London's Commissary Court and cover the dates 1484-1487; dates which cover the War of the Roses and the accession of Henry VII, the first Tudor monarch. Thus, one of the questions for the course might be how major political events register in the daily lives of people, who are not on the battle front.

Ability to travel, language, handwriting, and lack of legal knowledge all hinder access to medieval documents. A major goal of this project will be to make these wills better known to scholars, genealogists, and the interested public. Most of the wills in this register are in English rather than Latin and the LMA has digitized them for our use. In this class, you will learn how to read and transcribe these sources, and collaborate in creating an online museum-style digital exhibit that combines qualitative, and quantitative analysis with interactive maps and reproductions of key documents.

Covid: Alas we are still in the midst of a pandemic, in accordance with University guidelines, masks will be worn at all times in class—this means over your nose. You will be disenrolled from the course if you fail to follow this safety protocol. As this is a group project and there are few of you, doing the work is necessary to finish the project and for you to get a grade in the class. We will switch to hybrid or zoom as necessary to accommodate quarantines. Quarantines on their own are not then an excused absence from class or work on the project. Real illness is another issue, and we will just have to figure that out as we go along.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Barbara Hanawalt, *Ceremony and Civility: Civic Culture in Late Medieval London* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2017).

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES:

Assignment 1: Wall text assignment (Individual 10%)

Assignment 2: Project description and plan (Group 20%)

This is your roadmap for Assignment 5

Assignment 3: 3-5-page paper on wills as historical sources (Individual 20%)

Assignment 4: 3-4-page paper assessment of project and your role in it (Individual 10%)

Assignment 5: Story Map/Participation (Group 40%)

COURSE SCHEDULE:

PART I: Wills as Manuscripts and Texts

Monday: 30 August - Introduction-Project Based Classes and Medieval London

Wednesday: 1 September - Archives and the London Metropolitan Archive

Read for Class: Arlette Farge "Gathering and Handling Documents"

: Kate Theimer "Archives in Context and as Context"

Introduce: Register 7

https://search.lma.gov.uk/scripts/mwimain.dll/144/LMA_OPAC/web_detail?SESSIONSEARCH&exp=refd%20DL/C/B/004/MS09171/007#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&z=-0.4829%2C-0.0747%2C1.9657%2C1.4933

: Our spread sheet

Monday: 6 September - NO CLASS-LABOR DAY

Wednesday: 8 September - Last Wills and Testaments I: Law and Process

Read for Class: Pollock & Maitland, "The Last Will"

: Shona Kelly Wray and Roisin Cossar "Wills as Primary Sources"

: Tom Arkell, "The Probate Process"

: Goose and Evans, "Wills as Historical Source"

: Four Examples of Medieval Wills

Monday: 13 September - Last Wills and Testaments II: What Historians do With Wills

Read for Class: Katherine French, "Loving Friends"

: Giovanna Benadusi, "Investing the Riches of the Poor"

: Clive Burgess, "Late Medieval Wills and Pious Convention"

: Cordelia Beattie, "Married Women's Wills"

Assign Assignment 1.

Wednesday: 15 September - Paleography Workshop I

Taylor Sims

Assign Paleography Journal: I want you to keep a journal about transcribing. This journal should document your progress and time spent on transcribing; what questions you have; insights you've gleaned; random thoughts about the experience. Keeping this will help you stay on track, help you formulate ideas about what to do with the wills, generate ideas for the project. I will be checking this journal, and you may want to share it with your classmates as you plan your final project, so it isn't a private journal so much as a tool.

Monday: 20 September - Paleography Workshop II

Taylor Sims

Wednesday: 22 September – Codicology (Meet in Hatcher Rare Books Room)

Read for Class: Erik Kwakkel, "Filling the Page"

Assignment 1 Due in Class

Monday: 27 September - The Medieval Way of Death

Read for Class: Clive Burgess, "Fond Thing Vainly Invented"

: Christopher Daniell, "From Death-Bed to Remembrance"

: Vanessa Harding, "Burial Choice and Burial Location in Later Medieval London."

Assign spreadsheet worksheet.

Wednesday: 29 September - Where do we go from here?

Discuss spreadsheet worksheet

Assign Assignment 2

Monday: 4 October - Paleography Workshop III

Discuss journals

PART II: London

Wednesday: 6 October - London I: Geography

Read for Class: Barbara Hanawalt, "Introduction, Chapter 1"

Introduce: Layers of London <https://www.layersoflondon.org/>

: Agas Map <https://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/agas.htm>

Monday: 11 October - London II: Society

Read for Class: Sylvia Thrupp, "Social and Economic Position of London Merchants"

: Clive Burgess, "London Parishioners in Times of Change"

: Shannon McSheffrey, "Place, Space, and Situation"

Introduce: Medieval Londoners <https://medievalondoners.ace.fordham.edu/>

Wednesday: 13 October - London III: Politics and the Crown

Read for Class: Barbara Hanawalt, "Chapter 2"

: Caroline Barron, "Richard II and London"

Assignment 2 Due in Class (one copy from all of you)

Monday: 18 October - London IV: City Government

Read for Class: Barbara Hanawalt, "Chapters 3 & 4"

: Frank Rexroth, "The Beginning of the Hundred Years War"

Wednesday: 20 October - Check-In

Monday: 25 October - London V: Guilds and Economy

Read for Class: Justin Colson, "Commerce, Clusters, and Community"

: Barbara Hanawalt, "Chapter 5, 6, & Conclusion"

Assign Assignment 3

PART III: The Project

Wednesday: 27 October - Check-In

Monday: 1 November - Story Maps Workshop
Assignment 3 due in class

Wednesday: 3 November - Design Planning

Monday: 8 November - Check-In

Wednesday: 10 November – UMMA-Medieval Art – Details about this coming later
Assignment 3 due in class

Monday: 15 November - Design Workshop

Wednesday: 17 November – Bits and Pieces I

Monday: 22 November – Presentation Planning

Wednesday: 24 November: NO CLASS-THANKSGIVING

Monday: 29 November – Bits and Pieces II

Wednesday: 1 December – Bits and Pieces III

Monday: 6 December – Bits and Pieces IV
Paleography Journal due in class

PART IV: Conclusion

Wednesday: 8 December – Presentation
Assign Assignment 4

Wednesday: 15 December 4-6.00 Final Exam
Unveiling of final draft of project! (Assignment 5)
Assignment 4 due

POLICY STATEMENTS:

Academic Misconduct:

The University of Michigan community functions best when its members treat one another with honesty, fairness, respect, and trust. The college promotes the assumption of personal responsibility and integrity, and prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct. All cases of academic misconduct will be referred to the LSA Office of the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Education. Being found responsible for academic misconduct will usually result in a grade sanction, in addition to any sanction from the college. For more information, including examples of behaviors that are considered academic misconduct and potential sanctions, please see lsa.umich.edu/lsa/academics/academic-integrity.html

Students with Disabilities:

The University of Michigan is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all classes, programs, services, and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office located at G664 Haven Hall. The SSD phone number is 734-763-3000. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation (VISA) form. Please present this form to me at the beginning of the term, or at least two weeks prior to the need for the accommodation.