

History Department Research Seminars 2013

2-12-2013

Downed WWII Airmen with Claire Andrieu

**Downed Airmen as Social Catalysts, Germany
and the United Kingdom, 1940-45: A Work in Progress**

[Prof Claire Andrieu](#) (SciencesPo., Paris)

Thursday

5th December

4-5:30

Samuel Alexander A.102



Claire

This talk is based on an ongoing research project addressing compared behavior of civilians in Europe during WWII. It builds on a standard and common event throughout Europe, the unexpected arrival of one or more airmen on the ground. Between 1939 and 1945, nearly 150,000 airmen of the RAF and the U.S. Air Force fell from their plane or force-landed in enemy territory. Some 55% were killed in action, 35% were taken prisoner, and 10% escaped their pursuers. In total, about 15,000 fugitives hid in German Europe at one time or another, with the help of civilians. In the opposite camp, the Luftwaffe also suffered heavy losses during the war. About 4,000 Luftwaffe airmen fell over Britain. Nearly 2,000 were taken prisoner. Most were first received by civilians.

Given the chance that presides over the localization of their drop points on the continent and in the British Isles, and due to the vagaries of their flight path in Europe, these men are the unwitting agents of a wide European survey. How they are received not only reflects the opinion of the inhabitants. However spontaneous it may look, the reception consists of acts that result from prior acquisition processes. What they express is stronger than opinion, it is a snapshot of condensed history, culture and political system. That is why the reception behavior is uniform on a national scale, with strong contrasts from one nation to another. Typical behaviors are: civility in England, covert aid to the Allies in France, lynchings in Germany from 1943. But the typical is not necessarily representative of the whole.

This talk will focus on the British and German cases. It will address the concepts of “People’s War” and “Volksgemeinschaft” in light of the comparison.

All are welcome. Events end around 5:30pm followed by drinks with the speaker.

22-11-2013

Japanese infanticide talk Nov 27

Infanticide and a Demographic Revolution in Japan

Dr Fabian Drixler

Wednesday November 27

5-7pm

University Place 4.205

Presented by Japanese Studies and History



Around 1790, eastern Japan's culture of reproductive restraint and responsible parenting came under attack amid a deepening depopulation crisis. Previously, many of its inhabitants believed that they had to choose which children to raise and which to discard at birth, and infanticides were so frequent (40% of all births) that every generation was smaller than the one that went before.

The fight against infanticide, motivated by this depopulation, became a central concern. The number of children increased from about three per woman in the 18th century to about six in 1920. This talk will outline this reverse fertility transition and discuss the changing metaphors and images, political concerns and understandings of the world, that made infanticide normal and normative in one century, and a dehumanizing crime in another.

Does this journey from low fertility to high matter for how we view demographic change in other societies, past, present and future?

Fabian Drixler has been teaching Japanese history at Yale since 2008. He is the author of *Mabiki: Infanticide and Population Growth in Eastern Japan, 1660-1950* (University of California Press, 2013).

18-11-2013

Early Modern Tipples & Tonics This Thursday

Intoxicants and Early Modernity – an ontological cocktail

[Dr Angela McShane](#)

(Victoria & Albert Museum/Royal College of Art)

&

Dr James Brown

(Sheffield)

Thursday

21st November

4-5:30pm

University Place 6.205



Thursday's talk explores an AHRC and ESRC-funded project found at:

<http://hridigital.shef.ac.uk/intoxicants>

An excerpt from the larger project description:

"There is every indication that the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw a significant increase in the production, traffic, and consumption of intoxicants: substances understood at the time to be 'poisoning, or envenoming' and 'tuddling or making drunk', and which today are recognized as having an often detrimental impact on the body's physiological and mental processes, especially if consumed in excess. This includes 'old world' alcohols like ale, beer, wine, and spirits; and 'colonial groceries' like tobacco and opium. Utilising a range of archival materials, this project will do three things. It will trace the increase in intoxicants between c. 1580 and c. 1740 as empirically and systematically as possible. It will look to explain the increase, paying particular attention to the role of local, national, and international markets on the one hand and the formation of 'civil society' on the other. And it will explore some of the key corollaries of these developments: in particular the formation of the early-modern state and developments in printed media and discourses."

History Research Seminars, 2013-14

All are welcome. Events end around 5:30pm followed by intoxicants with the speaker.

4-11-2013

Lancaster's James Taylor on Victorian-era Fraud

'The Forgotten Criminalisation of Company Fraud in Victorian Britain'

Dr [James Taylor](#), Lancaster University

7th November 4-5:30pm

University Place 6.205

History Research Seminar -- open to all!

Read Dr Taylor's [recent contributions to History & Policy](#) on the banking crisis



Received wisdom has it that Victorian Britain was a haven for white-collar criminals and that the state only seriously tackled the problem of company fraud in the twentieth century. While the Victorian criminal justice system dealt harshly with 'proletarian' offences like poaching and assault, middle-class wrongdoers got off lightly because of their status, so the story goes. Moralists may have wrung their hands, but fraud was generally tolerated as the necessary price for a dynamic, wealth-generating economy.

This paper challenges these assumptions. Derived from a recent monograph based on an unparalleled sample of legal cases – many of which are examined for the first time – it rejects existing interpretations which emphasise the deregulatory dimensions of company law. In reality, the state was increasingly interested in curbing corporate misbehaviour. From the middle of the nineteenth century, lawyers and legislators began to explore how the criminal law could be deployed to regulate commercial activity. The result was that prosecutions of company directors were commonplace by the 1890s.

These prosecutions performed multiple functions. They underwrote British self-perception as an honest people. They dramatised the class blindness of the criminal justice system, thus discrediting radical critiques of the law. They legitimised freedom of incorporation by underlining that those who abused this freedom would be disciplined. They stabilised confidence in times of economic crisis. And they were increasingly seen as necessary as faith in a self-regulating economy – in which unsound elements would be naturally purged by business failure – ebbed. The criminalisation of fraud is therefore as much a social and cultural, as an economic and legal, phenomenon, with far-reaching implications for our understanding of nineteenth-century Britain. The subject also has contemporary relevance in light of the ongoing economic crisis and the issues it raises regarding business ethics and the relationship between the state and the market.

15-10-2013

'Endangered Races' Talk by Sadiah Qureshi

‘Exterminate All the Brutes’: Settler Colonialism and the Future of Endangered Races

Dr Sadiah Qureshi, Birmingham

Thursday 17th October

4pm

University Place 4.206

History Research Seminar



Lamenting the predicament of dying races became an increasingly prominent occupation in the long nineteenth century. Novelists, painters, scientists, politicians, poets, travel writers and missionaries all contributed to creating and perpetuating the sense that some peoples were doomed to a speedy extinction. The feelings of imminent change were not unfounded as many human societies found themselves ravaged by the new diseases, loss of land and warfare they suffered due to imperial expansion. Most famously, in 1869 William Lanney, often argued to be the last Tasmanian man, passed away. Just seven years later, Trugernanner, the ‘last’ Tasmanian woman followed suit. The circumstances leading to this loss sparked and stimulated great discussion over the kinds of political activity that were appropriate for ‘civilized’ nations, and how best to tackle the fate of the European empires whilst learning from past lessons. Early-modern writers had long noted the apparent decimation of some indigenous peoples; however, such discussions took on a new and urgent form in the nineteenth century as commentators were increasingly able to appeal to a new scientific understanding of extinction as an endemic feature of natural change. This talk will discuss how my current research explores modern notions of human endangerment. In particular, it will sketch out how theories of extinction can help us understand the historical relationships between scientific knowledge and political policy-making, competing visions of endangered peoples’ lives and the nature of intercultural contact within settler colonies.

All are welcome. Talks end around 5:30pm followed by drinks with the speaker.

1-10-2013

Africa's Child Combatants with Exeter's Stacey Hynd

Thursday 3rd October

4pm

Sam Alex Bldg Rm. A.101

'Narratives of Violence: Historicizing Representations of Child Combatants in African Conflict, c. 1980-2010'

Dr Stacey Hynd, University of Exeter



Children are integral to contemporary warfare in Africa, and child soldiers in particular are often taken as evidence of the depoliticization, criminalization and civilianization of conflict.

However, 'new war' theories do not fully account for the origins, spread or international impact of the phenomenon. This paper argues that a rigorous historical contextualization of children in African conflicts, their experiences and understandings of violence, and a historicized reading of the evidence upon which current claims are based, are necessary to develop a stronger understanding of child combatants in contemporary conflict. It argues that the modern 'child soldier' phenomenon is only partly linked to empirical evidence, and emerges from the entanglement of liberal humanitarianism, international law, and political discourses. As such, it analyses and historically contextualizes such discourses, situating child combatants within the wider crises of postcolonial states, the 'youth revolutions' facing African societies, colonial and independence-era patterns of child labour, delinquency and

conflict involvement, as well as historical constructions of race and childhood in Africa. The paper's empirical foundation consists of humanitarian reports, TRCs, legal proceedings, the published memoirs of former child soldiers, and archival accounts of children's involvement in colonial and independence era conflict.

All are welcome. Talks end around 5:30pm followed by drinks with the speaker.

22-4-2013

Medieval Accountability

The final Manchester History research seminar of this academic year will be this Thursday - please come along to hear:

John Sabapathy (University College London)

The Politics of Accountability in the Middle Ages

Thursday 25th April, 4.10pm

University Place, 4.206

ALL WELCOME

History Research Seminars 2012-2013

The politics of accountability in the Middle Ages

John Sabapathy
University College London



25th April, 4.10pm
University Place, 4.206
All Welcome

John Sabapathy is Lecturer in Medieval History at University College London and works on the comparative history of Christendom and Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. He is currently completing a monograph on officers and their accountability in the Middle Ages, focusing on English officers in an European context.

For more information on History seminars and events see:
<http://e-tout.blogspot.co.uk/>

20-2-2013

Professor Anthony Reid (ANU), "Writing History on the "Ring of Fire": Tectonic Crises and Global Climate Change"

Research seminar: Writing History on the "Ring of Fire": Tectonic Crises and Global Climate Change (hosted by History-CCS-HCRI) 21 February Thursday 2013 | 16:00-18:00 | University Place 4.206 Postgraduate seminar: Negotiating Asian Nationalisms (hosted by

CCS, History and Graduate School) 22 February Friday 2013 | 11:00-13:00 | Mansfield Cooper 3.04 Professor Anthony Reid (emeritus ANU) is an eminent historian of Asia, corresponding member of the British Academy, founding Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at UCLA (1999-2002) and of the Asia Research Institute at NUS, Singapore (2002-7). He is the author of 10 books which include *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, Charting the Shape of Early Modern Southeast Asia*; *An Indonesian Frontier: Acehese and other histories of Sumatra* (2004); and most recently *Imperial Alchemy: Nationalism and political identity in Southeast Asia* and *To Nation by Revolution: Indonesia in the 20th Century*, and *An Indonesian Frontier: Acehese and other histories of Sumatra* (2004). He has also written and edited nearly 20 books on themes such as slavery, freedom, China-Southeast Asian relations, Islam, health, historiography, and economic and environmental history.