

AP/HIST 3212 3.0
Society in Preindustrial Europe
Fall, 2018

Calumet 109: Tues & Thurs 2:30-4

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office hours: Tuesday, Thursday 1:30 and by appointment

email policy: I write the whole class via Moodle, but use tcohen@yorku.ca for my emails with my students. As course director I take responsibility for your success not only in my class but in all your studies and I welcome emails about any matter that affects your doing well at York. All emails are of course confidential and treated as personal unless you instruct me otherwise, as when, for instance, you have a comment and idea for the whole class.

<https://moodle.yorku.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=132445>

The idea of the course: This course is an experiment for the professor. The larger subject is pre-modern European society. Now society is both a thing, and a set of processes. It is thing of a very complex nature, certainly, and its processes are always multiple: the control and distribution of material resources, and of immaterial ones like moral, cultural, and intellectual capital. So social history can study the distribution and circulation of goods, both tangible and intangible, and lay out the relationships that channel them in their movement. Or, to take the same issues but to look at who possesses these assorted assets, it can trace stratification, and clumping, and mobility. And, in that connection, it can study conflicts over assets. But this social history, in our course, will take a different tack: it will focus on control, social control, in the widest sense. So it will approach social history through the lens of what social scientists call 'disputes and settlements.'

Social control is a fascinating subject. Some control is conscious and intentional. Much, however, is reflexive, habitual, and often barely perceived. What force is it, for instance, that stops most professors from dying their hair blue? How many professors are even aware that such a subtle force exists? And what force inhibits students from blowing soap bubbles, singing camp songs, or turning cartwheels in class? Embarrassment is a powerful, subtle device for shaping behaviour.

Some social control comes from above: magistrates, decrees, police forces, and prisons control human behaviour, as do churches, schools, hospitals, convents, and guilds and boards and business managers. And other social control comes from below. And a third kind comes from inside the head, via conscience, an internalization of moral imperatives, or via fear of shame or embarrassment or scorn.

In premodern Europe, social control evolved, from an early time when states were rudimentary.

Indeed, 'state' is a misnomer, for, say, medieval France or Poland; it is a modern term with connotations of regularity and scale that thoroughly misfit those early times. To make Europe's evolution from loose to tight, from informal to formal, as clear as possible, we start with medieval Iceland, a society almost without institutions, a case of social control by society itself. At the other end of the course and the semester, we arrive in early modern France, in a time of nascent absolutism. By what devices and what erratic pathway did Europe arrive at that latter point, at that stage in the meandering evolution towards top-down control, makeshift and incomplete as it then still was?

The books: They cost a bit more than we all would wish. The consolation: they are all very good books and we will work them hard. We have five, and we read them all, from end to end. We also have some articles on our Moodle or via links to YUL.

The book list (in order of use): all versions paperback

Njal's Saga, Penguin, 2001, ISBN 978 0 140 44769 9 (note: avoid older Penguin editions with different pagination).

William Ian Miller, *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking: Feud, Law and Society in Saga Iceland*, University of Chicago Press, 1990

Daniel Lord Smail, *The Consumption of Justice*, Cornell University Press, 2003

Edward Muir, *Mad Blood Stirring*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998 (abridged paperback version)

James R. Farr, *A Tale of Two Murders*, Duke University Press, 2005

Operating principles: I have three: honesty, trust, community.

Honesty: The University wants all courses to remind students of the importance of intellectual honesty. No plagiarism is allowed. But this course is beyond plagiarizable; the assignments are quirky and very personal. There is no way to pull them off the web. Fine! But honesty still matters, as a general stance, mine with you and yours with all of us. See the official statement below for policy. I have chaired the LA&PS higher committee and I know a lot about how students both worry and feel puzzled about the boundaries and grey areas, and I am happy to give you advice about the principles in this course and any other, and to help you negotiate with a unit if ever you are charged. Rule of thumb: when in doubt ask the person who grades your work ahead of time.

Trust: This, for me as a professor, is a basic operating principle. I like trusting my students. I consider their word golden. Thus, I respect what they tell me and to treat it as true. As a result, I never ask for doctors' notes and other proof of problems. If there is a problem, just tell me. I ask no details. "I was away for good reason" suffices. But, to be prudent, do get doctors' notes if you need them for York's officialdom. (Social control of students!)

Community: This one is crucial for all of us. Learning is not something I dump on students, like gravel down a chute, but a thing that professor and students produce by working together as a

group. Accordingly, 'being there' is crucial. Everybody has to come, bring the books, read the books, and plug in the head to what is going on in class. So, I ban not only all telephones and text-messengers (as is usual in classes) but also all laptops and tablets unless we all agree it is time to fish them out and look things up, as we often do in class. No laptops! You bet! But people live these days on their laptops. Indeed they do, and they email and Facebook and play solitaire and review pictures of last Saturday's party and watch TV and movies and home videos and download music and write papers for other courses and buy tickets to Cancun and more and more they do it in the middle of class. So? So shut the machines and join the group. End of story! The only exceptions are special needs and special missions and special moments. If so, see me.

Lecture notes on Moodle

I will be posting write-ups of lectures and of what we say in class on Moodle. That fact should reduce worries about how to take notes without the laptop open. On the other hand, I will not be using Moodle's email or chat. But I will send lots of emails to the whole class via Moodle, so make sure Moodle and you agree as to your best email address, so you do get my comments.

Work breakdown

7 log entries	35% (7 x 5%)
Njal paper	15%
final paper	20%
final exam	20%
participation	10%
bonus via participation	ca. 2.5 points atop 100% [1 point for coming, 1 for bringing the readings, 1 for having read them, credited to class bonus total)

Logs: rules of the game: It is important to do the log before the class when we discuss the passage in question. So **sign** and **date** each log entry. No signature, no grade. I will be grading the early logs in mid-course, so that you receive some feedback as you build your log collection. A log entry should be about a page and a half to two pages long, double-spaced. I give good grades for careful reading, careful thinking, independence of mind, and imagination.

week 1	6/9	Meet the course, sort out directions, solve problems Build 'families', get names, nicknames, characters
week 2	11/9	Njal, vii-xxxiii (Intro) and ch. 1-36 (to page 58)
	13/9	Njal, ch. 37-65 (to p. 109) Miller, Prologue (pp. 1-12) Introduction: Institutional Setting, Ranks of Persons (pp. 12-42) log question 1: What is your name and your character and what

		traits have you acquired?
week 3	18/9	Njal, ch. 66-91 (to p. 156) Miller, "Making Sense of the Sources" (pp. 43-76)
		(dossier of our Iceland posted on Moodle and handed out to families in hard copy)
	20/9	Miller, "Some Aspects of the Economy," 77-110
		log question 2: Find an exchange in Njal and see what Miller would have said about it.
week 4	27/9	Njal's Saga, ch. 92-131 (to p. 229) Miller, "Householding Patterns", "Bonds of Kinship" (pp. 111-138, 139-178)
		Problems Problems Problems (handed out) and pondered
	25/9	Njal's Saga, ch. 132-143 (to p. 264)
		log question 3: On p. 164, Miller talks of the work one must be willing to do to hold relations with one's kin. So what sacrifices might you, as Icelander, make for your kin?
		All logs handed in for first grading.
week 5	2/10	Njal's Saga, ch. 144-159 Miller, "Feud, Vengeance, and the Disputing Process" (pp. 179-220)
		Negotiations in class
	4/10	Miller, "Law and Legal Process" (221-58)
		Negotiations in class
		>>>No classes – Fall break<<<<
week 6	16/10	Miller, "Peacemaking and Arbitration" "Concluding Observations" (pp. 259-300, 301-8)
		Negotiations in class
	18/10	Daniel Lord Smail, <i>Consumption of Justice</i> , "Using the Courts," 1-88

T. Cohen, "Three Forms of Jeopardy: Honor, Pain, and Truth-Telling in a Sixteenth-Century Italian Courtroom," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 29.4 (1998): 78-98 (**Moodle/JStor**)

week 7	23/10	Smail, <i>Consumption of Justice</i> , "Structures of Hatred," 89-132.
	25/10	Smail, <i>Consumption of Justice</i> , "The Pursuit of Debt", 133-159.
		T. Cohen, "Bourdieu in Bed: the Seduction of Innocentia (Rome, 1570)." <i>Journal of Early Modern History</i> , Spring, 2003, vol. 7, no. 1-2 55-85 [Moodle/ Jstor]
		paper due (ca. 5 pp.) Reflect on your experience as an Icelander in dispute
week 8	30/10	Smail, <i>Consumption</i> , "The Body and Bona," 160-205
		log question 4: Not Iceland: So how did people in Marseilles use state organs to shape private quarrels?
	1/11	>>>No classes – Fall break<<<<
week 9	6/11	Smail, <i>Consumption</i> , "Creation of the Archive," 207-58
	8/11	Muir, <i>Mad Blood</i> , xi-xxviii, "Friulian Enigma," 2-49
		log question 5: Was Friuli, much simpler than Marseilles, any different from Iceland?
week 10 of	13/11	Muir, <i>Mad Blood</i> , "Approaching Thunder," "The Tempest 1511," 50-109
	15/11	Muir, <i>Mad Blood</i> , "The Problem of Meaning," "Retaliation," 110-132
		log question 6: Meditate on the pig that ate Savorgnan's brain, and what culture made of that grisly event.
week 11	20/11	Muir, <i>Mad Blood</i> , "Toward the Duel," 157-192
		Swordplay in class - Aaron Miedema, PhD student, will arm you and try to run you through. Bring your reflexes.
	22/11	Aaron Miedema, Paper on Cellini's swordfights (Moodle)

log question 7: What did you learn when you held in your own hand a convincing replica of Renaissance sword or dagger?

week 12	27/11	T. Cohen, "A Daughter-killing Glossed, Digested, and Reluctantly Accepted," draft, for <i>Murder in Renaissance Italy</i> , edited by Trevor Dean and K. J. P. Lowe, Cambridge University Press (2017) (Moodle)
	29/11	Farr, <i>Tale of Two Murders</i> , pp. 1-85
week 13	4/12	Farr, pp. 86-133
week 14	1/12	Farr, pp. 136-204 paper due

Paper questions: do only one.

The model here: a close reading of Farr's book, using it to attach what you see on its pages to what you have learned in the course. So footnotes help, both to his book and, where useful, to other readings.

1. By the time we arrive in Farr's early modern France, how much self-help survives in the face of the rise of state law?
2. If Farr's story bears on social control, what are its lessons?
3. How modern, and how archaic, were the workings of justice in Farr's story?

Official History materials follow:

Grading:

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g. A+ =9, A=8, B+=7, C+=5, etc.). Assignments and tests will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100; A = 80-89, B+=75-79, B=70-74; C+=65-69, C+60-64, etc.).

For a full description of York's grading system, see <http://history.laps.yorku.ca/students/grading-system/>

Religious Observance Accommodation:

<https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm.woa/wa/regobs>

The History Department is located on the second floor of Vari Hall, 2140. The usual office hours during the academic term are M-F, 8:30am-4:00pm. The department's phone number for general inquiries is 416-736-5123.

The History Department website: Upcoming events, resources for undergraduate history students, faculty and staff information, and much more: <http://www.yorku.ca/uhistory/>

Undergraduate Program in History: links to information on history major career paths, degree programs (what is required for majors, minors, etc.), and degree checklists: <http://history.laps.yorku.ca/undergraduate-program/>

History Advising Hours: The History department offers advising times weekly. The hours are posted on our website 1-2 weeks in advance. The days and times change to accommodate student's different schedules. No appointment is necessary; students will be seen on a first-come, first-served basis. The Director of Undergraduate Studies is Prof. Adrian Shubert, and he can be contacted at dushist@yorku.ca.

The Writing Centre: One-to-one help with a writing instructor on any writing assignment. You will need to enroll to set up your appointment, though they also offer some drop-in sessions. The enrollment link and further information is found at <http://www.yorku.ca/laps/writ/centre/>. Bring a copy of your assignment to your appointment.

York University Libraries: Links to the main catalogue, e-resources, on-line help chat line with librarian, and many other research aids: <http://www.library.yorku.ca/web/>

SPARK [Student Papers and Academic Research Kit]: This is an on-line tutorial that provides handy tips and tools for understanding and successfully completing university-level assignments. Go to <https://spark.library.yorku.ca>

Learning Disability Services: Learn about LDS at <http://lds.info.yorku.ca/>

York Student Code of Conduct: <http://oscr.students.yorku.ca/student-conduct>

Academic Honesty Statement:

Violations of the York Senate Policy on Academic Honesty will be treated severely. Recent penalties have included failure in the course, suspension from the University, and withholding or rescinding a York degree, diploma or certificate. Cheating during in-class or take-home examinations, collaborating on written assignments, failing to use quotations marks and citations when using or paraphrasing the printed or electronically disseminated work of others, aiding or abetting academic misconduct, and violating any other part of the Policy on Academic Honesty will result in penalties. For further details, see the relevant part of the York Website: <http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-honesty-senate-policy-on/>

Academic Integrity Tutorial: http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/index.html

History department policy on grade reappraisals, including link to the grade reappraisal form: <http://history.laps.yorku.ca/students/grading-system/>

Important Add/Drop Deadlines (Fall Term Courses):

Last date to enroll without permission of course director September 18, 2018

Last date to enroll WITH permission of course director
Last date to drop courses without receiving a grade
Course Withdrawal Period (Receive a "W" on transcript)

October 2, 2018
November 9, 2018
November 10-December 4, 2018