

**HISTORY 335**  
**Seminar in Modern European History: Social Responses to Poverty**  
**Spring 2008**  
**TIME: M, W 1-2:50**  
**FROST 106**

Instructor: Rebecca Bates  
[rebecca\\_bates@berea.edu](mailto:rebecca_bates@berea.edu)  
Phone: 985-3793  
Office: Frost 108

Office Hours: TR 12-1; T 3-5  
& by appointment

“A decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization.”

- Samuel Johnson, c. 1770

“We are the first generation that can end poverty.”

- Declaration of the United Nations, 2000.

**Description of the Course:**

This course is a semester long introduction to European responses to poverty from the 17<sup>th</sup> century through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Topics to be considered include institutional responses to vagrancy; the criminalization of poverty; definitions of the family; the socialist critiques of capitalism; the rise of voluntary associations; and the relationship between philanthropic organizations and the state.

By the end of the course, students should be aware of the changing character of poverty; grasp key debates concerning how families, social reformers, philanthropists, and the state grappled with the difficult problem of poverty; should have developed critical reading skills enabling one to analyze primary and secondary sources; should have enhanced their abilities to communicate verbally and in writing; and have practiced working with other members of a group to communicate a collective interpretation of a historical problem.

This course, which has been underwritten by the Project Pericles, is designed to incorporate issues of civic engagement. Modern European History, while acknowledged by historians to be the age of “mass participation,” is often presented as a series of failures. According to this interpretation, individuals and minorities, alike, were losers as the barons of industrial capitalism and popular demagogues, most notably Adolf Hitler, trampled on those who were already the outcasts of society. However, another history of the modern era can be told. A history that speaks to the engagement of individuals who wrestled often, but not always successfully, with the rise of industrial capitalism to bring a new authority of the state and to institutions that would redistribute wealth. By working through this history, in part by collaboratively reading primary and secondary documents, this course both illustrates and hopes to cultivate the intellectual skills and habits of mind necessary for positive engagement in a civil society. In addition to the readings and class discussions, which highlight the challenges that are a manifest part of social action, this course will use both the forums of public writing (via editorials and internet commentary)

and group public presentations to allow students to develop and practice the skills necessary for responsible citizenship.

### **Content Specific Objectives:**

By the end of the term students should be:

- aware of the changing character of poverty
- grasp the debates concerning how families, social reformers, philanthropists, and the state grappled with the difficult problem of poverty

### **Transferrable Historical Skills:**

- Students will become active participants in the making of history by interpreting the past for themselves.
- Students will have practiced working within a group to communicate a collective interpretation of a historical problem.
- Students will begin to develop and apply analytical skills necessary to interpret primary texts and secondary sources, including film and visual material.
- Students will begin to develop the critical writing skills necessary to communicate the complexity of historical events.
- Students will illustrate their ability to document written work using the standards of the historical profession.

### **Required Texts:**

Approximately 150 pages will be assigned per week. Texts will be assigned through Blackboard. Please download these texts to your hard drive and bring your computer to class or print them out before class.

Tutorial readings will be assigned in consultation with the professor, while **general reading assignments will be drawn from the following.**

Blaug, Mark. "The Myth of the Old Poor Law and the Making of the New." The Journal of Economic History vol.23, no. 2 (1963)

Brundage, A. and D. Eastwood (1990). "The Making of the New Poor Law Redivivus." Past and Present(127): 183-194.

Bradlow, E. (1984). "The Children's Friend Society at the Cape of Good Hope." Victorian Studies 27(2): 155-177.

Carpenter, M. (1861). "On Educational Help from Government for the Destitute and Neglected Children of Great Britain." Journal of the Statistical Society of London 24(1): 22-29.

- Cunningham, H. (1990). "The Employment and Unemployment of Children in England c.1680-1851." Past and Present(126): 115-150.
- Daunton, M. (1995). Progress and poverty : an economic and social history of Britain, 1700-1850. Oxford, England ; New York, Oxford University Press.
- Harling, P. (2001). The Modern British State. Malden, MA, Polity.
- Harrison, B. (1966). "Philanthropy and the Victorians." Victorian Studies 9(4): 353-374.
- Hill, C. (1972). The world turned upside down; radical ideas during the English Revolution. New York, New York Viking Press 1972.
- Levine, D. (1985). "Industrialization and the Proletarian Family in England." Past and Present(107): 168-203.
- Henriques, U. (1968). "How Cruel Was the Victorian Poor Law?" The Historical Journal 11(2): 365-371.
- Himmelfarb, G. (1991). Poverty and compassion : the moral imagination of the late Victorians. New York, Knopf.
- Himmelfarb, G. (2006). The moral imagination : from Edmund Burke to Lionel Trilling. Chicago, Ivan R. Dee.
- Jones, G. S. (1971). Outcast London: a study in the relationship between classes in Victorian society. Oxford [Eng.], Clarendon Press.
- King, S. (1997). "Poor Relief and English Economic Development Reappraised." The Economic History Review 50(2): 360-368.
- Lees, L. H. (1998). The solidarities of strangers : the English poor laws and the people, 1700-1948. Cambridge ; New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Mandler, P. (1987). "The Making of the New Poor Law Redivivus." Past and Present(117): 131-157.
- Malthus, T. R. (1798) *First Essay on Population*.
- Parson, G. (1988). Religion in Victorian Britain: Traditions. New York, Manchester University Press.
- Ross, E. (1993). Love and toil : motherhood in outcast London, 1870-1918. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Ross, E. (2007). Slum travelers : ladies and London poverty, 1860-1920. Berkeley, University of California Press.
- Solar, P. M. (1995). "Poor Relief and English Economic Development before the Industrial Revolution." The Economic History Review 48(1): 1-22.

Scotland, N. (2007). Squires in the slums settlements and missions in late-Victorian Britain. London; New York; New York, I.B. Tauris ; Distributed in the U.S. by Palgrave Macmillan.

Tananbaum, S. L. (1997). "Philanthropy and Identity: Gender and Ethnicity in London." Journal of Social History **30**(4): 937-961.

Taylor, J. S. (1979). "Philanthropy and Empire: Jonas Hanway and the Infant Poor of London." Eighteenth-Century Studies **12**(3): 285-305.

Thane, P., Ed. (1982). The Foundations of the Welfare State: Social Policy in Modern Britain. New York, Longman Group.

Thompson, F. M. L. (1990). The Cambridge social history of Britain, 1750-1950: Social Agencies and Institutions. Cambridge England ; New York, NY, Cambridge University Press.

### **Course Grading and Requirements:**

- 25% Class participation and attendance
- 30% Group Project
- 20% Reading Responses
- 10% Midterm Examination
- 15 % Final Examination

### Class Participation:

This course will be driven by class discussion and you are expected to actively participate in *every* class discussion. The purpose of discussion is not only to share your historical interpretations, but also to increase your own understanding of the past *by asking questions*. In order to guarantee a high standard of discussion it is necessary for everyone to complete the assigned readings.

### Classroom Behavior:

Civil discussion of differing viewpoints is an essential part of the study of history. Appropriate classroom behavior includes arriving on time and remaining for the entire class; please let me know before class if you will need to leave early. Please turn off all cell phones and any other annoying devices that beep.

### Attendance:

You are allowed two absences, excused or unexcused, without lowering your final grade. If you miss three classes your final grade will drop by a third of a letter grade with each additional absence (e.g. from a B to a B-; from a C- to a D+). If you have an illness or circumstances that will prevent you from regularly attending class, please be certain to talk to me so that we can begin to discuss a way to facilitate your needs. *If you miss class it is your responsibility to get notes and updates regarding the course assignments from a classmate.*

### *Method:*

Class time will be devoted to tutorials and to work on the project of designing the internet site and public presentation on poverty.

*Tutorials:*

Beginning on Wednesday 2/27, every other week two class members will be responsible for writing a 5 page essay. This essay, which should be properly documented, will consider a theme that the student has selected *and* reflect on the historical development. The major text (or a link to the text) for this essay will be distributed by the instructor one week in advance. Links or bibliographical references for supplementary texts on the themes selected by the students will be available and it is expected that the students writing essays will consult these works as well. These essays will be emailed to everyone participating in the course by Tuesday at 7:00 pm. The other two students are required to write a 2-3 paragraph response to both essays, although more emphasis may be given to a particular essay. My expectation is that the responses will highlight the strengths of the essays *and* bring up questions regarding the historical interpretation constructed by fellow students. Both essays and responses will be evaluated as response papers, with essays receiving 66% of the weight and responses 33%.

*Website Development and Group Presentation:*

Monday class time will be devoted to constructing the website and the public presentation of this new knowledge. This time should be intellectually rigorous. Working together we will consider what information needs to be presented...how much should be presented and what interpretation we are putting forward. I will be at these meetings as a consultant, but *do not* expect to lead these meetings. A formal proposal for this group work is due by February 25<sup>th</sup>: this proposal should consist of two parts a submission by the entire group of the dimensions of the project and an individual proposal identifying the planned contribution of that person. *Assessment of Group Project:* Group Proposal: 10%; Individual Proposal: 10%; Individual Contribution to Project: 60%; Group Project: 20%.

*Midterm and Final Exams:*

Will be comprised of re-writing tutorial essays. The midterm should result in at least 10 pages of historical prose (these may be a series of smaller essays), while the final exam should result in 15 additional pages. *Assessment:* 10% Midterm Examination & 15 % Final Examination.

**Feeling Overwhelmed?**

Always feel free to stop by my office to discuss any questions or concerns that may arise during the semester. It is not necessary to make an appointment with me. If I am unavailable to talk with you when you stop by, we can arrange to meet at a more convenient time.

*Please use email sparingly and do not expect an instant reply.* I generally check my messages at least once a day (M-F), but expect at least 24 hours before receiving a response. If you are having difficulty in the course, please do not use email to discuss your concerns, rather please stop by my office hours or schedule an appointment to discuss the situation.

**Student Special Needs Services:** If anyone in this class is in need of special academic accommodations and is already registered with the Special Needs Services Office, please make an appointment with the instructor to discuss such accommodations. If you need academic

accommodations and are not already registered with the Special Needs Services Office, please contact Bev Penkalski in Room 4 of Fairchild Hall or by phone at (859) 985-3150.

**Grading Scale:** In accordance with the definition of letter grades adopted by the College Faculty in 2003, the following grading scale will be used in this class.

**A/A-:** These grades signify consistently outstanding achievement in the course. (90-100%)

**B+/B/B-:** These grades reflects work of good to very good quality. Work at this level often has outstanding characteristics but is not consistent throughout the course or in all aspects of the course as required for A/A-work. (80-89%)

**C+/C:** these grades denotes that the student has attained an acceptable level of competence. The student has demonstrated a basic understanding of the course material and abilities sufficient to proceed to more advanced courses in the area. (74-79%)

**C-/D+/D/D-:** these grades indicate work that is minimally adequate and raise serious concern about the readiness of a student to continue in related course work. (60-73%)

**F:** this grade represents work that is unsatisfactory and unworthy of credit. (Below 59%)

**Academic Honesty and Integrity:**

All students are expected to be honest in their academic work. If a student is found guilty of cheating--including plagiarism, he/she will receive a grade of zero in the examination or on the project. Other penalties, including failure of the course, may be imposed as mandated by college policies and as directed by circumstances.

25-Feb	<b>Proposals for Group Project Due</b>
	Demographics of Poverty
27-Feb	<b>Essays Group 1</b>
3-Mar	Website Development
	Children: Hope of the Future
5-Mar	<b>Essays: Group 2</b>
10-Mar	Website Development
	Utopian Socialism/ Deserving & Undeserving Poor
	<b>Essays: Group 1</b>
12-Mar	<i>Last Day to Drop Course without WP/WF</i>
17-Mar	Website Development
	Shovelling out the Paupers (Friendly Societies?)
19-Mar	<b>Essays: Group 2</b>
	Individual Appointments regarding Revisions
24-Mar	
26-Mar	Midterms Due
	<i>Spring Break</i>
31-Mar	
7-Apr	Website Development

8-Apr	<i>Last Day to Drop Course</i>
9-Apr	Family <b>Essays: Group 1</b>
14-Apr	Website Development
16-Apr	Marxism vs. Self-Help <b>Essays: Group 2</b>
21-Apr	Website Development
23-Apr	Sanitation & Diseases / Press <b>Essays: Group 1</b>
28-Apr	Website Development
30-Apr	Industrial Actions/ Strikes (& Classification of the Poor) <b>Essays: Group 2</b>
5-May	Website Development
7-May	Welfare State (and Demise) <b>Essays: Group 1</b>
12-May	Website Development & Public Presentation
14-May	From Band-Aids to "End Poverty Now" <b>Essays: Group 2</b>
14-May	<i>All project work completed by this date.</i>
21-May	<i>Final Exam Revisions Due</i>