HSTR 420: CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN ENGLAND
(Spring 2020)
Subject to change

Instructor: Simon Devereaux
Email: <devereau@uvic.ca>
Phone: (250) 721-7390

Course description:

This seminar examines the nature, purposes and extent of capital punishment in England from the Middle Ages to the present day. Topics include:

- the practice of hanging, drawing and quartering for traitors
- the idea of the gallows as a semi-sacred space
- growing critiques of execution that were gaining prominence after the mid-18th century
- the imposition of post-mortem dissection upon murderers between 1752 and 1834
- attempts to make capital punishment more effective and acceptable during the Revolutionary Era (1775-1815)
- the struggle to reduce capital punishment to the crime of murder alone (1815-1837)
- growing doubts about the morality and efficacy of public execution during the early Victorian era, ending in its abolition in (1837-1868)
- the final unravelling of capital punishment in postwar England (1945-1969)

Proposed assignments:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One short (ten-minute) verbal presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>One short (1,200-word) Seminar Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>One longer (1,600-word) Book Review</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regular Seminar Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Proposed reading list:

Required readings posted on Course Spaces