



London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690-1800

By Professor Tim Hitchcock, Professor Robert Shoemaker

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London Lives is a fascinating new study which exposes, for the first time, the lesser-known experiences of eighteenth-century thieves, paupers, prostitutes and highwaymen. It charts the experiences of hundreds of thousands of Londoners who found themselves submerged in poverty or prosecuted for crime, and surveys their responses to illustrate the extent to which plebeian Londoners influenced the pace and direction of social policy. Calling upon a new body of evidence, the book illuminates the lives of prison escapees, expert manipulators of the poor relief system, celebrity highwaymen, lone mothers and vagrants, revealing how they each played the system to the best of their ability in order to survive in their various circumstances of misfortune. In their acts of desperation, the authors argue that the poor and criminal exercised a profound and effective form of agency that changed the system itself, and shaped the evolution of the modern state.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Reveals how the cunning, courage and sheer resourcefulness of some of eighteenth-century London's poorest residents forced the city's authorities to overhaul its justice and welfare systems."

BBC History Magazine

"A compelling read and there is a huge amount of meticulously researched information in here."

Your Family Tree

"A brilliant analysis of an outstanding resource."

Who Do You Think You Are?

"Shocking in its depiction of survival and desperation ... this book shows how the criminal underclass helped shape the English justice system."

Hallie Rubenhold, 'Books of the Year', BBC History Magazine

About the Author

Tim Hitchcock is Professor of Digital History at the University of Sussex. With Robert Shoemaker and others, he is responsible for a series of websites giving direct and searchable access to some 20 billion words of primary sources reflecting the social history of Britain, including: The Old Bailey Online (www.oldbaileyonline.org), London Lives (www.londonlives.org), Connected Histories (www.connectedhistories.org), and Locating London's Past (www.locatinglondon.org). With degrees from the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Oxford, he has published extensively on the histories of eighteenth-century poverty, street life, sexuality and masculinity. His most recent books include *Down and Out in Eighteenth-Century London* (2004) and with Robert Shoemaker, *Tales from the Hanging Court* (2007). In 2011, with Shoemaker, he was given the Longman-History Today Trustees Award, for their substantial contributions to history as the 'directors of the groundbreaking digital projects The Old Bailey Proceedings Online and London Lives'.

Robert Shoemaker is Professor of Eighteenth-Century British History at the University of Sheffield. Holder of a PhD from Stanford University, California he is an expert on London history, gender, and crime and criminal justice in the 'long' eighteenth century. In addition to his collaborations with Tim Hitchcock, he is the author of *Prosecution and Punishment: Petty Crime and the Law in London and Rural Middlesex, c.1660-1725* (Cambridge, 1992), *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (1998), and *The London Mob: Violence and Disorder in Eighteenth-Century England* (2004). With Hitchcock and others, he is currently working on a new project, 'The Digital Panopticon: The Global Impact of London Punishment, 1780-1925' (www.digitalpanopticon.org).

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