

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## London Lives

*London Lives* is a fascinating new study that exposes 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 change in social policy. Calling upon a new body of digital 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 these acts of desperation, the poor and the criminal exercised a profound and effective form of agency that changed the system itself, and shaped the evolution of the modern state.

TIM HITCHCOCK is Professor of Digital History at the University of Sussex.

ROBERT SHOEMAKER is Professor of Eighteenth-Century British History at the University of Sheffield.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# London Lives

*Poverty, Crime and the Making of  
a Modern City, 1690–1800*

---

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107639942](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107639942)

© Tim Hitchcock & Robert Shoemaker 2015

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2015

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd, Padstow Cornwall

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Hitchcock, Tim, 1957–

London lives : poverty, crime and the making of a modern city, 1690–1800 /  
Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-1-107-63994-2 (Paperback) – ISBN 978-1-107-02527-1 (Hardback)

1. Crime–England–London–History–18th century. 2. Poor–England–London–Social conditions–18th century. 3. Criminals–England–London–Social conditions–18th century. 4. Criminal justice, Administration of–England–London–History–18th century. 5. Public welfare–England–London–History–18th century. 6. London (England)–Social conditions–18th century.

I. Shoemaker, Robert Brink. II. Title.

HV6950.L7H57 2014

364.109421'09033–dc23 2014017598

ISBN 978-1-107-63994-2 Paperback

ISBN 978-1-107-02527-1 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

This book is dedicated to everyone who helped  
create the *Old Bailey Online* and *London Lives*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Contents

---

<i>List of figures</i>	page viii
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xvi
1 Introduction	1
2 Beggarman, thief: 1690–1713	27
3 Protest and resistance: 1713–1731	70
4 Vestries, justices and their opponents: 1731–1748	136
5 Reformers and their discontents: 1748–1763	194
6 Finding a voice: 1763–1776	268
7 The state in chaos: 1776–1789	333
8 Epilogue: The 1790s	394
<i>Bibliography</i>	414
<i>Index</i>	444

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Figures

---

1.1	Samuel Scott, <i>A Crowd</i> , n.d. c. 1760	page 3
2.1	London, Westminster and Southwark, c. 1690 and population estimates broken down by parish	30
2.2	Prosecutions and commitments, 1681–1714: The Old Bailey, Bridewell and London Workhouse	33
2.3	Vice offences recorded in Lord Mayor's waiting and charge books, 1686–1694	37
2.4	Printed settlement certificate filled out on behalf of Petter and Jane Hughes, 22 August 1715	47
3.1	Offences prosecuted at the Old Bailey, 1707–1731	71
3.2	Old Bailey punishment sentences, 1713–1731	79
3.3	Societies for the Reformation of Manners prosecutions, 1715–1731	108
3.4	Warrant to 'all constables' for the arrest of 'disorderly persons' (1725)	109
3.5	William Hogarth, <i>A Harlot's Progress</i> , Plate 3 (1732)	120
3.6	A plan and section of the workhouse in the Parish of St George Hanover Square [1715–1731]	124
3.7	<i>The Workhouse Cruelty; Being a Full and True Account of One Mrs. Mary Whistle . . . in the Parish of St. Giles's in the Fields</i> (n.d., 1731)	127
4.1	Offences prosecuted at the Old Bailey, 1725–1750	137
4.2	St Martin in the Fields workhouse admissions, 1738–1748	140
4.3	St Clement Danes, Pauper Census, 1745	142
4.4	St Martin in the Fields Workhouse Registers, 'Drop' and 'Born in the house'	146
4.5	Henry Fletcher, <i>A View of St Martin's Round-House</i> ('as tore to pieces by the enraged Multitude') (1742)	159
4.6	Legal counsel at the Old Bailey, 1715–1748	188



Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

	List of figures	ix
5.1	Real wage rates of London bricklayers, carpenters and their labourers, 1744–1800	195
5.2	Prosecutions and commitments, 1745–1765: Old Bailey, Bridewell and the London Workhouse	197
5.3	St Clement Danes, poor law expenditure, 1740–1765	198
5.4	<i>James Maclean, the Gentleman Highwayman at the Bar</i> , 1750	203
5.5	William Hogarth, <i>Gin Lane</i> , 1751	215
5.6	William Hogarth, <i>Beer Street</i> , 1751	216
5.7	Old Bailey trial reports including ‘Gin’ or ‘Geneva’, 1715–1780	218
5.8	Old Bailey death sentences and executions, 1749–1774	245
5.9	Old Bailey punishment sentences, 1745–1763	245
6.1	Crimes prosecuted, 1763–1776: Old Bailey and Bridewell	271
6.2	Poor relief expenditure 1763–1776: St Clement Danes and St Dionis Backchurch	287
6.3	City of London vagrant expenditure, 1763–1776	306
6.4	The Public Office, Bow Street. <i>The Malefactor’s Register; or the Newgate and Tyburn Calendar</i> (1779), vol. III, frontispiece	317
6.5	Old Bailey punishment sentences, 1763–1776	323
6.6	William Pink, after Agostino Carlini, ‘Smugglerius’ (1776, 1834)	331
7.1	Carver & Bowles (publishers), ‘A view near Woolwich in Kent, shewing the Employment of the convicts from the Hulks’ (1779)	336
7.2	Escapes (attempted and actual) from prisons, hulks and transports, 1776–1786	339
7.3	‘Here Lyeth John Jones, double ironed for attempting to break out of Newgate, 1776’	341
7.4	James Gillray, <i>No Popery, Or Newgate Reformer</i> (1780)	347
7.5	<i>The devastations occasioned by the rioters of London firing the new goal of Newgate . . . June 6, 1780</i>	348
7.6	Prosecutions and commitments, 1775–1789	354
7.7	Percentage of Old Bailey trials with legal counsel, 1770–1800, as reported in the <i>Proceedings</i>	357
7.8	Old Bailey punishment sentences, 1770–1790	363
7.9	Old Bailey death sentences and executions, 1775–1790	364

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

x	List of figures	
7.10	London whipping punishments, 1770–1799	365
7.11	Patrick Madan (1782)	376
7.12	St Clement Danes, poor law expenditure, 1750–1803	381
7.13	City of London vagrancy expenditure, 1776–1790	386
7.14	Vagrants removed via Henry Adams, broken down by place passed from, October 1782 – October 1785	387

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Preface

---

This book is one facet of a larger project: ‘Plebeian Lives and the Making of Modern London, 1690–1800’. Originally funded by the ESRC (RES-000-23-1217), this project digitised and made searchable some 240,000 pages of manuscript materials reflecting on criminal justice and poor relief in eighteenth-century London. The website, *London Lives 1690–1800: Crime, Poverty and Social Policy in the Metropolis*, provides access to these materials in combination with fifteen modern data sets created by previous projects. In total *London Lives* gives direct access to 3.35 million name instances, and allows users to link together records relating to the same individual. In doing so, it makes it possible to trace individual life histories and to assess the role plebeian Londoners played in shaping the development of modern social policy. This book is constructed as a product of that website and largely reflects the results of our research in it.

Since the vast majority of the sources consulted are freely available on the *London Lives* website, this book is best read online, allowing you to click through directly from the primary sources cited and quoted in the text to transcriptions and images of the original documents. Where possible, we have also linked to modern secondary literature and to printed primary sources, including Google Books and the *English Short Title Catalogue* for printed primary literature, and to the British Library’s *Ethos* system for unpublished doctoral theses. With Google Books we have linked to volumes available through ‘Snippet’ or ‘Preview’ functions, but not to those which provide only bibliographical data. With one exception we have restricted links to freely available materials. Where a pay wall makes the materials inaccessible for many or most readers, we have noted our use of the sites, including URLs and a date, but have not provided direct links. The exception to this rule of thumb is journal articles where a secure link could be identified, even when the relevant source was not freely available to all users.

We hope that these links will facilitate a new approach to reading monographs in which readers switch back and forth between the original

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

xii Preface

sources, the contextual secondary interpretation, and the monograph itself - gaining a deeper understanding of the period and argument. The book is also designed to be read offline and in hard copy; and we have used a standard footnote referencing system so that readers can locate and follow up our sources, both online and in print, however they choose to read the book. For readers of the hard copy who wish to follow up references to the *London Lives* website ('LL'), document reference numbers should simply be typed in the appropriate box on the search page. For references to 'sets', see below, p. 24, n. 67. For 'lives', go to [www.londonlives.org/static/Lives.jsp](http://www.londonlives.org/static/Lives.jsp).

Whether online or offline, or in some combination of the two, we hope you will find this book both accessible and rewarding.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Acknowledgements

---

First of all, we would like to thank the funders who made this book and the underlying electronic resources possible: the ESRC, funders of the ‘Plebeian Lives’ project; and the AHRC and Big Lottery Fund, who underwrote the *Old Bailey Online*, which in turn laid the foundations for ‘Plebeian Lives’.

This book may have two names on the cover, but it is the product of the work of many more; all of whom deserve more credit than can be given in a simple acknowledgement. Most importantly, Dr Sharon Howard managed the digitisation projects that underpin this book (both *London Lives* and, from 2005, the *Old Bailey Online*), and she also managed the online PMwiki environment in which the book was drafted as a collaborative text. Every page reflects her technical skill, her commitment to the project and her willingness to devise a solution to each new problem. Neither this book, nor the *London Lives* website would exist without her.

The ‘Plebeian Lives’ project was implemented by the Higher Education Digitisation Service at the University of Hertfordshire and the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield. At Hertfordshire, Ian Brearey, Asif Mohammed Farook and Geoff Laycock managed the initial rekeying process that underpins the site. At Sheffield we are particularly indebted to Jamie McLaughlin, Digital Humanities Developer at the HRI, who designed the underlying data infrastructure and made the website work. Katherine Rogers and Ed MacKenzie developed the automated text markup, and David Shepherd, former Director of the HRI, and Michael Pidd, Manager of HRI Digital, oversaw all the technical work, ensuring that the project came to a successful conclusion. Mary Clayton and Louise Falcini served as untiring research assistants in the archives of London, ensuring that the right materials were digitised to the best standard we could afford. And a team of ‘data developers’, under the leadership of Dr Philippa Hardman, embedded and checked the XML mark-up that makes it possible to search the digitised text effectively. We are grateful to Anna Bayman, Eilidh

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## xiv Acknowledgements

Garrett, Carol Lewis-Roylance, Susan Parkinson, Anna Simmons, Gwen Smithson, Nicola Wilcox and Catherine Wright for their hard work. Ed Duncan and Viki Philpott contributed to the project as postgraduate interns, researching and writing several biographies ('*lives*'). The list could go on. A website such as *London Lives* is not a book, it does not have an author (or even two). It is the product of many hands, and we would like to give credit to the wider collaboration involved. The same could be said about the original *Old Bailey Online* project.

We were beneficiaries of many contributions on the journey from website to book. Our undergraduate students, at both Sheffield and Hertfordshire, helped us to understand the material and suffered as we tried out one idea after another. Several Sheffield students are among the authors of the *lives*. Our postgraduate students, current and former, contributed through both reading sections of the text and acting as sounding boards for our ideas as they evolved. In this capacity we are grateful to Louise Falcini, Des Newell, Dianne Payne, Janice Turner, Richard Ward and Matthew White. We have also benefited hugely from the advice and criticism of many academic friends who took the time to read the manuscript. Their generosity was unstinting and exemplifies the best traditions of the scholarly community. Most importantly, Jeremy Boulton went through the text with a fine-toothed comb, saving us from real error and embarrassing misinterpretations. He and Leonard Schwarz also very generously allowed us access to their work on the St Martin in the Fields workhouse registers and settlement examinations. Joanna Innes also read the full manuscript, and her comments gave us pause for thought, again saving us from significant errors. John Levin, Katrina Navickas, Heather Shore, Brodie Waddell, Tim Wales, Richard Ward and Phil Withington all read and commented insightfully on sections of the text.

Our home departments and institutions, at the Universities of Sheffield and Hertfordshire, and more recently Sussex, have also been hugely supportive. When combined with colleagues in the wider academy, we have been fortunate to work in a stimulating community of historians. We would particularly like to thank John Beattie, Simon Devereaux, Drew Gray, Peter King, Andrea McKenzie and Deirdre Palk. Robert Shoemaker is also indebted to Elizabeth Foyster, David Garrioch, David Lemmings, Randall McGowen, Nick Tosney and Phil Withington; while Tim Hitchcock has benefited from working with Adam Crymble, Simon DeDeo, Seth Denbo, Richard Deswarte, Jo Guldi, Sara Klingenstein, William Turkel, Peter Webster, Susan Whyman and Jane Winters.

The ideas presented in this book evolved over two decades and more; and did so in dialogue with a powerfully supportive historical

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Acknowledgements

xv

community. Much of this community was forged at the Long Eighteenth-Century Seminar at the Institute of Historical Research, and we would like to acknowledge our debt to the convenors, past and present: Arthur Burns, Pene Corfield, Adam Crymble, Amanda Goodrich, Leonie Hannan, Sally Holloway, Julian Hoppitt and Sarah Lloyd. The valued friends and colleagues who have attended the seminar over the decades are too numerous to name, but each has made history writing more fun. Sections of the text and argument have also been presented at other seminars and conferences, and we would like to thank the organisers and audiences of BSECS (Oxford, 2009), Anglo-American Conference (London, 2009), NACBS (Louisville, 2009), British Crime Historians (Sheffield, 2010), MLA (Los Angeles, 2011), UC Berkeley (2011), Oxford Brookes (2011), Centre for the Historical Record and Public History (Kingston, 2011), David Nichols Smith Conference (Melbourne, 2011), Cambridge Graduate Seminar in Modern British History (2012), Oxford e-Research Centre (2012), Gerald Aylmer Seminar, RHS (2012), Centre for English Local History, University of Leicester (2013), Free University of Brussels (2013), University of British Columbia, Victoria (2013) and the Open University (Milton Keynes, 2013).

This is also a better book for the contributions of the anonymous readers who ploughed through the sample chapters and final manuscript. We tried hard to heed their warnings against hyperbole and breathlessness, and while we may not have succeeded completely, we know the text is better for their warnings. We would also like to thank Richard Fisher, who encouraged the project of the e-monograph from its inception, and Elizabeth Friend-Smith, commissioning editor. Charlotte Thomas acted as production editor, Dr Jacqueline French copy-edited the manuscript and the index was compiled by Dr Richard Ward. We are grateful to all three for their great care and hard work.

On a personal level we would like to thank our partners and sons, Sonia and Nick Hitchcock, and Wendy Bracewell and Roland Shoemaker. This book took a decade from conception to publication and debts beyond repayment were incurred on every day of that decade.

Our errors and failures are our own, but this book is the product of friends and family, collaborators and critics, and we thank them all.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02527-1 - London Lives: Poverty, Crime and the Making of a Modern City, 1690–1800

Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Abbreviations

---

BL	British Library
LL	<i>London Lives 1690 to 1800: Crime, Poverty and Social Policy in the Metropolis</i> ( <a href="http://www.londonlives.org">www.londonlives.org</a> )
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> ( <a href="http://www.oxforddnb.com">www.oxforddnb.com</a> )
PP	<i>Parliamentary Papers</i> ( <a href="http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk">parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk</a> )
WAC	Westminster Archives Centre