

Course	Instructor
Summer, 2021	Kevin Roddy
Castles of Medieval England	UCD Emeritus
Class Web Page	Office Hours: TH 12:00-1:00
Thursday morning from 10-11:50	
Instructor's Assistant: Gail Yokote	Instructor email: kproddy@ucdavis.edu

Coffee-Table Deadweight used in this course: John Goodall, *The English Castle: 1066-1650*, 2nd printing, (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 548pp. ISBN 978-0-300-11058-6.

Extremely useful source (and cheap): David Macaulay, *Castle: Revised and in Full Color*. (HMH Books for Young Readers; Illustrated edition, November 5, 2013) ISBN-10 : 0544102266 ISBN-13 : 978-0544102262

Description of Course Content:

Spring 2021 OLLI course - Castles of Medieval England

Seminar Focus: In spite of the title, this course has been designed to be extremely relevant to the present: this class is about choice of habitation in an uncertain time, but with the primary focus on habitation rather than, as might be expected, protection. To most of those unfamiliar with the Middle Ages, the term "castle" implies a "drafty" (always "drafty") foreboding fortress, crammed with men-at-arms ready to raise the drawbridge and pour hot oil on beseigers. Unfortunately for movies and the television, is image is not accurate. While warfare played a role, it was a minor one; for the most part castles were designed and built much more for comfort, for ostentation, and for hospitality than for safety.

This class, then, should increase your appreciation of these structures, with the end, I hope, of not convincing anyone to erect walls, but rather to enlarge their dining rooms.

Learning Outcomes: My goal is to focus entirely on the practice of critical thinking in a rigorous, disciplined manner, as was habitual in medieval universities for almost five hundred years. Students taking the class will not only learn the difference between guaging opinion and determining fact, but between supportable and insupportable inferences, between the requirements for arguing from differences and those requirements for arguing from similarities. You will be given the skills to analyze, to disassemble, to construct both propositions and your refutations in a

rational process.

Each week, we will progress, partly in a chronological fashion, partly in a thematic one, to review a good number of castles, most of which can be found in reasonable condition, especially in the north of England, where London and Winsor were often as much an enemy as Scotland. Thus historical context will always provide a rationale for design and purpose.

About the Instructor: In my fifty years in teaching, I have offered courses from remedial writing to OLLI courses on Cathedrals, Monasticism, as well as Castles. In between these extremes have been courses in Davis, Sweden, England on general medieval culture, mysticism, literature, history, economics, politics. I have published on drama, on myth, and on nutrition. I have always been concerned to help impart the skills that students might need to know, and this concern has led me to undertake this course.

Schedule:

- Week 1 (May 13): Introduction
Class 1: Celts, Romans, Castle Construction, Organization
[First Class Introduction: Castles](#)
- Week 2 (May 20): Motts, Baileys, Royal Keeps
Class 2: Pickering, the Tower of London, Clifford's Tower, York
- Week 3 (May 27): Royal and Ducal Edifices: Keeps and Curtain Walls
Class 3: Rochester, Middleham, and Bolton
- Week 4 (June 3): Noble Northern Castles
Class 4: Alwick, Warkworth (the Percies, Nevilles), Barnard, Raby
- Week 5 (June 10): Edward I's Welsh Castles, Ireland
Class 5: Caernarvon, Conway, Harlech, Beaumaris, Caephilly
- Week 6 (June 17): Castle Life: Management, Agriculture, the Arts
Class 6: Peasant Self-sufficiency, Staff, Literature, Music: Dussel, Se.Be.
[Dussel](#)
- Week 7 (June 24): The Ultimate Castle
Class 7: Dover

- **Week 8 (July 1): Late Castles, Cities, Conclusion**
Class 8: Tynemouth, Kenilworth, Raglan, Warwick; York, Visby