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Preliminary Bibliography
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Preliminary Topic:

I plan to attempt to research the way of life of the lower classes/“average guy,” preferably at some period between 600 and 1000 AD. I am especially interested in familial relationships, and the way that the harsh living conditions of the period affected family structure and relationships. If possible, I will limit my research to one geographic region, but the feasibility of this will depend on the amount of source-material I can find dealing with any specific region in a specific time period. If there is not enough source information, I will either cover a larger region in one time period or one region over a longer time span. I have looked through the Medieval Internet Sourcebook fairly extensively, but have not recorded everything I found of interest on the sight in this bibliography. I have included the documents I plan to start with, but may return to the Sourcebook for more documents once I have narrowed my research area. I plan to do a lot of reading over Spring Break, so that when I return I will have a much better idea of the specific region and time period in which I will be working.

Secondary Sources:

Bennet, Judith. The tie that binds: peasant marriages and families in late medieval England. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* v. 15 (Summer 1984) p. 111-29. This is a very interesting analysis of the social effects of a single marriage between members of two influential peasant families in 14th century England. It traces the interaction patterns of the married couple and their extended families before and after the marriage, using court records. It shows the marriage to be of great import to the couple’s interactions, but of only minor importance to the interactions of their extended families.

Biddick, Kathleen. Missing links: taxable wealth, markets, and stratification among medieval English peasants. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* v. 18 (Aut 1987) p. 277-98. This article contains statistics gathered from the tax rolls of several English burrows from the year 1297. It could prove useful as a source of information about the diet of medieval peasants, as well as the measure used to determine wealth in their agriculturally centered society.

Dyer, Christopher. Standards of Living in the later Middle Ages: Social Change in England c.1200-1520. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. I plan to use this largely statistical book as a foundation on which to base my primary research. I am more concerned with social relationships than with economic issues, but those same economic issues undoubtedly shape the social relations of their period. This book focuses a bit later than I would like to, but still gives me a good starting point from which to build with anecdotal evidence.

Edwards, Robert R. and Stephen Spector, eds. The Olde Daunce: Love, Friendship, Sex & Marriage in the Medieval World. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1991.

This is a collection of essays by various medieval scholars on the social relationships in the Middle Ages. I hope to find some interesting ideas in this to either further argue or dispute, and to use the bibliographies as pointers to more relevant primary texts on these subjects.

Fossier, Robert. Peasant Life in the Medieval West. trans. Juliet Vale. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1988.

Fossier's book again serves to provide a general background against which to set my specific research. His book gives interesting information about general social conditions in Western Europe during the Middle Ages, but is not location- or time-specific. It will give me an idea of the conditions, social structures, and beliefs to look for as I turn to primary sources.

Hanawalt, Barbara A. and Michal Kobiak, eds. Medieval Practices of Space. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

I'm not sure of the usefulness of this book, but I hope to gain from it some insight into the physical structures of individual homes and communities. I feel I need some sense of this in the background in order to better understand the social structures that developed within these physical settings.

Harvey, Barbara. Living and Dying in England, 1100-1540: The Monastic Experience. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1993.

This book provides useful information about the general living conditions of the non-nobility. While it does not contain much about family relationships, since it is about celibate monks, it does have good information about mortality rates, health conditions, and diet.

Knapp, Peggy. Chaucer and the Social Contest. New York: Routledge, 1990.

This has one chapter dealing with the social division of the three estates in Medieval Europe, and another with the role of women in the period. Though Chaucer is a bit later than I would like, he may prove a necessary source for non-ecclesiastical material, and I hope this book will give me further insight into the social conditions reflected in his works.

"Medieval English Towns." A site maintained by the *Online Reference Book for Medieval Studies*. <<http://the-orb.net/encyclo/culture/towns/towns.html>>

This site may provide some good information about the physical living conditions of the lower-classes.

Power, Eileen. Medieval People. New York: Harper Perennial, 1963.

This book includes six semi-fictional accounts of individuals of various social stations living in the middle ages. It is based on historical evidence, and will provide a useful context from which to begin my own research, as I see how Dr. Power reconstructed the lives of these medieval characters.

White, Jr., Lynn. Medieval Technology and Social Change. London: Oxford University Press, 1962.

This contains a chapter on the changing agricultural technologies of the Middle Ages. Since farming was the means of subsistence for essentially all of the medieval sub-classes, it is important that I understand what exactly being a farmer meant in terms of labor and lifestyle.

Primary Texts:

“The Anglo-Saxon Dooms: 590-975.” The Medieval Internet Sourcebook (MIS).
<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/560-975dooms.html>>

These laws do not deal much with the serf-class, but do provide some interesting insights into the general views toward marriage, women, life, and property during this period. My favorite at the moment is, from King Aeltherbert’s reign, “If a freeman lie with a freeman's wife, let him pay for it with his wergeld, and provide another wife with his own money, and bring her to the other.” Also, the laws are very specific about various injuries – there are penalties specified for varying degrees of injury to eyes, nose, ears, stomach, thy, leg, foot, genitals, toes, nails, chin, etc. If one had enough money, one could murder anyone – as long as the death-price was paid, no punishment was administered (except perhaps excommunication if repentance was not made).

Bede. The Life and Miracles of St. Cuthbert.” MIS.
<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/bede-cuthbert.html>>

This has some nice descriptions of childhood play and parental involvement. There are also some references to farming techniques and foods eaten.

Benson, Larry D. and Theodore M. Andersson, eds. The Literary Context of Chaucer’s Fabliaux: Texts and Translations. Indianapolis, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1971.
This is a large collection of texts contemporary to Chaucer that touch on the same themes dealt with in the Canterbury Tales, or that served as source material for the Tales. This will provide interesting cross-perspectives on the social structures portrayed by Chaucer.

Chaucer, Gregory. The Canterbury Tales. trans. Ronald L. Ecker and Eugene J. Crook. Palatka, Florida: Hodge & Braddock, Publishers, 1993.
Though later than the period I’d most like to research, I will nevertheless keep Chaucer as a possible source for a non-ecclesiastical, non-noble perspective on life in the Middle Ages.

“The Goodman of Paris.” 1392. MIS.
<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/goodman.html>>
A letter from a Parisian merchant to his new wife, describing in detail the characteristics of a good wife.

Gregory of Nyssa. “The Life of Macrina.” MIS.
<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/macrina.html#intro>>
This is a great Saint’s life, and it shows a mother-daughter relationship (albeit a rather unusual one) in great detail. Gregory is Macrina’s brother, and thus the whole text contains interesting information about family structures and the relationships between siblings and parents. This is of course a noble family – Gregory was a bishop as was his older brother St. Basil. However, it is still quite interesting – especially since Gregory says his sister chose to live as an equal to the servants – something can then be deduced about the lifestyle of the servants from Macrina’s own life.

Gregory of Tours, The History of the Franks. trans. Lewis Thorpe. London: Penguin Books, 1974.

There are some useful anecdotes in Gregory's history. Some – not many, as he is largely unconcerned with the daily sufferings of his flock, but some of the miracle stories force him to write about the peasantry.

Heaney, Seamus, trans. Beowulf. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000.

There are a couple of great passages that describe parents mourning for the loss of their children, and rivalry between brothers.

Kempe, Margery. The Book of Margery Kempe. MIS.

<<http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/kempe3.htm>>.

A very interesting work written by a Christian married woman with some very interesting anecdotes about her relationship with her husband.

The Letters of Abelard and Heloise. trans. Betty Radice. London: Penguin Books, 1974.

These letters will provide one account of love and marriage in the Middle Ages.

McConnell, Winder, trans. The Lament of the Nibelungen. Columbia, South Carolina:

Camden House, Inc., 1994.

I am unfamiliar with this early German epoch, but may find it useful as a non-ecclesiastical source, especially if I decide to focus on continental Germanic cultures.

Merwin, W.S., trans. The Song of Roland. New York: The Modern Library, 2001.

I am not familiar with this French epoch, written sometime in the 11th or 12th centuries, but it may prove an interesting source, especially if I focus on peasant living standards in Gaul. I found it while looking for any non-ecclesiastical sources.

Metaphrates, Symeon. "The Life of St. Matrona of Perge." MIS.

<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/matrona.html>>.

This life tells of a Byzantine Saint who disguised herself as a man and lived in monastery in order to escape being discovered by her husband, from whom she had run away to serve God. She had a daughter, whom she left with a friend before running away. What I find most interesting is that, when the daughter dies, the author says:

Since it had already become known that she was a woman, [the devil] could have distracted her from divine thoughts and could have led her mind to worldly concerns with the child as a pretext. Therefore, she did not grieve but was delighted in the matter, since she considered what had happened not to be the loss of a child, but relief from concern about the child.

This seeming delight in the death of the child provides interesting information on the expected role of women as mothers and the prioritization of home, family, and God.

"The Miracle of St. Maximinus of Micy." MIS.

<<http://urban.hunter.cuny.edu/~thead/henry.htm>>.

As with other miracle stories, this account of St. Maximinus may provide insights into the lifestyle of the lower classes through their involvement in Maximinus' miracles.

Murray, Jacqueline, ed. Love, Marriage, and Family in the Middle Ages: A Reader. Toronto: Broadview Press Ltd., 2001.

This is a reader with both religious and secular texts about familial relations in the Middle Ages. This should provide interesting information about family structure and the relationships between parents and children, husbands and wives, extended families and communal peace. Its excerpts should also point me to relevant texts that I can then pursue in their full context.

Pope Gregory I. Dialogues. trans. Odo John Zimmerman, O.S.B., *The Fathers of the Church*, series. New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1959.

Pope Gregory was a leading figure of his age, who was remarkably concerned with pastoral care, who had access to a great deal of information about the state of the world on all levels. His dialogues contain miracle stories that often provide insight into the lives of the underclasses (as it is they who often need miracles). His duties as Bishop of Rome put him into direct contact with the common people of his day, and his passion as a pastor made him care about their needs. His dialogues will then hopefully be a fruitful source as to the standards of living and social relations of the peasants of the 6th and 7th centuries.

Pope Gregory III. "Prohibition on Selling Christians to Pagans for Sacrificial Rites." 731. MIS. <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/731Greg3.html>>.

This is just an interesting commentary on the respect with which slaves were held in Christian Europe: the Pope had to tell Christians that it wasn't acceptable to sell their slaves as sacrifices to the Pagans.

"The Questioning of John Rykener, A Male Cross-Dressing Prostitute." 1395. MIS. <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1395rykener.html>>.

This transcript gives some insight into the actual sexual practices of the later Middle Ages, an interesting contrast to the allowed practices written about by the church.

Reginald of Durham. "Life of St. Goderic." MIS. <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/goderic.html>>.

Goderic was a merchant in the 12th century, and the account of his life provides some insight into the lifestyle of merchants in the period.

Richelinde. "A Gift of Serfs to Abbey of St. Trond." from the *Cartulary of Saint Trond*, 938. MIS. <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/938Giftserf.html>>.

A document giving possession of serfs to an Abbey, which shows a great deal of concern for the well-being of the serfs being transferred. It is an interesting perspective on the serf-class from a landholder's perspective.

St. Bernardino of Siena. "Two Sermons on Wives and Widows." 1427. MIS. <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/bernardino-2sermons.html>>.

Two sermons with a lot of information about marriage and child-rearing. Common problems in marriage can be deduced from the advice the preacher gives, and his attitude towards women seems remarkably enlightened.

St. Boniface. "The Correspondence of St. Boniface." MIS.
<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/boniface-letters.html>>.

Boniface was dealing daily with the real problems of real people, and his letters provide windows into all kinds of interesting interactions between people and family-members.

Severus, Sulpitius. "Life of St. Martin." MIS.
<<http://www.users.csbsju.edu/~eknuth/npnf2-11/sulpitiu/lifeofst.html#16>>

There are several miracle stories in this Life that illuminate family ties. In Chapter XVI, St. Martin of Tours cures a young girl of paralysis because of desperate pleas from her father. It is a very moving account of a father begging for the life of his daughter.

Thiebaux, Marcelle, trans. The Writings of Medieval Women: An Anthology. 2nd ed. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1994.

This anthology contains works of both nuns and married women. Though I am not yet familiar with many of the works themselves, I hope that women, who have a traditionally closer connection to family-building and child-rearing, will have written about familial relationships and family-oriented anecdotes. As well, they will serve an important balance to the largely male-authored literature of the time, an especially important balance when dealing with issues of marriage, sex, and children.

Thomas of Monmouth. "The Life and Miracles of St. William of Norwich." 1173. MIS. <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1173williamnorwich.html>>.

This is a deeply disturbing account of a supposed ritual murder of a young Christian boy by Jews as a sacrifice during Passover. I'm not sure that this is of any particular relevance to my paper, but it is so disturbing – whether it actually happened, or, if it did not, just the fact that people believed it had.

Treharne, Elaine, ed. Old and Middle English: An Anthology. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2000.

This is a large anthology of works written in old and middle English, most with modern English translations. It has ecclesiastical sources, chronicles, hymns, and poetry. I will use this to find relevant sources about early English social structures.

Willibald. "The Life of St. Boniface." MIS.
<<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/willibald-boniface.html>>.

There is a great description of early childhood at the start of this Life, in which the author describes St. Boniface as having "been weaned and reared with a mother's usual anxious care" and that his father "lavished upon him more affection than upon the rest of his brothers." It may also contain accounts of miracles that will be of interest.