Lecture 10 handout: Leisure

Structure of the lecture:

- Question of the decline of custom and the separation of popular from elite culture
- Rational recreation
- Later nineteenth century – rise of a mass leisure culture?
- Rise of the seaside resort

Decline of custom?

Industrialisation and urbanisation

Moral campaigns

Prohibition of cruel sports

Rational recreation

Development of organised sport

‘muscular Christianity’ – coined by T. C. Sanders in a review of Charles Kingsley’s *Two Years Ago* (1857); Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* (1857); Dr Thomas Arnold and Rugby School

Commercialisation of more traditional forms of entertainment – the music hall

Later nineteenth century – rise of a mass leisure culture?

Time

Money

Counter-arguments:

1. the poor
2. Women

Some relevant dates:

1800 Bull Baiting Bill

1824 - Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals formed

1829 – Metropolitan police act
1833 Factory Act

- Children of 9-13 years to work no more than 9 hours a day
- Children of 13-18 years to work no more than 12 hours a day

1835 – Cruelty to Animals Act

1845-6 – Rugby School committed its rules of football into writing

1847 – Eton rules of ‘rugby’

1850 – textile workers restricted to 10 ½ hour day and Saturday half-holiday

1855 – formation of Sheffield Football Club

1863 – 26 October - foundation of the Football Association at Freeman’s Tavern, Lincoln’s Inn Fields, London

1871 – formation of Rugby Football Union

1874 – textile workers restricted to 10 hour day Monday-Friday and 6 ½ hours Saturdays

1896 – opening of the first commercial cinema in the West End of London

1902 – total working week in textile trades of 55 hours

Further reading:


Eileen and Stephen Yeo (eds.), *Popular Culture and Class Conflict, 1590-1914* (Hassocks, 1981)