"They Would Have a Law of Their Own" : The Discourse on Smuggling at the Old Bailey, 1736-1814

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Abstract
This thesis examines the cases of 136 men tried for smuggling offenses at London's central criminal court during the long eighteenth century. Before the 1770s, the government portrayed smuggling as a crime against the nation, but after this time, the discourse changed significantly. At a time when smugglers actually were consorting with the enemy, the language of nationalism virtually disappeared from their trials and was replaced by the portrayal of smuggling as a crime of assault against revenue officers. The accounts of smugglers themselves also reveal a shift in emphasis. During the first part of the eighteenth century, smugglers referred to their trade in terms of tradition, and they were surprised to find themselves awaiting execution for such a commonplace activity. But after the 1770s, their language changes, too. Smugglers are increasingly reported to define smuggled goods as their private property and to suggest that revenue officers are in the wrong for seizing what is not theirs by right. This thesis argues that the changes in the discourse reveal both the revolutionary potential of smuggling and the ways authorities sought to change the conversation from one of national import to one of personal assault.

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Smuggling: smuggling, conveyance of things by stealth, particularly the clandestine movement of goods to evade customs duties or import or export restrictions. Smuggling flourishes wherever there are high-revenue duties (e.g., on tea, spirits, and silks in 18th-century England, coffee in many European. At the bottom of the article, feel free to list any sources that support your changes, so that we can fully understand their context. (Internet URLs are the best.)

Your contribution may be further edited by our staff, and its publication is subject to our final approval. "THEY WOULD HAVE A LAW OF THEIR OWN": THE DISCOURSE ON SMUGGLING AT THE OLD BAILEY, 1736-1814 by Annie Tock Morrisette November 2013. Director of Thesis: Timothy Jenks Major Department: History. This thesis examines the cases of 136 men tried for smuggling offenses at London's central criminal court during the long eighteenth century. The Old Bailey accounts of smuggling trials during these periods reveal distinct ways in which the central authority sought to shape the discourse on smuggling. During the first period (1736–1753), covered in chapter two, smugglers were portrayed as threats to national order and as enemies to the nation's revenue and security. —It is this old business that has driven everything else out of your head for the time. I was frightened at first. Don't you remember, Harvey? And, it must be said, they looked strange and not quite steady at the end of it all. There are, indeed, terrible tales of people losing consciousness by the time they reach that glorious finishing line. But I was captivated. Many of the old Jewish families had moved across the river into more expensive neighbourhoods. There was a new underclass made up of Filipinos, Vietnamese, and Canadian Indians. 1. Harry's father was permitted to come to Canada if he A) didn't work in agriculture.