Clip: STONE LAWRENCE_LAWRENCE STONE WITH KEITH

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S1 **00:00:23:06**

For more than two decades now, Lawrence Stone has had a reputation as one of the most productive and exciting of the historians writing about early modern England. He spent his early career in Oxford and since 1963 has been the Dodge professor of history at the University of Princeton in the United States since 1968. He has also been director of the Shelby Cullum Davis Center for Historical Studies. Professor Stone. Your first book was on Medieval Sculpture, published in 1955. And although you've ranged fairly widely since then and have always been willing to step outside geographical and chronological frontiers, for the most part, your work has been associated with England in the 16th and 17th centuries. What was it that first drew you to this particular period of English history?

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S2 **00:01:13:08**

Well, you're quite right. I was supposed to be medievalist. I was trained as a medievalist. My headmaster, Sir Robert Byrd Trotter, has taught me, as a medievalist. I went to Christchurch and started reading Medieval History with No Mars as my special subject. I did the third Crusade with John Prestwich, so everything was set to be a medievalist. And then I hit the early modern period and I started reading the works of Tawney, and it became clear to me that the central questions I was interested in with the transition from medieval feudalism to modern capitalist society and modern politics, law and so on. And if I want to do that, this is where the action was in the early modern period. And that fixed me. And it works of Tawney, I think, which did it. Secondly, it struck me that it was if you want to find out when England becomes different from the continent of Europe, it is this early modern period when it begins to drift away in all, all phases of its life. And thirdly, I realized by hit or miss and trial and error that the date I wanted in the medieval period was to inadequate, really to understand how people felt. You had very little personal letters, personal documentation, love letters, things of this sort. You simply couldn't understand what made them tick. Whereas the early modern period you could literacy was advancing. People were writing to one another and they had survived. So that those things, I think, just sucked me.

S1 **00:02:36:23**

From that point onwards. It was something like 17 or 18 years before the publication of the Crisis of the Aristocracy, which obviously did a great deal of research. Why did you decide to go about studying the aristocracy so completely? It's partly an argument about the English Civil War, but it's also a total portrait of a social group. Why did you decide to to approach it in this extraordinarily broad and for the time very unusual way?

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S2 **00:03:01:24**

Well, that's a hard question. I think I drifted into it. I didn't. I simply discovered this vast mass of archives untouched, untapped, which would suddenly become available through the dissolution of these great country houses. They deposited their archives in local record offices, or they were suddenly making them available to scholars and I just hit it. That's one one reason. It's simply the data overwhelm me. I should also remember that my first book, which everybody always forgets, was a biography of Bella Ficino. And I was ranging fairly widely different aspects of this human being. So I'd always been interested in this. Thirdly, I read people like Lucien Favre, Marc Bloch and the French School, and these things just pulled me in different directions and I decided I had to work on problems of power, on problems of the family and problems of education and problems of religion. ET cetera. If I was going to do a composite picture and I had this wild ambition to do a total portrait of a class which I thought was possible because I kept the class sufficiently small to make it doable. I went into this thing with the idea that the main crisis was a financial crisis and that the aristocracy was in deep financial trouble. In 1640, when the revolution broke out. I then discovered halfway through the simply wasn't true. What happened was it was only a temporary crisis. It was largely the whole of the reign of Elizabeth for a variety of reasons. By the early 17th century, they were coming out of this economic trough, and by the 1640, they were economically in pretty good shape. But what it seemed to me was happening was that they simply hadn't yet found themselves a proper political role to replace the medieval feudal military role, which they had played originally, and that the efforts to get themselves out of the economic trap, which which meant raising rents, throwing people off the land, maximizing profits, was decreasing their status and their influence over their their tenants. And in the eyes of everybody at large.

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S1 **00:05:11:21**

In terms of the the political crisis, the crisis of authority, a number of historians in recent years have begun suggesting that the the aristocracy. Rather I want to say specifically, the House of Lords was still exercising considerably more influence than was thought until very recently. Do you have a view on these recent revisionist arguments?

S2 **00:05:33:20**

Yes, I I'm afraid I don't buy them at all. It does seem to me sort of neo namur ism being fed back into the 17th century or it doesn't doesn't fit is applying, namely its interpretation of the role of the aristocracy in the 1760s and applying it to the period of the of the 1630s and 1640s. I mean these arguments that people like John Pym were simply satellites and toadies and acolytes of great magnates simply doesn't seem to me to hold up. They are independent men. They're saying their own thing. They are, of course, dependent on patronage for election. That's no question about that. But the central questions you have to ask yourself is, first of all, why is it that the House of Commons becomes the centre of political activity, not the House of Lords, and that we now know much more about that? And it's the House of Commons speeches which are being circulated and distributed, and people are reading them widely and passing them around, not House of Lords speeches. And when the chips are down, it's the House of Commons or the majority, substantial majority of the House of Commons who take on the King and a substantial majority of the House of Lords in a civil war and beat them. And this has never happened in history before. It seems to me that there's evidence of military weakness and political weakness of the members of the House of Lords and the House of Lords as an institution.

S1 **00:06:53:04**

Well, what do you think was the if there is a single fundamental reason, what what was the basic reason that the Squire were able to assume leadership on the eve of the Civil War?

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S2 **00:07:04:17**

Well, I think partly the feeling of vacuum that the English church had had blotted its copybook hopelessly with Archbishop, Lord, Lord in time unionism was obviously deeply unpopular and even shocking to many devout Anglicans who thought it was on the edge of Popery. The king was increasingly unpopular. He was cold. He was resistant to any appeals for compromise, and he was treacherous. And everybody knew that. And the circulation of these pamphlets and these poems and scurrilous poems and things, I think proved this into this vacuum poured a group of very, very talented, legally trained, highly educated, wealthy, ambitious, experienced administrators like people like Pym and his associates, who, it seems to me, filled this vacuum and took over only the first 2 or 3 years of the war.

S1 **00:08:00:12**

Would you accept that the aristocracy reasserted themselves pretty effectively after 1663?

S2 **00:08:05:04**

I mean, the comeback is extraordinary. And by the 1670 or 16 80s, their battening on the economic prosperity which is coming their way. They had reorganised their estates, they had modernised the although rents were flagging and stabilising right through the late 17th century, their income seems to be going up. They were marrying hairdressers very, very fast and therefore piling up more and more land, more and more capital. They were using their money, learning to use their money to influence the voting processes. As the Whig Tory split developed and they were manipulating the electorate in this way. They were obtaining control and using it of the patronage of the church and the state to put their own nominees in. And they were co-operating with Squires in the Whig Party and the Tory Party to to seize political power at the centre. And it seems to me you can see them taking off.

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S1 **00:09:01:04**

Co-operating with Squires. You say you don't see the Squire as being effectively pushed out? No, I don't think so.

S2 **00:09:08:08**

I think it is a corporation. If they hadn't co-operated with the Squires and they hadn't co-operated with the great banking communities after the founding of the Bank of England and these Great East India Company, Levant Company and so on, these were the critical new the levers of power in England and the aristocracy were very skilful, it seems to me, cooperated with them, adapted their policies to match these interests and at the same time themselves staying on top of the situation and indeed hogging most of the profits by sinecure offices and military offices and things of this son.

S1 **00:09:46:22**

To what extent did the the crisis of the aristocracy by its very range provide, as it were, a springboard into the rest of your career as a historian? It could be said that many of the things that you've pursued since that sprang directly from that book, were you following up loose ends, as it were?

S2 **00:10:03:20**

Yes, I think it was these rather skimpy chapters on these various problems of the family, problems of education and so on, which I decided were inadequate and had to be looked at in greater depth, which stirred me up to have a look at them. These questions had always been on my mind from the start, but it is working on them through the crisis. And my sense that further exploration was badly needed, which pushed me into this exploration of particularly education and the family, and also a desire to push into the 18th century. It seemed to me that this cutoff point at 1660, which we were all doing at that time, was inadequate. We really had to push on and see the rest of the story towards the industrial revolution.

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S1 **00:10:43:18**

Yes. You very much done that with your most recent book, An Open Elite. Your argument concerning the relative stability of the elite is focused on the later 17th and 18th century. To that extent, you very much did what you wanted to do in moving forward in time. And yet you do still seem to hold to the position that the late 16th and early 17th centuries had been a period of unprecedented mobility. Yes, I.

S2 **00:11:10:23**

Do. I think the dissolution of the monasteries in itself opening up maybe a quarter of the total land area of England for grabs, simply shook the society to its roots. The creation of the nation state and the centralisation of power in the central state, the reorganisation of the Church of England. And all these things shook up society. And it was a period of great social mobility to compare the speed of change then to the speed of change. As far as I could see in this latest study later on, it is it is a period of great change and the 1660 to 1880 is a period of extraordinary stability.

S1 **00:11:47:01**

I suppose one of the central problems with any work of this kind is that, as you suggest, in an open elite, there's the problem of how much is a lot. You show at various times in different counties between 10 and 20% turnover in particular generations of elite families. Could it not be said that that is, in fact quite a lot?

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S2 **00:12:08:00**

Well, it could. And I do pose this question. It's an unanswerable one, as we all know, and different people can have different conclusions. My own position is that there's no such thing as a totally closed elite. It virtually does not exist outside the Venetian oligarchy, perhaps even in the Indian caste systems. Demography inevitably creates mobility of a sort. So you're going to have maybe five, 10% whatever happens. In addition to which, the only area where we found a very high mobility was very close to London, in Hertfordshire, just outside London, not elsewhere. And even that, if you look at even more closely, what you find is that people were moving in and out. There was a rotating stream moving in, moving out, whereas the solid core of old families is hanging on generation after generation after generation not budging at all.

S1 **00:12:56:16**

Do you think that would be equally true of of the lesser gentry? I mean, again, in the book, you do say that you would be prepared to to consider the possibility that there was much more mobility at the bottom end of general society. And some studies like BG Blackwood's study of Lancashire, for example, suggest a considerable amount of turnover at various points in the 17th century. Perhaps the myth was was describing an experience which was that of the prosperous professional lower gentry level.

S2 **00:13:28:07**

No, I think there's no question that at the gentry level, the mobility must have been much greater. On the other hand, if you look at, as I say, these urban studies and see how few people seem to be moving out of the urban situation, my guess is that these new men moving in are upwardly mobile yeomen from land classes and professional men, lawyers, doctors of government officials, which means it is absolutely no different than anywhere else in Europe.

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S1 **00:13:58:21**

If you go back a little too, to the the late 16th and early 17th centuries, the period which you along with many others, see as the period of drastic change, perhaps we can take up the question of the educational revolution. From your 1964 article, do you still stand by the notion of an educational revolution of the late 16th and early 17th centuries?

S2 **00:14:20:13**

Yes, I think everything that's been published since has tended to confirm this fact.

S1 **00:14:25:05**

Do you think we yet have a satisfactory explanation of why the gentry in particular began to transform their their educational requirements?

S2 **00:14:34:08**

No, we don't. I think that is a puzzle. You can argue what is was the point of Latin? Why do you have to struggle with Latin? Clearly they were persuaded by Erasmus and the humanists that a gentleman, if you wanted to be a gentleman, you must be able to read and speak Latin. It seems to be a status qualification that you had to have. Also, I think it's partly due to the fact that these landed classes were having to adapt themselves from being a military warrior aristocracy to an administrative aristocracy. They had to get an education which would be suitable for administration, and that meant modern languages, political science, history, things of this sort.

S1 **00:15:15:17**

How much of it is just fashion, do you think?

S2 **00:15:17:17**

I think a lot of it is fashion because it seems to ebb in the. Post post 1660. But on the other hand, if you turn to literacy, the graph keeps moving steadily upwards.

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S1 **00:15:28:01**
There are those, even those who have gone to a great deal of trouble to document. The rise of popular literacy have sometimes been very skeptical about whether it had any practical consequences of great significance. What do you think about that?

S3 **00:15:41:13**
Well, I'm I'm torn.

S2 **00:15:43:23**
I really am torn. For a long time, I thought it was tremendously important and revolutionized the world and so on. Then I began to wonder, what the hell difference does it mean if you can read and write? Today we're moving into a society where communication is much more oral. We're learning things through television and visual aids rather than through books. And how much is this going to affect the way we think and the way we feel and the way we look at ourselves? On the other hand, you can say that reading is a very private, a very personal thing which creates introspection, creates inwardness, if you like. You are alone with this printed word and you're communicating with the past and with the author. And you can also say, I think with some justification, that the Reformation would simply never got off the ground without literacy. It was the reading of the Bible which created a Protestant. The possibility of Protestantism certainly created Puritanism without Puritanism would have been without literacy. There would have been no Puritanism. The tie in between the reading, the Bible and Puritanism seems to me a very, very tight one. The the level of movement is just not possible without the pamphlet literature of the Civil War period in which we allegedly tens of thousands were being published and being read. So in that sense, very central aspects of English life were being governed by this literacy.

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S1 **00:17:07:01**

You've written a great deal about the English Revolution, either directly or indirectly. To what extent does it form a central series of events in your whole conception of the early modern period?

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S2 **00:17:20:15**

I think this is I always have thought this is absolutely central. It's a, in my view, the first of the so-called great revolutions of the world. You regard the French Revolution, the second, and the Russian Revolution to the third, and then the Chinese and so on. A great revolution in the sense that everything was up for grabs. The whole religious structure was up for grabs. The political structure was up for grabs. A king was not only executed, but the monarchy was abolished, The House of Lords was abolished, and every possible radical thought that anybody's thought ever since could be found somewhere in the period 1640 or 1660. If you look for it, maybe only half a dozen people read it, but it's there somewhere. I mean, this extraordinary explosion of radical thinking. So I think it's one of the one of the great central episodes of the Western world. Therefore and although you can say that in political terms and in terms of social structure and total economic structure, the effects were not very great. I think that is true. Nevertheless, it did provide a conspicuous of views about the church is entrenched. The dissenting element would never be dislodged ever again in this history. They were embedded in the towns by 1660, they couldn't be got out of it. So you had a religious plurality of a religiously pluralistic society. There was no hope of ever going back on that. And I think the idea is of the contract state, as elucidated by Locke and finally accepted in the 18th century was arose out of the contract theories of this revolution. So in that sense, both politics and religion were permanently affected by what we've done then. So I really do think it's a very, very central central episode, even if, as I admit, the social consequences, economic consequences were not very great. And that if you look in the long term ideological perspective and moral perspectives, you can say that the main results were actually the reverse. That is to say, it ushered in a huge century and a half of conservatism. We mustn't change anything. If we touch anything, we're liable to get this explosion again, which it seems to me, held up reform of of English institutions until the Victorian period. So in that sense, it was it was very negative.

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S1 **00:19:39:12**

You're one of the few people who who's written quite extensively on the question of the results of it all. People obviously are much more preoccupied with the causes at the moment. There seem to be two positions. One, that there were no particular long term causes, that the whole thing was an almost accidental breakdown short term, the other being a removal back to the notion that there was one dominant cause which is now being traced to religion revival of the Puritan Revolution idea. Do you still stand by your own rather more complex view? The the the argument that there was what you called a multiple dysfunction in English. Society and politics, which can be traced back over a century and should be to explain these events.

S2 **00:20:26:01**

Without the shop term, there would have been no civil war. It's absolutely clear without the folly of idiocy of of of, of Charles and obduracy, of Lord and things of this sort. Accidents like the Irish rebellion, the Civil War wouldn't have broken out in the first place. I concede that. And I said, I've always said that. But on the other hand, it does seem to me these people who are obsessed with these short term causes of intimate political debate in a one year or another year are so deep in the wood that all they can see of the trees. If you're in the middle of a wood, all you see is trees. And it's hardly surprising they can't see anything else. And the classic example of this, it seems to me, is Fletcher's superb book, which is an analysis of 1640, 42 leading up to the Civil War. And he does a beautiful chronology, shows how it happens. He demonstrates something very important, which was that massive input from the human upwards by petitioning about nationalist issues to the state. And then he says, when it's all over, well, what caused the Civil war? He says, well, they just didn't trust one another or big deal. But he is incapable of explaining why they didn't trust one another because his framework is so narrow to this two years, he can't do it. If you want to know, for example, an almost any problem, if you want to know anything about religion, you've got to go back to the Reformation. If you want to know about the Puritans, they are not comprehensible except in

terms of the failure of the Reformation to reform the English Church Reform society to create a new and better moral and ethical church which failed. And they emerge out of that failure. You've got to go back there to find it. If you look at politics, you have to explain why. Charles the first, unlike Louis the 14th or Philip the fourth, had such little power. He had no money, he had no army and he had no local civil service. And unless you explain those three things, you have to go way, way back to Henry the eighth Way even before, to explain them. If you want to look at another question of why both sides in these disputes before the Civil War were obsessed with the law. They were legalistic. They absolutely obsessed with the law. Would explain that. Do you want to go back to the 14th century? I divided the courts into long term, then precipitates and then triggers the precipitates. I started at 1629 with the dissolution of Parliament and Charles's autocracy. Today, I think I would start at 16 2526 with the with the real breakdown. It seems to me if relations between King and Parliament, particularly over the forced loan and things of that sort, I think they have convinced me that the precipitates are begin with with Charles. Charles really was a catalyst. He was so obstinate and he was so hostile to Parliament and he was so irresponsible that things really start going wrong very badly. And I would therefore transfer the the beginnings of the precipitates back to 25. That's the only thing I would do.

S1 **00:23:17:07**
That's interesting. The it could be said that one sticking point arguing for an incompatibility between your views and some revisionist views would be that you did argue in the causes of the English revolution that there was a rise of opposition as a self conscious political force. Now that that's a particular concept which has been repeatedly rejected by these political historians, again, would you still stand by that or would you modify that position?

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S2 **00:23:46:22**

I don't think that there's such a thing as the opposition. I do think there was such a thing as opposition and people who are coming up to London, to parliament and say we are the country and we're looking after the interests of the country, which is not the same as the interests of the court, and therefore that the interests of the king and his courtiers is not the same as interest of the nation as a whole. Now that it seems to me, once you're in that position, you are in a conflict situation, whereas Elizabeth had been the embodiment of English nationalism and everything that was grand and glorious about England. James and Charles were incapable of taking on that role and conflict beneath the veneer of a rhetoric of consensus, it seems to me, is very clear.

S1 **00:24:30:21**

So you you don't feel that the English Civil War to some extent distorts the historiography of the 17th century?

S2 **00:24:39:10**

You're absolutely right that the the way we divided English social history with Torn is century 1540 1641. We stopped bang and we never looked beyond has done endless damage.

S1 **00:24:50:15**

Well, you've crossed the divide more than most, and not least in the question of the history of the family, which is, do you think now, looking back, that in your interpretative chapters and summations and conclusions, you perhaps went too far in presenting a firm schema of change?

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S2 **00:25:07:08**

Yes, I think I made two major mistakes. One was to over schema ties, as you say, which was not supported by the evidence, which does suggest a much slower and more hesitant and more ambiguous transformation. The trouble is with family history, you know as well as I do, is that there are many family structures and patterns and modes of behaviors or are families pretty well. And one family living next door to another 1st May be behaving quite different ways, which makes it such absolute hell to produce any overarching model by a more cautious person. I wouldn't have been stuck my neck out like this, and I wouldn't have ever schemata the way I did. But I did give people a target to shoot at, which I think may have been helpful. But the other, much more serious mistake was that I was generalizing primarily from the upper and upper middle classes to the poor. I do now know about the poor, and it's perfectly clear that my model of the poor was quite wrong.

S1 **00:26:04:11**

Is there any real hope, do you think, of of of writing a single history of the English family?

Clip: STONE LAWRENCE_LAWRENCE STONE WITH KEITH

S2 **00:26:09:24**

Well, yes and no. I think there stratified diffusion still holds, but only I think it holds to the middle and upper classes. As I say, if this concept of an effective individualism, which I was trying to push as something emerging in the late 17th and 18th century and then spreading, it does, I can first see it in people like Daniel Defoe and dissenting London elements in the late 17th and 18th century. I then can see it spreading to the gentry and then I think it's fairly clear it spreads to the aristocracy. This is, I think, intellectual movements, humanitarian, intellectual romanticism, novels, all sorts of things of this sort. And I do think it is being diffused upward through the social system. You go down below that and I think, as I say, you have a very long continuity of relatively free marital patterns and marital behaviors with parents reacting to this in very, very different ways. I mean, some very brutal parents who were being absolutely tyrannical to their children and some being extremely permissive, but far more permissive than I ever expected, that I would still hold to this diffusion with high intellectual ideas behind it from the middle class upwards. But I don't think it works down below.

S1 **00:27:22:09**

The problem at the moment with the history of the family seems to be to find ways of handling change. But is there also a problem of having the correct kind of time scheme within which to deal with it?

S2 **00:27:32:04**

I think that's right. It's perfectly clear that you stick to a generation or two generations which historians normally do. This won't do. I do think that change because it's very, very slow, particularly amongst the lower classes and if you want to see it functioning, we have to take it at least 200 to 250 year spans in order to want to perceive anything significant happening.

Clip: STONE LAWRENCE_LAWRENCE STONE WITH KEITH

S1 **00:27:53:22**

One of the most fundamental changes which you saw arising over a period of 2 to 3 generations is the rise of affect. You said quite openly in the family sex and marriage that you found it exceedingly difficult. How, how, how to explain this shift in the range of people's sympathies, as it were, are able to define it more closely now or explain it?

S2 **00:28:16:04**

I can't define it more closely. I think what I would stress in the scene, to me, a humanitarian sensibility and hostility to cruelty. If you look at it, you see an end of of torturing people in England in the middle of the 17th century by the end of burning heretics and of burning witches, end of burning alive anyway, wives who poisoned their husbands they strangled before their public executions become a move to the inside. The prisons romanticism is hooked into it.

S1 **00:28:51:06**

One thing that you haven't written a great deal about, though you constantly mention it, is religion. Why is this? Why have you never gone frontally into questions of.

S2 **00:29:02:07**

Which there are limits to the. I've obviously recognized the enormous importance of religion. I myself an agnostic. So I don't I never had a religious experience in my life, so I can't treat it from insight. But have to talk about it. And indeed in my undergraduate lecture courses, which ran from 1480 to 17, 20 or thereabouts, about a third of the course is devoted has to be to religion, to the Reformation and to Protestantism and to the to the Puritanism and dissent anti popery and so on. And I have to deal with it as best I can.

S1 **00:29:37:02**

A reputation for bold argument and clear conceptualization. Inevitably that brings controversy to that extent. You you almost deliberately caught it. Why do you prefer this style of operation?

S2 **00:29:51:11**

It seems to me history works in two ways. One is posing broad ideas and then niggling and testing them and testing them or refining them and saying, This isn't right, this isn't right. We have to change it in this way. That I think, as I understand it, occurs in every science, whether it's physics or biology or history or whatever. And I have always preferred the the the bold and perhaps foolhardy generalizations simply to stimulate work and get it going. Um, and that has, I suppose, is a temperamental built in temperamental bias, obviously one on one and inevitably always the work attracts the attention of detail. Researchers graduate students go and do doctoral dissertations and the thing gets chipped away and sometimes it disappears altogether, like my model of the working class family. I don't mind that I do have a dislike, which is probably a weakness. I think of ambiguity. I really hate ambiguity and I realize the world is full of we live in an ambiguous, ambiguous world and we're constantly in conflict and ambiguity. But nevertheless, I'm very irritated by books which at the end of it I say, What the hell does that man said, I can't understand that he really said anything. He said two things. He's talking out of both sides of his mouth. I don't like that. So I've always tried to be clear and I've always tried to be so that everybody can understand exactly what it is I'm saying. But that of course, inevitably leads to oversimplification. It leads to exaggeration. And if you're out front in the field doing a lot of pioneering, you're going to be proved wrong. And I'm sure a lot of what I've said over time is going to be proved wrong. Some of it, I hope, will be proved right.

S1 **00:31:39:00**

How do you go about setting a project up then, when when you're when you've got an idea which you want to follow through, do you have a a method that you usually follow?

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S2 **00:31:48:12**

Well, I don't think I do anything very different from anybody else. I read all the secondary literature. I then look around for archival material or primary material and just plunged myself into it for as many years. It requires to come up with some plausible hypothesis of my own. I've also been I poke around in the social sciences. One of the influences on me, obviously, is moving to America, where the social sciences were much more powerful than in England. And I was very influenced, first of all, by sociology, by a particularly arcane Merton and then by by political science, particularly. The theories of evolution were very important, obviously, in my analysis of the English revolution and theories of modernization, although they're vastly oversimplified in the American scene, I still think it contains a kernel of truth that something fundamental does change, which can be called modernization as we move into the modern world, those two things being very important. And then more recently, of course, being in close cohabitation with Clifford Geertz and symbolic anthropology. It's also influenced my thinking not as much as some of my other colleagues at Princeton.

S1 **00:33:00:01**

You seem to draw very eclectic on all of this.

S2 **00:33:02:01**

Yes, I I'm a grave robber. I like to I don't think there's anything wicked in just going into a different field and with a pickax and digging out the gold and getting out fast. If if it's useful to you, then use it.

S1 **00:33:18:10**

Could you could I ask you about how you write to do you write first? Do you plan very carefully?

Clip: STONE LAWRENCE_LAWRENCE STONE WITH KEITH

S2 **00:33:24:08**

Do I write very fast? I write a first draft very, very fast indeed. And then I tinker and tinker and tinker and tinker. And it used to be very difficult for me because every time I tinker, it had some poor person. Usually a woman has to retype it, either my wife or my secretary or somebody or something. And by the 15th writing, one begins to ask oneself, Can one possibly ask one's wife or one secretary to do it? Now my life has been transformed by the word processor and one can tinker forever.

S1 **00:33:54:08**

Do you have any views about the teaching of history, the ways in which it should be taught?

S2 **00:34:00:04**

Not really the essential things to make it interesting. And that depends on the human personality. I think nothing is worse than boring history. It just drives people away from the field and didn't touch it.

S1 **00:34:13:16**

You said perhaps our last question that history is a moral as well as an intellectual task. Well, what exactly do you mean by that?

Clip: STONE LAWRENCE_LAWRENCE STONE WITH KEITH

S2 **00:34:22:18**

Well, I don't think that history has much purpose and has you can make much of it unless you have some vision of a moral universe in this world and this present time which you're prepared to use in the past. Now, I don't mean to say the old fashioned doctrine, which is that history is the evidence of God's work in the world. It seems to me history is a story of absolute horror in which the bad guys always win. The good guys nearly always lose. And on the whole, it's an atrocious story. But it does seem to me that if one is working on the past, one should be free to make moral judgments about human beings in the past. I'm prepared to do so. It does seem to me that a democratic law based society is better than the tyranny nowadays. Historians, English historians, particularly terrified of saying anything like that, always make moral judgments. They say, I think that's wrong. I think we do have. Obligation to society and to our readers to make it clear where we stand. I'm an old fashioned Whig and liberal, and I don't think I ever make any bones about where I stand on these matters. I think if you parade your your moral views in your works, as some people do, I think that's upsetting and jars on the nerves. But to go into history allegedly without any preconceptions, without any moral bias one way or the other of torture is as good as non torture or something of this sort, which is what a lot of English is trying to pretend they do. I think it's nonsense and I think they are the king themselves. Or killing their readers or both.