Unit Description
‘Sackage, carnage and wreckage’ is the 1066 & All That summary of the fifteenth century in England, and its image as an era of anarchy and bloodshed has been crystallised in the popular imagination through the history plays of William Shakespeare. However, over the last forty years, increasing interest has been taken in this ‘Cinderella century’ by scholars and controversy continues to rage over major issues of interpretation. This special subject will address perhaps the most vital question – that of kingship during a period of dynastic turbulence and usurpation. How was kingly authority conferred and its continued validity restated and reaffirmed in a century when every occupant of the English throne had his right to it challenged?

Contact Hours and Mode of Teaching:
10 x 2 hour seminars

Methods of Assessment:
1 x 5000 word essay, 1 x 2 hour exam

Essential Reading –
Cook, David R., Lancastrians and Yorkists: the Wars of the Roses (London, 1984)
Dockray, Keith, William Shakespeare, the Wars of the Roses and the Historians (Stroud, 2002)
Pollard, A.J., Late Medieval England, 1399-1509 (Harlow, 2000)
Watts, John, Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship (Cambridge, 1996)

Further Information
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