

HIS 374 01: *British History, 1688 to the Present*
MWF: 1-1:50pm, Bryan 206

Professor: Jill Bender

Office: MHRA 2116

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30-3:30pm; and by appointment

Email: jcbender@uncg.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides a historical survey of Britain, from the late-seventeenth century to the present. During these 300+ years, the British electorate increased significantly, the British Empire reached its widest expanse, the British Empire collapsed, and the Beatles took the music world by storm. It was, in other words, an exciting time of significant change for Britain. We will study this change by examining and analyzing a variety of historical sources – from political documents to novels to music to films. Specific course themes include the ramifications of Britain’s industrial development, contestations over political power, and the expansion of the British Empire. The course will focus on Britain, but an effort will be made to examine the country’s history within a global context.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be introduced to the multiple approaches to Modern British history – economic, cultural, and political – through exposure to a variety of historical documents.
 2. By the completion of the course, students will be able to identify and give the significance of the major events, peoples, and debates in the history of Modern Britain.
 3. Students will improve their ability to construct and support an analytical argument based on primary historical sources. These skills will be developed both through writing assignments and classroom discussions.
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REQUIRED TEXTS:

The following texts are required and available for purchase at the university bookstore:

Elizabeth Gaskell, *Mary Barton* (This book is also available online at

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2153>)

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own*

Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*

All reading material marked with an * is available on the course Blackboard site or will be distributed in class.

Please note that there is no central text for this course. The course lectures are designed to provide the necessary information and background to place documents within historical context. Should you wish to consult a text in addition to the required readings, I have placed Thomas Heyck, *The Peoples of the British Isles: From 1688 to 1870* and *The Peoples of the British Isles: From 1870 to the Present* on reserve.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Participation

Please note that a number of class meetings will be devoted to discussion. These classes provide an opportunity for you to engage with and discuss the readings in detail. Students must come to classes labeled “Discussion” prepared to participate – in other words, having read the assigned readings for the week, taken notes, and prepared questions and/or comments.

Papers

Students will be required to write two papers over the course of the semester. Both papers need to be double-spaced, with 12 point font, and standard margins. Please cite your sources using footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical documentation. Plagiarism is a breach of the university’s academic integrity policy. For more information on this policy, see <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>.

Due dates for papers: The first paper is due September 19th. The second paper is due December 2nd. Paper topics will be provided in advance of both due dates. Papers are due in class. I do not accept emailed copies of papers.

Note on late papers: The grades of the papers will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade for each class-meeting late. Papers will not be accepted after one week and a 0 will be recorded.

Grading

Grades will be based on four different aspects of your performance: (1) papers (2) mid-term exam (3) participation (4) final exam. The final grade will be determined according to the following calculation:

Paper #1 15%
Paper #2 25%
Mid-term Exam 15%
Final Exam 25%
Participation 20%

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION SCHEDULE:

WEEK ONE

Aug 22: Introduction

Aug 24: The Glorious Revolution

Aug 26: Eighteenth-century English society

No reading

WEEK TWO

Aug 29: Britain and its Eighteenth-Century Empire

Aug 31: Britain and France

Sept 2: DISCUSSION: *Responses to Revolution*

Reading

Documents on the French Revolution*

Start Gaskell, *Mary Barton*

WEEK THREE

Sept 5: *No Classes*

Sept 7: The Industrial Revolution

Sept 9: DISCUSSION: *The novel as a historical source*

Reading

Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, pages 9-14*

Cont reading Gaskell, *Mary Barton*

WEEK FOUR

Sept 12: Social Upheaval

Sept 14: Political Upheaval

Sept 16: DISCUSSION: *The ramifications of the Industrial Revolution*

Reading

Finish *Mary Barton*

WEEK FIVE

Sept 19: Free Trade Nation

*****PAPER ONE DUE*****

Sept 21: The Irish Question

Sept 23: DISCUSSION: *The Irish Famine*

Reading

Documents on the Irish Famine*

Christine Kinealy, "At home with the Empire: the example of Ireland," *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, eds. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (2006), 77-100.*

(recommended) Kevin Kenny, "Ireland and the British Empire: An Introduction,"

Ireland and the British Empire, ed. Kevin Kenny (2004), 1-25.*

WEEK SIX

Sept 26: The Victorians: Science, Religion, and Empire

Sept 28: The Victorians: Cities and Culture

Sept 30: DISCUSSION: *The Victorian Age*

Reading

Documents on Jack the Ripper*

Judith Walkowitz, "Jack the Ripper and the Myth of Male Violence," *Feminist Studies* 8:3 (Autumn 1982): 543-574.*

WEEK SEVEN

Oct 3: The Victorians: Political Developments

Oct 5: Britain, Europe, and New Imperialism

Oct 7: The Revolt against Victorianism

No reading, review for midterm

WEEK EIGHT

Oct 10: *No Classes*

Oct 12: *****MIDTERM*****

Oct 14: The Great War

Reading

Although we will not have a formal discussion this week, please look at the following links before Friday's lecture.

World War I poetry, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1914warpoets.html>
John McCrae, "In Flanders Fields," <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/mccrae-flanders.html>

WEEK NINE

Oct 17: Counting the Cost

Oct 19: Interwar Feminism

Oct 21: DISCUSSION: *The Impact of WWI*

Reading

Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

WEEK TEN

Oct 24: Labour and the Left

Oct 26: Interwar Imperialism

Oct 28: DISCUSSION: *Interwar Imperialism*

Reading

Derek Sayer, "British Responses to the Amritsar Massacre," *Past and Present* (May 1991): 130-164.*

Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant"*

WEEK ELEVEN

Oct 31: The Era of Appeasement

Nov 2: The People's War

Nov 4: DISCUSSION: *World War II*

Reading

Select speeches by Churchill*

Orwell, excerpt from "The Lion and the Unicorn: Socialism and the English Genius"*

WEEK TWELVE

Nov 7: Building a New Jerusalem

Nov 9: Post-war British Culture I *****FILM:** *Darling*, SOEB 120, 6pm***

Nov 11: DISCUSSION: *The 1960s*

No Reading – this week’s discussion will be based on the film *Darling*

WEEK THIRTEEN

Nov 14: Post-war British Culture II

Nov 16: End of Empire

Nov 18: Post-imperial Britain

Reading

Begin Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*

WEEK FOURTEEN

Nov 21: DISCUSSION: *Post-imperial Britain*

Nov 23: *No Classes*

Nov 25: *No Classes*

Reading

Finish Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*

Rushdie, “The New Empire within Britain”*

WEEK FIFTEEN

Nov 28: Thatcher’s England

Nov 30: “New Labour”

Dec 2: Britain Today

*****PAPER TWO DUE*****

No Reading

WEEK SIXTEEN

Dec 5: Conclusion

*****FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, December 7, 2011, 3:30-6:30pm*****
