

HIS 374 01: *British History, 1688 to the Present*
MWF: 9-9:50am, MHRA 2209

Professor: Jill Bender

Office: MHRA 2116

Office Hours: Mondays, 1:00-2:00pm; Wednesdays, 1:00-2:00pm; and by appointment

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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 dramatically, 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:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and the give the significance of the major events, people, and debates in the history of modern Britain.
 - Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view.
 - Use evidence based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting a written argument.
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REQUIRED TEXTS:

The following books are available on reserve at Jackson Library and for purchase at the university bookstore:

Ellis Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain, 1714 to the present*

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*

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

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Participation

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

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 sources using footnotes or endnotes. 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 17th. The second paper is due November 12th. 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 $\frac{1}{3}$ of a letter grade for each class-meeting late. Papers will not be accepted after one week and a 0 will be recorded.

Exams

There will be two exams in this course. Both exams will be content-driven, based largely on the lectures, readings, and class discussions. The mid-term exam will be on Monday, October 8th. The final exam will be on Monday, December 10th. Review sheets will be provided in advance of both exams.

Grading

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

Papers 40% (20% each)
Mid-term Exam 15%
Final Exam 25%
Participation 20%

Contract Honors Students

Those students taking this course as a contract honors course will be required to complete the same assignments as other students as well as write an 8-10 page historiographical essay based on additional readings. Please meet with me to discuss a topic and create a reading list. An annotated bibliography will be due on November 5th. The final paper will be due on December 3rd.

The grade for the contract honors course will be based on five different aspects of student performance: (1) papers (2) mid-term exam (3) annotated bibliography and historiographical essay (4) final exam (5) participation. The final grade will be determined according to the following calculation:

Papers 20% (10% each)

Mid-term Exam 15%

**Historiographical Essay 20% (Annotated bibliography 5% +
final paper 15%)**

Final Exam 25%

Participation 20%

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION SCHEDULE:

WEEK ONE

Aug 20: Introduction

Aug 22: The Glorious Revolution

Aug 24: Eighteenth-century English society

Reading

Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 5-9; 15-31; 38-44

WEEK TWO

Aug 27: Britain and its Eighteenth-Century Empire

Aug 29: Britain and France

Aug 31: DISCUSSION: *Responses to Revolution*

Reading

Documents on the French Revolution*

Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 66-72; 77-89; 112-122

(I also encourage you to start Gaskell, *Mary Barton*.)

WEEK THREE

Sept 3: *No Classes*

Sept 5: The Industrial Revolution

Sept 7: DISCUSSION: *The novel as a historical source*

Reading

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

Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 94-108

(Please continue reading *Mary Barton*, which we will discuss next week.)

WEEK FOUR

Sept 10: Social Upheaval

Sept 12: Political Upheaval

Sept 14: DISCUSSION: *The ramifications of the Industrial Revolution*

Reading

Gaskell, *Mary Barton*
Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, chapter 5

WEEK FIVE

Sept 17: Free Trade Nation ***PAPER ONE DUE***
Sept 19: The Irish Question
Sept 21: DISCUSSION: *The Irish Famine*

Reading

Documents on the Irish Famine*
Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 151-162

WEEK SIX

Sept 24: The Victorians I
Sept 26: The Victorians II
Sept 28: 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.*
Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 162-167; 182-187; 214-228

WEEK SEVEN

Oct 1: Britain, Europe, and New Imperialism
Oct 3: The Revolt against Victorianism
Oct 5: DISCUSSION: *Review for Midterm*

Reading

Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 188-192; 229-239

WEEK EIGHT

Oct 8: *MIDTERM*****
Oct 10: The Great War
Oct 12: Counting the Cost

Reading

We will not have a formal discussion this week, but you should read the following pages in Wasson and begin Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*.

Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 241-250

WEEK NINE

Oct 15: *No Classes*

Oct 17: Interwar Feminism

Oct 19: **DISCUSSION:** *The Impact of WWI*

Reading

Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

WEEK TEN

Oct 22: Labour and the Left

Oct 24: Interwar Imperialism

Oct 26: **DISCUSSION:** *Interwar Imperialism*

Reading

Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant"*

Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 192-199; 250-266

WEEK ELEVEN

Oct 29: The Era of Appeasement

Oct 31: The People's War

Nov 2: **DISCUSSION:** *World War II*

Reading

Harrison, *Living Through the Blitz* (excerpt)*

Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 267-281

WEEK TWELVE

Nov 5: Building a New Jerusalem (**Annotated bibliography due for Contract Honors**)

Nov 7: Post-war British Culture

Nov 9: Film

WEEK THIRTEEN

Nov 12: Film

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

Nov 14: DISCUSSION

Nov 16: End of Empire

Reading

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

WEEK FOURTEEN

Nov 19: Post-imperial Britain

Nov 21: *No Classes*

Nov 23: *No Classes*

Reading

Rushdie, “The New Empire Within Britain”*

Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 295-303

WEEK FIFTEEN

Nov 26: Thatcher’s England

Nov 28: “New Labour”

Nov 30: Britain Today

Reading

Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, chapter 11

WEEK SIXTEEN

Dec 3: Conclusion

(Historiographical Essay due for Contract Honors)

*****FINAL EXAM: Monday, December 10, 2012, 8:00-11:00am*****
