

HIS 374 01: *British History, 1688 to the Present*
MWF: 11-11:50am, Curry 238

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>)

Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*

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://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>.

Due dates for papers: The first paper is due September 16th. The second paper is due November 11th. 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 7th. The final exam will be on Monday, December 9th. 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% (this includes attendance, in-class participation, and any in-class assignments)

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION SCHEDULE:

WEEK ONE

Aug 19: Introduction

Aug 21: The Glorious Revolution

Aug 23: Eighteenth-century English society

Reading

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

WEEK TWO

Aug 26: Britain and its Eighteenth-Century Empire

Aug 28: Britain and France

Aug 30: **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 2: *No Classes*

Sept 4: The Industrial Revolution

Sept 6: **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 9: Social Upheaval

Sept 11: Political Upheaval

Sept 13: **DISCUSSION:** *The ramifications of the Industrial Revolution*

Reading

Gaskell, *Mary Barton*

WEEK FIVE

Sept 16: Free Trade Nation *****PAPER ONE DUE*****
Sept 18: The Irish Question
Sept 20: **DISCUSSION:** *The Irish Famine*

Reading

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

WEEK SIX

Sept 23: The Victorians I
Sept 25: The Victorians II
Sept 27: **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

Sept 30: Britain, Europe, and New Imperialism
Oct 2: The Revolt against Victorianism
Oct 4: **DISCUSSION:** *Review for Midterm*

Reading

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

WEEK EIGHT

Oct 7: *****MIDTERM*****
Oct 9: The Great War
Oct 11: 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*.

WEEK NINE

Oct 14: *No Classes*

Oct 16: Interwar Feminism

Oct 18: DISCUSSION: *The Impact of WWI*

Reading

Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

WEEK TEN

Oct 21: Labour and the Left

Oct 23: Interwar Imperialism

Oct 25: DISCUSSION: *Interwar Imperialism*

Reading

Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant"*

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

WEEK ELEVEN

Oct 28: The Era of Appeasement

Oct 30: The People's War

Nov 1: DISCUSSION: *World War II*

Reading

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

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

WEEK TWELVE

Nov 4: Building a New Jerusalem

Nov 6: Post-war British Culture

Nov 8: Film

WEEK THIRTEEN

Nov 11: Film *****PAPER TWO DUE*****
Nov 13: DISCUSSION: *The 1960s*
Nov 15: End of Empire

Reading

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

WEEK FOURTEEN

Nov 18: Post-imperial Britain
Nov 20: DISCUSSION: *Post-imperial Britain*
Nov 22: Thatcher’s England

Reading

Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*
Wasson, *A History of Modern Britain*, 295-303

Optional Reading

Rushdie, “The New Empire Within Britain”*

WEEK FIFTEEN

Nov 25: “New Labour”
Nov 27: *No Classes*
Nov 29: *No Classes*

Reading

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

WEEK SIXTEEN

Dec 2: Conclusion

*****FINAL EXAM: Monday, December 9, 2013, 12-3pm*****
