

HIST 440 Special Topics: History of Modern Britain

Professor: Dr. Kelly Elliott

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Office Hours: MWF 8:30-9:00, 10-11

Spring 2012

Admin 321

T R 9:30-10:50

TR 11:30-noon and by appointment

Course Description: This course examines the major events of modern British history from the Glorious Revolution to the present. While providing a continuous narrative of major political, social, and economic developments, the course explores such themes as the forging of the British nation and Empire, gender relationships in the context of British politics and culture, the role of religious belief in British identity, and class culture and conflict.

Course Goals: The course seeks to cultivate critical reading and thinking skills by exposing students to a range of primary source texts and historiographical approaches. Class readings represent multiple viewpoints and methodologies, and by reading and discussing these texts, students will explore not only the events of British history, but the documents from which historical narratives are forged, and the conventions of historical scholarship. Upon completion of the course, successful students will be able to craft a narrative of British history from 1688 to the present, and to complicate that narrative by placing gender, religion, or class at the center of analysis. Students will be able to analyze and evaluate both primary and secondary sources on modern Britain.

Purpose of this course: To improve students' critical thinking, analysis, and use of writing skills. The coursework also seeks to foster a historical perspective in students, that is, an understanding of and appreciation for the worldviews of the past, and an ability to relate that knowledge to the present.

What I expect of you: This course is designed for upper level history and social science majors. Prerequisites for the course are junior standing or the completion of at least three hours of 100-299 history. Come to class on time and prepared. Do not start packing up before I finish. Read assigned texts before you get to class. Be ready to ask questions and participate in discussion. Apply yourself thoughtfully to your assignments, and turn them in on time. If you are engaged with the material, the professor, and your classmates, we will all get more out of the class.

What you may expect of me: I will come to class prepared to make the coursework as clear and as interesting as I can. I will listen willingly to suggestions or comments on the course, when appropriate. I will start class on time and let you out on time. I will endeavor to return your assignments to you with thoughtful, helpful comments on them, and in a timely manner. As well, I will always be available to assist you in any way that I can. Email is the best way to reach me. I am always glad to meet with you during office hours or by appointment.

Required texts:

A History of Modern Britain: 1714 to the Present by Ellis Wasson
ISBN 978-1-4051-3936-6

A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft
Revised edition, edited and with an introduction by Miriam Brody
ISBN 9780141441252

Mary Barton: A Tale of Manchester Life by Elizabeth Gaskell
Edited and with an introduction by MacDonald Daly
ISBN 9780140434644

Murder Must Advertise by Dorothy Sayers
ISBN 0-06-104355-9

Brief additional readings from significant works of scholarship in modern British history will be scanned and placed on Blackboard. These may include selections from:

Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England, ed.
Douglas Hay
Linda Colley, *Britons: The Forging of the Nation*
John Tosh, *Masculinity in Victorian Britain*
FML Thompson, "Social Control in Victorian Britain" *Economic History Review*
34 No. 2 (May 1981), 189-208
Karen M. Morin, "Peak Practices: Englishwomen's 'Heroic' Adventures in the
Nineteenth-Century American West" *Annals of the Association of American
Geographers* 89 no. 3 (1999), 489-514.

The syllabus schedule and/or assignments may be altered at any time, according to my discretion, and with due notice to students.

Attendance/Participation: In-class discussion is a major component of this course. Regular, punctual class attendance is absolutely necessary. Students who miss multiple classes will not be able to contribute substantively to class discussion. Be advised that students who do not participate in discussion, or who fail to contribute substantively to discussion, will lose participation points (e.g., "I agree with what Jack said," is not a substantive contribution.) Please be aware that the participation section of your grade is based on my observation, throughout the semester, of your attendance, contribution to discussion, and overall engagement in the class. Reading quizzes may be given over assigned texts; these points also go towards the participation grade. Habitual talking or cell phone disruption/texting may result in loss of participation points.

Grading/Exams: Grades are reflective of your ability to master the material presented in lecture, discussion, and assigned readings. We will have two examinations, which will include both ID and essay questions.

Assignments:

Primary source analysis papers: Students will write a response/analysis paper based on their choice of one of the three primary source texts assigned, choosing from *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, *Mary Barton*, and *Murder Must Advertise*. Each paper will be 1200 words in length.

Primary source presentation and discussion: In assigned small groups, students will make a short introductory presentation, and plan and lead class discussion over one of the class readings.

Book review: Students will write one critical book review of a monograph of their choice on a topic in modern British history. The monograph must be at least 100 pages long, and must be published by an academic press, with copyright date *no earlier than 1985*. Book reviews should be approximately 1000 words.

Breakdown of grading, for 1000 total points:

100 points course participation (primarily determined by quality and frequency of contribution to discussion in class)

150 points book review

200 points response paper (choose one of three assigned papers)

150 points presentation/discussion

400 points exams (200 Midterm Exam, 200 Final Exam)

Final grades for the course will be based on the percentage of points earned out of total possible points.

Grade scale:

A = 100-90 B = 89-80 C = 79-70 D = 69-60 F = 59 and below

No extra credit is offered in this course.

Course Policies:

Make-ups and late work: Tests may be made up for documented excused absences. **Late assignments/projects will receive a 10-point deduction per school day for each day they are late.** Assignments turned in on the due date, but after the class period, will be considered one day late. Papers turned in the day after the due date will be considered two days late, and so on. *No assignments will be accepted more than two weeks after the due date*, except under documented circumstances or at the professor's discretion.

Academic Integrity: Presenting someone else's work as your own, whether intentionally or not, is plagiarism. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Intentional or unintentional failure to give credit to sources used in a work in an attempt to present the work as one's own.

Submitting for credit in whole or in part the work of others.

Submission of paper(s) or project(s) obtained from any source, such as a research service or a club paper file, as one's own.
Plagiarism will result in a zero on the assignment and/or an F in the course. See the full university policy on plagiarism at <http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/provost>).

Students with disabilities should provide proper documentation through Student Disability Services. SDS assists students with disabilities in obtaining appropriate academic accommodations.

A significant portion of course time will be spent in discussion. Always, but particularly in discussion context, students are expected to conduct themselves with courtesy and sensitivity towards other students, the professor, and the course material.

Schedule of Topics/Assignments:

Week 1: Introduction to British History

Tuesday 17 January – Social, political, and religious structures of early modern Britain

Thursday 19 January – Britain's Glorious Revolution and the making of Modern Britain

Read: Wasson chapter 0 (www.wiley.com/go/wasson) and Wasson, xiv-xviii, 5-9

Week 2: Rise of the State

Tuesday 24 January – War, Money, and the Creation of the State

Thursday 26 January – Walpole and Collective Responsibility

Read: Wasson chapter 1 (9-36)

Week 3: Eighteenth-century Society

Tuesday 31 January – Enlightenment and religious enthusiasm

Thursday 2 February – law and the social orders; discuss reading from *Albion's Fatal Tree*

Read: Wasson chapter 2; *Albion's Fatal Tree* selection

Week 4: Conflict and Rivalry

Tuesday 7 February – Britain vs. France: The Impact of the Seven Years War

Thursday 9 February – Loss of the American Colonies

Read: Wasson chapter 3 to page 77; Wollstonecraft, her introduction and chapters I, II, and V

Week 5: The British Response to the French Revolution

Tuesday 14 February – French Revolution and British Reaction

Thursday 16 February – discuss Wollstonecraft

Read: Wasson chapter 3, page 77-end; Wollstonecraft, chapters X through conclusion

Wollstonecraft paper due Thursday 16 February

Week 6: Forging the British Nation

Tuesday 21 February – the construction of national and religious identities in Britain

Thursday 23 February – discussion of Colley, *Britons*

Read: Wasson chapter 4; selection from Colley, *Britons*

Week 7: Industrialization

Tuesday 28 February – Industrialization and social change

Thursday 1 March – discuss *Mary Barton*, part one

Read: Wasson chapter 5; *Mary Barton*, part one

Week 8: Political Reform

Tuesday 6 March– finish *Mary Barton* discussion; The Reform Act of 1832

Thursday 8 March – MIDTERM EXAM

Read: *Mary Barton*, part two

Mary Barton paper due Thursday 8 March

SPRING BREAK

Week 9: Victorian Politics and Religion

Tuesday 20 March – British missions and the abolition of slavery

Thursday 22 March – Gladstone, Disraeli, and 1867

Read: Wasson chapter 6

Week 10: Victorian Culture

Tuesday 27 March – masculinity and femininity in Victorian Britain; discuss Tosh

Thursday 29 March – challenges to Victorian belief

Read: Wasson chapter 7; selection from John Tosh

Book review due Thursday 29 March

Week 11: Imperial and Domestic Exclusions

Tuesday 3 April – High Imperialism and Jingoism in Britain

Thursday 5 April – poverty, health, and gender at the turn of the century; discuss Ross

Read: selection from Ellen Ross, *Motherhood in Outcast London*

Week 12: The Great War and Rise of Consumer Culture between the Wars

Tuesday 10 April – Britain in WWI

Thursday 12 April – discuss *Murder Must Advertise*

Read: Wasson chapter 8; *Murder Must Advertise*

Week 13: The “People’s War” and Its Consequences

Tuesday 17 April – Britain in WWII

Thursday 19 April – finish discussing *Murder Must Advertise*

Read: Wasson chapter 9; *Murder Must Advertise*

***Murder Must Advertise* paper due Thursday 19 April**

Week 14: Decolonization and British Culture

Tuesday 24 April – End of empire

Thursday 26 April – Creation of the Welfare State

Read: Wasson chapter 10

Week 15: Developments in Recent British history

Tuesday 1 May– Margaret Thatcher and her legacy (screening of *The Iron Lady*)

Thursday 3 May – Britain and EU; the Anglo-American “special relationship”

Read: Wasson chapter 11

Final Exam: Monday 7 May, 1:30-3:30pm. Please note that the final exam date and time are determined by the university registrar. Final exams may not be taken at another time unless approved by the registrar’s office.