

HISTORY 325: GREAT BRITAIN SINCE 1760

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11.30am-12.20pm, Cuneo Hall room 203

Professor Aidan Forth, Crown Center 546, afort@luc.edu

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 3.45-4.45, Friday 12.30-1.30



The British Isles are a wet and chilly archipelago in the forbidding waters of the North Sea. Not much larger than the state of Illinois, Britain existed at the outer fringes of civilization for much of recorded history. Yet Britain was a central actor in the social, economic, political and cultural transformations of the modern world. By the nineteenth century, it projected unparalleled economic and political might. This course asks why British history matters. What was Britain's contribution to world history? Through lectures, readings, and class discussions, upper-division undergraduates examine the main themes of British history, with a focus on the modern period. Following a brief review of the social, political and cultural inheritance of the 16th and 17th centuries, we examine the path to democratic politics and liberal modernity. After analyzing the structure of British politics and society in the "old regime," we turn to the great social and economic transformations of the industrial revolution, the politics of class consciousness, and the electoral reforms of the Victorian era. At the same time, we consider the loss of the American colonies, and the haphazard emergence of Britain as a global imperial power. We examine the extent to which the colonial encounter impacted British culture and society, and the repercussions of British economic and military might on the rest of the world. The course then shifts to a consideration of mass culture, the organization of democratic politics, and the advent of modern political parties and state institutions. Moving to the twentieth century, we discuss the impact of the world wars, the transition from a warfare to welfare state, and the politics of decline.

By the end of the course, students will demonstrate an understanding of the key themes in British history, and assess Britain's place in a global and European context. In particular, students will develop an appreciation for the dynamics of coercion and consent, violence and humanitarianism, and expansion and decline that animate the British past. More generally, students will show an understanding of historical

methods, the interpretation of evidence, and an appreciation for competing historiographical understandings of the past.

READINGS

The following books should be purchased online or at the bookstore:

Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging a Nation: 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).
E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963).
Rudyard Kipling, *The Man who would be King: Selected Stories* (Penguin Classics, 2011).
Rebecca West, *Return of the Soldier* (Modern Library Classics, 2004).
Peter Stansky, *The First Day of the Blitz: September 7, 1940* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

All other readings will be available online or in an electronic Course Reader posted on Sakai.

There is no assigned textbook. Students looking for additional reference information can consult James Vernon, *Modern Britain, 1750 to present* (Cambridge University Press, 2017) or Susan Kingsley Smith, *A New History of Britain since 1688* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

EXPECTATIONS

A **primary responsibility** of students is to **listen attentively to lectures, complete the weekly readings** and contribute **their thoughtful, reflective opinions** in class discussions. Students should allocate enough time to complete the required reading, **approximately 50-150 pages per week**. The readings can be interpreted in a variety of ways and students should formulate some initial positions and questions to offer in class discussion. Students are **warmly encouraged to ask questions during lectures** and are also welcome to attend office hours to further discuss issues raised in class.

Unexcused absences will have a detrimental impact on your attendance and participation grade. Because exams are based heavily on lecture material, missed classes will also impact your ability to perform well. If you have an illness, family emergency, or other event that prevents you from coming to class, you must **keep the professor informed with as much advanced warning as possible**. It is up to you to find ways to make up the missed material, though students are encouraged to come to office hours to discuss missed content with the professor. **Absences from quizzes are especially serious, and will require documentation**, such as a note from your doctor. An email the night before without any corroborating proof will not be enough.

Students with disabilities should contact the office of Services for Students with Disabilities in the Sullivan Center to work out any special learning requirements: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>.

All cellphones, smartphones, tablets, and any other electronic devices should be turned off during class. The use of laptop computers in this class is a privilege, which may be revoked at any time. Laptops may be used for taking notes only. Facebook, email, instagram, twitter—or whatever you kids do these days! ;-)—are expressly forbidden; apart from diverting your own attention, such activity distracts your fellow classmates. **Anyone caught abusing his or her laptop privileges will be asked to leave the class, and will no longer be permitted to bring a computer to class.**

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Primary Source Analysis 1 due October 6	10%
Primary Source Analysis 2 due November 20	15%
Research paper due December 11	30%
Pop quizzes	20%
Participation	10%
Forum posts	15%
TOTAL	100%

Students will complete **all assigned readings, weekly forum posts, two primary source analyses, and a longer research paper.**

In the **first primary source analysis** (1000 words) you will choose a *primary source* we read in class and assess its content and historical context. Why was it written? What were the goals of the author, and how was the document likely to be read and received? For the **second primary source analysis** (1000 words) you will do the same, except this time you will find the source yourself using the resources available at Cudahy Library. One of the great advantages of modern British history is there is a vast array of sources readily available—and they are all in English!

For the **research paper**, you will formulate a research question based on a topic that interests you. You will then write a 2000-word essay based on a minimum of **three primary sources** and **two secondary sources**. Students should bring ideas to the instructor by **no later than October 30th**. Further details will follow in class.

There will also be **pop quizzes** to assess your grasp of basic facts and fundamental principles. These will be short, unannounced open-book quizzes that reward students who attend every class and who take careful notes. Lecture material and assigned readings will form the basis of the questions asked.

Finally, **class participation** is a vital component of your grade. Making thoughtful comments and asking imaginative questions that contribute to an ongoing discussion are a necessary part of the learning experience. **Every week, students will pose a question or comment on the Sakai Discussion Forum** that deals with a fundamental issue raised by weekly readings and/or lecture material. These must be thoughtful contributions that provide evidence the student has read and thought carefully about the readings. We will address these questions in class discussion. **Failure to contribute to the forum by 10am on the day we discuss readings will have a negative impact on your grade.**

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: WHY BRITAIN?

August 28	Welcome!
August 30	When, Where, What, Who?
September 1	Why?

WEEK 2: REVOLUTION

September 4	NO CLASS Labor Day
September 6	Reformation, Religious War and Revolution
September 8	Discussion

Reading: Putney Debates (1647); *Bill of Rights* (1689); John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (1689); selection; G.M. Trevelyan, "Introduction" to *The English Revolution 1688-1689* (Oxford University Press, 1938), pp. 3-10.

WEEK 3: NATIONALISM

September 11	The Fiscal Military State
September 13	Nationalism and Napoleon
September 15	Discussion

Reading: Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging a Nation: 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), Introduction, chapters 1, 7-8, conclusion; Edmund Burke, *Reflection on the Revolution in France* (1792), selection.

WEEK 4: CONQUEST

September 18	Atlantic Empire
September 20	The Pivot East
September 22	Discussion

Reading: Maya Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire: Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East: 1750-1850* (Vintage Books, 2005), chapter 2; Z.B. Howell, *A Genuine Narrative of the Deplorable Deaths of the English Gentlemen and others who were suffocated in the Black Hole* (London, 1758), 1-33; Thomas B. Macaulay, "Essay on Lord Clive" (1840), pp. 42-6; Edmund Burke "At the Trial of Warren Hastings" (1788).

WEEK 5: HUMANITY

September 25	Imperialism and Morality
September 27	Slave Abolition
September 29	Discussion

Reading: Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789), chapter 2, 5; Thomas Clarkson, *An Essay on Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* (London, 1786), part III.

WEEK 6: INDUSTRY

October 2	The Industrial Revolution
October 4	Industrial Society and Culture
October 6	Social Dislocation PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS #1 DUE

Reading: Roy Porter, "The Enlightenment in England," in Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich, eds., *The Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 1-18. **Start reading E.P. Thompson.**

WEEK 7: SOCIETY

October 9	NO CLASS Mid-Semester Break
October 11	Discussion
October 13	Class Politics

Reading: Frederick Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (Stanford University Press, 1968), selection; E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Press, 1966), pp. 9-13, 189-212, 269-349.

WEEK 8: CLASS

October 16	Gender, Race and Class
October 18	Discussion
October 20	NO CLASS Dr. Forth is at a conference

Reading: E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Press, 1966), pp. 350-400, 711-13, 807-32; Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (University of California Press, 1995), pp. 1-9, 233-47, 265-71.

WEEK 9: DEMOCRACY

October 23	Great Reform Act
October 25	Redefining the Political Nation
October 27	Discussion

Reading: W.N. Molesworth, *The History of the Reform Bill of 1832* (Chapman and Hall, 1865), pp. 1-4; James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A Study in English political culture, c. 1815-1867* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), 15-47, 105-160.

WEEK 10: REFORM

October 30	Social Reform DEADLINE TO DISCUSS RESEARCH PAPER
November 1	Public Spheres and Separate Spheres
November 3	Discussion

Reading: Jeremy Bentham, "Panopticon, or the Inspection House" (1787); Michel Foucault, "Panopticism," in *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of the Prison* (Vintage Books, 1977), pp. 195-228; Chris Otter, "Making Liberalism Durable: Vision and Civility in the Late Victorian City," *Social History*, 27:1, 2002, pp. 1-15; Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 41-80; Emmeline Pankhurst, "Speech from the Dock" (1908); Millicent Fawcett, *Women's Suffrage: A Short History of a Great Movement* (1912), selection.

WEEK 11: EMPIRE

November 6	The Crown Jewel
November 8	Scramble for Africa
November 10	Discussion

Reading: Rudyard Kipling, *The Man who would be King* (1888), “Gungadin” (1890), and “White Man’s Burden” (1899); John Mackenzie, “Empire and Metropolitan Cultures,” in Andrew Porter, ed., *Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 270-93; Maya Jasanoff, “With Conrad on the Congo River,” *New York Times*, August 18, 2017, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/18/opinion/joseph-conrad-congo-river.html?mcubz=3& r=0>; Karen Attiah, “The New York Times shows how to fail miserably while writing about Africa,” *Washington Post*, August 24, 2017, available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2017/08/24/the-new-york-times-shows-how-to-fail-miserably-while-covering-africa/?tid=sm_fb&utm_term=.35dc6f1c7d7d#comments

WEEK 12: WAR

November 13	WWI: Origins
November 15	WWI: Outcomes
November 17	Discussion

Reading: Rebecca West, *The Return of the Soldier* (1918); Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford University Press, 1975) pp. 3-35.

WEEK 13: RECOVERY

November 20	Interwar Britain PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS #2 DUE
November 22	NO CLASS Thanksgiving
November 24	NO CLASS Thanksgiving

Reading: Start reading Peter Stansky, *The First Day of the Blitz: September 7, 1940* (Yale University Press, 2007).

WEEK 14: WELFARE

November 27	The People’s War
November 29	The People’s Victory?
December 1	Discussion

Reading: Peter Stansky, *The First Day of the Blitz: September 7, 1940* (Yale University Press, 2007).

WEEK 15: DECLINE

December 4	Loss of Empire
December 6	Brexit
December 8	Discussion

Reading: George Orwell, “Shooting an Elephant” (1936); Enoch Powell, “Rivers of Blood” (1968); Salmon Rushdie, “The New Empire Within Britain” (1982); Hanif Kureishi, “My son the fanatic” (1994).

RESEARCH PAPERS DUE DECEMBER 11, 1:00p.m.

(The instructor reserves the right to change any aspect of this syllabus at any time.)