



## **MODERN BRITAIN**



HIST 322-001  
Spring 2016  
TR 12:00-1:15 pm  
Planetary 224  
Office hours: R 2-3 pm  
and by appt.

Dina M. Copelman  
RB 357 B  
703-993-1250 (office)

[dcopelma@gmu.edu](mailto:dcopelma@gmu.edu)

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines Britain from the later 18th Century to the Interwar period in the 20th Century. We will explore how Britain's "uniqueness" in fact laid the foundations for many fundamental aspects of Western modernity. Britain is often considered the home of many modern firsts: political upheavals that ushered in a continuous parliamentary system; the first nation to industrialize; the birthplace of bourgeois Victorian culture; the place where the modern city first shocked the world and transformed the land; the hub of an Empire that stretched round the globe. Not all firsts could be presented as triumphal: Britain also, arguably, first experienced the modern strains of an aging industrial infrastructure; competition and the loss of its status as the major global superpower; disruptive divisions rooted in class, gender, regional and ethnic differences; and disillusion with the fruits of progress. All of these processes were both specifically British and at the same time quintessentially modern.

This course will examine the issues listed above while always approaching history from a range of perspectives—Britain's geo-political role will inform our work, but so will the social histories of the family, leisure and sexuality; we will examine changing economic structures and conditions as well as the intellectual and political currents that sought to give meaning to a changing world; social conflict and political movements and the powerful forces resisting change.

### **CLASS RESOURCES AND READINGS**

The following books have been ordered for the class:

*Britain Since 1688: a Nation in the World*, Stephanie Barczewski, John Eglin, Stephen Heathorn, Michael Silvestri and Michelle Tusan  
*The Odd Women*, George Gissing

Most weeks have a folder in Blackboard where relevant documents and articles for that week will be available. In general, I will not go over the textbook extensively in class, though I will be happy to answer questions about it. Class discussions will focus on documents, assigned articles and other readings, but to make sense of those you will have to be up to date with *Britain Since 1688*. Weekly readings average about 50-80 pages, but there are some weeks when we will cover longer readings (such as the *The Odd Women*).

I will place other class materials on Blackboard as well, such as class handouts about assignments, links to useful reference works, etc.; over the course of the semester I may add some materials to Blackboard that are not currently listed on this syllabus. In general, please note that I may add, remove or change aspects of the course. It is my responsibility to provide you this information in a timely manner and I will update you both in class and electronically about such changes. It is your responsibility to keep up with these changes and other class news.

**CHECK EMAIL AND BLACKBOARD OFTEN!**

## **GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS**

### **NOTE THAT ASSIGNMENT DATES MAY CHANGE DUE TO WEATHER AND OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.**

All assignments will be described and discussed in class and I will also provide handouts as necessary. Please pay attention to the different forms and deadlines for submission. All papers have to be submitted online to Blackboard; I may also ask you to submit hard copies of these assignments.

**Please keep copies of the assignments you submit and of those I return to you after grading.**

**Late assignments will be graded down. Extensions granted only under extraordinary circumstances if requested before (except in the case of a *documented* medical or family emergency). You may be asked to provide written documentation to back up your request for an extension.**

Class participation	15%	Based on preparation for and engagement with class discussions. Participation also covers group work. All students will be assigned to a group and you will begin to work with your group by the third week of class. Groups will have multiple purposes: they will provide you with a set of students who can help you keep up with the class; they will be used for in-class discussion purposes; and group will be given some independent assignments. For instance, a group may be asked to prepare a definition of a special term, a list of facts about a major event or the main contribution of a group or person. This will be explained more extensively in class.
3 in class 30 minute identification/definition exams	15% (5% each)	You will have to pick 4-6 terms from a list of at least 10-12. A longer list of terms will be available the class before the exam.  Exams are tentatively scheduled for weeks 4, 9 and 14 but this could change. You will have one week's notice of the exact date.
Due February 21 and April 10 11:59 pm	40% (20% each)	You will write two 5-6 page essays, scheduled for February 21 and April 10. The first will analyze the Cobbett and Engels readings; the second will be based on <i>The Odd Women</i> . In both cases, you will have to incorporate other class readings and themes.
Take Home Final Due by 11:59 pm	30%	You will choose one or two questions out of 3 or 4 to write a total of 6-8 page essay. The questions will ask you to examine particular issues or developments over the course of the century.

## **WEEKLY SCHDEULE**

By Sunday evening I will usually send an email highlighting key themes, class news and reminders pertinent to the upcoming week. It is your responsibility to be sure you are getting my emails and to stay on top of them. I expect you to have read them in advance of class. In general, **you need to check gmu email regularly.**

The topics listed below are general. Specific issues and events will overflow from one class to the next. As we progress, I will note when and how you need to adjust your preparation if we are not in sync with the syllabus.

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
1	January 19 & 21	Introduction Syllabus Vocabulary	<i>Britain Since 1688</i> (hereafter B1688) Chapters 1 & 2
2	January 28 & 30	Syllabus Review; Politics and Society	B1688 Chapters 3 & 4 John Brewer, <i>Theater and Counter-Theater in Georgian Politics: The Mock Elections at Garrat</i> in <b>Blackboard Week 2 folder (BB Week 2)</b> John Hogarth, <i>Rake's Progress</i> <a href="http://www.soane.org/collections-research/key-stories/rakes-progress">http://www.soane.org/collections-research/key-stories/rakes-progress</a>
3	February 2 & 4	Slavery and Revolutions: Britain and the World	Olaudah Equiano, <i>The Life of Olaudah Equiano</i> <b>BB Week 3</b> Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine and Mary Wollstonecraft on the French Revolution <b>BB Week 3</b>

4	February 9 & 11	Changing Landscapes	William Cobbett, <i>Rural Rides</i> <b>BB Week 4</b> <b>First in-class exam</b>
5	February 16 & 18	Industrialization and Cities	B 1688 Chapter 5 Friedrich Engels, <i>Condition of the Working Class in England</i> <b>BB Week 5</b> Documents <b>BB Week 5</b>
→→	<b>Sunday February 21</b>	<b>Paper Due 11:59 pm on BB</b>	<b>Cobbett and Engels paper due in BB</b>
6	February 23 & 25	Class and gender	B 1688 Chapter 6 Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, <i>Family Fortunes</i> <b>BB Week 6</b>
7	March 1 & 3	Catching up	
8	March 8 & 10	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASSES
9	March 15 & 17	Victorians	<i>Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management</i> <b>BB Week 9</b> Samuel Smiles, <i>Self Help</i> <b>BB Week 9</b> Matthew Arnold, <i>Culture and Anarchy</i> <b>BB Week 9</b> <b>Second in-class exam</b>
10	March 22 & 24	The Politics of a Global Power	B 1688 Chapter 7 Other readings TBA
11	March 29 & 31	Imperialism	John Hobson, <i>Imperialism</i> Chapter VIII <a href="https://books.google.com/books?id=bl0k_ZjcWZ8C&amp;dq=hobson+imperialism&amp;pg=PP1&amp;ots=QdtVVIFame&amp;sig=eI8cGZvyvVt9NWideOqIDGIFvUs&amp;hl=en&amp;sa=X&amp;oi=book_result&amp;ct=result#v=onepage&amp;q=hobson%20imperialism&amp;f=false">https://books.google.com/books?id=bl0k_ZjcWZ8C&amp;dq=hobson+imperialism&amp;pg=PP1&amp;ots=QdtVVIFame&amp;sig=eI8cGZvyvVt9NWideOqIDGIFvUs&amp;hl=en&amp;sa=X&amp;oi=book_result&amp;ct=result#v=onepage&amp;q=hobson%20imperialism&amp;f=false</a> PJ Cain & AG Hopkins, "Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Expansion" <b>BB Week 11</b>
12	April 5 & 7	Urban Challenges New Women I	George Gissing, <i>The Odd Women</i>
→→	<b>Sunday April 10</b>	<b>Paper Due 11:59 pm on BB</b>	<b>Placing <i>Odd Women</i> in context</b>
13	April 12 & 14	Edwardian Beginnings and Endings	B 1688 Chapter 8 George Dangerfield, <i>Strange Death of Liberal England</i> <a href="http://quod.lib.umich.edu/mutex/gmu.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb02030">http://quod.lib.umich.edu/mutex/gmu.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb02030</a>
14	April 19 & 21	World War I	B 1688 Chapter 9 Paul Fussell, <i>The Great War and Modern Memory</i> <b>BB Week 14</b> War Poets <b>BB Week 14</b> <b>Third in-class exam</b>
15	April 26 & 28	The Products of Modernity	B 1688 Chapter 9 Judith Walkowitz, <i>Nights Out</i> <b>BB Week 15</b> George Orwell, <i>Road to Wigan Pier</i> <b>BB Week 15</b>
	May 3	Make Up Class	Keep day available incase we have to make up a class
→→	<b>May 9</b>	<b>Final Essay due 11:59 pm on BB</b>	

### **ADD/DROP DEADLINES**

Last day to add (full-semester course): Tuesday, January 26, 2016

Last day to drop without tuition liability (full-semester course): January 26, 2016

Final Drop Deadline, 67% tuition liability (full semester course): Friday, February 19, 2016

### **WRITING CENTER**

The University Writing Center offers free one-on-one consultations with undergraduate and graduate students from any discipline, working on any project, at any stage of the writing process. Tutors can help you understand an assignment, develop ideas, organize your paper, incorporate sources, revise effectively, and learn to proofread and edit. You may schedule a 45-minute appointment by going to [writingcenter.gmu.edu](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu), registering online, and linking to the online schedule. If you prefer to register or make an appointment in person, you may stop by the main location in Robinson A 114 during its hours of operation. You may obtain help for all your papers, including the take-home final.

## **LEARNING ACCOMODATIONS**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodation, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

## **HONOR CODE**

Submit work under your own name, and remember that plagiarism is a violation of the GMU Honor Code. The Honor Code states, "Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." Plagiarism means using words, ideas, opinions, or factual information from another person or source without giving due credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles consulted is not sufficient. Nor does rearrangement of another person's phrasing (paraphrase) release one from the obligation to document one's sources. Plagiarism is a form of fraudulently claiming someone else's work as your own, and as such is the equivalent of cheating on an exam. **A serious academic offense, plagiarism is grounds for failing at least the assignment, if not the whole course.** If you are unclear about what you should document, consult with me. When in doubt, document. (*Adapted from the English Department Statement on Plagiarism*). Honor Code can be found online at <http://honorcode.gmu.edu>

## **RULES OF THE ROAD**

**(Nothing below reflects feelings about this class since it was all written before I stepped into class. I am being tough here to get this out of the way and then I can show you how easygoing I really am.)**

This course relies on preparation and encourages discussion. If you are not in class you will not learn as much and cannot take part in discussion. If you are not prepared you will not be able to follow the material. If you are not in class, not prepared and cannot discuss, the course fails (and so might you). It's that simple. More than two "unexcused" absences (which equals one week of work) will bring your grade down. (An "excused" absence is: illness, family and other emergencies that can be documented; VERY important commitments that cannot be changed that I am notified of in advance, etc.). If you are granted an excused absence you still have to keep up with the work and assignments; you may also be asked to submit additional or different work. It is your responsibility to find out about any work you may have missed. It is your responsibility to keep track of any changes relevant to the class—readings, assignments, class meetings etc. Late assignments will be marked down (unless you have been granted an extension) and also returned late. If you know **in advance** that you will have trouble with a deadline you need to tell me about that at least a week ahead of time.

Come on time and leave at the end of class. **Sit clustered together (in other words, I don't like to see seating gaps) and once you have been assigned to a group sit near your group.** The classroom is not a place to lie down or nap; having your head on the desk indicates you are not well enough to come to class and you require medical assistance--I will ask you to go to campus medical services. While participation is essential, that means sharing things related to what we are covering with the class as a whole (or your group during group time). Private conversations, frequent unrelated comments, disrupting other people's comments—all create a problematic learning environment and it is my job to keep things on track.

A sign in sheet will be circulated at the beginning of each class. **Turn off cell phones and put them away.** If for some reason you need to be reached during class time, put your phone on "vibrate." (If I forget to do this two or more times, I will owe you a snack.) Being open to new technology, I will start by allowing the use of laptops and tablets to take notes and/or access readings (Kindles and such are ok for readings as well; cell phones are not). You will have to turn off the internet function while you are in class—**CLASS IS NOT THE PLACE TO SURF THE WEB, OR DO ANYTHING UNCONNECTED WITH THE IMMEDIATE WORK BEING DONE IN CLASS.** As I age (which happens daily) it takes longer to remember names. Therefore, you will make a legible sign with your name that you will use for the first half of the course. You may bring a covered drink to class but—unless otherwise agreed upon—no eating in class.

Best way to contact me is by email: [dcopelma@gmu.edu](mailto:dcopelma@gmu.edu). I try to respond within 24 hours. My office hours are Thursdays 2-3 pm. It's best to set a time in advance or at least to call (571-239-1713) before coming—sometimes I have to cancel or change my hours. If office hours don't work, we can set up an appointment for a better time.

**I will discuss these guidelines with you and I am open to suggestions. The goal is to have a productive and enjoyable class!**