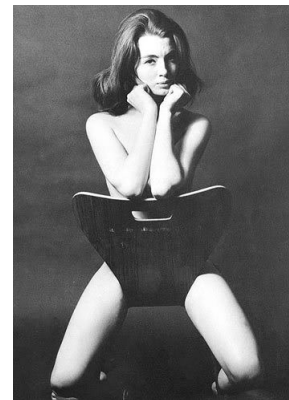


GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
Department of History & Art History

Britain, 1900-1970: Downton Abbey to the Beatles
Spring 2024

Course	Building/Hall	Room	Day	Time
HIST 388-003	Innovation	330	Monday/Wednesday	Noon-1.15 p.m.



INSTRUCTOR:
OFFICE:
OFFICE HOURS:
TELEPHONE:
E-MAIL:

Dr Kevin Matthews
Horizon Hall, Room 3200
by appointment; in person or via Zoom
703.993.1250 (main department number)
cmatthe2@gmu.edu

REQUIRED TEXT & MATERIALS:

1. Clarke, Peter. *Hope and Glory: Britain, 1900-2000*
2. Norman, Philip. *Shout: The Beatles in their Generation*
3. War Department, *Instructions for American Servicemen in Britain, 1942*

As well as the books mentioned above, all students who are taking this course for credit, are required to purchase two Scantron cards Form No. 882-E.

In addition, the course instructor will supply students with required readings via the internet or Blackboard in addition to the required texts. These readings are listed in the calendar at the end of this syllabus. By this same method, students will also receive material - maps, cartoons, and other illustrations - to enhance the student's understanding (and, it is hoped, enjoyment) of the topics covered in this course.

RECOMMEND TEXTS: (You are not required to obtain these books; they are listed here as additional sources that you may wish to be aware of:)

1. Addison, Paul. *The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War*
2. Graves, Robert and Alan Hodge. *The Long Weekend: A Social History of Great Britain, 1918-1939*
3. Marr, Andrew. *A History of Modern Britain*
4. Morgan, Kenneth. *The People's Peace: British History, 1945-1989*
5. Rhodes James, Robert. *The British Revolution: 1880-1939*
6. Sandbrook, Dominic. *Never Had It So Good*
7. Strunk, William and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

In 1900, Great Britain was the world's leading political, economic, and imperial power. By 1970 the British people found themselves in an entirely different world. This course looks at these tumultuous years to examine the impact of the two world wars, the "long weekend" of the 1920s and 30s, and the decline of the world's largest empire — as well as the origins of the welfare state, the creation of the Anglo-American "special relationship", and Britain's rise as a cultural power especially in popular music. From "Rule, Britannia" to "Swinging London", students will explore a series of multidimensional changes that occurred within a single person's lifetime and that have few parallels found elsewhere.

TEACHING TECHNIQUES, ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION, and EXAMINATIONS:

Following a "semi-Socratic" method of teaching, this course is based on lectures, classroom discussions, and readings. If you are prepared, your contributions to these discussions will create a more lively, interesting experience for everyone. On a more prosaic level, your participation in class will benefit your final grade. Students who regularly participate will benefit if their grades are borderline between a plus or minus; for example, a C might become a C+, or a B+ might become an A-.

Regarding the exams: A **study guide** will be supplied prior to both of the tests. The final exam is **not cumulative**. Students who are permitted to take exams at the **Testing Center** must obtain the paperwork & send it to me immediately. Once approved you will be given the extra time allotted to take the exams.

You are **personally responsible** for knowing the time and date of all exams and other assignments. Check your GMU E-mail daily. You are **required** to take exams on the date set by the instructor; students are not allowed to take exams at a time of their choosing. If you fail to show up for an exam without a **documented excuse** (usually medical in nature), you will **not** be **allowed** to take a make-up exam. You will, instead, be given a zero grade without appeal. This applies, in particular, to the final exam; the dates for exams are given in the syllabus calendar. (**Note:** the date for the mid-term exam is tentative.)

Make-up exams will be given at a mutually convenient time for the instructor and student. It is up to the student to resolve the matter of make-up work with the instructor — not the other way around. In particular, see the syllabus calendar regarding the **final exam**.

ATTENDANCE: IF YOU DON'T SHOW / YOUR GRADE WILL BE LOW

Class attendance is mandatory. You are responsible for all material and all announcements presented at each session. You will be tested on material covered in class that will be found in the assigned readings - and vice versa. If a student **must** miss a class, (s)he should arrange to obtain class notes from a fellow student. Lecture notes **will not - under any circumstances - be provided** by the instructor.

A **great amount of reading is required** for this course and it is important that students stay ahead of the readings to be prepared for classroom discussions. **Failure to attend class on a regular basis** makes it extremely difficult to keep abreast of the course; the result is a lower or even a failing grade for the course. **Specifically**, the final course grades for students who fail to attend class on a **regular basis** (as determined by the instructor) will **drop an entire letter grade** — without exception. This is beyond the 10 percent part of your grade covered by “classroom participation/attendance and quizzes”. Valid excuses for missed lectures (again, usually medical in nature) must be in **writing**.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Classroom decorum - Students are required to **show up for class on time** and, once in class, to **remain for the entire session**, except in case of emergency. Arriving late or leaving in the middle of a lecture is **disruptive and disrespectful** to your fellow students. Students who leave in the middle of a session can expect to be called out to explain why they are disrupting class in this manner. Those who violate these rules can expect to receive a lower course grade.

Use of lap-top computers & audio-recorders – **All** lap-top computers & any other such devices (e.g., Tablets) are **banned** from these sessions. You should use paper & pen or pencil for taking lecture notes. If you are unable to do so because of a medical issue, you **must provide** documentation, usually in the form of a **doctor's letter**, to be exempted from this ban. You may record lectures if you wish but only after consulting with me, first.

Cell phones are to be **turned off** at the beginning of each class. Repeated failure to do so will adversely affect your course grade. Any attempt to use unauthorized devices during an examination will constitute grounds for failing the course. You are welcome to bring drinks to class. However, **eating** in class is **forbidden**. Put another way, **I don't lecture in your kitchen; don't eat in my classroom**.

Cheating and plagiarism - **Either offense will constitute grounds for failing the course**. The university has a code governing academic ethics. Any student who is caught cheating on a quiz or exam or who plagiarizes will have his or her case sent to the Dean's Office for adjudication.

Study groups — I strongly recommend that you form **study groups**. Students tell me that forming small groups has helped them immensely in this course. It also helps for sharing lecture notes.

E-mail – I am happy to answer your questions via E-mail. Because over 130 students are taking courses with me this semester, however, **I cannot — & will not —respond** unless you identify yourself in the **subject line** of each E-mail, beginning with the course number & section number. For example:

HIST 388/3 – YOUR LAST NAME, & the reason for your letter

GRADE SCALE:

Mid-term examination	25 percent
Research paper	30 percent
Final examination	35 percent
Classroom participation/attendance:	10 percent
Total:	<hr/> 100 percent

90-100 A - signifies **remarkable, outstanding** work showing complete mastery of the subject

A+	97	-	100
A	93	-	96.9
A-	90	-	92.9

80-89 B - signifies work that is **above the average** expectations for this course.

B+	87	-	89.9
B	82	-	86.9
B-	80	-	81.9

70-79 C - signifies work that meets **average** university standards.

C+	77	-	79.9
C	72	-	76.9
C-	70	-	71.9

60-69 D - signifies work that is far **below average** but which is passable.

59-below F - signifies failure.

I do not grade on a curve. Nor is it possible to offer extra credit work - for any reason. Students should instead devote their energies to the assignments laid out in this syllabus. If a student merits an “A”, that is the grade that he or she will receive. Nor do I distribute grades based a percentage basis, so that only a certain number of students can earn an “A”, a certain number a “B”, and so forth. If every student earns an “A”, that is the grade each student will receive. However, I again point out that “A” work as defined above is genuinely outstanding and shows complete mastery of the subject. While I hope that every student will strive to meet this standard, **it will not be easy to obtain such a grade.**

RESEARCH PAPER - “Land of hope and glory”?

Within the time-frame covered by this course, Britons experienced an upheaval unique in their history. At the dawn of the 20th century, it was still said without irony that “God is an Englishman”. By mid-century, it was becoming clear that, as the American Dean Acheson put it, “Great Britain has lost an Empire and has not yet found a role.” Yet, even as those words were spoken in the early 1960s, Britain was on the verge of becoming dominant in a very different way, as a social and cultural power, notably in pop art and music.

All students taking this course for credit are required to write a **10- to 12-page** analytical paper. The object of your paper is a critical examination of a person, event, or trend during the period covered by this course to show how your subject changed Britain. Or, you may wish to show how the subject of your paper influenced the rest of the world. You should understand what this paper is not. First, it is **not** to be a simple **narrative paper**. It will not be enough for you to summarize a series of events, followed by a concluding paragraph asserting your that subject was, say, significant at its time, but had no long-lasting impact — or, conversely, that your subject resonates to this day. Rather, your assignment is to **critically evaluate** your subject’s significance (short- or long-term) by using examples from your research to substantiate your verdict. As you will see from the list of suggested paper options below, you may investigate this question through the medium of biography.

As well as avoiding the trap of writing a purely narrative paper, you should also be aware that this is **not** an exercise in writing counterfactual history. Put another way, your paper should not be an example of “what if” history.

Your term paper must be typed, paginated, double-spaced, and **footnoted**; other citations - e.g., endnotes, MLA style, etc will **not be accepted**. Your paper also must include a **complete bibliography** of all sources cited or referred to in your paper. If you use alternative citations or fail to include a bibliography, your papers will be returned to you ungraded, and your subsequent grade for the assignment will be lowered by a full letter grade. A **guide** showing how footnotes and your bibliography should be presented will be issued shortly.

I understand that students will use the **internet** to research their papers. However, the use of internet sources alone is **insufficient** for these papers, and I strongly **discourage** an over-reliance on internet material. Unlike printed sources, internet material too often comes from questionable sources. Your paper should rely **mainly**, if not **exclusively**, on published books and articles. If you depend on internet sources that prove to be inaccurate, the grade for your paper will suffer accordingly. **Having said that, you are permitted to use academic articles obtained via reputable sites such as JSTOR, etc.**

Do **not** use “A-I” (**Artificial Intelligence**) to write this paper. To discourage this temptation, I reserve the right to ask students to supply notes, drafts, and other material they use to prepare this paper to demonstrate their authorship of the work.

Students may include prints, charts, etc, but these should **not** be used as a substitute for your text. If you include a chart, that takes up half a page, for instance, that half page will not count toward the 10-12 page requirement. Any graphics should be included **only** if they materially add to the case you are making.

Papers written for this course should be free of factual, spelling and grammatical errors. For this reason, I encourage students to purchase Strunk & White’s *Elements of Style*. This reliable, inexpensive guide will save you from numerous errors both now and in the future and is well worth keeping. Needless to say, it is the student’s responsibility to submit a correct, legible copy of this assignment.

This assignment gives students the opportunity to explore a subject from this period of British history that he or she finds particularly interesting. Some of these topics are listed below. However, this list is by no means complete and students are allowed — indeed, encouraged — to suggest alternatives. I **strongly encourage** you to set up a meeting with me to discuss a few ideas for a paper that you have prepared in advance. My experience is that it helps students to talk these over before going further.

Once you have selected a specific topic that you wish to investigate, making sure that it is neither too narrow nor too broad to be examined within 10-12 pages. Your proposal must then be submitted to me (both by E-mail **and** as a hard copy) as a one-paragraph memorandum **no later** than the **7th of February**, explaining your thesis. **Do not begin your research for the paper until your selection has been approved by the instructor.** A sample memorandum is given here:

{STUDENT'S NAME}
{STUDENT'S E-MAIL ADDRESS}
{COURSE TITLE} "HIST 388/002 Paper Proposal"
{DATE}

Leni Riefenstahl has created some of the most innovative and controversial films of our time. As a woman film maker in a male dominated profession, her chances of success in this field were slim. That changed when Adolf Hitler promoted her career. Young and in awe of the situation in which she found herself, Riefenstahl went on to create films such as *Triumph of the Will* (now banned in Germany) and *Day of Freedom - Our Armed Forces*. I wish to explore the turbulence of the time surrounding Riefenstahl's life and to answer the following questions: What role did Riefenstahl play in promoting the Nazi regime? Should she be viewed as evil, or should her work be considered from a purely artistic perspective?

Old world at sunset (1900-1914): The impact of the Boer War; Labour in Parliament; Joe Chamberlain & "tariff reform"; the "New Liberalism"; David Lloyd George & the "People's Budget"; radical feminism: the Pankhursts; Winston Churchill as a social reformer; the impact of Fabianism; "Ourselves Alone" - Arthur Griffith & the creation of Sinn Féin; the quest for Irish Home Rule; King's rebel - Sir Edward Carson; "None dared call it treason" - the Conservative Party's decision to back the Ulster Unionists; a peacetime premier - H.H. Asquith; "Triple Alliance" - the challenge of the trade unions; Huns on the shore: the press and the pre-war invasion scares; the July Crisis of 1914.

Armageddon (1914-1918): Mobilizing for war; Disaster at the Dardanelles": the British attack Gallipoli; women on the home front; attack from the air: the bombing of Britain; "Lions led by donkeys" - Britain's high command & war strategy; the impact of the Battle of the Somme; David Lloyd George - "the man who won the war"; the price of victory - Britain becomes a debtor nation; the royal family & the anti-German war hysteria; legacy of the war poets; the "coupon election" of 1918; women win the vote.

A world unhinged (1919-1922): The British at Versailles; John Maynard Keynes & the "lost peace"; strains in the Empire; "red scare" - the impact of Bolshevism on post-war Britain; "Troubles" - again - in Ireland; Michael Collins & the origins of modern, urban guerrilla warfare; partition - creating Northern Ireland; A "government of all the talents": the Lloyd George Coalition; "Black Friday" & the collapse of trade union solidarity; Lloyd George and the sale of honours; revolt at the Carlton Club.

Safety first (1922-1931): The "unknown prime minister" - Andrew Bonar Law; reparations & war debts; the first Labour government; Ramsay MacDonald's quest for a prosperous Europe; "Safety first" - Stanley Baldwin's rise to power; the strange tale of the "Zinoviev letter"; "Auntie" - the creation of the BBC; Churchill's "greatest mistake" - Britain's return to the gold standard; the General Strike of 1926; the legacy of the "Bloomsbury set".

A dishonest decade (1931-1939): Thwarting democracy: the 1931 “National Government”; imperial independence - the Statute of Westminster; Baldwin & the origins of British appeasement; “War of the Spanish Oppression” - Britain & Spain’s Civil War; the Jarrow Crusade; the rise of British fascism; for the woman he loved - the abdication crisis; John Maynard Keynes & Keynesianism; “Alone” - Winston Churchill battles appeasement; “Peace in our time”: Britain abandons Czechoslovakia, 1938.

Their finest hour (1939-1945): Reluctant war leader - Neville Chamberlain; fiasco in Norway; Tory rebels & the fall of the Chamberlain government; a roll of the dice - Churchill takes over as prime minister; “Sea Lion” - Hitler fails to invade Britain; the lion roars: Britain destroys the French fleet at Mers-el-Kebir, 1940; how important was the Battle of Britain; the “Blitz” & the British; mobilizing Britain’s women for war; Churchill as warlord; a lifeline - “Lend-Lease”; uneasy partners - the Anglo-American alliance with the Soviet Union; Beveridge lays the foundations of the welfare state; “Occupied” - the Yanks in Britain; summer of terror - the V1 & V2 attacks on British cities; the empire at war.

Labour in office (1945-1951): Giving Churchill the “order of the boot” - why Labour won the 1945 general election; an “economic Dunkirk” - Britain’s postwar economic position; Mr Keynes goes to Washington; building the “New Jerusalem” - creating the welfare state; Labour decides to “build the bomb”; “Clem” Attlee as prime minister; Mountbatten & the partition of India; rebel in government - the career of Nye Bevan; retreat from empire; queuing up - rationing in post-war Britain; Ernest Bevin & the Marshall Plan; the “jewel in Labour’s crown” - the National Health Service.

Looking back in anger (1951-1956): Churchill’s “Indian summer”; the legacy of “One Nation Toryism”; TV & the coronation; a new “Elizabethan Age”; traitors to their class - the Cambridge spy ring; the Empire comes home - the challenge of post-war immigration; “Look Back in Anger” - John Osborne & the new British playwrights; battling the Mau in Kenya; prime minister-in-waiting - the frustration of Anthony Eden; saying “no” to Europe; the “greatest prime minister who never was: Hugh Gaitskell; the Anglo-American partnership; humiliation at Suez.

Never had it so good (1957-1963): The soothing hand of Harold Macmillan; racial discrimination in post-war Britain; “Winds of Change” - the retreat from empire; creating the affluent society; “Teddy Boys” & rock ‘n’ roll; Ian Fleming & the creation of 007; holidaying with Billy Butlin’s; the impact of CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament); “Uncle Harold” advises JFK; *The Avengers* - a female “James Bond”; the impact of skiffle music; Charles de Gaulle says “non” to Britain joining the EEC; Macmillan’s “Night of the Long Knives; Christine Keeler & the Profumo scandal.

Magical mystery tour (1963-1970): *Doctor Who* rescues the BBC; “New Labour’s” Act I - the rise of Harold Wilson; “have a curry?” - Indian cuisine takes over Britain; Brian Epstein creates “The Beatles”; giving back America the blues: the impact of the Rolling Stones; “mods” versus “rockers”; “British invasion” - British pop music takes over the world; “Swinging London”; Twiggy leads the world of fashion; dueling leaders - “Mr Wilson” & “Mr Heath”; Revolutions - legalizing abortion & homosexuality, abolishing capital punishment; Enoch Powell’s “rivers of blood” speech; the civil rights campaign in Northern Ireland; Wilson devalues the pound; keeping Britain out of Vietnam; the Beatles big flop - *Magical Mystery Tour*, the film; return of the “Troubles” in Ireland; the strange “death” of Paul McCartney; a very British Woodstock - the 1969 Isle of Wight Music Festival; goodbye empire, hello Europe.

IMPORTANT DATES & READING ASSIGNMENTS:

(Note: All reading assignments are to be treated as required, including excerpts supplied by the course instructor.)

Week 1 15 – 19 January Rule, Britannia

We are not interested in the possibilities of defeat.

- Queen Victoria during “Black Week”, December 1899

17th - **First** meeting of HIST 388/003

Readings: Clarke, Prologue & chp. 1; Burk, “Anglo-American Marital Relations” (pp. 529-548)

For reference, only: List of British monarchs; list of 20th century British prime ministers

Week 2 22 – 26 January Liberals & the spirit of reform

The argument of the broken pane of glass is the most valuable argument in modern politics.

- Emmeline Pankhurst, speaking on 16 February 1911

Readings: Clarke, chp. 2 (to bottom, p. 62)

Week 3 29 January – 2 February Ireland & Home Rule

I can imagine no length of resistance to which Ulster can go in which I would not be prepared to support them.

- Andrew Bonar Law, speaking as Conservative Party leader, 1912

Readings: Clarke, chp. 2 (p. 62-70); “Ulster League & Covenant” & Miller, *Queen’s Rebels*

Week 4 5 – 9 February The Great War

If I should die, think only this of me / That there’s some corner of a foreign field that is forever England.

- Rupert Brooke, “The Soldier”

7th - **Last day** to submit a term paper memorandum

Readings: Clarke, chp. 2 (p. 70-76); chp. 3 (p. 77-90); Poetry: Brooke, “Peace” & “The Soldier”; Shaw-Stewart, “Untitled”

Week 5 12 – 16 February **War on the “Home Front”**

Truly the War had made masochists of us all.
- Vera Brittain, “Testament of Youth”

Readings: Clarke, chp. 3 (p. 90 to end of chapter)

Week 6 19 – 23 February **A country fit for heroes?**

What is our task? To make Britain a fit country for heroes to live in.
- David Lloyd George, campaign speech, 24 November 1918

Readings: Clarke, chp. 4 (to the middle of p. 134); Poetry: Sassoon, “Aftermath”

Week 7 26 February – 1 March **Locust years: the 1920s & 30s**

Not a penny off the pay, not a second on the day.
- A.J. Cook, Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers, 1926

28th - **Mid-term examination** (tentative date)

Readings: Clarke, chp. 4 (pp. 134-143); Brendon, “Bane of Capitalism” (pp. 50-61)

Week 8 4 – 8 March **Spring Break (No classes this week)**

Week 9 11 – 15 March **Facing the dictators**

You have sat too long here for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go!
- Leo Amery to Neville Chamberlain, House of Commons, 7 May 1940

Readings: Clarke, chp. 6 (to p. 190); Brendon, “Britain’s Royal State”

Week 10 18 – 22 March

Allies

What kind of people do they think we are? Is it possible they do not realize that we shall never cease to persevere against them until they have been taught a lesson which they and the world will never forget?

- Winston Churchill, addressing the US Congress, 26 December 1941

Readings: Clarke, chp. 6 (pp. 190-215); *Instructions for American Servicemen in Britain, 1942*
Burk, “Anglo-American Marital Relations” (pp. 548-559); Burk on Dill (pp. 499-500)

Week 11 25 – 29 March

Labour triumphant

Social insurance ... is an attack upon Want. But Want is one only of five giants on the road of reconstruction The others are Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness.

- Social Insurance and Allied Services (the Beveridge Report), 1942

Readings: Clarke, chp. 7; Addison, “The People’s William”

Week 12 1 – 5 April

The Suez Crisis

Anthony, have you lost your mind?

- Dwight Eisenhower to Anthony Eden, October 1956

Readings: Clarke, chp. 8 (to bottom of p. 263); Norman, chp. 1; Sandbrook, “Suez”

Week 13 8 - 12 April

Imperial supernova

When someone steals your ox, it is killed and roasted and eaten. One can forget. When someone steals your land, especially if nearby, one can never forget. It is always there, its trees which were dear friends, its little streams. It is a bitter presence.

- Kikuyu elder on land expropriation in Kenya

Readings: Clarke, chp. 8 (p. 263 to end of chapter); Norman, chp. 2-6

Week 14 15 – 19 April **Winds of change**

Let's be frank about it; most of our people have never had it so good. ... What is worrying some of us is "Is it too good to be true?"

- Harold Macmillan, 20 July 1957

17th - **Last day to turn in your analytical term paper**

Readings: Clarke, chp. 9; Norman, chp. 7-12; Sandbrook, "The Secret Agent"

Week 15 22 - 26 April **Mods & rockers**

Sexual intercourse began / In 1963 (which was rather late for me) / Between the end of the Chatterley ban / And the Beatles' first LP.

- Philip Larkin, "Annus Mirabilis"

Readings: Clarke, chp. 9; Norman, chp. 13-19

Week 16 29 April **"They think it's all over ..."**

And in the end, the love you take / Is equal to the love you make.

- Paul McCartney

29th - **Last day of classes**

Readings: Norman, chp. 20-22

Week 17 6 May **Final exam** 11.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.

6th – **Final exam for HIST 388/003**

{ The date for the final exam is set by the University and does not conflict with exam times for other courses. I cannot make allowances for students who have **multiple final exams** scheduled on this date. Nor is it possible for students to take the final exam at another time because of **travel plans**. }

PLEASE NOTE: ALL DATES AND ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO SLIGHT MODIFICATION DEPENDING UPON UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES.