

HIST 388 / HIST 395 – Early Modern England

Sandbridge Hall 107

MW 10:30-11:45

Office Hours: Research 463, M 1-2:30pm & by appointment

Dr. Jessica Otis

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Course Description:

At the turn of the sixteenth century, England was a tiny island kingdom just emerging from the wreckage of a decades-long civil war. Over the next two centuries, its people struggled to survive through rebellions and dynastic drama, religious uncertainty and massacres, plagues and famines, continent-wide wars and seaborne invasions. This course will examine the political, economic, religious, cultural, and social transformations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England with a particular emphasis on how its people attempted to understand and thrive in an uncertain world. In doing so, they could never have imagined they were laying the foundations for a British Empire on which the sun never set and whose American colonies gave birth to the nation we live in today.

Honor Code:

By putting your name on your assignments, you are acknowledging the integrity of your work. If you have any questions about academic integrity, please either consult with me or go to <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>

Accommodations:

If you have learning needs and have been evaluated or are in the process of being evaluated by Mason's Disability Services (<http://ds.gmu.edu>), please let me know so that I may make certain you are receiving the support you need.

Should you require other accommodations during the semester, particularly if it involves obtaining access to the necessary technology to perform your coursework, please contact me as soon as you are aware of the issue.

Privacy and Safety:

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class.

Because some of this course's activities will require you to have an internet presence, please contact me immediately if you have privacy concerns or experience online harassment doing class activities during the course of this semester. Aliases may be an appropriate solution and/or alternative activities may be substituted for required course activities, as necessary. While I believe that your education will benefit from your participation in the online digital history community, your privacy and security is a higher priority than any particular course activity.

Diversity:

My goal is to create a supportive learning environment for students with diverse backgrounds and lived experiences. As such, I fully support the Mason Diversity Statement.

Mandatory Reporting:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or Counseling and Psychology Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. The 24-hour Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence Crisis Line for Mason is 703-380-1434. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or email titleix@gmu.edu.

Required Course Books and Expenses:

- Alec Ryrie, *Age of Reformation, 2nd Edition* (AR)
- John Spurr, *The Post-Reformation* (JS)
- Robert Tittler and Judith M. Richards, *The Reign of Mary I, 3rd Edition*
- K.J. Kesselring, *The Trial of Charles I*

Note: AR and JS will be placed on reserve at Fenwick Library

Additional readings, as well as detailed instructions for assignments and projects, will be posted on the course website. As many of these readings and assignments are web-based, students should have a device capable of connecting to the internet that they can bring to class. On occasions, a laptop (rather than a tablet, e-reader, smartphone, or other device) will be necessary to run specific websites or software.

Requirements and Grading:

Grades for the course will be based upon the following:

- Course participation: 20%
- Weekly writing assignments: 15%
- *The Reign of Mary I* paper: 20%
- Wikipedia editing assignment: 20%
- Final exam: 25%

Late work will be accepted up to 7 days after the due date, but will cost 1/3 of a letter grade per day. Students may also receive no-cost extensions for family emergencies and serious illness provided they notify me by email in a timely manner (i.e. before the due date.)

Course Participation:

Students will be able to earn course participation points by attending and actively participating in regularly scheduled class meetings and activities. A larger number of participation points will be allocated to the class meeting where we 1) hold an encode-a-thon for the [Elizabethan Court Day By Day](#) project and 2) have a formal class debate on *The Trial of Charles I*, as these will require more effort than regular class meetings.

Students will also earn course participation points for the official course field trip to the [Folger Shakespeare Library](#) in downtown DC (date TBA).

In addition, students can also earn course participation points for a variety of optional activities outside regular class meetings, including but not limited to:

- watch and write an extra course blog post reviewing [Mary Queen of Scots](#) (movie set for online viewing/Blu-Ray release in late February)
- additional hours of the Elizabethan Court Day By Day encode-a-thon on 3/25/19
- attending and writing an extra course blog post on the [Aquila Theatre performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream on 3/31/19](#) (students can get free tickets)
- watch and write an extra course blog post reviewing [The Favourite](#) (this is set in the reign of Queen Anne; please wait to watch/review until we at least reach the Restoration)
- other course-related educational opportunities, as they arise throughout the semester
- attending office hours

Weekly Writing Assignments:

Students will have weekly short writing assignments (250-500 words), the details of which will be posted to Blackboard. Some assignments will involve posting to the course blog as well as leaving comments on your classmates' posts. These assignments will usually be graded based on completion, but several randomly-chosen assignments will be graded on content.

***The Reign of Mary I* Paper:**

Students will write a long paper (1500-2100 words) based on *The Reign of Mary I*. Papers are due by the beginning of class on **Monday, Mar. 4**.

While you should be able to write your paper solely based on the assigned book, if you want you may also reference your class notes and other course readings. For this assignment, no outside research is allowed. All evidence must be properly cited. The [GMU Libraries have resources](#), including an introduction to the [Zotero](#) citation management software, that will help you with citation formatting.

Papers should be word-processed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman with 1" margins and include word counts in your header. Your paper must be submitted in hard copy and stapled together.

Papers will be graded on the strength of your arguments, the skill with which you deploy evidence from your source(s), and the quality of your writing. If you have any questions about what this means in practice, please talk to me in office hours and I would be happy to help you.

Wikipedia Editing Assignment:

Students will conduct a multi-stage Wikipedia editing project over the course of the second half of the semester. These stages will include:

- identifying an article to edit, including examining the talk page and edit history of the article and analyzing the current state of the citations and evidence deployed in the article
- creating a targeted plan of research and edits for the article
- conducting article edits
- monitoring Wikipedians response to article edits

Final Exam:

The take-home final exam will consist of multiple essay questions (2500-3000 words, total) and will draw upon the same analysis and writing skills as the papers. It will be due by the end of the University-scheduled exam period, which is currently scheduled for **Wednesday, May 8 from 10:30-1:15pm.**

Note: this is one of the earliest exam periods. Please plan accordingly.

The final exam will be "open notes, open library." In other words, you may consult your personal class notes while taking your final exam. You may also consult your assigned course readings and, while you should not need to conduct additional research, you may conduct outside research if you cannot find something in your notes/course readings. Regardless of whether you are consulting your course readings or outside research, all evidence must be properly cited. No collaboration with other students/tutors/etc. is allowed.

As with the *Reign of Mary I* paper, your final exam should be word-processed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman with 1" margins and include word counts in your header. Your exam must be submitted in hard copy and stapled together. The essays in your final exam will be graded on the strength of your arguments, the skill with which you deploy evidence from primary sources, and the quality of your writing.

Tentative Class Schedule, Subject To Change Based on Snow Days:Week One: Preliminaries

Jan. 23: Syllabus

[AHA History Tuning Project: 2016 History Discipline Core](#)

Week Two: Late Medieval England and Henry VII, 1485-1509

Jan. 28, 30: AR, Chpts. 1 & 2

[Richard III, The King in the Car Park](#) (YouTube video)

OPTIONAL: students who are interested in learning more about Richard III's scoliosis and how Richard III was able to live, ride, and fight with severe spinal deformity will also be interested in watching [Richard III, The New Evidence](#) (YouTube video)

Week Three: Young Henry VIII, 1509-1525

Feb. 4, 6: AR, Chpt. 3

[Tudor Monastery Farm](#) (7 YouTube videos, only [Episode 1](#) required)

Folger Shakespeare Library's [Virtual Printing House](#) (7 online exercises)

OPTIONAL: TMF shows you male dress but not female – students interested in seeing what an (wealthy) Tudor women would wear can watch [Dressing up a Tudor lady](#) (short YouTube video)

Week Four: Henry VIII and the Reformation, 1525-1547

Feb. 11, 13: AR, Chpts. 4 & 5

["The Ten Articles"](#)

["The Six Articles"](#)

Week Five: Edward VI, 1547-53

Feb. 18, 20: AR, Chpt. 6

Begin Robert Tittler and Judith M. Richards, *The Reign of Mary I, 3rd Edition*

Week Six: Mary and Philip, 1553-8

Feb. 25, 27: AR, Chpt. 7

Finish Robert Tittler and Judith M. Richards, *The Reign of Mary I, 3rd Edition*

Week Seven: The Elizabethan Settlement, 1558-1585

Mar. 4, 6: AR, Chpts. 8 & 9

["An Act for Uniformity"](#)

["The Thirty-Nine Articles"](#)

[Supersizers Go Elizabethan](#) (6 YouTube videos, watch all 6 "parts" of the episode)

OPTIONAL: students who found the first costuming video interesting can watch chronologically later episodes in the series, [Dressing up an Elizabethan lady](#) 1570-80 (short YouTube video)

Spring Break: March 11-17th

Week Eight: Elizabeth's Later Years, 1585-1603

Mar. 18, 20: AR, Chpts. 10 & 11

Roy Rosenzweig, ["Can History Be Open Source? Wikipedia and the Future of the Past,"](#) *The Journal of American History* 93, no. 1 (2006), 117-146.

skim an "almanack" or two from [EEBO](#); look for names such as Richard Allestree, Thomas Bretnor, Gabriel Frende, Arthur Hopton, Edward Pond, George Wharton

Week Nine: Legacy of the Tudors

Mar. 25, 27: AR, Epilogue

JS, Chpts. 1 & 9

Edward Topsell, *Historie of Foure-Footed Beastes*, 1607 ([EEBO](#), pick two entries)

OPTIONAL: [A Tudor Feast at Christmas](#) (YouTube video)

NOTE: March 25th is the Elizabethan Court Day By Day Encode-a-thon. Be sure to bring your laptop to class, if you have one. Students without a personal laptop can [check out a laptop](#) from Fenwick Library.

Week Ten: James VI/I, 1603-1625

Apr. 1, 4: JS, Chpts. 2 & 10

["Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical"](#)

[Tales From the Green Valley](#) (12 YouTube videos, Episodes 1 and 2 required)

OPTIONAL: students who found the first costuming video interesting can watch chronologically later episodes in the series, [Dressing up a Jacobean lady](#) (short YouTube video)

Week Eleven: Charles I, 1625-1649

Apr. 8, 10: JS, Chpt. 3

["The King's Declaration of Sports"](#)

K.J. Kesselring, *The Trial of Charles I*

Week Twelve: Civil Wars and Interregnum, 1642-1660

Apr. 15, 17: JS, Chpts. 4 & 5

["The Roots and Branches Petition"](#)

["The Solemn League and Covenant"](#)

Correspondence of Elizabeth Stuart (excerpts on Blackboard)

London Bills of Mortality ([EEBO](#), pick two bills)

OPTIONAL: students who found the first costuming video interesting can watch chronologically later episodes in the series, [*Dressing up a mid 17th townswoman*](#) (short YouTube video)

NOTE: The class debate on *The Trial of Charles I* is tentatively scheduled for April 17th.

Week Thirteen: Restoration of Charles II, 1660-1685

Apr. 22, 24: JS, Chpts. 6 & 11

[*The Diary of Samuel Pepys*](#)

[*Supersizers Go Restoration*](#) (6 YouTube videos, watch all 6 "parts" of the episode)

Week Fourteen: The End of the Stuarts, 1685-1714

Apr. 29, May 1: JS, Chpts. 7 & 8

[*Old Bailey Online*](#) (pick 5-10 similar crimes)

Week Fifteen: Legacy of the Stuarts

May 6: JS, Chpt. 12 & Conclusion

Final exam: **Wednesday, 5/8 10:30am-1:15pm**