



*Indian soldiers and British nurses drinking tea,
Woking Mosque, southwest London, 28 November 1941*

HIST UN2360: Twentieth Century Britain: Between Democracy and Empire

Spring 2019
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:40-3:55pm
702 Hamilton Hall

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Office: 624 Fayerweather Hall
Office Hours:
Tuesdays, 4-5pm
Wednesdays, 4-5pm

Course Description

In this course, we will trace the history of Britain as a modern democratic, imperial, and post-colonial nation from 1900 to the present. We will focus on how events like war and revolution (both at home and abroad) altered Britain, and how broader developments in political culture, economic integration, social transformation, and cultural transmission shaped the people and practices we understand as “British.” Topics to be covered include war and society; the integrity of the United Kingdom; the era of universal suffrage; social welfare and the role of the state; decolonization and mass migration; new social movements; and Britain’s relationship with the European Union.

Throughout this period, Britain, like other European countries, took on a hybrid identity as both a democratic, western nation-state and a waning imperial power. We will study this complex historical formation through the lenses of scholarly books and articles, primary source texts, and non-textual artifacts. Particular attention will be paid to recent digital humanities project that have expanded the stories and actors we have come to associate with twentieth-century Britain. Readings and analyses of these materials will be shared and assessed through classroom discussion, a midterm, a short written response paper, a take-home final, and a final essay. In the final essay, students will craft their own proposal for publicly engaged digital humanities project that presents an understudied or misunderstood theme of twentieth-century British history to new audiences.

Course Objectives

- To develop a basic understanding of the themes and narratives of British history over the past century
- To learn how to read, analyze, and critique historical representations across different forms of media (literature, memoirs, ethnographies, film) and subject positions (race, class, and gender)
- To connect historical formations with their present day political stakes: how has Britain's past encounters with nation-making shaped current debate about immigration, postcolonial legacy, and sovereignty?
- To engage the way history is collected and consumed by the public, thinking critically about the goals and methods behind these projects

Course Materials

For purchase at Book Culture and on reserve at Butler Library

Roberts, *The Classic Slum: Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century*

Young and Wilmott, *Family and Kinship in East London*

Mrs Miniver (film)

Thane, *Divided Kingdom: A History of Britain, 1900 to the Present* (optional textbook)

* *All other materials are available online or on Courseworks*

Course Grading

Essays must be submitted electronically on Courseworks by 11:59pm on the due date. The take-home final is due at 4pm, per the University's finals schedule. For every day work is late, you will be penalized a third of a letter grade.

Section attendance and participation (*participation in weekly discussion sections staffed by TAs is mandatory*): 25%

Map Quiz (Jan 31): 5%

Midterm (Feb 21): 15%

Mrs. Miniver-Mass Observation Short Assignment (March 15, 750 words): 15%

Final Essay (May 3, 1,000-1,500 words): 20%

Take-Home Final (May 16): 20%

Expectations Inside and Outside the Classroom

- Please make sure to arrive on time for class. Arriving late causes you to miss important material and is disruptive to others.
- All cell phones must be put away and put on do not disturb for the duration of the class.
- I strongly encourage you to take notes by hand rather than using your laptops. Here is a selection of research articles detailing the benefits of longhand, selective note-taking versus typed, verbatim note-taking:

<http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away>

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/students-are-better-off-without-a-laptop-in-the-classroom/>

Resources and Support

Mental Health Resources:

- As a student, you may experience challenges that negatively affect your learning, such as anxiety, depression, interpersonal or sexual violence, difficulty with eating or sleeping, grief/loss, and alcohol or drug problems. Columbia University and Barnard College offers several confidential services that you might find helpful for addressing such challenges, including
 - Counseling and Psychological Services: <http://health.columbia.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services>
 - Mental Health Services (CUMC) <http://cumc.columbia.edu/student-health/mental-health-services>
 - Furman Counseling Center (Barnard) www.barnard.edu/mentalhealth
- If you have a diagnosed mental health condition, you may also be able to register with Services for Students with Disabilities: see www.health.columbia.edu/ods

The Writing Center:

- The Writing Center—located at **310 Philosophy Hall**—is an amazing, free resource. If you would like additional feedback or assistance as you're planning, drafting, or revising your writing assignments, you can schedule an individual appointment with a Writing Center consultant, here: <https://columbia.mywconline.net/index.php?msgLOG=YES>
- Barnard students can use a similar resource, The Writing Center at **223 and 224 Barnard Hall**. To make an appointment, visit <https://barnard.mywconline.com/>
- For more information, please visit: <https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-center> or <https://writing.barnard.edu/>

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Week 1

Jan 22: Introduction and Why 1900?

Jan 24: New Liberalism and Constitutional Crisis

Readings:

Thane: Intro and ch. 1

Week 2

Jan 29: The Revolt of the Left: Women, Labor, and the Young

Jan 31: WWI

Map Quiz

Readings:

Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, chapters 1-8 (can skim chapters 4 and 6)

Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, pp. 337-364

Pankhurst, "Why We Are Militant" (1913)

Week 3

Feb 5: WWI

Feb 7: WWI

Readings:

Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, chapter 9

Moorhouse, *Hell's Foundations: A Social History of the Town of Bury in the Aftermath of the Gallipoli Campaign*, 60-79

Brighton Soldiers Online Exhibit, Sikh Museum

<http://www.sikhmuseum.com/brighton/index.html>

Thane, ch. 2

Week 4

Feb 12: Ireland and Empire

Feb 14: Universal Suffrage and Postwar Reconstruction

Readings:

Roberts, *The Classic Slum*, chapter 10

Lawrence, “Forging a Peaceable Kingdom: War, Violence, and Fear of Brutalization in Post-First World War Britain”

“Annie Besant” and “Tata, Mithan Ardeshir” in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/>

Letters of 1916: A Year in the Life (Maynooth University Online Database) <http://letters1916.maynoothuniversity.ie/browse>

Thane, ch. 3

Week 5

Feb 19: The Long Weekend: Interwar Culture

Feb 21: **MIDTERM**

Readings:

Mass Observation Online Database – Worktown Cinema-Going Survey + one other box of your choice

<http://www.massobservation.amdigital.co.uk.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/Documents/WorktownCollection>

Thane, ch. 4 & 5

Week 6

Feb 26: The Great Depression

Feb 28: Fascism at Home and Abroad

Readings:

Wilkinson, *The Town that was Murdered*, excerpts

Pugh, “The British Union of Fascists and the Olympia Debate”

Jacobs, *Out of the Ghetto: My Life in the East End, Communism and Fascism*, pp. 235-256

Trabajadores: The Spanish Civil War through the eyes of organized labour

<http://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/explorefurther/digital/scw/>

Week 7

March 5: WWII

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Readings:

Mrs. Miniver (film)

Summerfield, “Dunkirk and the Popular Memory of Britain at War, 1940-1958”

Thane, ch. 6

Week 8

March 12: WWII

March 14: **NO CLASS**

Readings:

Bomb Sight (GIS Project) <http://bombsight.org>

March 15: *Mrs. Miniver*-Mass Observation Short Assignment due, 11:59pm

Spring Break

Week 9

March 26: Rebuilding Britain

March 28: The End of Empire

Readings:

Young and Wilmott, *Family and Kinship in East London*

Thane, ch. 7

Week 10

April 2: The End of Empire

April 4: The Special Relationship and the Cold War

Readings:

Webster, “‘There’ll Always Be an England’: Representations of Colonial Wars and Immigration”

Linstrum, “Facts about Atrocity: Reporting Colonial Violence in Postwar Britain”

Shepard, *Voices of Decolonization*, excerpts

Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace”

Sandys, “1957 Defence White Paper”

Week 11

April 9: The Age of Affluence

April 11: The Permissive Society and its Discontents

Readings:

Schwarzkopf, “They Do It With Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics”

The Daily Mail advertisement search: “washing machine”

<http://find.galegroup.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/dmha/>

“The ‘Lady Chatterley’s Lover’ Case,” House of Lords Hansard Debate

[https://parlipapers-](https://parlipapers-proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=10226#t0064)

[proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=10226#t0064](https://parlipapers-proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=10226#t0064)

Mort, “Mapping Sexual London: The Wolfenden Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution”

Thane, ch. 8

Week 12

April 16: New and Old Social Movements

April 18: Black Britain

Readings:

Reid, “Alienation,” 1972

“‘On the picket line’ Jayaben Desai from East Africa to Grunwick”

<https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/oms/from-east-africa-to-grunwick-jayaben-desai>

Hall, *Familiar Stranger*, pp. 149-200

Birmingham Black Oral History Project

<http://www.bbohp.org.uk/node/21>

Week 13

April 23: The Troubles

April 28: Thatcherism

Readings:

Parr, *Our Boys*, pp. 3-81

Edwards, “‘Financial Consumerism’: citizenship, consumerism and capital ownership in the 1980s”

Thatcher, Speech to the Bow Group (“The Ideals of an Open Society”)

<https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/103674>

Thane, ch. 11

Week 14

April 30: New Labour

May 2: The Two Referendums

Readings:

Bashevkin, “From Tough Times to Better Times: Feminism, Public Policy, and New Labour Politics in Britain”

Blair, “Speech on Immigration, London Business School”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4Dmr8LRYJA>

Harris, “Anywhere But Westminster” video series

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/series/anywhere-but-westminster>

Thane, ch. 13

May 3: Final Essay due, 11:59pm

May 16: Take-Home Final due, 4pm

Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity

The intellectual venture in which we are all engaged requires of faculty and students alike the highest level of personal and academic integrity. As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity.

Scholarship, by its very nature, is an iterative process, with ideas and insights building one upon the other. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars’ work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that inform our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited.

In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others’ ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated. Students failing to meet these responsibilities should anticipate being asked to leave Columbia.

The Columbia Center for New Media, Teaching, and Learning defines plagiarism and its consequences at Columbia University:
ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/compass/discipline_humanities/documenting.html#plagiarism

Disability-Related Accommodations

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with Disability Services (DS). More information on the DS registration process is available online at www.health.columbia.edu/ods. Faculty must be notified of registered students' accommodations before exam or other accommodations will be provided. Students who have (or think they may have) a disability are invited to contact Disability Services for a confidential discussion at (212) 854-2388 (Voice/TTY) or by email at disability@columbia.edu.