



History 5389

CRN: 23969

Britain's Modern Wars

Credit Hours: 3

Spring 2022

Online

Dr. Sarah Mass

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(936) 294-3836 (office number)

Office Hours:

M 4:30-6pm over Zoom

Th 11:30am-1pm over Zoom or in person

And by appt. over Zoom

Course Description

This seminar will follow the history and historiography of Britain and its Empire at war during the twentieth century. From the turn-of-the-century Anglo-Boer War through to the Falklands War in the 1980s, we will use two key concepts to frame British citizen-subjects' experiences with armed conflict. The first is "modern": what made the conflicts of the twentieth century different from those that had come before? How were they modern? The second is "memory": how did the political, social, and cultural meaning of war and violence live on in historical consciousness? Additional concepts will be introduced throughout the semester as we move chronologically through the United Kingdom's domestic and overseas military engagements. These include the role that warfare played in anti-colonial and independence movements, the social and cultural history of the home front, and how war service shaped wartime and post-war identities along lines of race, class, and gender.

Course Objectives

Disciplinary Literacy: Become familiar with the content and importance of nine field-shaping books in modern British and British imperial history.

Communication Skills: Practice synthesizing and condensing large bodies of literature into key, clear, takeaway points

Evaluative Historical Thinking: Learn to compare and contrast scholarship across methodological, theoretical, geographic, and temporal divides, and explain why their similarities and divides matter

Analytical Writing Skills: Compose individual and collective historiographical assessments of books and articles of your choosing

Required Books

If you do not have college-level coursework in modern British history, I would suggest two textbooks that provide good background on our material. Stephanie Barczewski et al, *Britain since 1688: A Nation in the World* is the book I use for my undergraduate survey course. It is [available as an ebook](#) through the SHSU library. Pat Thane, *Divided Kingdom: A History of Britain, 1900 to the Present* (Cambridge, 2018) is another excellent survey of the time period covered in this course.

* Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford, 2013) ISBN: 978-0199971954

* Kate Imy, *Faithful Fighters* (Stanford, 2019) 978-1503610743

* Niamh Gallagher, *Ireland and the Great War* (London, 2019) 978-1350246690

* Sue Grayzel, *At Home and Under Fire* (Cambridge, 2014) 978-1107679412

* Wendy Ugolini, *Experiencing War as the 'Enemy Other'* (Manchester, 2014)
978-0719096907

* Sugata Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent* (Cambridge, MA: 2012) 978-0674065963

Richard Vinen, *National Service* (London, 2015) 978-0141399805

* Brian Drohan, *Brutality in an Age of Human Rights* (Ithaca, 2018) 978-1501714658

Helen Parr, *Our Boys* (London, 2019) 978-0141984698

* Available as a free ebook through the NGL website

Attendance Policy

This is an asynchronous online seminar; we are not meeting live and in-person. Your completion of the discussion board responses is required, and will show me that you are engaging with the material. You must check your SHSU email at least twice a week for updates from me.

Course Assessments and Grading

Discussion Board Posts 500 points

50 points for each week; 12 weeks total

See "Deadlines" on the final syllabus page for due date details.

No extensions

Book Review 150 points

February 23, 11:59pm

One-on-One Zoom Meeting 100 points

Week 15 (April 21-27)

Historiographical Essay 250 points

May 11, 11:59pm

900-1000 points	A
800-899 points	B
700-799 points	C
600-699 points	D
0-599 points	F

Late Work

Some deadlines in this course are firm. The discussion board posts must be completed by the due dates. Please plan your time accordingly so you can complete these on time. For the book review and historiographical essay, there is more leeway. If you give me more than 48 hours notice that you will need an extension, it will be granted no questions asked. *Within* 48 hours, I will need a reason for the extension. If I have not granted an extension for an assignment, your grade will be reduced by 5 points for each day late.

University Policies

Please refer to the University Policies around Academic Dishonesty, Religious Holy Days, Students with Disabilities Policy, and Visitors in the Classroom [here](#)

Classroom Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves on Zoom and Blackboard in the same manner they would in a face-to-face classroom: base your arguments in evidence from our readings, respond respectfully to differing interpretations, and build on conversations collaboratively.

Getting in Touch

I am here as a guide and a resource for the material in this course. My aim is to be as responsive as possible when you have questions or concerns: I will strive to return your email within 24 hrs. If it is sent on the weekends, I may take a little longer.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (January 12-19)

The Advent of “Modern” War

Morgan, “The Boer War and the Media”

Hyslop, “Review: Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism*”

Nasson, “Waging Total War in South Africa: Some Centenary Writings on the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902”

Discussion Forum #1: January 16-19

Week 2 (January 20-26)

“Memory” and Warfare

Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*

Additional article/book on Google Scholar

Discussion Forum #2: January 23-26

Week 3 (January 27-February 2)

Identity

Kate Imy, *Faithful Fighters: Identity and Power in the British Indian Army*

Discussion Board #3: January 30-February 2

Week 4 (February 3-9)

Enthusiasm

Niamh Gallagher, *The Great War in Ireland: A Social and Political History*

Discussion Forum #4: February 6-9

Week 5 (February 10-16)

The Home Front

Sue Grayzel, *At Home and Under Fire: Air Raids & Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz*

Discussion Forum #5: February 13-16

Week 6 (February 17-23)

The Enemy

Wendy Ugolini, *Experiencing War as the 'Enemy Other': Italian Scottish Experiences in World War II*

Discussion Forum #6: February 20-23

Book Review Due: February 23, 11:59pm

Week 7 (February 24-March 2)

Anti-Colonialism

Sugata Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent: Subhas Chandra Bose and India's Struggle Against the Empire*

Discussion Forum #7: February 27-March 2

Week 8 (March 3-9)

Mythology

See selected short pieces on Blackboard

Discussion Forum #8: March 6-9

Week 9 (March 10-16)

Demobilization

Richard Vinen, *National Service: A Generation in Uniform, 1945-1963*

Discussion Forum #9: March 13-16

Week 10 (March 17-23)

Counterinsurgency

Brian Drohan, *Brutality in an Age of Human Rights: Activism and Counterinsurgency at the End of the British Empire*

Discussion Board #10: March 20-23

Week 11 (March 24-30)

Sectarianism

See selected short pieces on Blackboard

Discussion Board #11: March 27-30

Week 12 (March 31-April 6)

Masculinity

Helen Parr, *Our Boys: The Story of a Paratrooper*

Discussion Board #12: April 3-6

Week 13-14 (April 7-April 20)

Study Weeks; work on your historiographical essay topics

Week 15 (April 21-27)

One-on-One Meetings with Dr Mass

Historiographical Essay due: May 11, 11:59pm

Deadlines and Point Totals

1/16, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

1/19, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

1/23, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

1/26, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

1/30, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

2/2, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

2/6, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

2/9, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

2/13, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

2/16, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

2/20, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

2/23, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

2/23, 11:59pm: Book Review due (150 points)

2/27, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

3/2, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

3/6, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

3/9, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

3/13, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

3/16, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

3/20, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

3/23, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

3/27, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

3/30, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

4/3, 11:59pm: Initial Discussion Forum Post due (30 points)

4/6, 11:59pm: Discussion Forum response to me or a peer due (20 points)

4/21-4/27: Zoom One-on-One Meeting with Dr Mass (100 points)

5/11, 11:59pm: Historiographical Essay due (250 points)