

History 236
Modern British History, 1688 to the Present
(British History II)
MWF 11-11:50
ARH 131

Professor Diana Shull

Mears Cottage 214

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:30-3:30; Fridays, 9-10:45; also by appointment.

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x3304

Course Webpage: <https://pioneerweb.grinnell.edu>

(Log in and click on "S08 British History II SEC01")

Course Overview:

This course provides an introduction to the political, economic, and social development of Britain from the Glorious Revolution through the present day. The main themes of the course are:

* **Citizenship and the idea of the nation.** During the time period covered by this course Britain developed from a primarily agrarian society ruled by aristocratic landowners, to a parliamentary democracy where certain qualified male citizens held the right to vote, and into a modern, modified welfare state with universal suffrage. This narrative encourages a number of questions. What does it mean to be British? Who does this include? Exclude? When did this idea develop? How has national identity changed over time in the British Isles? How did the British Empire contribute to the development of a sense of "Britishness?" In the twentieth century how did the influx of peoples from former colonies into Britain itself complicate perceived ideals of citizenship and national identity?

* **Industrialization and Urbanization.** We will explore the industrialization and urbanization of Britain from the eighteenth century to the present from a number of perspectives. What were some of the environmental and social consequences of the Industrial Revolution and attendant urbanization? How did different political parties and ideologies grapple with the environmental and social changes wrought by industrialization and urbanization?

* **Empire.** Britain, a small island nation, grew to have a global empire and dominate much of the world by WWI. How did this happen? What were the justifications, criticisms, and goals of empire? How did the dissolution of the British Empire after WWII affect political, economic, and social conditions in Britain itself?

* **Gender.** Throughout this course we will use gender as a category of analysis to further explore the themes above. How did gendered arguments for citizenship play a role in the expansion of the franchise? How did the Industrial Revolution shape gender roles? In what ways did ideals of gender factor into the justifications for empire?

Required Texts:

These are available at the bookstore. We will also supplement these readings with selections available as handouts, online, or in the library.

Thomas Heyck, *The Peoples of the British Isles: A New History, from 1688 to 1870, Volume 2* (Chicago: Lyceum, 2008), Third Edition.

Thomas Heyck, *The Peoples of the British Isles: A New History, from 1870 to the Present, Volume 3* (Chicago: Lyceum, 2008), Third Edition.

Walter Arnstein, ed., *The Past Speaks: Sources and Problems in British History, Vol. II: Since 1688* (Lexington and Toronto: Heath, 1993).

Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (New York: Pocket Books, 2007).

George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (San Diego: Harcourt, 1958).
(Also available online at: http://www.george-orwell.org/The_Road_to_Wigan_Pier/index.html)

Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (New York: Vintage, 2000).

Course Requirements and Policies:

Class Discussion: You **must** read the assigned primary sources and textbook passages before coming to class and participate actively in class discussions. Your participation grade is primarily based on your willingness to engage in class discussion in a constructive and consistent manner.

Attendance: You cannot participate in class discussion if you do not attend class! Class meetings are mandatory. You may miss two meetings for any reason (I do not need to know the reason). Any further failure to attend will have a negative impact on your participation grade unless this absence occurs due to a medical condition or a family emergency.

Extensions and Late Assignments: If you turn in an assignment late, your grade will drop by a third of a letter grade (for example from a 'B' to a 'B-') for every 24-hour period for which it is late. You must submit both a hard and electronic copy of your late work.

Accommodations: If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Dean for Student Academic Support and Advising, Joyce Stern, who is located on the third floor of the JRC (x3702).

Assignments and Grading:

You will receive more information about these assignments in handouts later in the course.

*Class Participation: (20%)

*Map Project: **due Monday, 28 January.** (10%)

* Two Short Essays: **due Friday, 7 March and Friday, 9 May.** (20% each)

* “A Day/Night Out” Project: **due Monday, 7 April.** (10%)

* Take-Home Final Exam: **Due by 5pm on Wednesday, 14 May.** (20%)

Brief Schedule of Topics:

You will receive more information and detailed reading assignments for each section of the course as the semester progresses.

Part I: The Crises of Authority

Week 1: 21, 23, 25 January

Introduction, 17th century background, and the Glorious Revolution

Week 2: 28, 30 January, 1 February

‘Forging the Nation:’ the Act of Union, beginnings of Empire

Map Assignment due 28 January

Week 3: 4, 6, 8 February

The First British Empire, Popular Politics

Part II: Political and Economic Revolutions

Week 4: 11, 13, 15 February

Agricultural, Commercial, and Industrial Revolutions

Week 5: 18, 20, 22 February

American Revolution, Irish Transformations

Part III: The Rise of Victorian Society

Week 6: 25, 27, 29 February

Class Politics, Liberal Reform

Week 7: 3, 5, 7 March

Domestic Ideology, Religion and Science

1st Essay due 7 March

Week 8: 10, 12, 14 March

Irish Question, Mid-Century Ideas of Race and Class, Imperialism

Spring Break

Part IV: Challenges to Liberalism

Week 9: 31 March, 2, 4 April

The Second Industrial Revolution, Urbanization and Public Health

Week 10: 7, 9 April

Ireland, Feminism, Empire

Day Out/Night Out Assignment due 7 April

****No class 11 April (Friday)****

Part V: The World Wars

Week 11: 14, 16, 18 April

Causes of the First World War, The War Experience, Influenza

Week 12: 21, 23, 25 April

The Interwar Years, the Great Depression, the Second World War

Part VI: Postwar and Postcolonial Society and Politics

Week 13: 28, 30 April, 2 May

The Welfare State, Decolonization

Week 14: 5, 7, 9 May

Northern Ireland, Thatcherism, Multiculturalism

2nd Essay due 9 May

*****Take Home Final Exam due by 5pm on 14 May (Wednesday)*****