



Boston University Study Abroad London

Boston University Study Abroad London British Culture and Identity CGS BC 201 (CGS) Fall 2014

Instructor Information

A. Name Dr. Richard Weight

Course Aims

This is an interdisciplinary course that fuses history, sociology, media studies and politics. It seeks to draw on the students' previous educational/life experiences of elite, popular and ethnic cultures and social, religious and political movements. It will compare British and American experiences in the modern era, the differences, similarities and cross-influences between the two nations. The course will make use of London as a primary source, from its special collections and sites of historic interest, to its everyday spaces of work and leisure.

Course Objectives

At the end of the course students should:

- Acquire a broad knowledge of key historical developments in Britain since the Second World War.
- Have a clear understanding of the sociological phenomena that have shaped contemporary Britain and the identity of its peoples.
- Gain a fresh perspective on contemporary America by comparing it with Britain.

Methodology

Students will be expected to keep a portfolio of their research based on their lecture notes, reading and internet research, study visits plus a journal based on their everyday experience of London life. **THROUGHOUT THE COURSE YOU SHOULD CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ISSUES IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND HOW CULTURE AND IDENTITY INTERACT:**

- The relation of the individual to society, ie: how local and national communities are established and maintained through systems of rights and responsibilities judged by the majority to be just and/or productive.
- Moral/value judgements and their relationship to different faiths/belief systems.
- How cultural, social and political hierarchies are created based on divisions of class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality and other factors.
- The political nature of established institutions such as the media, church and state.
- The role of 'agency' (free will) and 'human nature' (determinism) in the construction of cultures.

BY CLASS 12 (28TH NOVEMBER) STUDENTS MUST ELECTRONICALLY SUBMIT THEIR COMPLETED JOURNALS AS THEIR E-PORTFOLIO; IN CLASS 13 (5TH

DECEMBER) STUDENTS WILL GIVE PRESENTATIONS BASED ON THEIR JOURNALS IN GROUPS OF 4/5.

Assessment

See page 7 for more information.

PARTICIPATION	15%
EXAMINATION (2 hours)	40%
JOURNAL (approximately 1 entry per week from 14 Oct)	20%
PRESENTATION (approximately 15 minutes per group)	25%

Grading

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria and policies on plagiarism: <http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester>

** Final Grades are subject to deductions by the Academic Affairs Office due to unauthorised absences.*

Themes

The course will find threads of continuity and discontinuity in the complex histories of the British Isles since 1945. Britain was forced to acknowledge that it was no longer a world power at the end of World War II. Economically and militarily it looked to the USA as its senior partner in a world now seemingly divided between two super powers: the USA and the USSR. As its Imperial Colonies seceded country by country, Britain tried to retain some of its world wide trade network through the Commonwealth.

This Commonwealth was to have cultural influences on Britain that were to far exceed its economic importance: writers, musicians, artists and intellectuals from the Commonwealth have set the agendas of many areas of cultural life in Britain, from ska and reggae to bhangra-rock, Asian Fusion, jungle and dance hall/ragga; from Jean Rhys and VS Naipaul to Linton Kwesi Johnson, Timothy Mo, and Ben Okri; to name but a few movements and people.

Many new emigrants and refugees are coming into Britain, from South America to Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Middle East. The next few years will see some very interesting as these new cultures begin to fuse and form hybridities that are now unpredictable. It should be noted that English culture has always absorbed creative migrants, from Marx, Oscar Wilde and Conrad, to that group of intellectuals seeking asylum after the First World War, including Freud, Gombrich, Pevsner and Wittgenstein.

Britain's relation to its former colony, the USA, has been extraordinarily complex since 1945. Not only has it had to accept America's dominance as a world military-industrial complex that exceeds anything Britain could hope to achieve, but it has also succumbed to the 'Friendly Invasion' of American High and Popular Culture since the 1930s. Britain has sent back some of its cultural ambassadors, from Olivier and Burton to Alan Rickman and David Warner; from Hitchcock to Ridley Scott; from David Hockney to Damien Hirst; from the Beatles to Goldie, and so on.

All of these examples of 'multiculturality' must be set along older cultural and social traditions in Britain, and also older ideologies of what it means to be British. 'Heritage' films like *Room With a View* or *Remains of the Day* (the latter written by a Japanese writer who emigrated to Britain at the age of 6!) celebrate a Britain that many would like to have existed, but in fact never did (it took an

American Director, with *Gosford Park*, to blow apart the heritage film's pretensions, as did another American director in the 1960s with the notion of class: Joe Losey). Heritage Britain is a place where a minutely nuanced social hierarchy is supposed to have provided the stable base for a dignified style of life, and one that was capable of an uneasy, and sometimes tragic, but nevertheless, real, harmony and elegance. The Jane Austen heritage films and TV series showed a 19th Century Britain that was shaken only by the anxieties of young women who had to decide which eligible (i.e. wealthy) young men to set their chapeaus at. The gentle grace of their homes in idyllic village and country side was in fact dependent on the economic and social and military exploitation of the British Empire.

Class, race, gender, ethnicity, regionality, age, sexuality have therefore provided a set of continually active tensions and conflicts that interact in complex ways to threaten the fragile ideology of unity and harmony that so much of British culture attempts to promote.

Attendance

Classes

All Boston University Study Abroad London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trip in order to fulfill the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme.

Authorised Absence:

Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorized Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date (except in the case of absence due to illness, for which students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor's note as soon as possible). **Please note: Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence**

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:

- Illness, supported by a local London doctor's note (submitted with Authorised Absence Approval Form).
- Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)
- Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

The Directors will only in the most extreme cases allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.

Unauthorised Absence:

Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a **4% grade penalty** to their final grade for the course whose class was missed. This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a 'Fail' in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

Lateness

Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will be required

to meet with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalised.

Course Chronology

Lectures are designed to illuminate facts, themes and concepts and to generate discussion. They are NOT a substitute for reading set texts or any other material handed out in class. It is therefore essential that you do the required reading AND that you take notes during lectures. Should you wish to discuss anything with Richard in person, he will usually be available for 20 minutes at the end of each class. Alternatively, please feel free to e-mail him at any time.

CLASS 1 **Wednesday 27th August STUDY VISIT 1 to Greenwich** accompanied by Prof. Weight, departure from Westminster pier @ 10.30am, approximate return @ 1.30pm

CLASS 2 **Wednesday 3th September ‘The People’s War’** How World War II changed the British; plus the continuing role of monarchy and religion in British life.

Reading Introduction and ‘Warriors’ of *Patriots*

Wednesday 3th September DISCUSSION GROUPS: British and American attitudes to religion

CLASS 3 **Wednesday 10th September ‘Britain Can Make It’: Reconstruction and Affluence** Patterns of economic and social growth in Britain from c.1945 to c.1955, including the creation of ‘socialised medicine’ and the Welfare State.

Reading ‘Citizens’ and ‘Viewers’ of *Patriots*

Wednesday 10th September STUDY VISIT 2: Cabinet War Rooms, accompanied by Prof. Weight, King Charles Street, off Whitehall @ 3.30. Nearest Tube station: Westminster

CLASS 4 **Wednesday 17th September ‘You found England with its pants down’: The evolution of ‘multi-cultural’ Britain** Immigration from Ireland, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia in the era of decolonisation and the hostile responses to it from government and people; the quest for civil rights, the long-term impact of immigration on British society.

Reading ‘Shoppers’ and ‘Swingers’ of *Patriots*

Wednesday 17th September DISCUSSION GROUPS: British and American attitudes to race and immigration

CLASS 5 **Wednesday 24th September ‘We don’t care about your opinion anymore’: Class relations in Britain** The effect of mass media, education and consumerism on class relations from the 1960s to the present.

Reading ‘Strikers’ of *Patriots*

Wednesday 24th September DISCUSSION GROUPS: British and American attitudes to class

CLASS 6 **Wednesday 1st October, EXAM, 1.30-4.00pm**

MID-TERM BREAK 4TH-12TH OCTOBER

CLASS 7 **Wednesday 15th October, Women in British society,** the effect of secularisation and sexual ‘permissiveness’ on women’s rights in the private and public spheres

- Reading** Sceptics of *Patriots*
Wednesday 15th October DISCUSSION GROUPS: British and American attitudes to gender, sexuality and family life
- CLASS 8** **Wednesday 22nd October, ‘From Soho down to Brighton I played the silver ball’: British youth culture** The explosion of British youth culture and the creation of a ‘post-imperial’ Britishness – from Beatlemania and ‘Swinging London’ in the 1960s, through 70s Reggae and Punk to ‘Britpop’ and Rave culture in the 90s.
- Reading** ‘Hustlers’ of *Patriots*
Wednesday 22nd October, DISCUSSION GROUPS:
 The relationship between British and American youth culture
- CLASS 9** **Wednesday 29th October, ‘Lift Up Your Eyes to the Continent’:** Britain’s changing relationship with Europe and the rise of mass tourism.
- Reading** ‘Tunnellers’ of *Patriots*
Wednesday 29th October, DISCUSSION GROUPS:
 British and American attitudes to Europe and travel
- CLASS 10** **Wednesday 5th November, ‘Sport in British society’** The development of cricket, football and rugby as national sports; their impact on British identity and foreign relations in the age of globalisation.
- Reading** ‘Modernisers’ and ‘Conclusion’ of *Patriots*
Wednesday 5th November DISCUSSION GROUPS:
 British and American attitudes to sport
- CLASS 11** **Wednesday 12th November, ‘We want bacon but not Bogart from the Americans’: The Special Relationship** The economic and cultural influence of the United States on the UK from the 1960s to the present and British reactions to it, including the development of anti-Americanism from the Suez Crisis to 9/11 and after.
- Reading** RESEARCH AND PREPARATION FOR GROUP PRESENTATIONS & JOURNALS
Wednesday 12th November, DISCUSSION GROUPS:
 British and American attitudes to gun ownership and violence in society and the media
- CLASS 12** **Wednesday 19th November, The evolution of ‘multi-cultural’ Britain, part two** Eastern European immigration to the UK and post-9/11 attitudes to Muslims
- Reading** RESEARCH AND PREPARATION FOR GROUP PRESENTATIONS & JOURNALS
Wednesday 19th November, DISCUSSION GROUPS:
 Contemporary US/UK attitudes to nationality and diversity
- CLASS 13** **Wednesday 26th November, ‘One State, Five Nations’ Ireland and the British** Britain’s relations with Ireland since the Second World War, including Civil war in Northern Ireland and the current Peace Process. The rise of Scottish and Welsh nationalism and constitutional reform; the End of the UK as we know it? PLUS SUBMISSION OF JOURNALS
- Reading** RESEARCH AND PREPARATION FOR GROUP PRESENTATIONS
Wednesday 26th November, DISCUSSION GROUPS: British and American attitudes to local/regional and central/federal government
Please note: this lecture will fall into two parts (with a break in between), allowing time for one discussion group; students will therefore be required

to attend class from 1.30-4.30pm

CLASS 14 Wednesday 3rd December, GROUP PRESENTATIONS

A summary of your work so far, based on your journal and other research, addressing the following questions: what is the influence of America on Britain, what are the reasons for individuals/organisations accepting/resisting that influence, and the general relationship between the two countries and their peoples?

Reading List

PLEASE NOTE: your lecture notes, journal and internet research are NOT sufficient on their own to obtain a good grade. You must demonstrate, through reading, a firm grasp of the subject and the key issues and debates within it.

Additional reading may be found on Blackboard: <https://lms.bu.edu>

Required Reading

These books **MUST** be read/referred to in order to gain a basic understanding of the course.

- Garnett, Mark & Weight, Richard (2004), *Modern British History: The Essential A-Z Guide* London, Pimlico.
- Weight, Richard (2003), *Patriots: National Identity in Britain 1940-2000* London, Pan Macmillan.

Supplementary Reading

Referring to these books will deepen your understanding of the course and help you to write your exam. Most are useful for several topics and contain valuable bibliographies for extended reading.

General

Bedarida, Francois, *A Social History of England 1851-1990*, Part IV
Berstein, George, *The Myth of Decline: The Rise of Britain since 1945*
Clark, Peter, *Hope and Glory: Britain 1900-2000* (2nd Ed., 2004)
Davie, Grace. *Religion in Britain since 1945*
Dimpleby, David & Reynolds, David (1988), *An Ocean Apart: The Relationship Between Britain and America in the Twentieth Century* . Especially chapters 9-16
Holt, R and Mason, T. *Sport in Britain 1945-2000*
Marwick, Arthur. *British Society since 1945* (2nd Ed., 1990)
Storry, Mike and Childs, Peter, *British Cultural Identities* (Routledge, 1997)

Race

Alibhai-Brown, Yasmin, *Who Do We Think We Are? Imagining the New Britain*
Gilroy, Paul, *There ain't no Black in the Union Jack* (Routledge, 1998)
Gilroy, Paul, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* (Routledge, 2004)
Holmes, Colin, *John Bull's Island: Immigration and British Society 1871-1971*
Phillips, Mike & Trevor, *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain* (Harper Collins, 1998)

Class

Adonis, Andrew and Pollard, Steven, *A Class Act: The Myth of Britain's Classless Society* (1997)
Cannadine, David, *Class in Britain* (1998)

McKibbin, Ross, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (1998)
Marwick, Arthur, *Class: Image and Reality in Britain, France and the USA since the 1930s* (2nd Ed, 1990)
Mount, Ferdinand, *Mind the Gap: The New Class Divide in Britain* (2005)

Gender

Figs, Kate, *Because of Her Sex: The Myth of Equality for Women in Britain* (1994)
Hall, Lesley, *Sex, Gender and Social Change in Britain since 1880* (2000)
Lewis, Jane. *Women in Britain since 1945* (1992)
Rowbotham, Sheila, *A Century of Women: The History of Women in Britain and the United States* (1997)
Weeks, Jeffrey, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality since 1800* (2nd. Ed., 1989)

Youth

Bennett, Andy, *Cultures of Popular Music* (2003)
Booker, Christopher, *The Neophiliacs: A Study of the Revolution in English Life in the Fifties and Sixties*
Bracewell, Michael, *England is Mine: Pop Life in Albion from Wilde to Goldie* (1997)
Hall, Stewart & Jefferson, Tony, *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Postwar Britain* (1976)
Hebdige, Dick, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979)
Melly, *Revolt into Style: The Pop Arts in Britain* (1970)
McRobbie, Angela, *Feminism and Youth Culture* (2nd Ed., 2000)
Osgerby, Bill, *Youth Media* (2004)
Weight, Richard, *Mod: A Very British Style* (2013)

America

Arieti, James, et al, *Kazaam! Splat! Ploof!: The American Impact on European Popular Culture Since 1945* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2002)
Blackford, Mansel G., *The Rise of Modern Business in Great Britain, the United States and Japan* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1988)
Burke, Kathy, *Old World, New World: The Story of Britain and America* (Little Brown, 2007)
Bryson, Bill, *Notes From A small Island* (Black Swan, 1996)
Chunovic, Louis, *Why Do People Love America? A Supersized Analysis of US Cultural Influences* (2004)
Ferguson, Niall, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (Penguin, 2005)
Gamble, Andrew, *Between Europe and America: The Future of British Politics* (Palgrave, 2003)
Hertsgaard, Mark, *The Eagle's Shadow: Why America Fascinates and Infuriates the World* (2002)
Massey, Anne, *Hollywood Beyond the Screen: Design and Material Culture* (2000)
Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey and Ricci, Steven, *Hollywood and Europe: Economics, Culture, National Identity 1945-1995* (1998)
Pells, Richard, *Not Like Us: How Europeans have loved, hated and transformed American culture since World War II* (New York, 1997)
Sardar, Ziauddin and Davies, Merryl, *Why Do People Hate America?* (2002)
Seitz, Raymond, *Over Here* (Weidenfeld, 1998)

Assessment in Detail

1) Attendance and Participation in class

15%

If you have good reason to be late or absent (ie. illness) you MUST report it to BU prior to class in order for your Dr. Weight to be informed in good time. SEE ‘TERMS AND CONDITIONS’ BELOW

Contribution to discussion is one of the best methods of learning and it is an important part of your overall grade. While sympathetic account is taken of personality differences, YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO DEMONSTRATE AN ENQUIRING APPROACH TO THE TOPIC UNDER DISCUSSION IN EACH CLASS.

This may take the form of simply asking a question about something you want to know or do not understand. You may also have a comment to make based on your own knowledge and experience. Or, you may disagree with what your fellow students or lecturer is saying. FEEL FREE AT ALL TIMES TO QUESTION WHAT IS BEING SAID IN CLASS. BUT REMEMBER! You will be in a better position to contribute if you have prepared properly. It is therefore essential that you do the required reading listed above.

2) Examination (2 hours) 40%

The mid-semester exam is designed to test your research and essay-writing skills, to assess the extent to which you are grasping the central themes of the course. You will be expected to demonstrate your HISTORICAL knowledge of modern Britain and your understanding of the SOCIOLOGICAL basis of British culture and identity (e.g. ethnicity, class, gender). In the first part you will answer 4 short questions (60% of exam grade); in the second part, you will answer one essay question chosen from two (40% of exam grade). Read the guidelines below: ‘*Writing An Essay/Examination Answer*’.

3) Journal (approx one entry per week from 14 Oct) 20%

This must be kept on a regular basis and submitted as your e-portfolio. In it, you should record your impressions of British culture, society and politics, based on your everyday experience of life in London and anywhere else you visit in Britain/Europe. You should also utilise your studies for the end of term examination, including a scrutiny of books, newspapers and other media and, where possible, interviews/conversations with people you meet. Higher grades will be awarded to journals that analyse the influence of America on Britain, the reasons for individuals/organisations accepting/resisting that influence, and the general relationship between the two countries and their peoples (remember to say which features of each culture you prefer and why).

4) Presentation based on journal (approx 15 mins per group) 25%

The aim of the presentation is twofold: to test your ability to crystallise large amounts of information and complex ideas into a form that engages and informs an audience who do not necessarily possess your knowledge. It is also designed to generate class discussion. If you are listening to a presentation, you may politely interrupt to comment on or question what your fellow student is saying. This and a contribution to any discussion that ensues will improve your grade for this part of the course. FORM A GROUP OF 5, EACH INDIVIDUAL HAS APPROXIMATELY 3 MINUTES TO PRESENT. N.B: YOU WILL BE GRADED AS A GROUP. **Read the guidelines below: ‘*Giving A Presentation*’.**

Terms and Conditions

Richard will make some time available in each session for students to raise questions. Should they wish to discuss matters with him in person he will also be available at the end of class. Alternatively, please feel free to e-mail him. If you have problems with the availability of reading materials (all of which should be in the library) please contact the Academic Affairs Office.

Giving a Presentation

A presentation is NOT a hurried read-through of your journal or paper. It is a summary of your knowledge, ideas and conclusions about your subject, which should generate discussion. Follow these basic points:

1. Decide what your main points are and make a list of them (in the time you have available, four is usually sufficient).
2. Provide an example and/or a quote that illuminates each one.
3. Mention a public debate about at least one area of your subject and say which view you take and why.
4. Be prepared to answer comments/questions from your fellow students and lecturer and join in any discussion that follows. But don't be afraid to move your presentation on once you think an intervention has run its natural course. **YOU ARE IN CHARGE!**
5. In the conclusion of your talk, relate your research to the wider themes that have been discussed on the course.
6. Speak clearly and don't rush your talk. Remember that **WE ARE INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY!**

REMEMBER! PRIOR TO YOUR PRESENTATION, FIND OUT IF ANY STUDENTS ARE COVERING THE SAME AREAS AS YOU. CONSULT WITH THEM TO DECIDE WHICH POINTS YOU ARE EACH GOING TO COVER. THIS WILL AVOID REPETITION THAT MAY AFFECT YOUR GRADE (IT IS ACCEPTABLE TO COVER THE SAME AREAS IF YOU HAVE A DIFFERENT VIEWPOINT TO THEM). ALTERNATIVELY YOU CAN FORM YOURSELVES INTO SMALL GROUPS TO PRESENT JOINTLY. USING AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL WILL IMPROVE YOUR GRADE.

Writing an Essay/Examination Answer

Depending on the subject of your major, you may not be used to writing a discursive analytical essay. This should not adversely affect your grade, but ignoring the points below will do so. You are expected to write grammatically correct prose that employs accurate spelling. Please write your essay in 1.5 spacing and leave sufficient margins for my comments.

Preparation

1. Select a topic that really interests you. The more you are personally engaged in it, the more you will enjoy doing it.
2. Take accurate notes during your reading/internet research, including page numbers and URLs as you **MUST** cite references properly in your essay.
3. Write down the broad themes which you think are relevant to the question.
4. Define your argument briefly.
5. List the points you will use to develop your argument, and examples that you want to substantiate them with.

Writing

1. Your introduction should state the central argument clearly and concisely. It can be up to three or four sentences. Do not generalise and develop chatty comments to lead up to your thesis. Get to the point immediately.
2. Give each of the subsequent paragraphs an initial introductory sentence, followed by a development and expansion of the point in a way that is directly relevant to the question. Paragraphs should lead on to each other through a logical argument. Repetition of your points should be avoided.
3. Avoid a descriptive essay/examination answer which simply lists points asked for by the question. Write an argumentative essay/examination answer which debates the problems raised by

the question. This means analysing something with a view to offering an interpretation of its meaning. Therefore, avoid writing `this was good/successful/wrong/a failure.` Instead, argue why and how something is positive or not.

4. Your conclusion should say how your argument has developed, i.e. whether it has been modified or affirmed. It should not simply re-state the introduction. It is also your final chance to stamp your personal outlook on the essay, with an original, apposite point and/or turn of phrase.

Style

1. NEVER use the first person `I` to convey your views.

2. Whenever possible, use an example and/or an authoritative quote in order to illustrate a point. Do not simply re-state it. The quotation must be grammatically continuous with your essay, transcribed accurately with the source cited in full.

3. Make sure you transcribe names, dates and statistics accurately.

4. Use past, present and future tenses accurately and consistently.

5. Avoid abbreviations.

6. Employ the formal language of debate. Do not write in a conversational style and therefore avoid anecdote and slang vocabulary and phrases.

7. Avoid rhetorical questions.

8. Avoid qualifying phrases such as `it is almost as if` or `it would seem that`.

9. Note the difference between `its` which is the possessive and `it`s` which is the abbreviation for `it is`.

10. Avoid cliché such as `circumstances forced the immigrants to stick together like glue`.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS SYLLABUS PROPERLY. ENJOY THE COURSE AND THE REST OF YOUR STAY IN LONDON.

Richard Weight