



Boston University Study Abroad London

Boston University Study Abroad Class, Power and the Making of British Identity CAS HI 252 (*Elective A*) Spring 2018

Instructor Information

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| A. Name | Dr Michael Thornhill |
| B. Day and Time | Wed 17 Jan, then Monday and Tuesdays, and a final session on Friday 16 February: all times, 1.15pm-5.15pm (except class 4: 1.45pm to 5.45pm when we will be attending evensong at St Paul's Cathedral) |
| C. Telephone | |
| D. Email | |
| E. Office hours | By appointment |

Course Objective

The course explores how Britain created a unique political and cultural identity, and the way this impacted on the rest of the world. No prior knowledge of British history is required.

Course Overview

This course examines the evolving politics of the state in England – and later Britain – since 1534 and considers how these shifts were shaped by social and economic changes. The impact of these interrelated processes on the making of a distinct cultural heritage will also be assessed. Britain's architecture, literature, and art will be considered in the context of who pays for the specific works, from the palaces, stately homes and oil portraits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, via the rise of the novel in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to the consumers of popular culture created in the age of the welfare state since 1945. Bookending the course is a discussion of the sacred music produced in the wake of England's protestant reformation (we will be attending choral evensong at St Paul's Cathedral as part of one session) and, on a different note, the punk rock produced during Britain's 'crisis of governability' in the late 1970s. The impact of 'Britishness' overseas will also be assessed.

Methodology

The course is taught in ten classes, followed by a written examination lasting two hours. Most classes begin with a formal presentation after which there is a discussion period based on an assigned reading, usually from the course set text. The presentations take a thematic approach, while the set text readings proceed chronologically. Documentaries – and one televised drama – will also be used to support student learning. There are three guided field trips as part of the classes (to the National Portrait Gallery, St Paul's Cathedral, and to the Imperial War Museum). Students are required to attend all sessions and participate in discussions. This aspect will account for 10% of the final grade. A further 10% will be awarded for a class presentation based on the visit to the National Portrait Gallery. A 2000-word essay (about 8 typed pages, double-spaced in 12-point font) must be submitted to the instructor at the start of class 8 (a further 40% of the grade). This will be graded and returned with written feedback to students at the start of class 10. In the end-of-session examination (worth 40%) students must answer two essay-type questions from a selection covering all aspects of the course. No notes will be allowed in the examination room.

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.*

Attendance Policy

Classes

All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, seminar, and field trip in order to fulfil 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 more than one day. In this situation students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor's note as soon as possible). The Authorised Absence Approval Request Form is available from: <http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester/>

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 (first day of sickness):** If a student is too ill to attend class, the student must phone the BU London Student Affairs Office (who will in turn contact the student's lecturer).
- **Illness (multiple days):** If a student is missing more than one class day due to illness, the student must call into to the BU London Student Affairs Office each day the student is ill. Students must also provide the Student Affairs office with a completed Authorised Absence Approval Form and a sick note from a local doctor excusing their absence from class.
- 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.

Religious Holidays

Boston University's Office of the University Registrar states:

'The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.'

Special Accommodations

Each student will need to contact the Office of Disability Services to request accommodations for the semester they are abroad. Students are advised by BU-ODS not to expect the same accommodations as they receive on campus.

BU London can only uphold special accommodations if we have received the appropriate documentation from the BU-ODS. We cannot accept letters from other universities/centres.

All disabilities need to be known to the ODS in Boston if they are to be used as a reason for requiring a change in conditions, i.e. reduced internship hours or special accommodations for the internship schedule.

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 Associate Director for Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalised.

Reading

Set text:

Simon Jenkins, *A Short History of England* (2012)

General (recommended titles for essay research):

Kenneth O. Morgan (ed.), *The Oxford History of Britain* (Revised edition 2010)

Simon Schama, *A History of Britain Volume 2: 1603 – 1776* (2001)

Simon Schama, *A History of Britain Volume 3: Fate of Empire* (2002)

Simon Schama, *The Face of Britain: The Nation through its Portraits* (2015)

David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (2002)

David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (1999)

David Starkey, *Crown and Country: A History of England through the Monarchy* (2011)

John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (1997)

Andrew Marr, *A History of Modern Britain* (2009)

Edward Vallance, *A Radical History of Britain: Visionaries, Rebels and Revolutionaries* (2010)

Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (2000 edition)

Jon Savage, *England's Dreaming: Anarchy, Sex Pistols, Punk Rock and Beyond* (2002)

David Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled* (2000)

Norman Davies, *The Isles* (1999)

Niall Ferguson, *Empire* (2004)

Jeremy Paxman, *Empire* (2001)

Brendan Simms, *Britain's Europe* (2017)

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (2004 – present) group and feature articles concerning key themes and defining moments in course (see pdfs on Blackboard.)

Audios

Melvyn Bragg, *History of Our Times*, BBC Radio 4 (discussions with leading historians concerning key themes and defining moments discussed in course). See list on Blackboard.

Additional reading may be found on Blackboard: <http://learn.bu.edu>

Course Timetable

Week One

1. **POLITICS:** The rise of Parliamentary democracy (Wed 17 January)
 - Lucy Worsley, 'Elizabeth's I's Battle for God's Music', transmitted BBC 2017
[This programme concerns the impact of the protestant reformation on the English tradition of choral evensong and connects with the field trip to St Paul's in class 4 when we will attend evensong, hence the slightly later start time of this class.]

Week Two

2. **POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY:** The individual and the state from Hobbes to Keynes (Mon 22 January)
 - George Orwell, 'England your England' in *The Lion and the Unicorn* (1941)
 - 'History of Britain: Orwell and Churchill', documentary by Simon Schama, transmitted BBC1, 2003 (to be viewed in class)
3. **ART:** The politics of landscapes and portraits; and **field trip one** to National Portrait Gallery leaving after a 60-min lecture in the usual classroom (Tues 23 January)
 - Jenkins, *A Short History of England*, pp. 11- 50

Week Three

4. **ARCHITECTURE** Who pays for the buildings? Power and status as reflected in British architecture; and **field trip two** to St Paul's Cathedral leaving after a 60-min lecture in the usual classroom (Mon 29 January: **NOTE 1.45pm start time at Harrington Gardens and 5.45 end time following evensong at St Paul's.**)
 - Jenkins, *A Short History of England*, pp. 51-102
5. **STUDENT PRESENTATIONS** based on previous week's field trip to the National Portrait Gallery; and class discussion of St Paul's field trip from previous day (Tuesday 30 January)

Week Four

6. **THE NOVEL** Britain through the lens of the novel in the 18th and 19th centuries (Mon 5 February)
 - Jenkins, *A Short History of England*, pp. 103-150
7. **EMPIRE:** Exporting Britishness (Tues 6 February)
 - Jenkins, *A Short History of England*, pp. 151-189
 - 'Empire', *play up...* documentary by Jeremy Paxman, transmitted BBC 2012 * (to be viewed in class)

* **Contingency Class Date: Fri 9 February.** Students must keep this date free to attend class should any class dates need to be rescheduled.

Week Five

8. **TOTAL WAR:** The domestic and international consequences of the Second World War; **field trip three to the Imperial War Museum** leaving after a 60-min lecture in the usual classroom (Mon 12 February) **Essays must be submitted at 1:15pm**
 - Jenkins, *A Short History of England*, pp.190-229
9. **POPULAR CULTURE:** The post-war British state and the efforts to create equality of opportunity (Tues 13 February)
 - Jenkins, *A Short History of England*, pp.230-287
10. **STOCKTAKING:** A review session – to what extent should the evolution of modern Britain be viewed as a success story? (Fri 16 February)
 - Jenkins, *A Short History of England*, pp. 288-295
 - ‘The Crown: *Smoke and Mirrors*’ *(A dramatic recreation of the coronation in 1953; to be viewed in class)

EXAM: Tues 20 February. Exam times and locations will be posted on the BU London website and in the Student Newsletter two weeks before exam dates.

**** Contingency Class Date: Friday 9 February.** Students must keep this date free to attend class should any class dates need to be rescheduled

Terms and Conditions

Failure to produce essays at the allotted time may result in the lowering of the grade. Punctuality for class is essential.

I will make some time available in each session for students to raise questions etc. Should students wish to discuss matters with me in person I will also be available during the break mid-lecture and at the end of class. Alternatively, please feel free to e-mail me with questions. If you have problems with the availability of reading materials (all of which should be in the library) please contact me either through the Academic Affairs Office or via e-mail.

MTT 15 Dec 2017