

HIST-GA 2901
HISTORIOGRAPHY OF BRITAIN, 1680-1880
Weds., 3:30-6:10
KJCC 324

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William Hogarth, *The Humours of an Election: Chairing the Member* (1755)

Description

This graduate colloquium examines British history and historiography from the Glorious Revolution to the Victorians. The eighteenth century has long hosted some of the most vibrant debates in British historiography, but its relationship to subsequent periods has too often been reduced to either an early modern “other” or an emergent “us.” How can this period speak to the interests of modern historians, without being rendered a step on the path to the present – the fallacy of *modernization*? How can its historians assert the significance of this period, without recourse to the contention that it was at this time and in this place that the modern world was made – the fallacy of *Anglo-centrism*? How can British historians engage colleagues who work on other parts of the world, apart from following actors or ideas as they traversed other parts of the world – the fallacy of *derivative trans-nationalism*? With these problems in mind, we will examine both classic and recent works on a series of interpretive problems, from the political upheaval of the late-seventeenth century to the social control of the late-nineteenth century, in order to arrive at our own interpretations of this period and its historiography.

Evaluation

33% *Participation*

In addition to thoughtful and engaged discussion, participation includes 2 presentations of 20 minutes, providing historiographical context and framing our discussion. The readings marked ‘+’ are not required for the entire class, but should be helpful in preparing that week’s presentation.

33% *Reviews (2)*

You will write 2 reviews of 1000 words, distributed in hard copy to the entire class at the beginning of our discussion. The first review will be of a single book; the second review will be of a historiographical issue (with discussion of all readings for that week, including those marked ‘+’).

33% *Final paper*

You will write a final paper of at least 20 pages, due electronically by Monday, May 14. The formats of these papers will vary according to your interests, and we will discuss them further as the semester proceeds. **Extensions and incompletes will not be granted.**

Readings

We will discuss 1-2 books each week. The books for the first 4 weeks, marked (#), are available in NYU’s bookstore. Many of the readings are also available in Bobst (L), on Blackboard (Bb), or online (E).

➤ The books on reserve are listed here: <http://bit.ly/zucRBk>

★ **The following readings were unavailable for library reserve, and you are therefore urged to locate copies (or make arrangements for sharing) as soon as possible:**

E. P. Thompson, *Whigs and Hunters* (Week 5).

Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People* (Week 6).

Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self* (Week 7).

Chris Brown, *Moral Capital* (Week 8).

James Vernon, *Politics and the People* (Week 9).

Dennis Dworkin, *Class Struggles* (Week 11 – presenter only).

Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People?* (Week 12 – presenter only).

Bernard Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists* (Week 13).

Patrick Joyce, *The Rule of Freedom* (Week 14).

Simon Gunn and James Vernon, *The Peculiarities of Liberal Modernity* (Week 14 – presenter only).

Week 2 (Feb. 1) Grand Narratives

(#) (L) Harold Perkin, *Origins of Modern English Society, 1780-1880* (Routledge, 1969).

(#) (L) Richard Price, *British Society, 1680-1880* (Cambridge, 1999).

Week 3 (Feb. 8) The Glorious Revolution

(#) (L) Steven Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (Yale, 2009).

(E) Scott Sowerby, "Pantomime History," *Parliamentary History* 30, 2 (2011): 236-258.

+ (E) Tim Harris, "James II, the Glorious Revolution, and the Destiny of Britain," *Historical Journal* 51, 3 (2008): 763-775.

Week 4 (Feb. 15) The Financial Revolution

(#) John Brewer, *Sineus of Power: War, Money, and the English State* (Knopf, 1989).

(L) P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000*, 2nd ed. (Longman, 2001), pp. 1-103.

(Bb) Carl Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit: The English Financial Revolution, 1620-1720* (Harvard, 2011), Ch. 5-6.

+ (L) Julian Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty?: England, 1689-1727* (Oxford, 2002), Ch. 10.

Week 5 (Feb. 22) E. P. Thompson's Eighteenth Century

(Tamiment) E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (New Press, 1991), Chapters I, II, IV, VI.

E. P. Thompson, *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act* (Allen Lane, 1975).

+ (Bb) T. W. Heyck, "E. P. Thompson: Moralizer as Marxist Historian," ed. Walter Arnstein, *Recent Historians of Great Britain: Essays on the Post-1945 Generation* (Iowa State, 1990); (Bb) Stefan Collini, "Moralizer at Work: E. P. Thompson Reappraised," *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 February 2005.

Week 6 (Feb. 29) Nation, Empire, and Popular Politics

(L) Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (Yale, 1992).

Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture, and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge, 1995), Introduction, Ch. 2-5, Conclusion.

+ (E) J. C. D. Clark, "Protestantism, Nationalism, and National Identity, 1660-1832," *Historical Journal* 43, 1 (2000): 249-276; (Bb) E. P. Thompson, "Which Britons?" *Making History: Writings on History and Culture* (New Press, 1994), pp. 319-329.

Week 7 (Mar. 7) Identity, the Self, and Cultural History

Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (Yale, 2004).

+ (L) John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1997); (E) Karol Berger, Jill Campbell, and Don Herzog, "On Dror Wahrman's

The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 40, 1 (2006): 149-156.

~~~SPRING BREAK~~~

**Week 8 (Mar. 21) Anti-Slavery, the American Revolution, and Imperial History**

Chris Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (North Carolina, 2006), Introduction, Ch. 1, 2, 4, 7, Epilogue.

(L) Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (Knopf, 2011), Introduction, Parts I & III, Conclusion.

+ (E) P. J. Marshall, "Britain and the World in the Eighteenth Century," Presidential Lectures I (1998), II (1999), and IV (2001), published in the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* and available through JSTOR (52 pages).

**Week 9 (Mar. 28) Parties, Politics, and Political History**

(L) Frank O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons, and Parties: The Unreformed Electoral System of Hanoverian England, 1734-1832* (Oxford, 1989), Ch. 1, 3-5, Conclusion.

James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture, 1815-1867* (Cambridge, 1993; paperback, 2009).

+ (L) Susan Pedersen, "What is Political History Now?," ed. David Cannadine, *What Is History Now?* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

**Week 10 (Apr. 4) The Industrial Revolution and Economic History**

(Bb) Joel Mokyr, "The New Economic History and the Industrial Revolution," *The British Industrial Revolution: An Economic Perspective*, 2nd ed. (Westview, 1999), pp. 1-127.

(L) Patrick K. O'Brien, "Deconstructing the British Industrial Revolution as a Conjuncture and Paradigm for Global Economic History," eds. Jeff Horn, Leonard N. Rosenbrand, and Merritt Roe Smith, *Reconceptualizing the Industrial Revolution* (MIT, 2010), pp. 21-46.

(L) Robert C. Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective* (Cambridge, 2009), Ch. 1, 6-11.

+ (L) Horn, Rosenbrand, and Smith, *Reconceptualizing the Industrial Revolution*, pp. 1-20; (E) S. D. Smith, "Determining the Industrial Revolution," *Historical Journal* 54, 3 (2011): 907-924.

**Week 11 (Apr. 11) Class, Gender, and Social History**

(L) E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Gollancz, 1963), Preface, Ch. 12.

(L) Gareth Stedman Jones, "Rethinking Chartism," *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History, 1832-1982* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 90-178.

- (L) Joan Scott, "Women in *The Making of the English Working Class*," *Gender and the Politics of History*, rev. ed. (Columbia, 1999), Ch. 4.
- (L) Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (California, 1997), Ch. 1, 12, 13, 15.
- + Dennis Dworkin, *Class Struggles* (Pearson/Longman, 2007), Introduction and Ch. 3-6.

### **Week 12 (Apr. 18)      Evangelical Culture and Intellectual History**

- (L) Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1785-1865* (Oxford, 1992).
- + Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People? England, 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 664-723;
- (E) John Brewer, "England: The Big Change," *New York Review of Books*, 26 June 2008.

### **Week 13 (Apr. 25)      Victorian Imperial Culture**

- Bernard Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain* (Oxford, 2004), Ch. 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 13.
- (L) Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago, 2002).
- + (E) Richard Price, "One Big Thing: Britain, Its Empire, and Their Imperial Culture," *Journal of British Studies* 45 (July 2006): 602-627; (E) Tony Ballantyne, "The Changing Shape of the Modern British Empire and its Historiography," *Historical Journal* 53, 2 (2010): 429-452.

### **Week 14 (May 2)      Liberalism, Freedom, and Governmentality**

- Patrick Joyce, *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City* (Verso, 2003).
- (L) Chris Otter, *The Victorian Eye: A Political History of Light and Vision in Britain, 1800-1910* (Chicago, 2008), Introduction, Ch. 1-4, Conclusion.
- + Simon Gunn and James Vernon, "What Was Liberal Modernity and Why Was It Peculiar in Imperial Britain?" *The Peculiarities of Liberal Modernity in Imperial Britain* (California, 2011).

***Final papers due Monday, May 14.***