

HIST-UA 162: Britain & the British Empire
Fall 2023 | MW 12.30-1.45 | Kimmel 803

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Office hours: T 10.30-12.00 Zoom or KJCC 420

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Description

This course introduces students from any major, school, or year to British history since the establishment of the United Kingdom in 1707. During this period, Britain emerged as the world's primary imperial power and first industrial economy, fought two world wars partly in an effort to maintain that position, and unevenly navigated the post-imperial and post-industrial transformations of the late-twentieth century. Through lectures, readings, and discussions, we will situate the social and political history of modern Britain within this shifting global context.

Evaluation

25% Journal
25% Exam 1
25% Exam 2
25% Exam 3

Academic integrity

- Plagiarism of any kind will be penalized without warning:
<https://cas.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/cas/academic-integrity.html>

Devices

- Students using laptops should disable wireless and sit in the front of the room.
- Please silence and ignore phones during class.

Accessibility

- Requests for accommodations should come through the Moses Center:
<https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html>

Religious holidays

- NYU accommodates religious holidays: <https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html>

Books

Three required books are available at the NYU Bookstore on Broadway. If you purchase them elsewhere, **the following ISBN numbers will enable you to procure these exact editions.**

- T. W. Heyck & Meredith Veldman, *The Peoples of the British Isles: From 1688 to the Present* (4th ed., 2016): ISBN 978-0-19-061554-3
- Walter Arnstein, *The Past Speaks, Volume II: Since 1688* (1993): ISBN 0-669-24602-6
- Nigel Dalziel, *The Penguin Historical Atlas of the British Empire* (2006): ISBN 978-0-141-01844-7

Assignments

- **Daily readings:** Each lecture is paired with brief readings, which you should read in advance and arrive ready to discuss.
- **Weekly readings:** The textbook and atlas (Heyck & Veldman, Dalziel) are included for your orientation, reference, and studying. I recommend completing Heyck & Veldman before the week begins, and Dalziel before each lecture.
- **Journals:** I will distribute a journal to each student on the first day. We will pass them back and forth throughout the semester, as you respond to various prompts and questions. These journals will be evaluated in the manner of (and in place of) grades for participation and/or attendance, with an emphasis on regular participation and thoughtful engagement.
- **Exams:** Each of the three exams will include some combination of maps, identification questions, reading passages, and brief essays. You will receive a study guide one week before each exam. With the exception of the specific wording of the essay prompts, there will be nothing on an exam that you have not previously seen on the study guide.

PART I: 1707-1815

Week 1	Introduction (Heyck & Veldman 2-45)
9/6	Britain and the British Empire
Week 2	State and Society (Heyck & Veldman 45-49, 125-146, 57-77)
9/11	Uniting the Kingdoms (Dalziel 18-19; Whig and Jacobite ballads [c.1715])
9/13	The English Country House (Arnstein 29-30, 34-36)
Week 3	Theaters of Empire (Heyck & Veldman 149-165)
9/18	Atlantic Slave Trade (Dalziel 30-31; “Asiento” [1713]; “Rule Britannia” [1740])
9/20	The East India Company (Dalziel 36-37, 58-59; Robert Clive [1759])
Week 4	Revolution and Reform (Heyck & Veldman 79-97, 169-187)
9/25	The American Revolution (Dalziel 28-29, 52-53; Arnstein 106-109)
9/27	John Wilkes and Popular Politics (Arnstein 57-62)

- Week 5** **Monarchy or Anarchy?** (Heyck & Veldman 231-254)
 10/2 The Sanity of King George (Walter Bagehot [1867] via Brightspace + *The Madness of King George*, dir. Nicholas Hytner [1994])
 10/4 Britain and the French Revolution (Arnstein 134-140)

- Week 6** - - - -
 10/9 Fall Break
 10/10 Review session (optional Q&A, via Zoom)
 10/11 **Exam 1**

PART II: 1815-1914

- Week 7** **The British Revolution** (Heyck & Veldman 205-229, 283-335)
 10/16 The Industrial Revolution (Arnstein 152-154)
 10/18 The Age of Reform (Dalziel 56-57; [Shelley, "England in 1819"](#))

- Week 8** **Liberalism and Empire** (Heyck & Veldman 383-404, 489-502)
 10/23 Britain, China, and Liberal Empire (Dalziel 70-71; *Saturday Magazine* [1843] via Brightspace)
 10/25 Britain, India, and Illiberal Empire (Dalziel 78-79; Anita Anand and Wm. Dalrymple, *Empire* (podcast), Season 1, Episode 3: "Mutiny, Uprising, and Rebellion" [2022])

- Week 9** **Victorian Politics** (Heyck & Veldman 465-477, 337-355, 411-412, 454-457)
 10/30 Disraeli and Gladstone (Arnstein 271-276)
 11/1 Irish Home Rule (Arnstein 250-257)

- Week 10** **Constitution in Crisis** (Heyck & Veldman 417-429, 435-443, 457-462, 480-486)
 11/6 Radical Edwardians (Arnstein 304-05; [Emmeline Pankhurst](#) [1913])
 11/8 **Exam 2**

PART III: 1914-2023

- Week 11** **The Age of Total War** (Heyck & Veldman 502-542, 565-589, 610-647)
 11/13 The Second Thirty Years War (Dalziel 112-115, 118-119, 130-131; [Gandhi](#), Part III [1942])
 11/15 1940 and the Battle of Britain (Arnstein 376-378)

- Week 12** **The Welfare State** (Heyck & Veldman 651-664)

11/20 1948 and the **Battle for Britain** (Aneurin Bevan [1948], Andrea Levy [2004] via Brightspace)

11/22 Thanksgiving Break

Week 13 From Imperial Power to Soft Power (Heyck & Veldman 669-707)

11/27 The End of the British Empire (Dalziel 76-77, 116-117, 122-125); [Abdel Nasser](#) [Jul. 1956]; [Anthony Eden](#) [Sept. 1956]; [“Eden Must Go!”](#) [Nov. 1956]; [“Lessons from Suez”](#) [Oct. 1957]

11/29 Meet the Beatles (Arnstein 403-407)

Week 14 Nationalisms (Heyck & Veldman 664-669, 711-738)

12/4 Thatcherism (Arnstein 429-433)

12/6 Brexit (Zadie Smith [2016] via Brightspace)

Week 15 Conclusion (Heyck & Veldman 741-760)

12/11 Britain and the British Empire ([Ortolano](#) [2022])

12/13 **Exam 3**