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HIST 325-01, Modern Britain, Fall 2006

Item Type	Syllabus
Authors	Zastoupil, Lynn
Publisher	Memphis, Tenn. : Rhodes College
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SYLLABUS

Modern Britain
History 325
Fall 2006
Rhodes College

Professor Lynn Zastoupil
Office: Buckman 206
Office hours: MWF 10:30-11:30 (and by appointment)
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COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce students to some of the major historical developments of modern Britain. Attention will be focused not so much on individuals or a chronological narrative of events, as on major issues, trends, events and crises of this period. Topics to be covered include: eighteenth century society and religion; corruption and reform in eighteenth century politics; origins of industrialism; impact of French revolution; reform legislation and movements of the nineteenth century; social and economic consequences of industrialism; radical movements in late nineteenth century; imperialism and British politics; the Irish question; impact of world wars one and two; Britain's decline; origins and nature of the welfare state; and British society and politics since 1945. These and other topics will be covered by a combination of lectures, readings, and discussions. It is intended that students will leave this course with a firm grasp of many of the leading developments in modern British history.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be expected to attend lectures regularly, do assigned readings on time, and participate in class discussions. Often there will be assigned readings to complement the lectures, and students must be prepared to discuss these readings. Occasionally an entire class session will be devoted to discussion of assigned readings. It is essential that students participate fully in the class discussions in order best to understand the complexities of the issues at hand. Students who find it difficult to speak up in class are urged to submit summaries of the readings which will help improve their grade for class participation. There will be two examinations largely essay in nature. Students must also write two essays. The first is a short (1000 words) essay designed to help students develop ideas for a longer (2500-3000 words) research paper. The first is due early in the semester and will involve use of internet sites and encyclopedia articles. The second, longer essay will require more extensive research using traditional printed sources and is due near the end of the semester. Both research papers must be submitted by class time on the date due; all late papers will be reduced by one letter grade. **There are no exceptions to this rule.** Students must properly cite their sources for both essays. **The professor reserves the right to assign a failing grade for the assignment, or for the entire course, for any misuse of sources.**

Final grades will be determined as follows: class participation – 20%; first essay – 5%; mid-term examination - 20%; second essay - 25%; final examination - 30%.

BOOKS TO PURCHASE

Jane Austin, Pride and Prejudice
Charles Dickens, Hard Times
Antoinette Burton, Burdens of History
George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier
Mark Donnelly, Sixties Britain

COURSE OUTLINE

Week I: Introduction

August 23 Introduction
August 25 Seventeenth-century background

Week II: Glorious Revolution and Aftermath

August 28 The Glorious Revolution
August 30 Religion and society
Sept. 1 Empire

Week III: Eighteenth-Century Politics

Sept. 4 Labor Day recess
Sept. 6 Whig Oligarchy (English Historical Documents, 1714-1783, pp. 182-88, handout)
Sept. 8 Celtic Fringe (J. Swift, "A Modest Proposal")
NB: Swift's satire can be read at: <http://art-bin.com/art/omodest.html>

Week IV: Intellectuals and Reform

Sept. 11 Enlightenment (D. Hume, "Of Miracles," available in my public folder)
Sept. 13 Popular culture and politics (G. Rudé, The Crowd in History, Chpt. 3, available in my public folder)
Sept. 15 American rebellion and reform

Week V: Origins of Industrial Society

Sept. 18 Origins of industrialism
Sept. 20 Social and political consequences (Rude, Crowd, Chpt. 5 and Sadler Committee Report, selection, both available in my public folder)
Sept. 22 **Discussion:** Austin (all)

Week VI: French Revolution

Sept. 25 Britain and the revolution in France
Sept. 27 Revolutionaries and reactionaries (Rudé, Crowd, Chpt. 9, public folder)
Sept. 29 Revolution and empire

FIRST ESSAY DUE AT CLASS TIME SEPTEMBER 25

Week VII: Revival of Reform

Oct. 2 Post-war radicalism
Oct. 4 1832
Oct. 6 Age of Reform

Week VIII: 1840s: The Condition of England

- Oct. 9 **Mid-term examination**
- Oct. 11 Chartism (Rudé, Crowd, Chpt. 12, in my public folder)
- Oct. 13 Peel and conservative revival

Week IX: The Rise of the Middle Class

- Oct. 16 Fall break
- Oct. 18 Age of Equipoise and Reform
- Oct. 20 **Discussion:** Dickens (all)

Week X: Late Victorian Britain

- Oct. 23 Gladstone and Disraeli
- Oct. 25 Empire
- Oct. 27 Labor

Week XI: Edwardian Britain

- Oct. 30 Feminism
- Nov. 1 **Discussion:** Burton, Chpts. 1-3
- Nov. 3 Edwardian political crisis

Week XII: The Irish Crisis and the Great War and Its Impact

- Nov. 6 Ireland
- Nov. 8 War, crisis, and change
- Nov. 10 Great Depression

Week XIII: Rise of Labour and George Orwell

- Nov. 13 Rise of the Labour Party
- Nov. 15 **Discussion:** Orwell (all)
- Nov. 17 Individual consultations

SECOND ESSAYS DUE NOVEMBER 17

Week XIV: World War Two

- Nov. 20 Living through the Blitz
- Nov. 22, 24 Thanksgiving recess

Week XV: Post-War Britain

- Nov. 27 Welfare State and 1950s (Donnelly, Chpt. 1)
- Nov. 29 **Discussion:** Donnelly (Chpts. 2, 3 [pp. 48-54], 4-6)
- Dec. 1 **Discussion:** Donnelly (Chpts. 7-11)

Week XVI: Conservative Revival

- Dec. 4 Conservative revival (Donnelly, Chpt. 12 and Conclusion)
- Dec. 6 Review