British Culture: Between Literature and Politics

LTEN 131 Global Seminar

Tuesday, Wednesday
Lectures & discussions
2:00-5:00pm

Thursday Excursions
9:00am-1:00pm

Summer Session II
August 3 - September 4
2015

Global Seminar
UCSD

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DESCRIPTION AND THE PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

This course examines British culture and literature in the twentieth century with a focus on various political currents that redefined Britain as both a changing nation and a declining empire. The course examines the works of Shakespeare, John Stuart Mill, Jeremy Bentham and post-war novelists and political writers such as Winston Churchill, E.M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, Isaiah Berlin and Martin Amis to show the changing British attitudes towards national identity and political culture in connection with imperial rule.

This Tied to literature and political discourse, the course will also look at popular culture as a new audio poetic medium that influenced lifestyles, fashion and new attitudes toward self and collective identity in the critical decade of the 1960. The course considers these cultural transformation and their political implications in the everyday life of British public life, especially in the post-war period.

The basic goals of the course are as follow:

1. To acquire basic themes in the study of culture in the form of literary and musical expressions.

2. To gain an understanding of the complex histories of British culture over four centuries.

3. A study on the relationship between culture and politics in the context of British society and global life.

4. To gain a familiarity with basic theoretical debates on various cultural theoretical themes.

5. To be able to make connections between the content of this course and current events.

6. To improve one's writing and critical skills.
PREREQUISITES:
No prior knowledge of any topic in particular is required for this course. This is, however, an upper-division course. So, students are expected to be prepared to do reading, writing and to engage in-depth critical thinking.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS: Amazon.com; Cal Copy for the Course Reader

1. William Shakespeare, *King Lear*
2. William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*, 1847-48
3. E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India*, 1924
6. Course Reader

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Assignments:

Assignments and grades will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book imaginary</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site fantasies</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
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Reading:

It is important for each student to know that this upper-division course requires weekly reading. For each week you are required to read approximately 80-100 pages.

You will be expected to understand the readings and create thesis statements and make support of your claims with evidence in your writings.
EXAMS:

Book imaginary
This creative exercise requires you to imagine a new character in one of the fictional stories you are assigned in class. Your fictional character can change the story, insert a new tale, or merely observe the story told by the author of the book.

1) The paper needs to make references to the text (pages) and is limited to 3000 to 3500 words.

2) You are allowed to adopt any style of writing, but the paper needs to show that you have read the book and also understood the historical political context in which the story takes place.

3) Please number your pages and include a title and a bibliography—even if the source is only a single text.

Site Fantasies
This is a research paper, though still employing creativity in the writing process. You choose a site you have visited during your lectures (not excursions!) and imagine yourself in the political time frame that is discussed. In your research paper you then provide an analytical-historical account about the political history of the place and, more importantly, situate yourself in that time and place. The key here is to imagine how or what role you could have played in that historical context in a given site in London, while making references to research you have done about that place.

In the conclusion of the paper you need to show how you might have possibly introduced or inserted your 21st-century sensibilities or views into the place where you have written about and situated yourself within.

- Please email all your projects to the following email address:
  emailyourpapers@gmail.com

CLASS POLICY & GUIDELINES:

- Attendance and Participation:
  Active class participation for each week compromises 20% of your grade, so class discussion is a course requirement. Be prepared to talk about the reading material and lectures during class throughout the course.

- Late Papers:
  Late papers will be penalized a half letter grade for each class that they are late. Please email your papers. No print papers.
• Plagiarism:
The major part of your course assignments and exams involves writings based on your assigned readings, lectures and excursions. So, make sure to cite your sources, either quoted directly or paraphrased, so to avoid plagiarism. See me if you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism.

• Assistance
In case of disability that may require accommodation, please see me on the first day of class.

Schedule for the course

• Tuesdays and Wednesdays: 2:00pm – 5:00pm in class
• Excursions: Thursday and Fridays
• There will be no scheduled activity on weekends or on Mondays

Excursions

The course includes visits to various city sites, which include the British Library, Tate Gallery, and the Museum of London, where we will visit various exhibitions on how music and literature played an important role in shaping British identity. The excursions will also include Bloomsbury, where the Bloomsbury Group emerged as a leading modernist intellectual movement in Britain. We will also travel to the city of Oxford and visit numerous colleges where famous 20th century British authors like C.S. Lewis, Amit Chaudhuri and Arthur Evelyn St. John Waugh were educated or resided. We will also travel to Canterbury and Street for Stratford-upon-Avon.
Schedule of Lectures

- Please note that lectures will take place at various London sites with historical relevance to the course. Please prepare to walk, sit, walk again or get wet. 😊

- Sites where lectures will be delivered are subject to change.

August 3-7  

17th century

August 4, Tuesday: Introduction to the course (21 Pembridge Gardens)

Magna Carta (1215) (Morning Lecture)

British library (Afternoon)

* Magna Carta (1215)
* The Canterbury Tales (1475)

- Bring your identification cards and a bill with your address on it. This is for the British Library card.

August 5, Wednesday: Tudors; the Elizabethan Age; Shakespeare

Lecture 1: National Portrait Gallery (Morning)

Lecture 2: Borough Market (Noon; lunch)

Lecture 3: Golden Hind (Afternoon)

Lecture 4: The Globe Theater (Afternoon)

August 6, Thursday:

8:30am: meet at 5 Praed Street for Stratford-upon-Avon

1:15pm:

Othello

Royal Shakespeare Company Theatre
August 7, Friday

Canterbury and the Cathedral  (2pm entry)

August 10-14   (18th century)

August 11, Tuesday:  The Enlightenment; Revolution; Counter-Revolution
Jeremy Bentham

Lecture 1: University College London  (Morning)
Lecture 2: British Museum  (Afternoon)

August 12, Wednesday:  Mary Wollstonecraft; Edmund Burke

The Houses of Parliament visit 10:45am
Buckingham Palace

August 13, Thursday:  Tower of London

August 14, Friday:  Oxford

August 17-21   (19th century)

August 18, Tuesday:  William Makepeace Thackeray and Victorian Britain

Lecture 1: Downy Street  (Morning)
Lecture 2: 6 King’s Road, Bedford Row  (Morning)
Lecture 3: Kensal Green Cemetery  (Afternoon)

August 19, Wednesday: Talk by Lord Dick Taverne  (11:00am)

August 20, Thursday:  Bank of England & Victoria and Albert Museum

August 21, Friday:  Hampton Court Palace
August 24-28  (20th century)

August 25, Tuesday: Post-war Reconstruction

Movie: *The Ruling Class*  (Morning)
Movie: *Taste of Honey*  (Afternoon)

August 26, Wednesday: *A Passage to India*; Imperial decline; Counterculture; the Beatles

Lecture 1: Russell Square  (Morning)
Lecture 2: Tavistock Square  (Morning)
Lecture 3: Bloomsbury  (Morning)

Lecture 4: Carnaby Street  (Afternoon)
Lecture 5: Marque Club  (Afternoon)
Lecture 6: Abbey Road  (Afternoon)

August 27, Thursday: Imperial War Museum & the Churchill War Rooms

August 28, Friday: Cambridge

August & September 1-4  (20th and 21st centuries)

September 1, Tuesday: Isaiah Berlin; the Conservative Revolution

Meet at 1pm

Lecture 1: Parliament Square  (Afternoon)
Lecture 2: 28 Hyde Park Gate  (Afternoon)
Lecture 3: Chester Square at No. 73  (Afternoon)

September 2, Wednesday: “The Third Way”; *The London Fields*

Lecture 1: Grosvenor Square  (Morning)
Lecture 2: 30 St Mary Axe       (Afternoon)

September 3, Thursday:  Tate Modern Gallery

September 4, Friday:        Museum of London

Farwell party!!! (Afternoon)

Book imaginary Projects are due!
Site Fantasies are also due!