

## HH3024 – Decolonisation and Democracy: Britain since 1945

**Thursdays 11:30-14:30**

**Room: LHS-TR+40**

This course examines the culture, society and politics of Britain after 1945. It is a course that explores the political, economic and intellectual consequences of imperial decline. It analyses the ways in which national life both joyfully and painfully adapted to a new world order, and the ways in which new forms of social expression in Britain variously rubbed against, reached an accommodation with, and sometimes enhanced, much older and more far-reaching ambitions to wield international influence.

The first few weeks of the course look at how people have tried to tell recent British history – we analyse arguments about what the subjects of contemporary British history should be and how such histories might be written. We then go on to look at three structural types of social historical change: demographics, class and culture. The second half of the course drills down into a number of case studies; the spread of new economic liberalism, post-imperial military policies and the relationship to Europe.

You'll be given detailed information about the assessments in good time but broadly the first assessment is a group exercise where you'll be given a general theme to present on, the second assessment is a short guided exercise in writing biographical history which you will then develop into a longer essay. There's also a short review task.

The assessment schedule can be found below. Readings will be uploaded to the course site a week in advance.

### **Overviews**

P. Clarke, *Hope & Glory: Britain 1900-2000*

Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918-68*

B. Porter *The Lion's Share: A History of British Imperialism 1850-2011*

G. Bernstein, *The Myth of Decline: The Rise of Britain since 1945*

R. Weight, *Patriots: National Identity in Britain, 1940-2000*

### **16 August – Week 1**

*Introduction*

### **23 August – Week 2**

*The spirit of 1945: the story of post war Britain*

**Readings:** This week's readings will be distributed in-class

### **30 August – Week 3**

*New histories of post-war Britain*

**Readings:** D. Edgerton, *The rise and fall of the British nation* **Extracts**

**6 September – Week 4**

*Modern Britain: personal histories*

**Readings:** Extracts from C. Wills, *Lovers and Strangers: An Immigrant History of Postwar Britain* & others

**13 September – Week 5**

*First assessments – Group project & mini-review*

**20 September – Week 6**

*Race Relations*

**Readings:** Extracts from D. Goodhart, *The British Dream: Successes and Failures of Postwar Immigration* & others

**27 September – Week 7**

*Class*

**Readings:** Extracts from Selina Todd, *The People: The rise and fall of the working class 1910-2010* & others

**RECESS**

**11 October – Week 8**

*Culture wars*

**Readings:** Zoe Strimpel, 'Computer dating in the 1970s; Dateline and the making of the modern British single' & others

**18 October – Week 9**

*Second assessment – Biographical project*

**25 October – Week 10**

*Malaya: Military activism and secret intelligence*

**Readings:** Extracts from C. Walton, *Empire of Secrets: British Intelligence, the Cold War and the Twilight of Empire* & others

**1 November – Week 11**

*Yes to Europe! The 1975 Referendum*

**Readings:** R. Saunders, *The 1975 Referendum and Seventies Britain* **Extracts**

**8 November – Week 12**

*Hong Kong & Thatcherism*

**Readings:** Extracts from Mark Hampton, *Hong Kong and British Culture, 1945-1997* & others

**15 November – Week 13**

*Final essay workshop*

## **Assessment**

### **I. Mini presentations (5%)**

Topics given after add/drop on **30 August**

### **II. Article review (20%)**

Task given 13 Sept, assessments to be handed in by **5pm on Friday 28 Sept**

### **III. Video presentations (20%)**

Topics given 13 Sept, assessments to be handed in by **5pm on Wednesday 17 Oct**

### **IV. Biographical outline (15%)**

Task given 18 October, deadline **5pm on Friday 2 November**

### **V. Final biographical essay, circa 3,000 words (40%)**

Deadline: **30 November 5pm**

### **Useful additional works of reference:**

The final essay you produce on this course will be very much driven by your interests, many primary sources are available and you will be offered tailored support and guidance in class as you develop your work. Nevertheless, listed below are some general resources that you may find useful and which repay time spent working on.

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* ([www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com)) - indispensable and searchable through NTU library portal

Office for National Statistics ([www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)):

*Economic Trends* (1953-2006) (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/elmr/economic-trends--discontinued-/index.html>), now *Economic and Labour Review* (2007-) (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/elmr/economic-and-labour-market-review/index.html>)

*Social Trends* (1970-) (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/social-trends-rd/social-trends/index.html>)

*General Household Survey* (1971-2007) (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/ghs/general-household-survey/index.html>), now *General Lifestyle Survey* (2008-) (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/ghs/general-lifestyle-survey/index.html>)

Select visual and aural sources:

<http://www.screenonline.org.uk/> - UK film and television

<http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/> - film of imperial life

<http://www.britishpathe.com/> - newsreel, 1896-1976

<http://sounds.bl.uk/> - archival sound recordings