History 3050: Eighteenth-Century Britain
Professor Rachel Weil
G 01 Stimson Hall Tues/Thursday 1:25-2:40

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:00-1:00 and Thursdays 2:45-3:30 or by appointment
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Was she a rock of constitutional stability in a sea of bloody revolution (as Edmund Burke might say) or a corrupt, rotten oligarchy on the verge of well-deserved collapse (as Tom Paine thought)? What was it like to gain (and lose) an Empire? What did slavery in the Americas mean to the British at home? Whether watching a hanging at Tyburn, speculating on the newly invented stock market, chasing pirates or seeking suitable marriage partners at Bath, British men and women in the 18th century faced a world that had been dramatically remade by consumer capitalism, Enlightenment ideas, political revolution(s) and warfare on an unprecedented scale. This course considers the British experiences of religious persecution, crime, empire, sexuality and capitalism, and the impact of these on the modern world.

Requirements and grading:

Three 7-10 page papers (25% each) due on October 4, November 15 and December 9
Attendance and Informed Participation in Discussion Section (25%)

Book Purchases (Campus Store)
John Locke, Two Treatises of Government (Dover Thrift edition, including Letter on Toleration)
Robert C. Ritchie Captain Kidd and the War against the Pirates
Jane Austen, Emma
The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin
Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations
Olaudah Equiano, The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano
John Gay, The Beggar's Opera
All other readings will be posted on Blackboard, in the "Content" section.
Policies and Expectations

Academic Integrity
Students should be aware of Cornell’s Code of Academic Integrity, especially those sections relating to plagiarism. You are highly encouraged to look at Cornell's web-page on plagiarism and do their very enlightening exercises: http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm

Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity will result (depending upon severity) in failing the assignment or failing the course.

Attendance policy

Because Cornell University does not allow us to ask you for notes from a doctor proving that you were sick, I cannot distinguish between absences caused by illness and absences caused by something else (sports event, job interview, failed alarm clock, funeral, early departure for Fall break, etc). Therefore, I will treat all absences the same way regardless of the cause. You are allowed three absences during the semester without penalty, and with no questions asked. More than two absences will negatively affect your final grade (the more absences, the worse the effect). If you believe that a medical or personal issue may cause excessive absences, please notify me immediately.

Excessive lateness also counts as an absence. If there is a reason beyond your control why you may be late (for example, you have a class prior to this that is far away or may end late), please notify me.

Laptops and Devices

I encourage you whenever possible to put away your laptops and take notes by hand. Recent research in cognitive psychology suggests that students retain and understand material better if they do NOT take notes on a computer during lectures.

If you choose to use a laptop anyway, disable the internet connection when you come to class so that you don't get distracted or distract others. Reading email or Facebook, surfing, playing games, or texting are strictly prohibited in the classroom.

Coming prepared to class and participating

Because this is a small class, there are no separate discussion sections. There will often be a blend of lecture and discussion, which means that readings are assigned sometimes on Tuesdays, sometimes on Thursdays, and sometimes both days. Readings for each day are indicated clearly in the syllabus. You should have read the material before you come to class, be prepared to discuss it, and BRING IT WITH YOU to class (preferably in a hard copy so you are not looking at a computer screen).
Schedule of Lectures and Discussions

Please do readings assigned for the day before you come to class and bring the readings with you to class

**Week 1**
Tues August 23 The experience of Revolution and the search for stability

Thurs August 25 Religion and Politics

**Week 2**
Tuesday August 30 Discussion: Religious Toleration and its Discontents
- John Locke, *Letter Concerning Toleration*
- Roger L'Estrange, *The Growth of Knavery and Popery Under the Mask of Presbytery* (B)
- Andrew Marvell, *An Account of the Growth of Popery* (B)

Thursday Sept 1 The Revolution of 1688
- The Declaration of Rights (1689)

**Week 3**
Tues Sept 6 Debating the Meaning of 1688
- John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (note: you will want to read the whole thing to get a sense of the flow, but for this discussion focus on Chaps 1-4 and 8-19)
- Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France (excerpts)

Thurs Sept 8 The Ruling Class and the Challenge of Governance
- Locke, Thoughts concerning Education (excerpts)

**Week 4**
Tues Sept 13 The Fiscal-Military State
- Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against the Pirates* (chaps 1-3)

Thurs Sept 15 The Rage of Party

**Week 5**
Tues Sept 20 Discussion: Why Pirates?
- Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against the Pirates* (finish the book)

Thurs Sept 22 Transformations of Property
**Week 6**
Tues Sept 27 Discussion: Making the world safe for property?
- John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chapter 6
- Douglas Hay, “Property, Authority and Criminal Law” (B)
- John Langbein, “Albion’s Fatal Flaws (B)
- Peter Fryer, “Slavery and the Law” (B)
- review chapter 9 of *Captain Kidd*

Thursday September 29 Marriage a la Mode
- John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chaps 6-7
- Susan Staves. ‘Separate Maintenance Contracts’ (B)

**Week 7**
Tues Oct 4 Theatre, Popular Culture, and Crime. **First 7-10 page paper due today.**

Thurs Oct 6 Discussion: Beggar's opera as Satire
- John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera* (note: we will arrange a showing of the Beggar’s Opera earlier in the week or in the previous week)

**Week 8**
Tues Oct 11 FALL BREAK

Thurs Oct 13 The Culture of Politeness
- Jane Austen, *Emma* (1st half)

**Week 9**
Tues Oct 18 Discussion: Marriage and Social Order
- Finish *Emma*
Thurs Oct 20 Commerce, Enlightenment and the Public Sphere

**Week 10**
Tues Oct 25 Ben Franklin as Enlightenment examplar
- *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, up to page 126 (“In 1754, War with France being again apprehended…”)

Thurs Oct 27 Adam Smith 1: the philosophical Adam Smith
- Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, chaps 1-4

**Week 11**
Tues Nov 1 Adam Smith as Historian

Thurs Nov 3 Empire and Politics
Week 12
Tues Nov 8 Discussion: Trade and Empire
- Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Book IV, Chaps 1-3 (you can skip the Bank of Amsterdam), Chapter 7 (parts 1 and 2, up to "Of the Advantages which Europe has derived from the Discovery of America)
Thurs Nov 10 NO CLASS

Week 13
Tues Nov 15 The Crisis of Empire. **Second 7-10 page paper due today**

Thurs Nov. 17 Perspectives on the American Crisis
- *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (finish, pp. 134-168)
- Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Book IV, Chapter 7, section 3, through "the monopoly of the American Trade is a dazzling object"
- Soames Jenyns, *The Objections to Taxation of our American Colonies….Briefly Considered* (1765) & Edmund Burke, “Speech on Conciliation with America” (1775) (B)

Week 14
Tues Nov 22 British Identity in an Age of Revolution

Thurs Nov 24 THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 15
Tues Nov 29 Identity in Equiano's Narrative
- Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative*, including front matter and appendix (1-234)

Thurs Dec 1 Wrap-up
- Tom Paine, *The Rights of Man* (excerpt)

Third 6-8 Page Paper due Friday December 9 at 4:00 PM