

EUH 3931 – History of the British Empire
Fall 2022

Instructor: Rachel Laue

Meeting Time: Tuesday 1:55-2:45pm (Period 7) Thursday 1:55-3:50pm (Period 7-8)

Classroom: FLI 0119

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-4pm in FLI 210

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Course Description:

An examination of the expansion and rule of the British Empire from the loss of the American colonies in 1783 to the era of decolonization in the 1960s and beyond. From the white settlement colonies of Canada and Australia, to the occupation of parts of Africa and India, the history of the British Empire impacted every corner of the globe. The course will critically analyze the Empire from multiple perspectives, including the critics and defenders of imperialism as well as the responses of indigenous peoples to colonization. Economic, governmental, and social structures, religions and family life, individual freedom and the bonds of communities were all disrupted and changed by imperial encounters in the colonies and in Britain itself. This course explores how colonized and colonizers responded to these changes engaging with ideas of resistance and compliance, conflict and cooperation. This course will also discuss how the history of the British Empire is entangled with current affairs such as Brexit, Irish independence, the state of the Commonwealth, and the resurgence of imperial ideologies in the present day.

Learning Goals:

- 1.) To understand the push and pull of the different forces that drove imperialism over time.
- 2.) To creatively analyze historical events from different perspectives.
- 3.) To write clear, persuasive arguments grounded in evidence-based research.

Required Readings:

Philippa Levine, *The British Empire: Sunrise to Sunset, Third Edition* (2019).
Christina Baker Kline, *The Exiles* (2020).

Additional readings will be provided by the instructor each week on Canvas.

Assignments:

Note: All assignments will be submitted electronically via Canvas and be subject to checks for plagiarism.

Short Reflection Papers – Students will write **Three (3) reflection papers of 500 words based on one of the readings from class.** This is a loosely structured assignment meant to allow you, the student, to reflect on what you have learned and how your ideas have been challenged by diverse readings. **Reflection papers are due on Thursday, September 15th; Thursday, October 20th; and Thursday, November 17th.**

Kline Short Paper – Students will choose one of the historical monographs or journal articles listed in the acknowledgements at the end of Christina Baker Kline’s novel, *The Exiles*, read the monograph or article, and write **an essay of 3-4 pages** discussing what aspects of that scholarly work they saw reflected in Kline’s novel. Some questions to consider for this assignment: What elements of the historian’s research did Kline draw on for her novel? What elements did she leave out or change for the sake of the story? What research from the monograph/article should Kline have included or excluded? Do fiction writers have the same responsibility to use only verifiable historical evidence as historians do? **Due Thursday, October 6th.**

Petition for Self-Government Group Project – In small groups, students will research the history of a specific British colony and write a petition to British Parliament outlining the reasons why that colony should be granted self-government. Petitions should be **500-700 words long**. Each group will then give a **ten-minute presentation to the class**. Presentations may take any form students wish, from reading their petition aloud, to PowerPoints, or any other ideas you may have. Feel free to be creative! And be prepared to answer questions that your fellow students or instructor may have at the end of your presentation. Each student should submit their group-written petition individually along with a short paragraph explaining each group member’s contribution to the project. **Due Thursday, November 10th.**

Final Research Paper – Drawing on primary and secondary sources and the overall themes of course material, students will write a **research paper of 5-6 pages** answering the following general question: Of the different factors driving British imperialism during the 19th and 20th centuries, which was most important and why? At any point did this factor become a liability? Were colonized peoples ever able to use it for their own purposes? **Papers should use at least 2-3 primary sources, and 2 secondary sources.** You may use the primary and secondary sources provided in your weekly readings, or sources outside of class readings, or a combination of both. More information will be given later in the semester to help students construct their projects. **Due Monday, December 12th.**

Participation – This class is structured around the idea that robust student participation increases learning, generates enthusiasm for knowledge beyond the classroom, and allows students to discuss new ideas in a safe space. Here are some ways you can participate in this class: 1.) Show up! Attendance is mandatory. You can’t learn if you aren’t there. 2.) Speak up! Every Friday we will have an open group discussion, but there will be other opportunities to share your thoughts about the content of this course throughout the semester. It is my job as instructor to make sure the classroom is a safe, respectful place where everyone can speak openly. But it only works if you talk! 3.) Contribute to the group project! You will be graded on your contributions, but this is also an opportunity for you to foster relationships with your peers, generate new knowledge, and find new ways to think about history. 4.) If you have specific reasons you cannot participate in a traditional way, please come and talk to me privately. I am happy to figure out a solution that works for both of us.

Grading Policies:

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the specified due date.

Short Reflection Papers (3) - 30% (10% each)

Petition for Self-Government Project – 10%
Kline Short Paper - 20%
Final Research Paper - 25%
Participation: - 15%

UF Scale:

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|--------------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|---|----|---|----|-----|
| Letter Grade | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | E | WF | I | NG | S-U |
| Grade Points | 4.0 | 3.67 | 3.33 | 3.0 | 2.67 | 2.33 | 2.0 | 1.67 | 1.33 | 1.0 | .67 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Make-up and Late Work Policy:

Late assignments will be reduced by 1/3 letter grade if submitted more than 24 hours after the submission deadline. Assignments will be further reduced by 1/3 letter grade for each day late after that. Make-up work will be accepted only in consultation with and by permission of the instructor.

Attendance Policy:

Students should expect to attend every class meeting. Each student is permitted three (3) unexcused absences. All other absences will require proper documentation to prevent a reduction in your participation grade. Unexcused absences beyond the first three (3) will result in a reduction of the participation grade. Absences related to COVID-19 will be excused.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism is a serious offence and violates the University of Florida’s Student Honor Code. The University’s definition of plagiarism is as follows:

A student shall not represent as the student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- **Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution**
- **Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authorized by the student**
- **Unauthorized use of materials or resources**
- **Prohibited collaboration or consultation**
- **Submission of paper or academic work purchased or obtained from an outside source**

Assignments which contain plagiarism will receive a zero for a first offence. Repeated offences may result in further punitive action. All incidents of academic dishonesty are reported to the Office for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. For more information see the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code Book available here: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/> . Pages 12-14 outline violations to the academic honor code.

Diversity Statement:

This class welcomes civil discussion from all students enrolled in it including those of all races, ethnicities, disabilities, gender identities, sexual orientations, neurodiversity, socioeconomic backgrounds, religions, and political views. All members of this class, students and teacher alike,

have a responsibility to foster a classroom environment free of prejudice and discrimination where careful listening and thoughtful engagement with each other's perspectives is as important as our individual self-expression. Together we can create a diverse intellectual community characterized by respectful debate, openminded interaction, and empathy for one another.

Accommodation for Disabilities:

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact the Disability Resources Center (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) for information about available resources for students with disabilities.

Mental Health Resources:

Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352-392-1575) or make an appointment on the web at <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/> .

Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> . Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results> .

Schedule:

Week 1

Aug. 25: Thursday – Introduction to Course / The British Empire in 1783

Read: “An Indigenous Australian Perspective on Cook’s Arrival” from the British Library: <https://www.bl.uk/the-voyages-of-captain-james-cook/articles/an-indigenous-australian-perspective-on-cooks-arrival>

Week 2

Aug. 30: Tuesday – What is a Colony? Defining Modes of Power and Rule

Read: Levine, Chapter 1 “United the Kingdom” and Chapter 3 “Settling the New World”

Sept. 1: Thursday – Theories on Race and Class in early 19th Century Britain

Read: Excerpts from “An Account of Ireland in 1773 by a late Chief Secretary of that Kingdom” (1773) and

“Speech of the Right Hon. William Pitt in the House of Commons: on offering to the House the Resolutions which he proposed as the Basis of an Union between Great Britain and Ireland” (1799). (Canvas)

Week 3

Sept. 6: Tuesday – The British East Indies and the East India Company

Read: Levine, Chapter 5 “Britain in India”

Richard B. Allen, “Satisfying the “Want for Labouring People”: European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500-1850.” *The Journal of World History* 21, no. 1 (2010): 45-73.

Sept. 8: Thursday – The British West Indies and the Atlantic Slave Trade

Read: Levine, Chapter 2 “Slaves, Merchants, Trade”

Excerpts from Matthew Lewis, *Journal of a West India Proprietor* (Canvas)

Week 4

Sept. 13: Tuesday – Imperial Rivalries/Napoleonic Wars

Read: Levine, Chapter 4, “After America”

Read “Prisoners of War,” “Black Prisoners,” and “Black Lives in Late-18th Century Britain” pages on the Portchester Castle site linked here: <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/portchester-castle/history-and-stories/portchester-castle-and-prisoners-of-war/>

Sept. 15: Thursday – Documentary “Britain’s Global Trade in the Great Days of Sail”

Reflection paper 1 due at start of class

Read: “New Horizons” excerpt (Canvas)

Week 5

Sept. 18: Tuesday – Reformers and Abolitionists

Read: Begin reading Kline, pages 1-196 (this refers to the hardcover edition, if you have the paperback or eBook editions read until the first section labeled Hazel.)

Sept. 20: Thursday – Missionaries and the Civilizing Mission/The End of Slavery

Read: “Reform and Empire” excerpt (Canvas)

Week 6

Sept. 25: Tuesday – From Botany Bay to Van Diemen’s Land: The Invasion of Australia

Read: Digital Humanities Project: Map of Colonial Frontier Massacres, Australia, 1780 to 1930 at this link: <https://c21ch.newcastle.edu.au/colonialmassacres/map.php>
See also this article about the project from The New Yorker:

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/mapping-massacres>

Watch: Bruce Pascoe – A Real History of Aboriginal Australians, The First Agriculturalists at this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqgrSSz7Htw&ab_channel=TEDxTalks

Sept. 27: Thursday – Discussion of Novel

Read: Kline, 197-371 (Or first section labeled Hazel to end)

Week 7

Oct. 4: Tuesday – Expanding the Formal Empire: Settlement Colonies

Read: Levine, Chapter 6 “Global Growth”
“The British Diaspora” excerpt (Canvas)

Oct. 6: Thursday – Expanding the Informal Empire: China and The Opium Wars

Kline Short Paper due at start of class

Read: “Treaty of Nanjing”, “Petition from British Residents of Canton” (Canvas)
British Imperialism in China a Guided History by Boston University:

<http://blogs.bu.edu/guidedhistory/moderneurope/tao-he/>

Watch: How Britain Stole Tea:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSrzlS53JWU&ab_channel=RichardTilney-Bassett

Week 8

Oct. 11: Tuesday – Changing Theories on Race and Rule in mid-19th Century Britain

Oct. 13: Thursday – Documentary: “Queen Victoria’s Empire”

Read: Levine, Chapter 7 “Ruling an Empire”

Week 9

Oct. 18: Tuesday – Women, Gender, and Empire

Read: Levine, Chapter 9 “Gender and Sexuality”
Excerpts from Canadian Indian Residential Schools (Canvas)

Oct. 20: Thursday – The Indian “Mutiny” of 1857/The British Raj

Reflection paper 2 due at start of class

Read: Levine, Chapter 8 “Being Ruled”
Joseph Coohill, “Indian Voices from the 1857 Rebellion,” *History Today* 57, no. 5 (2007).
Also read through all sections of Anuj Kaushal’s digital history project “Indian Revolt of 1857” at this link: <https://1857india.wordpress.com/>

Week 10

Oct. 25: Tuesday – The Eastern Question and the “Great Game” with Russia

Oct. 27: Thursday – Gladstone, Disraeli, and Irish Home Rule

Read: Parnell and Gladstone speech excerpts (Canvas)

Week 11

Nov. 1: Tuesday – The New Imperialism

Read: Kipling, “The White Man’s Burden,” and “The Man Who Would Be King” (Canvas)

Nov. 3: Thursday – The Partition of Africa and The Boer War

Read: John Maynard, “‘Let us go’ ... it’s a ‘Blackfellows’ War’: Aborigines and the Boer War,” *Aboriginal History* 39 (2015): 143-162.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Boer War*, selections TBD. Can be read free on Gutenberg: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3069/3069-h/3069-h.htm>

Study the maps at the Map Archive here: <https://www.themaparchive.com/the-scramble-for-africa/>

Week 12

Nov. 8: Tuesday – From Colony to Dominion – Australian Self-Governance

Nov. 10: Thursday – Petition for Self-Government Presentations

- Petition for Self-Government Project due at start of class

Week 13

Nov. 15: Tuesday– Early Indian and African Nationalisms

Read: Levine, Chapter 10 “Contesting Empire”

Nicholas Owen, “The Soft Heart of the British Empire: Indian Radicals in Edwardian London,” *Past & Present* no. 220 (2013): 143-184.

Nov. 17: Thursday– World War I in the Colonies

Reflection paper 3 due at start of class

Read: “Shells, songs and bombs: How Indians experienced World War I on the home front” at this link: <https://scroll.in/article/902246/shells-songs-and-bombs-how-indians-experienced-world-war-i-on-the-home-front>

“The First World War in East Africa” from the British Library: <https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/the-first-world-war-in-east-africa>

Week 14

Nov. 22: Tuesday – The Interwar Years

Read: Gandhi’s Quit India Speech at this link:

<https://www.mkgandhi.org/speeches/qui.htm>

Daniel Mark Stephen, “The White Man's Grave”: British West Africa and the British Empire Exhibition of 1924-1925,” *Journal of British Studies* 48, no. 1 (2009): 102-128.

Nov. 24: Thursday – Thanksgiving, no class

Week 15

Nov. 29: Tuesday – World War 2 and Decolonization

Read: Levine, Chapter 11 “Decolonization”

Cheikh Anta Babou, “Decolonization or National Liberation: Debating the End of British Colonial Rule in Africa,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol. 632, Perspectives on Africa and the World (2010): 41-54.

See also maps here: <https://vividmaps.com/colonization-of-africa/>

Dec. 1: Thursday – Decolonization and the Commonwealth

Read: Primary Source excerpts from Ghana, Kenya, India (Canvas)

Read through the “1965 Freedom Ride” exhibit from the Australia Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies:

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/1965-freedom-ride>

Week 16

Dec. 6: Tuesday – The End of Empire?

Final Research papers due Monday, December 12th, by 5pm