Proseminar:
Imperial Crisis and the British Empire

Prof. Jeffrey Auerbach
Course: Hist 497E
Office: Sierra Tower 603
Semester: Spring 2011
Hours: TTh 11-12, T 2-3
Time: Tuesdays 4-6:45 pm
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Class # 18959

Description: This course, which focuses on the mid-nineteenth century British Empire, is designed to satisfy the proseminar requirement of the history major and provide students with training in the research and writing of an original essay based on relevant primary and secondary sources. The British Empire was the largest empire in history, encompassing one-quarter of the earth and so geographically dispersed that the sun literally never set on British-controlled territory. The middle decades of the nineteenth century, however, have often been seen as a lull in imperial history, transitional years between the First British Empire of the eighteenth century and the Scramble for Africa in the late-nineteenth century. Yet this was a period of considerable crisis, from the Crimean War in the early 1850s, to the Frontier Wars in southern Africa, the India Mutiny in 1857, the Maori Rebellion in New Zealand, and the Morant Bay uprising Rebellion in Jamaica in 1865, all of which provoked immense political and cultural soul-searching in Britain. These events, set in the wider context of British imperial history, will serve as the focus for this research seminar. Using primary sources such as diaries, letters, parliamentary reports, and newspapers, some of them more than 150 years old and available only in the Special Collections department of the Oviatt Library, students will write research papers on any aspect of these crises or the mid-nineteenth century British Empire. Possible topics include colonial warfare and governance, perceptions of indigenous people, the role of women, missionary activity, economic change, imperial geography, political cartoons, and numerous others. Prerequisite: successful completion of History 301.

Objectives:
- To produce an original, well-written, properly-documented research paper on a historical topic relating to the mid-nineteenth century British Empire
- To demonstrate a range of skills, including the ability to locate and analyze primary sources and to situate them in a historiographical context
- To learn to revise a first draft in order to produce a polished final draft
- To explore and develop the concept of an “imperial crisis” by examining people, events, political culture, and colonial connections across the mid-nineteenth century British Empire

Required Books: (Available at Matador Bookstore)
- Timothy H. Parsons, The British Imperial Century (1999)
Graded Assignments:

- *Illustrated London News* Exploration (10%), due Feb. 1. The Oviatt Library has a number of volumes of *The Illustrated London News* (the nineteenth-century equivalent of *Time* or *Newsweek* magazine). They are available in the Special Collections department, at call number AP1.I45. You are to select one volume – each volume covers six months – and write up three possible topics based on the articles/illustrations. For each possible topic you should write a paragraph that discusses the article you read (or image you looked at), states the topic you might want to pursue, and lists three questions, connections, and/or issues you would want to explore. Make sure to include volume/page/date for each entry.

- Comparative Analysis (10%), due Feb. 22: Write a 3-page paper in which you discuss and analyze the common threads, or similarities, linking together the Indian Mutiny/Rebellion of 1857 and the Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865, as well as the major differences between them.

- Research Paper (80%): This is the centerpiece of the entire semester. The research paper should be 20 pages double-spaced, with footnotes, and a complete bibliography. Much of the semester will be spent working towards this goal. Steps along the way, some of which are graded and others of which are not, include:
  - Feb. 8: Three potential topics or questions you are interested in researching
  - March 1: A paragraph description of your topic, the potential research questions you will be investigating, and a properly formatted bibliography listing at least ten sources, both primary and secondary, that are pertinent to your topic (10%). Along with this you should submit a research log that lists 1) the date of each search you conducted; 2) the database, catalogue, or bibliography you searched; 3) the keywords you used; and 4) the number of results produced; and 5) any follow-up action your took.
  - March 15: Primary Source Paper (10%). A 3-page analysis dealing with at least two primary sources central to your project. Your paper should introduce your topic/issue, provide an analysis of your sources, and offer some preliminary insights, conclusions, or connection. It should also be double-spaced and properly footnoted using Chicago/Turabian style. You may use secondary sources only so far as they are needed to elucidate your primary sources.
  - March 29: Annotated Bibliography of Secondary Sources (10%). This should cover at least three books and at least three articles. Each entry should summarize the content, argument, and usefulness of the source. Please use proper Chicago citation style.
  - April 12: The first 3-4 pages of your research paper (10%). This must include an introductory and/or a thesis paragraph. See *Writing Research Papers*, pp. 198-200 for tips, suggestions, and a template.
  - April 26: First Draft (15%). This must be a complete draft including footnotes and bibliography. It will be returned to you with suggestions and corrections on May 3, giving you two weeks to make revisions.
  - May 17: Final Paper Due by noon (25%)
**Attendance:** Since this class meets only once a week – and not even every week – it is important and expected that you attend every session having done the assigned reading and prepared to talk about it in a thoughtful, well-informed manner. I understand that an occasion may arise that makes it impossible to come to class. However, more than one absence for any reason other than your own hospitalization will result in a failing grade for the course, regardless of your grades on the written assignments. You are expected to arrive on time, and since arriving late is disruptive, I reserve the right to lower the grade of anyone who arrives late repeatedly. Needless to say, please turn off your cell phone when you enter the classroom.

**Workload:** This is an intensive class. You are expected to do at least 3-4 hours of work outside class for every hour you spend in class. That means you should expect to do 12-15 hours of work per week. During the first few weeks, most of this time will be spent doing the assigned reading, with some time devoted to library research to find and develop your topic. During the middle third of the semester, your 12-15 hours per week will be spent researching and reading. During the final third of the semester, most of your time will be spent writing and revising, with some time allocated for additional research and reading as needed. The key to success in this class is consistency. Since you are writing a term paper, not a “last-two-weeks-of-the-semester paper,” your final product should reflect a semester’s worth of work, and will be evaluated accordingly.

**Late Policy:** All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the specified due date. Late assignments will be accepted for one week after the due date, but will be marked down one-third of a grade (e.g., from an A to an A-) per day. Missed assignments will be entered as a zero. All assignments must be printed out, unless noted otherwise.

**Plagiarism:** Any student caught plagiarizing (copying someone else’s words or ideas, whether on paper or from the internet, without crediting them fully) will receive a failing grade for the course and be referred to the Office of Student Affairs for disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. Since plagiarism is always obvious and easily caught (I know how to Google too), it is better to hand in your own work and get a C than someone else’s and receive an F. If you are unsure what plagiarism is, consult with me before turning in an assignment.

**Grading:** You must get at least a C in this class to graduate with a history major. To me, “A” means excellent, “B” means good, “C” means acceptable. A “C-range” paper meets the basic requirements for this course, but typically lacks a clear thesis or offers one that is not disputable. It presents some evidence, but features a writing style that is often marred by grammatical and/or typographical errors. A “B-range” paper has a clear, disputable thesis, with a coherent argument that uses appropriate evidence in support of its points, and is for the most part well-written and proofread. An “A-range” paper offers an insightful and/or original thesis; presents evidence that is carefully chosen and deftly handled; features a nuanced argument; and is gracefully written and carefully proofread. A “D” or “F” paper will be seriously flawed in that it will be poorly researched and/or written. In short, your final paper should offer a clear thesis adequately supported with evidence; it should also be carefully and thoroughly researched, well-organized, properly documented, and clearly written.

**Formatting:** All footnotes and bibliographies must be formatted using the Chicago system, discussed in *Writing Research Papers*, pp. 278-283 and 340-363, and summarized online at [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). The complete *Chicago Manual of Style* is available in the Oviatt Library at Ref Z253.U69 2003.
Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Jan. 25  Introduction

Feb. 1  Timothy Parsons, *The British Imperial Century*
*Writing Research Papers*, ch. 1-3
Due: Illustrated London News Assignment
NB: Class will begin at 5:15 pm

Feb. 8  Library Research Orientation (Oviatt 169)
Ronald Hyam, *Britain’s Imperial Century, 1815-1914*, 3rd. ed (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 134-54 [moodle]
*Writing Research Papers*, ch. 4-8
Due: Three topics or questions you are interested in researching, based on your reading of Parsons and Fremont-Barnes

Feb. 15  Gad Heuman, *‘The Killing Time:’ The Morant Bay Rebellion in Jamaica*
*Writing Research Papers*, ch. 9-10

Feb. 22  Individual Conferences and Library Research
Due: Comparative Analysis of India Mutiny and Morant Bay Rebellion

*Writing Research Papers*, ch. 11-13
Due: Topic Summary, Bibliography, and Research Log

March 8  Individual Conferences and Library Research

Due: Primary Source Analysis

March 22  Individual Conferences and Library Research
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 29</td>
<td><em>Writing Research Papers</em>, ch. 15-16; 17, 20</td>
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<td>Due: Annotated Bibliography of Secondary Sources</td>
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<td>April 5</td>
<td>No Class: Spring Break</td>
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<td>April 12</td>
<td>Due: The first 3-4 pages of your paper</td>
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<td><em>Writing Research Papers</em>, ch. 22 (pp. 340-63)</td>
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<td>April 19</td>
<td>Individual Conferences by Appointment</td>
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<td>April 26</td>
<td>Due: First Draft</td>
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<td>May 3</td>
<td><em>Writing Research Papers</em>, ch. 16</td>
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<td>May 10</td>
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