Monday 25th June 2018

A1 - Civil Disobedience in 1960s America – Dr Caroline Ashcroft

In this seminar we will explore how three very different political thinkers understood the idea of ‘civil disobedience’ in 1960s America, and the role that civil disobedience could, or ought to play in American politics. We will contrast the ideas of Martin Luther King Jr. on nonviolent action, with James Forman’s idea of civil disobedience as radical resistance, and Hannah Arendt’s claim that civil disobedience is part of the legacy of American constitutionalism.

The seminar will explore the historical rise of practices of resistance in 1960s America, particularly in the context of the black civil rights movement, the anti-Vietnam movement, and the university campus protests. Against this background, we will then seek to understand the roles that King, Forman and Arendt attributed to civil disobedience: what was it for and what could it achieve? Finally, we’ll look at how each of these thinkers makes a claim for the legitimacy of civil disobedience, even whilst they acknowledge its illegality. How did they understand such practices to be justified, and what were the limits of civil disobedience?

A2 - What Makes a Nation: The Case of Italy – Dr Elena Bacchin

In the formation of the Italian national identity we have to distinguish a pre-political dimension and a political once. The pre-political dimension constituted a substrate of common sentiments and cultural conceptions in which political ideas, programmes, and ideals took roots and were elaborated in precise political and constitutional programs.

The seminar will analyse how during the first half of the 19th century Italy moved from a geographical, linguistic and cultural dimension to a political one. How the idea of an Italian nation took root among the peninsula’s population? Which was the role of culture in the spread of national ideas? How cultural ideas were transformed into a political programme?

A3 - How did London Survive the Blitz? – Dr Nick Beech

‘The Rescue Man was not only working on the incident, he was a part of it… the vaguely apprehended shape that appeared from the surrounding chaos as a human being.’

Between 7 September 1940 and 21 May 1941 London was attacked 71 times in German air raids labelled ‘the Blitz’. More than one million homes were damaged or destroyed, thousands of Londoners were displaced, factories, warehouses, docks and ports were decimated. How did London survive this assault and what was the experience like for those who worked in the Rescue and Recovery Service? We’ll look at some of the material that can help us answer these questions—photographs, diaries, private letters and public announcements.

A4 - Should nations apologize for wrongs committed in the past? – Dr Mark Condos

https://www.historytoday.com/suzannah-lipscomb/hardest-word

‘Over the course of the last two decades, the historical legacies of European colonial empires has become increasingly contested within both public and academic discourse. Much of this debate revolves around questions about whether today’s nations, societies, and governments should feel ‘guilt’ or ‘shame’ for their imperial past. The issue of apologizing for historical wrongs and even ‘crimes’ has become a particularly charged one. This seminar will explore some of the ways in which different nations, including Britain, France, and Germany, have all had to grapple with these issues as they continue to reckon with the ongoing legacies of their imperial history.’
A5 - Medieval Women - Professor Virginia Davis

Virginia Davis - Medieval Women Taster Day Preliminary Reading

This seminar will explore the role of women in medieval English society at all levels from aristocrat to peasant, from urban to rural. We will look at women’s lives, at the social, cultural and legal constraints on them and at the changes which took place in England between the Norman Conquest and the early Tudor period, drawing on a wide range of written and visual source material. Popular preconceptions about women’s role in this period will be challenged and the wide range of activities in which they were engaged revealed.

A6 - The cost of cheap clothing – Dr Alice Dolan

The Industrial Revolution started in the late eighteenth century. Technological innovation increased output and enabled the production of high quality goods at speed. However there was a human cost to this manufacturing change. Cotton manufacturing gains were built on a foundation of child labour and slavery. In this seminar we will discuss why cotton became so popular for clothing and uncover the human cost of industrialisation.

A7 - The Swinging Sixties and British Cinema – Dr Mark Glancy

Marwick, The Cultural Revolution

By many accounts the 1960s were British cinema’s most adventurous and dynamic decade. The British Board of Film Censors loosened its grip at last, and a young generation of filmmakers were heralded for bringing working class heroes and a new sexual frankness to the screen. The films of the 1960s thus appear to offer evidence that the decade’s reputation for rebellion and liberation is well deserved. But to what extent can the films of the 1960s serve as barometers of changing social attitudes? How new were the ‘new wave’ films? And who was swinging in London? This session investigates the realities and the myths of the 1960s in relation to some of the decade’s most memorable films, including Saturday Night and Sunday Morning (1960), The Pleasure Girls (1966) and Alfie (1966).

A9 - What is a Pirate? – Dr Simon Layton

In this session we will skim over the oceans of world history, taking a ‘maritime’ approach to the past that aims to complement textbook narratives, which prioritise the territorial frameworks of nation-states and continents. Recent scholarship asks us to consider, in an accessible and productive way, how Britain especially was shaped by the seas that surround it, and how (as a specifically maritime power) it played an important role in shaping the wider world. We will then consider some examples from among the various (and variously defined) ‘pirates’ of world history, to explore in greater depth how the ‘new maritime history’ challenges us to take a view from ‘the other boat’—to see processes of state-building and sovereign violence from the outside, beyond the shores of law, jurisdiction, and (until recently) the writing of history itself.

A10 - Renaissance Florence: A Golden Age? – Professor Kate Lowe

Historians often describe Florence under Lorenzo dei Medici (1469-92) as having experienced a golden age, yet the Medici had to work hard to take over the government of the city. Political self-fashioning was accompanied by cultural brilliance in many forms of media, especially art and architecture. The seminar will investigate how these innovations and successes were achieved, with the aim of deciding just how golden the period was.
A11 - Why were people worried about the growth of cities in the 19th century? - Dr Jennifer Wallis

Jen Wallis - Mearns Bitter Cry (1883)

The rise of the city was one of the great social revolutions of the nineteenth century. London rose to be the biggest city in the world, while the population of Manchester more than doubled in the space of 20 years between 1820 and 1840. Urbanisation created great wealth and powered the manufacturing boom of the ‘industrial revolution’; but cities could also be sites of poverty, disease, crime, and immorality. Many believed the Victorian city was a menace to civilisation itself. In this seminar, we’ll explore debates about the impact of urbanisation on Victorian health and happiness, considering how social investigators saw the city, and what exactly it was about the city that caused such anxiety to these contemporary commentators.

A12 - John F. Kennedy - Professor Mark White

This session will examine the presidency of John F. Kennedy. His policies, such as the Berlin crisis, the Cuban missile crisis and civil rights, will be discussed. The question of how Kennedy was able to develop such a powerful, iconic image will be considered. The issue of Kennedy’s character, and whether there was a connection between his private life and his public role as president, will also be explored.

A13 – What was the Enlightenment? - Dr Jessica Patterson

‘The Enlightenment’ is the term used to describe a profoundly exciting historical period of intellectual curiosity and adventure. It captures the idea that in 17th and 18th century Europe, various writers began to rigorously question traditional ideas about religion, society and culture by proposing new ways of understanding the world around us. However, what exactly the Enlightenment was, who was involved, and what ideas it produced is a source of debate among historians. In fact, even at the time there was disagreement. In 1783 an influential Berlin magazine received multiple answers to its essay competition question: ‘What is Enlightenment?’. In this seminar, we will introduce ourselves to this exhilarating historical period by exploring the same question. To do so we will consider influential thinkers, explain important ideas, explore iconic images and cover key events.

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This seminar explores Nazi crimes against Jews from the ordinary citizen’s perspective. Central ideological concepts and the different phases of racial persecution will figure as a framework for our analysis. Based upon a wide range of different primary sources such as the Nuremberg Laws, letters sent to Hitler, diary entries and extracts from an oral history interview collection we will discuss how historians have explored the degree of knowledge of the Holocaust and whether we can conclude that Antisemitism was widely supported in Germany. Furthermore, we will engage with the challenges related to different genres of historical testimonies and highlight issues that require specific attention from historians who attempt to trace privately held views.
Tuesday 26th June 2018

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A14 - How to Look at Art (And Why All Historians Should) - Dr Chloe Ward


The Mona Lisa. A family photograph. A television advert. A satirical cartoon. In our everyday lives we are constantly surrounded by images. So were the people of previous historical periods. Understanding the reasons images were created, how they were used, and the influence they had can enrich and shape our understanding of the past. In this seminar, you will learn the ‘toolkit’ of methodologies that art historians use to reveal the secret meanings in art.

A15 - What did ‘ordinary’ Germans know about the Holocaust? - Dr Kinga Bloch

This seminar explores Nazi crimes against Jews from the ordinary citizen’s perspective. Central ideological concepts and the different phases of racial persecution will figure as a framework for our analysis. Based upon a wide range of different primary sources such as the Nuremberg Laws, letters sent to Hitler, diary entries and extracts from an oral history interview collection we will discuss how historians have explored the degree of knowledge of the Holocaust and whether we can conclude that Antisemitism was widely supported in Germany. Furthermore, we will engage with the challenges
related to different genres of historical testimonies and highlight issues that require specific attention from historians who attempt to trace privately held views.
**Wednesday 27th June 2018**

**B1 - The First Crusade – Dr Thomas Asbridge**

In 1095 Pope Urban II delivered a sermon that transformed the history of Europe, declaring that Christianity was threatened by invasion and appalling oppression at the hands of Muslims, ‘a people ... alien to God’. He called upon Latin (Catholic) Europe to rise up against this supposedly savage foe as ‘soldiers of Christ’, reclaiming the Holy Land. Harkening to this call, tens of thousands of men, women and children marched out of the West to wage war against Islam in the titanic First Crusade. But why was this expedition launched at the end of the eleventh century, and was it religious devotion or simple, barbarous greed that drove such a mass of Latin Christians to enlist in this extraordinary expedition?

**B3 - Outsiders in the Middle Ages - Dr Peter Denley**

The medieval Christian west abounded in prejudices, proscriptions, violence and atrocities against those who did not ‘fit the mould’. Lepers, Jews, Muslims, criminals, heretics, witches, prostitutes, homosexuals, foreigners – the list seems endless, the treatment relentless. But is this a fair picture of the middle ages? This seminar will look at documents from the period to try to explore the mental picture that conventional society developed about its outsiders, understand the underlying causes of intolerance, identify the institutional, psychological and popular mechanisms of persecution, and reflect on the difficulties of disentangling myths from realities.

**B4 - Do your feelings have a history? - Professor Thomas Dixon**

Much of the history we study is about events and ideas: wars and peace treaties, democracy and fascism, elections and opinions. But for most of us, most of the time, the things we really care about are not world events or political ideas but our own emotional lives. This realisation, along with the awareness that we seem to live in a particularly emotional age – full of angry voters and weeping celebrities – has led historians to take a serious interest in the passions and emotions of the past, alongside more familiar approaches to events and ideas. This taster seminar introduces the history of emotions, an area of research in which Queen Mary academics have led the way. As preparation for the seminar, you will read posts written by some of our current QMUL students and published on the QM History of Emotions Blog.

**B5 - Did sex begin in 1963? - Dr David Geiringer**

The 1960s are widely remembered as a period of ‘sexual revolution’. Censorship of pornographic literature was relaxed; the contraceptive pill became widely available; divorce law was liberalised; abortion was made legal in England and Wales; and homosexual acts between consenting adults in private were decriminalised. Attitudes to sex and sexuality were changing, though historians disagree on the speed and extent of these changes. In this seminar, we will explore why a new feminist politics appeared in Britain in the late 1960s and 70s and what impact it made in terms of reshaping the sexual, cultural and political landscape of men and women’s everyday lives.

**B6 - The Fall of France - Professor Julian Jackson**

TBA

**B7 - Was the British Empire a Force for Good in the World? - Dr Reuben Loffman**

For a long time, the British Empire was seen as a force for good in the world. Yet despite steadfast critiques of it being proffered throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, even today some
historians have argued that British imperialism left positive legacies. In his popular book Empire, Niall Ferguson claimed that ‘no organization in history has done more to promote the free movement of goods, capital, and labour than the British Empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.’ While this may or may not be true, historians have continued to critique the manner in which Britain ruled its colonies and the effects its administration had. In this seminar, we will debate whether or not you believe that the British Empire was fundamentally ‘a good thing’ with the help of three recent, thought-provoking readings.

B8 - Is Trump a true American Populist? - Dr Noam Maggor

What is populism? What is populism about a mode of politics? Is Donald Trump indeed an American populist? What are the deep-seated political currents that carried him to the White House? Roughly defined as the call for the empowerment of ordinary people in all areas of life, populism has been one of the most influential (and probably least understood) social and ideological currents driving American politics since the early days of the republic. This seminar will explore the debates and competing historical interpretations of original populists, who surged to power in the late nineteenth century United States in the context of a massive process of industrialization. We will engage with the legacy of populism, its core beliefs, the nature of the populists as a social movement and political formation, reflecting both on its historical role and its current relevance.

B9 - Public health and power in New York: The case of Mary Mallon - Dr Edmund Ramsden

In the early 20th century, the case of Mary Mallon, “the most famous typhoid carrier who ever lived”, captured the imagination of the American public. The attention given to “Typhoid Mary” not only reflected a fear of disease and a growing medical literacy among New Yorkers, but also articulated social fears regarding immigrants, independent women and sexuality. In this seminar we will explore the role of the medical expert in mediating between microbe and environment, individual freedom and the social body, and science and morality.

B10 - The Inner Logic of the Medieval Inquisition - Professor Miri Rubin

The Inquisition haunts the popular imagination as a quintessentially ‘medieval’ institution, associated with intolerance, cruelty and the infliction of pain. Its painstaking inquiries have left vast amounts of sources, which are extremely graphic and often cite the voices of ordinary medieval people. On the basis of these this seminar will ask: Who ran it and why? How widespread was its reach? How deadly its methods of inquiry? Is the ‘black myth’ of the inquisition justified? The papal inquisition was created in the early thirteenth century with the aim of identifying and correcting those suspected of heresy. It followed strict legal protocols for interrogation, about what counted as evidence, and also how people were to be punished. In our seminar we will examine some protocols from medieval inquisitorial trials, translated into English, and try to reconstruct from them the situation which prevailed in the courtroom. How were interrogations conducted? What power did defendants have? What was the role of the community? How different was an inquisitorial trial from one in a secular court? Encountering fascinating sources from trials in thirteenth-century France and fourteenth-century England, we will discuss important issues about historical judgement of past individuals and institutions, and encounter medieval people in some of the most testing situations imaginable.

B11 - Commemorating the First World War - Dr Dan Todman

It is just over a hundred years since Europe was engulfed by what people at the time called ‘the Great War’. As we approach the centenary, the war seems everywhere: on tv, online, in the papers, and in official plans for commemorative ceremonies and the dispatch of two students and a teacher from
every English secondary school to the Western Front. But with everyone who experienced the war as an adult now dead, what are we actually ‘remembering’? In it, you will look at evidence of what the war meant to Britons at the time as a way to think about how you want to respond to its anniversaries.

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**B12 - Advertising the American Dream, 1929-1941 - Dr Jo Cohen**

How do you sell the American Dream when no-one is buying? For advertisers and big businessmen, the Wall Street Crash did not just mean hard times; the Depression forced them to defend their very purpose in American society. Distrusted and disliked, admen and businessmen struggled to win back their prestige and power. Their strategy? Rebranding the American Way of Life. Looking at a variety of American advertising, in print and on film this seminar asks: what can we learn from these unique sources about how Americans were sold on the American dream.

**B13 - Thatcher and Thatcherism: Was there a “Thatcher Revolution” in Britain - Dr Robert Saunders**

Margaret Thatcher was the most controversial politician of modern times, and she remains a very complex figure for historians. How much really changed during her time in power? What was ‘Thatcherism’ and who believed in it? Why did her funeral—nearly a quarter of a century after her resignation—arouse such strong feelings of hatred and adoration? In this class, we will set the Thatcher era in historical perspective and assess the extent to which there was or was not a ‘Thatcher Revolution’.

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every English secondary school to the Western Front. But with everyone who experienced the war as an adult now dead, what are we actually ‘remembering’? In it, you will look at evidence of what the war meant to Britons at the time as a way to think about how you want to respond to its anniversaries.

**B12 - Advertising the American Dream, 1929-1941 - Dr Jo Cohen**

How do you sell the American Dream when no-one is buying? For advertisers and big businessmen, the Wall Street Crash did not just mean hard times; the Depression forced them to defend their very purpose in American society. Distrusted and disliked, admen and businessmen struggled to win back their prestige and power. Their strategy? Rebranding the American Way of Life. Looking at a variety of American advertising, in print and on film this seminar asks: what can we learn from these unique sources about how Americans were sold on the American dream.

**B13 - Thatcher and Thatcherism: Was there a “Thatcher Revolution” in Britain - Dr Robert Saunders**

Margaret Thatcher was the most controversial politician of modern times, and she remains a very complex figure for historians. How much really changed during her time in power? What was ‘Thatcherism’ and who believed in it? Why did her funeral—nearly a quarter of a century after her resignation—arouse such strong feelings of hatred and adoration? In this class, we will set the Thatcher era in historical perspective and assess the extent to which there was or was not a ‘Thatcher Revolution’.

**A15 - What did ‘ordinary’ Germans know about the Holocaust? - Dr Kinga Bloch**

This seminar explores Nazi crimes against Jews from the ordinary citizen’s perspective. Central ideological concepts and the different phases of racial persecution will figure as a framework for our analysis. Based upon a wide range of different primary sources such as the Nuremberg Laws, letters sent to Hitler, diary entries and extracts from an oral history interview collection we will discuss how historians have explored the degree of knowledge of the Holocaust and whether we can conclude that Antisemitism was widely supported in Germany. Furthermore, we will engage with the challenges related to different genres of historical testimonies and highlight issues that require specific attention from historians who attempt to trace privately held views.