

Prospectus

In April 1966, *Time Magazine*'s cover declared London “The Swinging City” with an accompanying article raving about her musicians, artists, filmmakers, and entrepreneurs. Between the rise of Beatlemania in 1964 and the riots of 1968, London became the world's premiere artistic milieu. Fifty years later, the ghosts of that era continue to haunt us.

This freshman seminar will revisit “Swinging London” through published interviews, biographies, and autobiographies, films, music, cultural critiques, histories, and tours in order to better understand of an epoch that continues to shape our contemporary world.

Our approaches will include both disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives on London's popular culture in the mid-sixties by considering the interconnections between the arts, society, politics, and other forces in this milieu. In addition, the course reflects on how we know the world, particularly about ways to identify problems, formulate productive questions, and go about answering those questions. Students will...

- Distinguish among, and formulate, types of questions asked by different disciplines (music, film studies, history, sociology, among others)
- Read critically, and gather and interpret evidence
- Distinguish among the evidence and methodologies appropriate to different disciplines
- Consider and address complexities and ambiguities
- Make connections among ideas
- Recognize choices, examine assumptions and ask questions of themselves and of their own work
- Formulate ideas both orally and in writing
- Communicate ideas both orally and in writing
- Relate the results of the course to their educational goals

Assessment: Standards and Expectations

Classroom Participation (5%). The development and maintenance of an active mind requires us to question what we experience intellectually and emotionally. Most classes will begin with short discussions of your written reflections on the previous meeting's material (readings, films, recordings, etc.). *Your written questions constitute part of your grade.*

Mini Essay (20%; 23 September). Prepare a short (500-700 words) essay on a topic of your choosing exploring themes explored in the readings and the discussions. This first assignment is as much about the subject as it is about your ability to construct an essay (thesis, evidence, and proof) and to write it (length, citation, and bibliography). The purpose is to build awareness of faculty expectations for college papers. (You may rewrite this assignment applying feedback to improve your grade.)

Midterm Take-home Exam (20%; 12 October). Respond to a question/questions regarding readings, films, recordings, and seminar discussions.

Essay Abstract and Bibliography (10%; 23 October). Prepare a short (500-700 words) description of your end-of-semester paper with supporting bibliography. By mid-semester break, you will identify a topic about sixties London that will allow you to explore something in a way that the seminar cannot. (You have the option of incorporating interviews with appropriate Londoners who can provide them with insights into life in Britain and the city in the sixties.) You may rework this assignment to apply what you have learned from the feedback and to improve your grade.

Essay Draft (15%; 4 November). Prepare a draft of your end-of-semester essay with supporting bibliography. The purpose is to allow time for you to improve your research and writing. NB: This is *not* a “rough” draft. The grade will reflect the draft’s merits as a paper.

Research Presentations (10%; 28 & 30 November, 5 December). Prepare a ten-minute paper version of your essay to read to the seminar. (This is *not* the version you will submit.) Reading a paper reinforces your ability to hear not only the ideas of a sentence and paragraph, but also the rhythm and sound of the words. The presentation grade reflects your degree of preparation. Questions from the seminar and the instructor have the purpose of helping you prepare the final Essay.

Essay (20%; 7 December). An approximately 2000-word paper report on your research (with bibliography). The essay applies the goals of the seminar, both in terms of learning about mid-sixties London, but also in how to prepare material in the form of an academic essay. If your presentation is a video documentary, you will still need to submit your script in the form of a paper with annotated sources.

Tentative¹ Schedule

Date	Topics & Materials
------	--------------------

26 Aug	IES Orientation
--------	-----------------

Week One

31 Aug	Introductions Course prospectus and expectations
--------	---

2 Spt 3:00-5:00	Topic: The responsibilities, adventures, and privileges of intellectual life—Harry Potter as a metaphor for higher education’s promises and challenges. Reading: Routledge, “Harry Potter and the Mystery of Ordinary Life” (pdf) Discussion Questions: How does Rowling represent British society through Potter? How are the responsibilities of wizards in these books parallel to the responsibilities of higher education and to the realities of ethnicity and social class?
--------------------	--

3 Spt	Oxford
-------	--------

¹ Guests may unexpectedly disrupt the seminar schedule.

Week Two

- 5 Spt Topic: Writing and presenting a college essay through an examination of essay examples to discuss (a) developing a thesis, (b) making an argument to support your thesis, and (c) how to cite and to document information in your essay. The seminar will write short statements in class, share them, and discuss them.
- 7 Spt Topic: Globalization and the British “Invasion”
Readings: *Time Magazine*, “Great Britain” (pdf) & Sandbrook, “The Swinging City” (251-277)
Discussion Questions: What did *Time* get right, and what went wrong? What does this article tell us about how mainstream American media (and consequently the American public) understood Britain and youth culture? Was “Swinging London” already finished by the time this article appeared? What was the role of clubs in London in the mid sixties? How do the participants describe themselves? What did it mean to be “working class”? What did it mean to be “classless”? Did most British see themselves this way?

Week Three

- 12 Spt Topic: Mary Quant and mid-sixties culture
Readings: Moir, “Still Swinging at 77” (web); Levy, “The World Was Full of Chancers” (31-48); & Sandbrook, “Dedicated Followers of Fashion” (228-250)
Discussion Questions: How do clothing and fashion articulate culture? How do Quant’s designs capture the spirit of the era? What did customers expect of her clothing or of Sassoon’s hairstyles? How did clothing and design change in the high sixties and what remained consistent with the past?
- 14 Spt Topic: The Beatles and London, 1964
Film: *A Hard Day’s Night* (1964) [87 minutes]
Reading: Sandbrook, “Introducing the Turds” (101-119)
Discussion Questions: Did the Beatles represent something and, if so, what? How does this film function as a metaphor for mid-sixties Britain? What does the behavior of fans tell us about early mid-sixties youth culture? How did the Establishment and the adult population react to them? How does this film market the Beatles?
- 17 Spt London → Stonehenge → Bath
- 18 Spt Bath

Week Four

- 19 Spt Topic: Media and the promotion of music; sixties London culture
Film: *The Rolling Stones: Charlie Is My Darling – Ireland 1965* (1966/2012) [63 minutes]
Readings: Oldham, chapters 13-15 (pdf) & Levy, “Mick Doesn’t Like Women. Never Has.”
Sample Questions: How do the Rolling Stones of this documentary compare with the people described in Oldham’s biography? How does the film contrast the Rolling Stones with the Beatles? How do their on-stage and off-stage behaviors compare?
- 21 Spt [Soho Walking Tour](#)
- 23 Spt [Mini Essay \(Due by 12:00a Friday\)](#)

Week Five

- 26 Spt Topic: The packaging and marketing of the Beatles
Reading: Levy, "Nemperor" (121-136)
Discussion Questions: How had Britain changed from the land of "Angry Young Men" into "Laughing Youth Culture"? How much of The Beatles' success was marketing? Could something like Beatlemania happen again? What were the contributing factors? What was Brian Epstein's role as an intermediate between the Beatles and London's showbiz community? What is an MBE and why did receiving it mean?
- 28 Spt Topic: Mid-sixties British Pop and British Youth Culture
Reading: Sandbrook, "The Wild Ones" (203-227)
Discussion Questions: Who were the Teddy Boys (and Girls)? Who were the Mods and the Rockers? What was the significance of the Beatles receiving MBEs? Compare the Beatles, the Kinks, the Who, and the Rolling Stones in 1966.

Week Six

- 3 Oct Topic: The Beatles' *Revolver* and the beginnings of *Sgt. Pepper*
Recording: Selections from the Beatles' *Revolver* and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (available on YouTube)
Discussion Questions: How do these recordings reflect the mid sixties? Can you tell the differences between songs primarily written by McCartney, Lennon, and Harrison? If so, then what characteristics inform your conclusions? What was the relationship between concert performances and recordings? Why do performers tour and perform now and why did the Beatles stop touring.
- 5 Oct Topic: The Beatles and Britain in transition
Reading: Sandbrook, "I Was Lord Kitchener's Valet" (434-476)
Discussion Questions: How did *Sgt. Pepper* reflect London in 1966 and 1967? Were there British hippies and how were they different from American hippies? How did Pink Floyd fit into and articulate this scene? How did the past figure into popular culture's perceptions of the present? How did youth culture express itself through clothing?

Week Seven (Midterm Week)

- 14 Oct [Midterm Take-home Exam Due Electronically](#)

Week Eight (Midterm Break, 15-23 October)

- 23 Oct [Essay Abstract and Bibliography](#)

Week Nine

- 24 Oct Film: *Tonight Let's All Make Love in London* (1967) [61 minutes]
Topic: Documentaries and the Illusion of Objectivity
Discussion: How does Whitehead present London in the sixties? Would most Londoners at the time recognize his representation? Who are his subjects and why has he chosen them?
- 26 Oct [Guests: Roger Dopson \(music compilation editor\), John Schroeder \(music producer\), and Sue Snell \(fashion photographer and journalist\)](#)
Topic: [Sixties Britain](#)
Discussion Questions: [Come prepared with questions.](#)

Week Ten

- 31 Oct Film: *Pirate Radio* (2009) [117 minutes]
- 2 Nov Topic: The music industry, government regulations, and commercial radio
Reading: Chapman, “The 1960s Pirates: A Comparative Analysis of Radio London and Radio Caroline” (pdf)
Discussion Questions: What were pirate radio stations and why did they exist? What roles do class, generation, and gender play in this film? What is the relationship between the BBC and stations such as the one depicted in *Pirate Radio*?
- 4 Nov Essay Draft (due Friday by 12:00a)

Week Eleven

- 7 Nov Film: *Alphie* (1966) [114 minutes]
- 9 Nov Topic: Class and Sex in the Sixties
11:30-1:30 Reading: Levy, “I Hadn’t Thought It Out beyond That”
Discussion Questions: Does the film treat Alphie as an ideal, as a deviant, or as the norm? Do attitudes towards sexual relationships in this film reflect the societal norm for the era? Have these attitudes changed and, if so, how? What role does birth control play in this film? What role does social class play in these relationships? How do the lives of the actors relate to their film roles?

Week Twelve

- 14 Nov Film: *The Family Way* (1966) [115 minutes]
- 16 Nov Topic: Representations of Working-class Life
Reading: Donnelly, “Poverty and Devaluation” (pdf)
Discussion Questions: How did it feel not to be part of swinging London? What were the economic restraints that shaped the characters in *The Family Way*? How does the film depict gender and class roles? What is Paul McCartney’s role in the production of this film? What does this say about pop music in 1966?

Week Thirteen

- 21 Nov Film: *Blowup* (1966) [111 minutes]
- 23 Nov Topic: Fashion, Photography, and Film
Readings: Levy, “A Cloud of Pink Chiffon” (13-30) & Sandbrook, “Carry On England” (395-413)
Discussion Questions: How does Thomas treat women in this film and why is photography an appropriate medium for him? How is the London of *Blowup* different from or the same as London in the mid sixties described in your readings? How does it compare to London of today? (What appears to be the same and what has changed?) How does this film present music, musicians, and their fans?

Week Fourteen

- 28 Nov Student Research Paper Presentations (7 papers)
- 30 Nov Student Research Paper Presentations (7 papers)

Week Fifteen (Exam Week, 5-9 December)

5 Dec Student Research Paper Presentations (4 papers)

7 Dec **End-of-Semester Essay**

Tentative Reading List

- Chapman, Robert. 1990. "The 1960s Pirates: A comparative Analysis of Radio London and Radio Caroline." In *Popular Music* 9 (2): 165-178. (pdf)
- Donnelly, Mark. 2005. "Chapter 9: Poverty and Devaluation." *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society, and Politics*. Harrow, England: Pearson. (pdf)
- Levy, Shawn. *Ready, Steady, Go!: The Smashing Rise and Giddy Fall of Swinging London*. 2003. London: Doubleday. [Also available on Kindle.]
- Moir, Jan. 2012. "Still Swinging at 77! Mary Quant Put the Swing into the 60s, Gave Us That Iconic Bob Cut and—Hallelujah!—Invented Waterproof Mascara." In *Mail Online* (3 February). <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2096184/Mary-Quant-swing-60s-gave-iconic-bob-cut--hallelujah--invented-waterproof-mascara.html#ixzz3EGoAiTnd> (accessed August 2015).
- Oldham, Andrew. 2003. *2 Stoned*. New York: Vintage. (pdf)
- Routledge, Christopher. 2001. "Harry Potter and the Mystery of Ordinary Life." In *Mystery in Children's Literature: From the Rational to the Supernatural* (Adrienne Gavin and Christopher Routledge, eds.): 202-209. Basingstoke: Palgrave. <https://chrisroutledge.co.uk/writing/harry-potter/> (accessed June 2015).
- Sandbrook, Dominic. 2006. *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties*. London: Abacus.
- Time. 1966. "Great Britain: You Can Walk across It on the Grass." In *Time Magazine* ["Swinging London" issue] (15 April). (pdf)

Films

A Hard Day's Night (1964) [87 minutes]

Alphie (1966) [114 minutes]

Blowup (1966) [111 minutes]

Pirate Radio (2009) [117 minutes]

The Family Way (1966) [115 minutes]

The Rolling Stones: Charlie Is My Darling – Ireland 1965 (1966/2012) [63 minutes]

Tonight Let's All Make Love in London (1967) [61 minutes]

Students with Disabilities

In typical years, 8-10% of Skidmore students provide documentation related to a physical, psychological, or learning disability that qualifies them for academic accommodation. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is necessary to provide students with disabilities meaningful access to all college programs and activities as well as the individualized accommodation necessary for them to realize an equal opportunity to succeed.

We have a responsibility to inform students with disabilities about the process of accessing accommodations, and the Curriculum Committee asks that faculty include a statement on each syllabus that encourages students to consult with Student Academic Services if they have a disability. Such a statement will establish a line of communication and indicate to students that you are open to discussing their disability and need for accommodation. An example of such a statement follows:

"If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need academic accommodation, you must formally request accommodation from Meg Hegener, Coordinator for Student Access Services. You will also need to provide documentation which verifies the existence of a disability and supports your request. For further information, please call 580-8150 or stop by the office of Student Academic Services in Starbuck Center."

Academic Integrity

When confronting an apparent violation of the Honor Code, you may find it helpful to refer to the [Definitions and Guidelines](#) document published on-line through the Office of Academic Advising's (OAA) integrity [portal](#) and provided to students when they first enter Skidmore as part of the [Academic Integrity Handbook](#). Please remember that the grade penalties described in this document are, in fact, guidelines and you have final authority over each student's grade in this as in other contexts. If you wish to work outside the guidelines—for example, by adopting a "zero tolerance" policy on plagiarism that results in a failing grade regardless of the severity of the offense—please consider addressing this issue on your syllabus. When appropriate in the context of your course, you might also consider explicitly discussing with your students the limits of collaboration and/or your expectations regarding the proper documentation of sources, two areas that often lead to inadvertent (but still egregious) violations of the Honor Code. Whatever your specific policy, alerting students to the seriousness of academic integrity can only benefit our community.

Remember that all violations of the academic Honor Code must be reported. If the charge is sustained, the infraction may have consequences for the student beyond any grade penalty that you impose. A thorough description of these consequences, along with a description of the limited forgiveness and appeal policies, can be found in the [Further Impacts](#) document available through OAA's website.