Prof. Brian Cowan  
F 1.30-3.30pm  
LEA 808

HIST 594 (2012-13)  
Honours Seminar – Early Modern Britain  
Topics: Celebrity and Politics

Course Description and Objectives:

Readings and research in the political history of early modern Britain. This seminar will focus on the concept of ‘celebrity’ as an aspect of the structure of power relations in the British Isles from the troubled reign of Charles I to the equally unsettled reign of George III. We will pay particular attention to the decades of transition from Stuart rule to a Hanoverian regime between the 1680s and the 1710s. We will make extensive use of online databases and research tools for British history.

A good introduction to the basic political narrative that is a prerequisite for understanding the issues discussed in the course may be found in these textbooks: Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603-1714*, (London, 1997), and Paul Kléber Monod, *Imperial Island: A History of Britain and Its Empire, 1660-1837*, (Chichester, 2009) which will be on reserve at the library or the bookstore.

Also available at the bookstore will be Kevin Sharpe’s *Image Wars: Promoting Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603-1660*, (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2010) and Tim Blanning’s *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660-1789*, (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002). While these are not required texts, you may wish to own them as we will be reading substantial amounts of each, and both contain a wealth of further references that may be of use to you as you begin your independent research.

Requirements:

Fall:  
(25%): Weekly reading reports (2pp) to coincide with oral presentations; these reports must be uploaded to the myCourses server before the seminar meets so that everyone can read them.

(15%): Research prospectus (7-10 pages + bibliography and oral presentation)

Winter: (60%): 20-25 page research paper (30-40 pages for graduate students), to be completed by the end of the Winter semester.

Most readings for the course will be determined individually for each student. Some readings will be available electronically. These are indicated in **bold** **typeface**. Common readings for everyone in the seminar are indicated with an asterisk (*).
McGill values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the instructor’s or the university’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

**Seminar Format and Research Paper:**

We will meet as scheduled in the Fall and Winter terms as a research workshop in which we will work together to discuss research strategies and historiographic problems. Most of the work for the seminar will be tailored to each student’s individual research interests as they relate to the theme of the course. You will however want to share your ideas and research strategies with the other participants in the seminar.

Each student should consult with Prof. Cowan individually about the research topic you wish to investigate and write on. Remember that all good research projects are focused around asking good questions. Ask yourself ‘What is it about this topic that I want to know better?’ Then move to questions such as these: ‘How can I find this out? Is it a feasible research project? What sort or sorts of primary sources will I use? What is the state of the current historiography on this topic?’

Both the source materials and the historiography for post-revolutionary British history are enormous, so the best research projects will concentrate on a clearly focused question with a clearly defined set of primary source materials. It will also demonstrate a command of the relevant historiography on the topic and the kind of question you are asking.

Your research paper must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style in all matters of style and form: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org)

1. **Introduction: Thinking about Celebrity Historically [7 September]**

2. **Thinking Some More about Celebrity Historically [14 September]**


* Ulinka Rublack, “Celebrity as Concept: An Early Modern Perspective,” *Cultural and Social History* 8:3 (Sept. 2011): 399-403

* Ellis Cashmore, “Celebrity in the Twenty-First Century Imagination,” *Cultural and Social History* 8:3 (Sept. 2011): 405-13

3. **Reading Week [21 September]**

Begin readings for Week #4.

You may also wish to consult the following theoretical works on celebrity and modern society. Most of them are historically agnostic, if not historically ignorant, but they may be helpful as you continue to think about celebrity as a historical problem:


4. **Sacral Monarchy and Royal Celebrity [28 September]**


• Hannah Smith, “‘Last of all the Heavenly Birth’: Queen Anne and Sacral Queenship,” *Parliamentary History* 28:1 (2009): 137-49


5. Martyrdom and Religious Celebrity [5 October]


• John R. Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563-1694*, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993)


6. **Court Scandal & Infamous Celebrity [12 October]**


• CASE STUDY: Roger Lockyear, “George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham (1592–1628)” in the *ODNB*: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28293

  Read in conjunction with:

• Michael B. Young, “James VI & I: Time for a Reconsideration?” *Journal of British Studies* 51:3 (July 2012): 523-39


7. Revolution and Celebrity [19 October]


• Kevin Sharpe, Image Wars: Promoting Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603-1660, (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2010), 277-384, on the civil wars

• Blair Worden, Roundhead Reputations: The English Civil Wars and the Passions of Posterity, (London: Penguin, 2001), 1-121, on Edmund Ludlow; 316-38, on the Levellers


8. Regicide and Celebrity [26 October]


• Helen Pierce, “Artful Ambivalence? Picturing Charles I During the Interregnum,” in Royalists and Royalism during the Interregnum, (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 2010), 67-87

• Jason Peacey, ed., The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001)

• Andrew Lacey, *The Cult of King Charles the Martyr*, (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2002)

• Laura Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell: Ceremony, Portrait and Print, 1645-1661*, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000)


9. **Celebrity and the Public Sphere [2 November]**


• Bronwen Wilson and Paul Yachnin,, eds., *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe: People, Things, Forms of Knowledge*, (London: Routledge, 2009); see esp. the introduction

• Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989), 1-88


• Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, And the Division of Knowledge*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2006); see also the collected essays on the book in *History Compass* (2013)


• Peter Lake and Steve Pincus, “Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England,” *Journal of British Studies* 45:2 (April 2006): 270-292

• Brian Cowan, “Mr. Spectator and the Coffeehouse Public Sphere,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37:3 (2004): 345-366


10. **Celebrity and Constitutional Monarchy [9 November]**


11. NACBS [16 November]

There will be no seminar this week; you should use this time to work on your research prospectus.
12. **Celebrity and the Entertainment Industry [23 November]**

Guest seminar with Prof. Fiona Ritchie, Dept. of English


13. **Conclusion & Research Paper Prospectus Reports [30 November]**

Research paper prospectus is due in seminar.

This seminar will be devoted to oral presentations of your work thus far on your research paper. Along with your oral report, you should submit a version of your research prospectus. Your prospectus should include a short description (7-10 pages) of your research topic, why you think it is an important one, and how you intend to go about researching it in the Winter term.

This prospectus should be accompanied by an **annotated bibliography** of around 50 sources, both primary and secondary. Your annotations should briefly indicate the ways in which the work cited might be helpful to your research.
WINTER TERM

During the winter term, we will meet as a workshop to discuss the problems and potential of your research and to share drafts of your work in progress. For assistance in thinking about how to go about your research and writing it up, I would recommend the following guides:


Susan Rabiner and Alfred Fortunato, *Thinking Like Your Editor: How to Write Serious Nonfiction -- And Get It Published*, (NY, 2002).


1. **Celebrity in the Age of Mass Reproduction** [11 January 2013]

Submit a Revised Version of Your Fall Term Prospectus in class

  From: Julian Scaff’s translation; transcribed by Andy Blunden 1998; proofed and corrected Feb. 2005:
  [www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm](http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm)

  - CASE STUDY: Pat Rogers, “Samuel Johnson, (1709–1784)” in the *ODNB*:
  - Tom Mole, ed., *Romanticism and Celebrity Culture 1750-1850*, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2009); first three chapters by Mole; Goldsmith; and Higgins, 1-59
2. Presentation #1  [18 January]

From this week on, we will meet to discuss one research paper project in detail. Each person member of the seminar will be responsible for preparing a discussion centred around her/his research in progress. You may ask the other members of the seminar to read a short primary source or an article (be sure to consult with Prof. Cowan first, to ensure that the material can be made accessible to everyone) or you may simply choose to pose questions to the group related to issues you are dealing with in your own research in progress.

The presentation schedule will be assigned randomly by Prof. Cowan, or you may volunteer for a particular date. If there is a compelling reason why you cannot present on a certain date, it may be possible to change dates with someone else, but only if that person also agrees.

Don’t expect to have all the answers to your research at hand by this stage: think of your presentation as an opportunity to get detailed feedback from the rest of the seminar as to how to go about solving interpretative and/or practical problems you have encountered so far.

Do expect to speak for about 15-30 minutes at the beginning of the session to introduce your topic to the group. You should be able to answer these questions:

1) What is the historical problem your paper seeks to address and solve?
2) What sources will you use to answer your historical problem?
3) What is the existing historical literature (the historiography) that exists on this problem or topic? If there isn’t any, then explain why not. If there is a lot, explain how your approach may relate to the existing historiography. Do you agree with it, or do you intend to challenge it?
3. **Presentation # 2** [25 January]

4. **Presentation # 3** [1 February]

5. **Presentation # 4** [8 February]

6. **Presentation # 5** [15 February]

7. **Presentation # 6** [22 February]

8. **Presentation # 7** [1 March]

9. **READING WEEK**

10. **Draft Workshop** [15 March]

**First Draft Due** in class for discussion and submission. Everyone must submit a rough draft of the research paper. It should be written in complete sentences but it need not be fully referenced or footnoted, although you will save yourself a lot of trouble later in the term if you do include your references now. The seminar will be devoted to discussing your research papers.

We will pair up and share drafts with each other: you should give a copy of your paper to your partner by Monday, 10 March, in order to allow her/him to read it, think about it and be prepared to comment upon it by the time we meet as a group.

Bring your rough drafts to the seminar and be prepared to present your thoughts and conclusions on your partner’s paper to the rest of the class. Your presentation should be about ten minutes.

11. **Presentation # 8** [22 March]

12. **Presentation # 9** [29 March]

13. **Second Draft Due** [5 April]

Second drafts are due in class for discussion and submission. At this point, you should have a paper draft that is close to complete. You should bring this paper into class for discussion by the group. Prof. Cowan will look over the paper and provide last minute suggestions for improvement before you submit your final draft in the following week.

14. **Conclusion** [12 April]
The final draft of your paper is due in class. There will be a group discussion of research accomplished during the year.

Tuesday, 16 April is the last day of classes for the McGill calendar. Papers cannot be accepted after this date.