

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: **Secrets, Spies, and Surveillance in Modern British History**

Course Number and Section:

HISTORY

4414F 550

Instructor Name(s): Tim Compeau

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

Britain's culture of secrecy will be examined in both the public and the private spheres through the themes of the Official Secrets Acts, MI5 and MI6, spies and double agents, royalty and the media, birth control, crime investigations, electric monitoring and anti-terrorism laws.

This course will explore the history of secrecy, spies, and surveillance in British cultural, social, and political history from the early modern period to the present.

Learning Outcomes:

- Assess and articulate the historiographical debates concerning secrecy, lies, omissions and controlled information.
- research complex historical topics by constructing a research plan, locating and analyzing sources, determining the components of historical arguments, and drawing conclusions.
- analyze a variety of primary sources and utilize them in writing a research essay.
- analyze secondary sources, including their sources, methods, argument, strengths, limitations, potential implications and significance for the field; and use secondary sources to consider why questions asked and topics studied by historians have changed over time.
- understand the effects of secrecy on the creation and meaning of historical knowledge in political, social and intellectual context.
- write and properly format an essay that uses primary and secondary evidence to support a thesis statement.
- Relate class material to current cultural and political debates on secrecy, state surveillance and spying.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Ian Fleming, Moonraker (1954). Not available in the bookstore. Amazon.ca: Affordable

Classics Limited edition, ISBN-10: 1915923034. \$13.99. Other editions are acceptable.

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Participation		30
Research Proposal	10/08/2025	10
Working Paper	Nov. 14/Nov. 21	15
Peer Review	Nov. 19/Nov. 26	5
Final Essay	12/03/2025	40

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Friday, July 25, 2025