Hist. 163: A Special Relationship: Britain and America since WWII [F, 2011]

This course will examine (from the British perspective) the Anglo-American “special relationship” that is supposed to characterize the era from the Second World War to the present. We shall not only be concerned with the politics of war and diplomacy, but also with social relations and the “Americanization” of British culture.

Course requirements will include: three short papers of about 5pp ea. (together, 30% of course grade) and one term paper of about 25pp (50%) on an aspect of the course of your choosing (with the instructor’s consent), as well as attendance (10%) and participation in class discussion (10%).

Required Readings:

Baylis, John (comp.). Anglo-American Relations Since 1939: The Enduring Alliance (1997)
Lodge, David. Changing Places (1975, a novel)
Amis, Martin. Money (1984, a novel)

Other readings will be assigned from the Reserve Desk at Tisch or on the web-accessed course site (Trunk).

Syllabus of Classes and Readings

Sep. 6: Introduction: Before the War [Required: Gamble, Ch. 5 (on Trunk)]

13: The “Grand Alliance” [Req: Baylis, Ch. 1; Hitchens, Intro. and Chs. 1, 5-6, 8; Recommended: Reynolds, RICH RELATIONS, Chs. 10, 14]

20: The Early Cold War [Req: Baylis, Chs. 2-3; Hitchens, Chs. 7, 9-12; Rec: Churchill, Iron Curtain Speech]

27: Dependency made plain: Suez to the Cuban Missile Crisis [Req: Baylis, Chs.4-6; Rec: Tiratsoo, “Limits of Americanisation”]

Oct. 4: Popular Culture in the Era of American Hegemony [Req: McKay, intro., Chs. 1-2; Rec: Malchow, SPECIAL RELATIONS, Intro., Chs. 1, 2; 1st paper due]


18: From Pop to Counterculture [Req: Lodge; Rec: Birchall, “The Decline and Fall
of British Rhythm and Blues”; Neville, “The Politics of Play Power” in PLAY POWER; Roszak, MAKING OF A COUNTERCULTURE, Preface and Ch. 1; Marwick, THE SIXTIES, Intro. and Ch. 10]

25: Black Power [Req: McKay, Chs. 3-4; Rec: Egbuna, DESTROY THIS TEMPLE, 61-93; Malik, FROM MICHAEL DE FREITAS TO MICHAEL X, 139-148; Selvon, MOSES ASCENDING]

Nov. 1: Women’s Lib, Gay Lib  [Req: McKay, Ch. 5; Rec: Rowbotham, A CENTURY OF WOMEN, Ch. 6; Weeks, COMING OUT, Chs. 16-18; GLF “Manifesto”; 2nd paper due]

8: No class

15: Malaise and Heritage: the Seventies [Req: Tunstall, THE MEDIA ARE AMERICAN, Intro. and Ch. 2; Hitchens, Ch. 2; term paper outline and proposed bibliography are due]

22: No class

29: Thatcherism as Americanization [Req: Baylis, Chs. 7-8; Amis, MONEY; rec: Scott-Smith, “Her Rather Ambitious Washington Program,” 3rd paper due]

Dec. 6 [last class]: New Labour’s Special Relationship, 1997-2010 [Req: Baylis, Ch. 9; Finish Hitchens; Parker, “He Knew He Was Right”]

Dec. 15: Term Papers Due(electronically)by 5pm EST.