

HI2H7-15 Measuring Society: social sciences and social problems in twentieth-century Britain

22/23

Department

History

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

If the years 1900-2000 were ones in which 'ordinary' Britons were subject to greater scrutiny by researchers interested in 'social' phenomena, what did this mean for everyday life and perceptions of self and nation? How did such research techniques work to measure - but equally to construct, interact with and influence the perception of - key social 'problems' and challenges in this period? And how did sociology influence popular culture, politics and representations of what was 'normal' or 'ordinary'? Students taking this module will engage with these questions, and ask how the historical data generated by the social sciences (defined broadly and eclectically) can be of use to historians in trying to make sense of life in the past.

Module aims

In the last decade, archived materials from twentieth-century British social-scientific studies (both mainstream and more eccentric) have begun to receive serious scholarly attention from historians: both as sources to complement the study of social, cultural, economic and political change and to rethink the scope of the 'social' itself. This module introduces students to some of the currents and

thinking in Britain's social scientific disciplines from c.1900 to the 1990s. Students will explore the origins of these disciplines, their original source material, and the growing body of historical scholarship that has recently emerged from 'reusing' twentieth-century social-scientific sources.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The module is taught across nine themed weeks and is grouped into three sections. The first block of four weeks: introduces some of the historical scholarship produced by using primary material from earlier social-scientific research (Week 1: Who was observing whom in twentieth-century Britain?); examines from where the social sciences in Britain emerged (Week 2: Social investigation, class and race); and presents two case studies of social scientific projects/endeavours: one academically-driven sociology and social psychology (Week 3: The 'Problem Family') and the other from a more eccentric project that was - at least initially - outside the Academy (Week 4: Mass-Observation and its Afterlives). The second block of three weeks (5, 7 and 8) is an exploration of 'themes' in the social sciences. These will be chosen by students taking the module from a long list prepared by the module tutor (see supplementary details below for information on the envisaged selection process). Potential topics include: "'Policing the Crisis": race and radical British sociology', 'Sex and Permissiveness', 'Youth Cultures', 'Researching Gender', 'Health and Longitudinal Research', 'Social Planning', 'Working-Class Autobiography and Life Stories'. The final two weeks explore legacies of representation in two different ways. Week 9 examines what Stuart Hall termed the 'social eye' of fiction (from TV soap opera to social realist cinema), while Week 10 will allow students to give their own original response to some of the sources and themes discussed throughout the module in the form of an assessed contribution to a plenary 'Symposium'.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of some of the key social-scientific movements in twentieth-century Britain.
- Analyse and evaluate the contributions made by historical and interdisciplinary scholarship on social problems and social sciences in Britain.
- Analyse primary source material to generate new ideas and interpretations.
- Act with limited supervision to research topics in the social history of twentieth-century Britain.
- Communicate the findings of independent research, adapting it to the needs of diverse audiences.

Indicative reading list

Brooke, S., "'Slumming' in swinging London? Class, gender and the post-war city in Nell Dunn's *Up the Junction* (1963)", *Cultural and Social History*, 9:3 (2012), pp. 429-449
Connell, K., 'Race, prostitution and the New Left: the postwar inner city through Janet Mendelsohn's "Social Eye"',

History Workshop, 83 (2017), pp. 301-340 Hall, S. [edited by Morley, D.], *Essential Essays*, 2 vols (Durham, 2018) Hinton, J., *Nine-Wartime Lives: Mass-Observation and the making of the modern self* (Oxford, 2010) Hinton, J., *Seven Lives from Mass Observation* (Oxford, 2016) Hollow, M., 'Governmentality on the Park Hill estate: the rationality of public housing', *Urban History*, 37:1 (2010), pp. 117-135 Koven, S., *Slumming: sexual and social politics in Victorian London* (Princeton, 2004) Lambert, M., 'Between "families in trouble" and "children at risk": historicising "troubled family" policy in England since 1945', *Children and Society*, 33 (2019), pp. 82-91 Lawrence, J., *Me, Me, Me: the search for community in post-war England* (Oxford, 2019) Lemov, R., *World as Laboratory: Experiments with mice, mazes and men* (New York, 2005) Lemov, R., *Database of Dreams: the lost quest to catalog humanity* (New Haven, 2015) MacClancy, J., *Anthropology in the Public Arena: historical to contemporary contexts in Britain* (2013) Madge, C. and Harisson, T., *Mass-Observation* (London: Frederick Muller, 1937) Savage, M., *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: the politics of method* (Oxford, 2010) Shapira, M., *The War Inside: psychoanalysis, total war, and the making of the democratic self in postwar Britain* (Cambridge, 2013) Stanley, L., *Sex Surveyed, 1949-1994: from Mass-Observation's 'Little Kinsey' to the National Survey and the Hite Reports* (London, 1995) Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, F., *Class, Politics, and the Decline of Deference in England, 1968-2000* (Oxford, 2018) Thomson, M., *Psychological Subjects: identity, culture, and health in twentieth-century Britain* (Oxford, 2006) Walkowitz, J., *City of Dreadful Delight: narratives of sexual danger in late-Victorian London* (Chicago, 1992) Welshman, J., *From Transmitted Deprivation to Social Exclusion: poverty, policy and parenting* (Bristol, 2012) Welshman, J., *Underclass: a history of the excluded since 1880*, (London, 2013) Yeo, E.J., *The Contest for Social Science: relations and representations of class and gender* (London: Rivers Oram, 1996)

Subject specific skills

Primary source analysis. Research involving secondary literature. Presentation of work in essay form.

Transferable skills

See learning outcomes.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 2 hours (12%)
Tutorials	2 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Private study	130 hours (87%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Students will undertake independent research and reading to prepare for seminars and assessments. The general expectation will be the reading and preparation of three texts (of article or book chapter length) for each seminar; this should take approximately 3 hours. The assessments will also require independent research, reading around 6-10 texts, and then preparing and presenting an output in the form of an essay and a project.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
3000-word essay	50%		Yes (extension)
Title and subject to be negotiated with the module tutor.			

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component

Primary source analysis	40%	Yes (extension)
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A project (to be negotiated with the module tutor) in which students should devise a means of presenting a primary source (relating to one of the topics covered in the module) and of exploring and analysing its significance for the history of twentieth-century Britain and the historical questions examined over the course of the module. This could take the form of a podcast, a presentation, a video or a web-page but must be targeted at a relevant audience outside of academia (to be identified by the student).

Reassessment component is the same

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Seminar and Symposium contribution	10%		Yes (extension)
Contributions to weekly seminars and to the plenary Symposium held in lieu of the seminar in week 10. At the latter, students should present their source analysis (see previous assessment) to the group using the appropriate method (e.g. playing the podcast, demonstrating the website), outline their chosen audience, justify the choices made, and be prepared to answer questions from the tutor and fellow students. Students should outline issues faced, explain how these were addressed, and reflect on the ways in which this has developed their understanding of the chosen theme.			

Reassessment component			
Reflective piece			Yes (extension)
A piece of short, reflective prose writing outlining challenges faced by the student in the preparation of the primary source analysis and fulfilling the same criteria as would be expected of the Symposium contribution.			

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback via on-line systems (i.e. Tabula) and individual meetings (face-to-face tutorials).

Availability

Pre-requisites

N/A

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- Year 2 of UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)
- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)

This module is Core option list C for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology