

## Quo Vadis Europe Post-Brexit? Possible Futures from a Historical Perspective

**Martyn Roetter**

**Tuesdays, March 7 - April 18 (not March 21) 1:00-3:00 p.m. 6 sessions**  
**The Engineering Center, One Walnut Street**

On June 23, 2016 a majority (52 percent) of votes in a referendum called by conservative prime minister David Cameron (37 percent of eligible voters) were cast in favor of the United Kingdom's (U.K.'s) withdrawal from the European Union (EU), or Brexit, after 43 years of membership. Although the referendum is nonbinding, so far this result has been accepted as the unchallengeable "will of the people," requiring the U.K. to negotiate terms for an unprecedented departure of the EU's second largest economy. Yet notably Margaret Thatcher, heroine of conservatives in both the United States (U.S.) and the U.K. and prime minister from 1979 to 1990, once characterized referendums as "a device of demagogues and dictators." Moreover, there are deep divisions among the advocates of Brexit about the form it should take. The new prime minister, Theresa May, has announced that Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty will be triggered by the end of March 2017 to initiate the formal process of implementing Brexit.

This seminar will address three questions: 1. How did the U.K. and the EU get to this point? 2. Where are we now in terms of the Brexit negotiating process? 3. What scenarios and consequences can be envisaged for the U.K. and Europe, and what might be the global effects?

Each question will be addressed in two consecutive sessions in this discussion-focused course. Conversations will draw on readings and other material including selected articles, documents, quotes, and short videos in English from the U.K. and other European and non-European (e.g., the U.S., Asia) sources dating from World War I to the present day. Class members are welcome to share their own experiences with the U.K. and the EU. The conversations will expose a wide range of opinions on the EU over time, the motivations that led to its creation, the often contentious relationships between the U.K. and other EU members, and the possible economic, social, and geopolitical consequences of Brexit.

**Martyn Roetter**

Martyn Roetter has a doctorate in theoretical nuclear physics from Oxford University. He has lived in the U.K., France, and Germany. He worked around the world as an adviser on technology, business, policy, and regulatory issues for private- and public-sector clients as a partner in multinational consulting companies and his own sole proprietorship. Son of a German refugee and an English mother, he has been engrossed by the relationships between the U.K. and the rest of Europe since his student days.

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