**England After Empire**

**Harvard Summer School 2022**

**Instructor:** Duncan White

**Contact:** duncanwhite@fas.harvard.edu

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Course Description:**

This course considers the way England was transformed through the demise of its Empire after the Second World War through to the advent of Brexit Britain. From the birth of the welfare state to the rise of Thatcherism, from post-colonial migration to multicultural Britain, from the Swinging Sixties to punk rock and riots, we will track these radical political, social and cultural changes through novels, poetry, theater, film, pop music, photography, fashion, food and sport. We will explore the way Britain sought to retain its influence in the world, through its involvement in the Cold War, its relations with the Commonwealth, and its continuing ‘special relationship’ with the United States, even as what being English or British began to change in meaning. As well as reading literary works by John Osborne, Sam Selvon, Zadie Smith, and Bernardine Evaristo, we will consider the nation’s popular culture, from The Beatles to The Sex Pistols.

**Assignments and Grading:**

**Participation:** This is a seminar class so contributing to discussions and debates is essential. Please be prepared to contribute to every class. If you find the prospect of this challenging for any reason please come and see me in office hours so that we can talk through strategies to employ.

**Papers One and Two:** Two shorter papers (4-5 pages) will be due during the course of the semester (see schedule). More information will be distributed closer to the date. These will be given letter grades.

**Final Paper:** A final research paper of 8-10 pages. This will draw on our cumulative reading of Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* or Bernadine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other,* but will also involve the analysis of other primary sources and the formation of an argument that contends with secondary sources. This will receive a letter grade.

**Participation:** 30%

**Paper One: 20%** (due Jul ?, 5pm EST)

**Paper Two: 20%** (due Jul ??, 5pm EST)

**Final Paper: 30%** (due Aug ?, 5pm EST) Please note that this is a hard deadline to which extensions cannot be granted.

**Readings:** Please be sure to have completed all assigned readings ahead of class. As you will be expected to annotate your readings it is preferable that you bring marked-up hard copies with you. Use of phones or laptops in a manner not directly related to class work will result in a grade penalty and a ban. If there is a reason why you might need to check your phone during class please inform me ahead of time.

**Pronouns:** Preferred gender pronouns will be respected by everyone in class. I will default to the pronouns you have selected on my.harvard, but if you have other preferences please let me know. Please address your fellow students directly by name or “you” when responding to a point made by your classmates, with whom you are in conversation during our discussions.

**Subject material:** Some of our subject matter can be divisive and offensive and is certainly worthy of scrutiny and critique. However, I encourage you to approach the material as an important (if often difficult) part of history and culture, meant to spark lively discussion about its past and its present significance. Please not the following in particular:

* The use of racial slurs in many texts, including the n-word. This course engages in the cultural and social change that Britain underwent in the second half of the twentieth century and as such interrogates changing attitudes towards race and racism. Racial slurs are used in different contexts, both in examples of racist rhetoric, and by authors whose position is anti-racist. Please do not use these words in classroom discussion, instead referring to them as "racial slurs".
* In *Girl, Woman, Other* there are several scenes in which sexual violence is remembered by traumatized characters.
* In *Goldfinger* there is a scene in which an act of sexual coercion and violence occurs, even as the film does not represent it as such.

You are welcome to come speak with me if you have any concerns.

**Attendance:** Attendance is required in all classes. The Summer term moves very quickly, and even a single missed class will put you at a disadvantage in your learning. Absences will negatively affect your final grade and can be grounds for removal from the course.

**Deadlines:** Please submit your work on time through Canvas. Failure to do so will result in a half-grade penalty if the work is submitted within 24 hours of the deadline. Work more than 24 hours late has to be submitted to me in person. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Everybody is granted two grace days that they can use at any time during the semester (except for the final paper).

**Email and Canvas:** I will sometimes provide email updates about readings, assignments, and other course matters. While I am always happy to talk during office hours, you are also welcome to email me with any questions. I try to respond to all emails within a 48-hour period; please read and respond to your email regularly. Please also check the course Canvas site frequently for any changes to the readings and assignments

**Collaboration and Plagiarism:** You are responsible for understanding Harvard Summer School policies on academic integrity (http://www.summer.harvard.edu/policies/student-responsibilities) and how to use sources responsibly. Not knowing the rules, misunderstanding the rules, running out of time, submitting the wrong draft, or being overwhelmed with multiple demands are not acceptable excuses. To support your learning about academic citation rules, please visit the Resources to Support Academic Integrity (http://www.summer.harvard.edu/resources- policies/resources-support-academic-integrity) where you will find links to the Harvard Guide to Using Sources (https://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu) and two free online 15-minute tutorials to test your knowledge of academic citation policy. The tutorials are anonymous open-learning tools.

**Accommodations:** The Summer School is committed to providing an accessible academic community. The Accessibility Office offers a variety of accommodations and services to students with documented disabilities. Please visit <http://www.summer.harvard.edu/resources-policies/accessibility-services> for more information.

**Publishing or Distributing Course Materials:** Students may not post, publish, sell, or otherwise publicly distribute course materials without the written permission of the course instructor. Such materials include, but are not limited to, the following: lecture notes, lecture slides, video, or audio recordings, assignments, problem sets, examinations, other students’ work, and answer keys. Students who sell, post, publish, or distribute course materials without written permission, whether for the purposes of soliciting answers or otherwise, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including requirement to withdraw from the Summer School. Further, students may not make video or audio recordings of class sessions for their own use without written permission of the instructor.

**Assigned Texts:** You are responsible for purchasing required books. PDFs of other readings are available on the course Canvas site. If you encounter any problems (financial or otherwise) accessing course material, please get in touch with me.

**Required Texts**

Osborne, John. *Look Back In Anger*

Selvon, Sam. *The Lonely Londoners*

Fleming, Ian, *Casino Royale*

Smith, Zadie, *White Teeth*

Evaristo, Bernadine, *Girl, Woman, Other*

Let me know if you have any problem getting hold of these. Please note all other readings will be loaded to the course site on Canvas as PDFs.

**Schedule**

**Tuesday, June 21**

**Class 1: England? After? Empire?**

Orwell, George, "Part 1: England Your England" from *The Lion and the Unicorn* (1940)

Olusoga, David, "The toppling of Edward Colston's statue is not an attack on history. It is history." *Guardian*, Jun 8, 2020.

Sanghera, Sathnam, *Empireland* (2021) Excerpts.

**Thursday, June 23**

**Class 2: A New England**

**Readings:**

Osborne, John. *Look Back in Anger* (1956)

Kynaston, David. "Broad Vistas and All That." *Austerity Britain* (2008).

**Tuesday, June 28**

**Class 3: Windrush**Selvon, Selvon. *The Lonely Londoners* (1956)

Olusoga, David. *Black and British* (2016) Excerpt.

**Thursday, June 30**

**Class 4: Decline and Fall**

**Readings:**

*The Crown*, Season 2, Episodes 1-2

Brandon, Piers. ‘The Destruction of National Will.’ *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire, 1781-1997* (2007)

**\*\*\*\*DUE PAPER ONE \*\*\*\***

**Tuesday, July 5**

**Readings: Backlash**

Powell, Enoch. ‘Rivers of Blood’ (1968)

Waters, Chris. ‘"Dark Strangers" in Our Midst: Discourses of Race and Nation in Britain, 1947-1963.’ *Journal of British Studies* Vol. 36, No. 2, Twentieth-Century British Studies (Apr 1997), pp. 207-238.

Perry, Kennetta Hammond, "'Race Riots' and the Mystique of British Anti-Racism," *London is the Place for Me: Black Britons, Citizenship, and the Politics of Race* (2015)

**Thursday, July 7**

**Class 6: Swinging Sixties: the Beatles**

**Readings:**

Beatles, *Revolver* (1966)

Beatles, *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967)

Collins, Michael, "'I say high, you say low': the Beatles and cultural hierarchies in 1960s and 1970s Britain," *Popular Music* (2020) Volume 39/3-4.

**Tuesday, July 12**

**Class 7: The Bond Phenomenon**

**Readings:**

Fleming, Ian, *Casino Royale* (1953)

*Goldfinger*, dir. Guy Hamilton (1964)

Christine Berberich,["Putting England Back on Top? Ian Fleming, James Bond, and the Question of England,"](https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/91433/files/12550123/download?wrap=1) *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 42, (2012)

**Thursday, July 14**

**Class 8: Feminism and Sexuality from the Pill to Thatcher**

**Readings:**

Lessing, Doris. Short Stories TBC

Kent, Susan Kingsley. "End of Consensus: “Permissiveness” and Mrs. Thatcher’s Reaction, 1963-90." *Gender and Power in Britain 1640-1990* (1999)

**\*\*\*\*DUE PAPER TWO \*\*\*\***

**Tuesday, July 19**

**Class 9: Thatcher's Britain 1**

**Readings:**

Thatcher, Margaret. "Let Me Give You My Vision." (1975)

Thatcher, Margaret. "The Falklands Factor." (1982).

"Anarchy in the UK." *Sex Pistols* (1976)

**Thursday, July 21**

**Class 10: Thatcher's Britain 2**

**Readings:**

*The Iron Lady*, dir. Phyllida Lloyd (2011)

Gamble, Andrew, "The Thatcher Myth," *British Politics* (2015) Vol.10 (1), p.3-15.

**Tuesday, July 26**

**Class 11: Multiculturalism and the Rushdie Affair**

**Readings:**

Smith, Zadie. *White Teeth* [First half].

Rushdie, Salman. "Imaginary Homelands," (1991) and excerpts from *The Satanic Verses* (1988)

*The Satanic Verses Affair*. BBC Documentary.(2009)

**Thursday, July 28**

**Class 12: Multiculturalism and New Labour**

**Readings:**

Smith, Zadie. *White Teeth* (Part Two).

Cook, Robin. ‘The Chicken Tikka Masala Speech.’ (2001)

Buettner, Elizabeth. ‘“Going for an Indian”: South Asian Restaurants and the Limits of Multiculturalism in Britain.’ *The Journal of Modern History* 80: 4 (December 2008), pp. 865-901.

**Tuesday, Aug 2**

**Class 13: Britain After Brexit 1**

**Readings:**

Evaristo, Bernadine, *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) Part 1

Saunders, Robert, "Brexit and Empire: Global Britain and the Myth of Imperial Nostalgia." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (Dec 2020)

**Thursday, Aug 4**

**Class 14: Britain After Brexit 2**

Evaristo, Bernadine, *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) Part 2

Andrews, Kehinde, "The Post-Racial Princess: Delusions of Racial Progress and Intersectional Failures," Women's Studies International Forum, Volume 84, Jan-Feb, 2021.

**\*\*\*\*DUE FINAL PAPER \*\*\*\***