



**School of Arts
Department of English, Theatre and Creative
Writing**

**MA Contemporary Literature and Culture
Student Handbook 2019-2020**

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This document is for reference only. Every effort was made to ensure that information was correct at time of online publication, but discrepancies may still occur due to the nature of this document. For current information and updates, always refer directly to the Birkbeck College website.

Introduction

When Birkbeck College was established in 1823, its principal mission was to provide education and training to working adults who earlier in life had lacked educational opportunity. Birkbeck now welcomes a diverse range of students, studying both full- and part-time at undergraduate and postgraduate level. A College of the University of London since 1920, Birkbeck is still highly committed to the concept of lifelong education, and especially within the world of work. Birkbeck and the other member colleges of the University of London have many research interests in common and share the same standards and degrees structures, but in one important respect Birkbeck is unique. Our [mission](#) is 'to provide courses of study to meet the changing educational, cultural and training needs of adults who are engaged in earning their livelihood, and others who are able to benefit' (Birkbeck College Charter).

Birkbeck College has built up special expertise in providing a stimulating, positive learning environment for adult, mature students. We award undergraduate degrees in a range of disciplines, taught in full-time and part-time modes, and have an unusually high proportion of students following taught Masters and MPhil/PhD courses.

Department

Welcome to the [Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing](#) in the [School of Arts](#). You are joining a vibrant community of graduates, which includes over 200 MA and some 100 PhD students. We hope that you will feel at home in this intellectual community. This booklet contains the essential information about the MA Contemporary Literature programme.

The Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing occupies houses in Gordon Square which are associated with the members of the Bloomsbury Group. 46 Gordon Square was the family home of Virginia Woolf, her brothers and her sister, Vanessa, until the latter's marriage to the art critic Clive Bell in 1907. It was later occupied by the economist John Maynard Keynes.

Most School of English activities take place in 43 Gordon Square, with classes also held in Russell Square and in the Main Building on Malet Street (and occasionally in other University of London buildings). The Malet Street building is where the Library, computer rooms and the student bar (fifth floor of the extension) are situated. A snack bar is located on the ground floor of 43 Gordon Square. We are close to the bars and cafés of the University of London Union, the Institute of Education and the School of Oriental and African Studies: explore the area for the environment that suits you.

We aim to provide intellectual stimulus in a supportive environment. Some students find the transition to graduate work initially disorientating, but we have a lot of experience in helping mature students with heavy commitments elsewhere successfully to manage their postgraduate studies. If you do have any difficulties, please talk to your module tutor, your personal tutor, or to the Programme Director.

Dr Sean O'Brien
Programme Director for years 2018-20
s.obrien@bbk.ac.uk

Starting your Course

Completing Your Enrolment

After receiving an offer of a place on the programme, you need to enrol as soon as possible. Enrolment is completed via your My Birkbeck Profile (see information below). You must complete your enrolment within the first 28 days of term by setting up a payment plan, or making a contribution to your fees. **By completing your enrolment you gain access to your student profile and programme documents, as well as your timetable, reading list and Student/Library access card.**

Please ensure you read your contract of enrolment. Students who withdraw or take a break in their studies after the first two weeks will be liable for the full fees for that term. [Click here to complete your enrolment via your My Birkbeck Profile.](#)



My Birkbeck Profile

Your [My Birkbeck Profile](#) in conjunction with [Student Services](#) is your gateway to accessing student support at Birkbeck. Quick links to the most current information on a range of services including the Birkbeck Library, Moodle, Timetables, Computing and IT Support, Career Services, Learning Support, Disability and Dyslexia Support, Counselling Service and more are listed.

[My Birkbeck Profile](#) is the online facility that allows Birkbeck students to manage their relationship with Birkbeck online. You can [login](#) to your My Birkbeck Profile to check and amend your contact details, order an [ID card](#) and keep track of your financial status and grades. You will use your My Birkbeck Profile to access your module and timetable information, [Personal Tutor](#) details and [eRegister](#) record of attendance. At exam time, you will also be able to access your personal examination timetable and your results once they are published.

It is essential to access your My Birkbeck Profile on a regular basis and keep your contact details up-to-date, to facilitate communication and access between yourself and the College. Email is the standard means of communication in the School of Arts.

Go to <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/my-birkbeck-profile> to login with your username and password. If you do not have your username and password, please contact ITS Reception in the main Malet Street building or by email at its-helpdesk@bbk.ac.uk.

Fees, Financial Support and Payment Details

College fees may be paid by many methods. Please click [here](#) to follow the link to the College website, for the most current information on fees and payment, and [here](#) for details on financial support. Whilst we have great sympathy with students who find difficulties in paying their fees, neither the programme director nor any of your tutors have the power to waive fees or sanction delays in payment. For advice and support in relation to paying your fees, please contact the [College Income Office](#). The Income Office deals with all enquiries relating to payment of fees, including direct debit

queries. Please communicate and negotiate with the College Fees Office directly if you have any fee-related queries.

Fees Policy 2019/2020

You are strongly encouraged to take a look at the [Fees and Payments](#) page on the website and read the current [Fees Policy](#). Refer to these resources to answer questions such as *What does fee liability mean? What is the last date I can enrol?* and *What should I do if I can't pay my fees?* Students who fail to pay their fees may become ineligible to continue the course, unable to submit assessments or access their My Birkbeck Profile. Any student who has a debt to the College at the end of the year will not have their marks relayed to them.

Postgraduate Loans

Please see the Birkbeck website [here](#) for helpful information on applying for a postgraduate loan. You can also access the [Postgraduate Loans and Enrolment: A Step-by-Step Guide](#) for assistance enrolling onto your programme.

Moodle

[Moodle](#) (Birkbeck's Virtual Learning Environment Platform) is an online student portal. **You will be expected to upload and submit all assignment documents using Moodle throughout the duration of your study.** You can also use Moodle to access interactive tutorials, lecture slides, reading lists and recorded lectures, career management resources and your personal student record.

It is recommended all students access [Moodle Support for Students](#) to become familiar with how to access Moodle and submit coursework online. Please [Login to Moodle](#) with your Birkbeck College username and password.

School of Arts Location

The School of Arts is housed at [43 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PD](#), where you will find the administrative offices and individual staff offices. Teaching often takes place in our building, but your lectures may be held in any of the University of London or University College London buildings. Please login to your My Birkbeck Profile for access to your student timetable and links to maps of the buildings. During term time, the Gordon Square entrance is staffed from 8.00am to 9.00pm, Monday to Friday and is open between 9.00am and 5.00pm on Saturdays (during term time only).

The Administrative Office

Please contact your Programme Administrator by phone or email to discuss any queries or to book an appointment.

Attendance Requirements

Taking a degree course at Birkbeck requires a high level of commitment, and it is important that you attend seminars consistently. Regular attendance is a requirement of every course unit and you will be required to register your attendance each week. **It is your responsibility to make sure you sign in using the e-register (see below) at every class you attend.** It is accepted that through illness or exceptional pressure at home or at work you may have to miss occasional classes, but if you have to be absent from several classes, or you know that you are going to have difficulties in attending regularly, please inform the Programme Director. **We do**

require notice of intended absence in writing (by email) to your module tutor AND your Programme Administrator.

We are very sympathetic towards the problems encountered by students and we will do all that we can to help you through any difficulties you may have with your studies. Please do signal if you are having problems.

Registering your attendance with eRegisters

The eRegisters system allows students to keep track of and monitor their own attendance at teaching events. In Birkbeck teaching rooms, students will be expected to tap their Birkbeck student ID card onto a card reader at the beginning of each class. **Please remember it is your responsibility to bring your Birkbeck ID card to class to monitor your attendance. This is especially important for those of you that are Tier 4 students.** For further information on eRegisters please click [here](#).

Programme Student Support

Any matters that students want to discuss that are directly related to the content of the MA should be discussed with the appropriate lecturer. Lecturers will let students know the time and place of their office hours, although you may wish to make an appointment. Email can be a convenient way to do this. Any other matters concerning the course should be taken up with your personal tutor. You will be informed of which member of the course team will act as your personal tutor at the beginning of term. You may discuss medical and pastoral problems in strict confidence.

Student Representation

Each year, we also ask for two student representatives from the MA to represent your concerns to a staff-student committee. These representatives raise issues specific to your experience as an MA Contemporary student at Birkbeck. We'll ask you to nominate representatives during the autumn term.

Start of Term for New Students

The pre-term general Induction and reception for new English, Theatre and Creative Writing, will be held on **Thursday 26 September 2019 from 7.00pm**. Your programme induction will run before the general induction. Further information will be circulated prior to this event.

In the first term all full-time (FT) students and first year part-time (PT) students, will take **Core Course 1: Reading the Contemporary**. This class will take place on **Monday at 6-9pm**, commencing on 30 September 2019.

Term Dates

Autumn Term Monday 30 September to Friday 13 December 2020		Spring Term Monday 13 January to Friday 27 March 2020		Summer Term Monday 27 April to Friday 10 July 2020	
Week 1	30-Sep-19	Week 1	13-Jan-20	Week 1	27-Apr-20
Week 2	07-Oct-19	Week 2	20-Jan-20	Week 2	04-May-20
Week 3	14-Oct-19	Week 3	27-Jan-20	Week 3	11-May-20
Week 4	21-Oct-19	Week 4	03-Feb-20	Week 4	18-May-20
Week 5	28-Oct-19	Week 5	10-Feb-20	Week 5	25-May-20
Reading Week	04-Nov-19	Reading Week	17-Feb-20	Reading Week	01-Jun-20
Week 7	11-Nov-19	Week 7	24-Feb-20	Week 7	08-Jun-20
Week 8	18-Nov-19	Week 8	02-Mar-20	Week 8	15-Jun-20
Week 9	25-Nov-19	Week 9	09-Mar-20	Week 9	22-Jun-20
Week 10	02-Dec-19	Week 10	16-Mar-20	Week 10	29-Jun-20
Week 11	09-Dec-19	Week 11	23-Mar-20	Week 11	02-Jul-20
College will close at 6pm on Friday 20 December, and normal services will resume from 9am on Thursday 2 January 2020. Check for Library opening hours.		College will close for Easter from 6pm 8 April, and normal services will resume from 9am 15 April 2020 Check for Library opening hours		4 and 25 of May are Bank Holidays. If classes fall on these dates they may be rescheduled.	
<p>Please note: Week 6 each term is Reading Week – no classes are held during Reading Week unless specified by your module convenor.</p> <p>Click here for full term dates and holiday closures.</p> <p>Students are reminded that it is inadvisable to take holidays during term time</p>					

Programme Structure

Part-time Study

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year One	Core Module 1 Mondays: 6-9pm AREN095S7 Reading the Contemporary	Option Module 1	Summer Seminars
Year Two	Core Module 2 Thursdays: 6-9pm ENHU050S7 Post-War to Contemporary	Option Module 2 Dissertation Topic is due by Friday 05 March 2021 Preliminary consultation with dissertation supervisor by end of spring term	Dissertation Research Skills Sessions and Supervisions Submission of Dissertation: due Friday 10 September 2021 Summer Seminars

Full-time Study

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year One	Core Module 1 Mondays: 6-9pm AREN095S7 Reading the Contemporary Core Module 2 Thursdays: 6-9pm ENHU050S7 Post-War to Contemporary	Option Module 1 Option Module 2 Dissertation Topic is due by Friday 6 March 2020 Preliminary consultation with dissertation supervisor by end of spring term	Dissertation Research Skills Sessions and Supervisions Submission of Dissertation: due Friday 11 September 2020 Summer Seminars

Important Dates 2019-2020

Autumn Term

Thursday 26 September 2019

Programme induction for incoming MA Contemporary students at 6.15-6.45pm
Pre-term general induction and reception for new students 7-9pm

Monday 30 September 2019

Start of academic year
First class for core 1

Thursday 03 October 2019

First class for core 2: FT/PT2

December 2019

Dissertation planning session for FT/PT2 in core 2

Spring Term

Monday 13 January 2020

First day of spring term/deadline for core course 1 and 2 coursework

Friday 06 March 2020

Deadline for dissertation proposals

Summer Term

Monday 27 April 2020

First day of term/deadline for option courses coursework
Dissertation supervisions begin

Wed evenings

Research skills classes begin for FT/PT2.

Friday 10 July 2020

End of term
Dissertation meetings complete

Friday 11 September 2020

Submission of dissertation for FT/PT2

Submission Deadlines

Core Module 1:

AREN095S7 Reading the Contemporary
Monday 13 January 2020
14:00pm (electronic submission)

Core Module 2:

ENHU050S7 Post-War to Contemporary
Monday 13 January 2020
14:00pm (electronic submission)

Spring Option Module

Monday 27 April 2020*
14:00pm (electronic submission)

Dissertation (full-time and second year part-time students only)

Friday 11 September 2020
14:00pm (electronic submission)

**Please note: this date is subject to change depending upon your module choice.*

Spring Term: Option Modules

You will be contacted by administrative staff from the English, Theatre and Creative Writing department with instructions on how to make your spring option module choice through online module selection. Timetable information on options available in your current academic year will be listed and circulated with the instructions on how to make your choice. You will be asked to list a number of preferred options online, in the event you are not allocated a place onto your first preference option. Please complete your option choices by the deadline specified by your department and note the following:

- Option modules are allocated on a first come, first served basis and places are competitive.
- If you require help with your module choices you should contact your personal tutor.
- Please be aware that modules vary from year to year. If you are a part-time student, you should take into account when you make your module choice that it is unlikely that the same selection of option modules will be available in your second year.

Summer Term: Research Skills Programme and Summer Seminars

Wednesday, 6.00-7.20pm: **Research Skills Programme (PT2 and FT) and Summer Seminars** (all students).

The Research Skills Programme is a short series of seminars designed to consolidate and extend the research methods already introduced on the course and

support you as you work on your dissertation. The Programme is primarily for PT2 and FT students who are working on the dissertation, but PT1 students are permitted to attend.

The **Summer Seminars** are lectures, discussions, screenings and creative writing events all related to Modern and Contemporary Literature. They will run in the Wednesday 6.00-7.20 slot in weeks 7,8 and 9. The aim is to provide all MA students with a space in the summer term for you to recover from two intensive terms, yet remain intellectually engaged. The Summer Seminars are provided in addition to the Graduate Lecture Programme of visiting speakers and panels that runs on Thursdays throughout the year, Birkbeck Arts Week (in May 2019) and the other events across the Department, School and University.

Dissertation

A 15 000-word dissertation on any topic from the many areas covered by the MA in Contemporary Literature and Culture is written over the summer. Students meet with their supervisor for close consultation on their topic for three hour-long supervisions on mutually convenient dates. **These must be concluded by the final day of the academic year, which is 10 July 2020.** The summer is for working on the dissertation and the submission date is **14:00 on Friday 11 September 2020.**

MA Contemporary Literature and Culture Staff Contact List

Key Contacts		
Dr Sean O'Brien Programme Director and Personal Tutor	Room 301, 43 Gordon Square	s.obrien@bbk.ac.uk
Programme Administrators	Room G19/G20, 43 Gordon Square	englishandhumanities@bbk.ac.uk
Teaching Staff on the MA Contemporary Literature and Culture Programme		
Dr Joe Brooker	43 Gordon Square	j.brooker@bbk.ac.uk
Dr Peter Fifield	43 Gordon Square	p.fifield@bbk.ac.uk
Dr Caroline Edwards	43 Gordon Square	caroline.edwards@bbk.ac.uk
Dr Grace Halden	43 Gordon Square	g.halden@bbk.ac.uk
Dr Anna Hartnell	43 Gordon Square	a.hartnell@bbk.ac.uk
Dr Mpalive Msiska	43 Gordon Square	m.msiska@bbk.ac.uk
Professor Roger Luckhurst	43 Gordon Square	r.luckhurst@bbk.ac.uk

Above are the core teachers on the MA Contemporary programme. Teaching and dissertation supervisions are also provided by additional specialists in the Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing.

Please check office hours with individual staff members. We ask you visit offices only when you have made an appointment. Please ring or email in advance. Staff members are available for tutorials at other times by appointment.

Staffing is subject to change and listing in this handbook is not a guarantee that a specific staff member will be with the Department in the 2019-20 academic year.

There is a research leave policy in the College, which means that all members of academic staff are entitled to one term's research leave every three years. In addition, members of staff are regularly awarded externally funded research leave, by organisations such as the Leverhulme Trust and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Therefore, not all academic staff will be present at all times. On such occasions the Department will arrange replacement cover and advise the affected students.

Core Course 1: Reading the Contemporary (FT and PT2)

Module Convenor: Dr Sean O'Brien

Module Lecturers: Dr Sean O'Brien (SO), Dr Katherine Angel (KA), Dr Joe Brooker (JB), Prof Martin Eve (ME), Dr Caroline Edwards (CE)

Module Code: AREN095S7

Module Level: 7

Timetable: Autumn Term, Mondays 6.00pm – 9.00pm

All sessions involve a lecture (6-7.20) followed by a seminar (7.40-9) with the exception of Week 11, during which the first session (6-7.20) will be taught as a closing lecture and the second session (7.40-9) will consist of a student-led workshop on Researching the Contemporary.

Module Description

This course introduces students to a range of contemporary literary, cinematic, visual and theoretical works published since 2000, tracing some of the major developments in contemporary literatures at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Taking in poetry, film, memoir, journalism, television, the novel, the graphic novel, science fiction and digital culture, this course explores the meanings and characteristics of the 'contemporary' via a focus on categories like trauma, crisis, memory, futurity, and the digital – terms that have been major preoccupations of cultural production in the last two decades.

Aims and objectives:

- To provide a comprehensive grounding in some of the key trends and texts in the field of contemporary literature and culture, with a special focus on the post-2000 period.
- To engage students in debates about the conceptualization of the contemporary, and to equip them with the appropriate vocabulary and critical paradigms.
- To identify and engage with the key features and characteristics of new forms of writing that have emerged as a result of new technologies.
- To develop a multidisciplinary approach to the study of contemporary literature and culture.

Coursework and assessment:

Assessed essay: this course is examined by a 5,000 word essay due the first day of the spring term. Please see the handout posted on Moodle for a list of essay questions and submission instructions.

Texts and media that you will need to purchase:

- *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, dir. Benh Zeitlin (2012) [Film]
- Alan Hollinghurst, *The Line of Beauty* (2004) [Novel]
- *The Expanse*, Season 1, Episode 1, 'Dulcinea' [TV]
- Valarie Solanas, *SCUM Manifesto* (2015) [Manifesto]
- Claudia Rankine, *Citizen: An American Lyric* (2014) [Poetry]

- David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (2014) [Novel]
- Rana Dasgupta, *Tokyo Cancelled* (2005) [Novel]
- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (2006) [Graphic Novel]
- Ashley McKenzie, *Werewolf* (2016) [Film]

Please note: all core reading material that is *not* listed above – these will usually be short texts, i.e. essays, poems, short stories etc. – will be made available either electronically via Moodle (Birkbeck’s virtual learning environment) or via a handout given out in advance of the relevant class.

All recommended secondary reading is available via the e-journal databases (Project Muse and JSTOR), in Birkbeck Library or Senate House Library; you will also be able to find copies of all texts in the British Library.

Introductory reading on contemporary literature and cultural theory:

- Siân Adiseshiah and Rupert Hildyard (eds), *Twenty-First Century Fiction: What Happens Now* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013)
- Alain Badiou, *The Rebirth of History: Times of Riots and Uprisings* (London: Verso, 2012)
- Pamela Bickley, *Contemporary Fiction: The Novel since 1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008)
- Peter Boxall, *Twenty-First-Century Fiction: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)
- Ian Brinton, *Contemporary Poetry: Poets and Poetry since 1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)
- Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004)
- Liam Connell and Nicky Marsh (eds), *Literature and Globalization: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2010)
- Todd F. Davis and Kenneth Womack, *Postmodern Humanism in Contemporary Literature and Culture: Reconciling the Void* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006)
- Robert Eagleston, *Contemporary Fiction: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)
- Justin Edwards and Agnieszka Soltysik Monnet (eds), *The Gothic in Contemporary Literature and Popular Culture: Pop Goth* (New York: Routledge, 2012)
- Amir Eshel, *Futurity: Contemporary Literature and the Quest for the Past* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013)
- Brian Finney, *English Fiction Since 1984: Narrating a Nation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006)
- Sebastian Groess, *The Making of London: London in Contemporary Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011)
- Stuart Hall, Doreen Massey and Michael Rustin, *After Neoliberalism? The Kilburn Manifesto, Soundings:*
<http://www.lwbooks.co.uk/journals/soundings/manifesto.html>
- Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse (eds), *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet: New Essays* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Co., 2006)

- Ann Kenniston and Jeanne Follansbee Quinn (eds), *Literature After 9/11* (New York: Routledge, 2010)
- Roger Luckhurst, *The Trauma Question* (London: Routledge, 2008)
- Roger Luckhurst and Peter Marks (eds), *Literature and the Contemporary* (London: Longman, 1999)
- Theodore Martin, *Contemporary Drift: Genre, Historicism and the Problem of the Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017)
- Rod Mengham (ed.), *An Introduction to Contemporary Fiction: International Writing in English since 1970* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999)
- Jago Morrison, *Contemporary Fiction* (London: Routledge, 2001)
- Antonio Negri, *Time for Revolution*, trans. Matteo Mandarini (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013)
- Steve Padley, *Key Concepts in Contemporary Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006)
- Nicholas Royle, *The Uncanny* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003)
- David Shields, *Reality Hunger: A Manifesto* (London: Penguin, 2010)
- Philip Tew and David James (eds), *New Versions of Pastoral: Post-Romantic, Modern and Contemporary Responses to the Tradition* (Madison, N. J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2009)
- Rebecca L. Walkowitz (ed.), "Immigrant Fictions," *Contemporary Literature* (special issue), Vol. 47, No. 4 (2006)
- Slavoj Žižek, *Living in the End Times* (London: Verso, 2010)
- _____, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real* (London: Verso, 2002)

Seminar Schedule

Week 1 | When was the Contemporary? (SO)

This session introduces the module by opening a debate about the nature of the contemporary: is it primarily a conceptual or a periodizing term? What is the contemporary 'now'? We'll begin with a lecture covering key critical writings on the notoriously slippery notion of the contemporary, drawing out its overlapping theoretical, cultural, political and environmental implications.

Through a discussion of *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, this introductory class will also consider the idea that the contemporary world is in some ways 'post-American'.

Essential viewing / reading:

- *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, dir. Benh Zeitlin (2012)
- Giorgio Agamben, 'What is the Contemporary?' in *What is an Apparatus? And other Essays* (2009)
- Lauren Berlant, 'Introduction: Affect in the Present' in *Cruel Optimism* (2011).
- Rob Nixon, 'Introduction' in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011).

Week 2 | Retro Action (JB)

The contemporary seems to be about the new. But contemporary cultural production also involves revisiting the past. How does the aesthetic reconstruction of the past contribute to the cultural-temporal mosaic of the contemporary? Are we attracted to the glamour of the past, nostalgic for its certainties, or keen to use it to interrogate the present? How is the past manipulated and remade by the lenses and styles of our contemporary moment?

Essential reading:

- Alan Hollinghurst, *The Line of Beauty* (2004), on the 1980s.

The lecture will also refer to the TV series *Mad Men* (2007-2015), on the 1960s.

Recommended additional/comparative texts:

- 1980s neo-1950s movies: *Back To The Future*, *Peggy Sue Got Married*, *Absolute Beginners*
- post-2000 neo-1980s movies: *Donnie Darko*, *13 Going on 30*, *This Is England*
- Neo-1980s novels: David Peace, *GB84* (2004) makes a strong comparison to Hollinghurst; see also Tim Lott, *Rumours of a Hurricane* (2001) and David Mitchell, *Black Swan Green* (2006).
- Retro TV: *Life on Mars* and *Ashes To Ashes*

Background reading:

- Andy Beckett, *When The Lights Went Out: Britain in the Seventies* (London: Faber, 2009)
- Joseph Brooker, *Literature of the 1980s: After the Watershed* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), Conclusion
- --- 'Neo Lines: Alan Hollinghurst and the Apogee of the Eighties', *Literary Criterion*, XL: 3&4 (2005): 104-116
- --- 'Orgreave Revisited: *GB84* and the Return to the 1980s', *Radical Philosophy*, Vol. 133 (September / October 2005), pp. 39-51
- Andrew Eastham, 'Inoperative ironies: Jamesian aestheticism and postmodern culture in Alan Hollinghurst's *The Line of Beauty*', *Textual Practice*, Vol. 20, No. 6 (2006): 509-527
- Elizabeth E. Guffey, *Retro* (London: Reaktion, 2006)
- Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (London: Routledge, 1995)
- --- *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003)
- Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism* (London: Verso, 1991), chapter 9 on 'nostalgia for the present'
- Nicky Marsh, *Money, Speculation and Finance in Contemporary British Fiction* (London: Continuum, 2007)
- Andy McSmith, *No Such Thing as Society: A History of Britain in the 1980s* (London: Constable, 2010)
- Simon Reynolds, *Retromania* (London: Faber, 2011): the fullest work to date in this field: if you're interested in Retro, read this
- Janelle L. Wilson, *Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2005)
- Peter York and Charles Jennings, *Peter York's Eighties* (London: BBC Books, 1995)

Week 3 | World-System Failure (SO)

A decade after the 2008 financial crisis, the future of the capitalist world-system remains uncertain, as nation states retreat from international partnerships and the neoliberal consensus appears to be on the wane. The capitalist world-system is also undergoing a profound transition at the very moment that it is increasingly butting up against ecological limits. This session will examine issues of hegemonic transition, climate crisis and economic stagnation in the SYFY television series *The Expanse*. How does the series mobilize the speculative capacities of science fiction to explore the prospects for further expansion of the capitalist world-system? Students should familiarize themselves with the pilot episode, 'Dulcinea'.

Essential reading:

- Mark Fergus and Hawk Ostby, 'Dulcinea,' *The Expanse* (SYFY and Alcon Entertainment, 2015–).
- Giovanni Arrighi, "Introduction," in *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power and the Origins of Our Times* (London: Verso, 2010), 1-27.

Background reading:

- Giovanni Arrighi, *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the 21st Century* (London: Verso, 2007).
- Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century. Vol. 3. The Perspective of the World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984).
- Joshua Clover and Aaron Benanav, "Can Dialectics Break BRICS?" *South Atlantic Quarterly* 113.4 (2014): 743-759.
- Melinda Cooper, "Secular Stagnation: Fear of a Non-Reproductive Future," *Postmodern Culture* 27.1 (2016): <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/668356>.
- Radhika Desai, *Geopolitical Economy: After US Hegemony, Globalization and Empire* (London: Pluto Press, 2013).
- Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).
- Jed Esty, "Realism Wars," *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 49.2 (2016): 316-342.
- Robert J. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living since the Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).
- Jernej Habjan, "From Cultural Third-Worldism to the Literary World-System," *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 15.5 (2013): <https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.2346>.
- Andrew Milner, *Locating Science Fiction* (Liverpool University Press, 2012).
- _____, "World System and World Science Fiction," *Paradoxa* 26 (2014): 15-29.
- Jason W. Moore, *Capitalism and the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*, (London: Verso, 2015).
- Michael Niblett, "World Economy, World Ecology, World Literature," *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism* 16.1 (2012): 15-30.
- David N. Samuelson, "Modes of Extrapolation: The Formulas of Hard SF," *Science Fiction Studies* 20.2 (1993): 191-232.
- Michael Szalay, "HBO's Flexible Gold," *Representations* 126.1 (2014): 112-134.
- Imre Szeman, "System Failure: Oil, Futurity, and the Anticipation of Disaster," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 106. 4 (2007): 805-823.

- Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-System Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).
- Warwick Research Collective, *Combined and Uneven Development: Towards a New Theory of World-Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015).
- Jerome Winter, *Science Fiction, New Space Opera, and Neoliberal Globalism: Nostalgia for Infinity* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2016).

Week 4 | The World Without Us: Apocalypse and the Anthropocene (CE)

What will the world look like without us? Nikolaus Geyrhalter's post-apocalyptic art film *Homo Sapiens* blurs the boundaries between photography installation and narrative cinema, taking us on an uncanny tour of the planet after humans have mysteriously disappeared. In this session we will consider how Geyrhalter's film responds to important issues raised by environmental discourse in the humanities (or the "environmental humanities"), since the environmental movement of the 1960s-70s. At a time of ongoing crisis in the 21st century, as visions of looming ecocatastrophe proliferate in novels, films and artworks, Geyrhalter's compelling thought experiment helps us think through the competing temporal scales (anthropocentric, geological, capitalist, post-anthropocentric, utopian) necessary to confronting the climate crisis and its existential threat to human habitation as we know it.

Essential viewing:

- Nikolaus Geyrhalter, *Homo Sapiens* (2016) [copies available in the library]

Essential reading:

- Ursula K. Heise, "From the Blue Planet to Google Earth: Environmentalism, Ecocriticism, and the Imagination of the Global" in *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 17-67.
- Timothy Morton, "The First Thread" in *Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), pp. 3-59.

Background reading:

- Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011)
- Eric C. Otto, *Green Speculations: Science Fiction and Transformative Environmentalism* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2012)
- Alan Weisman, *The World Without Us* (London: Virgin Books, 2008)
- Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016)
- Robert S. Emmett and David E. Nye, *The Environmental Humanities: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2017)
- Ursula K. Heise, Jon Christensen, Michelle Niemann (eds), *The Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities* (New York: Routledge, 2016)
- Imre Szeman and Dominic Boyer (eds), *Energy Humanities: An Anthology* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017)
- Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010)
- Bruno Latour, *Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018)
- Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017)

- Timothy Morton, *Being Ecological* (London: Penguin, 2018)
- Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2013)
- Jason W. Moore (ed.), *Anthropocene or Capitalocene?: Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2016)

Week 5 | Posthumanism and Gender in the Feminist Manifesto 2.0 (KA)

What does it mean to be human in the 21st Century? How can we define the human and the ‘non human’, and how does this relate to changing ideas about gender? This session will examine an important contemporary feminist manifesto, the *Xenofeminism: A Politics for Alienation*, written by the Laboria Cuboniks collective. This manifesto proposes that nothing “should be accepted as fixed, permanent, or given—neither material conditions nor social forms”. Embracing technological intervention and wild imaginative relationships to the future, it proposes an anti-naturalist, post-gender, trans-inclusive feminist utopia. We will examine this text, and explore its relationship to other important, ambitious, ecstatic, and uncompromising manifestos such as Valerie Solanas’s *SCUM Manifesto* of 1967 and Donna Haraway’s *Cyborg Manifesto*.

Essential reading:

- *Xenofeminism: A Politics for Alienation*: <https://www.laboriacuboniks.net/>
- Valerie Solanas, *SCUM Manifesto* (Verso, 2015, first published in 1971 by Olympia Press)

Background reading:

- Donna Haraway, ‘A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth-Century’, in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (Routledge, 1991)
- Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism* (Polity, 2018)
- Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013)

Week 6 | Reading Week – no class

Week 7 | The Afterlives of Slavery (SO)

This session reads Claudia Rankine’s *Citizen: An American Lyric* in the context of systemic antiblack violence, the rise of Black Lives Matter and the Movement for Black Lives, and new theories of racialization, Blackness and anti-Black racism. We will focus in particular on the way in which *Citizen* combines genres of prose, poetry and visual imagery in its depictions of police killings of African Americans and racist micro-aggressions. This session will also refer to recent work in Black Studies on the legacies of slavery and the concept of social death in our discussion of Rankine’s genre-bending bestseller.

Essential Reading:

- Claudia Rankine, *Citizen: An American Lyric* (Minneapolis: Graywolf, 2014).
- Christina Sharpe, “The Weather,” in *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 102-134.

Background Reading:

- Dionne Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (Toronto: Vintage, 2001).
- Lisa Marie Cacho, *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected* (New York: New York University Press, 2012).
- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008).
- Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
- Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Faber, Straus and Giroux, 2008).
- _____, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- Fred Moten, "The Case of Blackness," *Criticism* 50.2 (2008): 177-218.
- _____, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).
- David Marriott, *On Black Men* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000).
- Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
- Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).
- Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).
- Joshua M. Prince, *Prison and Social Death* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2015).
- Jared Sexton, "Afro-Pessimism: The Unclear Word," *Rhizomes* 29 (2016): <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue29/pdf/sexton.pdf>.
- _____, "The Social Life of Social Death: On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism," *InTensions* 5 (2011): <http://www.yorku.ca/intent/issue5/articles/pdfs/jaredsextonarticle.pdf>.
- Hortense Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe," in *Black, White & in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 203-229.
- Frank B. Wilderson III, "The Prison Slave as Hegemony's (Silent) Scandal," *Social Justice* 30.2 (2003): 18-27.
- _____, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

Week 8 | Reading Digitally (ME)

In the digital age, it is frequent to consider the possibilities of fictional form. New e-literatures avail themselves of digital affordances to yield fresh narrative potentials. Of equal concern, though, and the focus of this week's session is how reading is being changed by digital technologies. Here we will consider new kinds of methodological experiments in reading in the disciplinary field known as "digital humanities".

Essential reading:

- David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (London: Sceptre, 2004)

- Martin Paul Eve, *Close Reading With Computers: Textual Scholarship, Computational Formalism, and David Mitchell's Cloud Atlas* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019) [Introduction and Chapter 3]

Background reading:

- Tanya E. Clement, 'Text Analysis, Data Mining, and Visualizations in Literary Scholarship'. *Literary Studies in the Digital Age: An Evolving Anthology*, 2013. <https://dlsanthology.mla.hcommons.org/text-analysis-data-mining-and-visualizations-in-literary-scholarship/>.
- Amy Hungerford, *Making Literature Now* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016) [The chapter: "On Not Reading David Foster Wallace"]
- Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading* (London: Verso, 2013)
- _____, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History* (London: Verso, 2007)
- Andrew Piper, *Enumerations: Data and Literary Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018)
- Stephen Ramsay, *Reading Machines: Toward an Algorithmic Criticism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011)
- Roopika Risam, *New Digital Worlds: Postcolonial Digital Humanities in Theory, Praxis, and Pedagogy* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2018)
- Samuels, Lisa, and Jerome J. McGann. 'Deformance and Interpretation'. *New Literary History* 30.1 (1999): 25–56.
- Susa Schreibman, Raymond George Siemens, and John Unsworth, eds. *A New Companion to Digital Humanities* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Inc, 2016.)
- Ted Underwood, *Distant Horizons: Digital Evidence and Literary Change* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019)

Week 9 | Networks Beyond the Nation (SO)

This session will explore the meanings of transnationalism, postcoloniality and globalization in the contemporary period, particularly as they relate to the vectors of race and class. It will map these categories via a reflection on the British Indian novelist Rana Dasgupta's debut, *Tokyo Cancelled*, a meditation on metamorphosis, transit and dislocation. This text combines magical realism, folktale, fantasy and myth in order to represent the overlapping and interconnected worlds of globalized modernity.

Essential reading:

- Rana Dasgupta, *Tokyo Cancelled* (2005)
- Arjun Appadurai, 'Disjunction and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,' in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 27-47.
- Wendy Brown, 'Walled Sovereignty, Walled Democracy', in *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (New York, Zone Books, 2014), 7-42.

Background reading:

- Homi Bhabha, 'The World and the Home', *Social Text*, 31/32 (1992): 141-153.
- Jana Braziel and Anita Mannur, eds, *Theorizing Diaspora* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003)
- Arif Dirlik, 'The Global in the Local,' in *The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press,

1997), 84-104.

- Paul Gilroy, *Between Camps: Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race* (London: Penguin, 2000).
- _____, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993).
- David Theo Goldberg, *The Threat of Race: Reflections on Racial Neoliberalism* (Malden MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).
- David Harvey, 'Time-space compression and the postmodern condition,' in *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 284-307.
- Philip Leonard, *Literature After Globalization: Textuality, Technology and the Nation-State* (London: Continuum, 2013).
- Elena Machado Saez, 'Postcoloniality, Atlantic Orders, and the Migrant Male in the Writings of Caryl Phillips,' *Small Axe*, 17 (9.1) (2005): 17-39.
- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, 'Under Western Eyes Revisited: Feminist Solidarity Through Anti-Capitalist Struggles,' *Signs*, 28:2 (2003).
- Frauke Reitemeier (ed.), *Strangers, Migrants, Exiles: Negotiating Identity in Literature* (Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen, 2012).

Week 10 | The End: Writing Back to Death, Writing Towards Death (KA)

How do writers approach death? In this session we will consider narratives that look back at death, as well as narratives that look forward in time to it. Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* is a graphic novel that circles around her father's apparent suicide and his disavowed homosexuality; and Gillian Rose's philosophical memoir, *Love's Work*, is an exploration of death, illness, and Jewishness that starts from her own cancer diagnosis; she died shortly after the book was published. Bechdel's recursive and multi-layered narrative returns obsessively to her father's death, as she attempts to relate his life to her own, and Rose's narrative writes into her own death. We will explore the narrative relationships to time in both these texts, as well as consider how writing towards death relates to awareness of climate catastrophe. Is there a relationship between writing about impending individual tragedy and narratives confronting the potential collapse of the future?

Essential reading:

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (Jonathan Cape, 2006)
- Extracts from Gillian Rose, *Love's Work* (Penguin, 1995)

Background reading:

- Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Harvard University Press, 2012)
- Donna Haraway, *Staying With The Trouble* (Duke University Press, 2016)
- Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Duke University Press, 2004)

Week 11 | Superfluous Life: Precarity and Representation (SO)

What does it mean to speak of a precarious present? In the opening decades of the twenty-first century, work has become increasingly precarious. But precarity reaches beyond the gig economy to saturate the entirety of contemporary capitalist societies. This session will explore the social forms precarity takes in Ashley McKenzie's debut film, *Werewolf*, from drug addiction and precarious employment to the gendered labour of crisis management. We will approach precarity as a problem for representation—noting how its subjective appearance takes on forms of disposability,

superfluity and waste—in order to ask how contemporary cinematic realism responds to this representational challenge.

Essential reading:

- Ashley McKenzie, *Werewolf*, prod. Nelson MacDonald (New Waterford: Grassfire Films, 2016).
- Aaron Benanav and John Clegg, “Misery and Debt: On the Logic and History of Surplus Populations and Surplus Capital,” in *Contemporary Marxist Theory: A Reader*, eds. Andrew Pendakis, Jeff Diamanti, Nicholas Brown, Josh Robinson, and Imre Szeman (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014): 585-608.

Background reading:

- Alice Bardan, “The New European Cinema of Precarity: A Transnational Perspective,” in *Work in Cinema*, ed. Ewa Mazierska (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013): 69-90.
- Franco ‘Bifo’ Berardi, *Precarious Rhapsody: Semiocapitalism and the Pathologies of the Post-Alpha Generation* (London: Minor Compositions, 2009).
- ---, *The Soul at Work: From Alienation to Autonomy*, trans. Francesca Cadel and Giuseppina Mecchia (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009).
- Robert Brenner, *The Economics of Global Turbulence: The Advanced Capitalist Economies from Long Boom to Long Downturn, 1945-2005* (London: Verso, 2006).
- _____, “What Is Good for Goldman Sachs Is Good for America: The Origins of the Current Crisis,” *La economía de la turbulencia global*, trans. Juan Mari Madariaga (Madrid: Akal, 2009): <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/issr/cstch/papers/BrennerCrisisTodayOctober2009.pdf>.
- Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London: Verso, 2009).
- _____, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004).
- Jonathan Crary, *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* (London: Verso, 2015).
- Michael Denning, “Wageless Life,” *New Left Review* 66 (2010): 79-97.
- Simon During, “Precariousness, Literature and the Humanities Today,” *Australian Humanities Review* 58 (2015): 51-56.
- Silvia Federici, “Precarious Labor: A Feminist Viewpoint,” Lecture, Bluestockings Radical Bookstore, New York, NY, October 28, 2006: <https://inthemiddleofthewhirwind.wordpress.com/precariou-labor-a-feminist-viewpoint/>.
- Alex Foti, *General Theory of the Precariat: Great Recession, Revolution, Reaction* (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2017).
- Gabriel Giorgi, “Improper Selves: Cultures of Precarity,” *Social Text* 31.2 (2013): 69-81.
- Isabell Lorey, *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious* (London: Verso, 2015).
- Angela Mitropoulos, “Precari-Us?” *Mute* 1, no. 29 (2005): 88-92.
- Phil A. Neel, *Hinterland: America’s New Landscape of Class and Conflict* (London: Reaktion Books, 2018).

- Brett Neilson and Ned Rossiter, "Precarity as a Political Concept, or, Fordism as Exception," *Theory, Culture & Society* 25.7-8 (2008): 51-72.
- Saskia Sassen, *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).
- Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2011).

Core Course 2: Post-War to Contemporary (FT and PT2)

Module Convenor: Dr Sean O'Brien

Seminar Leaders: Dr Sean O'Brien (SO) and Dr Mpalive Msiska (MM)

Module Code: ENHU050S7

Timetable: Autumn Term, Thursdays 6.00pm – 9.00pm

Learning Aims and Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should:

- Form an understanding of the relations between literature and cultural history in the post-war period
- Develop the ability to read texts closely and consider the specific textual strategies employed by different writers
- Engage with ideas of 'the contemporary' as a period and concept.

Module overview

This module is organised in two blocks: 'The Post-War, 1945-1979', and 'The Contemporary, 1979-Present'. Each week includes a seminar based around a text, taught from 6.00-7.20pm. In the second half of the evening a more general lecture will consider literary, cultural, historical and philosophical contexts for the week's reading. These will be focused on shorter texts, and run from 7:40-9:00pm.

At a Glance

Week / Texts

1. Introduction
2. Beckett, *Novellas* / Pound, *Cantos* and Adorno, 'Trying to Understand Endgame'
3. Larkin, *The Less Deceived* and Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* / Gilroy, 'Has It Come to This?'
4. Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49* / Sorbonne Occupation Committee, 'May '68 Documents' and Barthes, 'The Death of the Author'
5. Carter, *The Passion of New Eve* / Kristeva, 'Women's Time'
6. [reading week]
7. DeLillo, *White Noise* / Jameson, 'Postmodernism'
8. Gibson, *Pattern Recognition* / Hardt and Negri, *Empire* 'Preface' and 'Part 1:1 World Order'
9. Bechdel, *Fun Home* / W. G. Sebald, *The Emigrants*
10. Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*
11. Roundtable on Contemporary Literature

Assessment:

Assessment is by one essay of 5000 words, to be submitted by **14:00 Monday 13 January 2019.**

General Background Reading on Post-45 Literature and Culture:

- Boxall, Peter, *Twenty-First-Century Fiction: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)
- Bradford, Richard, *The Novel Now: Contemporary British Fiction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007)
- Brannigan, John, *Orwell to the Present: Literature in England 1945-2000* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2002)
- Connor, Steven, *The English Novel in History, 1950-95* (London: Routledge, 1996)
- Davies, Alastair and Alan Sinfield, eds, *British Culture of the Post-War: An Introduction to Literature and Society 1945-1999* (London: Routledge, 2000)
- Eagleton, Robert, *Contemporary Fiction: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)
- English, James F., ed, *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British Fiction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006): a very good collection on recent fiction
- Gasiorek, Andrej, *Post-War British Fiction: Realism and After* (London: Arnold, 1995)
- Hampson, Robert and Peter Barry, eds, *New British Poetries: The Scope of The Possible* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993)
- Head, Dominic, *An Introduction to Modern British Fiction, 1950-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)
- *The State of the Novel: Britain and Beyond* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008)
- Hewison, Robert, *In Anger: Culture in the Cold War, 1945-60* (London: Weidenfeld, 1981)
- *Too Much: Art and Society 1960-75* (London: Methuen, 1986)
- James, David (ed), *Legacies of Modernism: Historicising Post-war and Contemporary Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)
- *Modernist Futures: Innovation and Inheritance in the Contemporary Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)
- Lane, Richard, Rod Mengham and Philip Tew, eds, *Contemporary British Fiction* (Oxford: Polity, 2002)
- Luckhurst, Roger, and Peter Marks, eds, *Literature and the Contemporary* (London: Longman, 1999)
- Martin, Theodore, *Contemporary Drift: Genres, Historicism and the Problem of the Present* (New York: Columbia UP, 2017).
- Mengham, Rod, ed, *An Introduction to Contemporary Fiction: International Writing in English since 1970* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999)
- Morley, David, and Kevin Robins, eds, *British Cultural Studies* (Oxford: OUP, 2001)
- Morrison, Jago, *Contemporary Literature* (London: Routledge, 2001)
- Sinfield, Alan, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Post-War Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989)
- Stevenson, Randall, *Oxford English Literary History, vol12: 1960-2000: The Last of England?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)
- Waugh, Patricia, *Harvest of the Sixties: Literature and its Background 1960-90* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995)

Detailed Course Outline

BLOCK 1: THE POST-WAR, 1945-79

The first five weeks of the module will focus on literary and cultural developments in the initial decades of the post-war period. Working chronologically from the years immediately following the Second World War, we will examine the fates of modernism, the decline of empire, the legacies of colonialism and decolonization, the victories and defeats of the student movement, the rise of theory, and the emergence of the feminist movement across key literary texts and figures.

WEEK 1

6-7:20: Introduction to the Module: Periodizing the Postwar (SO)

In this opening introductory lecture, we will discuss the themes and scope of the course. We will consider ways of reading post-war literature (in terms of literary form, historical context, and prevailing theories of culture such as postmodernism), and explore issues of periodization – how do we carve up the time of cultural history? What are the implications of thinking in decades? Should we consider post-war history in terms of key moments and conjunctures?

WEEK 2

6-7:20 Seminar: Post-War Beckett

Beckett is often considered a limit case for the trajectory of modernism in the post-war period. He wrote these novellas at the very end of the Second World War in 1945 and 1946. Do they signify a new stage of modernism? Are they instances of late modernism? Do they gesture ahead to a period of postmodernism?

Required reading:

- Samuel Beckett, *Novellas* (often published as *First Love and Three Novellas*)

Further reading:

- Begam, Richard, *Samuel Beckett and the End of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996)
- Beloborodova, Olga et al. (eds), *Beckett and Modernism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2018)
- Birkett, Jennifer, and Kate Ince, eds, *Longmans Critical Reader: Samuel Beckett* (London: Longman, 2000)
- Connor, Steven, *Samuel Beckett: Repetition, Theory, and Text* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988)
- Miller, Tyrus, 'Dismantling Authenticity: Beckett, Adorno and the "Post-war"', *Textual Practice* 8:1(1994), 43-57.
- Pilling, John, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Beckett* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- Spacks, Patricia Meyer, *Boredom: The Literary History of a State of Mind* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995)
- Weisberg, David, *Chronicles of Disorder: Samuel Beckett and the Cultural Politics of the Novel* (New York: State University of New York, 2000)

7:40-9: Lecture: What is Late Modernism? (JB)

What are the post-war legacies of modernism is one of the key themes of this course. What happens in the wake of Joyce's *Wake*? When did modernism end? Did it end?

Or does it carry on, mutate, continue? This lecture will situate Beckett in the wider context of the emergence of what has come to be known as 'Late Modernism'.

Required reading:

- Ezra Pound, *The Pisan Cantos* (selections from late fragments)
- Theodor Adorno, 'Trying to Understand *Endgame*'. *New German Critique* 26 (Spring – Summer 1982), pp. 119-150.

General Reading:

Adorno, Theodor, *Aesthetic Theory* (London: Athlone, 1997)

Bürger, Peter, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984)

Said, Edward, *On Late Style: Music and Literature against the grain* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007)

WEEK 3

6-7:20: Seminar: The Ends of Empire

The period following the Second World War saw the terminal decline of the British Empire, as independence movements overthrew remaining strongholds of imperial rule in the colonies and the US replaced Britain as the global hegemon of the capitalist world-system. In this session we will examine literary developments in post-imperial Britain, including the poetry of melancholy and mourning and the emergence of a distinctly post-colonial literary tradition in Britain.

Required reading:

- Philip Larkin's *The Less Deceived* (selections)
- Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*
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Larkin background reading:

Booth, James, ed., *New Larkins for Old* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999)
Bristow, Joseph, 'The Obscenity of Philip Larkin', *Critical Inquiry*, 21.1 (1994), 156-81

Hewison, Robert, *In Anger: Culture in the Cold War, 1945-60* (London: Weidenfeld, 1981).

Morrison, Blake, *The Movement: English Poetry and Fiction from the 1950s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980)

Regan, Stephen, 'Fables of Freedom: The Less Deceived', in *Philip Larkin* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 77-99.

Regan, Stephen, ed., *Philip Larkin* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997)
Wood, Michael. "We All Hate Home: English Poetry since World War II." *Contemporary Literature*, 18: 3, 1977, 305–318.

Selvon background reading:

ARIEL (1996): Sam Selvon special issue of this journal.

Andrew Gibson, 'Altering Images', in *London from Punk to Blair* ed. Joe Kerr and Andrew Gibson (London: Reaktion, 2003), pp.292-300.

Gilroy, Paul, "There ain't no black in the Union Jack": *The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (London: Hutchinson, 1987).

McLeod, John, *Postcolonial London* (London: Routledge, 2004).

Nasta, Susheila, ed, *Critical Perspectives on Sam Selvon* (Washington, D.C: Three Continents Press, 1988).

- Owusu, Kwesi, ed., *Black British Culture and Society: a Text-Reader* (London: Routledge, 2000).
- Premnath, Gautam, 'The Lonely Londoner: V.S. Naipaul and "The God of the City"', in Gilbert, Pamela, ed., *Imagined Londons* (New York: SUNY Press, 2002) (compares Caribbean writers Naipaul, George Lamming and Sam Selvon on the representation of London).
- Selvon, Sam, 'Finding West Indian Identity in London', *Kunapipi*, 9 (1987), 34-38.
- Schwarz, Bill, ed., *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).
- Wambu, Onyekachi, ed., *Empire Windrush: Fifty Years of Writing about Black Britain* (London: Gollancz, 1998).

7:40-9: Lecture: Post-Imperial Melancholy (MM)

How important is it to consider the post-war era in Britain as period of empire's end? How did rapid decolonization after the war affect cultural production and national narratives in England? Has England become post-colonial, or does it remain locked in a melancholic relationship to its past?

- Paul Gilroy, 'Has It Come to This?', in *After Empire* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 95-132.

For Background Reading: the classic texts of post-colonial theory include:

- Said, Edward. *Orientalism* (the Introduction) (London: Penguin, 1978), and 'Orientalism Reconsidered,' *Cultural Critique*, No. 1. (Autumn, 1985), pp. 89-107.
- Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994)
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (ed.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan: 1988), pp. 271-313.

For post-imperial Britain see also:

- Hall, Stuart, *Essential Essays, Vol II: Identity and Diaspora* (Durham: Duke UP, 2019).
- Stuart Hall, 'Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities,' *Culture, Globalisation and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*, ed. Anthony King (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997), pp. 31-68.

For commentary from the right, see Roger Scruton, *England: An Elegy* (London: Pimlico, 2000).

WEEK 4

6-7:20: Seminar: Counter Cultures

Thomas Pynchon is often associated with the emergence of the Counter Culture movement. In this session we will discuss Pynchon's 1966 novella, *The Crying of Lot 49*, in relation to the nuances of Pynchon's engagements with the Counter Culture and the heady days of the Sixties.

Required reading:

- Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*

Background Reading:

- Chambers, Judith, *Thomas Pynchon* (New York: Twayne, 1992)
- Freer, Joanna, *Thomas Pynchon and the Counterculture* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2016)
- Gleason, William, 'The Postmodern Labyrinths of Lot 49', *Critique*, 34.2 (1993), 83-99.
- Grant, J. Kerry, *A Companion to 'The Crying of Lot 49'* (Georgia UP, 1994)
- Knight, Peter, *Conspiracy Culture: From Kennedy to the X Files* (London: Routledge, 2000)
- Krafft, John. "Thomas Pynchon." *Social Text*, no. 9/10, 1984, pp. 283–286. (in special issue called 'The 60s Without Apology')
- McKenna, Christopher J. "'A Kiss of Cosmic Pool Balls': Technological Paradigms and Narrative Expectations Collide in 'The Crying of Lot 49.'" *Cultural Critique*, 44 (2000), pp. 29–42.
- O'Donnell, Patrick. "Engendering Paranoia in Contemporary Narrative." *Boundary 2*, 19: 1 (1992), pp. 181–204.,
- O'Donnell, Patrick (ed), *New Essays on 'The Crying of Lot 49'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): useful collection, especially Pierre- Yves Petillon's suggestive essay 'A Re-cognition of Her Errand into the Wilderness' (pp.127-170).

7:40-9: Lecture (SO): May '68 and the Rise of 'Theory'

This lecture aims to situate the rise of 'Theory' in the wake of the civil unrest that erupted across France in May 1968. Focusing on the relation between the events of May '68 and the subsequent development of new modes of criticism and theoretical inquiry in literary studies and elsewhere, we will explore the legacies of that pivotal revolutionary moment as they shape the emergence and development of the New Left, cultural studies, the linguistic turn and the new social movements.

Required reading:

- Sorbonne Occupation Committee, 'May 68 Documents', *The Situationist International Anthology* (Bureau of Public Secrets, 2007), p. 435-445.
- Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author,' *Image-Music-Text* (London: Fontana Press, 1977), p. 142-148.

Background reading:

- Dickstein, Morris, *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1997)
- Hall, Stuart, 'Cultural Studies: Two Paradigms', *Essential Essays, Vol I: Foundations of Cultural Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019)
- Hewison, Robert, *Too Much: Art and Society in the Sixties, 1960-75* (London: Methuen, 1986)
- Jameson, Fredric, 'Periodizing the 60s', *Social Text* 9-10 (1984), a special issue of the journal called 'The 60s without Apology'
- Marwick, Arthur, *The Sixties* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- Moore-Gilbert, Bart, and John Seed, eds, *Cultural Revolution? The Challenge of the Arts in the 1960s* (London: Routledge, 1992)

WEEK 5

6-7:20: Seminar: 1970s Feminism

In the 1970s, new cracks emerged in British society's post-war consensus. Carter's novel draws on science fiction to traverse this time of tremors. We will explore her fictional strategies, her representation of America, and her allegories of gender and sexual politics in the era of second wave feminism.

Required reading:

- Angela Carter, *The Passion of New Eve*

Gender Theory:

Butler, Judith, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1992)

Garber, Marjorie, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (London: Routledge, 1992)

Moi, Toril, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (London: Routledge, 1985)

Segal, Lynne, *Why Feminism? Gender, Psychology, Politics* (Oxford: Polity, 1999)

Specific Carter background

Bristow, Joseph, and Trev Broughton, eds, *The Infernal Desires of Angela Carter: Fiction, Femininity, Feminism* (London: Longman, 1997)

Carter, Angela, *The Sadeian Woman* (London: Virago, 1979)

--- *Nothing Sacred: Selected Writings* (London: Virago, 1982). See particularly the 'Scream and Dream' sections, and 'Lorenzo the Closet-Queen'.

Day, Aidan, *Angela Carter: The Rational Glass* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998)

Sage, Lorna, ed., *Flesh and the Mirror: Essays on the Art of Angela Carter* (London: Virago, 1994)

Stoddart, Helen, *Angela Carter's 'Nights at the Circus'* (London: Routledge, 2006).

7:40-9: Lecture: Feminist Theory and the Second Wave (Dr Jo Winning)

After the 60s, a critique of the failures or absences of the 60s counter-culture was launched by women in what became known as the 'Second Wave' of feminism. This lecture will widen the context to understand more of Angela Carter's fictional intervention

Required reading:

- Julia Kristeva, 'Women's Time' in *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. Toril Moi (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986)

Feminist Theory

Foundational texts from the 1970s movement include:

Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics* (1970)

Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1977)

Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex*

Marks, Elaine and Isabelle de Courtrivon (eds), *New French Feminisms: An Anthology* (1981) – collects together key French women thinkers from de Beauvoir through Luce Irigaray, Monique Wittig, Helene Cixous and Kristeva.

Background on Feminism

Echols, Alice, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America 1967-75* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989)

Segal, Lynne, *Making Trouble: Life and Politics* (London: Virago, 2017). Memoir by leading feminist scholar at Birkbeck about the 1960s and 70s.

General Background Reading on the 1970s:

Beckett, Andy, *When the Lights Went Out: Britain in the Seventies* (London: Faber, 2009).

Lodge, David, 'The Novelist at the Cross-Roads' (1969). An important essay, collected in his *The Novelist at the Crossroads and other Essays* (London: Ark, 1986)

Miller, Stephen Paul, *The Seventies Now: Culture As Surveillance* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999). This is about American culture, but useful nonetheless.

Moore-Gilbert, Bart, ed., *The Arts in the 1970s: Cultural Closure* (London: Routledge, 1994)

Nairn, Tom, *The Break Up of Britain* (London: New Left Books, 1977). See especially chapters on 'The Twilight of the British State' and 'English Nationalism'.

Savage, John, *England's Dreaming: Anarchy, Sex Pistols, Punk Rock and England* (London: Faber, 1991)

WEEK 6: READING WEEK

BLOCK 2: THE CONTEMPORARY, 1979-Present

The final five weeks of the module move chronologically through the second half of the post-war period into the present. We will begin with sessions on postmodernism, globalization and migration, before moving on to discuss emerging forms and genres in contemporary literature. The module concludes with a lecture on dissertation planning in Week 10, and a roundtable on contemporary literature in Week 11.

WEEK 7

6-7:20: Seminar: The Postmodern Turn

1979 is often considered a major moment of economic, cultural and political rupture and the 1980s were perhaps the central period for theoretical discussions of the concept of postmodernism. In lecture and seminar, we will look at two major instances of this cultural development which extend our consideration of US culture.

Required reading:

- Don DeLillo, *White Noise*

Background reading

Boxall, Peter, *Don DeLillo: The Possibility of Fiction* (London: Routledge, 2006)

Lentricchia, Frank (1991), *Introducing Don DeLillo* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991)

--- (ed), *New Essays on DeLillo's 'White Noise'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

7:40-9: Lecture: High Postmodernism and the 1980s (SO)

Fredric Jameson's essay of 1984 has been among the most widely cited of the last two decades. It is reprinted as the first chapter of his 1991 volume: read this chapter, but the whole book is recommended. This lecture will aim to come to terms with this

influential attempt to define the contemporary world as 'postmodern', and to situate it in intellectual and cultural history.

Require reading:

- Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism' (essay in *New Left Review*, 1984; book version in 1991).

Background and Commentary

Anderson, Perry, *The Origins of Postmodernity* (London: Verso, 1998). Very useful historicisation.

Burnham, Clint, *The Jamesonian Unconscious: The Aesthetics of Marxist Theory* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995)

Connor, Steven, *Postmodernist Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989). One of the clearest expositions of a fraught and sometimes confusing terrain.

Eagleton, Terry, 'Fredric Jameson: The Politics of Style', in *Against the Grain: Essays 1975-1985* (London: Verso, 1986), pp.65-78.

Hardt, Michael, and Kathi Weeks, eds, *The Jameson Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000)

Hutcheon, Linda, *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1988): influential theory of postmodernism as 'historiographic metafiction'.

Kellner, Douglas, and Sean Homer, *Fredric Jameson: A Critical Reader* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004)

Kunkel, Benjamin, 'Into the Big Tent', *London Review of Books* 32:8, 22 April 2010, available online at <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v32/n08/benjamin-kunkel/into-the-big-tent>: recommended as a succinct, reliable introduction to Jameson.

Lyotard, Jean-Francois, *The Postmodern Condition*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984)

McHale, Brian, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London: Methuen, 1987): an influential theory of the postmodern novel.

Roberts, Adam, *Fredric Jameson* (London: Routledge, 2000)

WEEK 8

6-7:20: Seminar: Empire after Empire

If the 1980s mark the high point of postmodernism, the 1990s saw the rise of globalization. After the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War, the integration of former communist bloc countries into the world market signaled for some an Empire after empire, with technology as the key enabling force. How does Gibson's text help us to 'see' new kinds of shapes of the global and globalization?

Required reading:

- William Gibson, *Pattern Recognition*

Easterbrook, Neil, 'Alternate Presents: The Ambivalent Historicism of "Pattern Recognition"', *Science Fiction Studies*, 33: 3 (Nov., 2006), pp. 483-504

Hayles, N.Katherine, 'Traumas of Code', *Critical Inquiry*, 33: 1 (Autumn 2006), pp. 136-157

Link, Alex, 'Global War, Global Capital, and the Work of Art in Gibson's *Pattern Recognition*', *Contemporary Literature*, 49: 2 (Summer 2008), pp. 209-231.

General Reading

Luckhurst, Roger (ed.), *Science Fiction: A Literary History* (London: British Library, 2017)

Murphy, Graham and Sherry Vint (eds), *Beyond Cyberpunk: New Critical Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2010).

7:40-9: Lecture: Globalization and Migration (MM)

The term 'globalization' really only began to be used widely in the 1990s, although the phenomenon of international and global networks of the international economy are centuries old. The 1990s inaugurated both the World Trade Organisation and the first major anti-globalization protests and resistances. What does the shift to a world perspective mean for accounts of contemporary culture? Does it signal a new homogeneity of mass culture, working on economies of scale? Or does it mean a new awareness of diversity and difference? Can accounts of 'the post-war' remain coherent as the contemporary era explodes our old accounts of national literatures and canons of art?

Required reading:

- Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri, 'Preface' and 'Part 1.1: World Order', *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University press, 2000).

Background reading

Castells, Manuel, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd ed (Oxford: Blackwell, 2011)

Hardt, Michael and Negri, Antonio, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2000).

Stonebridge, Lindsey, *Placeless People: Writings, Rights and Refugees* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018)

Woolley, Agnes, *Contemporary Asylum Narratives: Representing Refugees in the Twenty-First Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014)

WEEK 9

6-7:20: Seminar:

In recent years, comic books or graphic novels have received increasing attention in studies of contemporary literature. What possibilities does this form present? What models of reading and analysis does it require? We will look closely at a celebrated instance of the genre that also engages with questions of sexuality, history and the lasting influence of modernism.

Required reading:

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*

Background reading

Chute, Hillary, *Graphic Women* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010)

Groensteen, Thierry, *The System of Comics* (Jackson, MA: University Press of Mississippi, 2007).

Freedman, Ariela. "Drawing on Modernism in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*." *Journal of Modern Literature*, vol. 32, no. 4, 2009, pp. 125–140.

Hatfield, Charles, *Alternative Comics: An Emerging Literature* (Jackson, MA: University Press of Mississippi, 2005)

McCloud, Scott, *Understanding Comics: the Invisible Art* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993).

Sabin, Roger, *Comics, Comix and Graphic Novels* (London: Phaidon, 1996). *Modern Fiction Studies* 52.4 (2006): 'Graphic Narrative,' special issue edited by Hillary Chute and Marianne DeKoven.

Warhol, Robyn, and Robyn Warhol-Down. "The Space Between: A Narrative Approach to Alison Bechdel's 'Fun Home.'" *College Literature*, vol. 38, no. 3, 2011, pp. 1–20.

7:40-9: Lecture: Trauma Theory (Roger Luckhurst)

This lecture will focus on the novel/memoir/testimony by W. G. Sebald, called *The Emigrants* (1993). If you are pressed for time you can just read the first 2 narrative sections, to get a taste of Sebald's style. This will allow us to explore the wider context of 'trauma culture' in the 1990s and beyond. Why did 'trauma' become such a key idea in the 80s and 90s? Has the memoir form displaced the novel as the locus of narrative power or truth? Why did everyone suddenly feel the need to confess their traumatic secrets?

Background reading

Caruth, Cathy, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996).

Huysen, Andreas, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (London: Routledge, 1995)

Kaplan, E. Ann, *Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature* (New Brunswick: U Rutgers P, 2005).

LaCapra, Dominick, 'Trauma, Absence, Loss,' *Critical Inquiry* 25 (Summer 1999), 696-727.

Leys, Ruth, *Trauma: A Genealogy* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2000).

Luckhurst, Roger. 'Traumaculture', *New Formations* 50 (2003): 28-47.

Luckhurst, Roger, *The Trauma Question* (Routledge, 2008).

Whitehead, Anne, *Trauma Fiction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004)

Gilmore, Leigh, *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and Testimony* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

On Sebald

Harris, Stefanie, 'The Return of the Dead: Memory and Photography in W. G. Sebald's *Die Ausgewanderten*', *German Quarterly* 74:4 (2001): 379-91.

McCulloh, Mark, *Understanding W G Sebald* (Columbia: U South Carolina P, 2003).

Parry, Ann, 'Idioms for the Unrepresentable: Post-War Fiction and the Shoah', *Journal of European Studies* 27:4 (1997): 417-32.

Philip Schelsinger, 'W. G. Sebald and the Condition of Exile', *Theory, Culture and Society* 21:2 (2004): 43-68.

Anne Whitehead (ed.), *W G Sebald: A Critical Companion* (Washington: U Washington P, 2004).

WEEK 10

6-7:20: Seminar: The Genre Turn

Literature in the contemporary period actively rejects traditional genre distinctions, blurring the boundaries between literary fiction and genre fiction and reorganizing the literary field. Are we witnessing a proliferation of new genres, or the death of genre? Are we post-genre? We will explore these and other questions with reference to Whitehead's genre-busting Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *The Underground Railroad*.

Required reading:

- Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*

Background reading

Coates, Ta-Nehisi, *Between the World and Me* (New York: Text, 2015)

Ramsey, William. "An End of Southern History: The Down-Home Quests of Toni Morrison and Colson Whitehead." *African American Review*, vol. 41, no. 4, 2007, pp. 769–785.

Wolfe, Gary, *Evaporating Genres: Essays on Fantastic Literature* (Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 2011).

7:40-9: Lecture: Dissertation Planning (SO)

In this session, we will try to look ahead to think about how you might be preparing for your dissertation proposal (due in March) ahead of the summer term where you will be ascribed a tutor and set out on your own research area. We will discuss previous examples of dissertations and provide strategies for thinking through a focused and achievable project.

WEEK 11**6-7:20: Roundtable: Locating the Contemporary (SO, MM, JB)**

In this final session, seminar leaders will hold a roundtable in which we will examine recent trends in contemporary literature. There is no required reading, but you may find some of the general leading listed below to be of interest.

General reading on the contemporary

Boxall, Peter, *Twenty-First Century Fiction: a Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Connor, Steven 'The Impossibility of the Present, or, From Contemporary to Contemporaneous' in Luckhurst and Marks (eds.), *Literature and the Contemporary* (London: Longman, 1999).

Eaglestone, Robert, *Contemporary Fiction: a Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)

--- 'Contemporary Fiction in the academy: towards a manifesto', *Textual Practice* 27:7 (2013), 1089-1101. 40

Irr, Caren, *Toward the Geopolitical Novel: U. S. Fiction in the Twenty-First Century* (Columbia UP, 2013)

Martin, Theodore, *Contemporary Drift: Genre, Historicism and the Problem of the Present* (Columbia University Press, 2017)

Smith, Terry 'Contemporary Art and Contemporaneity,' *Critical Inquiry* 32 (2006): 681-707.

Spring Option Modules

Important Information:

The timetable below lists spring options on offer in the 2019-20 academic year to the MA Modern and Contemporary Literature programme. To make your module selection you need to be invited to enrol on the programme. All enrolled students will be sent instructions and a live link to the online module selection system to make their selection.

Please complete your selection as soon as possible, remembering that we offer places on a first-come, first-served basis, as our modules are capped and places are competitive. You will be asked to list a number of preferred options, in the event you are not allocated a place onto your first preference option.

The options listed here are regarded as of particular interest to students on the MA Modern and Contemporary Literature programme. If you would like to consider an option in another department in the School of Arts not listed in this handbook, please contact your programme director to check that it will contribute to a coherent MA profile.

If you want to discuss your module choices, the named convenors of each course are usually happy to respond to emails, or you can contact your personal tutor. Please be aware that modules vary from year to year and we try to vary the choices year to year to provide maximum choice for students. If you are a part-time student, you should take into account when you make your module choice that it is unlikely that the same selection of option modules will be available in your second year.

Full module breakdowns for options and readings lists for the current academic year will be available on Moodle prior to the spring term. Some information provided below contains indicative reading. Once your module choices are confirmed, you will be able to access all updated materials on Moodle for your spring course. Please wait for updated reading lists at this time before purchasing texts in advance.

Please note, modules can be subject to change or withdrawal due to staff leave and module uptake. Module convenors are subject to change and those not confirmed for 2019-20 are listed as TBC below.

Module code	Module name	Day and time for 2019-20	Convenor
AHVM015S7	Contemporary American Cinema	Tuesday 18:00-21:00	Dr Mike Allen
ENHU053S7	Contemporary US Fiction	Wednesday 19:30-21:00	Dr Joe Brooker and Prof Roger Luckhurst

AREN237S7 AREN237S7	Culture and Human Rights	Tuesday 18:00-19:30	Dr Agnes Woolley
AREN197S7	Freud in the World: Psychoanalysis, Literary Writing and the Legacies of History	Tuesday 18:00-21:00	Prof Jacqueline Rose
ENHU122S7	Language Matters	Thursday 19:30-21:00	Dr Peter Fifield
ENHU051S7	Post-Colonial Discourse and the Novel	Thursday 18:00-19.30	Dr Mpalive Msiska
AREN116S7	Twenty-First Century Feminist Fiction and the World in Crisis	Monday 19:30-21:00	TBC
ENHU068S7	Reading Time in the Twentieth Century	Thursday 18:00-19:30	Dr Sean O'Brien
ARMC172S7	Theoretical Perspectives on Media	Thursday 18:00-21:00	Prof Tim Markham and Dr Scott Rodgers
ENHU105S7	Reading Walter Benjamin's Arcades Project	Tuesday 18:00-19:30	Prof Esther Leslie

Summer Term

Dissertation - MA Contemporary Literature and Culture (FT and PT2)

Module Code: AREN145D7

FT and PT2 students will have their first advisory session in the autumn term, a second advisory session in spring term 2019 in advance of the submission of the proposal form, and their first research skills session early in the summer term. We aim to provide plenty of support for this element of the degree, but here's what you need to know now.

In the summer term, you are also **expected** to attend the research skills dissertation workshops in weeks 2, 3, and 4 and also **required** to give a presentation on your research project, either in week 10 or 11.

- The dissertation constitutes 33% of your final mark.
- You are **required** to offer a presentation on your work, but this will not count towards your final mark.
- The dissertation should number 15 000 words. This excludes the bibliography, but includes footnotes or endnotes.

For PT2 and FT students, it must be submitted by **14:00 midday on Friday 11 of September 2019**. This deadline is not negotiable. If you miss the deadline you will have to wait another twelve months before being awarded your degree, because the exam board meets only once a year.

Supervision Process

The dissertation proposal form is in the Appendices section of this booklet. You'll be asked to submit this via turnitin assignment on Moodle. There is nothing official about the outline you provide us, and we don't expect a perfectly conceived project. However, it is on the basis of this outline that you will be assigned a supervisor, so it is important that you have a sense of a topic by this point, so that you can begin meeting your supervisor from the beginning of the summer term. We will try to align your work with the most suitable person on the staff, where this is possible. You may wish to approach members of staff (including personal tutors and course tutors) for advice or discussion about the potential of possible projects well before this date. It is good to start thinking about the dissertation relatively early.

The MA director will inform students of their supervisors by the beginning of the summer term. It's up to the student to contact tutors to arrange a first meeting. Students and supervisors should then arrange a further two supervisions (three in all), each one hour long, which **must be completed by 10 July 2020**.

In the course of these meetings supervisors may be asked to comment on plans or on drafts of part of the dissertation. Your supervisor may help you to clarify your main thesis; aid you in shaping your thoughts into an appropriate scale; suggest further reading or lines of library research; advise you on methods of research. It is advisable to pencil in the future meeting dates at your first meeting.

Summer Term Research Skills Classes

Dedicated research skills workshops led by core staff will be held on Wednesdays in the summer term, 6-7.30pm, starting on 01 May. We pool the students starting supervisions from the MA Contemporary, the MA Modern and the MA Critical and Cultural Studies for the workshops.

Week 1: MA Contemporary, Modern and MACCS will meet as group together.

Week 2: Dissertation Workshop

Week 3: Dissertation Workshop

Week 4: Dissertation Workshop

We then reconvene at the end of term, back in smaller core of MAs for students to offer short presentations (5-10 minutes) on their work with the MA convenor as chair of the event. This exercise is a **requirement**.

Week 10: Dissertation Presentations by MA students

Week 11: Dissertation Presentations by MA students

Bibliography for Dissertation Writing Skills:

Many books and online resources advise on managing dissertations and longer essays. Here is a list of some that may be helpful:

Judith Bell, *Doing Your Research Project* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1987)

Pat Cryer, *The Research Student's Guide to Success* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996)

Martyn Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide for Small-Scale Social Research Projects* (Buckingham, Open University Press, 1998)

William Foddy, *Constructing Questions for Interviews and Questionnaires: Theory and Practice in Social Research* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)

Chava Franfort-Nachmias and David Nachmias, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences* (London: Edward Arnold, 1976)

Nigel G. Gilbert, *Researching Social Life* (London: Sage, 1992)

David B Gracy II, *An Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts* (New York: Special Libraries Association, 1981)

Konrad H. Jarausch and Kenneth Hardy, *Quantitative Methods for Historians: a Guide to Research, Data, and Statistics* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1991)

Gerhard Lang and George D. Heiss, *A Practical Guide to Research Methods* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994)

R.H. Miller, *Handbook of Literary Research*, 2nd edn (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995)

Natalie L. Sproull, *Handbook of Research Methods: a Guide for Practitioners and Students in the Social Sciences*, 2nd edn (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995)

Guido H. Stempel III and Bruce H. Westley, eds., *Research Methods in Mass Communication* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1981)

George Watson, *Writing a Thesis: a Guide to Long Essays and Dissertations* (London: Longman, 1987)

Frederick Williams, Ronald E. Rice, Everett M. Rogers, *Research Methods and the New Media* (New York: Free Press, 1988)

Dissertation Format

Take a while to think about the presentation of your dissertation. Make your work easily identifiable and easy on the eye for the reader. Always ensure your work is double spaced and with an easily readable font.

Pagination

All pages, except the title page, should be numbered.

Left margin

Provide a bit of extra space for the left margin throughout, particularly as we'll ask you to bind the hard copy and this takes up a bit more space on the left hand side of the page.

Title Page

You should give the title for your dissertation on a separate page. The following is recommended as a format:

Title and name in the middle of the page

At bottom of the page 'Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MA in Contemporary Literature and Culture, Birkbeck College, University of London' followed by the month and year of submission.

Abstract

You should preface your dissertation with a 300-word abstract, which describes succinctly the scope and argument of the dissertation. This is **required**. It helps us identify two markers, but is also a good exercise for students in making sure that they can crisply sum up their thesis.

Bibliography

All dissertations should include a full bibliography listing all the primary and secondary sources you have cited.

Word Limit

The word limit is 15 000 words, excluding titles, diagrams and tables and bibliography. Footnotes are included in the word limit. Where possible, try to avoid extensive footnotes, and keep them largely referential.

Referencing

In your essays and your dissertation you must use a proper system of referencing. The Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing has adopted the MHRA style in all its programmes. Full details are given in the *MHRA Style Guide: A Handbook for Authors, Editors, and Writers of Theses* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association), which can be consulted in libraries, or bought in reference sections of good bookshops. It can also be downloaded from <http://mhra.org.uk/publications/books/styleguide/styleguideV1.pdf>.

Binding

We advise that for the hard copy you submit you get it bound. Most stationers, such as Ryman's, offer binding services which can usually be done on the spot. Ring-binding is fine. Please don't spend vast amounts using academic binderies! We

merely want these pages bound together more robustly than a staple, as they'll be read by two internal readers, and possibly sent off to a third, external reader, so they need to survive these journeys.

Summer Term Seminar Programme (FOR ALL STUDENTS FT, PT1 AND PT2)

Extra Lecture/Seminars, Weeks 1, 7, 8, and 9 – all students welcome

There is a window of opportunity for a small cluster of free-form classes in the summer term, since the compulsory elements of cores and options are over. These are optional classes, but they are a chance for students to come to an agreement about an extra area of study they want to pursue through a series of staff-led lectures/seminars. They also give PT1 students a cluster of extra classes, to maintain the structure of study in the summer term. MA convenors for the Contemporary, Modern and Cultural Critical MAs will gather suggestions from students in Week 1 of summer term (01 May), then set a small amount of reading for the lectures in week 7, 8, 9. Staff leading the seminars will depend on the topics chosen!

For PT1 students, we aim to provide Core 2 reading lists as early as possible in the term to enable PT1 students to get on with reading ahead for the autumn term.

Assessment Information

MA Assessment

The dissertation counts for: **33%**

The four essays count for: **67%**

(All students submit four essays: two core course essays and two option essays)

For a **distinction** to be awarded, the numerical average of the dissertation and the four essays must be at distinction level (70 or above).

For a **merit** to be awarded, the numerical average of the dissertation and the four essays must be at merit level (60-69).

For a **pass** to be awarded, the numerical average of the dissertation and the four essays must be at pass level (50-59).

Students are entitled to make one attempt, per piece of coursework, to make good failed essays. Resubmission must take place by the next coursework deadline following the return of the failed piece of coursework to the student (e.g. Autumn term essays submitted in January must be resubmitted by the April deadline or on a date agreed with the programme director). Standard coursework deadline dates, each year, are:

First Monday of Spring term
First Monday of Summer term
Second Friday of September

Progression on the Programme is dependent upon making good all Fail marks. Full-time students should note that, where they obtain Fail marks, the MA cannot be completed in one year.

Resubmitted work will normally consist of a second attempt at the same topic.

Students are entitled to resubmit a failed MA dissertation on one occasion only. An extension of up to one year may be granted for resubmission. Students must pass the dissertation in order to pass the degree programme.

Students who fail two pieces of coursework must suspend their studies until they have made good at least one of the failed essays.

The essays and dissertations are double-marked, and overseen by an external examiner.

Please note that all marks remain provisional until ratified by the External Examiner at the Exam Board in November of the year of finalising.

See below for Grade-Related Criteria.

Grade-Related Criteria

These are the criteria assessors and the exam board apply when marking your essays and dissertations.

To be awarded a PASS at MA level the essay or dissertation should normally:

- Present a reasonably clear argument with some level of detail;
- Show a fair ability to marshal evidence, even if this is not quite sustained throughout the essay;
- Display a reasonably thorough knowledge of the relevant primary sources and texts;
- Demonstrate a fair grasp of a reasonable range of secondary literature relevant to the essay topic;
- To some extent situate the topic in hand within a broader historical and/or intellectual context;
- Use appropriate scholarly conventions relating to presentation;
- Be adequately documented, with footnotes or endnotes, and a Bibliography that reveals engagement with relevant primary and secondary texts.

To be awarded a MERIT at MA level the essay or dissertation should normally:

- Present a clear and detailed argument;
- Marshal a large body of evidence confidently and clearly throughout the essay;
- Display a thorough knowledge of the relevant primary sources and texts;
- Demonstrate a good grasp of a range of secondary literature relevant to the essay topic, including recent work in the field, and be able to engage with as well as rehearse current or recent debates on the topic in hand;
- Effectively situate the essay topic within a broader historical and/or intellectual context;
- Be very well written throughout;
- Be presented in a proper scholarly fashion throughout;
- Be well documented, with footnotes or endnotes, and a full Bibliography that reveals engagement with relevant and recent primary and secondary texts.

To be awarded a DISTINCTION at MA level the essay or dissertation should normally:

- Fulfil all the criteria of a MERIT essay and, additionally:
- Show a level of intellectual ambition beyond what is required for a MERIT mark;
- Display some evidence of originality in the selection of and/or interpretation of primary sources;
- Have a wide range of reference, beyond what is required for a MERIT mark.

Assessment

All essays are double marked, that is, they are marked by two members of staff. Essays are returned to students with a set of comments and a mark. This mark has been agreed by two internal markers. Marks remain unconfirmed until the exam board, which takes place in November. A selection of students' work is seen by our external examiners, who are the final adjudicators of assessed work. Once marks have been agreed by the exam board they cannot be altered. The exam board will take into account any mitigating circumstances that have been accepted, confidentially, by the Sub-Board, and makes decisions about penalties for late or missing work.

Marking Scale

70-100	Pass with distinction
60-69	Pass with merit
50-59	Pass

Marks below 50 constitute a 'fail'.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, the act of taking somebody else's work and presenting it as your own, is an act of academic dishonesty, and Birkbeck takes it very seriously.

Examples of plagiarism include (but are not restricted to):

- copying the whole or substantial parts of a paper from a source text (e.g. a web site, journal article, book or encyclopaedia), without proper acknowledgement
- paraphrasing another's piece of work closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained
- piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole
- procuring a paper from a company or essay bank (including Internet sites)
- submitting another student's work, with or without that student's knowledge
- submitting a paper written by someone else (e.g. a peer or relative) and passing it off as one's own
- representing a piece of joint or group work as one's own.

If you knowingly assist another student to plagiarise (for example, by willingly giving them your own work to copy from), you are committing an examination offence.

What happens if plagiarism is suspected?

The College operates a three stage policy for dealing with assessment offences. The first stage allows for a very rapid and local determination for first or minor and uncontested offences. Stage two allows for a formal Department investigation, where a student wishes to contest the allegation or penalty, where there is an allegation of a repeat offence or for more serious cases. Stage three involves a centrally convened panel for third and serious offences, dealt with under the code of Student Discipline.

What if I am worried that I'm not referencing correctly?

Please see your module tutor or contact a member of the learning support team as soon as possible.

Please refer to the Birkbeck website for updated information on assessment offences here:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/exams/assessment-offences>

Please access the assessment offences policy here:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/assessment-offences-policy.pdf>

Collusion

Like plagiarism, 'collusion' is an assessment offence. Any piece of writing you submit must be your own work. In the humanities, the way you structure your argument and express yourself is an inherent part of producing work of the required standard, and you will be judged on that, so it is not acceptable to get an inappropriate level of help in this area.

You may ask friends, family or fellow students to proof-read your work and offer advice on punctuation, grammar, and presentational issues, but it is not acceptable for someone else to come up with your arguments for you, or to re-write a draft you have produced.

If your first language is not English, you may find your written work a challenge initially, and it is acceptable to ask someone to look over your work and give you advice on punctuation, grammar and phrasing. However, that advice must be minimal and the argument and structure of any assessment must be your own work, and written in your own words.

It is unacceptable to pay someone to write (or re-write) your essays for you and if you are discovered to have done so, you risk expulsion from the programme. The College and the School of Arts have a range of services in place to help you improve your academic writing, so if you are concerned at all and would like some additional support, you should contact your personal tutor or the Programme Director.

Please refer to the website for further details here: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/exams/assessment-offences>

Essay Guidelines and Advice: Coursework Submission, Return of Coursework and Late Submissions

Essays

Essays should be 5 000 words long (with the exception of MA Creative Writing components; word length for each as stated in module syllabus). Please note that excessively over- or under-length essays will be penalised. Also, please be aware of the university regulations against plagiarism and duplication of your own work (i.e. there should be no overlap between this essay and material presented for assessment elsewhere in this course or in another module). Please ensure that your essay follows the style of referencing outlined in the MHRA stylebook. This is available on the web at:

<http://mhra.org.uk/publications/books/styleguide/styleguideV1.pdf>.

General

Students sometimes ask if they may write on an author who does not write in English. The bibliographies of a number of our modules include works in translation, especially contextual and theoretical works, and it is fine to discuss these in essays and the dissertation. However, the primary source material of assessed work should normally have been written in English. If you have a strong reason for wanting to write on an author who does not write in English, you should discuss this with the course convenor. Factors relevant to the choice of primary material for essays and the dissertation include whether you will be able to obtain the relevant secondary materials in the libraries open to you, and whether the module convenor is able to evaluate the work properly. Material by foreign language authors must be available in translation.

It may be that your course tutor issues a list of questions, one of which you must answer in your essay. In other cases, your tutor may encourage you to devise your own question. **In any case, your essay must be relevant to the course you have taken, in terms of both subject-matter and approach.** If you are in doubt as to whether what you want to write is relevant, you should discuss it with your course tutor. It is a good idea to take notes on this discussion, write a brief note recording it and share it with your tutor, so that you both have a clear, written idea of what your intentions are regarding your essay.

The criteria we normally use for making judgements about the range of assessed work, and their relation to the categories of Pass, Merit and Distinction, are set out formally in the Grade Criteria document above. It acts as a summation of our expectations, and should not be regarded as a check list but as useful guidance.

Submission of coursework

Please note: If you are taking options from other Departments/Schools different procedures may apply. Please check with the relevant Department/School before submitting your essay.

All work should normally be computer-generated (using a format compatible with Microsoft Word, and not a pdf or similar) unless you are told explicitly that an assignment may be hand-written. All work should be submitted double-spaced. Please note that the word count should include footnotes but excludes the bibliography.

Put your name and/or student ID number and the title of the module at the top of the essay, and include the title of the essay or the question as set out on the list of essay topics. Word count should be indicated at the end of the essay.

Please note that electronic submission is normally required by **14:00 (2pm)** on the day of the deadline.

We require electronic submission of your work for the following reasons:

- Some work will be marked online via Turnitin;
- Electronic submission is essential for purposes of moderation (second marking and External Examiner scrutiny);
- All work submitted online is automatically screened for plagiarism;
- We are required to retain a copy of all student work for up to five years after graduation.

For further information and instructions on how to submit essays using Moodle, please see Appendix A or visit the ITS Help Desk in Malet Street building.

Return of Coursework

Coursework will *usually* be marked and returned electronically in 4 weeks from the stated submission date or the date of handing in. Larger modules and modules with numerous seminar groups, such as core modules, could take longer due to the number of students involved. There may also be a delay if the college is closed or if there are extended holidays during that 4 week period.

Please do not phone or email to ask whether your essay has been marked unless the marking period has elapsed.

Late Submission of Coursework

All Schools and Departments across the College have moved to a system whereby students are **not permitted to ask for extensions** to coursework deadlines. If for some reason you are unable to submit a piece of work by the stipulated deadline, you should complete a Mitigating Circumstances form, which you can download from the web [here](#).

This form gives you space to describe the circumstances that have prevented you from meeting the deadline, and requires you to provide supporting evidence (such as a medical certificate). It is advisable to discuss the situation with your personal tutor before submitting the form.

Mitigating Circumstances Forms should be emailed to the course administrator or handed in to the Department office **within 14 days of either side of the deadline that is going to be missed.**

When you receive a late submitted piece of assessed work back from the markers, you will find that you have been awarded two grades: a penalty mark of 50% LP (late pass) for postgraduate students, assuming it is of a pass standard, and the 'real' mark that would have been awarded if the work had not been late. When the Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Board has met and considered your form, you will be told which of these marks will stand. If your claim has been accepted, the essay will receive the grade it has been deemed worth. If your claim is rejected, you will receive the LP mark.

Please note that Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Board will normally meet two weeks before the final exam board and claims will not be processed until then. Please see the Birkbeck College website for the policy and further process details of [Mitigating Circumstances](#).

Note: If you are taking an option within another School please note that you will need to adhere to the deadline/ extension policy of the School in which the option course is based.

Dissertations

It is particularly important to submit dissertations on the deadline date. This deadline is not negotiable. If missed, the candidate will not be examined in the same year and will have to wait another twelve months before being awarded the degree as MA examination boards meet only once a year, normally in November. Any difficulty in meeting the dissertation deadline should be brought to the attention of the Course Director at the earliest opportunity. Students should submit both an electronic and a hard copy of the dissertation.

College Assessment Policy

For further information please familiarise yourself with the College online assessment pages and awarding regulations. See the following links for requirements and policies:

[Registry Policies](#)

Style Guide

Writing essays at graduate level demands a more rigorous and scholarly attention to detail than undergraduate essays: you must fully reference all sources, and do so in a systematic and coherent way. You will see a number of systems of reference in books and journals. The Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing advocates use of the MHRA style described below, with information taken from the *MHRA Style Guide* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2004), which should be consulted for further explanation. Libraries hold copies of this style guide, and you can buy it in good bookshops (including Waterstones, Gower Street). It can also be downloaded for personal use from:

<http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/download.shtml>

Please try to get into the swing of using this system consistently as early as possible; this will make writing the dissertation easier. It also means that every time you read an article you should take a note of its *author, title, journal volume number/date and inclusive page numbers (or, with books, its place of publication and publisher)*. This will avoid the tedious business of having to go back to the library to scrabble around for the essays you've read in the distant past minutes before the deadline expires.

One final word: don't worry if this looks completely impenetrable to you at first—referencing is a discipline which takes time to learn.

Titles in the essay text:

Italics, or underlinings (use one or other, not both), are used for the titles of all works individually published under their own titles: books, journals, plays, longer poems, pamphlets, and any other entire published works. The titles of chapters in books or of articles in journals should be enclosed within single quotation marks. The titles of poems or essays which form part of a larger volume or other whole, or the first lines of poems used as titles, should also be given in single quotation marks:

Mrs Dalloway, *In Memoriam*, *King Lear* 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci', 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue', 'The Miller's Tale'.

Titles of films, substantial musical compositions, and works of art are italicised. Titles of songs and other short individual pieces are enclosed within single quotation marks.

Quotations:

Short quotations (not more than about forty words of prose or two complete lines of verse) should be enclosed in single quotation marks and run on with the main text. If not more than two complete lines of verse are quoted but the quotation includes a line division, this should be marked with a spaced upright stroke (/). For a quotation within a quotation, double quotation marks should be used:

Mrs Grose replies that 'Master Miles only said "We must do nothing but what she likes!"'.

If a short quotation is used within a sentence, the final full point should be outside the closing quotation mark; it may also be appropriate to alter the initial capital in such a quotation to lower case:

Do not be afraid of what Stevenson calls 'a little judicious levity'.

Long quotations (more than about forty words of prose, prose quotations consisting of more than one paragraph even if less than forty words, and verse quotations of more than two lines) should be broken off by an increased space from the preceding and following lines of typescript, and indented an inch (normal new paragraphs of text should always be indented half an inch). They should not be enclosed within quotation marks. Long quotations should normally end with a full point; even though the original may use other punctuation, there is no need (except for a question mark or exclamation mark) to preserve this at the end of a quotation. Omissions within prose quotations should be marked by an ellipsis (three points within square brackets: [...]). Omitted lines of verse should be marked by an ellipsis on a separate line.

References:

When you include material in your essay that you have drawn from another work, either from a literary text or from another critic, you must provide a footnote or endnote that gives the details of your source. All quotations, therefore, will be accompanied by a note, but so will any information you include that you have learned from the essays, articles, history books, reference works and electronic resources you might have read for your essay. Your marker will want to know what you have consulted for information, and will sometimes want to look at the source themselves. But the even more important reason for citing sources is that failure to provide full details of sources constitutes an act of plagiarism, it suggests that you are passing off someone else's work as your own, and this offence carries severe penalties that may lead to your expulsion from the course (see section 10).

Your word-processing software may have a footnote function (usually in the 'Insert' pull-down menu), if it does not, notes should be placed as a numbered list at the end of the essay. Numbers for notes are usually placed at the end of the sentence, after punctuation, such as commas or full stops, and quotation marks: 'Mrs Grose replies that 'Master Miles only said "We must do nothing but what she likes!"'.¹ If your computer does not have a footnote facility, or the facility to place numbers in superscript, then place the number of the note in brackets: 'Mrs Grose replies that 'Master Miles only said "We must do nothing but what she likes!"' (1). To convert a number to superscript in Word, highlight it, go to 'Format', then to 'Font' and tick the 'superscript' box.

The footnotes or endnotes themselves should be set out as follows:

¹ Henry James, 'The Turn of the Screw', in *The Turn of the Screw and Other Stories*, ed. by T.J. Lustig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 197.

Books

Tom McArthur, *Worlds of Reference: Lexicography, Learning and Language from the Clay Tablet to the Computer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 59.

The author's name is given as written on the title page of the book. The title is given in italics (or can be underlined instead), and the main title is separated from the

subtitle by a colon (even if the punctuation on the title page is different). The place of publication (city, not country) comes next, then the name of the press (without secondary matter such as '& Co.', 'Ltd.'). Remember to include the page number your quotation is drawn from, preceded by 'p.' for 'page', or 'pp.' for 'pages'.

Jean Starobinski, *Montaigne in Motion*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 174.

Emily Dickinson: Selected Letters, ed. by Thomas H. Johnson, 2nd edn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 194-97.

If the book you are using has been translated or edited by someone, you should include their name, as above. However, it is the main author, rather than the translator or editor, whose name appears at the beginning of the note (here Starobinski, rather than Goldhammer). If you are using a book of letters or diary entries, for example, that contains the name of the main author within it (as here with Dickinson's *Selected Letters*), you do not need to repeat the author's name at the beginning of the citation.

You should also specify which edition of a book you are using, if it is not the first edition of the work in question (here, the second edition of Dickinson's *Selected Letters*), because different editions may contain different material, or have different page numbering.

Dictionary of the Middle Ages, ed. by Joseph R. Strayer and others (New York: Scribner, 1982), vi (1985), 26.

If the work you are citing is a reference work, such as a dictionary or a guide to English literature, the reference should begin with the title of the work, rather than the name of the editor. If there are more than three editors or authors of a work, use the first name on the title page and 'and others'. If one volume of a multi-volume work has been used, the volume number should be given in roman numerals (here six has been turned into vi). 'p' is usually omitted if a volume number is given.

Chapters or articles in books

Martin Elsky, 'Words, Things, and Names: Jonson's Poetry and Philosophical Grammar', in *Classic and Cavalier: Essays on Jonson and the Sons of Ben*, ed. by Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982), pp. 31-55 (p. 41).

The title of the chapter or article is put in single quotation marks and followed by the word 'in', then the name of the book, with full publication details. The first and last page numbers of the article or chapter should be given, preceded by 'pp.', and finally, the page number to which you are referring should be given in brackets, preceded by 'p.', or, if you are referring to more than one page, 'pp.'.

Articles in journals

Richard Hillyer, 'In More than Name Only: Jonson's "To Sir Horace Vere"', *Modern Language Review*, 85 (1990), 1-11 (p. 8).

The name of the article is followed directly by the name of the journal in which it appears, without the 'in' used for chapters in books (see above). After the title of the journal, give the volume number of the journal (without writing 'volume' or 'vol.')

 and if the volume number is given in roman numerals, convert it to arabic numerals (here '85', rather than 'LXXXV'). Follow this with the year in which the volume was published (here 1990), the first and last page numbers of the article (and when referring to journal articles rather than book chapters, don't use 'pp.'), and finally, the page number to which you are referring, in brackets and preceded by 'p.' or 'pp.'

Articles in newspapers and magazines

Michael Schmidt, 'Tragedy of Three Star-Crossed Lovers', *Daily Telegraph*, 1 February 1990, p. 14.

The method of citation is the same as for journal articles, except that the date of the newspaper should be given, in place of the volume number and year.

Electronic resources

Electronic resources can provide useful information for use in your essays. However, their quality and authority vary widely. While CD-ROM resources available on library computers are generally reliable, internet resources such as personal websites are much less likely to be—or at least, there is no guarantee that they are. You should use books and journal articles to check any information you find on the internet, and the research for your essays should in any case extend well beyond internet resources.

When citing electronic resources, you should follow the style used for printed publications above as far as possible. Information should be given in the following order: 'author's name; title of item; title of complete work/ resource; publication details (volume, issue, date); full address of the resource (URL), in angle brackets; date at which the resource was consulted, in square brackets; location of passage cited, in parentheses.

Kent Bach, 'Performatives', in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* <<http://www.rep.routledge.com>> [accessed 3 October 2001].

E.E. (Edward Estlin) Cummings, 'maggie and milly and molly and may' in *Literature Online* <<http://lion.chadwyck.co.uk>> [accessed 5 June 2001].

References where the original source is not given

If you want to quote something that a critic is quoting, and you are not able to look at the critic's original source, use the following form for the note:

Virginia Woolf, 'Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown' (1923), qtd in Michael Levenson, *A Genealogy of Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 13.

If the year of the work, or even the title, isn't given by the critic, you can write:

Virginia Woolf, qtd in Michael Levenson, *A Genealogy of Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 13.

You should, however, attempt to look at the original source. Looking at the original context of a quotation is one of the ways you are able to evaluate the critic's use of their material.

Subsequent references

When you refer to a source for a second time, you must still provide a footnote or an endnote, but you do not need to repeat all the bibliographical details. You can give the reference as the surname of the author, or surname and abbreviated title, if your bibliography holds more than one work by the author: 'McArthur, p. 63' or 'McArthur, *Worlds of Reference*, p. 63'. Do not use the outdated forms of reference 'ibid.' or 'op.cit.'. If you are likely to refer to a small number of works many times in an essay (if, for example, you are writing an essay that focuses on one or two books), you may identify an abbreviation in the first full reference and include all subsequent references in your own text, e.g.:

Henry James, 'The Turn of the Screw', in *The Turn of the Screw and Other Stories*, ed. by T.J. Lustig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 197. Hereafter referred to in the main text as *TS*.

References to 'The Turn of the Screw' would then appear in brackets in your own text:

Mrs Grose replies that 'Master Miles only said "We must do nothing but what she likes!"' (*TS* 197).

Bibliography:

All the material referred to in footnotes or endnotes, and any other material you have consulted, must appear in a bibliography at the end of the essay. The form is the same as the notes, except that the works appear in alphabetical order, with the surname of the author or editor preceding the first name, and the page number you referred to in your essay should be omitted (inclusive page numbers of articles in journals and newspapers, or chapters in books should be retained). It is easier for your reader to find information in your bibliography if you do not divide it up into categories of work (such as 'primary' and 'secondary' or 'books' and 'films'): include all works in one list. The only exception to this is archival material.

Bach, Kent, 'Performatives', in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* <<http://www.rep.routledge.com>> [accessed 3 October 2001].

Elsky, Martin, 'Words, Things, and Names: Jonson's Poetry and Philosophical Grammar', in *Classic and Cavalier: Essays on Jonson and the Sons of Ben*, ed. by Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982), pp. 31-55

Schmidt, Michael, 'Tragedy of Three Star-Crossed Lovers', *Daily Telegraph*, 1 February 1990, 14.

Starobinski, Jean, *Montaigne in Motion*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986)

Summers, Claude J., and Ted-Larry Pebworth, eds, *Classic and Cavalier: Essays on Jonson and the Sons of Ben* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982).

Support for Students

Support for students with Disabilities, Dyslexia and Mental Health Needs

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities, specific learning difficulties, medical conditions and mental health conditions (hereinafter referred to as **disabled students**). Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College's Wellbeing Centre. The Wellbeing Centre is located in G26 on the Ground floor of the Malet Street building.

All enquiries should come to the Wellbeing Centre (+44 (0) 20 3907 0700) who will determine the appropriate referral to specialists in the [Disability and Dyslexia Service](#) and [Mental Health Service](#). They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students' Allowance, specialist equipment, personal support, examination arrangements, etc.

On enrolment you need to complete a Study Support Plan (**SSP**), which will set out the reasonable adjustments that we will make with physical access, lectures, seminars, assessments and exams. After you complete this and provide disability evidence, we confirm the adjustments you require and then your department, examinations office, etc. will be informed that your SSP is available and adjustments can be made. You should contact the Wellbeing Service if any of your adjustments are not in place.

Access at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's main buildings have wheelchair access, accessible lifts and toilets, our reception desks and teaching venues have induction loops for people with hearing impairments, and we have large print and tactile signage. Accessible parking, lockers, specialist seating in lectures and seminars and portable induction loops can all be arranged by the Disability & Dyslexia Service.

The Disabled Students' Allowance

UK and EU (with migrant worker status) disabled students on undergraduate and postgraduate courses are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (**DSA**). The DSA provides specialist equipment including computers with assistive technology and training, personal help (e.g. study skills tutors, mentors and BSL interpreters) and additional travel costs for students who have to use taxis. It provides thousands of pounds worth of support and all the evidence shows that students who receive it are more likely to complete their courses successfully. The Wellbeing Centre can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support. Students will receive their note-taking support from the University rather than the DSA.

Support in your Department

Your Department is responsible for making reasonable adjustments in learning and teaching and assessment, specialist seating, etc. Whilst we anticipate that this support will be provided by the Programme Director, tutors and Programme Administrator in the Department, they will also have a Disability Lead. If you

experience any difficulties or require additional support from the Department then they may also be able to assist you. You can find their details [here](#).

Support in IT Services and Library Services

There is a comprehensive range of specialist equipment for students with disabilities in IT Services. This includes an Assistive Technology Room, which may be booked by disabled students. We have software packages for dyslexic students (e.g. ClaroRead and Mind view), screen reading and character enhancing software for students with visual impairments available in our computer laboratories, specialist scanning software, large monitors, ergonomic mice and keyboards, specialist orthopaedic chairs, etc. We have an Assistive Technology Officer, who can be contacted via IT Services.

The Library has an Assistive Technology Centre, where there is also a range of specialist equipment, including an electronic magnifier for visually impaired students, as well as specialist orthopaedic chairs and writing slopes. The Disability and Dyslexia Service Office refers all students with disabilities to the Library Access Support service, who provide a comprehensive range of services for students with disabilities and dyslexia.

Examinations and Assessments

Many disabled students can receive support in examinations, including additional time, use of a computer, etc. In exceptional circumstances, students may be offered an alternative form of assessment.

Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia)

Mature students who experienced problems at school are often unaware that these problems may result from their being dyslexic. Whilst dyslexia cannot be cured, you can learn strategies to make studying significantly easier. If you think you may be dyslexic you can take an online screening test in the computer laboratories – the instructions for the screening test are available on the Disability Office website. If appropriate, you will be referred to an Educational Psychologist for a dyslexia assessment. Some students can receive assistance in meeting the cost of this assessment, either from their employer or from Birkbeck.

Further information

For further information please access the website [here](#) for updated contact details and information on Wellbeing drop-in sessions in the [Student Advice Centre](#).

Academic and Language Support Facilities for Postgraduate Students

Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching (CTPLT)

The Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching (located in the Main Building, Torrington Square) provides workshops and some individual tutorial assistance to PG students. Please click on this [link](#) and look under the 'Postgraduate Student Support' tab on the website for further information.

One-To-One Tutorials

The CTPLT offers a number of one-to-one tutorials available each week, including during term 3. These are meant to help students with a specific aspect of their writing. Tutorials can be booked by emailing: learningskills@bbk.ac.uk. Students are asked to bring a sample of their work with them to the appointment.

Workshops Covering a Range of Skills

There are CTPLT workshops specifically for PG students. These are offered periodically throughout the year, but more frequently in Autumn and Spring terms. There is an 'Academic Writing Day for PGs' in May, and a day in February on referencing.

Workshops can be viewed and booked on My Birkbeck: www.bbk.ac.uk/mbphome
The Academic Development Workshop Calendar includes information on all workshops offered throughout Birkbeck.

Facilitated Writing Workshops

In July and August CTPLT will be hosting a series of facilitated writing workshops designed to help students engage with their dissertation writing process. These workshops are also booked through My Birkbeck: www.bbk.ac.uk/mbphome

Language and Grammar

The CTPLT offers workshops through the year on aspects of formal, academic expression. There are also weekly 'Drop In' Language and Grammar sessions. Information about topics, dates and venues can be found on the My Birkbeck: www.bbk.ac.uk/mbphome

School of Arts Workshops

In the Autumn and Spring terms, [Dr Fleur Rothschild](#), Learning Development Tutor for the School of Arts, offers a series of workshops on:

- Study Skills
- Research Skills
- Essay Writing
- Language and Grammar

These workshops are open to all students in the School of Arts, including Postgraduate students, and there is always a contingent of PGs who attend each term. The schedules are usually published in September and can then be accessed via My Birkbeck www.bbk.ac.uk/mbphome

Regrettably, Dr Rothschild is unable to offer one-to-one help to Postgraduate students who should, in the first instance, contact their Personal Tutor, or Dissertation Supervisor.

Online resources

Online resources can be found in students' Moodle list:

- Birkbeck Learning Skills, for example [What materials are available to help develop my academic English?](#)
- [School of Arts Study Skills:](#) Study Tools; Language and Grammar. This resource is a WIP which will be progressively developed through the summer and the coming academic year. It currently contains resources and slides from some of the Study Skills, and Language and Grammar workshops.

Get Ahead: Stay Ahead - Helping you get the best possible start to your course

At Birkbeck we want to make sure you get all the help you need to get your studies off to a great start and to provide you with support during your course. On the Get Ahead: Stay Ahead website you can access a range of online resources to help you:

- consider how you can achieve your goals
- find out what studying at Birkbeck is like
- improve your study skills and succeed on your course
- The online materials are interactive tutorials that are free to use and you can work through them at your own pace.

These interactive tutorials will help you consider how you can achieve your goals, find out what studying at Birkbeck is like and improve your academic skills: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/get-ahead-stay-ahead>.

For further information on Learning Development and Academic Skills support available within Birkbeck College, please see the website for details: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support>.

Student Support



As a Birkbeck student, you can get access to a range of support and study facilities. Please follow the links below to access current information on the following facilities:

- [Academic support](#)
- [Accommodation services](#)
- [Career services](#)
- [Computing and IT services](#)
- [Counselling service](#)
- [Disability and dyslexia support](#)
- [Financial support](#)
- [Graduate Research School](#)
- [Health services](#)
- [Learning Development Service](#)
- [Library services](#)
- [Lockers](#)
- [Moodle](#)
- [Nursery](#)
- [Orientation for new students](#)
- [Student Advice Centre](#)
- [Wellbeing Service](#)

If you want to talk to someone about any aspect of this provision, please contact the [Student Advice Service](#).

International Students

Birkbeck offers a range of support services for international students. Please access the website for details [here](#).

- [Guide for international students](#)
- [Submit your Visa and immigration enquiry](#)
- [Visa and registration information](#)

Study Resources

Birkbeck Computer Services

There are two or three large rooms in the main building and one in the basement of Senate House that make computer terminals available to Birkbeck students. This gives you free access to word-processing should you require it, as well as an email account and entry to the internet. There are many, constantly growing resources available on the Internet, and it is becoming an increasingly vital element of academic research. Please see details on the website: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/its/timetables/>.

The College constantly runs a rotating series of courses introducing students to word processing packages, negotiating the Internet, and other skills: check the notice board outside E101 (meaning the first floor of the extension block of the main building), and sign up early: these courses are very popular.

College Hardship / Book Buying Funds

It may be possible, if you are having financial difficulties, to apply to the College for assistance with fees and to receive small awards to help with the purchase of essential texts. For information and advice, contact the [Student Advice Service](#) and see the Birkbeck website here for further details: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/hardship-fund>.

Libraries

[Birkbeck Library](#) is on the first floor of the main building in Malet Street. Please refer to the Birkbeck website for current [User Information](#), [Library Opening Hours](#), [Frequently Asked Questions](#), and to search the online catalogue.

Birkbeck Electronic Library

The Library subscribes to many electronic journals and databases. You can access these from anywhere within College using your Central Computing Services (CCS) username and password, and the majority of these resources can also be accessed from home or work. As well as finding comprehensive information about the Library, its services and collections, you can also:

- Search the Library catalogue, renew your books and place reservations on items out on loan.
- Read articles in over 12,000 electronic journal titles and newspapers.
- Search databases to help you find out what has been written about the subject you are researching, including *Literature Online (LION)*, which includes the *MLA International Bibliography (MLA)* and the *Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (ABELL)*, the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*, *JSTOR*, *PCI* and *Project Muse*.
- Work through LIFE – an online tutorial to help you make the most of the Library.

Other libraries

Birkbeck students can also use a range of other libraries. Students have reference access to most University of London college libraries. In addition, the UK Libraries

Plus Scheme allows students reference access to over 135 other higher education libraries and part-time students may also borrow from up to three member libraries. See the Library web site for more information.

Further information and help

Please contact your **Subject Librarians** for MA Contemporary Literature and Culture programme on elplibrarian@bbk.ac.uk. Feel welcome to contact them with any Library enquiries.

Senate House Library

Situated next door to Birkbeck College, on the fourth floor of Senate House, this is a world-class research library, with extensive collections in twentieth-century British and American fiction and criticism. Staff are very helpful in negotiating this initially confusing library, and you should be able to find most of the materials you require. They have recently purchased a large number of videos which can be viewed in the building. Membership of this library is absolutely vital for your MA.

British Library

A copyright library, which receives all books published in Britain and has a very broad and deep collection of books published elsewhere too. It is only 15 minutes walk from Birkbeck and is an excellent resource for MA study. Books usually take between 50 minutes and 2 hours to arrive at your desk. The library has changed its policy regarding student admission several times in the past year. At the time of going to press, you should be able to join on showing your MA card, but it is worth checking the website for details before you visit for the first time. Queues to the admissions office tend to build up in the middle of the day – try first thing in the morning (from 9:30 am, or 10:00 am on Mondays). The library is open until 8:00 Monday-Thursday, and until 5 on Fridays and Saturdays.

University College Library

This is situated 5 minutes away from Birkbeck, on Gower Street. Students from Birkbeck are admitted to the library, and since it has extensive holdings in English literature, it is worth holding in reserve if texts are proving difficult to obtain. Make sure you have your Birkbeck college card and a photograph when you first visit.

M25 Consortium Libraries and SCONUL Research Extra

Birkbeck participates in an arrangement that allows academics and research students to use other research libraries in the country. It may be convenient for you to have access to the libraries of another university, especially if you do not live or work close to Birkbeck. Some university libraries also have extended hours, which can be useful if you need a quiet place to work later at night. (Imperial, for example, is open for 24 hours during its exam period, including to registered external users.) Opening hours change with some regularity, and libraries have different kinds of restrictions, so check websites for details. Begin with the M25 Consortium Libraries page at www.m25lib.ac.uk/, and [www.sconul.ac.uk/use lib/srx/](http://www.sconul.ac.uk/use_lib/srx/).

Library Resources: Contact Details

University of London Library

Senate House
Malet Street

London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7862 8500
Fax: 020 7862 8480
Website: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/>
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

Birkbeck College Library

Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7631 6239
Website: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/>
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

Little Magazines Library

Little Magazines Department
The Library
University College London
Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT
Telephone: 020 7380 7796 (direct line) or: 020 7387 7050 ext 7796
Fax: 020 7380 7727
Website: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/special-collections/a-z/little-mags>
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street

Courtauld Institute of Art Library

Somerset House
Strand
London WC2R 0RN
Telephone: 020 7873 2649
Fax: 020 7873 2410
Website: <https://www.courtauld.ac.uk/study/resources/book-library>
Nearest Tube: Charing Cross

School of Oriental and African Studies Library

Thornhaugh Street
Russell Square
London WC1H 0XG
Telephone: 020 7323 6109
Fax: 020 7636 2834
Website: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/Library/>
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

School of Slavonic and East European Studies Library

Senate House
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7862 8523
Fax: 020 7862 8644
Website: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/library>
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

University of London Institute of Education Library

20 Bedford Way
London WC1H 0AI
Telephone: 0207 612 6000
Website: <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/infoserv/ishome.htm>
Email: lib.enquiries@ioe.ac.uk
Nearest Tube: Russell Square

University of London Institute of Historical Research Library

Senate House
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7862 8740
Website: <http://ihr.sas.ac.uk/cwis/library.html>
Email: ihr@sas.ac.uk
Nearest Tube: Goudge Street or Russell Square

Warburg Institute Library

Woburn Square
London WC1H OAB
Telephone: 020 7862 8949
Fax: 020 7862 8939
Website: <https://warburg.sas.ac.uk/library-collections/library>
Nearest Tube: Russell Square

British Library: Humanities and Social Sciences

96 Euston Road
St Pancras
London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7412 7676 (reading room); 020 7412 7677 (membership enquiries)
Website: <http://www.bl.uk/>
Nearest Tube: Euston or Kings Cross

British Library National Sound Archive

96 Euston Road
London NW1 2DB
Telephone: 020 7412 7440
Fax: 020 7412 7441
Website: <https://sounds.bl.uk>
Nearest Tube: Euston, Euston Square, or King's Cross

Music recordings of most periods, styles and countries; oral history, spoken literature and drama; wildlife sounds and sound effects. Duplicate recordings of BBC material. Free public listening service by appointment.

British Library Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections

96 Euston Road
London NW1 2DB
Telephone: 020 7412 7873
Fax: 020 7412 7641
Website: <http://www.bl.uk/collections/asiapacificafrika.html>

Nearest Tube: Euston or King's Cross

Public Record Office

Ruskin Avenue

Kew

Richmond

Surrey TW9 4DU

Telephone: 020 8392 5200

Fax: 020 8392 5286

Website: <http://www.pro.gov.uk/>

Nearest Tube: Kew

Guildhall Library

Aldermanbury

London, EC2P 2EJ

Telephone: 020 7332 1868 or 1870

Website:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/guildhall-library/Pages/default.aspx>

Nearest Tube: St Paul's, Bank or Moorgate

History and topography of London. Publications of national and local historical societies, newspapers, complete files of House of Commons and Lords debates and journals, large collections of public and local acts and statutory instruments, House of Commons papers complete from 1830.

Barbican Library

Barbican Centre

London, EC2Y 8D5

Telephone: 020 7638 0569

Website: <https://www.barbican.org.uk/your-visit/general-info/library>

Nearest Tube: Barbican, Moorgate, St Paul's.

St Bride Printing Library

Bride Lane

Fleet Street

London, EC4Y 5EE

Telephone: 020 7353 4660

Website: <http://www.stbride.org/>

Nearest Tube: Blackfriars or St Paul's

Printing, publishing, graphic design and related subjects. Early technical manuals, manufacturers' prospectuses and type specimens. Trade serials and directories.

Battersea Reference Library

Altenburg Gardens

Lavender Hill

London SW11 1JQ

Telephone: 020 8871 7466

Fax: 020 7978 4376

Website: <https://www.better.org.uk/library/london/wandsworth/battersea-library>

Nearest Railway Station: Clapham Junction

Occult, architecture, William Blake, G A Henty, Edward Thomas. Closed some days - it's advisable to ring to check opening hours before visiting.

West Hill Reference Library

West Hill, (corner of Santos Road)
London SW18 1RZ
Telephone: 0208 871 6386
Fax: 020 7978 4376
Website: <https://librarytechnology.org/library/26913>
Nearest Tube: East Putney

Humanities, fine arts, special loan collections on history and travel. Closed some days – it's advisable to ring to check opening hours before visiting.

Marylebone Library

109-117 Marylebone Road
London NW1 5PS
Telephone: 020 7641 1037
Fax: 020 7641 1044
Website: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/library-opening-hours-and-contact-details>
Nearest Tube: Baker Street or Marylebone

Medical collection, including dentistry and nursing. Also the Sherlock Holmes Collection which contains material relating to Conan Doyle and the history of detective fiction, and can be seen by appointment only.

Specialist Libraries Open to the Public:

Catholic Central Library

Lancing Street (off Eversholt Street)
London NW1 1ND
Telephone: 020 7388 4333
Fax: 020 7388 6675
Website: www.catholic-library.org.uk/
Nearest Tube: Euston

Commonwealth Knowledge Centre

Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London, SW1Y 5HX
Telephone: 020 7747 6164
Website: <http://thecommonwealth.org/knowledge-centre>
Nearest Tube: Green Park

The Commonwealth Literature Library has a unique collection of 11,000 books, written and translated into English on all aspects of Commonwealth and postcolonial literature. The Commonwealth Resource Centre provides multi-media resources for

loan and information on all 54 member countries, peoples and organisations making up the contemporary Commonwealth community.

The Women's Library

London Guildhall University

Calcutta House

Old Castle Street

London E1 7NT

Telephone: 020 7320 1189

Website: <http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/thewomenslibrary/>

Nearest Tube: Aldgate East, Toynbee Hall exit

Women's history, fiction, poetry, magazines; feminism and feminist criticism. The UK's best resource for women's history and literature.

Imperial War Museum (School of Printed Books)

Imperial War Museum

Lambeth Road

London SE1 6HZ

Telephone: 020 7416 5342

Fax: 020 7416 5374

Website: <http://london.iwm.org.uk/>

Nearest Tube: Lambeth North

History of the two world wars, and other wars and military undertakings involving Britain and the Commonwealth since 1914.

Poetry Library

Level 5

Royal Festival Hall

South Bank Centre

London SE1 8XX

Website: <http://www.poetrylibrary.org.uk/>

Nearest Tube: Waterloo or Embankment

The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine Library

The Wellcome Building

183 Euston Road

London NW1 2BE

Telephone: 020 7611 8582

Fax: 020 7611 8369

Website: <http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/>

Nearest Tube: Euston or Euston Square

Websites with UK libraries information

COPAC

<http://www.copac.ac.uk/copac/>

Access to the catalogues of all major UK university libraries. If you can't get the book you need in London, see if you can find it here and ask Birkbeck Library to arrange an inter-library loan.

M25 Consortium

<http://www.M25lib.ac.uk/M25/>

Links to over 100 libraries in the London area

UK Public Libraries

<http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac940/weblibs.html>

Libraries Information (via Birkbeck)

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/other.html>

Other Graduate Activities

We have a large postgraduate community, and there are many other arenas you might wish to participate in. We circulate information by email about interesting and relevant events taking place in London and beyond: conferences, readings, exhibitions.

MA Thursday evening lectures programme

We aim to stimulate cross-fertilisation between MA programmes by putting on a series of lectures by guest speakers, and panels with staff and current graduates, on Thursday evenings from 7:30. A full programme of speakers should be available from October and advertised on the department's website.

Modernist and Contemporary Reading Groups

Run by PhD students, these groups meet in order to read texts organised around a different theme each term. MA students are welcomed. Ask the MA convenor or the postgraduate office for more information. The Contemporary Fiction Group aims to meet twice a term: see <http://dandelionnetwork.org/group/contemporaryfictiongroup> for this group's latest activities.

The Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Literature (CCL)

Founded in 2012, [Birkbeck's Centre for Contemporary Literature](#) is a meeting place for numerous ongoing projects by academic staff, creative writers and graduate students. The Centre hosts conferences and symposia, readings and seminars on a range of contemporary writers – in prose fiction but also potentially in other forms and media. We are open to suggestions for future projects and events, including collaborations with other departments, writers and artists, and non-academic institutions.

Centres for Poetics and Cinema

Dr Stephen Willey directs the [Centre for Poetics and Cinema](#) which runs seminars, workshops, conferences and readings by poets throughout the year, and also collaborates on writing projects such as the Voiceworks series with the Wigmore Hall and Guildhall School of Music. The Centre has its own web journals, *pores* and *Readings*, and has developed an imprint, Veer Books, along with an active group of postgraduate poets, London Under Construction. Sessions are open and informal. Look out for regular posts on email.

Birkbeck day conferences

The Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing frequently arranges day conferences (recent conferences include 'Transmission: Hari Kunzru Workshop', 'A Visit from Jennifer Egan', 'Colours of Memory: A Conference on the Writing of Geoff Dyer', 'Flying: A Conference on Kate Millett', 'Remembering the 1990s', 'The Inhuman', 'Ghosts', 'Gendering the Millennium', 'Death by Technology', 'Magical Thinking', 'Narratives in Transition', 'Money Talks', 'Occasional Music', 'Alan Hollinghurst in Conversation' and 'Weird Council: an International Conference on the Writing of China Miéville'). Look out for publicity materials in the School. MA students are very welcome to attend such events.

The Centre for English Studies

The Centre for English Studies is located on the third floor of Senate House, and provides a structured sequence of seminars, lectures from distinguished speakers, day conferences and graduate seminars. Many of these are held during the day, but there are also weekend conferences and late afternoon meetings if you are able to attend. The Centre releases a batch of material at the beginning of each term, announcing the programme for the coming weeks: we will normally email you about relevant events.

Look out particularly for the **London Modernism Seminar** which meets on the first Saturday of each month during term time.

The **Institute for Romance Studies**, also located in Senate House, often puts on lectures and conferences which may be relevant to your studies. Information is available at Senate House, and also advertised on the notice-board.

Research Centres

Birkbeck, University of London, is an internationally recognised institution with a reputation for cutting-edge research. The School of Arts brings together some of the finest research activity across the college, research that is recognised as world-leading.

Research in our School is conducted under the auspices of our [academic departments](#) as well as [our highly respected research centres](#). You are warmly encouraged to engage with the various research centres throughout the School, and wider college, to attend and get involved in organizing events to better inform your own research and study.

The School's Research Centres can be found here:

<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/arts/research/research-centres>

Appendix A: Getting Started with Moodle

What is Moodle?

Birkbeck uses 'Moodle' as its Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform. Moodle is used to house course documentation (handbooks, module outlines, coursework, coversheets etc.) materials (readings, PowerPoint presentations, slide lists etc.) and for electronic submission and marking of coursework.

Access Moodle

You can access Moodle [here](#). To log in you need your ITS username and password, a computer with a connection to the internet and a web browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox.

Login Details

If you are having login problems, but your password is working for other services, please change your password via the online [form](#) (allow one hour after completing this form, and then log in to Moodle again). If this hasn't resolved the problem please contact the [ITS Helpdesk](#) via email (its@bbk.ac.uk), telephone (020 7631 6543), or in person (Malet St building, next to the entrance to the Library).

Moodle Support for Students

Please access the [Moodle Support area for Birkbeck students](#) for information on [how to get started with Moodle](#) and updates on how to submit the all-important Turnitin assignment.

Appendix B: Common Awards Scheme Regulations and Policies

Common Awards Scheme

Please access the [Common Awards Scheme](#) regulations for taught and research programmes for the current academic year.

If you have any queries regarding the regulations please contact asq@bbk.ac.uk.

Policies

See the Birkbeck College website for access to current [policies](#) including: **Assessment Offences, Mitigating Circumstances** and **Break-in-Studies Policy**.

Appendix C: MA Dissertation Proposal Form

This form must be submitted via Turnitin Assignment by 14:00, Friday 6 March 2020.

Name

Student Number

Proposed Topic

Brief Outline / Abstract

Brief Indicative Reading List / Sources To Be Used