

ENGL 4431: Contemporary British Fiction  
Dr. Carey Mickalites  
Fall 2015  
TR 2:40 - 4:05

This course is an advanced introduction to contemporary British fiction. While there are numerous ways to define “the contemporary”—1945 to the present, or 2000 to the present, for example—we will read novels published between the 1980s and the early twenty-first century. Rather than approaching the reading in a chronological order, the reading is organized according to broad thematic units representing major social, political, and cultural concerns being dealt with by some of the most fascinating fiction writers of today. While each cluster of texts can be considered in isolation, we will also see that the course as a whole seeks to situate recent British fiction within a broadly historical framework, thus showing how the fiction expresses “Britishness” in the present in relation to the past and to the possible futures of the nation and its cultural identity.

In addition to consistent reading and class discussions, students will write several short response papers, give one brief presentation, and develop and write a research paper (6-8 pp.) with guidance from me. We will also supplement the reading with film, television, and other media relevant to our study. Be prepared for often random doses of Monty Python!

\*I encourage you to shop for the texts online in order to save money. When buying used copies, which I recommend, please be sure to get a clean copy, not excessively marked up, etc. See the ISBNs listed below with each book.

### **Required Texts**

Martin Amis, *Lionel Asbo* (Knopf. ISBN: 978-0-307-95808-2)  
Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (Plume. ISBN: 0-452-27007-3)  
Julian Barnes, *England, England* (Knopf. ISBN: 0-375-40582-8)  
Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day* (Knopf. ISBN: 0-394-57343-9)  
Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia* (Penguin. ISBN: 978-0140131680)  
Patrick McCabe, *The Butcher Boy* (Bantam Doubleday. ISBN: 0-385-31237-7)  
Ian McEwan, *Atonement* (Random House. ISBN: 0-385-72179-x)  
Zadie Smith, *N/W* (Penguin. ISBN: 978-59420-397-8)