

Anglistisches Seminar

Lehrstuhl Anglistik II
Dr. Stella Butter

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Spring Semester 2008: PS II The Contemporary British Novel

Course Description

This course aims to provide an introduction to the rich and varied landscape of the contemporary British novel. We will explore how recent novels critically engage with key issues and ideas that have been influential in the shaping of contemporary Britain (e.g. ethnic and gender relations, nationhood, social and class structures). Special emphasis will be placed on the different narrative and generic forms developed in British fiction to chart ongoing cultural and historical transitions. While the sheer wealth and diversity of the contemporary British novel does not allow for a comprehensive survey within a one-semester course, you will, however, gain insight into different contemporary strands of fiction, ranging from fictions of migration and fictions of memory to new Gothic and pop literature. With apologies to the other great authors who were bumped off the syllabus, here is the list of novels in their reading order: 1) Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990), 2) Jackie Kay, *Trumpet* (1998), 3) Patrick McGrath, *The Grotesque* (1989), 4) Kazuo Ishiguro, *When We Were Orphans* (2000), 5) Nick Hornby, *High Fidelity* (1995).

The quality of the discussions in the seminar is largely dependent on the amount of preparation that you do for the course. Please allow ample time for a thorough reading of the novels prior to class and also for the supplementary texts in the reader, which will be made available at the beginning of the semester. In order to enable students to influence the teaching agenda for each session on the basis of their own research and preparation for the course, each student is kindly asked to send two questions for each class to me via e-mail by 5 p.m. on the Sunday before each class (starting with the second session). For the first class, I would kindly ask you to have read Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia*.

Course Schedule

18.02.	Introduction: Mappings of the Contemporary British Novel
25.02.	Kureishi, <i>The Buddha of Suburbia</i>
03.03.	Kureishi, <i>The Buddha of Suburbia</i>
10.03.	Kureishi, <i>The Buddha of Suburbia</i>
17.03. - 28.03.	<i>Easter Holidays (no courses)</i>
31.03.	Jackie Kay, <i>Trumpet</i>
07.04.	Jackie Kay, <i>Trumpet</i>
14.04.	Patrick McGrath, <i>The Grotesque</i>
21.04.	Patrick McGrath, <i>The Grotesque</i>
28.04.	Kazuo Ishiguro, <i>When We Were Orphans</i>
05.05.	Kazuo Ishiguro, <i>When We Were Orphans</i>
12.05.	<i>Bank Holiday (no course)</i>
19.05.	Kazuo Ishiguro, <i>When We Were Orphans</i>
26.05.	Nick Hornby, <i>High Fidelity</i>
02.06.	Final Discussion and Conclusion
09.06.	<i>Optional: Written Exam</i>

Primary Texts

Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia* (ISBN-10: 0571200435)

Jackie Kay, *Trumpet* (ISBN-10: 0330331469)

Patrick McGrath, *The Grotesque* (ISBN-10: 0679776214)

Kazuo Ishiguro, *When We Were Orphans* (ISBN: 0-571-205623)

Nick Hornby, *High Fidelity* (ISBN-10: 0140295569)

Secondary and Theoretical Texts (for further reading)

Philip Tew. *The Contemporary British Novel*, London, 2007 [2004].

Vera Nünning (ed.). *Der zeitgenössische englische Roman: Genres – Entwicklungen – Modellinterpretationen*. Trier: WVT 2007.

Credit Requirements

Regular attendance is mandatory and active participation is expected. On the basis of your own research and preparation for the course, you are kindly asked to send two questions for each class to me via e-mail by 5 p.m. on the Sunday before each class (starting with the second session).

Following the guidelines set out for your course of studies, you may choose the form of your final examination:

Written exam (5 ECTS) **OR** oral exam (5 ECTS) **OR** research paper (6 ECTS).

Seminar Folder and Material

All material is made available on dotlrn: <https://dotlrn.uni-mannheim.de>

This concerns the course schedule, theoretical texts and handouts.

Office Hours

Wednesdays, 11.00-12.00 (EW 268). If you cannot make it during this time, please contact me to arrange for an alternative appointment.

Research Papers

A list of topics for research papers will be distributed during the course of the semester. If you want to write on a topic not on the list, please confer with me. Please also submit an outline of your research paper ("Gliederung") before you start writing it up.

Formal requirements: Length of research papers: 10-15 pages; papers must adhere to the MLA citation rules (cf. <https://dotlrn.uni-mannheim.de>). It is mandatory to attach the following statement, dated and signed, on a separate sheet to your research papers:

„Ich versichere, dass ich die beiliegende Arbeit ohne Hilfe Dritter und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel einschließlich des Internets angefertigt und die den benutzten Quellen wörtlich oder inhaltlich entnommenen Stellen als solche kenntlich gemacht habe.“

For detailed information and help on how to write your (first?) research paper ("Hausarbeit"), please attend the "Grundlagenkurs Hausarbeiten" (Maurus Roller, Thursdays 5.45-6.45 p.m., EW 242).