ENGLISH 460C
BRITISH LITERATURE: 1945-THE PRESENT

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12:30-1:40

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

English 460C examines representative works by British authors writing from 1945 (the end of World War II) to the present. We will consider the works in their historical contexts, as well as in the light of current literary and critical theory.

The course will emphasize student-led discussions rather than teacher-led lectures.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To give you practice and training in reading and interpreting works of literature, with particular emphasis on their cultural and historical backgrounds.
2. To give you practice in scholarly research and in the critical analysis of individual works of literature, as well as the comparative analysis of several works.
3. To open up for your consideration some current literary and critical trends.
4. To give you practice presenting your ideas orally.
5. To help you to write more effectively.
6. To give you some enjoyment reading (I hope!).

TEXT BOOKS:

The following text books are required:

Martin Amis, Time’s Arrow (Penguin).
A. S. Byatt, Babel Tower (Random House).
Ted Hughes, Birthday Letters (Penguin).
John LeCarre, Smiley’s People (Penguin).
George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four (Penguin).
Jean Rhys, Wide Sargasso Sea (Penguin).
Fay Weldon, Darcy’s Utopia (Harper Collins).

In addition, some poems will be provided on handouts.
The following text is recommended:

Jane E. Aaron and Murray McArthur, *The Little, Brown Compact Handbook*, First Canadian Edition (Addison-Wesley). This text has useful sections on punctuation, grammar, and sentence errors, as well as a summary of the MLA style. All royalties derived from the sale of this text will be donated to the Department of English scholarship fund.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS:**

**A. POETRY (3 weeks):**
1. Dylan Thomas: "Fern Hill"; "Do Not Go Gentle"
2. Stevie Smith: "The Galloping Cat"; "Our Bog Is Dood"; "The New Age"; "Thoughts about the Person from Porlock"
3. Philip Larkin: "Church Going"; "Aubade"
4. Ted Hughes: "Pike"
5. Sylvia Plath: "Daddy"; "Lady Lazarus"
6. Frieda Hughes: "Readers"; "Birds"
7. Derek Walcott: "The Glory Trumpeter"; "The Season of Phantasmal Peace"
8. Seamus Heaney: "Punishment"; "Skunk"

**B. NOVELS (6 weeks):**

**GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. One short (5-page) analysis of an assigned poem from *Birthday Letters*. (20%)

2. One long essay of approximately 15 double-spaced, typewritten pages. The topic will involve at least one of the novels (50%)

3. Participation in a 40-minute group presentation, based on one of the novels; this novel should be different from the long essay. (10%)

4. Professionalism (see below). (20%)

*Note:* Class participation will affect the final grade positively (up to 5%). Attendance is expected.
PROFESSIONALISM:

Because the course is organized more as seminar-type discussions than as lectures (and because there is no final examination), students will have certain responsibilities throughout the term. These are as follows:

1. Each student will read and write comments on one other student's short essay before it is submitted for marking. (I will organize the exchange.)

2. Each student will be expected to read at least three of the final essays on *Birthday Letters*, which will be assembled in a folder.

3. Members of each group will serve as critics for one other group's presentation.

4. Each student will present (orally) an essay proposal in the last three weeks of class (assuming that the course stays on schedule); students will be expected to discuss other students' proposals and to offer suggestions.

5. Each student will write a peer evaluation; I will be mainly interested in positive contributions.

6. Students will be expected to contribute to class discussions.

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*And the Faculty of Arts requires that we notify you of the following:*

"Note on the avoidance of academic offenses: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean."

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