

STDABRD 344-103:**“London is the Place for Me”: Multicultural Britain in the Age of Immigration**

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

This class traces the history, experiences, and future of multicultural London. In 2011, 44% of Londoners were immigrants or ethnic minorities. This number will increase over the next decade, as members of Britain’s former Empire, migrants from the European Union, and refugees from across the globe seek a better future in Europe’s largest city. This influx of peoples and cultures poses difficult questions to British society: What does it mean to be a British citizen? Has this mode of belonging changed over time? Is London’s cultural diversity a positive attribute, or does it irrevocably alter “Britishness”?

In this course, we will explore London as a city of encounters, tensions, and solidarities. The relationship between “multiculturalism,” “identity,” and “Britain” will be scrutinized through the lens of literature, drama, media, academic texts, and immersive urban activities. Readings and analyses of these materials will be shared and assessed through classroom discussion and short writing assignments. In a final project, students will work collaboratively to produce their own interpretation of multicultural London. On the macro level, students will explore how race, ethnicity, and immigration have been inscribed in “the nation” since the end of Empire up through the current debate over Britain’s membership in the European Union. On the micro level, students will examine the individual experiences of immigrants and ethnic minorities in order to assess how “difference” is felt unevenly across race, generation, gender, and class divides.

Course Goals

- To situate Britain as a case study of how colonial legacies, biological racism, multicultural politics, and identity activism shape national histories
- To connect historical formations with their present day political stakes: how has Britain’s past encounters with “difference” shaped current debate about immigration policy or membership in the European Union?
- To learn how to read, analyze, and critique representations of race and ethnicity across media (literature, memoirs, ethnographies, film, television, music, etc.) and subject positions (gender, sexuality, class, generation)
- To engage students in the “everyday history” of urban diversity and to explore how waves of immigration have shaped London’s communities and its built environment

Classroom Conduct

This course focuses on questions of identity and difference--you may have personal investment in these questions, or you may be grappling with their meanings for the first time. What I ask is that we maintain a classroom environment where original or divergent readings and opinions are respected and encouraged. Disagreement should never take the form of personal attack. Allow others to participate, think through an issue, and complete their statements, and support your own questions or critiques with evidence from the course material. If you are ever uncomfortable with our class discussions, please let me know.

Attendance, Participation, and Classroom Technology

- As this course only meets for six weeks, I expect students to attend every class and every excursion.
- It is imperative that you complete the readings and viewings before class, and that you bring the necessary text in digital or printed form.
- Participation represents a large portion of assessment for this course. Participation can take many forms: offering your analysis of the course material, responding to a classmate's comment or question, asking a clarifying question, volunteering to read, or listening actively. If you have any questions about reading for and participating in a humanities class, please talk to me.
- We will meet twelve times in the classroom, and six times for excursions. Each day is graded on a four-point scale (total 72 points), outlined below.
 - A score of five indicates that you have truly come to class prepared to engage with the course material and your classmates, and the difference between a four and a five hinges on the latter part. I will happily give fives on days in which you interact with each other by building off of each other's comments, by asking questions of your classmates that show that you have listened to and thought about their positions, and by making efforts to include everyone in the conversation.
 - A score of four indicates that you have taken an extra step beyond just showing up. This might mean volunteering to read, offering a point for discussion, or even asking a question about what is going on in class.
 - A score of three is the default mark. If you show up on time, have your materials, and look alert but say nothing, you will get a 3. Note that if you do this every day and attending every excursion, you will be on track for a B- in class participation over the course of the term.
 - A score of two indicates general disengagement from class proceedings. This might mean not having your class materials, staring listlessly at walls or out of windows, saying "Huh?" if I call on you, or falling asleep.
 - A score of one indicates truly disruptive behavior, which usually takes the form of talking out of turn or talking too much. If you have something to say, offer it in a way that engages the entire classroom.
 - A score of zero will be given in two cases: if you are absent or if I find you are using technology for non-course purposes.
 - For each excursion, you will receive four points for attending.

Course Materials

Readings

Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (available on Amazon, new and used)

All other course material will be online or posted on CTools

Miniseries/Films

White Teeth - Hulu (US); Channel 4 (UK)

This is England

Bend It Like Beckham

Course Evaluation

Attendance and participation (both class and excursions) - 30%

Three written responses (due 5/13; 5/20; 6/3. 300 words each) - 15%
White Teeth Essay (4-5 pages, due 5/27) - 20%
Group Project - (presentations 6/14 and 6/16) - 30%
Final Reflection Letter (2 pages, due 6/24) - 5%
Assignments will be detailed at a later date. All written work is due in your CTools drop box by 5pm on the specified date.

Further Information

- Plagiarism: Plagiarism is academic theft. It is an insult to your fellow students, and myself. For more information about academic dishonesty, see the following link for university policies <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/index.html>
- Accessibility and Accommodations: I am committed to making this course as accessible as possible for all students. If there are ever circumstances that may affect your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. In some cases, you may wish to consult with the university's Services for Students with Disabilities (<http://ssd.umich.edu/>). In all cases, I will treat as private and confidential any information that you share with me.

Course Schedule

Class 1 - May 10

Postwar Race and Immigration

Readings: Ward, "A New Way of Being British"; BBC Windrush Arrivals

Excursion: "Public Panel Debate -- Implications of Brexit for EU Migrants" 3-4:30pm

[Excursion May 11 - Brick Lane]

Class 2 - May 12

Postwar Race and Immigration

Readings: Smith, *White Teeth* - Pt. 1;

<https://hatfulofhistory.wordpress.com/2013/07/03/queue-jumpers-and-turning-back-refugees-the-ugandan-asian-crisis-and-parallels-with-the-present/>;

<https://hatfulofhistory.wordpress.com/2013/07/15/the-etymology-of-queue-jumpers-and-gatecrashers-in-uk-immigration-control-discourse/>

Miniseries: *White Teeth* Episodes 1 <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/white-teeth/on-demand/31903-001>

May 13: CTools Post Due

Class 3 - May 17

Postwar Race and Immigration

Readings: *White Teeth* Pt 2&3

Miniseries: *White Teeth* Episodes 2&3

<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/white-teeth/on-demand/31903-002>

<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/white-teeth/on-demand/31903-003>

Class 4 - May 19

Postwar Race and Immigration

Readings: *White Teeth* Pt. 4

Miniseries: *White Teeth* Episodes 4

<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/white-teeth/on-demand/31903-004>

[Excursion May 20 - Notting Hill]

May 20: Ctools Post Due

Class 5 - May 24

New Racism - The State and Politics

Readings: Gilroy, "The Whisper Wakes, the Shudder Plays"

Film: *This is England*

[Excursion May 25 - Brixton]

Class 6 - May 26

Cultures of Difference - Protest and Activism

Readings: Hall, "Urban Unrest in Britain"; <http://www.urban75.org/brixton/history/riot.html>

May 27: White Teeth Essay due

[Black Cultural Archives]

Class 7 - May 31

Cultures of Difference - Protest and Activism

Readings: Dawson "Love Music, Hate Racism"

Class Visit: British Library (Punk Exhibition)

[Excursion June 1 - Rivington Place]

Class 8 - June 2

Cultures of Difference - Diaspora

Readings: Hall, "The Formation of a Diasporic Intellectual"; Heathcott, "Urban Spaces and Working-Class Expressions across the Black Atlantic"

June 3: CTools Post Due

Class 9 - June 7

Cultures of Difference - Gender and the Family

Readings: Shelina Zahra, Spirit 21 Blog <http://www.spirit21.co.uk/>

Film: *Bend It Like Beckham*

[Excursion June 8 - "Cuttin It" Old Vic Theatre, 7:45pm]

Class 10 - June 9

New Immigrants

Readings: Louise Ryan, "Becoming Polish in London";

Web series: Polish Londoners - www.londonersproject.co.uk

Class 11 - June 14

Studying Belonging Now/Presentations

Readings: TBD

No Excursion

Class 12 - June 16

Presentations

June 24 - Final Reflection Letter due

*****I reserve the right to amend this syllabus*****