The novelist Caryl Phillips once wrote: “For many British people, to accept the idea that their country has a long and complex history of immigration would be to undermine their basic understanding of what it means to be British.” By focusing on imaginative writing by British people of African, Caribbean, and South Asian origin, this seminar investigates the “Blackness” -- and the “Britishness” -- of contemporary British literature. We will discuss the literary qualities of this diverse and growing body of writing, which is too often reduced to documentary status; and we will unsettle established social and literary-historical narratives about the so-called Windrush Generation, exploring how the national and racial label, “Black British,” can have important transnational and transracial implications. By asking how Black British literature is a peculiarly local phenomenon, we will also reveal how it has been shaped by (and continues to shape, in turn) old and new patterns of immigration, political economy, and cultural exchange.

Books
The following books have been ordered from Book Culture, 536 West 112th Street:

- Desani, V. S. All About H. Hatterr (NY Review Books, 2007)
- Emecheta, Buchi. Second Class Citizen (George Braziller, 1983)
- Kureishi, Hanif. The Black Album (Scribner, 1996)
- Philips, Caryl. Foreigners (Vintage, 2008)
- Selvon, Sam. The Lonely Londoners (Longman, 1989)
- Smith, Zadie. White Teeth (Vintage, 2001)

You must complete assigned readings by the day they appear on the syllabus. Readings marked with the parenthetical reference “H” will be made available as handouts.

Courseworks Page
You will receive only one paper copy of this syllabus. To download a replacement, log in to https://courseworks.columbia.edu/ and follow the links for ENGL W3954x. You should also check Courseworks whenever an assigned reading or media source is annotated with the parenthetical reference “C,” which indicates that a text is available for download or streaming.

Grading
Final grades will be decided by your performance on the following assignments, which will all be explained on detailed handouts distributed in class:

- Short seminar paper 15% (3 pages; due on date selected by student)
- Critical analysis paper 30% (10 pages; due 10/15)
- Research casebook 40% (20 pages; due 12/16)
- Class participation 15%

Extensions and Late Papers
Unless you have a medical note or other official documentation (e.g., a letter from an academic advisor), all deadline extensions are given at my discretion and should not be expected. Contact me by email at

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least 24 hours in advance of the due date if you will require an extension.

Late papers will be lowered by one third of a grade (e.g., from “A+” to “A”) for every day (including weekend days) the assignment is late without a proper excuse. Only I can decide what is a “proper excuse.” Once a paper is more than 10 days late, it will be awarded the grade of F. However, you must still submit the paper in order to receive a passing grade for the course.

Attendance
Attendance is mandatory and will be recorded. You should think of coming to class as an assignment you can ace simply by showing up. However, because everyone needs a day off once in a while, you can miss one seminar meeting without affecting your grade. After that, every missed class will reduce your final grade by one third (e.g., from an “A+” to “A”). If you have a good reason for missing class you must supply me with an official note (e.g., from a doctor) in order to be excused.

Class Participation
Although I will sometimes lecture for part of a class period, I also expect you to ask questions, debate one another, and thereby enrich our understanding of the texts we read together. For this reason, I may assign discussion questions or other short assignments designed to stimulate discussion. I will also take note of how prepared you are to join in class discussion. At the end of the semester, I will assign 15% of your final grade on an A-C-F scale that reflects whether you’re a committed, occasional, or neglectful contributor to the everyday workings of our class. If you do not contribute to class discussion, please make sure to show your commitment in other ways—for instance, by attending my office hours, emailing me your thoughts, and being prepared to answer questions when called upon.

Academic Integrity
The faculty of Columbia University have prepared the following statement on Academic Integrity:

The intellectual venture in which we are all engaged requires of faculty and students alike the highest level of personal and academic integrity. As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity.

Scholarship, by its very nature, is an iterative process, with ideas and insights building one upon the other. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars' work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that inform our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited.

In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated. Students failing to meet these responsibilities should anticipate being asked to leave Columbia.

Students suspected of plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity will be subject to the Dean’s Discipline Process. For information about that process and a detailed account of University rules regarding plagiarism, please see: <http://www.college.columbia.edu/bulletin/universitypolicies.php>. For advice on academic integrity and how to avoid it through citing your sources, see: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/>.

Communication
If you have a question you cannot ask in class, please attend my office hours on Monday, 11-1, or
contact me by email (mh2968@columbia.edu) or phone (212-854-6407) to make an appointment.

Respectful Conduct
I am happy to be addressed as “Matt” or “Professor Hart.” When writing to me by email, please begin with a salutation (e.g., “Dear Professor Hart” or “Dear Matt”). Sign all emails with your name, especially if you are writing from a mobile device. Please let me know how you would prefer to be addressed.

Class Calendar

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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| Sept 9 | Lord Kitchener, “London is the Place for Me” (C)  
from Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: the History of Black People in Britain* (H)  
from Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush* (H) |
| 16 | Caryl Phillips, *Foreigners*  
C. L. R. James, “Africans and Afro-Caribbeans” (H)  
Learie Constantie, “Colour Bar” (H) |
| 23 | Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*  
Sukdheva Sandhu, from *London Calling* (H) |
| 30 | Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen*  
Hazel Carby, “White Woman, Listen!” (H) |
| Oct 7 | G. V. Desani, *All About H. Hatterr*  
Eric D. Smith, “Ambiguity at its Best!’: Historicizing *All About H. Hatterr*” (C) |
| 21 | Poetry in performance by John Agard, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Jean “Binta” Breeze, and Lemn Sissay (H & C) |
| 22 | Critical Analysis Paper Due |
Salman Rushdie, “The New Empire Within Britain” and “An Unimportant Fire” (H) |
Homi Bhabha, “How Newness Enters the World” (H) |
| 11 | Hanif Kureishi, *The Black Album*  
from Lisa Appnegesi, et al., *The Rushdie File* (H) |
| 18 | Black Audio Film Collective, *Handsworth Songs*, dir. John Akomfrah (C)  
Stuart Hall, Darcus Howe, and Salman Rushdie, “*The Handsworth Songs Files* Letters” (H) |
| 25 | Thanksgiving Break |
| Dec 2 | Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* |
| 9 | Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*  
Critical Readings on Zadie Smith -- Students’ Choice |
| 16 | Research Casebook Due |