

# ENGL6005 Contemporary Literature (Semester 2)

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## 185 items

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This module is unique in the sense that it takes a very specific and limited timeframe for its focus. We will be studying literary works that have been produced within the last 10 years only, which makes them not only highly relevant to our experience of contemporary life, but also critically untested. We do not know whether these works will stand the test of time and, apart from a few reviews and blogs, we will find very little written about them. This makes the use of our own critical judgement essential. How well do they represent the contemporary world? What voices and forms are they using to innovate in style and content? These works engage with a range of contemporary issues from social justice and tech totalitarianism to the crisis of democracy and climate anxiety.

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## Set texts (8 items)

We will be reading the texts in the following order:

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**Crudo**, by Olivia Laing, 2018

**Book** | Essential

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**Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?: a novel**, by Dave Eggers, 2015

**Book** | Essential

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**Red pill**, by Hari Kunzru, 2021

**Book** | Essential

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**Weather: a novel**, by Jenny Offill, 2021

**Book** | Essential

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**Surge**, by Jay Bernard, 2019

**Book** | Essential

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**Three rooms**, by Jo Hamya, 2022

**Book** | Essential

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**H(a)ppy**, by Nicola Barker, 2017

**Book** | Essential

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**Let them eat chaos**, by Kate Tempest, 2016

**Book** | Essential

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## Weekly schedule (59 items)

Being updated for S2, 2023

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## Week 1. What is the contemporary and how do we write about it? (3 items)

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**00: Lost Futures, in Ghosts of my life: writings on depression, hauntology and lost futures**, by Mark Fisher, 2014

**Book** | **Essential** | Available as print and eBook. We have 2 eBook versions - if you can't access one version, try the other.

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**Neoliberalism and contemporary literary culture**, edited by Mitchum Huehls; Rachel Greenwald Smith, 2017

**Book** | **Essential**

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**Jonathan Coe: can fiction make sense of the news?** - in The Guardian, by Jonathan Coe, 2018-11-03

**Article** | **Essential**

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## Week 2: Olivia Laing, Crudo (2018) (2 items)

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**Crudo**, by Olivia Laing, 2018

**Book** | **Essential**

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## Recommended reading on autofiction (1 items)

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**Autofictional: Approaches, Affordances, Forms**, by Alexandra Effe, 2022

**Book** | Open access eBook. Chapter 'A Cognitive Perspective on Autofictional Writing, Texts, and Reading', by Alexandra Effe and Alison Gibbons, pp. 61-81 covers Olivia Laing's Crudo.

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## Week 3: Contemporary manifestos - How to live in the 21st Century? (12 items)

A selection of contemporary manifestos will be available via Moodle

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## Required reading (5 items)

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**Manifesto, in Violent ignorance: confronting racism and migration control** [Scan available via link], by Hannah Jones, 2021

**Book** | **Essential** | Chapter 7

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**Chapter 1 'Chasm', in New dark age: technology and the end of the future** [Scan available via link], by James Bridle, 2018

**Book** | **Essential**

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Extinction Rebellion, 'Welcome to the Rebellion' (2019) - available on Moodle

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**Living a feminist life**, by Sara Ahmed, 2017

**Book**

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As critical citizens of a global contemporary culture influenced by political, social,

economic and ideological fractures, you have a stake in its formation and you are asked in this assignment to reflect on your personal experience of twenty-first century living. In week 3 you will explore the four manifestos above that offer radical interpretations of contemporary conditions:

For **Assignment 2** (due Week 12) you are asked to write a response to at least ONE of these manifestos - though you may choose to combine elements from more than one.

See your Module Handbook for full details of this assignment.

## Other manifestos (7 items)

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**Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race**, by Reni Eddo-Lodge, 2018

[Book](#) | Available as print and eBook. We have 2 eBook versions - if you can't access one version, try the other.

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**Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race**, by Reni Eddo-Lodge, 2017

[Book](#)

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**How to be an antiracist**, by Ibram X. Kendi, 2019

[Book](#)

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**How to be an antiracist**, by Ibram X. Kendi, 2019

[Book](#)

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**Sense of place and sense of planet: the environmental imagination of the global**, by Ursula K. Heise, 2008

[Book](#)

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**Imagining extinction: the cultural meanings of endangered species**, by Ursula K. Heise, 2016

[Book](#)

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**Planet on fire: a manifesto for the age of environmental breakdown**, by Mathew Lawrence; Laurie Laybourn-Langton, 2021

[Book](#)

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## Week 4: Dave Eggers, *Your Fathers, Where Are They? And the Prophets, Do They Live Forever?* (2014) (6 items)

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**Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?: a novel**, by Dave Eggers, 2015

[Book](#) | Essential

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## Recommended reading on Dave Eggers - *Your Fathers, Where Are They? And the Prophets, Do They Live Forever?* (5 items)

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**An Interview with Dave Eggers and Mimi Lok** - in *Contemporary Literature*, by Sean Bex; Stef Craps, 2015

[Article](#)

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'[N]ew constellations for thinking about normativity': rethinking Judith Butler's 'frame' with reference to Dave Eggers' - in Textual Practice, by Daniel O'Gorman, 2015

[Article](#)

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Typical Eggers: transnationalism and America in Dave Eggers's 'globally-minded' fiction - in Textual Practice, by Bran Nicol, 2019

[Article](#)

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Floods, fortresses and cabin fever: Worlding "Domeland" security in Dave Eggar's Zeitoun and The Circle - in American Literary History, by John Masterson, 2016

[Article](#)

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Dave Eggers's What Is the What: Fictionalizing Trauma in the Era of Misery Lit - in American Literature, by E. Twitchell, 2011

[Article](#) | Article no longer available online

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## Week 5: Hari Kunzru, Red Pill (2019) (9 items)

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Red pill, by Hari Kunzru, 2021

[Book](#)

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Hari Kunzru's Transmission and Global Risk Society - in Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences, by Hatice Övgü Tüzün, 2019

[Article](#)

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The Routledge companion to twenty-first century literary fiction, edited by Daniel O'Gorman; Robert Eaglestone, 2019

[Book](#)

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Hacking the Society of Control: The Fiction of Hari Kunzru - in Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction, by Peter D. Mathews, 2021

[Article](#)

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Literature after globalization: textuality, technology and the nation-state, by Philip Leonard, 2013

[Book](#)

---

British Asian fiction: twenty-first-century voices, by Sara Upstone, 2010

[Book](#)

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An Interview with Hari Kunzru: Networks, Finance Capital and the Fate of the Novel - in Wasafiri, by Max Haiven, 2013

[Article](#)

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Hari Kunzru in conversation - in Wasafiri, by Fredrick Luis Aldama, 2005

[Article](#)

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The Politics of the State in Contemporary Literary Studies - in Literature Compass, by

Matthew Hart, 2009

Article

## Week 7: Jenny Offill, *Weather* (2020) (5 items)

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*Weather: a novel*, by Jenny Offill, 2021

Book

*Contemporary fiction and climate uncertainty: narrating unstable futures*, by Marco Caracciolo, 2022

Book

*Ballad of Unchecked Dread: Weather: A novel by Jenny Offill* - in *Dissent*, by Ismail Muhammad, 2020

Article

*Contemporary Women's Autofiction as Critique of Postfeminist Discourse* - in *Australian Feminist Studies*, by Yanbing Er, 2018

Article

*Jenny Offill's Dept. of Speculation and the Revival of Fragmentary Writing* - in *Miscelanea*, by Wojciech Drag, 2017

Article

## Week 8: Jay Bernard, *Surge* (2019) (4 items)

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*Surge*, by Jay Bernard, 2019

Book | Essential

### Further reading on *Surge* (3 items)

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"For here, we have not an enduring city, but we are looking for the city to come":  
*Dysgraphia of disaster and wayward Black futures in Jay Bernard's *Surge* (2019)* - in  
*Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, by Cathie Kanagavalli Lakshmi Jayakumar-Hazra, 2022

Article

*Inside the Frame: Women Writers and the Windrush Legacy: Interviews with Grace Nichols, Karen McCarthy Woolf and Jay Bernard* - in *Wasafiri*, by Hannah Lowe, 2018

Article

*Grenfell, Race, Remembrance* - in *Wasafiri*, by Claire Launchbury, 2021

Article

## Week 9: Jo Hamya, *Three Rooms* (2021) (6 items)

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*Three rooms*, by Jo Hamya, 2022

Book

**Three Rooms** - in Wasafiri, by Vamika Sinha, 2022

Article

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**Three Rooms by Jo Hamya review - on belonging and inequality** - in The Guardian, by Shahidha Bari, 2021

Article

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**Well Educated, Well Employed, and a Paycheck Away From Disaster** - in The New York Times, by Katie Kitamura, 2021

Article

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**Three Rooms** - in New York Journal of Books, by Ariel Balter

Article

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**Situating Intellectual Freedom in "Three Rooms"** - in Chicago Review of Books, by Clancey D'Isa, 2021

Article

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## **Week 10: Nicola Barker, H(A)PPY (2017) (8 items)**

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**H(a)ppy**, by Nicola Barker, 2017

Book | Essential

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## **Further reading on Nicola Barker - H(A)PPY (7 items)**

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**Interview: Nicola Barker.** - in New Statesman, by India Bourke, 2017

Article

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**War on blandness: review of "H(A)PPY," by Nicola Barker** - in New Statesman, by Kevin Barry, 2017

Article

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**Wellness republic: Review of "H(a)ppy," by Nicola Barker** - in New Statesman, by Leo Robson, 2017

Article

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**Nicola Barker - Literature**

Webpage

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**Nicola Barker: 'I find books about middle-class people so boring - I feel like stabbing myself'** - in Guardian, by Alex Clark, 2017-07-22

Article

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**Darkmans**, by Nicola Barker, 2008

Book

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**Nicola Barker: critical essays**, edited by Berthold Schoene-Harwood, 2020

Book | Includes a chapter on H(A)PPY by Eleanor Byrne

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## Week 11: Kae Tempest, Let Them Eat Chaos (4 items)

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Let them eat chaos, by Kate Tempest, 2016

[Book](#) | Essential

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Kate Tempest: Let Them Eat Chaos review -- a state-of-the-world address - in The Observer , by Alex Clark, Oct 9, 2016

[Article](#) | Optional

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Kae Tempest, London and the digital affects of neoliberalism - in Textual Practice, by George Legg, 2024

[Article](#) | Optional

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Performance, Hybridity and Convergence in the Poetry of Alice Oswald and Kae Tempest - in Sillages critiques, by Juliette Utard; Gwen Le Cor; Bastien Goursaud, 2022

[Article](#) | Optional

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## Secondary sources for your assignments (117 items)

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### 21st Century writing (3 items)

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Twenty-first-century fiction: contemporary British voices, by Daniel Lea, 2016

[Book](#)

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The Routledge companion to twenty-first century literary fiction, edited by Daniel O'Gorman; Robert Eaglestone, 2019

[Book](#) | Covers Hari Kunzru and David Eggers

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Cosmopolitanism in twenty-first century fiction, by Kristian Shaw, 2017

[Book](#)

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### Criticism on Contemporary Writing (30 items)

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What's the use?: on the uses of use, by Sara Ahmed, 2019

[Book](#)

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New historicism and cultural materialism, by John Brannigan, 1998

[Book](#)

---

The Cambridge companion to postmodernism, by Steven Connor, 2004

[Book](#)

---

Reading after theory, by Valentine Cunningham, 2002

[Book](#)

---

Nervous states: how feeling took over the world, by William Davies, 2018

[Book](#)

---

**The digital banal: new media and American literature and culture**, by Zara Dinnen, 2018

Book

---

**After theory**, by Terry Eagleton, 2004

Book

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**Brexit and literature: critical and cultural responses**, edited by Robert Eaglestone, 2018

Book

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**Literature: why it matters**, by Robert Eaglestone, 2019

Book

---

**Conceptualising the global in the wake of the postmodern: literature, culture, theory**, by Joel Evans, 2019

Book

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**The writer's place: interviews on the literary situation in contemporary Britain**, by Peter Edgerly Firchow, 1974 (i.e. 1975)

Book

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**Ireland and postcolonial studies: theory, discourse, utopia**, by Eo

in Flannery, 2009

Book

---

**Cities, citizens, and technologies: urban life and postmodernity**, by Paula Geyh, 2009

Book

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**In a queer time and place: transgender bodies, subcultural lives**, by Judith Halberstam, ©2005

Book

---

**Terrorism and literature**, edited by Peter C. Herman, 2018

Book

---

**A Reader's guide to contemporary feminist literary criticism**, by Maggie Humm, 1994

Book

---

**Hypertext: the convergence of contemporary critical theory and technology**, by George P. Landow, c1992

Book

---

**Posting the male: masculinities in post-war and contemporary British literature**, by Daniel Lea; Berthold Schoene-Harwood, 2003

Book

---

**Feminist postcolonial theory: a reader**, by Reina Lewis; Sara Mills, c2003

Book

---

**Contemporary Irish literature: transforming tradition**, by Christina Hunt Mahony, 1998

Book

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**Rewriting Scotland: Welsh, McLean, Warner, Banks, Galloway, and Kennedy**, by Cristie L. March, c2002

Book

---

**Necropolitics**, by Achille Mbembe; Steve Corcoran, 2019

Book

---

**Feminism's queer temporalities**, by Sam McBean, 2017

Book

---

**Post-theory: new directions in criticism**, by Martin McQuillan, c1999

Book

---

**Being ecological**, by Timothy Morton, 2018

Book

---

**Key concepts in contemporary literature**, by Steve Padley, 2006

Book

---

**Contemporary lesbian writing: dreams, desire, difference**, by Paulina Palmer, 1993

Book

---

**Contemporary British women writers**, by Emma Parker, 2004

Book

---

**Do you feel it too?: the post-postmodern syndrome in American fiction at the turn of the millennium**, by Nicoline Timmer, 2010

Book

---

**Contemporary American women writers: gender, class, ethnicity**, by Lois Parkinson Zamora, 1998

Book

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## **Criticism on contemporary fiction** (51 items)

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**The contemporary British novel**, by James Acheson; Sarah C. E. Ross, 2005

Book

---

**Contemporary women's fiction and the fantastic**, by Lucie Armitt, 2000

Book

---

**The situation of the novel**, by Bernard Bergonzi, 1970

Book

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**The situation of the novel**, by Bernard Bergonzi, 1972

Book

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**The modern British novel**, by Malcolm Bradbury, 1993

Book

---

**The contemporary English novel**, by Malcolm Bradbury; D. J. Palmer, 1979

Book

---

**The Novel today: contemporary writers on modern fiction**, by Malcolm Bradbury, 1977

Book

---

**Orwell to the present: literature in England, 1945-2000**, by John Brannigan, 2003

Book

---

**The novel now: a student's guide to contemporary fiction**, by Anthony Burgess, 1971

Book

---

**The English novel in history, 1950-1995**, by Steven Connor, 1996

Book

---

**The unresolvable plot: reading contemporary fiction**, by Elizabeth Dipple, 1988

Book

---

**Sisters and strangers: an introduction to contemporary feminist fiction**, by Patricia Duncker, 1992

Book

---

**Utopia and the contemporary British novel**, by Caroline Edwards, 2019

Book

---

**A concise companion to contemporary British fiction**, by James F. English, 2006

Book

---

**Class fictions: shame and resistance in the British working-class novel, 1890-1945**, by Pamela Fox, 1994

Book

---

**The Cambridge introduction to modern British fiction, 1950-2000**, by Dominic Head, 2002

Book

---

**Discrepant solace: contemporary literature and the work of consolation**, by David James, 2019

Book

---

**Writing women: contemporary women novelists**, by Olga Kenyon, 1991

Book

---

**Cool characters: irony and American fiction**, by Lee Konstantinou, 2016

Book

---

**Writing spatiality in West Africa: colonial legacies in the Anglophone/Francophone novel**, by Madhu Krishnan, 2018, ©2018

Book

---

**Contemporary British fiction**, by Richard J. Lane; Rod Mengham; Philip Tew, 2003

Book

---

**Twenty-first-century fiction: contemporary British voices**, by Daniel Lea, 2016

Book

---

**On modern British fiction**, by Zachary Leader, 2002

Book

---

**Other Britain, other British: contemporary multicultural fiction**, by A. Robert Lee, 1995

Book

---

**Everything and less: the novel in the age of Amazon**, by Mark McGurl, 2021

Book

---

**The survival of the novel: British fiction in the later twentieth century**, by Neil McEwan, 1981

Book

---

**An introduction to contemporary fiction: international writing in English since 1970**, by Rod Mengham, 1999

Book

---

**Contemporary British & Irish fiction: an introduction through interviews**, by Sharon Monteith; Jenny Newman; Pat Wheeler, 2004

Book

---

**Islamophobia and the novel**, by Peter Morey, 2018

Book

---

**Old lines, new forces: essays on the contemporary British novel, 1960-1970**, by Robert K. Morris, 1976

Book

---

**Contemporary fiction**, by Jago Morrison, 2003

Book

---

**Postmodernism and the contemporary novel: a reader**, by Bran Nicol, c2002

Book

---

**Fictions of the war on terror: difference and the transnational 9/11 novel**, by Daniel O'Gorman, 2015

Book

---

**The Routledge companion to twenty-first century literary fiction**, edited by Daniel O'Gorman; Robert Eaglestone, 2019

Book

---

**Contemporary women's fiction: narrative practice and feminist theory**, by Paulina Palmer, 1989

Book

---

**The failure of theory: essays on criticism and contemporary fiction**, by Patrick Parrinder, 1987

Book

---

**Popular fiction and social change**, by Christopher Pawling, 1984

Book

---

**Contemporary Scottish fictions: film, television and the novel**, by Duncan J. Petrie, 2004

Book

---

**Brave new causes: women in British postwar fictions**, by Deborah Philips; Ian Haywood, 1998

Book

---

**Contemporary British novelists**, by Nick Rennison, 2005

Book | Covers Nicola Barker

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**Jeanette Winterson: the essential guide to contemporary literature : Oranges are not the only fruit, The passion, Sexing the cherry, The powerbook**, by Reynolds, Margaret; Noakes, Jonathan, 2003

Book

---

**Women in the house of fiction: post-war women novelists**, by Lorna Sage, 1992

Book

---

**A companion to the British and Irish novel 1945-2000**, by Brian W. Shaffer, 2005

Book

---

**Cosmopolitanism in twenty-first century fiction**, by Kristian Shaw, 2017

Book

---

**Contemporary women novelists: a collection of critical essays**, by Patricia Meyer Spacks, 1977

Book

---

**The Booker Prize and the legacy of empire**, by Luke Strongman, 2002

Book

---

**Bestsellers: popular fiction of the 1970s**, by John Sutherland, 1981

Book

---

**The contemporary British novel**, by Philip Tew, 2004

Book

---

**The Scottish novel since the seventies: new visions, old dreams**, by Gavin Wallace; Randall Stevenson, 1993

Book

---

**Feminine fictions: revisiting the postmodern**, by Patricia Waugh, 1989

Book

---

**Allegories of telling: self-referential narrative in contemporary British fiction**, by Lynn Wells, 2003

Book

## Criticism on contemporary drama (2 items)

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**Feminist views on the English stage: women playwrights, 1990-2000**, by Elaine Aston, 2003

Book

---

**Contemporary Irish drama and cultural identity**, by Margaret Llewellyn-Jones, 2002

Book

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## Criticism on contemporary poetry (31 items)

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**Contemporary British poetry: essays in theory and criticism**, by James Acheson; Romana Huk, 1996

Book

---

**Contemporary British poetry and the city**, by Peter Barry, 2000

Book

---

**The Politics of poetic form: poetry and public policy**, by Charles Bernstein, c1990

Book

---

**Gendering poetry: contemporary women and men poets**, by Vicki Bertram, 2005

Book

---

**British poetry 1964-1984: driving through the barricades**, by Martin Booth, 1985

Book

---

**Contemporary poetry: poets and poetry since 1990**, by Ian Brinton, 2009

Book

---

**Contemporary British and Irish poetry: an introduction**, by Sarah Broom, 2006

Book

---

**Binary myths: conversations with contemporary poets**, by Andy Brown, 1998

Book

---

**British poetry from the 1950s to the 1990s: politics and art**, by Gary Day; Brian Doherty, 1997

Book

---

**Contemporary poetry meets modern theory**, by Antony Easthope; John O. Thompson, 1991

Book

---

**Poetry in the mind: the cognition of contemporary poetic style**, by Joanna Gavins, 2021

Book

---

**American poetry of the twentieth century**, by Richard Gray, 1976

Book

---

**Contemporary poetry and postmodernism: dialogue and estrangement**, by Ian Gregson, 1996

Book

---

**The New British poetries: the scope of the possible**, by Robert Hampson; Peter Barry, c1993

Book

---

**Postmodern American poetry: a Norton anthology**, by Paul Hoover, c1994

Book

---

**Contemporary poems: some critical approaches**, by Peter Sansom; Lesley Jeffries, 2000

Book

---

**British poetry since 1970: a critical survey**, by Peter Jones; Michael Schmidt, 1980

Book

---

**Reading twentieth century poetry: the language of gender and objects**, by Edward Larrissy, 1990

Book

---

**Modern poetry after modernism**, by James Longenbach, 1997

Book

---

**Poetry in the British Isles: non-metropolitan perspectives**, by Hans-Werner Ludwig; Lothar Fietz, 1995

Book

---

**Escape from the self: a study in contemporary American poetry and poetics**, by Karl Malkoff, 1977

Book

---

**Contemporary women's poetry: reading/writing/practice**, by Deryn Rees-Jones; Alison Mark, 2000

Book

---

**Passing judgements: poetry in the eighties**, by John Mole, 1989

Book

---

**The deregulated muse: essays on contemporary British & Irish poetry**, by Sean O'Brien, 1995

Book

---

**Radical artifice: writing poetry in the age of media**, by Marjorie Perloff, 1991

Book

---

**Outcasts from Eden: ideas of landscape in British poetry since 1945**, by Edward Picot, 1997

Book

---

**The situation of poetry: contemporary poetry and its traditions**, by Robert Pinsky, c1976

Book

---

**Instabilities in contemporary British poetry**, by Alan Robinson, 1988

Book

---

**New women poets**, by Carol Rumens, 1990

Book

---

**American poetry since 1960: some critical perspectives**, by Robert B. Shaw, 1973

Book

---

**Poetry and the Anthropocene: ecology, biology and technology in contemporary British and Irish poetry**, by Sam Solnick, 2018

Book