**NYCTC7 – teaching proposal**

**‘There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack’?**

**Race and racism in Twentieth-Century Britain**

**Dr Kieran Connell**

Race and immigration have been contentious subjects in Britain for well over a century. From the ‘race riots’ of 1919 to the vote to leave the European Union in 2016, they have been at the centre of political debate in multi-faceted ways. This module seeks to place such debates in their historical context by tracing the growing black and Asian presence in Britain over the course of the twentieth century. Drawing on political, social and cultural history, and on a diverse body of primary sources ranging from photography and film to reggae and *bhangra* music, the module unpicks the factors that drove immigration from the Caribbean, South Asia and Africa, the changing attitude of the British state, the impact of different kinds of racism, as well as the political responses of black and Asian immigrants and their descendants. It will also explore the cultural practices that helped shape what would become known as multicultural Britain – from the arrival in the 1970s of a black-British reggae scene to the subsequent work of black and Asian filmmakers and novelists. Finally, the module ends with a discussion of the contemporary situation and present-day attitudes towards race, immigration and multiculturalism in Britain. In adopting an interdisciplinary approach that also encompasses cultural studies, sociology and film studies, the module offers students the chance to conduct an in-depth exploration of the emergence of the multicultural Britain we know today.

Seminar themes

WEEK 1: Introduction: sources, methodology and key questions

WEEK 2: ‘The fact of blackness’: what is ‘race’?

WEEK 3: The imperial context

WEEK 4: The First World War and the Race Riots of 1919

WEEK 5: The interwar black presence: black London and beyond

WEEK 6: Race and the Second World War

WEEK 7: ‘Dark Strangers’: the *Windrush* generation

WEEK 8: Labour and Race Relations

WEEK 9: Powellism and ‘Rivers of Blood’

WEEK 10: *Love thy Neighbour*:Race and popular culture

WEEK 11: Black Power

WEEK 12: South-Asian politics: Indian Workers’ Associations & Asian Youth Movements

WEEK 13: Britain’s Far Right

WEEK 14: Race and the politics of Thatcherism

WEEK 15: Urban unrest

WEEK 16: Reggae, Rastafarianism and the Birth of British *Bhangra*

WEEK 17: Film

WEEK 18: Literature: from Samuel Selvon to Zadie Smith

WEEK 19: The Stephen Lawrence and Mark Duggan affairs

WEEK 20: The state we’re in – Brexit and beyond

Assessment

This module will be assessed as follows:

* 5,000 word essay (60%). The essay should include both secondary *and* primary material. Questions may include:
  1. How relevant was Britain’s imperial status to post-war immigration?
  2. Assess the political impact of Enoch Powell’s ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech.
  3. How important was the concept of diaspora to Britain’s emerging reggae and *bhangra* musicians?
* Oral exam (30%). Students are required to identify one primary source and be prepared to explain what it tells us about one of the themes covered on the moduke. This should *not* be a source that we have already covered in class. In addition to this, students will also be asked a general question that relates to their overall understanding of the period. The exam will be approximately 10 minutes in length.
* Seminar contributions (10%). This mark is assessed according to how well students have participated in seminars throughout the module (the extent and quality of contribution), not for attendance only.

Electronic resources

The following websites have relevant primary material that will be of use to students across the module:

* *Tandana*, archive of Britain’s Asian Youth Movements: <http://www.tandana.org/>
* Warwick Modern Records Centre, race & racism collection: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/studying/docs/racism/windrush/>
* The British Cartoon Archive: <https://www.cartoons.ac.uk/>
* Birmingham Black Oral History Project: <http://www.bbohp.org.uk/>
* Media Archive of Central England: <http://www.macearchive.org/>