

small island andrea levy notes

Small Island Andrea Levy Notes: Exploring Themes, Characters, and Historical Context

small island andrea levy notes can serve as a valuable resource for students, book clubs, or anyone interested in understanding the rich layers within Andrea Levy's acclaimed novel, **Small Island**. This powerful work delves into post-war Britain, immigration, identity, and the complexities of human relationships, making it an essential read for exploring the British-Caribbean experience. Whether you're preparing for an exam or simply want to deepen your appreciation, these notes will guide you through the novel's key aspects.

Understanding the Context of Small Island by Andrea Levy

Before diving into the characters and themes, it's important to grasp the historical backdrop against which **Small Island** is set. The novel primarily takes place in the years following World War II, a period marked by significant social and political changes in Britain.

The Windrush Generation and Post-War Immigration

Small Island shines a spotlight on the Windrush generation—Caribbean immigrants who arrived in the UK in the late 1940s and 1950s. Andrea Levy's narrative captures the hopes and harsh realities faced by these immigrants, who were invited to Britain to help rebuild the country but often met with hostility and discrimination.

Understanding this context is crucial to appreciating the novel's exploration of race relations, belonging, and identity. The historical setting not only frames the characters' struggles but also enriches the narrative by highlighting the social tensions of the era.

Key Characters and Their Perspectives

One of the distinctive features of *Small Island* is its multiple narrators. Andrea Levy uses four main characters' perspectives to weave a multifaceted story that reflects different experiences and viewpoints.

Hortense and Gilbert – The Jamaican Immigrants

Hortense and Gilbert are newlyweds from Jamaica who journey to England, full of hope for a better life. Hortense is ambitious and dreams of becoming a teacher, while Gilbert, a World War II veteran, seeks recognition and respect in a society that often marginalizes him.

Their experiences shed light on the immigrant struggle: the clash between expectations and reality, and the resilience required to navigate a foreign land that is not always welcoming.

Queenie and Bernard – The British Hosts

Queenie and Bernard represent different facets of British society. Queenie, a kind-hearted Englishwoman, faces her own challenges as a single mother during wartime. Bernard, her husband, embodies the entrenched prejudices and class consciousness prevalent in British society at the time.

The interactions between the Jamaican couple and the British couple reveal the complexities of post-war Britain, where social divides and racial tensions influence personal relationships.

Exploring Major Themes in *Small Island* Andrea Levy Notes

When studying **Small Island**, focusing on its major themes can help uncover the novel's deeper meanings and social commentary.

Identity and Belonging

A central theme in **Small Island** is the search for identity and a sense of belonging. The characters grapple with their cultural heritage and the pressures to assimilate into British society. Gilbert's struggle with racism and Hortense's desire to maintain her dignity highlight the tension between preserving one's roots and adapting to a new environment.

This theme resonates strongly with readers interested in issues of multiculturalism and diaspora, making the novel relevant beyond its historical setting.

Race and Prejudice

Andrea Levy does not shy away from depicting the harsh realities of racial prejudice in 1940s Britain. Through the characters' experiences, **Small Island** exposes systemic racism and personal biases.

Queenie's initial naivety about racial issues contrasts with Bernard's more overt racism, illustrating different attitudes within British society. This exploration encourages readers to reflect on the legacy of racial discrimination and the ongoing challenges faced by minority communities.

War and Its Aftermath

The impact of World War II is deeply felt throughout the novel. Gilbert's service in the Royal Air Force and the disruption caused by the war highlight themes of sacrifice, loss, and change.

The war serves as both a backdrop and catalyst for the characters' journeys. It disrupts social norms and opens up new possibilities, yet also exposes inequalities and injustices that persist in peacetime.

Literary Techniques and Narrative Structure

Andrea Levy employs a range of literary techniques that enrich **Small Island** and make it a compelling read.

Multiple Narrators and Perspectives

By telling the story through four different narrators, Levy offers a multi-dimensional view of events. This technique allows readers to understand the complexities of each character's motivations and challenges, fostering empathy and a broader understanding of the social dynamics at play.

Use of Language and Dialect

Levy skillfully uses language to reflect cultural identities. The shift between Jamaican patois and British English highlights the characters' backgrounds and the cultural intersections they navigate. This linguistic variety adds authenticity and depth to the narrative.

Symbolism and Imagery

Throughout **Small Island**, Levy uses symbols such as the "small island" itself, representing both Jamaica and the idea of home, to convey themes of displacement and longing. Vivid imagery brings to life the contrast between the lush Caribbean and the often grey, cold Britain, enhancing the emotional impact of the story.

Tips for Writing Essays or Analyzing *Small Island* Andrea Levy

Notes

If you're preparing to write about *Small Island*, whether for an essay, presentation, or discussion, here are some helpful strategies:

- **Focus on Character Development:** Track how characters change in response to their experiences and how their perspectives reveal broader social issues.
- **Discuss Social and Historical Context:** Link events in the novel to the real historical background of post-war immigration and race relations in Britain.
- **Analyze Themes Deeply:** Go beyond surface-level observations to explore how themes like identity and prejudice are intertwined and affect the characters' lives.
- **Use Quotations Effectively:** Incorporate key quotes that demonstrate the novel's tone, themes, or character insights, and explain their significance.
- **Compare Narrators:** Examine how each narrator's voice and viewpoint contribute to the overall narrative and reader understanding.

Why *Small Island* Remains Relevant Today

Andrea Levy's *Small Island* continues to resonate because it addresses universal themes of migration, cultural identity, and social justice. In an increasingly globalized world, the stories of people crossing borders and seeking belonging remain vital.

Moreover, the novel invites readers to confront uncomfortable truths about racism and inequality, encouraging ongoing dialogue about inclusion and empathy. By engaging with **Small Island**, readers gain insight into a pivotal moment in British history and the enduring human stories behind it.

Exploring small island andrea levy notes not only enhances your comprehension of the novel but also opens a window into broader conversations about history, identity, and compassion. Whether you're studying it academically or reading for pleasure, Andrea Levy's **Small Island** offers a rich, thought-provoking journey.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main themes explored in Andrea Levy's 'Small Island' notes?

The main themes in Andrea Levy's 'Small Island' include immigration, identity, racism, love, and the complexities of post-war British society.

How do Andrea Levy's notes help in understanding the characters in 'Small Island'?

Andrea Levy's notes provide insights into the backgrounds, motivations, and development of characters, revealing their struggles and perspectives, which enriches the reader's understanding of their actions and relationships.

What historical context is important to consider based on Andrea Levy's 'Small Island' notes?

Levy's notes emphasize the significance of the Windrush generation, post-World War II Britain, and the racial tensions of the time, which are critical to comprehending the novel's setting and conflicts.

How does Andrea Levy address the theme of identity in 'Small Island' according to her notes?

Levy explores identity as multifaceted and fluid, especially for Jamaican immigrants in Britain, highlighting issues of belonging, cultural conflict, and self-perception through her characters and narrative.

What narrative techniques are highlighted in Andrea Levy's notes on 'Small Island'?

Levy uses multiple perspectives, shifting points of view, and interwoven storylines to present diverse experiences and viewpoints, allowing a nuanced exploration of themes like race, migration, and history.

Additional Resources

Small Island Andrea Levy Notes: A Detailed Exploration of Themes, Characters, and Historical Context

small island andrea levy notes offer an insightful window into one of the most impactful novels of contemporary British literature. Andrea Levy's *Small Island*, published in 2004, is a profound exploration of post-war Britain, immigration, identity, and the lingering complexities of colonial history. This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the novel through carefully curated notes and reflections, designed to enrich understanding for students, educators, and literary enthusiasts alike.

In-depth Analysis of Small Island by Andrea Levy

Andrea Levy's *Small Island* is a multi-layered narrative that weaves together the experiences of four main characters against the backdrop of the Windrush generation and the aftermath of World War II. The novel's structure, historical setting, and thematic concerns make it a rich subject for literary

analysis.

Historical and Social Context

Set primarily in 1948 London, *Small Island* captures a pivotal moment in British history when immigrants from Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean arrived to rebuild post-war Britain. This influx, often referred to as the “Windrush generation,” is central to the novel’s plot and themes. Levy meticulously portrays the challenges faced by these immigrants: racial prejudice, social exclusion, and the harsh realities of life in a country that promised opportunity but often delivered hardship.

The historical context is essential for understanding the motivations of characters such as Hortense and Gilbert, who leave Jamaica in search of better prospects, and Queenie, a white Englishwoman who navigates her own struggles amid social change. The novel exposes the contradictions of British imperialism, where colonized subjects are both welcomed and rejected by the “motherland.”

Character Perspectives and Narrative Structure

Small Island employs a distinctive multi-perspective narrative style, alternating between four voices: Hortense, Gilbert, Queenie, and Bernard. This approach allows Levy to delve into the complexities of each character’s experience, providing a rounded and nuanced portrayal.

- **Hortense**: A proud Jamaican schoolteacher whose expectations of England are shaped by colonial ideals and a desire for respectability.
- **Gilbert**: Hortense’s husband, a World War II veteran whose experiences reveal the paradoxes of fighting for a country that discriminates against him.
- **Queenie**: A white English woman whose kindness contrasts with social prejudices, yet whose naivety also highlights the ingrained biases of the time.
- **Bernard**: Queenie’s husband, whose attitudes embody the entrenched racism and cynicism of post-war Britain.

This polyphonic structure enriches the reader's understanding of the era and the emotional landscapes of the characters. The interplay of perspectives also challenges simplistic interpretations of race and identity.

Thematic Exploration in *Small Island*

Immigration and Identity

A core theme explored in *Small Island* by Andrea Levy is the negotiation of identity amidst displacement and cultural dislocation. Hortense and Gilbert's migration to England illustrates the clash between expectations and reality. They grapple with the loss of status and the struggle to maintain a sense of self in an environment that is often hostile.

Levy's portrayal is neither romanticized nor one-dimensional; instead, it acknowledges the resilience and agency of immigrants while unflinchingly depicting the racism and exclusion they face. This theme remains relevant to contemporary discussions around immigration and multiculturalism in Britain.

Race and Prejudice

Racial discrimination permeates the narrative, shaping characters' experiences and interactions. The novel exposes the systemic racism embedded in British society, from housing restrictions to employment barriers. Hortense's dignified endurance contrasts with the overt hostility experienced by Gilbert, highlighting different facets of racial prejudice.

The juxtaposition of Queenie's relatively sympathetic stance with Bernard's overt racism illustrates the spectrum of attitudes within British society. Levy uses these dynamics to critique the hypocrisy of a nation that prides itself on fairness yet practices exclusion.

Post-war Britain and Social Change

Small Island situates personal stories within the broader context of a country recovering from the devastation of World War II. The war acts as a catalyst for social transformation, yet also exposes deep-seated inequalities. Through the characters' wartime and post-war experiences, Levy interrogates the promises of a "land fit for heroes" and reveals the complexities beneath.

The novel's depiction of bombed-out London, rationing, and housing shortages creates an authentic atmosphere that grounds the narrative in historical reality. This backdrop enriches the exploration of hope, disillusionment, and survival.

Literary Devices and Style

Andrea Levy's writing in Small Island is characterized by evocative imagery, authentic dialogue, and a balanced narrative pace. Her use of multiple narrators allows for a rich, layered storytelling that avoids didacticism.

Symbolism and Motifs

- **The Island**: Symbolizes both home and exile, representing Jamaica as the place of origin and England as the land of aspiration and alienation.
- **War and Military Service**: Reflect themes of loyalty, sacrifice, and betrayal, especially for Black veterans like Gilbert.
- **Housing and Space**: The scarcity and quality of housing serve as metaphors for social inclusion and exclusion.

Pros and Cons of the Narrative Approach

- **Pros:** Multiple perspectives offer complexity and empathy, providing a rounded view of historical and social issues.
- **Cons:** The shifting viewpoints can challenge some readers' engagement or continuity of narrative flow.

Applications of Small Island Andrea Levy Notes in Education

These notes serve as valuable resources for GCSE and A-level literature students studying *Small Island*. They aid in understanding key themes, character development, and historical context, which are crucial for essay writing and exam preparation.

Educators often use such notes to prompt critical discussions about post-colonial literature, race relations, and British history. The novel's accessibility and emotional depth make it a significant work for exploring multicultural Britain.

Comparison with Other Post-colonial Novels

Small Island shares thematic concerns with novels like Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* and Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*. However, Levy's focus on the Windrush generation offers a unique perspective on migration and identity.

These comparisons deepen readers' appreciation of the post-colonial experience and the diverse

voices that shape British literature.

Small Island by Andrea Levy remains an essential text for understanding Britain's complex history of race, migration, and identity. The notes and analyses surrounding the novel facilitate a deeper engagement with its themes, characters, and historical significance, ensuring its continued relevance in literary study and cultural discourse.

Small Island Andrea Levy Notes

small island andrea levy notes: *Andrea Levy* Jeannette Baxter, David James, 2014-03-13
Andrea Levy has emerged as one of the most significant and popular voices in contemporary black British writing both in the UK and abroad. Drawing on a familial history of emigration, her critically-acclaimed novels - including the multiple award-winning *Small Island* - attempt to bring a variety of voices to the representation of black experience in post-war Britain. This book is the first of its kind to be devoted to Levy's work. Combining historical, theoretical and textual perspectives, the volume hosts a wide range of current critical approaches to Levy's fiction. With chapters written by leading established and emerging scholars, the book explores issues of literary form, diasporic literature and cultural value, the BBC TV adaptation of *Small Island*, while also shedding fresh light on Levy's critically neglected early works. The book also includes a new interview with Levy herself, a timeline of her life, chapter summaries, as well as guides to further reading and online resources, making this an essential companion to the writings of one of the most exciting voices in contemporary fiction.

small island andrea levy notes: *Small Island* Andrea Levy, 2004 It is 1948 in an England still shaken by war. At 21 Nevern Street, London, Queenie Bligh takes into her house lodgers who have recently arrived from Jamaica. What else could she do when her husband, Bernard, never returned from his RAF wartime posting to India? Among her tenants are Gilbert and his new wife Hortense. Gilbert Joseph was one of the several thousand Jamaican men who joined the RAF to fight against Hitler. Returning to England after the war he finds himself treated very differently now that he is no longer in a blue uniform. Desperation makes him remember a wartime friendship with Queenie and knock at her door. Hortense shared Gilbert's dream of leaving Jamaica and coming to England to start a better life. But when she at last joins her husband, she is shocked by London's shabbiness and horrified at the way the English live. Even Gilbert is not the man she thought he was. Queenie's neighbours do not approve of her choice of tenants, and neither would her husband, were he there. Through the stories of these people, *SMALL ISLAND* explores a point in England's past when the country began to change.

small island andrea levy notes: *İngiliz Kültür Tarihi ve İncelemeleri* Zeynep Z. ATAYURT FENGGE, 2024-09-20

small island andrea levy notes: *Make-Believe* David Dickinson, 2020-01-01 'I will tell you a story that will make you believe in God.' No story can guarantee being able to do this. Yet novelists can tell stories that make us think about what we believe about God and why. Despite repeated predictions of the death of the novel, thousands of works of fiction are published and read in Britain each year. Although Western society is less religiously observant than it was, many 21st-century novelists persist in pursuing theological, religious and spiritual themes. *Make-Believe* seeks to explain why. With chapters offering analyses of novels from several genres - so-called literary

fiction, historical fiction, science fiction, fantasy and dystopia – David Dickinson discusses a wide spectrum of novelists. Both those who are avowedly atheistic and those who have a vested interest in perpetuating biblical stories feature. Well-known writers such as Rushdie, McEwan, McCarthy and Martell rub shoulders with some you may be meeting for the first time. Appealing to literature students and people who simply enjoy reading, whether Christian or not, this study of God in novels invites us to open our minds and allow aspects of our culture to shape our understanding of God and to change our ways of talking about the divine.

small island andrea levy notes: The Multimedia Encyclopedia of Women in Today's World Mary Zeiss Stange, Carol K. Oyster, Jane E. Sloan, 2013-01-09 This e-only volume expands and updates the original 4-volume Encyclopedia of Women in Today's World (2011), offering a wide range of new entries and new multimedia content. The entries reflect such developments as the Arab Spring that brought women's issues in the Islamic world into sharp relief, the domination of female athletes among medal winners at the London 2012 Olympics, nine more women joining the ranks of democratically elected heads of state, and much more. The 475 articles in this e-only update (accompanied by photos and video clips) supplement the themes established in the original edition, providing a vibrant collection of entries dealing with contemporary women's issues around the world.

small island andrea levy notes: The Post-War British Literature Handbook Katharine Cockin, Jago Morrison, 2010-02-10 The Post-War British Literature Handbook is an accessible and comprehensive introduction to literature and culture in post-war Britain. It provides a one-stop resource for students with the essential information and guidance needed from the beginning of a course through to developing more advanced knowledge and skills.

small island andrea levy notes: Racializing the Soldier Gavin Schaffer, 2016-05-23 Racializing the Soldier explores the impact of racial beliefs on the formation and development of modern armed forces and the ways in which these forces have been presented and historicized from a global perspective. With a wide geographical and temporal spread, the collection looks at the disparate ways that race has influenced military development. In particular, it explores the extent to which ideas of racial hierarchy and type have conditioned thinking about what kinds of soldiers should be used and in what roles. This volume offers a highly original military, social and cultural history, questioning the borders both of racialization and of the military itself. It considers the extent to which discourses of gender, nationality and religion have informed racialization, and probes the influence of expert studies of soldiers as indicators of national population types. By focusing mostly, but not exclusively, on colonial and post-colonial states, the book considers how racialized militaries both shaped and reflected conflict in the modern world, ultimately explaining how the history of this idea has often underpinned modern military planning and thinking. This book is based on a special issue of Patterns of Prejudice.

small island andrea levy notes: Pragmatic Perspectives on Postcolonial Discourse Christoph Schubert, Laurenz Volkmann, 2016-06-22 In sociolinguistic research on Englishes world-wide, little has been published on the pragmatics of postcolonial varieties. This interdisciplinary volume closes this research gap by providing integrative investigations of postcolonial discourses, probing the interstices between linguistic methodologies and literary text analysis. The literary texts under discussion are conceptualized as media both reflecting and creating reality, so that they provide valuable insights into postcolonial discourse phenomena. The contributions deal with the issue of how postcolonial Englishes, such as those spoken in India, Nigeria, South Africa and the Caribbean, have produced different pragmatic conventions in a complex interplay of culture-specific and global linguistic practices. They show the ways in which hybrid communicative situations based on ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity result in similarly hybrid social and communicative routines. The central pragmatic paradigms discussed here include im/politeness, speech act conventions, conversational maxims, deixis, humour, code-switching and -mixing, Othering, and linguistic exclusion.

small island andrea levy notes: Global Black Narratives for the Classroom: Britain and Europe

BLAM UK, 2024-01-26 Rather than reserving the teaching of Black history to Black history month, Black narratives deserve to be seen and integrated into every aspect of the school curriculum. A unique yet practical resource, *Global Black Narratives* addresses this issue by providing primary teachers with a global outline of Black history, culture and life within the framework of the UK's National Curriculum. Each topic explored in this essential book provides teachers and teaching assistants with historical, geographic and cultural context to build confidence when planning and teaching. Full lesson plans and printable worksheets are incorporated into each topic, alongside tips to build future lessons in line with the themes explored. Part 1 examines Black Britain, a term used to refer to African and Caribbean immigrants to the United Kingdom and their descendants. Teachers will gain essential contextual knowledge and the practical skills to deliver lessons exploring many examples of Black Britain, dating as far back as the Tudor period. Detailed lesson plans are provided on numerous activist groups and figures who make up the Black British civil rights movement including Claudia Jones, Harold Moody, Stuart Hall, Amy Ashwood The West African Students Union, the Bristol bus boycott and resistance groups from the 1960s to 1980s. Many of the lesson plans also concern music and wider arts and culture. Part 2 explores Black Presence in Europe, providing focused examples of Black narratives. Topics explored include Negritude, Josephine Baker, Afro-Spaniards and the Moorish occupation of Spain, Afro-Surinamese people in the Netherlands and Black presence in France. Created by BLAM UK, this highly informative yet practical resource is an essential read for any teacher, teaching assistant or senior leader who wishes to diversify their curriculum and address issues of Black representation within their school. It is published in two practical and comprehensive volumes. Volume 1 covers Britain and Europe, whilst Volume 2 includes Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean. Each volume can be used individually for teaching but when used together they provide a truly global perspective on black history and culture.

small island andrea levy notes: Contemporary British Novel Since 2000 James Acheson, 2017-01-17 Focuses on the novels published since 2000 by twenty major British novelists. The *Contemporary British Novel Since 2000* is divided into five parts, with the first part examining the work of four particularly well-known and highly regarded twenty-first century writers: Ian McEwan, David Mitchell, Hilary Mantel and Zadie Smith. It is with reference to each of these novelists in turn that the terms *arealist*, *apostmodernist*, *ahistorical* and *apostcolonialist* fiction are introduced, while in the remaining four parts, other novelists are discussed and the meaning of the terms amplified. From the start it is emphasised that these terms and others often mean different things to different novelists, and that the complexity of their novels often obliges us to discuss their work with reference to more than one of the terms. Also discusses the works of: Maggie O'Farrell, Sarah Hall, A.L. Kennedy, Alan Warner, Ali Smith, Kazuo Ishiguro, Kate Atkinson, Salman Rushdie, Adam Foulds, Sarah Waters, James Robertson, Mohsin Hamid, Andrea Levy, and Aminatta Forna.

small island andrea levy notes: *Notes wydawniczy* , 2005

small island andrea levy notes: *Narratives of Difference in Globalized Cultures* Belén Martín-Lucas, Andrea Ruthven, 2017-12-07 This book is about how the marketing of transnational cultural commodities capitalizes on difference and its appeal for cosmopolitan consumers in our postmodern globalized world. At what price? What ethical and political conundrums does the artist/writer/reader confront when going global? This volume analyzes why difference - whether gender, sexual, racial, ethnic, or linguistic - has become such a prominent element in the contemporary cultural field, and the effects of this prevalence on the production, circulation and reception of cultural commodities in the context of globalization. At the intersection of globalization, diaspora, postcolonial and feminist studies in world literature, these essays engage critically with a wide variety of representative narratives taken from diverse cultural fields, including humanitarian fiction, multilingual poetry, painting, text-image art, performance art, film, documentary, and docu-poetry. The chapters included offer counter-readings that disrupt hegemonic representations of cultural identity within the contemporary, neoliberal and globalized landscape.

small island andrea levy notes: A Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Poetry,

1960 - 2015 Wolfgang Gortschacher, David Malcolm, 2020-12-21 A comprehensive and scholarly review of contemporary British and Irish Poetry With contributions from noted scholars in the field, *A Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Poetry, 1960-2015* offers a collection of writings from a diverse group of experts. They explore the richness of individual poets, genres, forms, techniques, traditions, concerns, and institutions that comprise these two distinct but interrelated national poetries. Part of the acclaimed Blackwell Companion to Literature and Culture series, this book contains a comprehensive survey of the most important contemporary Irish and British poetry. The contributors provide new perspectives and positions on the topic. This important book: Explores the institutions, histories, and receptions of contemporary Irish and British poetry Contains contributions from leading scholars of British and Irish poetry Includes an analysis of the most prominent Irish and British poets Puts contemporary Irish and British poetry in context Written for students and academics of contemporary poetry, *A Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Poetry, 1960-2015* offers a comprehensive review of contemporary poetry from a wide range of diverse contributors.

small island andrea levy notes: Encyclopedia of British Writers, 1800 to the Present

George Stade, Karen Karbiener, 2010-05-12 Contains alphabetically arranged entries that provide biographical and critical information on major and lesser-known nineteenth- and twentieth-century British writers, and includes articles on key schools of literature, and genres.

small island andrea levy notes: Autobiography and Decolonization Philip Holden, 2008

Philip Holden reveals deeply gendered connections between the writing of individual lives and of the narratives of nations emerging from colonialism. *Autobiography and Decolonization* is the first book to give serious academic attention to autobiographies of nationalist leaders in the process of decolonization, attending to them not simply as partial historical documents, but as texts involved in remaking the world views of their readers. Holden examines Mohandas K. Gandhi's *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Marcus Garvey's fragmentary *Autobiography*, Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford's *Ethiopia Unbound*, Lee Kuan Yew's *The Singapore Story*, Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom*, Jawaharlal Nehru's *An Autobiography*, and Kwame Nkrumah's *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*. Holden argues that these examples of life writing have had significant influence on the formation of new, and often profoundly gendered, national identities. These narratives constitute the nation less as an imagined community than as an imagined individual. Moving from the past to the promise of the future, they mediate relationships between public and private, and between individual and collective stories. Ultimately, they show how the construction of modern selfhood is inextricably linked to the construction of a postcolonial polity.

small island andrea levy notes: Postcolonial Audiences Bethan Benwell, James Procter,

Gemma Robinson, 2012-03-12 Without readers and audiences, viewers and consumers, the postcolonial would be literally unthinkable. And yet, postcolonial critics have historically neglected the modes of reception and consumption that make up the politics, and pleasures of meaning-making during and after empire. Thus, while recent criticism and theory has made large claims for reading; as an ethical act; as a means of establishing collective, quasi-political consciousness; as identification with difference; as a mode of resistance; and as an impulsion to the public imagination, the reader in postcolonial literary studies persists as a shadowy figure. This collection answers the now pressing need for a distinctively postcolonial take on the rapidly expanding area of reader and reception studies. Written by some of the top scholars in the field, these essays reveal readers and reception to be varied and profoundly unstable subjects that challenge many of our assumptions and preconceptions of the postcolonial – from the notion of reading as national fellowship to the demands of an ethics of reading.

small island andrea levy notes: Literature and Ethics Steve Brie, William T. Rossiter,

2010-06-09 This volume examines the crucial relationship between literature and ethics, as it has developed and changed from the late medieval period to the present day. The focus of the volume is predicated upon three interrelated themes: instruction, judgement, and justice. Previous studies of

literature and ethics have often been restricted to a limited chronology and generic focus; the present volume covers a range of periods, texts and genres in order to provide a wider illustration of the relationship between the literary and the ethical.

small island andrea levy notes: Rethinking Race and Identity in Contemporary British Fiction Sara Upstone, 2016-10-04 This book takes a post-racial approach to the representation of race in contemporary British fiction, re-imagining studies of race and British literature away from concerns with specific racial groups towards a more sophisticated analysis of the contribution of a broad, post-racial British writing. Examining the work of writers from a wide range of diverse racial backgrounds, the book illustrates how contemporary British fiction, rather than merely reflecting social norms, is making a radical contribution towards the possible future of a positively multi-ethnic and post-racial Britain. This is developed by a strategic use of the realist form, which becomes a utopian device as it provides readers with a reality beyond current circumstances, yet one which is rooted within an identifiable world. Speaking to the specific contexts of British cultural politics, and directly connecting with contemporary debates surrounding race and identity in Britain, the author engages with a wide range of both mainstream and neglected authors, including Ian McEwan, Zadie Smith, Julian Barnes, John Lanchester, Alan Hollinghurst, Martin Amis, Jon McGregor, Andrea Levy, Bernardine Evaristo, Hanif Kureishi, Kazuo Ishiguro, Hari Kunzru, Nadeem Aslam, Meera Syal, Jackie Kay, Maggie Gee, and Neil Gaiman. This cutting-edge volume explores how contemporary fiction is at the centre of re-thinking how we engage with the question of race in twenty-first-century Britain.

small island andrea levy notes: The Postcolonial City and Its Subjects Rashmi Varma, 2011-08-05 This book considers twentieth and twenty-first century literary and cultural formations of the postcolonial city and the constitution of new subjects within it. Varma offers a reading of both historical and contemporary debates on urbanism through the filter of postcolonial fictions and the cultural fields surrounding and containing them. In particular, she presents a representational history of London, Nairobi and Bombay in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and engages three key theoretical frameworks—the city within postcolonial theory and culture (its troubled salience in the construction of postcolonial public spheres and identities, from local, rural, ethnic/tribal, and regional to national, cosmopolitan and transnational subjects and spaces); postcolonial fictions as constituting a new world literary space and as a site of the articulation of contending narratives of urban space, global culture and postcolonial development; and postcolonial feminist citizenship as a universal political project challenging current neo-liberal and post neo-liberal contractions and eviscerations of public spaces and rights.

small island andrea levy notes: Multiculturalism and the Jews Sander Gilman, 2013-10-14 In this powerful and wide-ranging study, Sander Gilman explores the idea of 'the multicultural' in the contemporary world, a question he frames as the question of the relationship between Jews and Muslims. How do Jews define themselves, and how are they in turn defined, within the global struggles of the moment, struggles that turn in large part around a secularized Christian perspective? Gilman uses his subject to unpack a sequence of important issues: what does it mean to be multicultural? Can the experience of diaspora Judaism serve as a useful model for Islam in today's multicultural Europe? What is a multicultural ethnic? Other chapters look at specific figures in Jewish cultural history – Albert Einstein, Franz Kafka, Israel Zangwill, Philip Roth, the hermaphrodite N.O. Body (aka Karl Baer, raised as Martha Baer) – to explore issues within Jewish identity. Throughout, Gilman pays keen attention to the ways in which contemporary literature – Chabon, Ozick, Zadie Smith, Jonathan Safran Foer, Gary Shteyngart – taking the idea of Jewishness and multiculturalism into new arenas.

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