COURSE DETAIL

LITERATURE, SOLIDARITY AND THE HUMANITARIAN TURN

Country
United Kingdom - England

Host Institution
King's College London

Program(s)
English Universities,King's College London

UCEAP Course Level
Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)
English

UCEAP Course Number
124

UCEAP Course Suffix
E

UCEAP Official Title
LITERATURE, SOLIDARITY AND THE HUMANITARIAN TURN

UCEAP Transcript Title
LIT & SOLIDARITY

UCEAP Quarter Units
6.00

UCEAP Semester Units

4.00

Course Description
In the early 21st century, popular left-wing political movements have gained new energy and visibility as activists have forged new connections across the globe. Forms of transnational activism as diverse as the alter-globalization movement, environmental activism, anti-austerity activism, and refugee advocacy networks all rely on a notion of solidarity between people from different national, cultural, and economic backgrounds, and especially between people from the global north and the global south. But what does it mean to be in solidarity with another person, or with a movement? Are you in solidarity with someone only when you share political beliefs with them, or is it possible to be in solidarity on the basis of shared human feeling and a commitment to universal human rights? Using E. M. Forster's plea to "only connect" as a point of reference and departure, this course examines expressions of transnational solidarity in literature and film circulated in English from the 1970s to the present day. It examines the shift in the late and post-Cold War period from third-worldist to humanitarian ideas of solidarity, and on the persistent use of documentary realism and the construction of a sympathetic protagonist as means of both ideological and emotional persuasion. It explores the reasons for the cultural prominence of some solidarity movements rather than others, and discusses the possibilities and pitfalls of imaginative empathy as a basis for political activism. The course examines examples of the recent backlash against human rights-based notions of solidarity, and the return of utopian political ideas. Contexts studied include Biafra, the Chilean and Nicaraguan solidarity movements, the anti-apartheid movement, the Palestine solidarity movement, and the global uprisings of 2011 and beyond.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
6AAEC094

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LITERATURE, SOLIDARITY AND THE HUMANITARIAN TURN

Host Institution Course Details
Host Institution Campus King's College London
Host Institution Faculty
Host Institution Degree
Host Institution Department English
Course Last Reviewed

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