



Look Back in Anger (Penguin Plays)

By John Osborne

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Jimmy Porter, frustrated and bitter in his drab flat, lives with his middle-class wife, Alison. Also sharing the flat is Cliff who keeps things tenuously together. Alison's friend Helen arrives and persuades her to leave Jimmy only to fall for him herself. When Alison becomes pregnant, Helen leaves the couple. This play originally opened at the Royal Court Theatre in 1956 and has since proved to be a milestone in the history of theater.

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Look Back in Anger (Penguin Plays) By John Osborne Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #392263 in Books
- Brand: Osborne, John
- Published on: 1982-11-18
- Released on: 1982-11-18
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.76" h x .25" w x 5.10" l, .21 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 96 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

Play in three acts by John Osborne, performed in 1956 and published in 1957. A published description of Osborne as an "angry young man" was extended to apply to an entire generation of disaffected young British writers who identified with the lower classes and viewed the upper classes and the established political institutions with disdain. Although the form of the play was not revolutionary, its content was unexpected. On stage for the first time were the 20- to 30-year-olds of Great Britain who had not participated in World War II and who found its aftermath lacking in promise. The hero, Jimmy Porter, has reached an uncomfortably marginal position on the border of the middle class, from which he can see the traditional possessors of privilege holding the better jobs and threatening his upward climb. -- *The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature*

About the Author

John Osborne was born in London in 1929. His plays include *Look Back in Anger* (1956), *The Entertainer* (1957), *Luther* (1961), *Inadmissible Evidence* (1964), and *A Patriot for Me* (1966). Both *Look Back in Anger* and *The Entertainer* were adapted for film, and in 1963 Osborne won an Academy Award for his screenplay for *Tom Jones*. John Osborne died on 24 December 1994.

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