



# A World of Paradoxes:

Exploring Manifestations of **DYSTOPIA** in India

- According to *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, dystopia is “a modern term invented as the opposite of utopia, and applied to any alarmingly unpleasant imaginary world, usually of the projected future” (Baldick 100). It is a significant form of science fiction and modern satire.

# Why?

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graph LR; A[Why?] --> B[ENGL 235: Film and Literature]; A --> C[Desire to diversify my course with new voices/ cultures]; A --> D[Katherine Boo's Behind the Beautiful Forevers]; A --> E[Learning about "Paradoxical" India]; A --> F[Unsettling Relevance to Our Modern Experience];
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ENGL 235:  
Film and Literature

Desire to diversify my course  
with new voices/ cultures

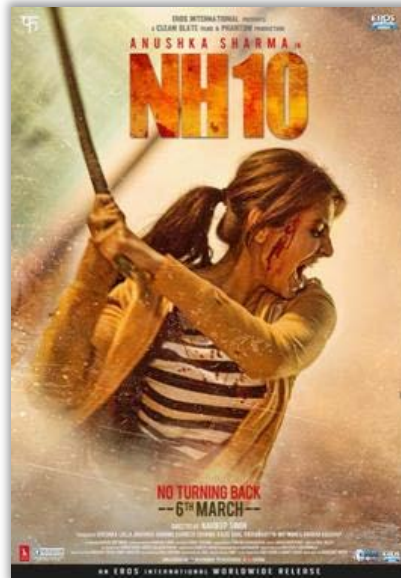
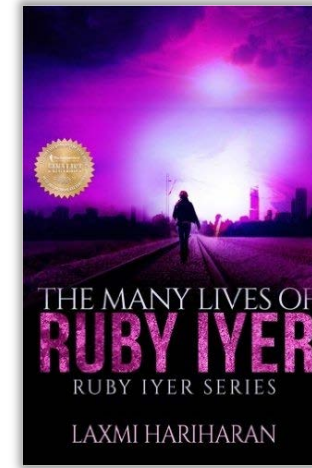
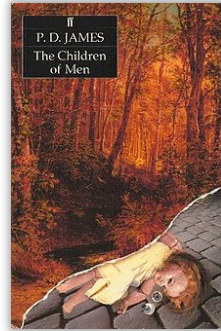
Katherine Boo's  
*Behind the Beautiful Forevers*

Learning about  
"Paradoxical" India

Unsettling Relevance to  
Our Modern Experience

# PARADOX

- Basic Distinctions between USA and India: In one of our first meetings last semester, I took note of our safety and health needs, which include wearing masks due to pollution and avoiding the water and street food. We also discussed the burning rubber smell in one of the cities we plan to visit.
- “Inhaling tiny air pollutants reduces the life expectancy of Indians by an average of 3.4 years, with Delhi residents losing 6.3 years, the most of all states, according to a new study by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology” (Agarwal).
- Dr. Rai acknowledged the extreme poverty vs. extreme wealth.
- Biotechnology is a booming industry in India, yet close to “2 million children under the age of five die every year from preventable illness” (John Pilger, *The Guardian*)
- Government intervention in the caste system has provided new opportunities for discriminated communities but also heightened the desire to keep stratification alive.
- Our colleague, Cinder Cooper-Barnes, drew attention to Gandhi as a proponent of non-violent civil disobedience, but he was also known for holding racist views of black Africans.
- Bombay [Mumbai] “is the centre for most of India’s foreign trade, global financial dealing and personal wealth. Yet at low tide on the Mithi river, people are forced to defecate in ditches, by the roadside” (John Pilger, *The Guardian*).



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*The Children of Men*. Wikipedia, 1992, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Children\\_of\\_Men](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Children_of_Men).

*The Many Lives of Ruby Iyer*. Amazon, 2014, <https://www.amazon.com/Many-Lives-Ruby-Iyer/dp/1502773775>.

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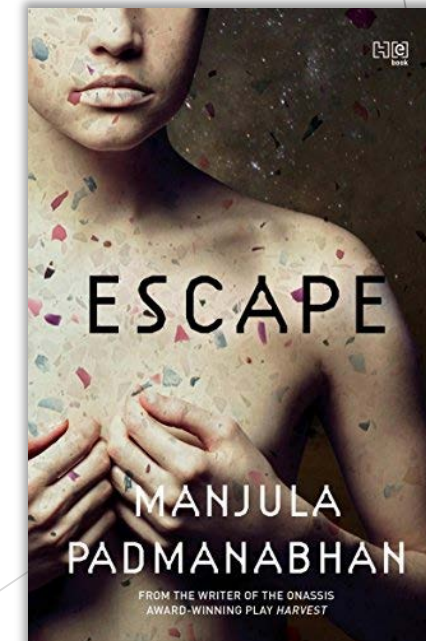
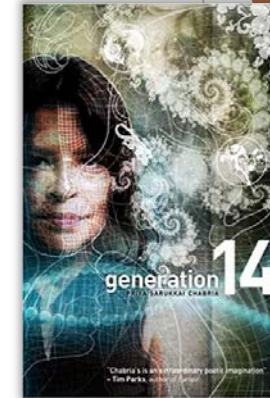
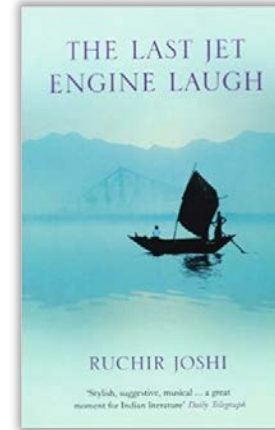
*Schirkoa*. IMDB, 2016, <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt5823554/mediaviewer/rm1385109248>.

*Signal Red*. Amazon, 2011, <https://www.amazon.com/Signal-Red-Rimi-B-Chattejee-ebook/dp/B0056VAT16>.

# SOME IDEAS

“I must say this: SF, at least in the language I'm familiar with (English), is a fledgling field of study. From both creative and critical aspects, it isn't as developed as it is in the US. Consequently, no major film adaptations of these novels have been undertaken.” – Dr. Sami Ahmad Khan

S. No.	Name of the Text	Author	Publisher	Year
1.	<i>The Last Jet Engine Laugh</i>	Ruchir Joshi	Harper Collins	2001
2.	<i>Signal Red</i>	Rimi Chatterjee	Penguin	2005
3.	<i>Generation 14</i>	Priya Sarukkai Chabria	Zubaan/Penguin	2008
4.	<i>Escape</i>	Manjula Padmanabhan	Picador	2008
5.	<i>Gods of War</i>	Ashok Banker	Penguin	2009
6.	<i>The Beast with 9 Billion Feet (YA)</i>	Anil Menon	Zubaan	2009
7.	<i>Vimana (YA)</i>	Mainak Dhar	Penguin	2012
8.	<i>Zombiestan(YA)</i>	Mainak Dhar	Duckbill	2012
9.	<i>Toke</i>	Jugal Mody	Harper Collins	2012
10.	<i>Baramulla Bomber</i>	Suraj C. Prasad	Niyogi	2013
11.	<i>The Competent Authority</i>	Shovon Chowdhury	Aleph	2013



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*Escape*. Amazon, 2015, <https://www.amazon.com/Escape-Manjula-Padmanabhan-ebook/dp/B014Q0W75K>.

*Generation 14*. Amazon, 2008, <https://www.amazon.com/Generation-14-Priya-Sarukkai-Chabria/dp/8189884069>.

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from Sami Ahmad Khan, an OP Jindal Global University contact

# SOME IDEAS

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