John Osborne

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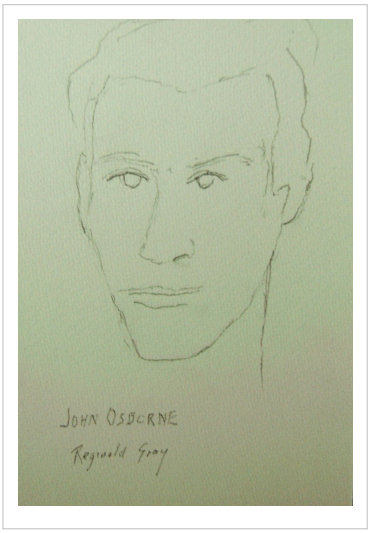 John Osborne by Irish artist Reginald Gray. London.1957.	
Born	12 December 1929 Fulham, London, England
Died	24 December 1994 (aged 65) Clun, Shropshire, England
Occupation	Playwright, political activist
Nationality	English
Period	1950–92
Genres	Social realism, Kitchen sink drama
Literary movement	Angry Young Man
Notable work(s)	*Look Back in Anger* *The Entertainer* *Inadmissible Evidence*
Spouse(s)	Pamela Lane Mary Ure Penelope Gilliatt Jill Bennett Helen Dawson

John James Osborne (12 December 1929 – 24 December 1994) was an English playwright, screenwriter, actor and critic of the Establishment. The success of his 1956 play *Look Back in Anger* transformed English theatre.

In a productive life of more than 40 years, Osborne explored many themes and genres, writing for stage, film and TV. His personal life was extravagant and iconoclastic. He was notorious for the ornate violence of his language, not only on behalf of the political causes he supported but also against his own family, including his wives and children.

Osborne was one of the first writers to address Britain's purpose in the post-imperial age. He was the first to question the point of the monarchy on a prominent public stage. During his peak (1956–1966), he helped make contempt an acceptable and now even cliched onstage emotion, argued for the cleansing wisdom of bad behaviour and bad taste, and combined unsparing truthfulness with devastating wit.[*citation needed*]

Early life

Osborne was born in December 1929[1] in London, the son of Thomas Godfrey Osborne, a commercial artist and advertising copywriter of South Welsh extraction, and Nellie Beatrice, a Cockney barmaid.[2] In 1935 the working-class family moved to the Surrey suburb of Stoneleigh, in search of a better life, though Osborne would regard it as a cultural desert - a schoolfriend declared subsequently that "he thought [we] were a lot of dull, uninteresting people, and probably a lot of us were. He was right." [3] He adored his father and hated his mother, who he later wrote taught him "The fatality of hatred … She is my disease, an invitation to my sick room," and described her as "hypocritical, self-absorbed, calculating and indifferent."

Thomas died in 1941, leaving the young boy an insurance settlement which he used to finance a private education at Belmont College, a minor public school in Devon.[4] He entered the school in 1943, but was expelled in the summer term of 1945, after whacking the headmaster, who had struck him for listening to a forbidden broadcast by Frank Sinatra. School Certificate was the only formal qualification he acquired, but he possessed a native intelligence.

After school, Osborne went home to his mother in London and briefly tried trade journalism. A job tutoring a touring company of junior actors introduced him to the theatre. He soon became involved as a stage manager and acting, joining Anthony Creighton's provincial touring company.[5] Osborne tried his hand at writing plays, co-writing his first, *The Devil Inside Him*, with his mentor Stella Linden, who then directed it at the Theatre Royal in Huddersfield in 1950. Around this time he also married Pamela Lane. His second play *Personal Enemy* was written with Anthony Creighton (with whom he later wrote *Epitaph for George Dillon* staged at the Royal Court in 1958). *Personal Enemy* was staged in regional theatres before he submitted *Look Back in Anger*.

Look Back in Anger

Written in seventeen days in a deck chair on Morecambe pier where Osborne was performing in a creaky rep show called *Seagulls over Sorrento*, *Look Back in Anger* was largely autobiographical, based on his time living, and arguing, with Pamela Lane in cramped accommodation in Derby while she cuckolded him with a local dentist. It was submitted to agents all over London and returned with great rapidity. In his autobiography, Osborne writes: "The speed with which it had been returned was not surprising, but its aggressive dispatch did give me a kind of relief. It was like being grasped at the upper arm by a testy policeman and told to move on". Finally it was sent to the newly-formed English Stage Company at London's Royal Court Theatre.

Formed by actor-manager and artistic director George Devine, the company had seen its first three productions flop and urgently needed a success if it was to survive. Devine was prepared to gamble on this play because he saw in it a ferocious and scowling articulation of a new post-war spirit. Osborne was living on a leaky houseboat on the River Thames at the time with Creighton, stewing up nettles from the riverbank to eat. So keen was Devine to contact Osborne that he rowed out to the boat to tell him he would like to make the play the fourth production to enter repertory. The play was directed by Tony Richardson and starred Kenneth Haigh, Mary Ure and Alan Bates. It was George Fearon, a part-time press officer at the theatre, who invented the phrase "angry young man". Fearon told Osborne that he disliked the play and feared it would be impossible to market.[6]

In 1993, a year before his death, Osborne wrote that the opening night was "an occasion I only partly remember, but certainly with more accuracy than those who subsequently claimed to have been present and, if they are to be believed, would have filled the theatre several times over". Reviews were mixed. Most of the critics who attended the first night felt it was a failure, and it looked as if the English Stage Company was going to go into liquidation.[7] The *Evening Standard*, for example, called the play "a failure" and "a self-pitying snivel". But the following Sunday, Kenneth Tynan of *The Observer* - the most influential critic of the age - praised it to the skies: 'I could not love anyone who did not wish to see *Look Back in Anger*,' he wrote, "It is the best young play of its decade". Harold Hobson of *The Sunday Times* called Osborne "a writer of outstanding promise". During production, the married Osborne began a relationship with Mary Ure, and would divorce his wife, Pamela Lane, to marry her in 1957.

The play went on to be an enormous commercial success, transferring to the West End and to Broadway, touring to Moscow and in 1958 a film version was released with Richard Burton and Mary Ure in the leading roles. The play turned Osborne from a struggling playwright into a wealthy and famous angry young man and won him the Evening Standard Drama Award as the most promising playwright of the year.

The Entertainer and into the 1960s

When he first saw *Look Back in Anger*, Laurence Olivier was dismissive, viewing the play as unpatriotic and bad theatre, "a travesty on England".[8] At the time, Olivier was making a film of Rattigan's *The Prince and the Showgirl* co-starring Marilyn Monroe, and she was accompanied to London by her then-husband Arthur Miller. Olivier asked the American dramatist what plays he might want to see in London. Based on its title, Miller suggested Osborne's work; Olivier tried to dissuade him, but the playwright was insistent and the two of them saw it together.

Miller found the play revelatory, and they went backstage to meet Osborne. Olivier was impressed by the American's reaction, and asked Osborne to write him a play; John Heilpern suggests the great actor's about-face was due to a midlife crisis, Olivier seeking a new challenge after decades of success in Shakespeare and other classics, and fearful of losing his pre-eminence to this new kind of theatre. George Devine, artistic director of the Royal Court, sent Olivier the incomplete script of *The Entertainer* (1957, filmed in 1959) and Olivier initially wanted to play Billy Rice, the lead character's decent elderly father. On seeing the finished script, he changed his mind and took the central role as failing music-hall performer Archie Rice, playing to great acclaim both at the Royal Court and then in the West End.[8]

The Entertainer uses the metaphor of the dying music hall tradition and its eclipse by early rock and roll to comment on the moribund state of the British Empire and its eclipse by the power of the United States, something flagrantly revealed during the Suez Crisis of November 1956 that elliptically forms the backdrop to the play. An experimental piece, *The Entertainer* was interspersed with vaudeville performances. Most critics praised the development of an exciting writing talent:

> A real pro is a real man, all he needs is an old backcloth behind him and he can hold them on his own for half an hour. He's like the general run of people, only he's a lot more like them than they are themselves, if you understand me.

The words are Billy Rice's, though as with much of Osborne's work they could be said to represent his own sentiments, as with this quote from *Look Back in Anger*:

> Oh, heavens, how I long for a little ordinary human enthusiasm. Just enthusiasm—that's all. I want to hear a warm, thrilling voice cry out 'Hallelujah! Hallelujah. I'm alive!'

Following *The Entertainer* were *The World of Paul Slickey* (1959) a musical that satirizes the tabloid press, the unusual television documentary play *A Subject of Scandal and Concern* (1960), and the 1962 double bill *Plays for England*, comprising "The Blood of the Bambergs" and "Under Plain Covers".

Luther, depicting the life of Martin Luther, the archetypal rebel of an earlier century, was first performed in 1961; it transferred to Broadway and won Osborne a Tony Award. *Inadmissible Evidence* was first performed in 1964. In between these plays, Osborne won an Oscar for his 1963 adaptation of *Tom Jones*. *A Patriot for Me* (1965) drawing on the Austrian Redl case, is a tale of turn-of-the-century homosexuality and espionage which helped to end (along with *Saved* by Edward Bond) the system of theatrical censorship under the Lord Chamberlain.

Both *A Patriot For Me* and *The Hotel in Amsterdam* (1968) won Evening Standard Best Play of the Year awards. The latter play features three showbiz couples in a hotel suite, having fled a tyrannical and unpleasant movie producer, referred to as "K.L". John Heilpern[9] confirms the rumor that "K.L" was in fact a portrait of Tony Richardson, seen through Osborne's eyes. Laurie, a screenwriter, a role created by Paul Scofield, is a self-portrait: Osborne at mid-career.

1970s and later life

John Osborne's plays in the 1970s included *West of Suez* which starred Ralph Richardson, *A Sense of Detachment*, first produced at the Royal Court in 1972, and *Watch It Come Down*, first produced at the National Theatre at the Old Vic starring Frank Finlay.

In 1971, he made his best remembered acting appearance, lending Cyril Kinnear a sense of civil menace in *Get Carter*. In 1978 he appeared as an actor in *Tomorrow Never Comes* and in 1980 in *Flash Gordon*.[10]

Through the 1980s Osborne played the role of Shropshire squire with great pleasure and a heavy dose of irony. He wrote a diary for *The Spectator*.[11] He opened his garden to raise money for the church roof, from which he threatened to withdraw covenant-funding unless the vicar restored the Book of Common Prayer. (He had returned to the Church of England about 1974.)[12]

In his latter years, Osborne published two volumes of autobiography, *A Better Class of Person* (Osborne, 1981) and *Almost a Gentleman* (Osborne, 1991). *A Better Class of Person* was filmed by Thames TV in 1985 and was nominated for the Prix Italia with Eileen Atkins and Alan Howard as his parents and Gary Capelin and Neil McPherson as Osborne.

He also collected various newspaper and magazine writings together in 1994 under the title *Damn You, England*. At his memorial service in 1995, playwright David Hare said:

> It is, if you like, the final irony that John's governing love was for a country which is, to say the least, distrustful of those who seem to be both clever and passionate. There is in English public life an implicit assumption that the head and the heart are in some sort of opposition. If someone is clever, they get labelled cold. If they are emotional, they get labelled stupid. Nothing bewilders the English more than someone who exhibits great feeling and great intelligence. When, as in John's case, a person is abundant in both, the English response is to take in the washing and bolt the back door.

His last play was *Déjà Vu* (1991), a sequel to *Look Back in Anger*.

Critical responses, idols and effect

Osborne was a great fan of Max Miller[13] and saw parallels between them. 'I love him, (Max Miller) because he embodied a kind of theatre I admire most. 'Mary from the Dairy' was an overture to the danger that (Max) might go too far. Whenever anyone tells me that a scene or a line in a play of mine goes too far in some way then I know my instinct has been functioning as it should. When such people tell you that a particular passage makes the audience uneasy or restless, then they seem (to me) as cautious and absurd as landladies and girls-who-won't.'[14]

Osborne's work transformed British theatre. He helped to make it artistically respected again, throwing off the formal constraints of the former generation, and turning our attention once more to language, theatrical rhetoric, and emotional intensity. He saw theatre as a weapon with which ordinary people could break down the class barriers and that he had a 'beholden duty to kick against the pricks'. He wanted his plays to be a reminder of real pleasures and real pains. David Hare said in his memorial address:

> John Osborne devoted his life to trying to forge some sort of connection between the acuteness of his mind and the extraordinary power of his heart.

[15]

Osborne did change the world of theatre, influencing playwrights such as Edward Albee and Mike Leigh. However, work of his kind of authenticity and originality would remain the exception rather than the rule. This did not surprise Osborne; nobody understood the tackiness of the theatre better than the man who had played Hamlet on Hayling Island.[16] He was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Writer's Guild of Great Britain.

Osborne joined the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in 1959. Later he drifted to the libertarian, unorganized right, considering himself "a radical who hates change".

Personal life

Relationships

Osborne had many affairs over the course of his life and frequently mistreated his wives and lovers. He was married five times with all except his final marriage being unhappy unions.

Pamela Lane (1951-57)

In Volume 1 of his autobiography *A Better Class of Person*, Osborne describes feeling an immediate and intense attraction towards his first wife. The pair were both members of an acting troupe in Bridgwater.

She had just recently shorn her hair down to a defiant auburn stubble and I was impressed by the hostility she had created by this self-isolating act... her huge green eyes which mock or plead affection, preferably both, at least... She startled and confused me.. There was no calculation in my instant obsession.

Though Alison Porter in *Look Back in Anger* was based on Pamela, Osborne describes Lane's parents as 'much coarser' and how at one point they hired a private detective to follow him after a fellow actor was seen 'fumbling' with his knee in a teashop. Though he admits that it was true at least that the actor in question did have a homosexual crush on him.

I began to feel surrounded and outflanked by hostility.. I had set off a crest of anger that had not been much more than drowsy before my arrival... It was scarcely important. Pamela was the battlement I was determined on.

The two married in secret in nearby Wells and then left Bridgwater the following Sunday amidst an uneasy truce with Lane's parents (Osborne's hated mother was not aware of the union until the couple were divorcing), spending their first night as a married couple together in the Cromwell Road in London.

I was unable to take my eyes off her. I watched her eating, walking, bathing, making-up, dressing, undressing, my curiosity was insatiable. Seeing her clothes lying around the floor (she was hopelessly untidy, in contrast to my own spinsterish habits). There was little doubt in my otherwise apprehensive spirit that I had carried off a unique prize.... Perhaps I interpreted what might have been bland complacency for the complaisance of a generous and loving heart.

The two lived a fairly itinerant and reasonably happy married existence at first, living at a number of digs around London and finding work in London at first, touring then in Osborne's case Kidderminster and Lane's Derby. Lane's acting career flourished in Derby while Osborne's floundered and she began an affair with a rich dentist. Somewhat ironic given that Osborne had been playing a dentist in the company's production of Shaw's You Never Can Tell and that it was Osborne who had inadvertently introduced them by succumbing to a toothache he attributed to marital woes.

This was in the summer of 1955 and Osborne spent much of the next two years before their divorce hoping they would reconcile. In 1956, after Look Back in Anger had opened, Osborne met her at the railway station in York, at which meeting she told Osborne of her recent abortion and enquired after his relationship with Mary Ure, of which she was aware. In April 1957, Osborne was granted a divorce from Lane, on the grounds of his adultery.[17]

Mary Ure (1957-63)

Osborne began a relationship with Ure shortly after meeting her when she was cast as Alison in *Look Back in Anger* in 1956. The affair swiftly progressed and the two moved in together in Woodfall Road, Chelsea.

Mary was one of those unguarded souls who can make themselves understood by penguins or the wildest dervishes .. I was not in love. There was fondness and pleasure, but no groping expectations, just a feeling of fleeting heart's ease. For the present we were both content enough.

Contentment, in Osborne's case, grew into a jealousy and slight contempt for Ure's stable family background and the banalities of her communication with them and a somewhat withering regard for her acting abilities.

I had stopped concealing from myself, if I ever had, that Mary was not much of an actress. She had a rather harsh voice and a tiny range. Her appearance was pleasing but without any personal sweep to it.

Like most actors, she was hysterical when unemployed and resentful when appearing every night to full houses. She also entertained the common belief that a writer is only working when he can be seen head down at his desk. Why are you drinking/dreaming/farting/fornicating instead of making typewriter noises?

There was infidelity on both sides and after an affair with Robert Webber, Ure ultimately left Osborne for Robert Shaw.

The fact that my coltish liaison with Francine had been pre-empted by Mary's conduct with Webber explained her oddly restrained behaviour in New York... Betrayal might end in the bedroom but I found it naive to assume it necessarily began there.

Osborne described visiting her after she had left him and having sex with her while she was pregnant with the first of four children she would bear to Shaw. Of their divorce, Osborne wrote of being surprised that she repeatedly refused to return to him treasured postcards drawn for him by his father but is circumspect at her death in 1975.

Destiny dragged her so pointlessly from a life better contained by the softly lapping waters of the River Clyde.

This is in marked contrast to his later revelling in the death of fourth wife Jill Bennett.[18]

Penelope Gilliatt (1963-68)

Osborne met his third wife, writer Penelope Gilliatt, initially through social connections, and she then interviewed him.

From Osborne's autobiography *Almost a Gentleman*:

It was not so much chastity that troubled me, but the withdrawal of feminine intimacy. And now, here I was, giving a routine interview to a young, animated woman, seemingly very informed and quick to laugh... I was already engaged in the prospect of mild and easy flirtation. I hadn't marked Penelope down in any appraising way as a future sportive fancy, but I had always been addicted to flirtation as a game worth playing for itself. One main attraction Penelope held for Osborne was her red hair *I took red hair to be the mantle of goddesses.*

Despite her being married and Osborne knowing her husband, Gilliatt set out to seduce Osborne and succeeded in doing so.

Penelope's behaviour and my own during the weeks that followed were probably grotesquely indefensible.

Osborne details some of the brazen subterfuges he created in order to commit adultery with Penelope Gilliatt before they were married, which included inventing a film festival in Folkestone so they could go away together.[19] Osborne proposed marriage by asking Gilliatt: *Will you marry me? It's risky, but you'd get fucked regularly.*

Osborne and Gilliatt were married for five years (together for seven), in which time she bore him his only natural daughter, Nolan.[20] Osborne had an abusive relationship with his daughter: he cast her out of his house when she was seventeen; they never spoke again.[21] Osborne and Gilliatt's marriage suffered through what Osborne perceived to be an unnecessary obsession on her part with her work, writing film reviews for *The Observer*.

I tried to point out that it seemed an inordinate amount of time and effort to expend on a thousand-word review to be read by a few thousand film addicts and forgotten almost at once.

He also observed in her a growing pretentiousness.

She was to become increasingly obsessed with fripperies and titles ... She took to calling herself 'Professor Gilliatt'. [22]

Strains in the marriage, exacerbated by Gilliatt's alcoholism and what Osborne felt was malignant behaviour, led to Osborne conducting an affair, swiftly followed by marriage, with Jill Bennett.

Jill Bennett (1968-77)

Osborne endured a turbulent nine-year marriage with Bennett, whom he came to loathe. Their marriage degenerated into mutual abuse and insult with Bennett goading Osborne, calling him 'impotent' and 'homosexual' in public as early as 1971.[23] This was cruelty which Osborne reciprocated, turning his feelings of bitterness and resentment about his waning career onto his wife. Bennett's suicide in 1990 is generally believed to have been a result of Osborne's rejection of her. He said of Bennett: "She was the most evil woman I have come across", and showed open contempt for her suicide.[24]

... she was a woman so demoniacally possessed by Avarice that she died of it. How many people have died in such a manner, of Avarice? .... This final, fumbled gesture, after a lifetime of glad-rags borrowings, theft and plagiarism, must have been one of the few original or spontaneous gestures in her loveless life... During the nine years I lived beneath the same roof with her, she spent half the day in bed. There was a short period when she took dressage lessons, that most intensive course in aids to severe narcissism.

Osborne seemed to relish in reading through obituaries of Bennett and contradicting any points of merit journalists found in her and is scathing of her acting abilities.

... sounding like a puppy with a mouthful of lavatory paper. I did everything I could to scrub up her diction, but it never improved. Indeed after we separated and she was consigned to lesser parts it became even worse. During a television series... even by the pier-end standards of sit-com, she was quite incomprehensive and cried out for sub-titles.

Osborne signed off the chapter on Bennett with perhaps some of his most damning prose committed to print.

Adolf [Osborne's nickname for her] *has left half a million to Battersea Dogs' Home. She never bought a bar of soap in all the time she lived with me. Always, she cried poverty... It is the most perfect act of misanthropy, judged with the tawdry, kindless theatricality she strove to achieve in life. She had no love in her heart for people and only a little more for dogs. Her brand of malignity, unlike Penelope's went beyond even the banality of ambition.... Her frigidity was almost total. She loathed men and pretended to love women, whom she hated even more. She was at ease only in the company of homosexuals, who she also despised but whose narcissism matched her own. I never heard her say an admiring thing of anyone... Everything about her life had been a pernicious confection, a sham.*

He concluded by stating that his only regret is that he chose not to shit in her open coffin.[25]

Helen Dawson (1978-94)

Dawson (1939–2004) was a former arts journalist and critic for *The Observer*. This final marriage of Osborne's, which lasted until his death, seems to have been Osborne's first happy union. Until her death in 2004, Dawson worked tirelessly to preserve and promote Osborne's legacy.[]

Osborne died deeply in debt, his final word to Dawson was: *Sorry*.[26] After her death in 2004, Dawson was buried next to Osborne.

In his 2006 biography,[27] John Heilpern describes at length a holiday in Valbonne,[28] France, in 1961, that Osborne shared with Tony Richardson, a distraught George Devine, and others. Feigning bafflement over the romantic entanglements of the time, Heilpern writes:

> Let's see: Osborne is on a besieged holiday with his aggrieved mistress[29] while having a passionate affair with his future third wife[30] as the founding artistic director of the Royal Court has a nervous breakdown and his current wife[31] gives birth to a son that isn't his.[32]

Vegetarianism

Around the time of *Look Back in Anger* Osborne was a vegetarian, something which was considered unusual at the time. In *Almost a Gentleman* he gives some insight into this lifestyle choice:

Graves of Osborne and his fifth wife in Clun churchyard

> My own vegetarianism had been prompted by self-interest. I wanted to confound my pitted complexion, implacable daily headaches, throbbing glands, dish-cloth hair and dandruff. That my appearance had marginally improved (though not the headaches) was no doubt due a little to less toxic input... Meat could be equated with inner squalor. Vegetarianism might banish that, too.[33]

Death

After a serious liver crisis in 1987, Osborne became a diabetic, injecting twice a day. He died in 1994 from complications from his diabetes at the age of 65 at his home in Clunton, near Craven Arms, Shropshire.[34] He is buried in St George's churchyard, Clun, Shropshire, alongside his last wife, Helen Dawson, who died in 2004.[]

Works

Title	Type	Year	Notes
The Devil Inside Him	Theatre	*1950*	with Stella Linden
The Great Bear	Theatre	*1951*	blank verse, never produced
Personal Enemy	Theatre	1955	with Anthony Creighton
Look Back in Anger	Theatre	1956	
The Entertainer	*Theatre*	1957	
Epitaph for George Dillon	*Theatre*	1958[35]	with Anthony Creighton
The World Of Paul Slickey	Theatre	1959	[36]
A Subject Of Scandal And Concern	TV	1960	
Luther	Theatre	1961	
Plays for England	Theatre	1962	
The Blood of the Bambergs	Theatre	1962	
Under Plain Cover	Theatre	1962	
Tom Jones	Screenplay	1963	
Inadmissible Evidence	Theatre	1964	
A Patriot for Me	Theatre	1965	
A Bond Honoured	Theatre	*1966*	One-act adaptation of Lope de Vega's *La fianza satisfecha*

The Hotel In Amsterdam	Theatre	1968	
Time Present	Theatre	1968	
The Charge of the Light Brigade	Screenplay[37]	1968	
The Right Prospectus	TV	1970	
West Of Suez	Theatre	1971	
A Sense Of Detachment	Theatre	1972	
The Gift Of Friendship	TV	1972	
Hedda Gabler	Theatre	1972	Ibsen adaptation
A Place Calling Itself Rome	Theatre	(1973)	Coriolanus adaptation, unproduced
Ms, Or Jill And Jack	TV	1974	
The End Of Me Old Cigar	Theatre	1975	
The Picture Of Dorian Gray	Theatre	*1975*	Wilde adaptation
Almost A Vision	TV	1976	
Watch It Come Down	Theatre	1976	
Try A Little Tenderness	Theatre	*(1978)*	unproduced
Very Like A Whale	TV	1980	
You're Not Watching Me, Mummy	TV	1980	
A Better Class of Person	Book	*1981*	autobiography volume I
A Better Class of Person [38]	TV	1985	
God Rot Tunbridge Wells	TV	1985	
The Father	Theatre	*1989*	Strindberg adaptation
Almost a Gentleman	Book	*1991*	autobiography volume II
Déjàvu	Theatre	1992	

Selected filmography

- *Get Carter* (1971)
- *The Chairman's Wife* (1971)
- *Tomorrow Never Comes* (1978)
- *Flash Gordon (film)* (1980)

Notes

[1] Heilpern, p.23

[2] Heilpern, p.24

[3] Schoolfriend Hilda Berrington, speaking on *Osborne:Angry Man*, Channel Four.

[4] Heilpern, p.64

[5] Heilpern, p.90

[6] Little & McLaughlin, p.25

[7] Little & McLaughlin (p.326) cite a letter from Stephen Daldry "I have in our archives letters from members of the audience from the original production of *Look Back in Anger* demanding their money back. Had we honoured every one of those requests, this theatre would not have been able to survive"

[8] *The Guardian* Tuesday 6 March 2007 'It's me, isn't it?' (http://arts.guardian.co.uk/theatre/comedy/story/0,,2027355,00.html)

[9] Heilpern p.359

[10] John Osborne at IMDB (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0651570/)

[11] *Times* obituary, 27 December 1994
[12] Heilpern, ch.45
[13] Heilpern, p.136
[14] Osborne 1991, p.39-40
[15] Heilpern, p.477
[16] Osborne 1991, p.7
[17] Osborne, pp. 43-44
[18] Osborne, pp. 255-9
[19] Osborne, pp 181-3 for example
[20] The name was chosen in honour of Captain Nolan, who led the famous Charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War. At the time of her birth Osborne was researching that war and writing the screenplay of the film his next wife would star in. (Osborne, p.240)
[21] Heilpern, page 421-2
[22] Osborne, p.240
[24] Heilpern writes (page 443) that the second volume of Osborne's autobiography was ready to go to press at Faber & Faber. Bennett's suicide freed Osborne from the restraining order arising from their bitter divorce. He sat down and wrote a new chapter for the book, specifically to excoriate his ex-wife.
[25] Osborne, p.259
[27] Heilpern, p. 267
[28] It was from Valbonne that Osborne wrote the infamous "Damn You, England" letter that was published in *Tribune* on 18 August 1961. (Heilpern, page 239)
[29] Costume designer Jocelyn Rickards
[30] Gilliatt
[31] Ure
[32] Colin, who took the name Osborne but was and is the spitting image of Robert Shaw, with whom Mary Ure was starring at the Royal Court when she became pregnant.
[33] Osborne,p. 2
[34] Heilpern, pp. 470-479
[35] Written before LBIA but not staged at the Royal Court Theatre until 2 years later.
[36] This musical, performed at the Palace Theatre, was an adaptation of Osborne's own never-produced play, provisionally titled *An Artificial Comedy* or *Love in a Myth*, written in 1955 while he was waiting for *Look Back in Anger* to be staged. It was a critical and commercial disaster
[37] Uncredited, due to a script war with director Tony Richardson.
[38] This was a TV adaptation of the first volume of Osborne's autobiography

References

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- Doollee.com (http://www.doollee.com/PlaywrightsO/osborne-john.html)

External links

- Quotations related to John Osborne at Wikiquote
- John Osborne (http://www.screenonline.org.uk/people/id/452881) at the British Film Institute's Screenonline
- John Osborne's Collection (http://research.hrc.utexas.edu:8080/hrcxtf/view?docId=ead/00168.xml/) at the Harry Ransom Center (http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/) at The University of Texas at Austin
- 'A Poor Jonah': John Osborne's Roads to Freedom (http://www.bl.uk/eblj/2010articles/article2.html/) describing the discovery of John Osborne's pre-*Look Back in Anger* plays at the British Library (http://www.bl.uk/)
- Portraits of John Osborne (http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person.php?LinkID=mp03390) at the National Portrait Gallery, London

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