Raymond Williams and The Lonely Londoners







In his book *The Country and the* City, Raymond Williams argues that English literature has a longstanding historical fascination with ideas of city and country. He is particularly interested in how geographical space itself can contour ideas of social structure and artistic achievement. Accordingly, space becomes political and problematic, and being a Marxist, Williams wants us to think about what representations and readings of the city and country can teach us about ideology and social structure.

1. Outline the visual images and metaphorical associations Williams makes of the country and city. Explain how we perceive these two spaces and how they are opposed to one another.

2. If we read the landscape of London presented in Selvon's novel, what do we find? Is it a happy pastoral scene, a vibrant metropolis, or something else entirely?

3. Williams argues that perceptions of space are filtered through an individual consider how this works in *Lonely Londoners*.

4.	Having been schooled on a diet of English literature and stories of the Mother Country, what preconceptions do the character's offer about London and other 'big cities'? Why is this significant?
5.	Binaries are reinforced through the text. How is the binary of city (London) and country (colonies) deployed? Find some examples.
6.	Is the division between the city and the country problematic?
7.	Williams argues the problem is not the division between the city and the country, but the fact that this division has been constituted in such a way that the city chattels the country, assimilating and transforming it to the requisites of the city. In order to capture the uniqueness of two individual voices, both voices must be included to convey how different they are from one another. How is the divide between country and city portrayed in <i>Lonely Londoners</i> ? Are there two voices in the novel?