

HI2A8-15 The Formation of American Culture, 1929 to the Present

26/27

Department

History

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

J.E. Smyth

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module explores the history of the United States (1929 to the present) through the rise of the culture industries; the production, censorship and consumption of literature, theatre, music, film, radio, art, television, sport, fashion, advertising, gaming and social media; and the ways in which individuals have sought to resist or reformulate dominant national discourses through cultural production and critique.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

Topics include women in Hollywood, the revolution in American fashion in the 1930s, Mexican American youth culture and the Zoot Suit Riots, the Hollywood blacklist, masculinity and corporate culture in the postwar era, African Americans on network television, Discophobia, the history of the Hollywood blockbuster, franchise culture, social networks and the impact of #MeToo.

Students will learn not only about the history and theory of culture, national identity, modernism and post-modernism in America, but also about the ways in which cultural history is developed,

controlled, contested and reconstructed via race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. Lost Generations
2. The Gangster as Tragic Hero
3. The Women Who Ran Hollywood
4. The Fear of the Dark
5. Seeing Red in the Blacklist
6. Wenches with Wrenches and Men in Grey Flannel Suits
7. The Revolution Will Not Be Televised
8. Backlash
9. Franchise: Culture's End Game/Game Over

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the formation of American culture in the early twentieth century and its development through the twenty-first century.
- Communicate ideas and findings, adapting to a range of situations, audiences and degrees of complexity.
- Generate ideas through the analysis of a broad range of primary source material.
- Analyse and evaluate the contributions made by existing scholarship related to the history and theory of culture.
- Act with limited supervision and direction within defined guidelines, accepting responsibility for achieving deadlines.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

[Specific reading list for the module](#)

Subject specific skills

See learning outcomes.

Transferable skills

See learning outcomes.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Tutorials	2 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Private study	130 hours (87%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

History modules require students to undertake extensive independent research and reading to prepare for seminars and assessments. As a rough guide, students will be expected to read and prepare to comment on three substantial texts (articles or book chapters) for each seminar taking approximately 3 hours. Each assessment requires independent research, reading around 6-10 texts and writing and presenting the outcomes of this preparation in an essay, review, presentation or other related task.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A4

Assessment component	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Seminar contribution	20%		No
Oral contributions in seminars and lectures about responses to reading, lecture or seminar material			

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Reassessment component			
1000-word reflective essay in lieu of seminar contribution			Yes (extension)
Assessment component			
3000 word essay	80%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback provided via Tabula; optional oral feedback in office hours.

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- Year 2 of UENA-VQ34 Undergraduate English and History (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)
- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)

This module is Core option list C for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V7 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)
- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V7 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
- Year 2 of UHIA-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)

This module is Option list E for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- Year 2 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)