HI2C6-15 Sex and the US Military: from Cold War to War on Terror

26/27

Department
History
Level
Undergraduate Level 2
Module leader
Susan Carruthers
Credit value
15
Module duration
10 weeks
Assessment
100% coursework
Study location
University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Since World War II, the military has loomed large in the United States: significant not only for its war-waging functions and budgetary claims but as a parallel welfare state. The site of intense political contestation, the US armed forces have also formed a battleground in battles over sex, sexual violence, and sexuality: the focus of this 15 CAT module. Organised into three parts, this module will explore different facets of of sex-- as a problem and resource-- for the US military over the decades since World War II.

Module web page

Module aims

Students will first consider the ways in which (heterosexual) sex has been construed, implicitly or more explicitly, as a "reward" for men's military service, and the consequences of this sexual prerogative for militarized communities in the United States as well as overseas. The second section of the module assesses how women have been recruited into and deployed by the US military since 1945, examining debates over women's inclusion in combat roles and how gender has been "weaponised" in the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The module concludes by

analysing questions of sexual violence, homosexuality and transexuality in the military, allowing students to historicise present-day struggles over who is permitted to serve-- in which capacities, and under what terms-- in various branches of the US military.

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.

Part I: Sex and the US soldier

1. Why and how gender, sex and sexuality matter in the US military
2. The US military and commercial sex
3. Domestication: a 'family friendly' army?

Part II: Gender in the Armed Services
4) Masculinity and femininity at war in Vietnam
5) Recruitment and training
6) Reading Week
7) Women in combat

Part III: Managing sexuality in the US military
8) The queerness of the military
9) Sexual violence: an invisible war?
10) Transgender service: the final frontier?

Learning outcomes

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

- Demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the multiple ways in which sex and sexuality have structured US military service in the years since World War II.
- 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, including sources produced by active duty personnel and veterans.
- Analyse and evaluate the contributions made by existing scholarship.
- Act with limited supervision and direction within defined guidelines, accepting responsibility for achieving deadlines.

Indicative reading list

Reading lists can be found in Talis

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	1 session of 1 hour (1%)
Other activity	2 hours (1%)
Private study	129 hours (86%)
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.

Other activity description

Film screening

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

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Seminar contribution	20%		No
Reassessment component			
1000 word reflective essay in lieu of Seminar Contribution			Yes (extension)
Assessment component			
3000 word policy position paper	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-V102 Undergraduate History (Renaissance and Modern History Stream)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-V100 Undergraduate History
- 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 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)