

# TH319-15 Doing Theatre History

**26/27**

**Department**

SCAPVC - Theatre and Performance Studies

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 3

**Module leader**

David Coates

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

This module looks at how, where and for what purposes theatre history is activated in society and culture today. It will introduce students to key principles of theatre historiography and will provide opportunities for them to apply these in a variety of ways. Students will engage with archives, archival practices and different types of evidence that inform us about the theatrical past and will be challenged to think critically about these structures and sources. Specific weeks of the course will consider how historical acting styles and audiences can be understood; how the digital humanities are changing research into theatre history; how theatre history is curated and narrated in museums, galleries and a range of theatre spaces and for what purpose; and how and why we produce historical reconstructions and engage with historic theatre practices, such as at Shakespeare's Globe or the Tyne Theatre and Opera House. Students will also see how theatre history and historians are activated in the creation of new theatre pieces, including through a practical workshop with a practitioner/ company who ground their work in real people and events. Ultimately, the module asks students to think about the relationship between theatre, history and theatre history in a variety of ways. Examples studied will often be taken from British theatre history in the long nineteenth century, though students can bring materials from other contexts and periods to classes and their assessments.

### Module aims

This module aims to:

- explore the ways in which theatre history is researched, written and applied in society and culture today.
- introduce students to a range of historiographical questions, issues and principles through readings, discussion and hands-on activities in class.
- expose students to a range of sources used in the construction of theatre history and to help them to develop the skills required to analyse and activate them.
- enable students to apply their understanding to undertake the role of the theatre historian for themselves.

## 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.

Week 1: Introduction to Theatre Historiography

Week 2: Organising Theatre History: Archives and Periodisation

Week 3: Interrogating Evidence: Material Traces and Iconography

Week 3: Curating Theatre History: Museums and Galleries

Week 4: On Acting and Audiences

Week 5: Theatre Reconstruction and Historical Practices

Week 6: Reading Week Field Trip

Week 7: History on Stage: Contemporary Practices

Week 8: History on Stage: Practical Workshop and supplementary Project Tutorials

Week 9: Digital Humanities: Big Data and Mapping Theatre History

Week 10: In-Class Project sharing and research and development.

## Learning outcomes

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

- confidently engage in a research-based investigation and demonstrate an ability to locate primary and secondary sources using a range of resources and archives (digital and/or physical) that they have been exposed to within classes and through out-of-class tasks.
- critique and interpret the primary and secondary sources that they locate relating to theatre history.
- demonstrate a sound understanding of historiographical principles, concepts, questions and methods.
- think creatively about how contemporary audiences do and could engage with theatre history and disseminate theatre history to a contemporary audience for themselves.

## Indicative reading list

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

## Research element

in the assessment students are asked to undertake original research.

## Subject specific skills

- Subject-specific research skills: an understanding of how to locate sources and resources for research into theatre histories.
- Critical analysis of sources for the development of theatre histories.
- Practical knowledge on how to transfer theatre history into writing/ curated exhibitions/ theatrical works.

## Transferable skills

- Communication skills: written and oral, through in-class discussions and activities and assessments.
  - Organisational and project management skills: in delivering assessments and weekly tasks.
  - Research skills: in libraries and archives, using a range of primary and secondary sources.
  - Intellectual skills: critical analysis, developing an argument, reasoning, discussion.
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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	8 sessions of 2 hours (11%)
Project supervision	1 session of 30 minutes (0%)
Practical classes	1 session of 2 hours (1%)
External visits	1 session of 10 hours (7%)
Private study	45 hours (30%)
Assessment	76 hours 30 minutes (51%)
Total	150 hours

### Private study description

Each week students will have 1-2 readings and a task. In addition, in some weeks students will have some material to view (productions/ documentaries). It is expected that students will spend approximately 5 hours preparing for each class (45 hours private study time indicated overall).

### Costs

Category	Description	Funded by	Cost to student
Other	The module will include a practical workshop delivered by a practitioner/ company who engage with history / theatre history in their work. The module's budget will go towards paying that company/ individual to run this 2 hours workshop and to do the relevant preparation work for it.	Department	£250.00
Field trips, placements and study abroad	The module will include a field trip (likely to London or Stratford-upon-Avon) to encounter various sites where theatre history is presented to contemporary audiences. The costs they would need to cover would be return transport, refreshments, and entry to any aspects of the trip that require a fee (in London, such as the Globe Theatre's tour or Drury Lane tour; in Stratford, entry to Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust or RSC tour). Many other aspects of the visit would be arranged free of charge (ie. in London access to the V&A's Theatre and Performance Galleries and curatorial tour or digital West End walking tour). The estimated cost for the trip would be £60 based on Coventry-London advanced off-peak returns (which could be discounted if in possession of student railcards), money for lunch and entry to one paid-for attraction such as exhibition or tour.	Student	£60.00

## Assessment

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

### Assessment group A

Assessment component	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Theatre History Project Proposal	100%	76 hours 30 minutes	Yes (extension)

For this assessment you'll create a proposal for a project that engages with theatre history. The project proposal could take one of many forms. It might be (but is not limited to being) a proposal for:

- an exhibition and its content at a specific site.
- a theatrical reconstruction project (performance or space).

## Weighting

## Study time

## Eligible for self-certification

- a play's revival that engages with its performance history.
- the development of a new play/ screenplay performance that interacts with theatre history.
- a research project that investigates an under-examined aspect of theatre history.
- funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to do a theatre history project.
- a podcast or social media short form series engaging with theatre histories.

For this project proposal you will need to demonstrate an engagement with original sources and archives (digital and/or physical) and will need to apply your learning from across the module. The proposal should be presented in an appropriate style and form to align with its purpose: for example, if you're creating an exhibition proposal, it should have the look and feel of this type of document. Your project proposal should be approximately 4500 words and may be accompanied by images, diagrams etc, as suitable to the form you have selected.

Reassessment component is the same

## Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be written and will be delivered to students via Tabula. Oral feedback will be given on projects in their preparation stage (one 30 min meetings with each student).

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## Availability

## Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 3 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies
- Year 4 of UENA-QW35 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies with Intercalated Year
- Year 3 of ULNA-R1WB Undergraduate French and Theatre Studies
- UFRA-R1W4 Undergraduate French with Theatre Studies
  - Year 3 of R1W4 French with Theatre Studies
  - Year 3 of R1W4 French with Theatre Studies
- Year 3 of UGEA-RW24 Undergraduate German and Theatre Studies
- Year 3 of UGEA-RW25 Undergraduate German and Theatre Studies (3-year)
- Year 3 of UHPA-R4W4 Undergraduate Hispanic Studies and Theatre Studies
- Year 3 of UHPA-R4W5 Undergraduate Hispanic Studies and Theatre Studies
- Year 3 of ULNA-R3WA Undergraduate Italian and Theatre Studies
- UVCA-LA99 Undergraduate Liberal Arts
  - Year 3 of LA99 Liberal Arts
  - Year 3 of LA92 Liberal Arts with Classics
  - Year 3 of LA73 Liberal Arts with Design Studies

- Year 3 of LA83 Liberal Arts with Economics
- Year 3 of LA82 Liberal Arts with Education
- Year 3 of LA95 Liberal Arts with English
- Year 3 of LA81 Liberal Arts with Film and Television Studies
- Year 3 of LA80 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development
- Year 3 of LA93 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development
- Year 3 of LA97 Liberal Arts with History
- Year 3 of LA71 Liberal Arts with Law
- Year 3 of LA91 Liberal Arts with Life Sciences
- Year 3 of LA75 Liberal Arts with Modern Languages and Cultures
- Year 3 of LA96 Liberal Arts with Philosophy
- Year 3 of LA94 Liberal Arts with Theatre and Performance Studies
- UVCA-LA98 Undergraduate Liberal Arts with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA85 Liberal Arts with Classics with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA72 Liberal Arts with Design Studies with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA79 Liberal Arts with Economics with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA78 Liberal Arts with Education with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA88 Liberal Arts with English with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA77 Liberal Arts with Film and Television Studies with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA76 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA86 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA90 Liberal Arts with History with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA98 Liberal Arts with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA84 Liberal Arts with Life Sciences with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA74 Liberal Arts with Modern Languages and Cultures with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA89 Liberal Arts with Philosophy with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of LA87 Liberal Arts with Theatre and Performance Studies with Intercalated Year
- UTHA-W421 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies
  - Year 3 of W421 Theatre and Performance Studies
  - Year 3 of W421 Theatre and Performance Studies
- Year 4 of UTHA-W422 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of UIPA-W4L8 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 3 of UIPA-W4L9 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies and Global Sustainable Development (with Intercalated Year)