

Liverpool John Moores University

Title: Writing the Past: Historical Fiction
Status: Definitive
Code: **6028ENGLIS** (117981)
Version Start Date: 01-08-2019

Owning School/Faculty: Humanities and Social Science
Teaching School/Faculty: Humanities and Social Science

Team	Leader
Glenda Norquay	Y

Academic Level: FHEQ6 **Credit Value:** 24 **Total Delivered Hours:** 46
Total Learning Hours: 240 **Private Study:** 194

Delivery Options

Course typically offered: Standard Year Long

Component	Contact Hours
Lecture	11
Online	12
Seminar	22
Tutorial	1

Grading Basis: 40 %

Assessment Details

Category	Short Description	Description	Weighting (%)	Exam Duration
Presentation	AS1	Group presentation(2000 word equivalent)	40	
Essay	AS2	2500 word essay	60	

Aims

1. to explore the development of the historical novel as a genre;
2. to examine the relationship between historical fiction, its historical location and its moment of production
3. to assess techniques used to create a sense of the past, and consider the reading

dynamics of historical fiction and its changing audiences

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module the student should be able to:

- 1 Critically review , consolidate and extend their understanding of the development of the historical novel as a literary form, with particular reference to reading dynamics and audiences ;
- 2 Critically evaluate the various ways in which a sense of the past is constructed in a literary text, integrating new theoretical concepts;
- 3 Accept complete accountability for presenting ideas, using creative skills, in a group presentation.

Learning Outcomes of Assessments

The assessment item list is assessed via the learning outcomes listed:

Group presentation	3	
2500 word essay	1	2

Outline Syllabus

Theorising the genre: Lukács, Jameson, Radway

The birth of the historical novel: Sir Walter Scott, Waverley (1814)

Writing History in the 19th century: Macaulay, Carlyle, Manzoni

Masculine romance: R.L. Stevenson, Kidnapped (1886) or A. Conan Doyle, The White Company (1891) or S.J. Weyman, Under the Red Robe (1894)

A woman's genre? Georgette Heyer, The Devil's Cub (1932)

Postmodernism and the problem of history: J. Fowles, The French Lieutenant's Woman (1969) or A.S. Byatt, Possession (1990)

A crack across the table of history: reconstructing World War One: S. Faulkes, Birdsong (1993) or P. Barker, Regeneration (1991)

Hybrid histories and genre fiction: e.g. Laurie King, The Beekeepers' Apprentice (1994); Bernard Cornwall, Sharpe series

Representing history: group seminar presentations

Learning Activities

Lectures, seminars, workshops

Notes

This module builds on the interdisciplinary focus of the degree programme by examining a form which explicitly brings together 'history' and 'literature'. It explores the development of the historical novel as a genre and examines ways in which

writers at different moments in time have chosen to address history and reconstruct versions of the past. Assessing the dynamics between a fictional past and moments of production, it asks why particular historical episodes are popular with writers at specific points in time, and what it means to read, interpret and reconstruct the past in fictional form. It looks at literary techniques used to create a 'sense of the past', the positioning of readers in relation to historical understanding, the changing gendered dynamics of the form, and fluctuations in critical reception. Beginning with the emergence of the form in the 19th century, it traces its increasing popularity, popularisation and politicisation and examines the range of different forms of historical fiction now available. It will situate historical novels within debates around fiction as history, history as fiction. The focus of the module is on British fiction but, if interested, students can engage in comparative explorations of the form in other cultures.

Assessment 1 for this module will be based on small group presentations which explore the diversity of the genre and are then submitted in written form. The second assessment will be an essay.