We use cookies to ensure that we deliver the best user experience of our website. If you would like to, you can change your cookie settings at any time. Continue

Transcript of John Fagg discussing postgraduate supervision in American and Canadian Studies

Title: **John Fagg discusses postgraduate supervision in American and Canadian Studies (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAUd0rnoAiM)**

Duration: 2:15

My name is John Fagg and I teach in the Department of American and Canadian Studies.

My research is focussed on the big question to start with 'How did the 19th century become the 20th century?'.

That sounds silly because it's so big but you can break that down in various ways. American cultural historians have been interested for a long time in the ways in which, the processes which we can comment as modernity - urbanisation, industrialisation, massification - come together in those decades around 1900.

I'm interested particularly then in the ways in which that process of change takes cultural expression and finds cultural form.

More specifically again, the ways in which ideas of genre, of style, of modes of expression, bridge that gap between 19th century and 20th century. Examining ideas of stable realism that we might associate with certain kinds of 19th century art and literature and the ways in which that then transfers or becomes something that we recognise as being a response to modernity. Perhaps an idea of modernism itself.

So in all of those ways, I'm interested in the kind of messiness of cultural change. The ways in which genres or styles or modes from one period seem to spill over into or become apparent in or are revived through the work of a later moment.

In that sense I guess I'm interested in ideas that are shared by colleagues here at Birmingham that seem to have particular relevance to the work that's being done by people involved in the new research centre for the study of cultural modernity. I'm interested in working with colleagues and potentially with research students who are interested in ideas of realism in literature or in our visual art. Or perhaps the relationship between those ideas of word and image and relationships between them.

More broadly, that idea of a cultural response to late 19th, early 20th modernity.

© University of Birmingham 2014