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Teaching Stories: AMS students create 1990s zine

by
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AMS :: ATX is a blog dedicated to representing the many activities and interests of the department of American Studies at The University of Texas at Austin. Together with the department's Twitter feed, this blog exists to serve the AMS and Austin communities by acting as a hub for up-to-date information on events and opportunities at UT and beyond.





It's no secret that American Studies courses are among the most fascinating, enriching, and fun at UT. Today, we bring you a feature on a unique creative assignment that one of our Ph.D. candidates and Assistant Instructors, **Brendan Gaughen**, created for his undergraduate 311s course, "America in the 1990s": a 1990s era zine.

Here's what Brendan had to say about the project:

During the semester, students read about and discussed the activist and community-building potential of zines and this assignment was inspired by a desire to have students participate in something creative and collective, using a format that was quite popular in the 1990s. In addition to creating a single-page visual representation of their final paper (a topic they had been researching and writing about for most of the semester), students submitted a 2-3 page reflection paper describing why they chose particular images and text and how this creative



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visual format allows them to convey something different about their project than a typical research paper. Being a class about the cultural history of the 1990s, having students contribute to a collective zine seemed like an obvious choice for an assignment and I am quite impressed at what they created. Doing the layout was more complicated than I anticipated (it required cutting everything in half and reassembling four different halves per two-sided page), but the result is something tangible that students can hang onto as a memento.

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