

The Ben Auburn Award in Cultural Criticism

The Ben Auburn Award in Cultural Criticism seeks to stimulate the production and recognition of works of cultural criticism by students at The University of Akron through an annual awards competition and symposium administered by the Williams Honors College. In addition, there will be a second category “**Reexamining History and Culture,**” recognizing the lenses through which we look at history. **The first prize in each category will be \$500.**

The 2022 Symposium will be held virtually, on **Friday, April 29, 2022**, and awards will be made provided sufficient entries are received in each category.

Cultural criticism does not vilify our society. Rather, as culture adapts and changes, criticism identifies and assesses trends in the arts, aesthetics, and ideas of a human society. The critique is limited neither to high culture nor to popular movements, it can be applied across all human artistic and intellectual achievements. Moreover, cultural criticism can take many forms and appear in a variety of media. A series of related reviews, an extended essay or article, a monograph, or a chapter in a book are some written forms; video, audio, or filmed programs may constitute cultural criticism, as may exhibitions or performances, and works of imaginative textual (poems, fiction), pictorial, sculptural, and performance art designed primarily to reflect other works of the imagination.

The special topic for this year’s Ben Auburn Award in Cultural Criticism is “**Reexamining History and Culture.**” The evaluation of history and culture is always made through the lens of the observer, that is, the preconceived ideas and biases that we all possess. Critical Race Theory (CRT) has recently gained attention as a reexamination of history and culture with a critical evaluation of the lenses through which they were previously viewed. How does this cultural dialogue challenge society and make us reconsider previous conclusions? Does it go too far? Does it not go far enough?

The Ben Auburn Award, established by Mark, Sandy, and David Auburn in memory of their son and brother Ben, seeks to expand the boundaries of cultural criticism, the capacity of our students to participate in its creation, and the opportunities to grapple with ideas expressed in any form. It will recognize thoughtful analysis and commentary, reflective and careful judgment, and sustained acquisition of knowledge and taste. It will reward original thinking and expression. It will encourage intellectual risk-taking subjected to public assessment.

For more information please contact Prof. D. Dane Quinn, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Research, Williams Honors College, at quinn@uakron.edu, or at 330-972-6302. Additional details are also available at:

<https://www.uakron.edu/honors/students/ben-auburn-award.dot>

Submission

The Ben Auburn Award competition is open to **all undergraduate students** at The University of Akron. Up to five participants will be invited to take part in the virtual public symposium on April 29, 2022. **The first prize for the Ben Auburn Award is \$500.**

Works must be submitted by

**Friday, April 22, 2022
5:00 p.m.**

to receive full consideration by the Awards Committee. The production and the accompanying form should be submitted by email to honors@uakron.edu.



Williams Honors College
The University of Akron
Akron, OH 44325-1803



The 2022 Ben Auburn Award in Cultural Criticism

Productions and the submission form should be submitted to honors@uakron.edu.

Submission Deadline: Friday, April 22, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

Award Symposium: Friday, April 29, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

Submission Form [\(Please Print\)](#)

Name:	Student ID:
Email (@uakron.edu):	Phone:
Title of Submission:	
Major:	Student Status:
Format of Presentation:	

[Please include a brief \(maximum 200 words\) description of your submission](#)

Are you available to present on Friday, April 29, 2022?	
Yes	No (disqualifies entry)