

---

---

## **HISTORY 1: TURNING POINTS IN AMERICAN HISTORY**

Winter, 2017 @ 9LHour (8:50-9:55 MWF)

Professor Jennifer Miller, [jennifer.m.miller@dartmouth.edu](mailto:jennifer.m.miller@dartmouth.edu)

Professor Robert Bonner, [robert.bonner@dartmouth.edu](mailto:robert.bonner@dartmouth.edu)

Office hours: Prof. Miller, Fri., 1 – 4 PM Carson 410

Prof. Bonner, Mon. and Wed., 10 – 11, Carson 208

---

---



As an alternative to a “survey course” (which by design marches students from the “beginning” to the “end” of U.S. history), this introduction to American history takes up a series of five “turning points” that were of particular importance in a developing American order. At its heart, this course examines one central question: how do we understand and assess historical change? Through a series of five units, students will gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of these pivotal events and of the multiple participants involved in them. They can also expect to consider various elements of college-level historical inquiry, especially those involving matters of historical narrative, causation, agency, contingency, and irony.

The course begins by examining the process of defining the physical space of the United States—Where is America? Locating the **1759 Battle of Quebec** as one (among many) turning points in the British conquest of New France will help us to better appreciate the partition of British North American during the 1775-1783 War of American Independence. Moving to the **Election of 1844** will lead us to consider how southwestern expansion of this decade resulted (in part) from a hard-fought and remarkably close political contest between rival candidates for the presidency. Here, we will also address the beginnings of the political crisis that led to the American Civil War. These two episodes will involve a self-conscious exploration of how best to understand battlefield contingencies, on the one hand, and of “watershed” elections for the U.S. presidency, on the other.

Units three and four move into parallel examinations of two modes of American social change that wrestled with the fundamental ideals of the community—What is America? We will take up the **1848 Seneca Falls Convention** as an instigator of a Women’s Suffrage movement that culminated in the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. We will contrast that “reform movement” trajectory with the **1739 failed Stono insurgency**, which, as was the case in other such revolts, spurred a backlash against African-descended slaves.

The concluding unit will address a final example of a “technological turning point” and changes in daily life that defined Americans—Who are Americans? We will do this by examining the **invention and mechanization of refrigeration** and the cultural and economic transformations it provoked. As their final project, students will draw from what they have already learned to produce an original analysis of a “turning point” of their own selection. These projects will be undertaken in consultation with the instructor.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- Reading for, attending, participating in all classes (15% of final grade)
- Exercises focused on the 1759 Battle of Quebec (10% of final grade)
- Brief oral / written report on a single presidential election (15% of final grade)
- A comparative essay about historical narrative and social change (20 % of final grade)
- Multi-stage project on a “Turning Point” of a student’s choosing, *developed in consultation with the instructor* (30% of final grade)
- Identification-Based Final Test (10% of final grade)

**All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course, regardless of what percentage of the final grade they constitute.**

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** Please Purchase each of these five books

Paul Boyer, *American History: A Very Short Introduction*

Timothy J. Shannon, *The Seven Years’ War in North America*

Lisa Tetrault, *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Woman’s Suffrage Movement, 1848 - 1898*

Peter Charles Hoffer, *Cry Liberty: The Great Stono ... Rebellion*

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

#### **Grading**

All written papers and in-class exams will be graded anonymously. With the exception of the final project and presentations, all exams and papers should be submitted **ANONYMOUSLY** with only your student ID number and not your name.

Any late submissions will be penalized by two-thirds of a letter grade (for example: from B+ to B-). Furthermore, late submissions will be penalized an additional one-third of a letter grade for each additional 24-hour period after the initial deadline. If you know that you will need an extension, you must contact us as soon as possible. Extensions will not be approved less than 24 hours before the deadline.

Always indicate the word count (excluding footnotes) at the start or end of your paper. All papers should be within 10% (either-side) of the required word count. Papers that are above or below the word count will be penalized.

## **Attendance**

You are expected to attend all classes. However, since unavoidable circumstances do arise, you are allowed to miss **up to three classes**. After three absences, short of extraordinary circumstances and communication with your dean, you will **receive no credit for class participation (15% of your grade)**. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to get the missed material from a classmate. We also expect you to arrive to class on time. A pattern of late arrivals will adversely affect your grade.

## **Honor Code**

All students should read the Dartmouth Academic Honor Principle, which can be found here: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~uja/honor/>

As per the Honor Principle, all work submitted for this course must be your own independent work, work that you have completed solely for this course. You may not collaborate or work together on papers or during course exams, except when clearly allowed by the assignment. You may not pass other peoples' work or ideas as your own – that is, you may not submit papers that are cut and pasted, copied, or paraphrased from an outside source, whether that source is another student, an internet source, or another text. You may not submit work that you have completed for another course.

When completing writing assignments, you must properly document each and every outside source from which you have obtained information or ideas. This includes direct quotations, statistics, maps and images, and other author's ideas rewritten in your own words (paraphrasing). For more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, consult: <http://writing-speech.dartmouth.edu/learning/materials/sources-and-citations-dartmouth>

If you are confused about how to properly cite sources or about what constitutes plagiarism, consult with the professors **BEFORE** submitting your assignment. It is **YOUR** responsibility to understand and follow the honor code.

## **Accommodations**

All students who may need academic adjustments or accommodations during the term are strongly encouraged to convey those needs to us as soon as possible. Early communication is especially important in cases in which students will miss class due to athletic events or religious holidays; it is also important in cases involving disabilities, which may require in-class or other accommodations. All communications will remain confidential, although it may be necessary to consult with the Student Disabilities Coordinator in some cases involving documented disabilities

Some students may also wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

## **Technology**

All cell phones must be turned off and stowed in your bag for the duration of class.  
Laptops are allowed during lectures but must only be used for note taking purposes.  
Laptops cannot be used for email, facebook, internet etc. during class time.

Daily Schedule of Readings, Viewings and Other Assignments, by Unit  
(Readings Marked with Asterisk – Available on Canvas)

**PRELUDE: Class Themes and Objectives**

- 1/4 Introduction: What is a Turning Point?
- 1/6 Visualizing Turning Points BOYER SELECTIONS (SEE CANVAS)  
\* 5 IMAGES (*BRING TO CLASS*)

**UNIT 1: “What If’s” on North American Battlefields**

- 1/9 **1759:** The Plains of Abraham & Britain’s Continental Empire \* VIEW *War That Made America*  
READ SHANNON, 1-24, 164-65
- 1/11 Imperial Rivalries and the Fate of North America SHANNON, “GEOPOLITICAL” DOCS :  
# 1-3, 10, 12, 25 (WITH INTROS, ETC)
- 1/13 Collective Mission Amidst Wartime Ebbs and Flows SHANNON, “MISSION” DOCS:  
# 6, 11, 18, 21, 29-30.
- 1/16 *MLK DAY / NO CLASS*
- 1/18 Winners & Losers in the Wake of 1759 SHANNON, “OUTCOME” DOCS:  
# 31-35

**1/20 ASSIGNMENT ON PLAINS OF ABRAHAM DUE IN CLASS**  
(Class itself will address the 2017 Inauguration as “turning point”)

**UNIT 2: The Ballot Box and American Destinies**

- 1/23 **1844:** From Polk’s Election to Empire... and then Civil War \* VIEW 1844 VIDEO  
\* KORNBLITH, “RETHINKING THE COMING OF THE CIVIL WAR”
- 1/25 Who Made 1844 a “Mandate Election”? \*CHANNING/CALHOUN/ POLK
- 1/27 The Growing Power of the Presidency \* ART, LEARS  
\*PRESIDENTIAL ADS

1/30 Pivotal Elections in the Race for the White House \* SCHLESINGER, SELECTIONS

**BRIEF ORAL AND WRITTEN REPORTS ON SINGLE PIVOTAL ELECTION (DRAWING FROM SCHLESINGER VOLUMES) DUE 1/27 (IN CLASS)**

**UNIT 3: Manifestoes, Mobilizations and “Movement History”**

2/1 **1848:** Seneca Falls and the Founding of a Woman’s Suffrage Movement \* VIEW BURNS’ VIDEO  
TETRAULT, PROLOGUE

2/3 Rights, Movements and Gender at Midcentury TETRAULT, CHAP. 1-3

2/6 Memory and Praxis Through 1920 TETRAULT, CHAP. 4-5  
\* “IRON JAWED ANGELS” VIDEO

2/8 Brainstorming Exercise for Final Project  
*(Please post short description of idea by midnight of 2/9)*

2/10 Suffrage Narratives and “Second Wave Feminism” TETRAULT, EPILOGUE  
\* FLEXNER, “CENTURY” ON ‘1848

**FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE 2/13 (IN CLASS)**

**UNIT 4: Slave Revolt, Stories, and the Problems of Evidence**

2/13 **1739:** Rebellion and Its Aftermath on the Stono River of Carolina HOFFER, 1-36 & VIDEO

2/15 Building (and Regulating) a Slave Society HOFFER, 36-110

2/17 Historians’ Narrative and Popular History HOFFER, REMAINDER OF BOOK

2/20 Caribbean Counterparts & the Question of Evidence \*ANTIGUA’S DISPUTED SLAVE CONSPIRACY OF 1736

**WRITTEN EXERCISE ON NARRATING SOCIAL CHANGE DUE ON 2/18 BY 4 PM**

## **UNIT 5: Technological Innovation and Daily Life**

- 2/22 **1916:** The Kelvinator and the Cold Chain \* FRIEDBERG, INTRO, CHAP. 1
- 2/24 Beef: Commodities, Agency, Narrative \* REES, CHAP. 4
- 2/27 Abundance and the American Century \* THE "KITCHEN DEBATE"

## **UNIT 6: Student Projects**

### **FINAL PRESENTATION OUTLINE/STORYBOARD DUE 2/26 BY 5PM**

- 3/1 Peer Review Sessions
- 3/3 NO CLASS: Drop in assistance with Professors Miller and Bonner

### **FINAL PROJECT DUE 3/6 BY 8:50 AM (CLASS TIME)**

- 3/6 --- 3/7 Students will make oral presentations, describing and fielding questions about their final projects
- 3/8 Conclusion: What is a turning point?

### **FINAL TEST: MONDAY MARCH 13, at 11:30**