HI 190 - Making History: Conflict and Community in Boston’s Past

Professor James Johnson
Fall, 2012

Making History is designed to involve students in the very activities practicing historians carry out when writing books and essays. Focusing on three critical moments in the history of Boston, students will study primary source material ranging from archival and manuscript sources to film clips and documentaries to understand the elements of American identity stretching back over 300 years. These moments are: the 1670s, when a ferocious war broke out between colonists and Indians; the late 19th-century, when European culture influenced America on the level of the arts and letters as well as through waves of immigrants; and the 1970s, when racial tensions boiled over with court-ordered busing. The course will include guided visits to the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Museum of Fine Arts, the historical sites of Copley Square, and Boston’s neighborhoods.

Grades will be based on the following proportions:
- Three module-based papers: 15% each
- Three in-class exams: 10% each
- Final project (paper, presentation): 20%
- Class participation: 5%

Whenever appropriate, the course will employ digital technology, including online portfolios of artifacts, images, documents, works of art, film and audio, maps, and assignments.

Attendance is required in every class. For each multiple of three unexcused absences your final grade will be lowered one-third (e.g., B becomes B-). Please notify your professor of any illnesses, family emergencies, or other excused absences by email, preferably in advance of your absence.

Academic Conduct. The work you submit in this course must be your own. Presenting the work of others as your own is plagiarism and will be punished by an F for the assignment and possibly for the course, with possible further sanctions by the University Academic Conduct Committee.

The Boston University Academic Conduct Code describes plagiarism as including the following: “copying the answers of another student on an examination, copying or substantially restating the work of another person or persons in any oral or written work without citing the appropriate source, and collaboration with someone else in an academic endeavor without acknowledging his or her contribution.” A more detailed discussion with examples appears elsewhere in the Code (see http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/undergrad-resources/code/#II). It is your responsibility to read these pages carefully and know exactly what constitutes plagiarism.

All websites consulted for use in written work must be acknowledged in your papers. Unacknowledged use of material from the internet will be considered plagiarism and punished as such.
Required Readings


Schedule of Classes

**Section One - Conquest & Community in Early America: King Philip’s War**

September 4 - Introduction to the Course

September 6 - Overview of King Philip’s War

*Assigned Reading:*
  - Thomas O’Connor, Chapter One, “A Bible Commonwealth,” *Bibles, Brahmins, and Bosses* (5-20)
  - Philip Mandell, Chapter One, “Struggles in New England,” *King Philip’s War* (1-31)

*Discussion section - Reading and discussion of documents in class:*
  - John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” (1630)
  - William Wood on the Indian’s response to the English presence (1634)
  - Miantonomo, “Call for Indian Unity” (1642)

September 11 - Guest lecture: Sarah Philips on Plants and Animals in Colonial History

*Assigned Reading:*
  - John Easton, “A Relacion of the Indyan Warre” (1675)

September 13 - Contours of the War

*Assigned Reading:*
  - Mandell, Chapter Three, “The War Widens,” *King Philip’s War* (60-89)

*Discussion section - Reading and discussion of documents in class:*
  - Town of Lancaster, “Petition to the Governor and Council of Massachusetts” (1675)
• “A Memorandum of Indian Children Put Forth into Service to the English” (1676)

September 18 - Archival Practicum

*Assigned Reading:*
• Mandell, Chapter Four, “Indians Ascendant,” *King Philip’s War* (90-117)

September 20 - Visit, Massachusetts Historical Society

*Assigned Reading:*
• O’Connor, Chapter Two, “Bluebloods and Redcoats,” *Bibles, Brahmins, and Bosses* (21-37)

Students will tour the research library and exhibition space; learn procedures for ordering, handling, and consulting objects from the collection; and receive assignments for archives, books, or artifacts to be studied for semester-long project. At the end of the semester members of each group will give a presentation of their object at the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the group will present an 8-10 page paper on their findings. Each member of the group will also submit a 1-2 page account of the particular contribution he/she made to the project.

Partial list of materials to be considered:

**Manuscript, archival, and printed sources:**
- Lydia Child, *The First Settlers of New-England: or, Conquest of the Pequods, Narragansets and Pokanokets* (Boston, 1828 [?])
- John Cotton, Diary [kept from 6 March 1666 to November 1667 and 12 October 1670 to 23 July 1678, together with a Massachusetts Indian Language vocabulary]

**Artifacts:**
- Elm burl sump bowl [a trophy from the wigwam of King Philip, when he was slain in 1676, by Richard. Presented to the MHS by Eleazer Richard, his grandson, 1655-75]
- Cutlass [hangar or cutlass belonging to Col Benjamin Church and believed to be the sword Church was wearing when Metacomet, Sachem of the Wampanoags, was slain in 1676; 17th century]
- Flintlock from musket [lock of the gun by which King Philip was killed, 1676]

*Topics distributed, paper #1 (4 pages)*

September 25 - Interpretations of the War

*Assigned Reading:*
• Michael Wigglesworth, “God’s Controversy with New-England” (1661)
• Increase Mather, “An Earnest Exhortation to the Inhabitants of New-England” (1676)
• Anne Nelsen, “King Philip’s War and the Hubbard-Mather Rivalry”
September 27 - King Philip’s War and American Identity

**Assigned Reading:**
- Mandell, Chapter Five, “Colonists Victorious and Wounded,” “Epilogue,” *King Philip’s War* (118-44)

Discussion Section - Exam #1 (50 minutes); discussion of MHS projects: approaches, strategies, deadlines for the semester

**Section Two - The European Influence: Culture & Ideas in 19th-century Boston**

October 2 - Boston in the 19th Century: Culture & Ideas in Context

**Reading Assignment:**

*Paper #1 due (4 pages)*

October 4 - Alexis de Tocqueville’s America

**Assigned Reading:**
- Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (189-95, 252-68, 286-97)

Discussion Section - *Democracy in America*

October 9 - Monday schedule, no class

October 11 - Architectural tour of Copley Square, Trinity Church, and the Boston Public Library

**Assigned Reading:**
- O’Connor, Chapter Three, “The Brahmin Aristocracy,” *Bibles, Brahmins, and Bosses* (38-57)

October 16 - American Expatriates, i: John Singer Sargent

**Assigned Reading:**
- O’Connor, Chapter Four, “The Friends of Man,” *Bibles, Brahmins, and Bosses* (58-81)

**Assigned Viewing:**
- Selected works by Sargent (on Course Blackboard website)

October 17 - 6:30 p.m. Gallery lecture on John Singer Sargent, Boston Museum of Fine Arts

*(attendance strongly encouraged but not required)*

Students will select either a portrait in the MFA’s Sargent collection or an object from a list of choices drawn from the architecture in Copley Square to write about. Papers are to be 5 pages in length and are due in class November 6.

For portraits. Working with books on the course bibliography, write a biographical sketch of the subject
with any details you may find or plausibly conclude about his or her personality. With this in mind, discuss
the portrait in terms of mood, style, and setting. In what ways do Sargent’s choices (e.g., colors and
composition, posture, dress, facial expression, etc.) capture or contradict what you know about the person?

List of paintings to consider:
- The Daughters of Edward Darley Boit (Mary Louisa Boit, Julia Overing Boit, Jane
  Hubbard Boit, and Florence D. Boit) (1884)
- Edith, Lady Playfair (Edith Russell) (1884)
- Mrs. Edward Darley Boit (Mary Louisa Cushing) (1887)
- Mrs. Charles E. Inches (1887)
- Helen Sears (1895)
- Mrs. Fiske Warren and Her Daughter Rachel (Gretchen Osgood and Rachel Warren)
  (1903)
- General Charles J. Paine (1904)
- Nude Study of Thomas E. McKeller (c. 1917-20)

For objects in Copley Square. Working with articles and books on the course bibliography, write a
contextual description and analysis of the object. This should include the intention of its creator, responses
(favorable and unfavorable) from its contemporaries, and why you think its style and content were selected
for this particular space.

Partial list of objects to consider
- From Boston Public Library:
  - John Singer Sargent, any one of the 18 murals in the series The Triumph of
    Religion (1890-1919)
  - Edward Austin Abbey, The Quest for the Holy Grail (1891-1901)
  - Frederick MacMonnies, Bacchante and Infant Faun (1894)
  - Puvis de Chavannes, any one of the 8 murals in the series, The Muses of
    Inspiration (1895)
  - Any three of the panels inscribed with names on the exterior of the building
    Bela Pratt, Art and Science (1911)
- From Trinity Church:
  - John La Farge, any three subjects among his interior murals (1867-77)
  - John La Farge, any one of the 4 stained-glass windows (Christ Preaching, The
    New Jerusalem, Purity, Presentation of Mary at the Temple, The
    Resurrection [1883-1902]
  - Augustus Saint Gaudens, Phillips Brooks (1907-10)

October 18 - American Expatriates, ii: Henry James

Assigned Reading:
- Henry James, “Point of View”

Discussion Section - Discussion of Sargent and James

October 23 - Boston’s New Immigrants

Assigned Reading:
- O’Connor, Chapter Five, “The Yankee and the Celt,” Bibles, Brahmins, and
  Bosses (82-106)
- Mary Antin, “Chapter One, “Within the Pale”; Chapter Nine, “The Promised
  Land,” A Promised Land (1-28, 180-205)
October 25 - Brahmins and Newcomers: Philanthropy, Public Schooling, and Assimilation

Assigned Reading:

Discussion Section - Discussion of O’Connor and Antin

October 30 - End of the Melting Pot? Ethnic Tensions in Turn-of-the-Century Boston

Assigned Reading:
- Mary Antin, Chapter Two, “Judges in the Gate,” *They Who Knock at Our Gates* (1914) (31-94)

November 1 - The Place of Europe in American Identity

Assigned Reading:
- Randolph Bourne, “Transnational America” (1916), *History of a Radical and Other Papers* (160-84)

Discussion Section - Exam #2 (50 minutes); discussion of Antin and Bourne

Section Three - Race in the 20th Century: Desegregating Boston’s Public Schools

November 6 - Boston and the Great Migration

Assigned Reading:

Paper #2 due (5 pages)

November 8 - Race and the Public Schools in Boston

Assigned Reading:
- O’Connor, Chapter Seven, “Towards a New Boston,” *Bibles, Brahmins, and Bosses* (128-51)
- J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground* (1-28)

Discussion Section - Discussion of Malcolm X, Sandbrook, and Lukas

November 13 - Boston’s Neighborhoods

Assigned Reading:
- Lukas, *Common Ground* (139-59)
- Michael MacDonald, Chapter Two, “Freedoms,” *All Souls* (16-49)
November 15 - Guided Tour by Bus of Roxbury, South Boston, City Hall Plaza, Charlestown

Assigned Reading:
- Lukas, *Common Ground* (160-208)
- MacDonald, Chapter Three, “Ghetto Heaven,” *All Souls* (79-106)

Students will explore the media links on the class website, containing oral histories, archived news and film sources, and official documents about the busing crisis. Select two sources / documents to describe and analyze (4 pages). Why did you select these documents? What specific light does this material shed on the crisis?

November 20 - Why Busing?

Assigned Reading:
- Lukas, *Common Ground* (222-51)

November 22 - The Community Reacts: Roxbury & South Boston

Assigned Reading:
- Lukas, *Common Ground* (277-300)
- MacDonald, Chapter Four, “Fight the Power” (79-106)

Discussion Section: Discussion of Lukas and MacDonald

November 27 - The Community Reacts: Charlestown

Assigned Reading:
- Lukas, *Common Ground* (301-26)
- MacDonald, Chapter Five, “Looking for Whitey” (107-34)

Paper #3 due (4 pages)

December 4 - The Legacy of the Busing Crisis: Boston and Beyond

Assigned Reading:
- O'Connor, Conclusion, “A Bible Commonwealth,” *Bibles, Brahmins, and Bosses* (152-56)

December 6 - Panel Discussion: Race and American Identity

Discussion Section - Exam #3 (50 minutes); discussion of Formisano

December 11 - American Identity in the 21st Century

Final exam date (to be announced) - Presentation of projects at Massachusetts Historical Society, group papers (8-10 pages) and individual descriptions (1-2 pages) due