THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS SYSTEM
Nine Universities. Six Health Institutions. Unlimited Possibilities.

Steven Mintz

Executive Director, The Institute for Transformational Learning
Professor of History, University of Texas at Austin
Chase Tower ▪ 221 W. 6th St., Austin, TX 78701 ▪ 512-499-4210 ▪ smintz@utsystem.edu

A New History for a New Century

Too many students spell history b-o-r-i- n-g. They regard history as a jumble of disconnected facts. The word they use to describe history is "irrelevant."

My goal is to make the U.S. History survey course more outcomes-focused, more-inquiry driven, more rooted in primary sources -- and also more comparative and multicultural.

My approach doesn't sacrifice coverage, but it (1) builds on the fact that students have already taken US history several times (typically in 5th, 8th, and 11th grades), and (2) seeks to be more analytical and less descriptive and, yes, less antiquarian than a typical survey course.

To engage students, the course seeks to transform passive learnings into investigators, researchers, and problem solvers. It also draws upon certain proven ways to tap public interest in history: Mythbusting, Hollywood versus history, history detectives, history's mysteries, the backstory and the rest of the story, and what if and what might have been.

My broader aim is to achieve three learning objectives:

Historical Thinking: I want students to understand that the discipline of history offers a distinctive way of thinking. It teaches us to think diachronically, dynamically, and longitudinally, and to understand that everything has a history, that people and events are situated within unfolding processes and developments, and that events and decisions must be understood in terms of the conjuncture between the contingent and certain structural dynamics.

Historical Research Skills: The ability to find, decode, critically evaluate, contextualize, compare, and interpret primary sources.

Connecting Past to Present: The ability to examine the relationship of the past and the present in a nuanced manner – to understand how history defamiliarizes the present, rebuts myths and misconceptions, refutes simplistic theories of linear progress and inevitability, reveals long-term trends and developments that we are otherwise blind to, provides precedents, parallels, analogies, and guidance and direction that may or may not be useful, and offers a fresh vantage point on present-day concerns and controversies.

Doing History Activities

The most effective way to learn history is to do history. My mission is to recreate the introductory U.S. history survey as a series of inquiry based projects, case studies, and problem solving activities that make extensive use of a broad range of primary sources. Examples include:

My History is American History
Our family histories, taken together, constitute this country's history. By conducting an anonymous online survey, we can learn a great deal about this country's diversity, including such topics as migration, occupation, and ethnic variation.

History Happened Here

Historic landmarks lurk all around us. A resource like Google's Field Trip can enrich our experience by informing us about the historic events that happened near where we are standing.

History as It Happened
Read eyewitness accounts of historic events as they happened.

Multimedia Timeline Generator
Timelines help us understand the chronology and interrelationship of historical events. A multimedia timeline can provide an elegant way to visually present a series of events that have occurred over time—and to allow us to see how seemingly disconnected events overlap. Here, you will combine text and images to visually order a series of key historical developments.

History in the Headlines
How history illuminates current events and how advocates draw upon history to advance an argument.

Historical Debates
Enter a longstanding controversy raised by a particular period, drawing on primary source documents.

How Do We Know What We Know?
How do we know the size of the Native American population in 1492 or the number of Africans forced into New World slavery or how many soldiers died in the Civil War? Here we examine the process that historians use to reconstruct fundamental facts about the past.

History Through Sight and Sound
Investigate the rich potential of art, music, and photography to provide fresh insights into American history and culture.

Reading Maps
See what maps can tell us about the growth of geographical knowledge; the topography, resources and transportation networks of a geographical areas; the history of exploration and discovery; the process of migration; alterations in the natural environment; military tactics, and the distribution of social and political phenomena.

Forecasting the Future
A rocket will never be able to leave the Earth's atmosphere, The New York Times predicted on January 13, 1920.

What If…
Examine American history might have been different if a single event had turned out differently.

Ethical Judgments
Wrestle with a complex, often troubling moral dilemmas posed by the history of a particular era.

Hollywood Versus History
Examine and evaluate how a particular Hollywood film treated a historical episode.

Historical Facts: False and Strange but True
A cow kicking over a lantern didn't cause the Great Chicago Fire. Nor was pink always a girl's color and blue a boy's color.

History Through…

In this course, students use a wide range of primary sources to solve a historical mystery, answer a question, or trace change over time. Some are textual, including letters, diaries, speeches, government documents, but many are unconventional.

Advertisements
Advertisements are much more than mere mechanisms for selling products. They also provide insights into the growth of a consumer economy and American society's shifting conceptions of masculinity and femininity and its changing attitudes

toward sex and sexuality. Advertising played a crucial role in the transformation of the American economy from one in which most goods were produced and sold locally to one dominated by brand names and products distributed nationally.

Before the 1880s, most advertisements consisted entirely of print. The print itself was primarily informational: It described the product and where it could be obtained. The few images that ads contained were highly stylized and rarely illustrated the specific product for sale. Very few ads featured slogans or brand names. Beginning in the 1890s, however, advertisements underwent a profound transformation. They began to resemble advertising today, emphasizing visual images, slogans, catch-phrases, and appeals to individual's health and psychological well-being. The J. Walter Thompson advertising agency promoted Scott tissue by warning consumers of ''the troubles caused by harsh toilet tissue.'' Lucky Strike promoted cigarettes to women first by adopting the slogan “Reach for a Lucky instead of a sweet” and later by describing cigarettes as “torches of freedom,” as symbols of modern values.

Advertisements helped to transform American values. They made Americans aware of such “problems” as halitosis and body odor. More seriously, they helped promote a shift from an emphasis on savings toward consumption. They also helped to shift a culture oriented toward words toward visual images.

Architecture

Houses do not simply provide shelter. They offer valuable clues into the nature of the values that people held in the past and to the way that household members interacted. Between the early colonial period and the Civil War, American architecture underwent far-reaching changes--transformations that tell us a great deal about shifting ideas about privacy and refinement.

The very first buildings in colonial New England and Virginia were crude, temporary structures, often little more than lean-tos covered with branches or cloth. The roofs were covered with thatch--rushes or branches woven into mats--or with sod or plastered with mud. The earliest dwellings were called "cellars" since they resembled the simple structures that farmers in England used to store vegetables. Subsequently, houses were made out of split logs.

Over the course of the seventeenth century, buildings in New England increasingly consisted of a stone foundation and a wooden frame covered with clapboard--thin, narrow boards that overlap the ones below, so that joints aren't exposed to the weather. The structures were painted in "sadd" cololrs, usually dark greys or browns or reds. These houses were quite small, often no more than 500 square feet, with a very low ceiling. There was usually just one or two rooms, with a massive chimney at one end or in the center. There was little specialization of space; the same rooms were used as kitchen, living room, dining room, and bedroom.

In many seventeenth-century New England houses, the roofs generally had a short, steep front slope and a long, shallow rear slope--a design that today is termed "saltbox." To provide protection from the harsh New England winters, windows and doors were recessed and the house, barn, and shed were often attached to the main house. In two story houses, the second story often overhanged the first. There was no glass in the windows of the earliest structures. Instead, wooden shutters covered these windows. Only later did the New Englands cover their windows with oilskins or glass; given the cost of glass, these windows were small and might contain as many as twelve small panes of glass. A house's metalwork--its hinges, handles and nails--were made of hand-forged iron.

There were noticeable regional differences in seventeenth-century colonial architecture. In the Spanish borderlands and in New England, dwellings and public buildings were grouped closely together, while in the Southern colonies, structures were more widely dispersed. Structures in early New England were especially likely to be built of wood. Only eight New England houses are known to have been built out of brick and four out of stone prior to the eighteenth century. In the Middle and Southern colonies, houses were more likely to be built out of stone or brick and in the Spanish borderlands, out of adobe, baked clay.

During the eighteenth century, architecture and furniture in British North America increasingly mimicked popular English styles. Drawing upon English design books, carpenters reproduced, in somewhat simplified form, the Georgian style that was popular in eighteenth century England. Based on the ideas of the Italian Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio, the Georgian style of architecture was popular during the reigns of George I, II, and III (1714-1820). Georgian houses were much larger than their seventeenth century counterparts. Rectangular in shape, and two or even three stories in height, Georgian houses were highly symmetrical in design. Roofs were less steep than in the seventeenth century. Specialized rooms--kitchen, dining

room, bedrooms, and a sitting room--began to appear among the more well-to-do. In New England, the earliest Georgian structures were built out of wood and painted blue, green, pink, or yellow. Later buildings used brick, carved wooden trim, brass hardware, and larger window panes. Chimneys were often placed at both ends of the house.

Ornamentation became more elaborate. The front door was more conspicuous than in the past. The front entrance was often flanked by columns supporting a pediment, with steps leading up to the door. Windows were often topped by arches or other designs.

Following the American Revolution, new architectural styles became more common. The federal style, like the Georgian style, emphasized symmetry and balance, but placed an even higher premium on elegance. Roofs were less steeply pitched and were sometimes surrounded by a low, ornamental railing known as a balustrade. Windows were larger, and were often topped by an arch. Many federal style houses included bay windows, which projected outward from the houses walls. Glass often surrounded the front doorway, which was also topped with an arched window. Other symbols of refinement and affluence included curved staircases and detailed moldings.

Another architectural style that became popular after 1820 was known as the Greek Revival, which incorporated elements of classical design. Greek Revival houses, usually two stories in size and white in color, featured design elements borrowed from Greek temples. These included doorways or front porches flanked by fluted classical columns, and windows topped with prominent lintels (horizontal beams). Inspired in part by the Greek war of independence, Greek Revival architecture also represented a reaction against British styles in the wake of the War of 1812 and a desire to associate American democracy with the Greek and Roman republics. Neo-classical designs, many felt, might promote civic virtue.

After 1840, Victorian styles, including the Gothic Revival and the Italianate, became more common. The Gothic Revival represented a reaction against neo-classical architecture's emphasis on symmetry and balance. Inspired by the romantic movement in literature, the Gothic Revival celebrated the medieval past. Features of this architecutral styles included steeply gabled roofs, pointed arches, picturesque silhouette, towers and battlements, bay windows, and leaded stained glass. Intalianate architecture featured flat roofs, round arches, heavily decorated, bracketed cornices and eaves, tall windows at first floor hood moldings at windows, porches, and cupolas, ornamental structures on the roof.

Art

Historical art works of art are not simply “illustrations” or “replications” of historical events or settings; rather, these works actively shape meanings, values, and attitudes and construct and deconstruct cultural myths.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Europeans treated American culture with contempt. They charged that America was too commercial and materialistic, too preoccupied with money and technology to produce great art and literature. “In the four quarters of the globe,” asked one English critic, “who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue?” Writing toward the end of the nineteenth century, the novelist Henry James explained that the United States, in its founding decades, had none of the things necessary for great art: "No sovereign, no court, no personal loyalty, no aristocracy, no church, no clergy, no army, no diplomatic service, no country gentlemen, no palaces, no castles, nor manors, nor old country houses, nor parsonages, nor thatched cottages nor ivied ruins; no cathedrals, nor abbeys, nor little Norman churches; no great Universities nor public schools--no Oxford, nor Eton, nor Harrow; no literature, no novels, no museums, no pictures, no political society, no sporting class--no Epsom nor Ascot!"

Basic artistic implements, such as paints, brushes, and canvases, were unavailable. Most painters were simply skilled craftspeople, who devoted most of their time to painting houses, furniture, or signs. They were untrained and lacked the self-consciousness that we associate with real artists. They were imitators and illustrators, not artists. Not surprisingly, the country's few talented portrait painters of the late 18th century—John Singleton Copley, Charles Willson Peale, and Gilbert Stuart—spent much of their lives abroad.

There were three major obstacles to the creation of great art in America . The first was a problem of patronage: In the colonies, there were no churches or colonial assemblies eager to commission art works to embellish their buildings or adorn their rituals. There was no powerful monarchy that wanted art to glorify the state. And there was no aristocracy that wanted to beautify its estates. A second problem was a problem of democracy. In a democracy, could art flourish or even survive? Was there a market for anything but portraits in a commercial, predominantly Protestant society? Would the people be willing to pay for fine art? Or simply for mass culture? The third problem was a problem of legitimacy. Colonial Americans

were deeply uneasy about visual images. The Puritan ancestors had a taboo about graven images, icons, and mirrors. Before the end of the 18th century, there were very few paintings, drawings, or visual images in America . Ours was a cultural of words, not of images.

Many members of the Revolutionary generation regarded art with disdain. Art was viewed as effete, aristocratic, European. Even in the 19th century, Americans still had Puritan-like anxieties about indulging the senses. Americans associated the visual arts with luxury, corruption, and sensual appetite. Declared one early President: "When a people get a taste for the fine arts, they are ruined." In addition, America was a country filled with middle-class taboos, which limited the kinds of subjects that artists could treat. Artists couldn't include nudity in their paintings. There would be an ongoing reluctance to deal with the city and with the human body

The United States would gradually overcome these obstacles and develop a distinctive artistic tradition. In its formative era, the United States faced a problem that we now call "post-colonialism" Americans felt a profound sense of cultural inferiority; they were very vulnerable to the charge that they were vulgar, materialistic, and lacked visual acuity. There was a great fear that art in America would be derivative of art in Europe.

Many Americans wanted the United States to create a "democratic" art that would be different and distinct from art in Europe and would help the United States establish an independent national identity. During the nineteenth century, there was a widespread consensus that art needed to serve non-artistic functions: it needed to be educational or moral, to uplift the senses, and to shape character. Artists adopted several strategies to legitimate art. One strategy was to mimic the art of classical Greece and Rome. Classical art had republican associations. Classical art emphasized simplicity, purity, balance—ideals that were stressed by Americans of the Revolutionary era who were heavily influenced by the Enlightenment.

A second strategy involved historical painting. The American public hungered for visual representations of the great events of the American Revolution, and works such as John Trumbull's Revolutionary War battle scenes and his painting of the Declaration of Independence (1818) fed the public's appetite. A third strategy involved romantic landscape paintings. Landscapes attracted an enormous popular audience. Portrayals of the American landscape by artists of the Hudson River school, such as Thomas Cole, Albert Bierstadt, and Frederick Church, evoked a sense of the immensity, power, and grandeur of nature, which had not yet been tamed by an expansive American civilization. Landscapes also offered a way for Americans to commune with the divine. Furthermore, landscape paintings represented a reaction against the urban and industrial growth of cities that threatened to destroy the beauty of the American environment.

During the nineteenth century, landscape paintings dominated American painting. During the colonial era, two competing conceptions of the natural environment prevail. The New England Puritans regarded wilderness as a place of savagery and as a source of temptation that needed to conquered and civilized. Colonists south of New England, in contrast, viewed wilderness as a garden that could flourish if properly cultivated. The Romantic movement of the late eighteenth century celebrated the "sublime," the intense quasi-religious emotions of awe, terror, and wonder that can be evoked by the immensity, the power, and the grandeur of nature. In a reaction against urban and industrial growth, thinkers such as the American Transcendentalists considered nature a place where individuals could overcome alienation, achieve wholeness, and commune with the divine.

After the Civil War, influential artists associated America's westward movement with progress. Many regarded untamed nature as symbolic of American national identity; and stressed the essential harmony between wilderness and such innovations as the railroad and industry.

After 1900, many artists began to reject picturesque, pastoral landscapes and instead focused on gritty urban scenes or on abstract art. Landscape paintings mainly became the preserve of regionalists. Still, a number of modernist artists did turn to the Western landscape for inspiration.

Some artists, like John Marin, drew on cubism and expressionism to portray the Western landscape. But the most influential 20th century artist of the Western landscape was Georgia O'Keeffe. Her art remained in the representational tradition favored by Western artists, yet it was clearly modern art. Her paintings sought to capture the West's majesty and transcendence. Her paintings distilled the Western landscape into its fundamental elements, creating works of dramatic simplicity. Her paintings feature vivid, evocative colors and offer fresh new ways of viewing the environment. Her paintings translate earth, water, and sky into geometric bands of color and light. They present a stirring yet highly personal vision of

the magnificence of a vast landscape. We don't see the objective landscape; rather, we an artist's medications see the solitude and meditation

Cemeteries

Graveyards provide a great deal of useful information about peoples' lives in the past and the evolution of cultural ideas about death. Why did early Americans call places for the dead "burying grounds" or "graveyards"—not "cemeteries"? Why did they treat graveyards as meadows, not as sacred or spooky places? How common was death in early America and who was most likely to die prematurely? How and why has the iconography of tombstones change over time? Graveyards can help answer these questions.

Gravestones were one of colonial America 's earliest indigenous art forms. They also offer valuable clues to changes in cultural values over time. The terminology that we use to describe burial places, the appearance and location of graveyards, and the iconography of gravestones has changed radically over time. In this inquiry activity, you will interpret gravestone symbols and perform "cemetery mathematics," examining changes in life expectancy.

Many of humanity's greatest monuments, including the pyramids, are memories to death. Much of our greatest literature, including the works of Dante and John Milton, deals with heaven and hell. But in the twentieth century, Americans developed a phobia about death. As sex emerged out of the closet, death was pushed back into it, not to be spoken of in polite society. Dying was left to medical technology and no longer takes place in the home but in the hospital. Funerals are abbreviated and simplified. Cremation becomes common. Mourning was increasingly thought of as a form of depression to be treated with psychological therapy.

The most striking feature about life 300 years ago was the constant presence of death. Cemeteries were located at the very center of villages, symbolizing death's central presence. Death rates were four times what they are today.

In contrast, our cemeteries are set apart from society. Usually, our cemeteries are surrounded by walls or fences. Symbolically, we deny death. After death, corpses are embalmed. They are cosmetically restored as if asleep. Coffins are selected for their superior padding, as if comfort mattered to the corpse. We use euphemisms to speak of the dead; they have passed on. We describe the premises of death with terms like funeral parlor or home.

Film

Popular films are cultural artifacts that contain messages about class, ethnicity, and gender; sociological documents that record the look and mood of a period; and psychological texts that speak to social anxieties and tensions. Films are also power educators, that express political ideas and moral values, construct cultural myths, and shape our view of history.

Movies are much more than mere entertainment. Feature films are valuable sociological, psychological, and cultural documents which tell us a great deal about the mood and atmosphere of a particular era. Movies are also educators. For a century, Hollywood has reflected and shaped public ideas about beauty, glamour, femininity, masculinity, and America 's role in the world. The movies have been instrumental in defining and disseminating ethnic and racial stereotypes, and shaping our images of the past. Movies are particularly important in constructing the public myths that define our identity as a people.

In our highly visual culture, a growing amount of what we learn about history comes from the movies. Popular films both represent and misrepresent the historical past. In constructing historical movies, filmmakers manipulate situations, personalities, and timelines and condense highly complex sequences of events in constructing historical films.

There are several distinct kinds of historical films. Especially common are "costume dramas." A costume drama typically places modern people in a carefully re-created simulation of the past. Costume dramas are usually obsessed with authenticity and accuracy: They want to get the carpet of the Titanic just right. But the historical accuracy of costume dramas tends to be extremely superficial. The characters are just like people today, reflecting present-day concerns and values. A popular example was the the recent cinematic version of Titanic, which reflected contemporary concerns with class and gender.

A second kind of historical film is the docudrama, an attempt to fashion an entertaining history lesson by blending real historical figures and events with fictional characters, dialogues, and incidents. Unlike costume dramas, docudramas claim to be essentially true to the historical facts--but they seek to fill in the gaps in the historical record. But docudramas are rarely as

free from bias as they suggest. In films like Birth of a Nation and Gone with the Wind, Hollywood reinforced racial stereotypes, and fixed in the public mind a distorted view that slave life was "idyllic," and that slaves were loyal and docile. A more recent example is Steven Spielberg's Amistad, which portrays white abolitionists as racially condescending hypocrites and which minimizes the racism in the pre-Civil War North.

A third kind of historical film is ethnocentric, telling a historical story from a very narrow point of view. Examples of ethnocentrism include not only films like John Wayne's The Alamo, which fails to present Mexican perspectives on the Texas Revolution, but World War II films that omit our allies and treat the war as if it only involved American soldiers.

A fourth form of historical films revises history with a presentist agenda. A classic example is the 1942 epic They Died with Their Boots On, a sympathetic screen biography of George Armstrong Custer. At a time when American troops faced a series of costly defeats during World War II, the story of Custer's Last Stand provided a historical example of the value of valor and sacrifice. Another example is the film Bonnie and Clyde which uses the story of two Depression-era bank robbers to address the 1960s themes of youth revolt and women's liberation.

A fifth kind of historical film brings largely ignored historical incidents to the audience's attention. This might be called this cinematic social history. The Mollie Maguires looked at a group of nineteenth-century Irish American coal miners; Hester Street , at turn of the century Jewish immigrants; Reds , at World War I-era American socialists and feminists; and Glory told the story of the Massachusetts 54th, which recounts the experiences of some of the earliest black troops to experience combat during the Civil War.

The sixth version of cinematic history is revisionist history--a version exemplified by Oliver Stone's JFK. This is an attempt to refute the dominant interpretation of history. No kind of cinematic history provokes greater outrage from critics than revisionist history. Director Oliver Stone was accused of trying to delude the audience into believing that the U.S. government, led by Lyndon Johnson, conspired to murder John Kennedy in order to prolong American involvement in Vietnam.

A seventh and final kind of cinematic history version attempts to grapple with the meaning of historical change. There have been several striking examples of this approach in recent years. Oprah Winfrey film version of Toni Morrison's novel Beloved, seeks to show how traumatic memories of slavery haunted the post-emancipation generation. Another example is Forrest Gump, which follows an idiot savant through the many of the most troubling events of the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s, including the assassination of president John F. Kennedy, Vietnam War, the Watergate Affair, the murder of former Beatle John Lennon, and the spread of AIDS. The film attempted to reflect on the meaning of these events.

Popular Music

Today, Americans use music to pass time, to relax, to set a mood, and, in religious services, to express spiritual beliefs. In the past, music served other functions. Immigrant groups passed down traditions through song. Work songs helped laborers to cope with the hardship of their tasks and synchronize their movements. Many social movements, including the labor movement, the women's suffrage movement, and the Civil Rights movement, created a repertoire of protest songs. American popular music is the product of a mixture of diverse elements, including Native American, African, English, Scottish and Irish, German, Latin American, and Hawaiian musical cultures. Technology, economics, shifting tastes, and cross-cultural contact and borrowings all shaped American popular music.

Photography

Photographs have the power to freeze time and evoke emotions even more powerfully than words. In our image-saturated society, it is important for students to learn about the history of photography and to learn how to read photographs as complex texts that need to be interpreted, not simply as objective reproductions of the external world. A single shocking photograph can sway public opinion like nothing else. During the Vietnam war, a handful of photographic images were indelibly etched into Americans' collective imagination. Recently, in the wake of the Iraq prisoner abuse scandal, we are aware more than ever of the power of photographs.

Photographs are not simply mirrors of reality. They are documents that need to be read and interpreted. Many people assume that a snapshot is an accurate, totally objective copy of a moment in time. This view is wrong. A photograph is a

selective recording and interpretation of a visual scene. Understanding the degree of photographic manipulation is necessary to evaluate any particular image. Photographs do not lie, but the truths they communicate are elusive. The development of photography in the mid-19th century made images an integral part of American life. Today, it is more important than ever to develop visual literacy and understand how to "read" a photograph.

The first photograph was an image recorded on a pewter plate by a Frenchman, Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, in 1826. It showed the view from an upper story window in his home. Great strides in photography would not take place until the next decades, when Louis Daguerre created images on silver-plated copper, coated with silver iodide, which developed with mercury. In daguerreotypes, the images seem to float above the highly polished silver.

At first, there was no agreement about what to call the process of capturing an image. Among the terms bandied about were daugerreotype, crystalotype, talbototype, colotype, crastalograph, panotype, hyalograth, ambrotype, and hyalotype. Ultimately, a new word won out—photography, which means writing with light. Daugerreotypy was a cumbersome and time consuming process. The biggest problem was that it was impossible to duplicate daguerreotypes. But by the end of the 1850s, the daugerreotype had been replaced by a new method of photography known as the wet plate process. A British photographer named Frederick S. Archer discovered that a glass plate coated with a mixture of silver salts and an emulsion made of collodion could record an image. The image had to be developed immediately, before the emulsion dried. But it was now possible for the first time to make unlimited prints from a negative. It was also possible for photographers to take pictures outside of a studio.

A key figure in early American photography was Matthew Brady, who was just 22 years old when he took up photography in 1844. At first, many of his photographs were portraits of famous Americans, such as Senator Daniel Webster. These photographs tended to portray individuals in solemn poses that reflected the republican emphasis on dignity and virtue and made no effort to show the background or setting. Brady gained lasting fame for his Civil War photographs, which have created lasting images of the conflict in terms of rotting corpses and raved cities. Yet however lifelike these pictures seem, we must realize that they were not accurate depictions of wartime realities. Brady carefully arranged the scenes, and even moved corpses to ensure that they appeared where he wanted them.

In 1885, American inventor George Eastman introduces film made on a paper base instead of glass, wound in a roll, eliminating the need for glass plates. Three years later, he introduced the lightweight, inexpensive Kodak camera, using film wound on rollers. He also began to develop films in his own processing plants. No longer did amateur photographers to process their own pictures.

Some professional responded to the growth of amateur photography by attempting to transform the photograph into a work of art. One of the most famous American photographers, Alfred Stieglitz, experimented with camera angles, close ups, and focus to created photographs that resemble impressionist paintings. Another group of professional photographers used photographs as an instrument of social reform. Photographs by Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine awoke the nation's conscience in a way that statistics and reports had failed to accomplish.

Political Cartoons

Political cartoons use caricature, symbols, humor, ridicule, and exaggeration to make arguments and comment on political events. Even before the American Revolution, political cartoons had the power to shape public opinion. Some political cartoons are funny. Others are satirical. Some are ferocious. Frequently, political cartoons spark outrage. In 2006, cartoons published in a Danish newspaper, which caricatured the prophet Mohammad, touched off violent protests across the Muslim world. Political cartoons use caricature, symbols, humor, ridicule, and exaggeration to make arguments and comment on political events. Entire political arguments can be summed up in a single line in a political cartoon. Often, political cartoons are criticized for being one-sided and unfair. But an effective cartoon makes readers think.

Benjamin Franklin published what is thought to be the first American political cartoon in 1754 in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* as the French and Indian War approached. It showed a snake cut into eight pieces, with the head representing New England and the other seven parts representing the remaining colonies. With the caption "Join, or die," the cartoon warned the American colonists to work together or perish separately. The cartoon acquired fresh meaning when it was reproduced published during the campaign against the Stamp Act in 1765 and again at the start of the American Revolution. It was now perceived as staunchly anti-British.

Political cartoons' power to influence public opinion became vividly apparent after the Civil War, when Thomas Nast, cartoonist for *Harper's Weekly* , helped bring down "Boss" William Marcy Tweed, who headed New York City's corrupt Tammany Hall political machine from 1866 to 1871. Nast reportedly turned down a $500,000 bribe if he would stop attacking Tweed. Tweed didn't mind written attacks, but political cartoons were another matter. "My constituents can't read," fulminated Tweed, "but dammit, they can see pictures." Born in Germany in 1840, Nast arrived in New York City when he was five. At fifteen, he became an illustrator He helped to popularize some of the defining symbols of American culture, including the Democratic donkey, the Republican elephant, the tall, slender, bearded Uncle Sam, with a top hat and striped pants, and the plump, jovial bearded Santa Claus driving a sleigh pulled by reindeer.

Today, many newspapers that lack a book reviewer or film critic have a political cartoonist. Among the most influential political cartoonists of the twentieth century were Bill Maudlin, Pat Oliphant, and Herblock.

Propaganda Posters

Throughout the twentieth century, posters were intended to rouse the nation's spirit and convey a sense of common purpose. They promoted patriotism, productivity, and sacrifice. Some demonized the enemy, appealing to hatred and bigotry. During wartime, they helped convince Americans to put up with shortages, obey rationing rules, and maintain wartime secrecy. We will explore how propaganda posters use visual symbols and such techniques as sentimentality and appeals to patriotism, fear, duty, and sacrifice to whip up public emotions. Art, many political leaders were convinced during the first and second world wars, was as essential to the war effort as war materiel. Wartime propaganda posters fired up the troops' spirits and strengthened support for the war effort on the homefront. During World War I, all of the major combatants used art to raise morale, promote patriotism, mobilize support for the war effort, encourage young men to enlist, keep the population vigilant, and promote patriotism. These posters had to grab viewers' attention.

Propaganda posters used bold colors, dramatic designs, and evocative symbols to communicate wartime messages simply and quickly. While some posters drew on traditional symbols of nationalism (such as the finger-waving figure of Uncle Sam in James Montgomery Flagg's "I Want You" poster) and gritty or gory realism, some others drew on the latest currents of avant-garde art, such as Cubism, used stylized or geometric imagery. Wartime propaganda posters were distributed widely. During World War II, the federal government's Office of War Information placed 75,000 to 150,000 copies of each poster in recruiting stations, post offices and subways. ''A war poster's function is to make coherent a basically incoherent and irrational ordeal of killing, suffering and destruction,'' explained an Office of War Information analyst during the war.

Statistics

History provides an ideal vehicle for teaching statistics. History not only provides a wealth of concrete problems to solve, but often accessible and manageable data sets that can be used to address these problems. Examples abound. Were the wealthy or women and children more likely to survive the sinking of the Titanic? Is there any statistical evidence that suggests that the U.S. Navy removed its newer ships from Pearl Harbor before the December 7, 1941 attack? Such problems can be addressed simply or through the use of more advanced statistical techniques.

Student Projects

Virtual tours, recorded gallery talks, virtual museum exhibitions, and videos are only a few examples of the kinds of projects that students can create that offer first-hand experience in presenting history to a broad audience. The most impressive are projects that are truly fresh: That draw upon a students' family history or that examine a local topic through a historical lens.