

**School for New Learning
DePaul University
A Prairie Independence Day
South Campus
Dates: TBA
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In the 19th century, Chicago evolved from a largely uninhabited wilderness to an industrial and economic center of the United States. This class will examine this evolution from the perspective of evolving public celebration in the 1800's. Independence Day (and its ritual cousins, Thanksgiving and New Year Days) was celebrated passionately by the non-indigenous settlers of Illinois. Emerging political institutions often sponsored events on these holidays to promote their political agendas. Religious and employment related groups did this as well. Local leadership often drove the organization of local festivals with fireworks, food, fraternity, pageants, games or parades and other activities. Such holidays served to allow the populace rest, let off steam, show off and indulge appetites. However, these same gatherings were ideal for the group discussion of current events and political issues. The class will trace the mutual influence of festivals and the development of Illinois in the 1800's.

A cornerstone of the class will be a visit to a public Living History Museum, where re-enactors live the life of the period examined. This one competence class will be held for three three-hour evening classes and one Saturday six-hour class. The content of the class lends itself to a wide variety of competencies; negotiated or independent study competencies are welcome.

Faculty Biographical Sketch

Jill A. Joachim is a lifelong learner and is dedicated to the principal that effective instructors lead students to personal discoveries. With a Bachelor degree in Forestry and a Masters in Science focused on business abetted by almost 20 years in operations and human resources management, the instructor has a solid basis of real life experience in business. Additionally, the instructor is a true polymath and actively pursues new learning and experience in a wide range of topics. These interests include crafting, sports and competitions of all types, math and science developments, the wacky activities of the British Royal Family, gardening, maintaining an eight ear old travel pod, adoring her pets, family activities, music of all kinds, silly mystery novels and anything else that catches her fancy. Finally, the instructor is grateful she had the foresight to finish her education before entering a professional field. She is always appreciative that SNL students are full time workers, parents and caregivers in addition to being part time students.

Competencies

PUBLIC ART

A-1-G: Can explain the functions of public art and its relationship to communities.

1. Defines public art, differentiating it from other art forms.
2. Describes the relationships among community values, artistic expression, and aesthetics.
3. Applies this description to an appropriate example of public art.

Students demonstrate this competence by defining public art, including historical and contemporary views. Students may examine the social impact or the political context in which public art is proposed, funded, and produced. Students may also consider the impact of community values on the production of this art.

How were public festivals in 1800's Illinois art? What linked them to the community and community values and expressions? What was their social impact?

Consider fireworks in 1800's Illinois. What makes them public and what makes them art? What was their impact on people and institutions? Why were they important?

INSTITUTIONS INFLUENCE HUMANS

H-3-G: Can analyze the impact of social institutions on individual human development.

1. Identifies a social institution and describes its characteristics.
2. Articulates criteria for analyzing the impact of this institution on individual development.
3. Analyzes the impact of this institution.

Students demonstrate this competence by understanding how the existence and operation of social institutions, such as a family, a business, the criminal justice system or an educational institution, affect human development.

How did political parties in Illinois in the 1800's influence individuals?

How did public festivals in Illinois in the 1800's influence individuals?

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

H-1-F: Can describe and explain the roles of individuals, groups, societies, or states in history.

1. Demonstrates an understanding of connections among selected events over time.
2. Uses an informed historical approach to interpret events or roles of individuals, groups, or states.

Students demonstrate this competence by explaining why a particular event or series of events occurred when they did or why different circumstances are likely to result in particular outcomes. Students will consider a variety of conditions that may have influenced a particular event or process and demonstrate knowledge of current historical approaches.

What public celebrations were common in 1800's Illinois? What did most public celebrations have in common? Who (or what groups) drove these celebrations and why? How did the celebrations change over the century? What was the impact of the change?

POWER AMONG GROUPS

H-4: Can analyze power relations among racial, social, cultural, or economic groups in the United States.

1. Describes the unequal power relations between at least two racial, social, cultural, or economic groups in the U.S.
2. Discusses the historical, sociological, or economic dynamics under which these groups came to be in conflict.

Students demonstrate this competence by analyzing the historical, sociological or economic dynamics that lead to inequalities in power among groups in the United States. To the extent possible, we hope that students will relate this to their experiences as well as their responsibilities as a citizen. In many ways, this competence is about democracy in action; for example, how groups have negotiated and attained power and voice in a complex and diverse society. Since, however, inequalities persist in this country, it is important to understand the ways in which some groups have been systematically denied economic, social, and political justice.

Define a prevalent issue in 1800's Illinois (Indian rights and relations with settlers, land availability, slavery, states rights, taxation, the draft in the Civil War, The Civil War, banking regulation, economic speculation, statehood, etc.) What were the parties involved and their respective viewpoints? What was the source of the conflict? What resources were available to the conflicting parties? How and why did the conflict evolve and resolve over time? How did Independence Day celebrations reflect these various viewpoints?

Learning Experience

The learning experience will be largely, experience-based. The class will read selected *internet based resources* that describe Independence Day celebrations in the nineteenth century. Class discussion will be based on concepts and facts from these readings. Additionally, the class will visit a public Living History

Museum and experience reenactments of period Independence Day experiences.

Because competence achievement will be based on class discussion and experience at the Living History Museum, attendance is mandatory and participation is critical. Any absence will affect class grade.

Required class resources also include internet access and the ability to travel to and from the Living History Museum.

Required reading resources include:

<http://gurukul.american.edu/heintze/fourth.htm> Heintz, James R. *Fourth of July Celebrations Database*. Last visited 4/8/2003

Litwicky, Ellen. *"Our Hearts Burn with Ardent Love for Two Countries": Ethnicity and Assimilation at Chicago Holiday Celebrations, 1876-1918*

<http://www.elecvillage.com/juneteen.htm> *Electronic Village Juneteenth...The African American Independence Day!* Last visited 4/8/2003

Additional resources include:

Travers, Len. *Celebrating the Fourth*. University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, MA. 1997

Burstein, Andrew. *America's Jubilee*. Vintage Books, a division of Random House, Inc. NY, NY. 2001

Applebaum, Diana Carter. *The Glorious Fourth: An American Holiday, an American History*. Facts on File, Inc. 1989.

Waldstreicher, David. *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820*. University of North Carolina Press. 1997

Dennis, Matthew, *Red, White, and Blue Letter Days: An American Calendar*. Cornell University Press. 2002.

Aveni, Anthony F. *The Book of the Year: A Brief History of Our Seasonal Holidays*. Oxford University Press. 2002.

Litwicky, Ellen M. *America's Public Holidays, 1865-1920*. Smithsonian Institution Press. 2003

Plimpton, George. *Fireworks: A History and Celebration*. Doubleday. 1987

Evidence the Students will Submit

Students will participate in discussion and a trip to a Living History Museum to demonstrate their competence. The class and its participants will abide by the University's guidelines on academic integrity found in the Student Handbook.

Criteria for Assessment

Student's grades will be based on attendance, participation in discussion. Student's grades will be adversely impacted by any absence. More than one absence will result in class failure. Participation in discussion with clear, persuasive, fact-based comments will be evidence for competence achievement. Students who contribute regularly, persuasively and in a non-disruptive demonstrate excellence.

Class Schedule

Class 1

The Real History of the Declaration of Independence
Contents and legal importance (unimportance?) of the Declaration of Independence
A history and brief of The U.S. Constitution
A history and brief of the War for Independence
Brief history of U.S. celebrations – holidays in the birth of our nation
Political parties and issues emergent in the 1800's
The nature of Illinois in the 1800's
The history of Chicago in the 1800's

Class 2

Prereading:
Discussion: Slavery in Illinois in the 1800's
Important political issues in Illinois in the 1800's
The Civil War in the 1800's – Independence Day in the trenches and at home
The immigrant experience in the 1800's

Class 3

Prereading: None
Activity: Visit a Living History Museum

Class 4

Prereading:
Discussion: The learning from our class trip
Fireworks – a historical view
Wrap up and evaluation