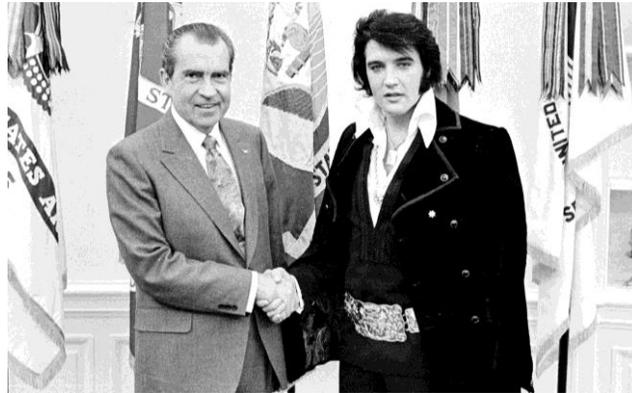


THE NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM

“Presidential Campaigns: An Election-Year History”

Fall 2016

Thursdays, 6-8 pm



“The presidency has many problems, but boredom is the least of them.”
– Richard M. Nixon

SYLLABUS

- October 13: 1789 – 1824: Introduction / George Washington to John Q.
Chapters 1 – 10
- October 20: 1828 – 1864: Andrew Jackson to Abraham Lincoln
Chapters 11 – 20
- October 27: 1868 – 1904: From Reconstruction to Roosevelt
Chapters 21 – 30
- November 3: 1908 – 1944: From TR to FDR
Chapters 31 – 40
- November 10: 1948 – 1984: From Truman to Reagan
Chapters 41 – 50
- November 17: 1988 – 2016: The Modern Era
Chapters 51 – 54

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS: This series invites participants to examine, discuss, and enjoy the history of the United States through its presidential elections just in time for the 2016 elections. We will read about every presidential campaign from 1789 to 2012, track changes within the nation from the presidency down to the voter, study some of the most famous speeches, political ads, and political cartoons ever devised, delight over misadventures and anecdotes, listen to recordings from the phonograph to the digital era, and ultimately transform the last 240 years of US history into a lens for better appreciating and understanding the nation we live in today.

Audience participation is both welcome and encouraged. Please feel free to bring questions for open discussion.

SELECT TEXT: (for in-class readings)

Presidential Campaigns: From George Washington to George W. Bush, by Paul F. Boller, Jr. (Oxford, 2004)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS: (for supplemental/further reading)

No Place for Amateurs: How Political Consultants are Reshaping American Democracy, by Dennis W. Johnson (Routledge, 2007).

The Audacity to Win: The Inside Story and Lessons of Barack Obama's Historic Victory, by David Plouffe (Penguin, 2009).

The Keys to the White House: A Surefire Guide to Predicting the Next President, by Allan J. Lichtman (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008).

The Selling of the President: The Classical Account of the Packaging of a Candidate, by Joe McGinniss (Penguin, 1988).

INSTRUCTOR:

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PUBLISHED WORKS (under the pen-name “Jacopo della Quercia”):

License to Quill (St. Martin’s Griffin, 2015)

The Great Abraham Lincoln Pocket Watch Conspiracy (St. Martin’s Griffin, 2014)

“Abraham Lincoln’s Steampunk Presidency” (Slate Magazine, 2014)