

History 1232, History of Boston

Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:00AM-9:40AM

Northeastern University College of Social Sciences and Humanities

Simon Rabinovitch, Renaissance Park 450 (Humanities Center)

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Office hours: I will have open virtual office hours between 10-11AM every weekday, meaning I will have zoom open during that time and anyone can ring me for a meeting with no appointment. I am happy to make an appointment for another time if you email me in advance. Zoom link on Canvas. Meeting ID: 401 232 2968, Passcode: 106074

Teaching Assistants: Debra Lavelle and Liam MacLean

Course Description

Boston was built by making the natural environment bend to the city. From the local indigenous population clearing the land, to the English landing in Charlestown, to filling Back Bay, up to the recent construction of the “big dig” and the “Seaport District,” the geography of the city was built by its inhabitants. The composition of the city’s peoples has also changed over hundreds of years and both migration to the city and internal migration within it has transformed neighborhoods and reshaped the urban environment time and again. The structure of the class is organized around key periods and moments of transformation. Students will learn about the complex and sometimes brutal interplay of people and environment in what came to be Boston over the past 400 years.

Class Requirements and Assessment

Further instructions for the following assignments will be given on Canvas and in class:

Rolling examination, 40%. You will be tested for your comprehension and analysis of the full breadth of the course materials, but instead of a midterm and final you will be examined as you complete the class. An examination question or questions about the course material for the week will be posted on Canvas most Tuesday afternoons. Due date will be set by your section leader, but in most cases your answer or answers will be due on Friday at 5:00 PM.

Boston digital history and mapping project, 40%. You will learn how to use a key digital mapping tool and conduct research in groups and individually to construct a historical digital

map for a site or neighborhood in Boston. Each class section will choose with their first section leader a site or neighborhood in the city. Each section will be divided into subgroups and section leaders will determine work responsibilities for each group, subgroup, and student. Students are expected to meet regularly with their section leader to discuss progress. Students will be assessed on their success in meeting specific benchmarks, on the final subgroup project, on participation in planning, and on their individual effort. **Due December 10.**

Section participation, 20%. You are expected to attend class synchronously online on Tuesdays and in person or remotely in section or class on Fridays. All class meetings—Tuesday full-class lecture/discussions and Friday sections—will be recorded and posted on Canvas. If you cannot attend any class you will need to view the recording. If you cannot attend a Friday section, remotely or in person, you need to inform the section leader. You are expected not simply to attend, but to attend having completed all assigned reading and be ready to discuss. I have included a participation grading rubric at the end of the syllabus.

Readings and Class Preparation

Each week has required readings that are listed in the syllabus and are available online through Canvas and/or the library. Complete assigned readings *before* the lecture/discussions on Tuesdays, especially because in many cases the author will be discussing their book with the class. Discussion sections on Fridays will follow up on Tuesday's topic and focus on the weekly readings. There are no required books for purchase in this class, but all of the books on the syllabus I would personally recommend purchasing and owning if that's a possibility for you. In most cases I've assigned 1-3 chapters from the books, but all are great reads from start to finish. Even purchasing one or two in areas that interest you might well inspire future study. The Canvas modules for each week may be updated to include additional videos and links to other media that are not on the syllabus

Discussion Sections

The class will be divided into six discussion sections. Students will stay together in their section, but will rotate through the discussion leaders according to a schedule posted on Canvas. Students will work on their digital history and mapping project throughout the semester with whomever is their *first* section leader.

Boston Neighborhood Videos

A class on the history of Boston presents an opportunity to explore the city by foot, even if we are living in challenging times. Over the course of the semester I will be filming six short films

about some of Boston's sights and neighborhoods. Up to 15 students for each trip will have an opportunity to sign up and come along. We will meet a production team from the College of Art, Media, and Design on location who will film our tour and discussions and create an edited version for the whole class. The videos will be posted on Canvas and the class website and are required viewing. After viewing the videos, students in Boston are encouraged to make the trips on their own or in small groups to experience the locations first hand.

Course Schedule

Introduction

September 11, Simon Rabinovitch

Week 1, The Birth of Boston

September 15, Christopher Parsons (Associate Professor of History, Northeastern University)

Readings:

- The Charter of Massachusetts Bay, 1629.
- John Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity," 1630.
- Birth of Boston digital map.
- Michael Rawson, *Eden on the Charles: The Making of Boston* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 1-21.

September 18, section discussion

Week 2, Research and Digital Humanities Training

September 22, NULab seminar on "Storytelling with Mapping: KnightLab StoryMap" led by Sarah Connell (Digital Scholarship Group and Assistant Director, Women Writers Project).

- See Canvas for important links.

September 25, Molly Brown, seminar on working with digitized collections (Reference and Outreach Archivist, Northeastern University Library and Special Collections).

- See Canvas for important links.

Week 3, King Philip's War in History and Memory

September 29, Martin Blatt (Affiliate Professor of the Practice and former Director of the Public History Program, Northeastern University) and Christine DeLucia (Assistant Professor of History, Williams College)

Readings:

- Christine M. DeLucia, *Memory Lands: King Philip's War and the Place of Violence in the Northeast* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2018), 29-83.
- "The Suppressed Speech of Wamsutta (Frank B.) James, Wampanoag," to have been delivered at Plymouth, Massachusetts, 1970.
- William Apess, "Eulogy on King Philip" (you are required to read the abbreviated version drafted as a public performance, but I have also included on Canvas the complete version for those who may be interested).
- Cambridge Proclamation on William Apess Day

October 2, section discussion

Week 4, Boston as Atlantic Empire

October 6, Mark Peterson (Edmund S. Morgan Professor of History, Yale University)

Readings:

- Mark Peterson, *The City-State of Boston: The Rise and Fall of an Atlantic Power, 1630-1865* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press) 27-84.

October 9, section discussion

Week 5, Slavery in Boston and Boston's Role in the Slave Trade

October 13, Jared Hardesty (Associate Professor of History, Western Washington University)

Readings:

- Jared Hardesty, *Unfreedom: Slavery and Dependence in Eighteenth-Century Boston* (New York: New York University Press, 2016), 12-42, 71-135.

October 16, section discussion

Week 6, Boston's Role in the American Revolution

October 20, Eric Schlereth (Associate Professor of History, University of Texas at Dallas)

Readings:

- Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999), 3-84.

October 23, section discussion

Week 7, Building the City: Landmaking in Boston

October 27, Nancy Seasholes (Independent scholar and author, PhD in History and Archaeology)

Readings:

- Nancy Seasholes, *Gaining Ground: A History of Landmaking in Boston* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018), 1-19, 152-209.
- Nancy Seasholes ed., *The Atlas of Boston History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 42-43, 72-73, 124-125, 127.
- Mark Peterson, *The City-State of Boston: The Rise and Fall of an Atlantic Power, 1630-1865* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 540-564.

Recommended further reading:

- Michael Rawson, *Eden on the Charles: The Making of Boston* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 22-74.

October 30, section discussion

Week 8, Migration, Industry, Politics, and Law Part I: The Irish Migration

November 3, Hidetaka Hirota (Associate Professor of North American Studies and Migration Studies, Sophia University)

Readings:

- Hidetaka Hirota, *Expelling the Poor: Atlantic Seaboard State and the Nineteenth Century Origins of American Immigration Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 41-99.

- Mark Peterson, *The City-State of Boston: The Rise and Fall of an Atlantic Power, 1630-1865* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press) 564-577.
- Hidetaka Hirota, “The danger of vilifying poor immigrants,” *The Washington Post*, August 13, 2019.

November 6, section discussion

Week 9, Migration, Industry, Politics, and Law Part II: The Sacco and Vanzetti Trial

November 10, Moshik Temkin (Johnson and Johnson Visiting Chair, Tsinghua University; Senior Fellow, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University)

Readings:

- Moshik Temkin, *The Sacco-Vanzetti Affair: America on Trial* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2009), 9-100 [the postscript, 181-218 also recommended].
- “Twenty Reasons why Immigration Should be Further Restricted Now,” (Boston: Immigration Restriction League, 1894).

November 13, section discussion

Week 10, Segregation and Integration in Boston

November 17, Matthew Delmont (Sherman Fairchild Distinguished Professor of History, Dartmouth College)

Readings:

- Matthew Delmont, *Why Busing Failed: Race, Media, and the National Resistance to School Desegregation* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2016), 77-92, 190-208.
- Charles Ogletree, Jr., *All Deliberate Speed: Reflections on the First Half Century of Brown v. Board of Education* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 57-78.
- See the large number of digital resources and media on “busing” in Boston on Canvas.

November 20, section discussion

Week 11, The Sexual Abuse Scandal in the Boston Archdiocese

November 24, Matthew Carroll (Professor of the Practice of Journalism, Northeastern University)

Readings:

- Globe Spotlight Team (Matt Carroll, Sacha Pfeiffer, Michael Rezendes), “Church allowed abuse of priest for years,” *Boston Globe* (January 6, 2002).
- Globe Spotlight Team (Matt Carroll, Sacha Pfeiffer, Michael Rezendes), “Geoghan preferred preying on poorer children,” *Boston Globe* (January 7, 2002).
- Globe Spotlight Team (Matt Carroll, Sacha Pfeiffer, Michael Rezendes); Stephen Kurkja; written by Walter Robinson, “Scores of priests involved in sex abuse cases,” *Boston Globe* (January 31, 2002).
- Thomas Farragher, “Church cloaked in culture of silence,” *Boston Globe* (February 24, 2002).
- Kevin Cullen, “Scandal erodes traditional deference to church,” *Boston Globe* (May 12, 2002).
- See also the links on Canvas to the Globe’s archived Spotlight page from 2002 and its “Clergy abuse documents archive.” Also HIGHLY RECOMMENDED: see the movie Spotlight!

November 27, no section, Thanksgiving break

Week 12, The Challenge of Policing in Boston

December 1, Michael Dukakis (Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Political Science, Northeastern University, and former Governor of Massachusetts)

Readings:

- Bill Bratton, “A year after Eric Garner, closing the great police-community divide,” *New York Daily News* (July 7, 2012).
- Bill Bratton and Jon Murad, “How precision policing made New York even safer,” *New York Post* (July 29, 2018).
- William (Bill) Bratton and Brian Anderson, “Policing on the Brink: A Conversation with William Bratton,” *City Journal* (July 22, 2020), listen to the podcast or read the transcript.
- Dugan Arnett and Milton J. Valencia, “Despite praise, ‘community policing’ in Boston does not work for everyone, experts say,” *Boston Globe* (June 15, 2020).
- Sarah Betancourt, “Study spotlights racial disparities in state criminal justice system,” *CommonWealth Magazine* (September 9, 2020).

December 4, Rod Brunson (Thomas P. O’Neill Jr. Chair of Public Life and Professor of Criminology/Criminal Justice and Political Science, Northeastern University)

Readings:

- Rod K. Brunson, Anthony Braga, David M. Hureau, and Kashea Pegram, “We Trust You, But Not That Much: Examining Police-Clergy Partnerships to Reduce Youth Violence,” *Justice Quarterly* 32, no. 6 (2015): 1006-1036.
- “Boston. Racism. Image. Reality.” A series of articles by the Globe Spotlight Team from December 2017.

Wrapping Up, Boston’s Current and Future Challenges, from Climate Change to Inequality

December 8, Kim Janey, Boston City Council President.

Percentage Equivalents to Letter Grades (as per CSSH)

94-100 A

90-93 A-

87-89 B+

84-86 B

80-83 B-

77-79 C+

74-76 C

70-73 C-

67-69 D+

64-66 D

60-63 D-

0-59 F

See the Northeastern University Catalogue for the [university’s grade table](#).

Participation Grading Rubric

There is a level of subjectivity to grading class participation (just as there is in a written assignment), but grading participation can still be predictable and consistent. I have put together the following rubric (scoring key) in the interest of transparency (to eliminate the mystery) and to encourage students to shape their preparation and behavior accordingly.

A Student attends regularly, always demonstrates knowledge of the reading, and regularly participates both independently and when called upon.

A- Student attends regularly, regularly demonstrates knowledge of the reading, and often participates independently and when called upon.

B+ Student attends class regularly, often demonstrates knowledge of the reading, and often actively participates (but frequently does not). Or, student regularly participates and demonstrates knowledge of the reading when present, but has unexplained absences.

B Student attends regularly, but only occasionally shows knowledge of the reading or actively participates. Or, student attends regularly but is frequently visibly disengaged from the class discussion.

B- Student is present regularly enough for a passing grade but does not demonstrate adequate commitment to the course. S/he either has frequent absences, often seems disengaged from the class discussion, or does not with adequate frequency demonstrate knowledge of the readings or participate.

If a student does not attend class regularly the participation grade is F (there is no credit for participation below B-).

Always=always

Regularly=always, with a little slack

Often=most of the time

Frequently=it happens quite a bit, but not most of the time

Occasionally=it doesn't happen most of the time, but sometimes it does

University Policies and Resources

University Attendance Policy

Please note the following Northeastern University attendance policies: *Students have the right to a limited number of excused absences for conditions listed in the [Northeastern University Attendance Requirements](#), including absences due to specific university-sponsored activities, religious holidays, military deployment, and jury duty. Students are responsible for notifying instructors in writing when facing an extended leave of absence or extenuating circumstances. Please note that University Health and Counseling Services will not issue documentation of students' illnesses or injuries.*

University Policies Regarding Masks and Physical Distancing

Because of the necessary distancing imposed by COVID-19, we will have fewer occasions on campus to create and enjoy in-person spaces for learning and growth. In order for us to preserve the opportunities offered by class meetings, students and instructors in the classroom *must* at all times follow the mandatory campus protocols for COVID-19 safety, including:

- Masks must be worn by students and instructors in classrooms and all other buildings;
- Six feet of distance must be maintained between persons;
- Students may come to class each week *only* on the days indicated by their Student Hub plan;
- Students must adhere to campus self-monitoring and testing protocols and should not come to class if they have any symptoms of illness.

For the sake of all our safety, if you come to class without a mask, I will direct you to the closest building where you can obtain one, after which you may return to class. If you are not able or willing to wear a mask, you may not be present in the classroom. If you come to class on a day on which you are not scheduled to be in the classroom, I will ask you to leave. In the unlikely event that any member of the class is unable or unwilling to comply with these mandatory safety precautions, the class will not be able to take place.

University Academic Integrity Policy

Please read and familiarize yourself with Northeastern University's policy on academic integrity on the website of the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution \(OSCCR\)](#), where plagiarism is defined broadly "as intentionally representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own in any academic exercise without providing proper citation." Penalties for

plagiarism will range in relationship to the severity of the incident but cases may be referred to the University's Student Conduct Board. If you have any questions or are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me or your section leader.

Title IX Protections and Resources

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects individuals from sex or gender-based discrimination, including discrimination based on gender-identity, in educational programs and activities that receive federal funding. Any NU community member who has experienced such discrimination, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, coercion, and/or sexual harassment, is encouraged to seek help. Confidential support and guidance can be found through [University Health and Counseling Services](#), the Northeastern [Center for Spirituality, Dialogue, and Service](#), and the [Office of Prevention and Education at Northeastern \(OPEN\)](#). Note that faculty members are considered "responsible employees" at Northeastern University, meaning they are required to report all allegations of sex or gender-based discrimination to the Title IX Coordinator. For additional information and assistance please see the [Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion](#) webpage.

Disability Resource Center

The university's [Disability Resource Center](#) works with students and faculty to provide students who qualify under the Americans With Disabilities Act with accommodations that allow them to participate fully in the activities at the university. Ordinarily, students receiving such accommodations will deliver teacher notification letters at the beginning of the semester. Students have the right to choose whether to disclose their specific disabilities to instructors but must provide a letter to receive accommodations.

WeCare

[WeCare](#) offers supports for students during times of difficulty or challenge. You can find WeCare at 226 Curry Student center Monday - Friday from 8:30-5:00, call at 617-373-7591, or email wecare@northeastern.edu.

Mental Health Resources

In addition to mental health resources available through [Northeastern's University Health and Counseling Services](#), Northeastern has added [Find@Northeastern](#), which is a 24/7 mental health consulting line and can be reached at 1-877-223-9477.

The Writing Center

The [Northeastern University Writing Center](#) offers free and friendly tutoring for any level of writer, including help with conceptualizing writing projects, the writing process, and using

sources effectively. The Writing Center has two on-ground locations: 412 Holmes Hall and 136 Snell Library as well as virtual appointment services. To make an appointment, or learn more about the Writing Center, visit <https://cssh.northeastern.edu/writingcenter/> or email WritingCenter@northeastern.edu. Advance and same-day appointments are available.

Peer Tutoring

[The Peer Tutoring Program](#) offers a wide range of tutoring services to meet the academic needs of undergraduate students. If you need academic assistance, contact the Peer Tutoring Program Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:30pm. Peer tutoring services are free and open to all NU undergraduate students. Peer tutoring begins the second week of classes and ends the last day of classes. The Peer Tutoring Program is located in 1 Meserve Hall. Call 617- 373-8931, email peertutoring@northeastern.edu, or visit the weblink above.

International Tutoring Center

The [International Tutoring Center \(ITC\)](#) provides current Northeastern University international students with free, comprehensive English language and academic support. The ITC includes English as a Second Language Tutoring (ESL), Language and Culture Workshops, and Reading Workshops. For more information on available workshops and tutoring opportunities please visit the ITC weblink above.

Snell Library

[Snell Library](#) offers a variety of resources for undergraduate research, including subject-specific [Research Guides](#), help with citation and bibliography, and 24/7 chat support. The library also houses the [Digital Media Commons](#), which offers a variety of resources for instructors and students for multimedia projects.

Resources During COVID-19

The links below contain updated information on Northeastern's Response to COVID-19.

- [Reopening Northeastern](#)
- [COVID-19 Updates from the University](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources for all Northeastern Students](#)

Help with Technology

For technology issues, please call the Northeastern HELP desk (617-373-4357) or email them at help@northeastern.edu. For Canvas Help,