

# The History of American Protest

John Stauffer

Harvard University

## Course Description

This course examines the rich tradition of protest literature in the United States from the American Revolution to the present. The primary focus is on three enduring strands of protest: civil rights (beginning with antislavery), women's rights, and workers' rights. Using a broad definition of protest literature, we pay particular attention to the cultural production and consumption of dissent as a powerful voice of both individuals and movements. We examine a wide range of print, visual, and oral forms of dissent, and we explore how various expressions of dissent function as political, ideological, rhetorical, aesthetic, and performative texts within specific contexts. Readings are mostly primary sources, ranging from pamphlets, speeches, essays, and poetry to photographs, music, sociology, and history.

## Lecture Videos

This course consists of approximately 12 hours of instruction presented by Professor Stauffer, split into 34 lecture videos ranging from 8 minutes to 34 minutes in duration. Below are the lecture titles and major themes as identified by Professor Stauffer. The videos provide the content needed to answer the course quizzes.

Select each course video and mark them completed when you are finished viewing them.

1. What Is American Protest Literature? (3 videos)
2. Declaring Independence (3 videos)
3. Aftermath of Independence (3 videos)
4. Declaring Equality (4 videos)
5. Antislavery Poetics (3 videos)

6. Antislavery Politics (2 videos)
7. Singing for Freedom (2 videos)
8. The Civil War as Living Room War (3 videos)
9. Fighting the Counterrevolution (3 videos)
10. Labor against Capital (2 videos)
11. Waves of Women's Rights (3 videos)
12. Performing Civil Rights (3 videos)

Note: Course lectures were originally recorded for the Gilder Lehrman Institute's online graduate program. You can disregard references to assignments, other coursework, and the use of content in classrooms discussed in the videos. They are not part of the History U program.

### **Resources**

Select the Resources link for information about the primary and secondary resources, videos, and websites referred to in the course. History U participants are not required to read or purchase print materials. All quiz questions are drawn from the lectures.

### **Quizzes**

The purpose of the six short quizzes is to review your knowledge of the material covered in the lectures. No outside reading is required to answer the questions successfully. After watching the videos in the course, select and complete the corresponding quizzes to test your knowledge and qualify for the Certificate of Completion.

### **Certificate of Completion**

After you finish watching all of the lectures, score an 80% or higher on each quiz, and complete the feedback survey, you will be able to download your certificate.

Please email [historyschool@gilderlehrman.org](mailto:historyschool@gilderlehrman.org) with any questions.