

Drunk and Diverse: Reframing the Founding Fathers

MELISSA SARTORE

New forms of history foster understanding, relatability, and identity as they shape and reshape collective historical experience. As it finds a new inebriated voice in *Drunk History*, a dynamic musical outlet in *Hamilton*, and a talk-show format in *Join or Die*, history achieves new appeal. This "new" history is the latest iteration in the relationship between popular culture and history, a comic remediation, and represents the ever-changing accessibility of historical knowledge through a variety of mediums, often to unsuspecting audiences.

Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's *Remediation* builds upon the traditional contention that mediums always develop from one another. The authors identify and define the two logics of remediation, immediacy and hypermediacy, which present information in a constantly reformed or newly shaped form (Bolter and Grusin 5-6; 11; 17). The two logics of remediation cooperate to provide a "transparent presentation of the real and the enjoyment of the opacity of media themselves" as well as identify an endless enthusiasm and expectation for new media (Bolter and Grusin 19; 45; 76-78). Remediation allows audiences access information with the assumption that it will continue to be presented in new and exciting ways, often supplementing or even supplanting previous iterations.

History necessarily remediates. Historical storytelling draws up on previous mediums, including oral tradition, books, primary and secondary sources, and later film, television, and the Internet. Ancient and medieval chroniclers used the works of their predecessors; bards, elders, and troubadours told their tales over and over again to new generations; and legal custom transitioned to formal written legislation. With the advent of radio, film, television, and the Internet, historical storytelling moved into even more accessible and popular media available to the masses.

The portrayal of historical information, particularly in the increasingly digital age, has led to supporters and critics alike debating issues of accuracy, revisionism, and relevancy of history in popular media. Critics of the relationship

The Popular Culture Studies Journal, Vol. 6, No. 1

Copyright © 2018

between history and popular culture need not look further than movies such as Oliver Stone's *Alexander* or the Netflix series *Marco Polo* to see how fact and fiction can blend to form historically inaccurate and misleading media (Borza; Larsen). In contrast, however, Raphael Samuel and Jerome de Groot argue that the pervasiveness of history leads to the infusion of the past and contemporary culture, as history is essential to how people understand and identify themselves. Popular culture raises historical consciousness rather than poses a threat to history and raises questions as to where historical . falls into larger cultural traditions and beliefs (Samuel 8; De Groot 310-12).

Recently, in *Prosthetic Memory*, Alison Landsberg contended that “modernity makes possible and necessary a new form of public cultural memory” (2). According to Landsberg, the historical narrative of movies and other visual media makes history more personal, deeply felt, and a person can put him or herself into the history that he or she did not experience (9). Similarly, Robert Rosenstone argues that media, specifically film, “gives us a new sort of history, what we might call history as vision” (181). Through these processes, the immediacy and hypermediacy of history-in-media creates a historical memory that is subjective and personal to the viewer while offering information, piquing interest, and building historical . . This remediation of history is dependent upon time, space, and context and while “the logic of transparent immediacy does not necessarily commit the viewer to an utterly naïve or magical conviction that representation is the same thing as what it represents” it creates an opaque “contact point between the medium and what it represents” (Bolter and Grusin 30).

In spite of what Landsberg identified as an “overall academic contempt for television,” she finds value in shows such as *Deadwood* and *Mad Men*, as they provide the viewer with insights into social history by blending day-to-day life with de-idealized notions of the past (*Engaging the Past* 61). She largely focused on the use of television drama to provide historical communication and information, but her ideas can be extrapolated to comedy and even to the theatrical stage. Recently, new media has blended history and popular culture in comic television shows such as *Drunk History* and *Join or Die*, to say nothing of the smash Broadway show *Hamilton*. These forms of remediated history offer viewers new stories as well as a retelling of traditional historical information.

The remediation of history through drunkenness and diversity aligns with Kenneth's Burke's comic frame of acceptance. Comedy, to Burke, offers an analytical tool by which critics and audiences can process given circumstances

and facts and “from its vantage point, sees the operation of errors that the characters of the play cannot see” (41). Comedy is Aristophanes’ tool in the political play *Lysistrata*, Shakespeare uses it throughout his literary works, and it pervades social commentaries such as Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest* and John Kennedy Toole’s *Confederacy of Dunces*. These comic, and often satirical, presentations, among countless others, provide perspectives that allow audiences to cope and function within a given framework. Television and film presentations the likes of *The Office*, *The Simpsons*, and *Modern Times* offer the same sense of familiarity and expression to more modern audiences (Bonnstetter). Comedy is also the essence of *Drunk History*, *Join or Die*, and in a less obvious but no less important way, *Hamilton*.

Originally a web series, *Drunk History* was created by Derek Waters and Jeremy Konner in 2007 and was introduced as a television series on Comedy Central in 2013 (“Drunk History,” *Internet Movie Database*). The format features a celebrity, comedian, or other chosen individual who gets drunk and tells a story about a historical event or person. As the drunk story-teller recounts his or her tale, there is a re-enactment of events on the screen. During the re-enactment, performed by well-known actors and actresses, the characters lip-sync the drunken voice-over version of the story.

All of the stories on *Drunk History* are true, all of the depictions are as accurate as possible, and nothing is scripted or rehearsed, with the exception of dates and the pronunciation of names. Waters told *Time Magazine* in 2015, before the start of the third season of the show, “a huge amount of research goes into producing those drunken antics: a team of History PhD students at UCLA work with the *Drunk History* team for a couple of months” (Rothman). According to Waters, the show was created to humanize people and, while he self-identifies as having not been a great student in school, the show is how he has chosen to learn about history (Kim). In a 2015 interview with *The Observer*, Waters expanded upon the purpose and goal of the show:

I really believe the only way that the show can stay fresh every season is that the stories have to remain the heart, not the drunk person telling it...drunk people are funny and fun to watch, but I want to say, as humbly as I can, that our show has a specific voice and using that I hope to make you laugh and learn at the same time and not make you think this is all about learning. It’s a lot easier to learn when you don’t know you’re

learning...history is really important because the only way we can improve our future is to not repeat mistakes or be inspired by something that's happened in the past to make change or create something new (Easton).

Waters and *Drunk History* take this on, and from the earliest *Drunk History* clips, the show explains and retells both well- and lesser-known stories from American history.

In a 2008 *Drunk History* episode, comedian Jen Kirkman retells the story of Martha and George Washington's relationship with their slave Oney "Ona" Judge ("Drunk History," Vol.3). When the Washingtons decided that they would give Judge to a relative as a wedding gift in 1796, she fled to Virginia, then to Pennsylvania, and later to New Hampshire where she took refuge ("Oney Judge"). The Washingtons were convinced that Judge had been persuaded to leave by a seductive Frenchman and sent customs officials to retrieve her. Judge told the customs officer that she would rather live in freedom in exile rather than go back to a life of servitude.

Judge soon married a man by the surname Staines, had three children, and built a life in exile, all the while living in fear of being tricked or taken back into servitude. She feared that her children would be taken away as well, a well-founded concern after the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 stipulated that children of slaves were the property of that slave's former owner. According to the episode, Judge offered to return to the Washingtons' possession as long as her children would remain free, but they declined this offer and Oney remained on the run ("Drunk History" Vol. 3).

From interviews with Oney, there is no indication that the Washingtons ever gave up their quest to take her back to Mount Vernon and it was only with George Washington's death that she finally felt safe. In 1828, Oney voiced no regret about her flight and time as a fugitive, but rather expressed how she cherished her freedom, her chance to learn to read, and her opportunities to dedicate herself to Christian teachings. For Oney, none of this would have been possible if she had stayed with the Washingtons (Adams; Chase).

Oney Judge is relatively unknown to the general public. As Jen Kirkman pointed out at the end of her account, George Washington's reputation and the mistaken ideals associated with it remain the prevailing perception of the man. By introducing a new audience to Oney Judge through a drunken comic

interpretation, *Drunk History* contributes to the historical and moral conversations about slavery during the late eighteenth century and how they involved the founding of the United States.

During its second season, *Drunk History* once again took up the history of the Founding Fathers. The eighth episode, “Philadelphia,” includes three stand-alone segments linked by the named city and the actions of Founding Fathers. The first segment is about Baron von Steuben (played by David Cross) and how he assisted George Washington (played by Stephen Merchant) in training his troops at Valley Forge. The second segment features Thomas Jefferson (played by Jerry O’Connell) and John Adams (played by Joe Lo Truglio) in their constant feud, focusing on the election of 1800. The third segment shows Benedict Arnold (played by Chris Parnell) and his acts of treason, with attention paid to George Washington and his role in the events (played by John Lithgow) (“Philadelphia”).

In the second segment, writer and producer Patrick Walsh recounts the election of 1800 for *Drunk History* audiences. According to Walsh, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams were friends, associates, and avid letter righters through the late eighteenth century. Adams, a Federalist, and Jefferson, an Anti-Federalist or Republican, held different views on freedom of speech and the ability to criticize a sitting president. The former, President at the time, saw it as sedition while Jefferson, vice-president and formal rival candidate, saw it as a fundamental right, one that he found useful as he increasingly vocalized his disagreements with the President (Ellis 169-75; “Philadelphia”).

In 1800, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson again ran against each other for president actively engaged in the first negative political campaign in the country’s history (Ellis 175-84; 200-5; 208-11). Walsh and *Drunk History* informs the viewer that Jefferson financially backed journalist James Callender while he wrote articles about Adams in which he called him a hermaphrodite and a war-monger (“Philadelphia”; Ellis 208-11; McCullough 536-7; “Thomas Jefferson”). For his part, Adams responded with less personal fervor, but Federalists attacked Jefferson as a greedy, “mean-spirited, low-lived fellow, the son of a half-breed Indian squaw, sired by a Virginia mulatto father” (Hazzard).

Jefferson went on to win the election of 1800 but the damage was done. Before he left office, John Adams appointed numerous Federalists to political office to undermine his successor’s efficacy and authority (Ellis 208). The two men do not speak or write to one another for years, despite attempts by the Adams’ wife to reconnect them. Walsh calls the Founding Fathers “immature”

and accuses them of acting like “eighth graders” (“Philadelphia”). It is not until 1812 that they renewed their letter writing relationship. Jefferson and Adams continue to write to one another until the end of their lives, famously dying within hours of one another on July 4th, 1826 (Burleigh 393; McCullough 622-39; Meacham 488-94).

Drunk History highlights new perspectives, new information, and new conversations about not only the Founding Fathers of the United States, but also about historical topics in general. In conjunction with the clip about George Washington and the other segment in the “Philadelphia” episode, *Drunk History* exposes audiences to the more controversial and less glorious aspects of the first three Presidents of the United States. Through intoxicated storytelling with a comic flair, audiences learn about which they may have been unaware, misinformed, or only partially cognizant.

Join or Die with Craig Ferguson, which aired on the History Channel in 2016, also discusses historical topics with a popular and comical presentation. The talk show format debates issues such as “History’s Biggest Political Blunder,” and “History’s Dumbest Mistake.” Ferguson admits that the purpose of the show is not assert historical certitudes, but rather the goal is to exchange information. He also seeks to change aspects of late night television, and states that he sees “a lot of people in television that are frightened of looking stupid. I’m not. I’ve looked stupid plenty of times, I’ll look stupid again” (Lloyd). Ferguson, much like Waters, wishes he would have had more of an inclination for school as a youth, and, as a result, admits to a “encyclopedic knowledge about some things, but I miss sources, I miss connections. I’m not foolish enough to think that being self-taught is better: I think it may allow for a certain freedom of expression and a certain vitality, but there’s plenty of academics that don’t lack that either” (Lloyd).

Episode nineteen, “Best Founding Father” of *Join or Die*, aired in May 2016. The panel, made up *Time* Magazine journalist Joel Stein, comedian Jo Koy, and actor Fred Willard, were given six choices to discuss: George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and Benjamin Franklin (“Best Founding Father”). The conversation about the choices is preceded by discussion of general, preconceived notions about each man based upon the *John Adams* miniseries on HBO, general knowledge of Benjamin Franklin as an author, scientist, and inventor, and awareness of Alexander Hamilton as the first Secretary of Treasury.

Ferguson and the guests immediately remove two out of the six men from contention. They eliminate James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, decisions made based upon personal perceptions of each man's influence upon the country. After discussion of the remaining four men, two additional Fathers are removed, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. These decisions are based upon how the two Founding Fathers have been viewed by the public, events in their personal and professional lives, and how their actions affect our lives today. In the last round, the panelists discuss the careers and minds of the two remaining contenders, Adams and Washington. Craig Ferguson points out over and over again that John Adams did not own slaves, making him unique among the Founding Fathers. Through jovial and humorous conversation, the group determines that George Washington is the "Best Founding Father."

The entire conversation about the Founding Fathers on *Join or Die* reveals historical as well as popular understanding of these men. The episode, , to say nothing of the entire series, highlights how the public views historical individuals and issues while bringing them back into modern parlance. The discussions are light-hearted and intended to entertain as well as inform. Like Waters and *Drunk History*, Ferguson and *Join or Die* have introduced history to new audiences through new forums and mediums. Much of the information is not new, rather it is remediated through a comic lens.

The hit Broadway musical *Hamilton* has created intrigue and fervor around Alexander Hamilton, the first Secretary of the Treasury. *Hamilton* is a phenomenon that has not only changed Broadway but has reformed historical storytelling and the public reception of historical information. The products of this interaction between history and popular culture affect public opinions concerning the Founding Fathers but also inform modern political and social issues. From immigration and slavery to federalism and currency, the actions and opinions of the Founding Fathers, as told through new history, continue to factor into the current political and social climate.

Hamilton, written and originally starring Lin-Manuel Miranda, tells the story of Alexander Hamilton's orphan origins in the Caribbean to his service during the American Revolution through to his death in a duel with Aaron Burr. After reading the 2004 biography "Alexander Hamilton" written by Ron Chernow, Miranda was inspired to write a musical based on Hamilton, one that blended hip-hop, jazz, and rap with more traditional musical theater (Piepenburg). The new type of storytelling put forward by *Hamilton* – mixing music genres, the diversity

of the cast, the presentation of history in contemporary language – resulted in praise from the media and historians alike.

According to the *Washington Post*, “the reason “Hamilton” is making such a big splash is not just because it is terrific (it is) — diverse, lyrically brilliant, dense, emotional, erudite, *cool*. It’s because it’s earnest” (Petri). *The Economist* found lessons to be learned, as the play highlighted the pragmatism put forward by Hamilton rather than his blind obedience to ideology (“Patriotism on Broadway”). The musical is and does all of these things. *Hamilton’s* remediated history uses the comic frame of acceptance by presenting Alexander Hamilton as the “comic fool” (Burke). Hamilton is not the victim, rather he is the hero of his own story through mistakes, criticism, corrections, and ultimate reconciliation with himself. To Chernow, Miranda succeeded in creating a fresh yet honest representation of Alexander Hamilton. Chernow asserts “I think he has plucked out the dramatic essence of the character — his vaulting ambition, his obsession with his legacy, his driven nature, his roving eye, his brilliant mind, his faulty judgment” (Piepenburg). Hamilton is a human being, one that is decidedly the fool surrounded by revolution and upheaval.

Hamilton teaches audiences about history through relatable portrayals of men and issues alike. Diversity, as found in *Hamilton*, reflects self-awareness of matters such slavery and gender inequality by giving strong voice to actors of color and to females alike. Acceptance of history is shaped by this commentary. Hamilton and his cohorts are the comic fools that made mistakes and, through the remediated presentation of their story, reconcile and continue to recognize those errors. They are not the victims in the story any more than Hamilton is a victim in his individual tale, rather they are the founders of a nation that has the potential to create social balance.

For this reason, *Hamilton* plays a role in contemporary hot-bed political topics. Immigration – specifically “Immigrants, we get the job done” - a line from the play itself, was poignant in the 2016 election cycle (“Yorktown”). Hamilton himself was, obviously, an immigrant and his opinions about immigration changed over time but fundamentally he “saw the value and necessity of bringing in people from other places to help America develop and grow” (Stepper). Miranda, also an immigrant, addresses how Hamilton, the story he tells, and has been very vocal about immigration policies.

In a year when politicians traffic in anti-immigrant rhetoric, there is also a Broadway musical reminding us that a broke, orphan immigrant from the West Indies built our financial system,” Miranda said. “A story that reminds us that since the beginning of the great, unfinished symphony that is our American experiment, time and time again, immigrants get the job done (“Hamilton’ Creator”).

Hamilton provides a way to highlight the origins of the United States populous, and even with the challenges immigration has faced in the history of the country as a whole, reminds millions about where we all came from and that “immigrants get the job done” (“Yorktown”). Thus, the song and the play create acceptance of the history of immigration in the United States, albeit in the most general of terms (Smith and Voth).

Similarly, during the 2016 election cycle, there were numerous editorials and articles about what the various political parties (albeit, mostly the Republicans) could learn from *Hamilton*. This is not exclusively about historical fact but rather about how politicians should behave, the rhetoric they could use to be more successful. Rebecca Mead assert that both Donald Trump and Jeb Bush should see the musical while David Smith reminds his readers that Miranda first performed works from what would become *Hamilton* at the Obama White House (Mead; Smith). Miranda’s Hamilton is always a man of the people, even when he’s striving to establish the nation’s first bank and neglects to follow Aaron Burr’s advice to “talk less. Smile more,” and aspects of his life and actions are applicable to modern political events. *Hamilton* repeatedly shows the political risks of speaking one’s mind, as Hamilton’s own political career came to an end as a result of his criticism of his opponents. The message resonates with modern politicians as it reminds them to seek inclusion and cooperation in the face of differing opinions, while simultaneously reminds the audience about the diversity and complexity of the United States.

Not surprisingly, matters of economic interest have been connected to *Hamilton* and its social and political influence. In 2013, the US Treasury announced that it would redesign the \$10, indicating that it would be the first bill to have a female on its face. This new bill, as much part of currency redesigns that are common due to counterfeiting concerns, was slated to be revealed in 2020 after public forums and an online vote. According to the US Treasury website, the

redesign was also intended to institutionalize “our American history by using images that reflect the past and represent our current era” (“Modern Money”).

There were immediate questions about what the public actually knew about Alexander Hamilton and why he was on the bill, as well as concerns about how taking him off of the \$10 would affect his legacy. These questions and concerns only escalated with the rise of *Hamilton*, and soon, there was outright backlash against Hamilton’s removal. Hamilton, the first Secretary of the Treasury and essential creator of the economic structure of the United States, it was argued, deserved a place on the currency of the United States more than anyone. There were indications that the Treasury would alter their plan and have Hamilton share the \$10 with the female choice, determined to be Harriet Tubman, and the debate over what the new bill continued through mid-2016. Lin Manuel Miranda himself advocated for Hamilton to remain on the bill, and, ultimately, it was decided that Hamilton would stay on the \$10 bill with five women featured on the back (Calmes; Trudo). It would be an overstatement to indicate that the Broadway musical *Hamilton* saved its namesake’s position on US currency, but there is no denying that it played a role and increased historical awareness of who Alexander Hamilton was and what his contribution were (Montgomery).

As a result of *Hamilton*’s historicity and relatability, educators, too, have found great value in and use for *Hamilton*. Politics, government, ethics, music, and drama all incorporate *Hamilton* into curricula across the country. As part of an initiative by the Rockefeller Foundation, in 2015 thousands of students were able to see *Hamilton* for \$10 (*Rockefeller Foundation News and Media*). In conjunction with funding that program, the Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History developed lesson plans, materials, and other resources about government, civics, history, and economics for instructors to use in their classrooms (“Hamilton,” Gilder Lehrman).

This is not to say that *Hamilton* does not have critics. “It’s still white history. And no amount of casting people of color disguises the fact that they’re erasing people of color from the actual narrative” and, according to historian Lyra Monteriro, it is guilty of “Founders Chic” (Monteriro; Onion). “Founders Chic,” as it is known, became part of the academic conversation after the release of several overly glossy biographies and works about the Founding Fathers at the start of the 21st century. Largely associated with popular history, it is a phenomenon for which academics are also guilty, as it is appealing, understandable, and almost preferable to neglect some of the less pleasant facts

about the Founders. “Founders Chic” idealizes the “Founding Fathers,” removing their failures, challenges, and mistakes from the historical conversation, creating an unrealistic mythical representation of these men. The Founders owned slaves, fought wars, killed people, and, as the backlash against “Founders Chic” began to assert, were “no smarter than the best their country can offer now; they weren’t wiser or more altruistic...they were, however, far bolder than we are...they embarked on an audacious and unprecedented challenge to custom and authority. For their courage they certainly deserve our admiration. But even more they deserve our emulation” (Brands; Waldstreicher).

Monteiro is not alone in accusing *Hamilton* of “Founders Chic,” as other historians have criticized *Hamilton* for being part of the phenomenon. To Ken Owen, “*Hamilton* represents the apotheosis of Founders Chic” because it neglects to point out his elitism, dislike by the masses, cronyism and misses an opportunity to increase understanding of the American Revolution (“Historians and *Hamilton*”). John Fea, in his April 2016 *Way of Improvement* post “Wait a Minute! Is ‘Founders Chic’ Okay Now?” agrees with Owen, but credits *Hamilton* with reinvigorating “interest in early American history at a time when politicians and pundits are telling us that history and other humanities are not useful” (“Wait a Minute!”). Historians certainly have mixed opinions of the musical, also challenging the presentation of Aaron Burr as the villain, the Schuyler sisters as feminists, the plight of the immigrant, and the ease of establishing a democracy (Monteriro; Onion, Owen). To many, *Hamilton* is dangerous in its oversimplification and misrepresentation of historical facts. As “‘Late Show’ host Stephen Colbert joked: “I didn’t have to read the Bible, because I saw *Jesus Christ Superstar*.” That pretty much says it all” (Isenburg).

These criticisms not only miss the point on how *Hamilton* speaks to matters like “Founder’s Chic,” they also highlight how recent changes in historical storytelling are currently misunderstood and underappreciated. *Drunk History*, *Join or Die*, and *Hamilton* all reframe the Founding Fathers and address issues like the “founders chic” phenomenon through comic acceptance.

Drunk History counters “Founders Chic” directly when Jen Kirkman references the idealistic legacy of George Washington. Similarly, Patrick Walsh equates John Adams and Thomas Jefferson with teenagers. When Walsh describes the bickering and character assassination that took place in 1800, viewers are offered a very different perspective on the oft-praised second and third Presidents of the United States. *Drunk History* teaches viewers that these

two men founded more than just the country, as they essentially ushered in the era of negative political campaigns in the United States. They are comic fools. *Join or Die* explicitly discusses the role of slavery in the lives of the Founders, particularly Thomas Jefferson. Slave ownership, discussed with tongue-in-cheek humor, is a very large part of what gets Jefferson disqualified from contention as the “best” Founding Father.

Hamilton directly and indirectly takes on aspects of “Founders Chic” with a resurgence of interest in the relationship between the Founding Fathers and the institution of slavery. Critics of the show argue that *Hamilton* never explicitly states that George Washington, the Schuyler Family, and others owned slaves and criticize the use of African Americans to portray actual slave owners. The show indicates Thomas Jefferson’s relationship with Sally Hemmings, as he was a slave owner as well, but on the whole, to critics, the show praises men that were champion freedom while actually owning other human beings. *Hamilton*’s use of African Americans to portray the major characters is meant to keep them in the conversation, to make them part of the founding of the United States in a very public way, and to help audience members accept their collective past. With this approach, *Hamilton* not only addresses slavery and “Founders Chic” but redefines responses to and perceptions of the role of African Americans in the history of the United States.

In a recent Alexander Hamilton-themed episode of *Drunk History*, remediated worlds collide when an inebriated Lin Manuel Miranda offers a truncated version of the life of Alexander Hamilton and his rivalry with Aaron Burr (Melas). Again, the portrayal on screen matches Miranda’s words, with comic presentations by actresses Alia Shawkat (as Hamilton) and Aubrey Plaza (as Burr) (“Hamilton”). The drunken remediation of Hamilton’s story on *Drunk History* is merely the more explicit comic frame found in the play itself. Issues of diversity and choice found in the play highlight Hamilton as representative of his time, his surroundings, and his upbringing. *Drunk History* merely emphasizes these matters, adding another layer of comic frame to *Hamilton* itself.

There are no attempts to hide some of the controversial aspects of these men’s lives and actions. Rather, *Drunk History*, *Join or Die*, and *Hamilton*, embrace controversial or taboo topics readily incorporate them into the storytelling and the historical discourse. Remediated history pushes the boundaries of historical memory and knowledge into exciting new directions. The comic framework challenges our common perceptions and assumed knowledge, making history

more palatable. Learning about uncomfortable topics with a laugh or a drink builds upon earlier historical presentations, ideas, and media to retell stories. Through this, history stays alive, stays relevant, and is put to use. Comic remediation of history maintains the integrity of history itself while providing access, appeal, enthusiasm to new audiences.

Works Cited

- “1846 interview with Ona Judge Staines’.” Independence Hall Association. 4 Jul. 1995. www.ushistory.org/presidentshouse/slaves/oneyinterview.php. Accessed Oct. 2016. Originally published in Chase, Benjamin. *Slave Testimony, Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews, and Autobiographies*, John W. Blassingame, ed. Louisiana State UP, 1977.
- Bolter, Jay David and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. MIT P, 2000.
- Bonnstetter, B.E. “Mel Brooks Meets Kenneth Burke (and Mikhail Bakhtin): Comedy and Burlesque in Satiric Film.” *Journal of Film and Video*, vol. 63, no. 1, 2011, pp.18-31.
- Borza, Eugene. “Movie Commentary: ‘Alexander’.” *Archaeology Institutes of America Online Journal*, Dec. 2004, www.archaeological.org/pdfs/papers/AIA_Alexander_Review.pdf. Accessed 25 Oct. 2016.
- Brands, H.W. “Founders Chic: Our Reverence for the Fathers Has Gotten Out of Hand.” *Atlantic*, www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2003/09/founders-chic/302773/. Accessed 26 Oct. 2016.
- Burleigh, A.H., *John Adams*. American Presidents Transaction, 2011.
- Calmes, Jackie. “The Success of *Hamilton* May Have Saved Hamilton on the \$10 bill.” *New York Times*, Apr. 2016, www.nytimes.com/2016/04/16/us/politics/success-of-hamilton-may-have-saved-hamilton-on-the-10-bill.html. Accessed 26 Oct. 2016.
- “Drunk History.” *Internet Movie Database*. IMDB.com, Inc, www.imdb.com/title/tt2712612/?ref_=tt_ov_inf. Accessed 26 Oct. 2016.
- DeGroot, Jerome, *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2015.
- “Drunk History Vol. 3.” *Drunk History*, directed by Jeremy Konner, performances by Tymberlee Hill and Danny McBride, season 1, episode 4,

- Funny or Die Inc., 12 July, 2008, www.funnyordie.com/videos/2b68dc4d5f/drunk-history-vol-3-featuring-danny-mcbride-from-drunk-history-danny-mcbride-derekwaters-jen-kirkman-and-jeremykonner?_cc=__d__&_ccid=6ffb548-a2d7-43a1-94c7-252146134aa6. Accessed 27 Oct. 2016.
- Easton, Anne, “‘Drunk History’ Creator on the Inebriated Comedy That Gained Him an Emmy Nod.” *The New York Observer*, Observer Media, 15 Sept. 2015, www.observer.com/2015/09/drunk-history-creator-on-the-inebriated-comedy-that-gained-him-an-emmy-nod/. Accessed 26 Sept. 2016.
- Ellis, Joseph J. *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*. Vintage, 2002.
- Fea, John. “Wait a Minute! Is ‘Founders Chic’ Okay Now?” *The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Reflections at the Intersection of American History, Religion, Politics, and Academic Life*, 21 Apr. 2016, www.thewayofimprovement.com/2016/04/21/wait-a-minute-is-founders-chic-ok-now/. Accessed 27 Oct. 2016.
- Featherstone, Liza. “Hillary Clinton, ‘Hamilton’ and the Indifference We Shouldn’t Tolerate.” *AM New York*, Newsday, 27 July 2016, www.amny.com/opinion/columnists/liza-featherstone/hamilton-isn-t-perfect-but-hillary-clinton-can-learn-from-it-1.12100867. Accessed 26 Oct. 2016.
- “Hamilton: The Musical and Rockefeller Foundation Announce Partnership to Provide 20,000 NYC Public School Students with Tickets to Hamilton on Broadway with \$1.46 Million Grant.” The Rockefeller Foundation. 27 Oct. 2015, www.rockefellerfoundation.org/about-us/news-media/hamilton-the-musical-and-the-rockefeller-foundation-announce-partnership-to-provide-20000-nyc-public-school-students-with-tickets-to-hamilton-on-broadway-with-1-46-million-grant/. Accessed 30 Oct. 2016.
- “Hamilton.” *Drunk History*, created by Derek Waters, performances by Alia Shawkat and Aubrey Plaza, season 4, episode 10, Gary Sanchez Productions and Comedy Central, 2016.

“Hamilton.” The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, www.gilderlehrman.org/programs-exhibitions/hamilton-education-program. Accessed 28 Oct. 2016.

“‘Hamilton’ Creator Lin-Manuel Miranda: ‘Immigrants Get the Job Done.’” *Fortune*, 2018 Time Inc., 16 May 2016, www.fortune.com/2016/05/16/hamilton-creators-lin-manuel-miranda-immigrants-get-the-job-done/. Accessed 30 Sept. 2016.

Hamilton's America. Directed by Alex Horwitz, performances by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Barack Obama, PBS, 2016. WNET and PBS.com, www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf/episodes/hamiltons-america/#. Accessed 30 Nov. 2016.

“History’s Best Founding Father.” *Join or Die with Craig Ferguson*, season 1, episode 19, The Daily Motion, May 2016, www.dailymotion.com/video/x4d8h86. Accessed 25 Oct. 2016.

“History’s Biggest Blunder.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Join or Die with Craig Ferguson, 19 Feb. 2016, www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tbL2R0Fb_E&list=ELJ1hIIUNXqgGiMZyR7RTfAQ.

“History’s Dumbest Mistake.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Join or Die with Craig Ferguson, 13 May 2016. www.youtube.com/watch?v=sg2snx1bnvg&list=ELJ1hIIUNXqgGiMZyR7RTfAQ&index=14&t=0s.

Isenberg, Nancy. “Let’s Not Pretend That ‘Hamilton’ Is History.” *Zócalo Public Square*, 2003. 17 March 2016, www.zocalopublicsquare.org/2016/03/17/lets-not-pretend-that-hamilton-is-history/ideas/nexus/. Accessed 28 Sept. 2016.

“Join or Die with Craig Ferguson.” *The History Channel*. 2016, A&E Television Networks, LLC., www.history.com/shows/join-or-die-with-craig-ferguson. Accessed 29 Sept. 2016.

Kim, James. “‘Drunk History’ creator Derek Waters tries to tell the stories not told in textbooks.” *The Frame*, Southern California Public Radio, 27 Aug. 2015, www.scpr.org/programs/the-frame/2015/08/27/44280/drunk-history-creator-derek-waters-tries-to-tell-t/. Accessed 25 Oct. 2016.

- Landsberg, Allison. *Engaging the Past: Mass Culture and the Production of Historical Knowledge*. Columbia UP, 2015.
- . *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture*. Columbia UP, 2004.
- Larsen, Andrew. "Marco Polo: A Clash in Cultures." *An Historian Goes to the Movies ~ Exploring history on the screen*, 5 Feb. 2015, www.aelarsen.wordpress.com/category/marco-polo/. Accessed 27 Oct. 2016.
- Levere, Jane. "'Hamilton's America' Premieres tonight on PBS." *Forbes*, 21 Oct. 2016, www.forbes.com/sites/janelevere/2016/10/21/hamiltons-america-premieres-tonight-on-pbs/#678c06f53e67. Accessed 26 Oct. 2016.
- Liptak, Kevin, Antoine Sanfuentes and Jackie Wattles. "Harriet Tubman will be face of the \$20." *Cable News Network*, Apr. 2016, money.cnn.com/2016/04/20/news/10-bill-hamilton-20-tubman/. Accessed Oct. 2016.
- Lloyd, Robert. "Craig Ferguson once again cracks wise on the History Channel's new panel show, 'Join or Die'." *Los Angeles Times*, 11 Feb. 2016, www.latimes.com/entertainment/tv/la-ca-st-craig-ferguson-join-or-die-interview-20160214-column.html. Accessed 28 Oct. 2016.
- Meacham, John. *Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power*. Random House, 2013.
- Mead, Rebecca. "Why Donald Trump and Jeb Bush should see 'Hamilton'." *The New Yorker*, Condé Nast 2018. Sept. 2015, www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/why-donald-trump-and-jeb-bush-should-see-hamilton. Accessed 29 Oct. 2016.
- Melas, Chloe. "Lin-Manuel Miranda's 'Drunk History' Life Lesson on Alexander Hamilton." *Cable News Network*, 30 Nov. 2016, www.cnn.com/2016/11/30/entertainment/drunk-history-lin-manuel-miranda-hamilton/. Accessed 27 Oct. 2016.
- McCullough, David. *John Adams*. Simon and Schuster, 2002.

- Miranda, Lin-Manuel. "Yorktown (The World Turned Upside Down)." *Hamilton: An American Musical Soundtrack*, Atlantic, 2015.
- "Modern Money." The U.S. Department of the Treasury, www.modernmoney.treasury.gov/. Accessed 29 Oct. 2016.
- Monteiro, Lyra. "Race-Conscious Casting and the Erasure of the Black Past in Lin-Manuel Miranda's *Hamilton*." *The Public Historian*, vol. 38, no. 1, Feb. 2016, pp. 89-98.
- Montgomery, Scott. "What Really Kept Alexander Hamilton on the \$10 Bill," *Fortune*, Time Inc., 24 Apr. 2016, www.fortune.com/2016/04/24/alexander-hamilton-harriet-tubman/. Accessed 28 Oct. 2016.
- "Oney Judge." *George Washington's Mount Vernon*, 2017 Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, www.mountvernon.org/digital-encyclopedia/article/oney-judge/. Accessed 27 Oct. 2016.
- Onion, R. "A Hamilton Skeptic on Why the Show Isn't as Revolutionary as PCSJs It Seems." *Slate*, 2018 The Slate Group LLC, 5 Apr. 2016, www.slate.com/articles/arts/culturebox/2016/04/a_hamilton_critic_on_why_the_musical_isn_t_so_revolutionary.html. Accessed 28 Oct. 2016.
- Onuf, Peter. "Thomas Jefferson: Campaigns and Elections." Miller Center of Public Affairs, 2017 Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia, www.millercenter.org/president/biography/jefferson-campaigns-and-elections. Accessed 16 Nov. 2016.
- Owen, Ken. "Historians and *Hamilton*: Founders Chic and the Cult of Personality." *The Junto: A Group Blog on Early American History*, earlyamericanists.com/2016/04/21/historians-and-hamilton-founders-chic-and-the-cult-of-personality/. Accessed 29 Oct. 2016.
- "Patriotism on Broadway." *The Economist*, 16 Dec. 2015, www.economist.com/news/books-and-arts/21684118-why-everyone-wants-see-hamilton-patriotism-broadway. Accessed 30 Oct. 2016.

Petri, Alexandra. "'Hamilton' and the End of Irony." *Washington Post*, 2018 The Washington Post, 21 Sept. 2015, www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/compost/wp/2015/09/21/hamilton-and-the-end-of-irony/?utm_term=.541742245a2d. Accessed 28 Oct. 2016.

"Philadelphia." *Drunk History: Seasons 1 & 2*, written by Derek Waters and Jeremy Konner, directed by Jeremy Konner, Comedy Central, 2014.

Piepenburg, Erik. "Why *Hamilton* has heat," *New York Times*, 2018 The New York Times Company, 12 June 2016, www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/08/06/theater/20150806-hamilton-broadway.html. Accessed Oct. 28 2016.

"The Rockefeller Foundation Announces \$6 Million in Additional funding for 100,000 Inner City Students Nationwide to see 'Hamilton'," The Rockefeller Foundation, 23 June 2016, www.rockefellerfoundation.org/about-us/news-media/rockefeller-foundation-announces-6-million-additional-funding-100000-inner-city-students-nationwide-see-hamilton/. Accessed 29 Oct. 2016.

Rosenstone, R.A. *History on Film/Film on History*. 2nd Ed. Routledge, 2012.

Rothman, Lily. "How *Drunk History* Gets Made by Taking the Past Seriously." *Time*, 13 Oct. 2015, www.time.com/4063297/drunken-history-derek-waters-video/. Accessed 30 October 2016.

Samuel, Raphael. *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*. Verso, 1994.

Smith, David. "Hamilton v Trump: visions for America from a Broadway show – and a showman." *The Guardian*, 19 Mar. 2016, www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/mar/19/hamilton-musical-donald-trump-immigration-barack-obama. Accessed 27 Oct. 2016.

"'Son of a Half-Breed Indian Squaw' (Quotation)." Monticello, monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/son-half-breed-indian-squaw-quotation. Accessed Oct. 2016. Originally published in *The Jonny-Cake Papers of "Shepherd Tom," Together with Reminiscences of Narragansett Schools of Former Days*. Boston: Printed for Subscribers, 1915, pp. 232-33.

Stepper, John. "What Hamilton, an Immigrant, thought of Immigration." *Working Out Loud*.com. 25 June 2016, workingoutloud.com/blog/what-hamilton-an-immigrant-thought-of-immigration. Accessed 28 Oct. 2016.

Trudo, Hanna. "\$10 bill decision delayed as Hamilton successor debate continues." *Politico*, 2018 Politico LLC, 11 Dec. 2015, www.politico.com/story/2015/12/ten-dollar-bill-decision-delayed-hamilton-216706. Accessed 30 Oct. 2016.

Waldstreicher, David. "Founders Chic as Culture War." *Radical History Review*, 2002, 185-94.

"'Washington's Runaway Slave'." Independence Hall Association, 4 July 1995.

www.ushistory.org/presidentshouse/slaves/oneyinterview.php. Accessed 27 Oct. 2016. Originally published in Adams, T.H., "Washington's Runaway Slave, and How Portsmouth Freed Her." *The Granite Freeman, Concord, New Hampshire* (May 22, 1845); reprinted in *Frank W. Miller's Portsmouth New Hampshire Weekly*, 2 June 1877.