



To: Participants, OUSD Teaching American History Grant

From: Stan Pesick

Attached is a list of videos from the PBS American Experience Series. Professor Leon Litwack, University of California, Berkeley, History Department donated these titles to the Teaching American History project.

They are available for check out by teachers participating in the project. To use one of the videos please call or email me at the addresses listed below. I will send the video to you through school mail. Please use the school mail to return the video.

The PBS Website ([http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/archives\\_alpha\\_ae.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/archives_alpha_ae.html)) provides more information about each video, along with a teacher's guide for a number of the selections.

Stan  
879-8497  
[stan.pesick@ousd.k12.ca.us](mailto:stan.pesick@ousd.k12.ca.us)

### **Amelia Earhart** (1 hr.)

The first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic, Amelia Earhart was America's "Lady Lindy." What the public didn't know was the cost of her courage. The record-breaking flights, races, interviews, speeches and promotional commitments pushed her to the point of exhaustion. This beautiful, accomplished woman would disappear without a trace on the eve of her 40th birthday.

### **Ballad of a Mountain Man** (1 hr.)

Bascom Lamar Lunsford and his campaign to preserve mountain music and dance. Bascom Lamar Lunsford was a pioneer folklorist who in the 1920s began a campaign to preserve mountain music and dance. He dignified what was known as "hillbilly music." Knocking on doors of local banjo pickers and fiddlers, listening to their songs, he amassed an extraordinary repertoire, recorded for the Library of Congress and started the first folk music festival.

### **Barnum's Big Top** (1 hr.)

P.T. Barnum was huckster, con man, promoter and entertainer. His American Museum featured ancient relics side by side with such "living curiosities" as lions, snakes, bearded ladies and Siamese twins. In 1871 he took the whole show on the road; it traveled by rail. Barnum introduced the idea of three rings, and his "Jumbo the Elephant" added a new word to the English language. By the time he teamed up with James Bailey, his circus had become "The Greatest Show on Earth."

### **Battle for Wilderness** (1 hr.)

The first major battle for wilderness preservation erupted over the building of Hetch Hetchy Dam in Yosemite National Park in 1906. On the one side were the purists who argued that wildlands were to be left as God made them; on the other, those who believed in the wise management of natural resources. President Roosevelt, an ardent conservationist, was caught between the two.

### **Battle of the Bulge** (1.5 hrs.)

The single biggest and bloodiest battle American soldiers ever fought. It came as a total surprise, on December 16th, 1944, when 30 German divisions roared across the Allied front in Belgium and Luxembourg. The war, after all, was coming to an end. Allied commanders were eating oysters, celebrating promotions, and reflecting on the death of Glenn Miller. This was Hitler's final gamble and for the more than half

a million men thrown into the cause, an infernal test of courage and endurance.

### **D-Day** (1 hr.)

The most dramatic single event in WWII. It was truly a "battle of the world," a pivotal turning point in history, and the most dramatic single event in WWII. A military operation fraught with incalculable risk; the secret campaign was a triumph of intelligence and teamwork moving 5,000 ships carrying 150,000 men and 30,000 vehicles across one of the most unpredictable and dangerous bodies of water in the world. For all the split-second planning and careful rehearsal, it came down to the young men whose remembrances and recollections are the heart of this story.

### **Daley, the Last Boss** (2 hrs.)

Richard J. Daley was born on a street he would never leave and christened in the small church in which he would be buried. His climb up the political ladder to become Mayor was slow and methodical; in a job he coveted, he built a political machine that changed the nature of urban politics, but he was ill-equipped to cope with two great 20th century challenges: race and the war in Vietnam.

### **Demon Rum** (1 hr.)

Prohibition's effect on Detroit, Michigan, the first major American city to "go dry," where smuggling liquor across the Canadian border became the second largest industry in town. A humorous, wild tale related by residents who lived through this national experiment which lasted from 1920 to 1933.

### **The Donner Party** (1.5 hrs.)

Of all the 19th century pioneer stories, none exerts so powerful a hold on the American imagination as this, during the worst winter ever recorded in the High Sierras. In June, 1846, 87 men, women and children began their legendary 2,000 mile journey from Illinois to California. They packed huge wagons, took food, hired servants. When family leaders made the fateful decision to take an untried short cut to beat the coming winter, only half would come out alive.

### **Edison's Miracle of Light (1 hr.)**

In 1878, Thomas Edison announced his intention to harness Niagara Falls and produce a safe, electric light system. He said he could do it in six weeks. Almost three years later, all the components -- bulbs, sockets, switches, wires, junction boxes -- were finally ready. The "Wizard of Menlo Park" may have revolutionized the world, but he was caught in a web of personal, patent and corporate battles, eventually losing control of the industry he founded.

### **A Family Gathering (1 hr.)**

The personal journey of three generations of a Japanese American family. Settling in the 1900s in Hood River, Oregon, the Yasui family became respectable figures in the valley community. Yet in December, 1941, they were considered "potentially dangerous" enemy aliens and sent to internment camps. After the war, they would struggle to reclaim their place as patriotic Americans.

### **French Dance Tonight (1 hr.)**

When French settlers, exiled from Nova Scotia, migrated to Louisiana in the 1750s, they mixed with African Americans, Afro-Caribbeans, and others to create one of America's richest, most varied cultures. The film captures many of Cajun and Zydeco music's most important innovators and performers as they talk about the emergence of two musical traditions.

### **George Washington - The Man Who Wouldn't Be King (1 hr.)**

He was bumbling, yet ambitious. He volunteered to serve his country, but insisted on being reimbursed for expenses. He was the most famous general of the Revolution but a dismal tactician on the battlefield. Greedy and selfish, service to the colonies would profoundly change him. The man who came to symbolize the American Revolution could also be incredibly brave, generous and an inspirational leader who scorned attempts to participate in any system but a democratic one.

### **God Bless America and Poland Too (1 hr.)**

Frank Popiolek was 14 when he came to America in 1911, one of 2 million Polish immigrants who made the journey. He settled in Chicago and became a barber, instilling in his family a love of the "old world" traditions and pride in their Polish heritage. A nostalgic and humorous look at how old world Chicago lives side by side with the new.

### **Goin' Back To T-Town (1 hr.)**

In Tulsa, the community of Greenwood was a place where blacks had some measure of financial, social and political independence. Burned to the ground in 1921 by angry whites, Greenwood was rebuilt and boasted the largest concentration of black businesses in the country. In a nostalgic celebration of old fashioned neighborhood life, the black residents of "T-Town" relive their community's remarkable rise and ultimate decline.

### **The Great Air Race of 1924 (1 hr.)**

The first around-the-world air race, sponsored by the Army Air Service to prove that the airplane had a commercial future, was the ultimate test of man and machine. Four pilots took off in single-engine, open-cockpit planes; 175 days later, two remaining pilots would land where they'd begun, in Seattle

### **The Great War -- 1918 (1 hr.)**

All lingering 19th-century notions of the romance of battle were replaced by the terrible reality of 20th-century mechanized warfare. At Verdun, the French lost 300,000 men; at the Somme, the English lost one million. Against this setting, America reluctantly sent its boys to fight. The wrenching and heroic accounts of U.S. soldiers and nurses who served in the closing battles of the bloodiest war of the century.

### **The Hunt for Pancho Villa (1 hr.)**

Pancho Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico, was the culmination of years of bloody incidents along the border. For Americans, it was the last straw. In 1916, General John Pershing and his 150,000 man cavalry set out to get Villa, dead or alive. Before it was over, the U.S. and Mexico would be at the brink of war.

### **The Hurricane of '38 (1 hr.)**

As the storm made its way across the Atlantic and up the eastern seaboard, there was little warning. Radar had not been invented. The National Weather Bureau predicted it would blow itself out at North Carolina, but it didn't. No one had ever seen a storm like this. Rhode Island fishermen, residents and vacationers recount what it was like to live through one of the greatest natural disasters recorded in North America.

### **If You Knew Sousa (1.5 hrs.)**

John Phillip Sousa became America's favorite bandmaster, but band music wasn't Sousa's only passion. He was the first to bring the classics -- Verdi, Wagner, Puccini -- to a burgeoning American middle class. Wildly popular, his was the first large musical organization to go on tour and make music pay. He helped give birth to that great American institution, the small town marching band.

### **Insanity on Trial (1 hr.)**

On July 2, 1881, Charles Julius Guiteau shot and fatally wounded President James A. Garfield in the lobby of the Baltimore & Potomac train station in Washington, D.C. As sensational as the assassination itself was, Guiteau's trial lasted over three months and became a very public battle over the meaning of insanity. Was it hereditary? Did it show on a man's face?

### **The Iron Road (1hr.)**

A tale of high adventure, enormous human effort and engineering brilliance. On May 2, 1869, when the last railroad spike was driven, bells in the churches of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Omaha and St. Louis rang in celebration. Six years in the making, the transcontinental railroad captured the imagination of the nation, symbolizing unification of the country after five years of Civil War.

### **Ishi: The Last Yahi Indian (1 hr.)**

When "Ishi," the last surviving member of a small Indian tribe, walked into the small California town of Oroville in 1911, he became a media curiosity and scientific "specimen." The San Francisco Museum built a Yahi house where audiences could watch Ishi make arrowheads and shoot bows. Ishi went to the theater and received invitations of marriage. But contact would bring him terrible physical and psychological consequences.

### **The Johnstown Flood (1 hr.)**

By an abandoned earthen dam, at a mountain resort 14 miles up the valley, the leaders of industry and their families created an exclusive summer retreat. But the structure of the dam was fatally flawed. On May 31, 1889, after steady spring rains, it broke without warning, and this small city in Pennsylvania was swept away in a wall of water over 30 feet high. More than two thousand people lost their lives; thousands were left homeless

### **Lindbergh (1 hr.)**

At 25 , Charles A. Lindbergh arrived in Paris, the first man to fly across the Atlantic -- handsome, talented, and brave -- a hero. But the struggle to wear the mantle of legend would be a consuming one. Crowds pursued him, reporters invaded his private life. His marriage, travels with his wife and the kidnapping and murder of their first child were all fodder for the front page.

### **Los Mineros (1 hr.)**

The story of Mexican American miners -- "los mineros" -- whose pitched labor battles, beginning with the first strike in 1903, shaped the course of Arizona history. It was only in 1946 that the two-tier wage system for whites and Mexicans was abolished. The film recounts the rise and fall of three small towns -- Superior, Clifton-Morenci and Sonora -- where the mining of copper ore dominated the lives of all the inhabitants.

### **Mr. Sears' Catalogue (1 hr.)**

They started selling watches. Then Richard Sears and Alva Curtis Roebuck started a revolution -- a "wish book" that made life on the farm a little easier and put consumer goods within reach of every American. A story of entrepreneurial triumph as well as an affectionate portrait of America from the 1890s through the 1920s.

### **Murder of the Century (1 hr.)**

In 1906, the murder of Stanford White, New York architect and man-about-town, by Harry K. Thaw, heir to a Pittsburgh railroad fortune, was reported "to the ends of the civilized globe;" much of the focus however was on Evelyn Nesbit, the beautiful showgirl in the center of the love triangle. A sensational murder story that had everything: money, power, class, love, rage, lust and revenge.

### **The Orphan Trains (1 hr.)**

In the mid 19th century, thousands of children roamed the streets of New York in search of money, food and shelter. In an ambitious and controversial effort to rescue them, between 1854 and 1929 more than 100,000 of these so-called "street Arabs" were sent by train to the Midwest to begin new lives in foster families. Poignant and powerful are the memories of living "Orphan Train" riders who vividly recount their experiences.

### **Orphans of the Storm (1 hr.)**

In the summer of 1940, as the German Luftwaffe began its assault on England, 10,000 British children were sent on a perilous sea voyage to safe havens in the United States. There, they forged life-long relationships with their "adopted" families, relationships that changes lives and attitudes on both sides of the Atlantic.

### **Pearl Harbor -- Surprise And Remembrance (1.5 hrs.)**

The shock of what happened on December 7, 1941 has made Pearl Harbor a synonym for deceit and unpreparedness. Produced for the 50th anniversary, this examination of events shows the attack could have been foreseen -- the US and Japan had been on a collision course for years. A minute-by-minute account, on both sides of the Pacific, leading up to the surprise attack that Sunday morning.

### **Rachel Carson's Silent Spring (1 hr.)**

She had been a biologist for the federal government when she first took note of the effects of the unregulated use of pesticides and herbicides, especially DDT. Magazines refused to publish her articles because they were afraid of losing advertising. When Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* in 1963, she was viciously attacked, called "an ignorant and hysterical woman." But her warning sparked a revolution in environmental policy and created a new ecological consciousness.

### **The Satellite Sky (1 hr.)**

Few events shocked America more than the news in 1957 that Russia had launched the first satellite. It was an assault on our national pride, even a threat to national security. Using news reels, commercials, television shows, government films, and science fiction movies, the film presents a uniquely impressionistic history of the early years of the Space Race.

### **Scandalous Mayor (1 hr.)**

James Michael Curley dominated Boston's politics for almost half a century, building a sophisticated political machine based on rhetoric, old-fashioned patronage and sheer personal will. In 1903, he ran a campaign from jail and won; he overpowered opponents with charisma and intelligence, and if that didn't work, he smeared them. Curley's colorful, combative style seized the imagination of the community because he thumbed his nose at the Yankee establishment.

### **Sins of Our Mothers (1 hr.)**

A Gothic tale of sin and redemption in 19th century New England. A small town in Maine reacts to the unconventional behavior of one of its young residents, a woman named Emeline Gurney. A fascinating examination of small town mores.

### **Wild By Law (1 hr.)**

For years there was no federal law to protect the shrinking wilderness from encroaching industry and tourism, until three men dedicated their lives to finding a remedy. Robert Marshall, Aldo Leopold, the prophet of the modern environmental movement, and Howard Zahniser struggled for decades to create a permanent system of federally protected wilderness areas. The fruit of their efforts, the Wilderness Act, passed in 1964

### **Wildcatter -- A Story of Texas Oil (1 hr.)**

The tale of mavericks whose risk-taking, sweat and dreams changed an American industry. Starting with Spindletop, the first Texas gusher in 1902, rare archival film and interviews with pioneering oilmen are set against a contemporary story of a modern "wildcatter," gambling to find his fortune in yet another narrow hole in the Texas earth.

### **The World That Moses Built (1 hr.)**

From the late 1920s through the 1960s, Robert Moses held almost total power over the landscape of New York. He built bridges, highways, Jones Beach, Lincoln Center and the United Nations, some of the most ambitious public works ever conceived, and some of the most controversial.

### **The Wright Stuff (1 hr.)**

Theirs is a quintessential American story of two midwestern boys who believed they could break the barrier of the air, succeeding where others with government grants and engineering educations had failed. Their remarkable breakthroughs in design and engineering shaped the course of the twentieth century.