

# LIONS GATE *University*

NEW COURSE *Experiencing America A Smithsonian Tour through American History*

Starting Wednesday, November 16 @ 11:00 AM

**About This Course:** 24 30 min. Lectures

The Smithsonian is a repository of America's history, achievements, aspirations, and identity. It holds the artifacts of great leaders, and those of ordinary Americans. It houses scientific specimens and technological wonders. It is home to art, music, films, writings—a vast treasure trove of objects of extraordinary beauty and outstanding design. With a collection of some 137 million items in more than two dozen museums and research centers, the Smithsonian brings our national epic to life as nothing else can.

Consider these examples of its riches:

- George Washington's simple but elegant army uniform and sword;
- Thomas Jefferson's Bible, which he compiled by hand so he could study the Gospels in four different languages;
- The chairs where Generals Lee and Grant sat when they concluded the surrender that ended the Civil War;
- Jacqueline Kennedy's stunning silk gown, worn at the inaugural balls for President John F. Kennedy; and
- The spacesuit that protected Neil Armstrong when he took his "one small step" on the Moon.

## **A History Course Like No Other**

In addition to historic objects, **Experiencing America** includes maps, portraits, recordings, videos, and demonstration models. The result is an

American history course like no other. Along with history, you get a behind-the-scenes look at the work of curators, conservators, and other professionals who are preserving our nation's heritage.

**Experiencing America** is ideal preparation for anyone planning to visit the Smithsonian. And for those who can't make the trip, this course brings the Smithsonian to you, providing an immensely rewarding twelve-hour journey through the past. It starts more than 15,000 years ago with some of the oldest human artifacts found in North America. Your tour continues to Plymouth Rock, the Pacific Northwest with Lewis and Clark, the Moon and back, and even to the Land of Oz, thanks to Dorothy's famous ruby slippers worn by Judy Garland in the 1939 movie.

The showpieces of the course are a selection of original artifacts, which Dr. Kurin presents after donning a pair of archival gloves. These historic treasures include:

- **Star-Spangled Banner:** Dr. Kurin shows and discusses a fragment of the renowned flag that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the national anthem. The original flag measured 30 by 42 feet and is now on display at the National Museum of American History.
- **Slave shackles:** The new National Museum of African American History and Culture has a pair of iron shackles that were used to restrain enslaved Africans on their ocean passage to America. The set held by Dr. Kurin is unusually small because it was worn by a child.
- **Bell telephone:** Dr. Kurin demonstrates how an early cup-shaped telephone was used as a transmitter by speaking into it and as a receiver by then holding it to the ear. Along with many other inventions, it resides in the National Museum of American History.
- **Sitting Bull's drawing book:** The victorious Indian chief at the Battle of Little Big Horn made a book of drawings that depict his deeds as a warrior. This fascinating set of sketches is housed at the National Museum of Natural History.
- **Apollo 8 glove:** The first humans to travel beyond Earth's orbit were the three astronauts who orbited the Moon aboard Apollo 8 in 1968. Dr. Kurin shows a spacesuit glove worn by one of them. It resides in the National Air and Space Museum. And so much more.....