

# Welcome to Robert Frost's World and Words

Professor Gary Bouchard

A few years ago I developed a 100 level on-line summer course on Robert Frost for Saint Anselm students. To do so I teamed-up with talented videographer David Hjelm and traveled around New Hampshire to a few treasured locations from the poet's life. Together we created a couple of dozen mini-lectures on Frost's life and poems.

In this peculiar time when we find ourselves in forced hibernation away from so many of the people and places we love, I wanted to do what I could to help lift you beyond your four walls into the world and imagination of one of New England and America's most beloved poets.

A unique figure in American poetry, Robert Frost is as complex as he is revered and mythologized. His voice and vision are inseparable from the New England landscape he inhabited, and his diction is as New Hampshire as granite ledge, birch trees, maple syrup, stone walls and accumulating snow.

Most casual readers of poetry are acquainted with some of the more famous poems of Frost that are accessible to young readers. Beyond those dozen or so poems, Frost created a large body of work, including eight volumes of some of the most provocatively complex, metaphysical poems in American literature. Many of those poems are intricately connected to the landscapes, voices and imagination of New Hampshire.

Together in this course we will travel on the road less taken. The lectures will bring you to his homes in Plymouth, Derry and Franconia, New Hampshire. Our travels in his writings will bring us beyond the few familiar Frost poems to many seldom read works by this most famous American poet who launched his career in the early 20th century by introducing the world to the rural folks North of Boston. Through the reading and study in this course we will become equipped to better appreciate the verse of Robert Frost as well as the human and land-scapes of New Hampshire.

Texts: *The Poetry of Robert Frost*, ed. Edward Connery Lathem  
*Robert Frost, A Life*, Jay Parini

Opening Video (<https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Ee7r6H4T>)

<b>Part 1 – Recommended Timeframe: April 6<sup>th</sup> - April 13<sup>th</sup></b>	
Read	Chapters 1 - 3 of <i>Robert Frost, A Life</i> by Jay Parini
Watch	Dubunking Some Myths: Who was Robert Frost? ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/c6CYw9r7">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/c6CYw9r7</a> )
Read	Selections from <i>A Boy's Will</i> (1913) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Into My Own" p.5</li><li>• "Ghost House" p.5</li><li>• "My November Guest" p.6</li><li>• "Love and a Question" p.7</li></ul>
Read	Chapters 4-6 of <i>Robert Frost, A Life</i> by Jay Parini
Watch	The Language of Poetry and Poetic Analysis ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Dr2f3Y7F">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Dr2f3Y7F</a> )

Read	Selections from A Boy's Will (1913): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "To The Thawing Wind" p. 11</li> <li>• "A Prayer in Spring" p. 12</li> <li>• "Flower Gathering" p. 1</li> </ul>
Watch	Twenty-Three Traits of Robert Frost's Poetry <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/d8X9KrCp">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/d8X9KrCp</a>
Re-Read	Selections from A Boy's Will (1913): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "To The Thawing Wind" p. 11</li> <li>• "A Prayer in Spring" p. 12</li> <li>• "Flower Gathering" p. 1</li> </ul>
Read	Selections from A Boy's Will (1913) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Mowing"</li> <li>• "My Butterfly"</li> <li>• "The Tuft of Flowers" p. 22</li> <li>• "Reluctance" p. 29</li> </ul>
Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Derry Years: Where it All Started (<a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Aj52KfJn">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Aj52KfJn</a>)</li> <li>• Together or Apart: Three Poems from A Boy's Will (<a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Dn93BmHx">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Dn93BmHx</a>)</li> </ul>
Read	Chapters 7 - 9 of <i>Robert Frost, A Life</i> by Jay Parini
Watch	To England and Back Home ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Jx9j2K7N">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Jx9j2K7N</a> )
Read	Selections from North Boston (1914) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Mending Wall" p. 33</li> <li>• "Good Hours" p. 102</li> </ul>
Watch	'Mending Wall: Good Fences and Good Neighbors? <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Nt4o7S2Y">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Nt4o7S2Y</a>
Re-Read	Selections from North Boston (1914) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Mending Wall" p. 33</li> </ul>
Participate	Synchronous Zoom Discussion – Date: Monday, April 13 <sup>th</sup> at 3:00 <a href="https://anselm.zoom.us/j/832473065?pwd=Z0h0bXNkMTgxOVkyc1pHMUd2V3NFZz09">https://anselm.zoom.us/j/832473065?pwd=Z0h0bXNkMTgxOVkyc1pHMUd2V3NFZz09</a>

<b>Part 2 - Recommended Timeframe: April 13<sup>th</sup> – April 20<sup>th</sup></b>	
Read	Selections from North of Boston (1914): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Death of a Hired Man" p.34</li> <li>• "Home Burial" p. 51</li> </ul>
Watch	Together and Apart: Two Domestic Dialogues <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Yn63GrQw">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Yn63GrQw</a>
Read	Selections from North of Boston (1914): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The Code" p. 69</li> </ul>
Watch	Minding Codes or 'What Did I Say?' ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f5XHp73D">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f5XHp73D</a> )
Read	Selections from North of Boston (1914) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "After Apple-Picking" p. 68</li> <li>• "The Wood-Pile" p. 101</li> </ul>
Watch	After Apple Picking, Frost the Breezy Metaphysical <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f5XHp73D">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f5XHp73D</a>
Read	Chapters 10 - 12 of <i>Robert Frost, A Life</i> by Jay Parini

Watch	1999 Interview with Jay Parini about Frost's Life ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GE2pTpxXms4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GE2pTpxXms4</a> )
Read	Selections from Mountain Interval (1916) and New Hampshire (1923) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The Road Not Taken" p. 105</li> <li>• "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" p. 224</li> <li>• "Meeting and Passing" p. 118</li> <li>• "Fire and Ice" p. 220</li> <li>• "Dust of Snow" p. 221</li> <li>• "A Patch of Old Snow" p. 110</li> <li>• "Nothing Gold Can Stay" p. 222</li> </ul>
Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Lyrical Qualities of Frost's 'The Road Not Taken' (<a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f2QWn38Z">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f2QWn38Z</a>)</li> <li>• "Stopping by the Woods:" Frost as Master of Rhyme and Form (<a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Cz69Kaq2">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Cz69Kaq2</a>)</li> </ul>
Re-Read	Selections from Mountain Interval (1916) and New Hampshire (1923) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The Road Not Taken" p. 105</li> <li>• "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" p. 224</li> <li>• "Meeting and Passing" p. 118</li> <li>• "Fire and Ice" p. 220</li> <li>• "Dust of Snow" p. 221</li> <li>• "A Patch of Old Snow" p. 110</li> <li>• "Nothing Gold Can Stay" p. 222</li> </ul>
Participate	Synchronous Zoom Discussion – Date: April 20 <sup>th</sup> at 3:00 <a href="https://anselm.zoom.us/j/832473065?pwd=Z0h0bXNkMTgxOVkyc1pHMUd2V3NFZz09">https://anselm.zoom.us/j/832473065?pwd=Z0h0bXNkMTgxOVkyc1pHMUd2V3NFZz09</a>

<b>Part 3 - Recommended Timeframe: April 20<sup>th</sup> – April 27<sup>th</sup></b>	
Read	Selections from Mountain Interval (1916) and New Hampshire (1923) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The Oven Bird" p. 119</li> <li>• "Hyla Brook" p. 119</li> </ul>
Watch	Frost's Oven Bird: The Book, the Bird, and the Poem ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f3L4Gky9">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f3L4Gky9</a> )
Listen	Recording of Oven Birds ( <a href="https://www.hbw.com/ibc/species/ovenbird-seiurus-aurocapilla">https://www.hbw.com/ibc/species/ovenbird-seiurus-aurocapilla</a> )
Read	Selections from New Hampshire (1923) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "To Earthward" p. 226</li> <li>• "A Brook in the City" p. 231</li> <li>• "A Hillside Thaw" p. 237</li> </ul>
Watch	'To Earthward:' The Least and Most Frostian Poem ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f7RPw58J">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/f7RPw58J</a> )
Read	Chapters 10 - 18 of <i>Robert Frost, A Life</i> by Jay Parini
Watch	'The Road Not Taken' and the Irony not Understood ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/k8TXt63W">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/k8TXt63W</a> )
Read	Selections from Mountain Interval (1916) and New Hampshire (1923): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "An Old Man's Winter Night" p. 108</li> <li>• "Birches" p. 121</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Out Out ---" p. 136</li> <li>• "The Lockless Door" p. 240</li> </ul>
Listen	Robert Frost Reading "Birches" ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBw-OaOWddY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBw-OaOWddY</a> )
Watch	Ascending and Descending Frost's Birches ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/k5Z4FoQs">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/k5Z4FoQs</a> )
Read	Selections from Mountain Interval (1916) and New Hampshire (1923) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "New Hampshire" p. 159</li> <li>• "The Ax-Helve" p. 185</li> </ul>
Watch	Frost's Franco-American Neighbor and "The Ax-Helve" as a Commentary on Art ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Tr53Coe4">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Tr53Coe4</a> )
Participate	Synchronous Zoom Discussion – Date: Monday, April 27 <sup>th</sup> at 3:00 <a href="https://anselm.zoom.us/j/832473065?pwd=Z0h0bXNkMTgxOVkyc1pHMUd2V3NFZz09">https://anselm.zoom.us/j/832473065?pwd=Z0h0bXNkMTgxOVkyc1pHMUd2V3NFZz09</a>

<b>Part 4 – Recommended Timeframe: April 27<sup>th</sup> – May 4<sup>th</sup></b>	
Read	Selections from Mountain Interval (1916) and New Hampshire (1923): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "A Brook in the City" p. 231</li> <li>• "A Hillside Thaw" p. 237</li> <li>• "The Need of Being Versed in Country Things" p. 241</li> </ul>
Watch	'Out Out:' Frost at His Most Severe: Understatement as Irony ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Po58Zyg9">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Po58Zyg9</a> )
Read	Chapters 19 - 22 of <i>Robert Frost, A Life</i> by Jay Parini
Watch	Two Part Documentary on Frost in his later years (A Lover's Quarrel with the World) ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9jbV7knSH4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9jbV7knSH4</a> )
Read	Selections from West-Running Brook (1928) and A Further Range (1936) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "A Lone Striker" p. 273</li> <li>• "A Drumlin Woodchuck" p. 281</li> <li>• "Acquainted With the Night" p. 255</li> </ul>
Watch	A Striker, a Hider and a Walker: Frost the Person(a) ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/s3W4Few6">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/s3W4Few6</a> )
Read	Selection from West-Running Brook (1928) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "West-Running Brook" p. 257</li> </ul>
Watch	The Echo of Two Voices from Derry ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Zr3m2C7R">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Zr3m2C7R</a> )
Read	Selection from West-Running Brook (1928) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Two Tramps in Mudtime" p. 275</li> </ul>
Watch	Two Tramps, One Poet and the Work We Do ( <a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/j5FEi23K">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/j5FEi23K</a> )
Read	Selection from West-Running Brook (1928) and A Further Range (1936) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "On Looking Up By Chance at the Constellations" p. 268</li> <li>• "Desert Places" p. 296</li> <li>• "The Master Speed" p. 300</li> <li>• "Neither Out Far Nor In Deep" p. 301</li> <li>• "Provide, Provide" p. 307</li> </ul>
Read	Selections from A Witness Tree (1942) and Steeple Bush (1947) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"The Silken Tent" p. 331</li> <li>"Never Again Would Bird Song Be the Same" p. 338</li> <li>"Directive" p. 377</li> </ul>

Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two Masterful Sonnets and Frost's Last Great Directive (<a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Bi23Lpz4">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Bi23Lpz4</a>)</li> <li>Summary of Robert Frost's World and Words (<a href="https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Qx38Min6">https://media.anselm.edu/Watch/Qx38Min6</a>)</li> </ul>
Participate	Synchronous Zoom Discussion – Date: Monday, May 4 <sup>th</sup> at 3:00 <a href="https://anselm.zoom.us/j/832473065?pwd=Z0h0bXNkMTgxOVkyc1pHMUd2V3NFZz09">https://anselm.zoom.us/j/832473065?pwd=Z0h0bXNkMTgxOVkyc1pHMUd2V3NFZz09</a>

#### Instructor Bio:

Gary Bouchard is founding Executive Director of the Gregory J. Grappone Humanities Institute at Saint Anselm College, where he has taught in the English Department for over three decades. During those years he also served as Department Chair and as the College's Executive Vice President. A specialist in the field of Renaissance poetry and Shakespeare, he is the author of two scholarly books, including a recent book about the little known Catholic Saint, Robert Southwell published in 2019. Gary is the Consulting Editor and a Catholic Press Association award-winning writer for *Parable*, the magazine of the Catholic Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire. He is the author of a new popular book of meditations entitled *Twenty Poems to Pray* (Liturgical Press, 2019).

#### Additional Information to join Zoom Discussions:

Topic: Robert Frost Discussions

Time: Apr 13, 2020 03:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Every week on Mon, until May 4, 2020, 4 occurrence(s)

Apr 13, 2020 03:00 PM

Apr 20, 2020 03:00 PM

Apr 27, 2020 03:00 PM

May 4, 2020 03:00 PM

Weekly: [https://anselm.zoom.us/meeting/tZcvc-6rrj0v-](https://anselm.zoom.us/meeting/tZcvc-6rrj0v-PHZMvpDucwxMWTld9pjbvQ/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGrrD8tGdSTtV3tUbAqW9r_bPGxIDx-gplwig_BFiNEei7BAu5Ga6J1BumB)

[PHZMvpDucwxMWTld9pjbvQ/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGrrD8tGdSTtV3tUbAqW9r\\_bPGxIDx-gplwig\\_BFiNEei7BAu5Ga6J1BumB](https://anselm.zoom.us/meeting/tZcvc-6rrj0v-PHZMvpDucwxMWTld9pjbvQ/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGrrD8tGdSTtV3tUbAqW9r_bPGxIDx-gplwig_BFiNEei7BAu5Ga6J1BumB)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://anselm.zoom.us/j/832473065?pwd=Z0h0bXNkMTgxOVkyc1pHMUd2V3NFZz09>