

TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES

A Joint Publication of the New York and New Jersey State Councils for the Social Studies



Teaching Social Studies: Vol. 22, No. 2, Summer/Fall 2022

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Advertising rate per issue:	Institutional subscription rate:
Full page \$500 Half page \$300 Quarter page \$200	United States \$25 Foreign \$35 Single copy \$15

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Teaching Social Studies

Published by the New York and New Jersey State Councils for the Social Studies

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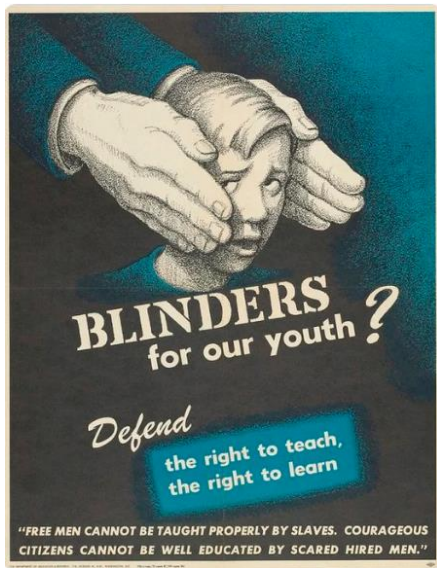
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The Freedom to Teach by the National Council for the Social Studies

This statement is from March 2022 and can be found at <https://www.socialstudies.org/current-events-response/freedom-teach>



Poster-Congress of Industrial Organizations, 1950s

School districts, the most active battlefield in the American culture wars today, are facing an unprecedented number of calls to remove books from schools and libraries, false claims about “obscenity” invading classrooms, the elimination of teaching about evolution and climate change, challenges to the need for making sense of and critiquing our world in the mathematics classrooms, and legislation redlining teaching about racism in American history. These actions are putting excessive and undue pressure on teachers, who are caught in the crossfire of larger political conflict, motivated by cultural shifts and stoked for political gain.

Teachers are being maligned as “harming” children and are subjected to constant scrutiny (and even

direct surveillance) by many parents, school administrators, and activist groups. Some are afraid to offer their students award-winning books that may violate vaguely stated laws about teaching the history of racism or that may be misleadingly labeled as pornographic. As a result, teachers’ very ability to do their job is under threat.

In their zeal, activists of the current culture wars unfortunately treat teachers as if they are enemies. The truth is that teachers are uniquely important leaders who, in educating current and new generations of students, bear responsibility for this country’s future. They are trained professionals with one of the hardest and most demanding jobs, a job that requires deep commitment, but brings little financial reward.

Teachers need our support; they need our trust; they need to have the freedom to exercise their professional judgment. And that freedom includes the freedom to decide what materials best suit their students in meeting the demands of the curriculum, the freedom to discuss disturbing parts of American history if and when they judge students are ready for it, and the freedom to determine how to help young people navigate the psychological and social challenges of growing up. In short, teachers need the freedom to prepare students to become future members of a democratic society who can engage in making responsible and informed contributions and decisions about our world.

The stakes are too high. We cannot let good teachers leave the field because they no longer have the freedom to do their job. We cannot let the education of our children and young adults become collateral damage in partisan political machination.

Transforming Education for Our Children's Future

Doug Selwyn

Parts of this essay appear in At the Center of All Possibilities: Transforming Education for our Children's Future (Peter Lang, 2022).
<https://www.peterlang.com/document/1166664>

A group of approximately 30 teachers, administrators, over the family members, health officials and others in our town of Greenfield, Massachusetts met summer of 2020 attempting to plan for the opening of the 2020-2021 school year. COVID-19 was raging and we had to make choices about whether to have in-person schooling, a hybrid model that had children in schools some of the week and learning remotely the rest of the week, or to conduct school entirely remotely, at least to start.

Several things became evident as we considered our options. First, there might be no institution as inextricably bound to the community than are schools. Any decision we made would reverberate through the community, with consequences for families, for businesses, for those needing childcare, for virtually every aspect of town life. It also meant that what was happening in the community would have significant consequences for what was happening in the schools. Second, it was clear that what we already knew, that there was (and is) significant inequality across our community, was even more prevalent and more consequential than we had realized. Third,

our schools were already severely underfunded and under-resourced before Covid. The arrival of Covid made things even worse, stretching resources beyond the breaking point, which made realistic planning all but impossible because there was no way to really do what needed to be done. Fourth, there would be no time to offer adequate professional development or preparation time for faculty and staff. And fifth, the federal and state governments were prioritizing political and economic interests over educational or health-related concerns.

And what was most clear was that the best-case scenario was to be able to get back to near “normal,” to the education we had before the arrival of the pandemic. We were in crisis mode and getting ready for the school year was all that mattered.

I had written a book two years before focused on the question, what would our schools look like if our primary focus was on the health and wellbeing of our children. What I found was that if that really was our primary concern we would have to address the underlying issues in our society such as the increasing gap between rich and poor, a lack of health care for mothers during pregnancy and for newborns and their families through their first months and years of life, and the various stresses and traumas

our children were experiencing from racism, from living in a toxic environment, from a lack of access to health care, and from other social, or economic factors if we wanted our children to both be healthy and able to come to school ready to learn. We could not simply say to schools fix yourselves while doing nothing about the underlying issues in our communities and country.

No one on our committee had time or energy to think about these larger issues as we pondered how to open schools. They simply wanted to get back to as close to “normal” as possible. While I recognized the enormous pressure the committee was under to get schools open one way or another, having as a goal returning to a school system that was failing so many of our children, particularly those who are most vulnerable, was not good enough, so I decided to research the question what do our children need to learn and know and how can we help them to learn it so that they are going to be as prepared as possible to move into their future, which is, by definition, unpredictable. While we recognize that one of the responsibilities of the adults in our society is to educate our young, there is not always agreement about what that education should consist of, who should receive it, who should offer it, who should pay for it, and how it should be assessed. These questions led me to invite the thoughts of educators and activists on what education our children needed and how we might help them to achieve it. I cast as wide a net as I could in gathering points of view, experience, perspectives, and understandings, and we looked at several aspects of the question including

understanding the role of schools within the larger society, learning from our experiences with COVID, looking at the content we offer, considering who should be teaching and how they should be educated, how we might assess, and what other models of education might we consider, beyond public schooling. I pulled the essays and interviews together into a book, *At the Center of All Possibilities: Transforming Education for Our Children’s Future* (2022), and want to briefly share what I learned, starting with a brief look at my own story.

I was mis educated about much of U.S. history by Walt Disney and other programs on television. I “learned” from Disney and other media that U.S. history really began with the “discovery” of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492 and continued as (white) European Americans moved across North America fulfilling their Manifest Destiny to civilize and settle the essentially empty continent. I watched Disney’s take on Davy Crockett to learn about what that meant; fighting hostile, savage Indians who stood in the way of that Manifest Destiny, and later, fighting hostile, evil Mexicans who surrounded and murdered heroic Americans at the Alamo. Disney never mentioned the genocide and forced resettlements that were at the heart of Manifest Destiny, or the land grab that was the so-called Mexican War, or its link to perpetuating and maintaining slavery. It was nationalistic myth making that was echoed by virtually everything else that appeared on television, our prime window on the world outside of our neighborhoods.

Disney and other media also (mis) educated me about race relations, gender roles and values, which seemed to center on strong, silent, gun toting men who traveled alone or sometimes with a clownish sidekick, and pretty, vulnerable and relatively helpless women. And, of course, all the good guys (and women) were white.

Despite the fact that I went through a well-regarded K-12 school system, I did not encounter any real pushback to the Disney version of history until I was in college, and that pushback mostly came from “teachers” and situations outside of the classroom. I spent my summers living across the street from the Six Nations Museum, in Onchiota, NY (population 62), within a small Mohawk community, and got to know Ray Fadden, the man who built and ran the museum., “Uncle” Ray and my other neighbors helped me to learn a much more accurate picture of the genocide and forced removal that were the hallmarks of Manifest Destiny, and I learned more about the complex and layered governing and social systems at the heart of the Iroquois Confederacy that challenged virtually everything I’d been taught at school, or by Disney.

This experience awakened me to the need to question, to challenge, and to not automatically accept what I was being told in school, in my neighborhood (which was an essentially middle class, white, quietly racist community of young families), and from media of all sorts, including the news.

When I finally decided on becoming a teacher, more than a decade after graduating from college I thought back on my relentless

mis education and realized I had to formulate my own goals, my own purpose as an educator. I came up with a short list of goals and aspirations for my work as a teacher, which I continued to add to with experience. They included:

The children are more important than any of the subjects.

- Every child should feel welcomed and valued.
- All children in class should have the opportunity to explore what is most important to them, at least some of the time.
- I should avoid using textbooks as much as possible as they are both deadly boring and inaccurate or incomplete.
- It is crucial to bring in more points of view and voices than what are featured in textbooks or in mandated curriculum.
- I must be a learner, to model what I hope the students will take from their time with me.
- I will bring as much joy and excitement to learning as possible.
- I want to help students to learn to critically question what they are encountering, including me.
- I must do everything I can to tell them the truth, and to help to learn to find the truth for themselves.

I can’t say that I have always been successful in meeting those goals, but they are always the compass points I try to steer

by. My research and conversations while editing *At the Center of All Possibilities* have moved me to update my list. I would now add:

- Having an increased awareness of the cultures, histories, and contexts of the students.
- Learning much more about the impact that inequality, white supremacy, racism, and capitalism play in determining, or strongly influencing the lives we lead
- Becoming a more active and engaged advocate for social justice outside of the classroom. Helping students understand the crippling impact of slavery and racism on our society, that continues to this day
- Supporting students learning to listen and communicate clearly with their peers, and to work with them as allies and cooperators rather than as competitors.
- Developing alternative ways of organizing education that pattern after the freedom school model, with a focus is on a smaller, more personal educational experience focused on the needs and interests of the students.
- Assessing the quality of our work together, in my classroom and in my school by the quality of our lives inside and outside of school. How are we feeling about ourselves and each other, how are we behaving with each other, how much are we engaging in learning that is of interest, and how are putting what we learn to use in service to what we care about, in school and out. If there

is no evidence that school is moving them towards becoming engaged, caring, and joyful humans then we are failing them and need to change what we are doing.

I would also add to my list the importance of reaching out to the community to help me to learn about the students, to learn about content I don't know, to help me identify resources and to help me think through how best to make the educational experience as effective and meaningful and joyful as possible. Many of us enter classrooms thinking we must do it all ourselves and are reluctant to "blow our cover" by admitting we don't know how to deal with particular content or a particular student or situation. That is evidence of a flaw in how we are trained rather than educated in our K-12 and university systems. I learned so much by asking them to be a part of this project. I hope that readers will keep this learning in mind as you think about how to transform education in your school or district, that you will be well served by inviting others to think and plan and act with you. We are in this together and are wiser and more powerful when we join together.

I want to close with a few words from Myles Horton, the founder of the Highlander Folk School, in Tennessee. He was in dialog with Brazilian educator Paulo Freire and said this: "If I had to put a finger on what I consider a good education, a good radical education, it wouldn't be about methods or techniques. It would be loving people first.... and that means people everywhere, not just your family or your own

countrymen or your own color. And wanting for them what you want for yourself. And then next is respect for people's abilities to learn and to act and to shape their own lives. You have to have confidence that people can do that... The third thing grows out of caring for people and having respect for people's ability to do things, and that is that you value their experiences. You can't say that you respect people and not respect their experiences." (Bell, Gaventa, & Peters, 1990, p 177-178)

There is so much that we can do if we trust, respect, and value the people we work with, beginning with our students and their families. When we trust, respect, and value people enough to listen to them when they share who they are, what they care about,

and what their goals and dreams are, we have already taken a significant step towards the transformation of their educational experience, and ours.

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Selwyn, D. (2022). *At the center of all possibilities: Transforming education for our children's future*. Peter Lang.

The Rise of Corporate Power and the Disintegration of American Democracy

Anthony Higuera

“No thoughtful person can question that the American economic system is under broad attack”.¹ These words open the Powell Memorandum’s “Attack on American free enterprise System”, written by Lewis Powell and sent to the United States Chamber of Commerce in 1971. Lewis Powell would become one of four justices Richard Nixon appointed to the United States Supreme Court that would gradually dismantle the more liberal leaning Warren court of the 1950s and 1960s.² For Powell the sources of the assault on American business were wide and varied. “They include, not unexpectedly, the Communists, New Leftists, and other revolutionaries who would destroy the entire system, both political and economic”.³ Powell is thorough in his inquiry into the many forces at work throughout the United States hell-bent on upending the capitalist order. He states that: “Yale, like every other major college, is graduating scores of bright young men who are practitioners of despair. These young men despise the American political and economic system... their minds

seem to be wholly closed. They live, not by rational discussion but by mindless slogans. A recent poll of students on 12 representative campuses reported that: almost half of the students favored socialization of basic U.S. industries”.⁴ The Powell Memorandum would prove to be a rallying cry for big business and global corporations to assert their rightful place in the sphere of American economic and political life. Powell argues in almost Orwellian tones that the battle for corporate dominance must be waged on multiple fronts: that textbooks in universities should be kept under surveillance, television networks closely monitored and scholarly articles propagated on the positive benefits of a capitalistic system.⁵ He urged corporations to take a page out of the playbooks of labor and realize that political power is essential for corporate growth and must be meticulously cultivated.⁶ The Powell Memorandum is essential because it provides a framework for business interests to utilize and manipulate the existing framework of the United States legal system

¹ Lewis Powell, greenpeace.org, 1.

² Adam Winkler, *We the Corporations* (Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018)

³ Lewis Powell, greenpeace.org, 3.

⁴ Powell, 3.

⁵ Winkler, 286-87

⁶ Winkler, 287.

to gain rights that would become akin to corporate personhood. One can think of Powell's letter to the Chamber of Commerce as both a rallying cry and a blueprint for corporate America in order to gain greater hegemony in the United States. The purpose of this paper is to argue that through corporations' utilization of the legal system to gain personhood and the rights that accompany it, the political and economic welfare of the American citizen has been jeopardized.

The first battles in the war for corporate supremacy would be waged on the legal front. Corporations used the court system to gain access to rights historically reserved for United States citizens. With the continual accrument of First Amendment speech rights, corporate America argued that monetary contributions by business is protected free speech guaranteed by the constitution. This came to have disastrous consequences for the future of America's political and democratic systems. As corporations grew more powerful they were able to use the wealth and resources at their disposal to buy political influence and favorable legislation.

The first defining court case appeared in 1976, a few years after the establishment of the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA). FECA's primary

goal was to establish new standards for fundraising and influence in the political spheres, much of which grew out of the reforms post-Watergate scandal.⁷ This act mandated public disclosure of contributions, made campaign contributions over a certain amount of money illegal and set caps on the amounts for campaign spending.⁸ The most ardent opponents of FECA were anxious that the law could be used as a tool by established politicians in order to maintain their own stranglehold on power.⁹ Their main concern lie in the fact that if the government could enact punitive measures on political communication, then entrenched politicians could utilize spending limits on insurgent political operatives in order to hold onto their own power.¹⁰ This law would eventually be challenged in the United States Supreme Court with the case of *Buckley v. Valeo*. On January 2, 1975 a suit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia by New York Senator James L. Buckley and Eugene McCarthy.¹¹ The plaintiffs in this case argued that the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 and the Presidential Election Campaign Fund Act were unconstitutional.¹² The Supreme Court upheld the majority of the law, however it struck down the spending limits on grounds of the First Amendment.¹³ The Supreme Court reached the conclusion that legislatively passed

⁷ Teachout, 206.

⁸ Teachout, 206-07

⁹ Teachout, 207

¹⁰ Teachout, 207.

¹¹ Fec.gov, 1.

¹² Fec.gov, 1.

¹³ Teachout, 207.

limits on spending were unconstitutional due to the fact that they infringed on the First Amendment and were not adequately related to solving the issue of corruption.¹⁴ Buckley would serve as a starting point for the Supreme Court's jurisprudence on money and political affairs.¹⁵ The influence of money and monetary contributions to politicians had far reaching consequences to the U.S. political system. Robert Kaiser's *So Damn Much Money* makes note that "the more important money became to the politicians, the more important the donors become to them".¹⁶ This new setup, although beneficial to corporate America, was problematic to the health of American democracy and the right of the average citizen to have fair representation. With the growth of corporate donors and their extensive resources which allow them to donate large sums of money to political campaigns, one must ask the question—what does this do to the balance of influence between people and corporations? This answer is simple: it dramatically shifts it in favor of corporations.

The culmination of over three decades worth of litigation would result in *Citizens United v. FEC* (2010). This seminal case proved to be the crowning victory for corporate America's right to

donate unfettered amounts of money based on their first amendment rights to freedom of speech. Just as Bellotti opened up a loophole for corporations to donate money in ballot measures, *Citizens United* threatened to do the same for corporate money in campaign elections.¹⁷ The case that would forever alter the landscape of campaign finance law began when a conservative nonprofit corporation sought to air a ninety minute movie about Hillary Clinton on DirecTV.¹⁸ Citizens United also wished to air thirty second advertisements for their movie regarding Hillary Clinton on cable television.¹⁹ The Federal Election Committee (FEC) sought to block both the movie and the television ads on the basis that they violated the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (2002), which did not allow corporate funded campaign ads within thirty day of a presidential primary contest.²⁰ Citizens United challenged the decision handed down by FEC on the basis that it was a documentary and not offered on broadcast television, therefore BCRA was not applicable.²¹ The government, however, argued that it was a ninety minute advertisement designed to damage Clinton in the primaries and its distribution did indeed count as broadcast.²² Ted Olsen, one of the leading lawyers for Citizens United argued that the law had no justification since

¹⁴ Teachout, 207.

¹⁵ Teachout, 207.

¹⁶ Teachout, 209.

¹⁷ Winkler,

¹⁸ Teachout, 229-230

¹⁹ Teachout, 230

²⁰ Teachout, 230

²¹ Teachout, 230

²² Teachout, 230

there was no quid pro quo when corporations donate money to campaigns.²³ His argument rested on the fact that Congress's power to limit corruption in elections rested on their power to punish and deter clearly explicit bribes, anything else could not truly be counted as corruption.²⁴ Olson went so far as to tell the court that the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act was essentially a ban on the free speech of corporations, and that the government had distinctly prohibited speech.²⁵

Proponents of *Citizens United* often attempt to downplay the damage it did to democracy. In the Wall Street Journal, Bradley Smith argues that the ruling allowed corporations to make independent expenditures in campaigns and elections.²⁶ He also argues that *Citizens United* opened the door to new political challengers and is quick to dismiss any critics as simply being put off that their preferred candidates did not win.²⁷ What Smith fails to recognize is that the ruling from *Citizens United* puts corporations and wealthy individuals at a disproportionate advantage when compared to the ordinary citizen. *Citizens United* essentially gave big business and special interests a pass to legally bribe politicians for legislation favorable to their interests.

This in turn diminishes the political rights of the American citizenry.

Citizens United is unique in the sense that corporations are described as associations that have taken on corporate form.²⁸ Historian Adam Winkler noted, "if the first amendment has any force, Kennedy read aloud from his opinion, it prohibits Congress from fining or jailing citizens or associations of citizens for simply engaging in political speech" (Winkler 364). What is significant in this fact is that by defining corporations as associations of citizens, it allows them to subsume the rights of other people, in other words the corporations own members.²⁹

One must then examine the implications of allowing corporations to assume rights of multiple individuals. If a corporation, as an association of individuals, can assume their collective rights then what recourse is left to individuals within the corporation to seek redress from grievances perpetrated by the corporation? If all rights belonging to individuals within a corporate framework are taken by the corporate entity then workers and employees are left powerless against corporate abuse and excess. The adoption of corporate personhood and corporate legal speech rights to utilize money in campaigns robbed

²³ Teachout, 231

²⁴ Teachout, 231

²⁵ Winkler, 361

²⁶ Bradley Smith, "The Incumbent's Bane: Citizens United and the 2010 Election", *Wall Street Journal*, 2.

²⁷ Smith, 2.

²⁸ Winkler, 364

²⁹ Winkler, 364

the average citizen of their rights to a free and fair democracy. According to Zephyr Teachout, “while corruption has narrowed to quid pro quo, free speech has expanded to encompass all money spent on communication”.³⁰ Large corporations, due to their wealth and resources, are at an unnatural advantage when compared to the average citizen in terms of spending money on campaigns and referendums. This undermines democracy as it creates rule by a few large corporate entities as opposed to rule by the people. It also allows corporations to buy greater access to

political candidates in order to secure favorable legislation towards their own interests. Taken a step further, Teachout argues, “because of *Citizens United* it is not illegal for a corporation to spend millions of dollars to punish a congressperson who voted against their interests”.³¹ This only further increases the power of corporations at the expense of the American citizens due to the fact that corporations are able to use their money and lobbying power to ensure favorable outcomes for themselves in regards to legislation.



³⁰ Teachout, 241.

³¹ Teachout, 112.

Boosting Reading Skills through Social Studies at the Elementary Level

Karissa Neely

Want to improve students' reading scores? Incorporate more social studies into their instruction.

“The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study shows that social studies is the only subject with a clear, positive, and statistically significant effect on reading improvement. In contrast, extra time spent on English Language Arts (ELA) instruction has no significant relationship with reading improvement,” Adam Tyner and Sarah Kabourek explain in their 2021 Social Education journal article, [“How Social Studies Improves Elementary Literacy.”](#)

According to the study, social studies has the power to boost literacy and student language acquisition. Because of its focus on people and the world around us, social studies gives students context for their ELA learning. As students use background knowledge to decipher informational text, they build real-world vocabulary and gain stronger reading comprehension skills.



In many elementary schools, where teachers have very limited social studies instruction time, they can use informational text from social studies during their language arts block.

“Integration of ELA strategies into social studies gives students an opportunity to use and refine ELA skills while using relevant content,” says Kelly Jeffery, ELA curriculum director at Studies Weekly.

Beyond reading, social studies instruction can also be more deeply blended with ELA, and support reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Here are four tips for further integrating social studies and ELA:

1. Use Interactive Notebooks

“[I]nteractive notebooks are simple spiral-bound notebooks into which students glue or tape my handouts,” says Christina Gil in a [2016 article for Edutopia](#). “It’s just a simple, functional way for students to create, write, and explore ideas all in the same place.”

Jeffery adds that interactive notebooks are a way for both the teacher to see what students are learning and thinking. Students use them to take notes, explore ideas, ask questions, reflect and respond. They then become a sourcebook for students as they review for assessments.

“They pair very well with Studies Weekly because it is a perfect way to consume our publications,” Jeffery explains.

2. Create a Presentation

Students need different types of opportunities to share their understanding and presentations are perfect for this.

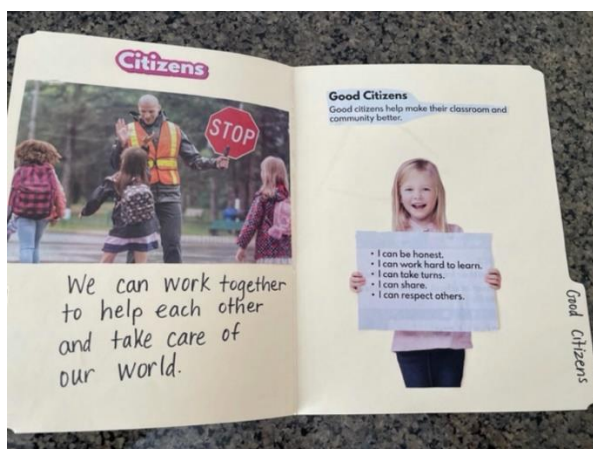
Brochures, posters, Google Slides, Nearpod, etc. are all interactive avenues for students to work individually or collaborate together to demonstrate knowledge.

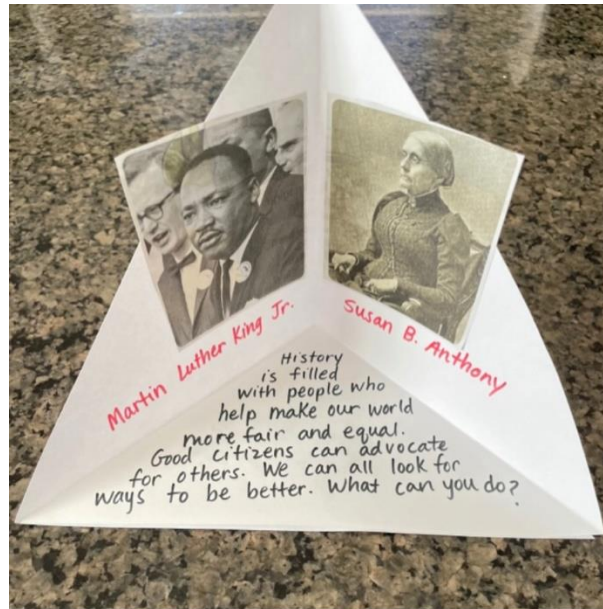
Similarly, students can create video journals to storyboard events and their responses.

The goal is not a perfect analysis of the event or the historical figure they are studying, but a reflection on it.

Additionally, students can create readers’ theaters or short plays based on historic events, and perform them for the class.

Others might opt to write a poem about a historic figure or create a children’s book explaining about an even





Three examples of easy ways students can show learning (from top left): file folders used to summarize information, popsicle puppets to share information from a historical figure's point of view, and trioramas used for summarizing, fact/opinion, analyzing a primary source, or as a mini-report.

3. Create a Supported Response

Using informational texts, students can create a reasoned persuasive argument sharing their opinion on an event or person.

One form of supported response is a small paragraph following the TEES Template as explained by Jeannette Balantic and Erica Fregosi in their 2012 article, “Strengthening Student Thinking and Writing about World History,” for *Social Studies and the Young Learner*.

The TEES Template helps students strengthen their thinking, reasoning, and responses to open-ended assessments. With this exercise students go beyond learning historical facts — instead they use these facts to form arguments and support.



4. Hold Collaborative Groups

After reading an article, students may analyze the information and reflect on it within their interactive notebook.

With their notebooks and/or articles in front of them, teachers can guide students in opening up a dialogue about what they read with a small group or the entire class. Students should consider all voices and sides to an issue or event, and use additional sources, if needed, to deepen their understanding.

As they share their opinions and factual evidence, students should also be instructed to actively listen to the other side. The goal of this exercise is not to win but to try to find a compromise between both positions.

These four tips are only just few options to help teachers blend social studies and ELA in the elementary classroom. Even more, in addition to integrating with ELA, social studies is also the gateway to deeper learning in all subjects. For example, as students learn geography, they learn spatial math concepts. Or as they learn about historical developments in technology, they develop background knowledge for science. Even within the study of social studies, students learn how to make connections between a specific topic and its effect on people, events, and society. They begin to understand how geography affects a region's economics, history affects governments, and governments affect society.

Teaching social studies with an integrated learning approach strengthens students' ability to reason and think critically, gain a deeper understanding of the content, and transfer information to solve new problems. This knowledge can prepare them for the future as they become the world's government, business, and family leaders.

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New York State's Birthday and First Constitution

Bruce W. Dearstyne

Social studies and history teachers routinely cover the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution in their courses. But every state also has a “birthday” (the day it got started as a state) and its own state constitution. The origins of states and their first constitutions can be very useful teaching tools, adding a new dimension to students’ historical insight and understanding.

New York State is an outstanding example. April 20 is New York’s Birthday! That was the date in 1777 when the Convention of Representatives of the State of New York, an *ad hoc* group elected the previous year to guide New York’s Revolutionary War efforts and develop its first constitution, finished work on that document.

The story of New York’s first state constitution is a dramatic one. New York had moved from steadfast loyalty to Britain to reluctant rebelling colony to a full-scale push for independence through the actions of three Provincial Congresses, the first elected in 1775, to guide New York in the growing alienation from Britain. The “Convention of Representatives” had been elected the year before as New York’s fourth Provincial Congress. Meeting initially in White Plains, they authorized New York’s representatives to the Continental Congress to approve the Declaration of

Independence in early July, then, to keep out of reach of British forces, fled north to Fishkill and finally to Kingston where they completed their work. Along the way, they changed their name from Provincial Congress to Convention of Representatives of the State of New York.

When they began their work it wasn’t entirely clear just what a “state” was. People knew about colonies/provinces (New York had been one), and nations or nation-states as they were sometimes called (such as Britain). There were few precedents of models to draw on. Other colonies-becoming-states were writing their own first constitutions. The Articles of Confederation, which would link the new states together, was not completed until November 1777. The U.S. Constitution was a decade in the future. The creative New York drafters drew on their own experience in colonial government, their knowledge of European writers on the concepts of natural rights and representative government, and a few American leading-edge advocates such as Massachusetts’ John Adams. But mostly they drew on their own creativity and improvisation.

The delegates worked in haste and approved the final draft of their document, which still had strikeouts and marginal notes when they signed it. There was no time to make a clean copy before sending the

document to the printer. They took a day off but the next day, April 22, the convention's secretary mounted a flour barrel outside the court house where the group had worked and read it aloud to Kingston citizens.

New York State had in effect proclaimed itself into existence.

The document began by quoting the Declaration of Independence. This connected New York with the other colonies asserting their independence. It stated that the convention acting "in the name and by the authority of the good people of this State doth ordain, determine, and declare that no authority shall on any pretense whatever shall be exercised over the people or members of this State, but such as shall be derived from and granted by them." In 1777, a document purporting to represent the consensus and will of the people, and their right to govern themselves, was a startling, radical departure from the past.

The original copy of the first constitution is preserved in the State Archives. The Archives has provided a scanned version at <https://digitalcollections.archives.nysed.gov/index.php/Detail/objects/10485>. You can read it online in typed form at the [Yale Law School Avalon Project](#). William A. Polf's [1777: The Political Revolution and New York's First Constitution](#), also available online, provides a good introduction. It is also described in Peter Galie, *Ordered Liberty: A Constitutional History of New York* and in my book, [The Spirit of New York: Defining Events in the Empire State's History](#).

The 1777 constitution is just over 5000 words in length. It outlined the structure and purposes of state government but did not provide much detail.

It created a two-house legislature -- one house, the Assembly, to be more numerous and more broadly representative of the people, and the other, the Senate, to be smaller and more attuned to the interests and property. That basic structure is still in place today.

It declared that "the supreme executive power and authority of this State shall be vested in a governor" who "shall take care that the laws are faithfully executed." That wording is similar to what exists in the current State Constitution. But the 1777 writers had had enough experience with the King of England and some colonial governors who had over-asserted their power that they hedged the authority of New York State's governor. Instead of giving the governor veto power over bills passed by the legislature, they created a "Council of Revision" consisting of the governor, chancellor, and judges of the supreme court with veto power. Rather than giving the governor sole appointment power, they vested that in a "Council of Appointment," consisting of the governor and four senators chosen annually by the Assembly, to approve all appointments.

The document made only a brief reference the courts; fleshing that out later would require legislative action. Voting rights were restricted to men who met certain property-holding or other requirements.

The Constitution was not very long but it was a sound beginning. Hastily-organized elections were held in the spring and summer. The first legislature assembled in Kingston in September and got to work. The newly-elected governor, General George Clinton, had to await a lull in the fighting to come to Kingston, take the oath office, make the first gubernatorial address, and then hurry back to lead troops again.

The fledgling government did not have tranquility for long. It had to flee as British troops arrived and assaulted and burned Kingston on October 16. The legislature soon re-assembled in Poughkeepsie and resumed work. By then, patriot forces had defeated British incursions from the west (at Oriskany, August 6), the east (at Bennington, on August 16) and the north (at Saratoga, October 17, a major victory that became the turning point of the Revolution).

1777 turned out to be something of a “miracle year.” New York State was here to stay. The new constitution endured without major changes until 1821.

There are many ways of approaching the use of the first State Constitution in social studies and history courses. Some possibilities:

***It is an inspiring, against-the-odds story.** It is a story of people determined to control their own collective affairs through representative government. At the beginning of 1777, the odds of New York’s success did not seem great. By the end of the year, New had written a constitution, established a government, held

elections, fended off invasions from three directions, and survived invasion and destruction of its capital.

***It represented compromise and consensus.** The writers had a number of disagreements and varying viewpoints and perspectives going into the process. But along the way they put aside their differences, compromised, and came together to develop a consensus document. That process is worthy of study now, when too often it seems difficult to reach agreement on divisive political issues.

***It was successful, flexible, and enduring.** The first constitution proved to be a viable framework for years when New York grew remarkably fast. Even when the first major revisions came in 1821, the structural changes were relatively modest. The revisions abolished the Council of Revision and the Council of Appointment and replaced them with procedures more similar to what we have today.

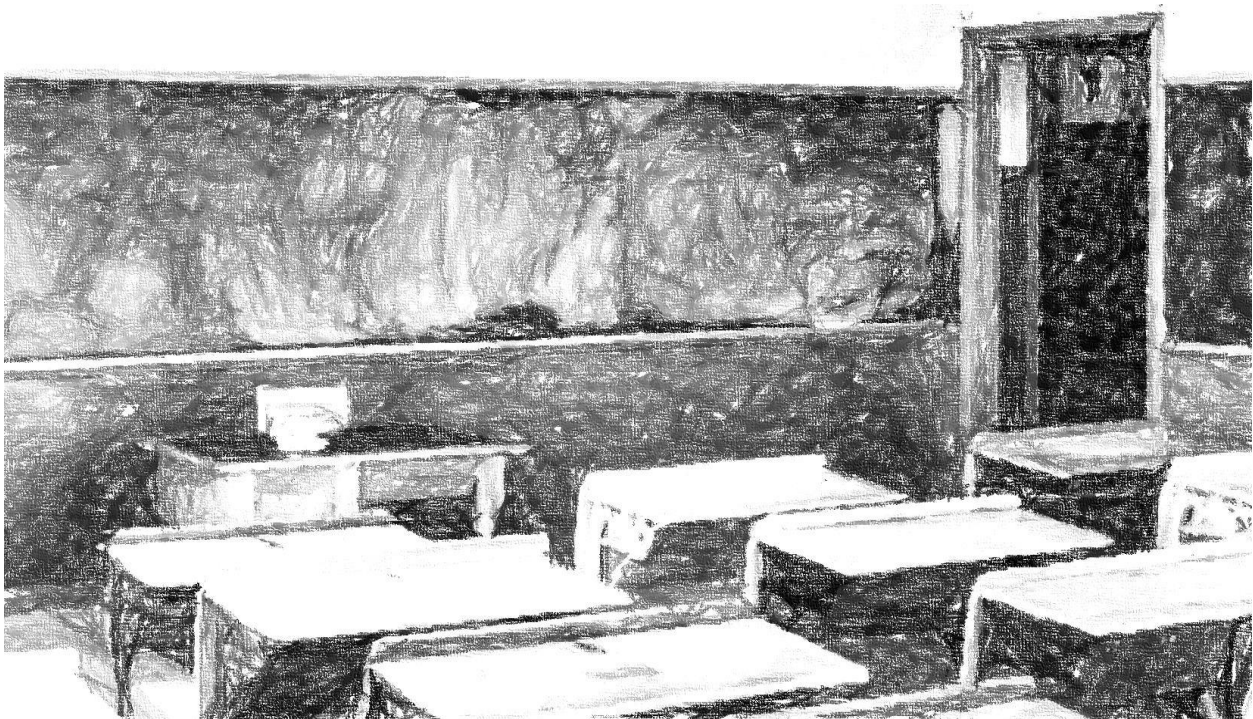
***It left important work undone.** The convention discussed abolishing the horrible practice of slavery but in the end it did not. That had to await legislation in 1799 and slavery was not formally abolished until 1827. Restrictions on men’s voting rights were gradually abolished in ensuing decades. Women finally got the right to vote in 1917. The constitution had no bill of rights other than protection of freedom of religion. The legislature enacted a bill of rights in 1787 and they were embodied in the 1821 constitutional revision. Since then, the constitution has been revised, updated,

changed, and amended many times. That is a reminder that constitutions are subject to update and change over time, with voters' approval.

***It was influential.** The New York constitution includes some of the principles that were embodied in the U.S. Constitution a decade later, 1787. New York led the way in a sense. That is not surprising because New York patriot Gouverneur Morris was one of the principal writers of the New York document and a decade later, then a delegate to the Constitutional Convention from Pennsylvania, he was also one of the writers of the U.S. Constitution.

***It is a source for teaching about self-government, constitutional law, and civic responsibilities.** The constitution could be a source for deepening students' understanding of self-government and their roles and responsibilities as citizens.

[*Educating for American Democracy*](#), a recent report on civics education, notes that students need more study of “the social, political, and institutional history of the United States in its founding era, as well as the theoretical underpinnings of our constitutional design. The state constitutions and the federal 1787 Constitution, as amended, form diverse peoples and places into an American people: one overarching political community.”



Academic Freedom: Are American Teachers Free? Should They Be?

James K. Daly

In 1936 Howard Beale asked if American teachers were free. It is a question that still resonates today. The issue is entangled in the complex and ever-changing world of educational policy, political pressures, and cultural tensions. A second question to Beale's earlier one could very well ask, should they be? What does it mean for teachers to be free? How do cultural expectations impact on what schools, communities, and larger groups perceive as appropriate for examination in public schools?

Many suggest topics, issues, and claims to truth should not be examined at all. Those who know the truth often feel compelled to teach it. Educational orthodoxy, whether of the political Left or the political Right, can silence opposing views, materials, attention. There is a long history of efforts to suppress perspectives. Legislation in many states has institutionalized restrictions on viewpoints, and textbook publishers have complied. Practitioners supporting the status quo, or the work of activist special interest groups have also contributed to censoring views (Jenkinson, 1979, 1985; O'Neil, 1984; Parker and Weiss 1983; Merry, 2009; Fallace, 2011; Hill, 2020, Nelson, 2021).

The essentiality of critical thinking

Critical thinking is regularly cited as an essential skill for preparing the young to succeed in the 21st century. The NCSS C3 framework identifies critical thinking as a key element in developing engagement and participation among citizens (NCSS 2013). Nelson et al. (2021) cite critical thinking as among the most important issues in schools.

Scholars have long stressed the need for schools to move away from indoctrination, the antithesis of critical thinking. Social studies is where young people must examine conflicts in beliefs and values (Hunt & Metcalf, 1955). Any belief not carefully examined is by definition a prejudice. Oliver and Shaver (1966) assert that the ability to choose on issues of public importance depends on awareness of alternatives. Schools must not just tolerate but encourage the examination of these alternatives. To accomplish this critical thinking is essential.

Critical thinking in schools allows individuals to scrutinize information and claims to truth. Learners explore what can be demonstrated, proved, and accepted using the best available information. Views are challenged, defended, discarded, or temporarily accepted. Learners recognize that acceptance of truth may well be tentative, pending additional knowledge (Pinker 2018).

Critical thinking skills are essential to examining topics on which society is divided (Nelson, 2021a). They protect against propaganda and conspiracy theories. Without these students are simply told what is correct, and which views are to be accepted. Recent years show the danger of this. In a world of rapid fire media proclaiming new truths throughout the day, with little or poorly supported evidence, students can be ignorant of their own ignorance. This may be welcomed by any number of special interest groups but is anathema to maintaining democracy.

Critical thinking takes a great deal of time. It requires considerable financial and other resources, from purchasing tools and materials to providing professional development opportunities. The amount of energy needed to do this in a field not easily measured is a challenge (Nelson et al., 2021).

Critical thinking and critical issues

Can critical thinking be promoted when only one or a narrow range of similar views are explored? Can critical thinking be developed for transfer to authentic settings if current critical issues are not examined? Traditionally many ‘givens’ are found both in the formal and the hidden curriculum. They are drawn from the dominant political and cultural perspectives reflecting the larger community. Scholars have consistently asserted that discussing controversy is essential in a diverse democratic society. Critical thinking needs to be about issues that in themselves are critical, with many and competing views. Critical thinking helps students explore

different outlooks, and constructively consider consequences of alternative views. Ettinger (2004) refers to this a “constructive harnessing of conflict”. Conflict can be embraced as offering opportunities for exchanging information, evidence, and making tentative conclusions on actions.

Barton and Levstik (2004) state that the aim of history education, and indeed for social studies, is preparing the young to act. Actions and consequences of historic challenges can be scaffolded to frame current day issues. They cite Newman (1975) and his call for intelligent action, the ability to use knowledge and skills to develop a commitment for addressing social problems. The context in which critical thinking skills evolve is pivotal. Barton and Levstik mention Parker and others in advancing the need for the young to understand and experience participatory democracy. Students need to be taught, and practice critical thinking skills on topics where disagreements are analyzed. They refer to McCully (2002) suggesting that just working on critical thinking skills may not help in examining current divisive topics. Building critical thinking skills without an exploration of authentic current issues may fall far short of what is needed.

Claims to truth need to be analyzed, with critical thinking skills scaffolded, enhanced, and regularly practiced. These skills support conflict resolution strategies, utilizing active listening and clear communication (Katz, 2020). This reinforces what Lortie (1975) referred to as the apprenticeship of observation. Learners routinely experience situations in which

these skills are refined and improved. They grapple with different views and competing sources of evidence. The routine and expected school experience would demonstrate a respectful appreciation of diverse views. The hidden curriculum would be supportive of the intellectual work of considering conflicting opinions. The norm would be examining issues in practiced and familiar patterns, respectful of opinions, while accepting disagreement on conclusions. Democratic principles and foundational documents along with Human Rights concepts need to provide the context in which critical thinking evolves. Examining how well these principles, documents and concepts have demonstrated themselves over time provides framing for analyzing current issues.

The need to address critical thinking skills, and the need to do so when addressing current controversial topics puts the teacher at the center of public scrutiny. It is in the larger public arena that controversy is housed, and from which it enters classrooms.

The preponderance of scholarship supports dealing with controversy. Schools must offer individuals opportunity to escape the limitations of the group into which they were born (Dewey, 1916). Schools should create awareness of the larger society. Few other institutions can guide an analysis of past events, an exploration of current considerations, with a focus on the future.

In a nation as diverse as ours, and in the current political and cultural climate, controversy enters schools and classrooms. The interactions between teachers,

administrators, professional organizations, and the public are fraught with complex and often contradictory expectations. Sustaining a democratic republic in this context requires citizens who can examine topics on which there is disagreement (Lynd, 1939; Selakovich, 1967; Newman and Oliver, 1970; Shermis and Barth, 1979; Berlak, 1977; O'Neil, R.M., 1981); Apple, 1982; Besag and Nelson, 1984; Engle and Ochoa, (1986); Daly, et al., 2001; Underwood, 2017; Nelson 2021a).

Are American teachers free?

Teachers appear to be willing to address controversy but often don't because of concerns about the consequences (Byford, 2009). Nelson (1992) writes that many report they have academic freedom. However, when questioned about teaching specific issues, a typical response was that they were too controversial to teach. Teacher belief in their ability to address controversy does necessarily translate to their doing so (Daly, 1986; Mitchell, Evans, Daly, & Roach, 1997; Misco and Patterson 2007). Patterson (2010) reveals that while 98% of teachers in one study reported they had academic freedom (of varying degrees), over 93% indicated limits to what can be taught. Some of those restrictions might be called self-censorship. Limitations included barriers raised (or anticipated) from community members, administrators, and students. Girard and Harris (2021) describe that teachers in one study found it easy to add topics and issues to provide a more inclusive view. However, they were unwilling to examine contemporary society and power relationships. The local

community was cited as a significant influence on what teachers address. In an Education Week article considerable percentages of teachers disclosed they avoided teaching many topics (Pendharkar, 2021).

Potential Sources supporting teacher freedom

Decisions made by practitioners have consequences for what is taught and how it is taught. State curriculum standards impact those decisions. An analysis of state standards for History indicated clear and opaque support for teacher decision making and selection in many states (Girard and Harris, 2020). The impact on teacher freedom ranged from rigid specificity to almost limitless choice for teachers. Standards may well support considerable freedom in many states; however, more is needed.

Academic Freedom is a philosophical framework buttressing teacher freedom. There are legal decisions that help uphold it. Philosophical views without more compelling legal support cannot be relied upon. They can and should be used to engage educators and communities in discussions on exploring difficult topics. Language supporting academic freedom needs to be in district policy manuals and guides. Hess (2009) reminds us that controversy is a socially constructed phenomenon. She recognizes that the public has a right to have an influence on what is taught in the schools. Engaged and systematic review of the need for, the limits on, and the student benefits of academic freedom need to be promoted. While the specific topics may change, controversy is a

given. Underwood (2017) recognizes that many who would restrict teacher freedom fear indoctrination. They feel left out of curriculum discussions, unaware of pedagogical strategies, and suspicious of views other than their own. Discussions on the nature and purpose of academic freedom may ease that fear.

Academic freedom

The National Council for the Social Studies advocates teacher freedom. The organization issued Position Statements on Academic Freedom in 1969, revised in 2007 (National Council for the Social Studies, 2010). The most recent maintains that teachers should be free to create settings that foster democratic processes (Social Education, 2016)). Academic Freedom for teachers is necessary to create citizens aware of contentious issues and positions on them. Students need to examine factual claims, discuss competing perspectives, investigate, and analyze topics of concern. This promotes understanding of the relationship between past and present, providing skills and dispositions for grasping local, national, and global views. Truth is difficult to discover and claims to it need to be thoughtfully considered.

Affirming academic freedom is important, as it informs educators and the larger community of its twin features. Academic freedom is not just a concept addressing the teacher, but one focused on the student (Hofstadter and Metzger (1968). Emerging from early German universities, the right of the student to learn was essential. The student was free to explore

ideas and not simply compelled to accept all that teachers, text and school presented.

Reassuring the public that academic freedom does not promote indoctrination is critical when many believe schools are overtly trying to impose views antithetical to them. Compelling acceptance of views can create a spiral of silence (Noelle-Neumann, 1977; Journell, 2017). Students presented with one perspective, taught by teachers supporting and promoting that perspective, may feel themselves to be in a minority. That perception can lead to silence. Anecdotal evidence suggests that students, and families, know what teachers expect, what outlooks are correct, and often the moral value attached to various views. With academic freedom the constraints of local perspectives are open to be examined in a wider context, but student acceptance or belief in those viewpoints is not required. Those who embrace Academic Freedom recognize it is not a license for teachers to force views on students or to limit the issues examined. The concept is a defense against the imposition of certainty, which seems to be an objective of many along the political continuum.

The role of school boards

School Boards approve curricula, resources, and materials. Board meetings often have limited time for public discussion of issues, let alone providing for discussions and examination of curricula content. Entering the term Teacher Academic Freedom on the National School Boards website had no hits. Under one heading on that site Boards were urged to say no to any Federal intrusion of local decision making

authority (School Boards Association, 2021). That would seem to provide support for considerable community influence on what is taught, and how it is taught. In the Advocacy Agenda for 2019-2020 (the only one on the website as of 2/16/22), there does not appear to be much about how to work with communities beyond the traditional interactions. No role for the larger public is evident.

Recently local Boards have addressed concerns about what may inappropriately be referred to as Critical Race Theory. A quick google or YouTube search provides evidence that the issue is one generating considerable conflict, and political action at the local and state level. The many YouTube videos, and anecdotal evidence suggest that school board meetings are not the best time or place for discussion. The very structure of public input at Board meetings seems to add frustration and anger to already potentially confrontational topics. Limited time, and the lack of a structure to permit significant and sustained conversation suggests other approaches need to be explored.

A memo from the FBI Director provides evidence that the anecdotal and social media reports of Board confrontations are accurate. The memo cites a spike in harassment, intimidation, and threats of violence against school employees and officials. It indicates that the agency will use FBI agents to discourage, identify and prosecute such threats. (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2021).

What is the role of the larger community? Are they to be relegated to

sporadic outbursts on social or traditional media, angry statements at school board meetings? How should public views be identified, shared, and considered. Who decides what is controversial, what gets addressed, and how, or if, opposing views are examined, welcome or tolerated?

Should American teachers be free?

American teachers should be free to foster citizens who can critically examine current controversial topics that divide the society. There is a need to protect the right of the student to learn. Teacher freedom brings responsibilities. There is a responsibility to ensure that practitioners and those preparing to practice are knowledgeable about the need for such freedom. There is a responsibility for practitioners to be open to guidance in planning, teaching, and assessing when focused on controversy. Administrators and Boards need to support teachers engaged in this work. They have a responsibility to create environments in which teachers work with colleagues, administrators, and the larger public to build support for addressing controversy. There are too few fora in which such conversation occurs. Those promoting teacher freedom and the right of students to learn beyond indoctrination need to work with school board members and the school community. Together those in schools must actively seek to find opportunities to have difficult conversations about the need for teacher and student freedom.

Preparing teachers for these challenges

Those planning to teach must understand the nature of academic freedom,

recognize the need for dealing with controversial issues, and their relationship to citizenship education. Research on teacher preparation in this effort is mixed. Misco and Patterson (2007) report that teacher education candidates understand the concept of academic freedom but believe that it offers only limited protection. Some revealed they would not exercise those freedoms for several reasons, including fear of reprisals. Uncertainty about how to properly deal with controversy led to a deference to community preferences. The majority were aware of constraints on what and how issues could be addressed.

Even after completing a social studies methods course, participants in a study by Nganga et al. (2020) displayed limited awareness and understanding of teaching controversial issues. Most were unwilling or cautious about addressing issues with which they did not feel comfortable, or about which they had little experience. There was acceptance of the need to conform to the views and values dominant in the community (Engebretson, 2018; Hess 2002).

Teacher education programs themselves may not model ways to deal with alternative perspectives. The spiral of silence found in other settings may also be present within these programs (Journell, 2017). Holding conversations and exploring differing perspectives on foundational ideas may not be a priority. There may be ‘single stories’ (Adichie, 2009) in teacher preparation. Divergent views need to be shared and explored. Doing so would model

how to examine differences in the schools in which students will work.

Education programs may be one of many ‘silo’s’ within the university, with their own ‘silo’s’. Conversation and collaboration between the programs for administrators and other specialists is essential. Counselors, teachers, administrators in training all benefit from examining the nature of controversy, community engagement, and the benefits to teachers and students of academic freedom. There are overlapping interests, and common audiences. This collaboration would help explore ways to engage with the communities in which they already work and those in which they will work.

What needs to be done?

Little in the larger culture provides examples of how people can discuss deeply held and contrary views. The skills of active listening and clear communication need to be practiced examining issues of current importance, even when presented in an historic setting. Students need experience checking the validity of various claims. They need practice within agreed upon ground rules. Time needs to be provided for researching evidence on topics and discussing views. Students require opportunities to analyze issues using various strategies. Students need structure and practice in hearing contrasting views and doing so in respectful ways.

Teachers need to be free to select books, resources, materials, and strategies. This must support the curriculum and be

consistent with state standards. Approaches on how to navigate those requirements is needed. Pre-service training and professional development for practitioners needs to be authentic, providing active participation in using various strategies. Routine focus is needed on the rationale for dealing with controversy. Pre-service training needs consistent and collaborative support from professors, clinical field supervisors, cooperating teachers and their administrators. Practitioners need support from colleagues, administrators, and local community members. These groups, committed to democracy, are essential to promoting conversation instead of confrontation on issues of significant disagreement.

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Teaching Controversial Issues: Teachers' Freedom of Speech in the Classroom

Arlene Gardner

What is the purpose of education? The conventional answer is the acquisition of knowledge. Looking beyond this facile response, most people will agree that the true purpose of education is to produce citizens. One of the primary reasons our nation's founders envisioned a vast public education system was to prepare youth to be active participants in our system of self-government. John Dewey makes a strong case for the importance of education not only as a place to gain content knowledge, but also as a place to learn how to live. In his eyes, the purpose of education should not revolve around the acquisition of a predetermined set of skills, but rather the realization of one's full potential and the ability to use those skills for the greater good.

Democratic self-government requires constant discussions and decisions about controversial issues. There is an intrinsic and crucial connection between the discussion of controversial political issues and the health of democracy. If we want our students to become informed, engaged citizens, we need to teach them how to "do" democracy by practicing the skills of discussing controversial issues in the classroom and learning how to respectfully disagree.

Research has demonstrated that controversy during classroom discussion also promotes cognitive gains in complex reasoning, integrated thinking, and decision-making. Controversy can be a useful, powerful, and memorable tool to promote learning. In addition to its value in promoting skills

for democracy, discussing current controversial public issues:

- Is authentic and relevant
- Enhances students' sense of political efficacy
- Improves critical thinking skills
- Increases students' comfort with conflict that exists in the world outside of the classroom
- Develops political tolerance
- Motivates students
- Results in students gaining greater content knowledge.

(Diana Hess, *Controversy in the Classroom: The Democratic Power of Discussion* (2009); Nel Noddings and Laurie Brooks, *Teaching Controversial Issues: The Case for Critical Thinking and Moral Commitment in the Classroom* (2017); "Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools" (2011); Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan at <https://crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tsd>).

Yet, teachers may consciously (or unconsciously) avoid controversial issues in the classroom because of the difficulty involved in managing heated discussions and/or for fear that parents will complain or that the school administration will admonish or punish them for "being controversial." These concerns are certainly not groundless. How well are teachers protected from negative repercussions if they address controversial issues in their classrooms? How extensive are teachers' First Amendment rights to free speech? How can heated disagreements among students be contained in the classroom?

Two different legal issues exist regarding free speech rights of teachers: The First Amendment directly protects a teacher's personal right to speak about public issues outside of the classroom and "Academic Freedom" protects a teacher's right and responsibility to teach controversial issues in the classroom. However, both have certain limitations.

First Amendment protection of public speech by teachers

Although the First Amendment free speech protection is written in absolute terms ("Congress shall make no law..."), the courts have carved out several exceptions (for national security, libel and slander, pornography, imminent threats, etc.). The courts have also carved out a limited "government employee" exception based on the rationale that a government employee is paid a salary to work and contribute to an agency's effective operation and, therefore, the government employer must have the power to prevent or restrain the employee from doing or saying things that detract from the agency's effective operation. Thus, the government has been given greater latitude to engage in actions that impose restrictions on a person's right to speak when the person is a governmental employee, which includes teachers who work in public schools.

Some of the earliest threats to the free speech rights of public school teachers were the loyalty oaths that many states imposed on government employees during the "red scare" and early "cold war" years of American history. In *Adler v. Board of Education* (1952), the Supreme Court in a 6-3 decision rejected First Amendment claims and upheld a New York statute designed to enforce existing civil service regulations to prevent members of subversive groups, particularly of the [Communist Party](#), from [teaching in public schools](#). The Supreme Court effectively overturned this ruling in the 1960s and declared several loyalty oath

schemes to be unconstitutional because they had chilling effects on individuals which violated their First Amendment rights (*Baggett v. Bullitt* (1964); *Cramp v. Board of Public Instruction* (1961); and *Keyishian v. Board of Education* (1967)).

Much of the reasoning regarding the "government employee" exception to the First Amendment outlined in *Adler* was abandoned altogether in the 1968 U.S. Supreme Court decision in [Pickering v. Board of Education](#). Teacher Marvin Pickering had written a letter complaining about a recently defeated school budget proposal to increase school taxes. The school board felt that the letter was "detrimental to the efficient operation and administration of the schools" and decided to terminate Pickering, who sued claiming his letter was protected speech under the First Amendment. The U.S. Supreme Court held that Pickering's dismissal violated his First Amendment right to free speech because public employees are entitled to the same measure of constitutional protection as enjoyed by their civilian counterparts when speaking as "citizens" and not as "employees."

In *Mt. Healthy City School District v. Doyle* (1977), non-tenured teacher Fred Doyle conveyed the substance of an internal memorandum regarding a proposed staff dress code to a local radio station, which released it. When the board of education refused to rehire him, Doyle claimed that his First and Fourteenth Amendment rights had been violated. The court developed a "balancing test" that required the teacher to demonstrate that the speech act was a "substantial" or "motivating factor" in the administration's decision and gave the school board the opportunity to demonstrate, based on the preponderance of the evidence, that the teacher's speech act was not the "but for" cause of the negative consequences imposed on the teacher by the school board. Finally, the court would

“balance” the free speech interests of the teacher and the administrative interests of the school district to determine which carried more weight. Based on this test, the U.S. Supreme Court found that the teacher’s call to the radio station was protected by the First Amendment, that the call played a substantial part in the board’s decision not to rehire Doyle, and that this action was a violation of Doyle’s rights under the First and Fourteenth Amendments.

In a 5/4 decision in *Connick v. Meyers* (1983), the U.S. Supreme Court held that speech by public employees is generally only protected when they are addressing matters of public concern, not personal issues. Sheila Meyers was an Assistant District Attorney who had been transferred. She strongly opposed her transfer and prepared a questionnaire asking for her co-workers views on the transfer policy, office morale and confidence in supervisors. She was terminated for insubordination. Meyers alleged her termination violated her First Amendment right to free speech. The district court agreed and the Fifth Circuit affirmed. However, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed because Meyer’s speech only dealt with personal not public issues. “When a public employee speaks not as a citizen upon matters of public concern, but instead as an employee upon matters only of personal interest, absent the most unusual circumstances, a federal court is not the appropriate forum in which to review the wisdom of a personnel decision taken by a public agency allegedly in reaction to the employee’s behavior.” Although the case involved an Assistant District Attorney, it is applicable to all public employees: teachers must demonstrate that their speech is of public concern.

This was confirmed in *Kirkland v. Northside Independent School District* (1989) where the

school district did not rehire non-tenured teacher Timothy Kirkland because of poor performance and substandard teaching evaluations. Kirkland filed a lawsuit in federal district court against Northside, claiming that he was not rehired in violation of his First Amendment rights after he gave his students a reading list that was different from Northside's list. Northside argued that Kirkland had no right to substitute his list without permission or consent and he had failed to obtain either. The district court ruled in favor of Kirkland and Northside appealed. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed and dismissed Kirkland's complaint, holding that Kirkland’s "speech" did not infringe on any matter of public concern and was in fact "private speech." If the nature of the speech is purely private, such as a dispute over one employee's job performance, judicial inquiry then comes to an end, and the question of whether the employee's speech was a substantial or motivating factor in the decision not to rehire him need not even be reached. The U.S. Supreme Court denied cert, leaving this decision in place.

Academic freedom

Although primarily used in the context of university faculty rights, “Academic Freedom” protects a teacher’s ability to determine the content and method of addressing controversial issues in the classroom. This is more limited at the K-12 level because the courts have long held the view that the administration of K-12 public schools resides with state and local authorities. Primary and secondary education is, for the most part, funded by local sources of revenue, and it has traditionally been a government service that residents of the community have structured to fit their needs. Therefore, a teacher’s “Academic Freedom” is limited to his or her content and method of teaching within the policies and curriculum established by the state and

local school board. By finding no First Amendment violation, the court in *Kirkland* implicitly held that he had no right to substitute his own book list for the one approved by the district without permission or consent, which he failed to obtain.

In an early case, following the end of World War I, Nebraska had passed a law prohibiting teaching grade school children any language other than English and Robert Meyer was punished for teaching German at a private Lutheran school. The court held that the Nebraska law was an unnecessarily restrictive way to ensure English language learning and was an unconstitutional violation of the 14th Amendment due process clause (the 14th Amendment had not yet applied the First Amendment to the states until *Gitlow v. New York* in 1925) that exceeded the power of the state (*Meyer v. Nebraska*, 262 U.S. 390 (1923)).

“The Fourteenth Amendment, as now applied to the States, protects the citizen against the State itself and all of its creatures—Boards of Education not excepted. These have, of course, important, delicate, and highly discretionary functions, but none that they may not perform within the limits of the Bill of Rights. That they are educating the young for citizenship is reason for scrupulous protection of Constitutional freedoms of the individual, if we are not to strangle the free mind at its source and teach youth to discount important principles of our government as mere platitudes.” Justice Jackson in *West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnett* (1943) (holding unconstitutional a requirement that all children in public schools salute the flag).

The Supreme Court has more than once instructed that “[t]he vigilant protection of constitutional freedoms is nowhere more vital than in the community of American schools” (*Shelton v.*

Tucker (1960)). In *Epperson v. Arkansas* (1968) (a reprise of the famous 1927 “Scopes Trial”), the Arkansas legislature had passed a law prohibiting teachers in public or state-supported schools from teaching, or using textbooks that teach, human evolution. Sue Epperson, a public school teacher, sued, claiming that the law violated her First Amendment right to free speech as well as the Establishment Clause. A unanimous U.S. Supreme Court declared the state law unconstitutional. The Court found that “the State’s undoubted right to prescribe the curriculum for its public schools does not carry with it the right to prohibit, on pain of criminal penalty, the teaching of a scientific theory or doctrine where that prohibition is based upon reasons that violate the First Amendment.” Seven members of the court based their decision on the Establishment Clause, whereas two concurred in the result based on the Due Process clause of the 14th Amendment (because it was unconstitutionally vague) or the Free Speech clause of the First Amendment.

The Supreme Court, however, has not clearly defined the scope of academic freedom protections under the First Amendment, and commentators disagree about the scope of those protections. (See, e.g., William W. Van Alstyne, “The Specific Theory of Academic Freedom and the General Issue of Civil Liberty,” in *The Concept of Academic Freedom* 59, 61–63 (Edmund L. Pincoffs ed., 1972); J. Peter Byrne, “Academic Freedom: A ‘Special Concern of the First Amendment’,” 99 *Yale L.J.* 251 (1989); and Neil Hamilton, *Zealotry and Academic Freedom: A Legal and Historical Perspective* (New Brunswick, 1998).

Whatever the legal scope, it is clear that the First Amendment protection of individual academic freedom is not absolute. For example, in *Boring v. Buncombe County Board of Education* (1998), the

Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals held that a teacher could be reprimanded (in this case transferred) because she sponsored the performance of a play that school authorities subsequently deemed inappropriate for her students and inconsistent with the curriculum developed by the local school authorities. This judicial deference toward K through 12 institutions often can be seen in cases involving teachers who assert that their First Amendment rights were violated when school administrators imposed punishments on them for engaging—while they taught their classes—in some form of expressive activity that the administrators disapproved.

The content

While cases about academic freedom, such as *Epperson*, involved state laws that limited or prohibited certain content being taught (in this case prohibiting teachers in public or state-supported schools from teaching, or using textbooks that teach, human evolution); New Jersey has taken a very broad approach to classroom content. Since 1996, New Jersey has established state standards (currently called “Student Learning Standards”) that set a framework for each content area. Unlike many other states, New Jersey does not establish a state curriculum but rather leaves this to local school boards. Subject to applicable provisions of state law and standards set by the State Department of Education, district school boards have control of public elementary and secondary schools. How much protection do New Jersey teachers have when they address controversial topics? Most First Amendment education cases in New Jersey involve students’ rights rather than teachers’ rights (e.g., school dress, vulgar language, threats, religious speech, equal access, See

http://www.njpsa.org/documents/pdf/lawprimer_FirstAmendment.pdf). However, several recent cases

from the Third Circuit (which includes New Jersey) provide some parameters.

In *Edwards v. California University of Pennsylvania* (3rd Cir. 1998), a tenured professor in media studies sued the administration for violating his right to free speech by restricting his choice of classroom materials in an educational media course. Instead of using the approval syllabus, Edwards emphasized the issues of “bias, censorship, religion and humanism.” Students complained that he was promoting religious ideas in the class. The U.S. Supreme Court declined to review the Third Circuit’s summary judgement against Edwards, holding that a university professor does not have a First Amendment right to choose classroom materials and subjects in contravention of the University’s dictates.

A very recent decision regarding a New Jersey teacher confirms the fact that the First Amendment does not provide absolute protection for teachers in public schools to decide the content of their lessons if it is not within the curriculum set by the school district. In *Ali v. Woodbridge Twp. School District* (3rd Cir. April 22, 2020) a non-tenured public high school teacher at Woodbridge High School was teaching Holocaust denial to his students and was posting links to articles on the school’s website saying things such as, “The Jews are like a cancer” and expressing conspiracy theories accusing the United States of planning a 9/11-style attack. When the Board of Education fired Ali, he sued claiming that his employment was terminated on the basis of his race and religion, and that defendants had violated his rights to free speech and academic freedom, among other claims. The District Court rejected all of Ali’s claims, awarding summary judgment to the school board, and the Third Circuit affirmed.

These are extreme cases where a teacher is addressing issues that are NOT within the curriculum set by the university or within the state social studies standards and the local school district's curriculum. When teachers are teaching a controversial topic that is included in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies and their school district's social studies curriculum, the existing case law seems to support the fact that they would be protected by the Fourteenth Amendment, unless they are violating school policies that require teaching in a neutral, balanced manner that does not seek to indoctrinate students.

For example, what if a teacher wants to assign a research paper about the Stonewall Riots or the Lavender Project? Since the history of LGBT rights is in the state standards and supposed to be included in local school district social studies curriculum, the Stonewall Riots and Lavender Project would be part of this history. This is not a situation like *Ali* where the materials were beyond the scope of the local curriculum (as well as being taught in an indoctrinating manner—see below). If the teacher fears that the topics will be controversial with the community, he or she should make the school administration aware of what he or she is planning to do. Since here, what the teacher plans to teach is within the state standards and the local school district curriculum, the school administration should support the teacher. If parents object, the real issue is one of policy (Should LGBT history be taught?), which is decided by the state and local boards of education, not the teacher. Therefore, the parents' argument should be with the state and local boards of education.

What if a teacher wants to show scenes of an R-rated movie in the classroom (i.e. Revolutionary War scenes from *The Patriot* or D-Day from *Saving*

Private Ryan?) Obviously, the American Revolution and World War II are part of the state standards for U.S. History and in every local school district's curriculum. The movie scenes would need to relate to the district curriculum and the teacher should get prior administrative and parental approval if some movie scenes are going to be very graphic.

How should a teacher prepare lessons on Nazi Germany during the 1930s? Nazi Germany is also part of the state history standards and every school district's curriculum. It should be taught in a way so that students can understand how the Nazis came to power and the prejudices they carried. Some of the World War II footage and movies may be shocking but our students will not be able to become informed, engaged citizens if we hide the past from them.

An ounce of prevention beforehand will help. Before starting, teachers should be clear about the goal of their lesson: The classroom activities should encourage critical thinking. You are not trying to convince students of any particular point of view. Preview any materials, especially visual media which may be very powerful or provocative. Be aware of the biases of the sources of information that will be used by students.

Teaching Tolerance suggests in *Civil Discourse in the Classroom* that "Teachers can effectively use current and controversial events instruction to address a wide variety of standards and even mandated content. To do so, however, teachers must work carefully and incrementally to integrate this new approach in their classrooms." The University of Michigan's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching offers guidance for how instructors (offered for college instructors but applicable for K-12) can successfully manage discussions on controversial topics. See Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of

Michigan at <https://crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tsd>). The “Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure” of the [American Association of University Professors](#), suggests that teachers should be careful to avoid controversial matters that are unrelated to the subject discussed.

Before engaging students in an activity or discussion involving a controversial subject, tell your supervisor and/or principal what you are planning on teaching and, if necessary, reference the district policy on teaching controversial issues, explain the lesson’s connection with the district social studies curriculum and explain the goal and value of what you plan to do. Then, consider the demographics of your community. If you anticipate that the topic of your lesson will be controversial with the community, send a note and/or talk with your students’ parents and/or the Parent Teacher Organization.

In an informative piece titled “Do You Have the Right to be an Advocate?,” published by *EdWeek*, Julie Underwood, a professor of law and educational leadership and policy analysis at the School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison, explains that the “district or the state can regulate employee speech during school hours or at school-sponsored activities to protect their own interests in instruction and political neutrality.” Despite the ambiguity in the laws protecting a teacher’s freedom of speech, Underwood concludes: “If it relates to the in class instruction and is age appropriate there is a good rationale for having a political discussion”.

Teaching in a Neutral or Balanced Manner

If the teacher has created a supportive, respectful classroom climate and built tolerance for

opposing views, it will be easier to consider controversial topics. For example, considering historical controversies might be good background as practice for looking at current controversies. Establish a process and rules of adequate evidence or support so that the discussion is based on facts rather than simply opinions. To help maintain classroom order even when students are having heated disagreements, set clear rules for discussions or use activities that require students to use active listening skills when considering controversial issues, such as:

- Continuum/Take a Stand
- Civil Conversations
- C3 Inquiries
- Guided discussions
- Socratic Smackdown
- Moot courts—structured format for considering constitutional issues
- Philosophical Chairs discussion
- Legislative hearings—structured format for considering solutions to problems

Carefully consider how students are grouped if they are to work cooperatively. Provide closure (which may be acknowledging the difficulty of the issue).

School boards work primarily through policies which set guidelines for principals, teachers, parents and students, as well as the district curriculum. To avoid a problem afterwards, the teacher should make sure that the controversial topic is within the state standards and the curriculum adopted by their local school board. Then the teacher should consult the school district’s policy regarding the teaching of controversial issues. Most school districts have a policy (usually #2240) that supports and encourages the teaching of controversial issues and sets guidelines for teaching controversial issues, including a process for dealing with challenges. Although the language may differ, policies dealing

with controversial issues generally focus on the need for the classroom lesson to be balanced, unprejudiced, fair, objective, and not aimed at indoctrinating students to a particular point of view.

Clearly, the type of indoctrination attempted by the teachers in the *Edwards* or *Ali* cases is beyond protected speech. In addition to avoiding indoctrination, teachers should avoid telling a joke in the classroom that might imply a negative characterization of an ethnic group, religion or gender. A “joke” that might be a put down of any ethnic group, religion or gender told in the classroom to students is never a good idea. It is not even a good idea for a teacher to post such a “joke” on Facebook because such speech might be considered as not addressing a matter of public concern and would not be protected by the First Amendment. However, using an historical photo, engraving or picture that included a negative image of an ethnic, racial or religious group might be okay in the context of examining what was seen as humor in the past and understanding the prejudice that existed during a particular time period. For example, when teaching about the Holocaust, a teacher might carefully use Nazi cartoons to demonstrate the high level of prejudice at the time. Another example might be using images of blackface or corporate ad campaigns to show racial attitudes when teaching about Jim Crow. The teacher does not need many examples to make the point. Know your audience. Choose carefully and be aware that certain advertising images from the Jim Crow era may offend some students in the class. The purpose of using controversial issues is important. At the core of deciding what a teacher should or should not say or do in the classroom is good judgment.

Should a teacher share his or her viewpoint on a controversial issue with the students?

Whether a teacher should share his or her opinion or viewpoint on a controversial issue will depend on the age of the students, if the opinion was requested by the students, and the comfort-level of the teacher. A teacher’s opinion may have too much influence on younger students and should probably be avoided. What if a middle or high school student specifically asks for your opinion? Such “natural disclosures” in response to a direct question by a student should be accompanied by a disclaimer, such as “This is my view because...” or “Other people may have different views”. If you prefer not to disclose your view, explicitly state that and explain why. Remember, the goal is to help students develop their own well-informed positions. Be mindful of your position as the “classroom expert” and the potential impact on the students. If you decide to disclose your own view, do it carefully and only after the students have expressed their views. Unrequested disclosures may be seen as preachy, or may stop the discussion. (See Hess, *Controversy in the Classroom*)

So, for example, should a teacher take a position on climate change? In terms of content, climate change is in the state standards and should be in the local school curriculum. If parents disapprove of this topic, this disagreement is really with the curriculum set by the school board, not with the teacher. However, the teaching strategy is important. Rather than taking a position, which may be seen as indoctrination or may simply stop the classroom inquiry, the better approach might be to have the students examine the issue and let the facts speak for themselves. Let students use the facts that exist to construct their own arguments about whether or not climate change is the result of mankind’s use of fossil fuels in industry and transportation. If the topic is presented in a balanced, neutral, non-indoctrinating manner, the teacher should not be subject to discipline.

Objections by parents should be referred to the school administration because it is a matter of policy (Should climate change be taught?), which is decided by the state and local boards of education, not the teacher.

How should teachers address questions from students regarding Black Lives Matter and racial inequality? The ACLU in the state of Washington prepared a short online article, “Free Speech Rights of Teachers in Washington State” (NJ’s ACLU only has a publication about students’ rights) with a related hypothetical: The teacher is instructed not to discuss personal opinions on political matters with students. In a classroom discussion on racial issues in America, the teacher tells the class that he/she has recently participated in a Black Lives Matter demonstration. Revealing this is the same as giving an opinion and may not be protected speech. Teachers can be disciplined for departing from the curriculum adopted by the school district and this would be a departure.

Can a teacher state that New Jersey is a segregated state when it comes to communities? Is the teacher stating this as a personal opinion or as a fact related to a topic of learning? There is no reason to simply state that NJ is segregated unless it is in the context of helping students understand and appreciate the history of segregation in NJ consistent with state standards and district curriculum. (For example, see “Land Use in NJ” and “School Desegregation and School Finance in NJ” for history, context and facts at <http://civiced.rutgers.edu/njlessons.html>).

Is a teacher permitted to take a stand on the issue of removing public monuments? Assuming that this is part of a current events lesson, it would be better if the teacher remained neutral and let the students’ voice differing views. If the students all have one position, perhaps the teacher can take a

position as “devil’s advocate,” but it should be made clear that this is what the teacher is doing.

Can a teacher assign blame to protests to specific groups or left or right extremist groups? Assigning blame is the same as a teacher giving his or her personal opinion. The better approach would be to have students look at the actions of specific groups and determine their appropriateness.

Can a teacher assign blame to Associate Justice Amy Coney Barrett regarding a Supreme Court decision that is 5-4 and against the teacher’s preference (i.e. Affordable Care Act, marriage, etc.). Assuming that this is part of a classroom lesson about the Supreme Court, the teacher should refrain from “assigning blame” because this is expressing his or her opinion, but should instead let the students consider the reasoning and impact of the decisions.

Is a teacher permitted to criticize or defend the government’s policies or actions on immigration? Outside the classroom, a teacher has a first amendment right to express his or her views on public issues. As part of a classroom lesson about immigration, rather than criticizing or defending the government’s policies or actions on immigration, the better approach would be to present or let students research the history of immigration policy and its impact and let the students discuss and draw their own conclusions (For example, see “Immigration Policy and its impact on NJ” at <http://civiced.rutgers.edu/njlessons.html>).

Can a teacher show a video clip from a specific news station (Fox, CNN) or assign students to watch a specific news program as an assignment? As long as the purpose is not indoctrination to any particular point of view and the assignments are balanced. If the teacher wants students to see and compare various media views on the same topic,

that would be a valuable classroom activity. (For example, see “Educating for Informed, Engaged Citizens” virtual workshop, for background on helping students understand bias in news, at the New Jersey Council for the Social Studies website at <http://www.njcss.org/>; also see Choices Program at Brown University: Teaching with the News at <https://www.choices.edu/teaching-with-the-news/>; and Constitutional Rights Foundation Fake News at <https://www.crf-usa.org/images/pdf/challenge/Understanding-Fake-News1.pdf> and <https://www.crfusa.org/images/pdf/challenge/Tackling-Fake-News.pdf>).

Conclusions

A teacher has a personal right under the First Amendment to share his view on public policy issues in public but NOT in the classroom. A teacher sharing his opinion or viewpoint in the classroom may be seen as indoctrination. So, for example, teachers should avoid sharing personal views on one’s sexual preference, regarding a particular candidate, President Trump’s taxes, a decision by a Grand Jury, prosecutor, FBI on racial issues, etc. Your school district may even have an explicit policy that teachers should not discuss personal views on political matters in the classroom, in which case, this policy should be followed. Everything a teacher says or does in the classroom should be considered based on the possible impact on the students.

This does not mean that teachers should avoid having students examine and discuss controversial topics. Encouraging the development of civic skills and attitudes among young people has been an important goal of education since the start of the country. Schools are communities in which young people learn to interact, argue, and work together with others, an important foundation for

future citizenship. Since the purpose of social education is to prepare students for participation in a pluralist democracy, social studies classes NEED to address controversial issues. Teachers have the right and the responsibility to help their students understand controversial topics and to develop critical thinking skills. However, the controversial topics should relate to the broad scope of subjects included in the NJ Student Learning Standards and the local school district curriculum. And controversial subjects should be addressed in a neutral or balanced manner, without any effort to indoctrinate students, but rather to help them develop the knowledge and skills they will need as workers, parents and citizens in a democratic society.

Background Materials

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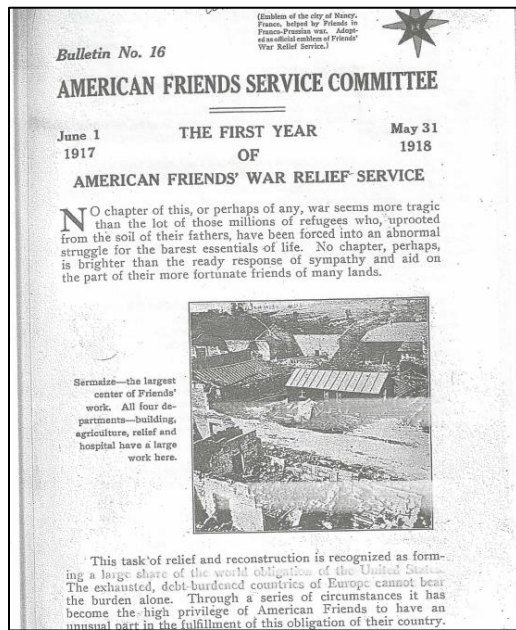
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Soldiers of Peace in Wartime: A Lesson from World War I

Charles F. Howlett



American Friends Service Committee Bulletin Detailing the First Year of War Relief Service, 1917-1918. Available online.

Humanitarian relief efforts in time of war have their own important message to tell. While so much attention is devoted to soldiers in combat, campaigns, and military victories, students of history are entitled to know more about the other side of the story: heroes who risked their own lives within earshot of cannons to save and assist innocent victims of the horrors of war. It is the other side of history most know little about, but should. Even in the throes of war's damnation there are humans out there willing to demonstrate why peace should be valued above all else.

Human civilization's first total war began in 1914 and ended in 1918, barely one

hundred and four years ago. That war traversed the globe, ravaged the European landscape, tumbled dynastic empires, and brought death and destruction to millions of people. Some 8.5 million combatants were killed alone, and nearly twice as many casualties. The civilian death toll was even more staggering as disease and starvation, let alone the bombing of cities, sucked the lifeblood from those caught in the crossfire of opposing armies. At that time no one could even imagine such an outcome. But while the war was raging on in the fields and valleys of northern Europe, the Middle East, and on the high seas, the Religious Society of Friends in America (or Quakers as they are more popularly referred to) teamed up with the Red Cross to provide aid and comfort to those directly impacted by the war. American Friends decided to take a more active role by performing noncombatant service in the theater of war. They truly risked their lives in the name of peace.

The establishment of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) was inspired by a similar organization in Great Britain, the British Friends Service Committee. The British committee was already performing relief work since the war in Europe had been raging almost three years prior to U.S. military involvement. What is most impressive about the American Friends overseas adventure is how quickly

they mobilized their efforts and logistically carried out in impressive fashion their own relief efforts.

During the war the Committee sent many young men and women to feed and care for refugees, build maternity hospitals, and repair and even rebuild destroyed homes. Reconstruction and medical care highlighted a major part of the Committee's relief efforts. As religious pacifists many draft-eligible Quaker men refused induction into the military, but were willing to perform alternative civilian service, including dangerous humanitarian work in war zones. Similarly, Quaker women volunteers, although not subject to conscription (draft), willingly enlisted in overseas relief and reconstruction work. In France, in particular, these noncombatant volunteers drove ambulances, rebuilt damaged homes, roadways, and villages; they also were instrumental in assisting refugees fleeing from war zones as well as providing funds to staff and supply maternity hospitals and relief stations.



AFSC Volunteers in France, 1917, AFSC Archives, Philadelphia

All told, close to six hundred, mostly male, volunteers worked endlessly in France

where most of the fighting took place within the shadow of aerial bombing and roaring cannons. Even when the war ended the Committee extended its work in Russia where relief workers helped fight famine and disease; in Serbia and Poland where they assisted in agricultural development and constructed orphanages; and, finally, into Austria and Germany where they fed hungry children.

In the spirit of Florence Nightengale, the subject of many biographies for her courage and training of nurses during the Crimean War in the nineteenth century, these relief workers in World War I became notable crusaders for humanitarianism. They worked in combat zones with courage, conviction, and compassion. As soldiers of peace their equipment was first aid kits, shovels, buckets, hammers, and nails.

At the same time, the actions of AFSC highlight as very important distinction between an antiwar movement and a peace movement—a distinction students and scholars should understand. An antiwar movement is a short-lived crusade aimed specifically at ending military hostilities and lasts only as long as the conflict endures. A peace movement, however, is continuous and extends well beyond simply ending the conflict—it seeks social justice and reform as well as calling for war to be abolished. That is why it is ever present and has existed in the United States as an organized endeavor since the early nineteenth century—in fact the first established peace society in world history was founded in New York City in 1815 by the merchant, David Low Dodge. Indeed,

AFSC, is an excellent example of what a peace movement is because its work continued long after the “guns of August” were silenced at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day in the eleventh month of 1918.

The following excerpts from the letters and accounts written by Friends can be used by teachers for Document Based Questions explaining the other side of war. They help demonstrate how humanitarian relief work plays a vital role in restoring the lives and stability of those directly impacted by the horrors and costs of war.

Document 1: Letters from Katherine W. Elkington to Parents (August-September 1917)

[Katherine W. Elkington grew up in Germantown, Pennsylvania. She worked at the hospital at Chalons-sur-Marne, in the Champagne-Ardenne region and wrote these letters from the Mission de la Société des Amis in Chalons-sur-Marne]

August 10, 1917: American nerve should count for something, and as I am the only one in all the town as far as I can make out, and there are 40,000 people here—I will have some responsibility. There are about thirteen workers all together here, counting those in the Maternity Ward, those in the creche, and those with older children. Just at present my work lies with the babies whose mothers are here, or who are refugees or something of that stripe. The oldest is three and the youngest a few months, and so as there are about thirty in between, you can see we have some job to keep all fed and clean....Not far away is a factory that turns out machine guns, and every hour you can

hear the pop, pop, pop of the new ones being tested. Besides this there is the never ending trial of soldiers and camions [trucks] going to the front, so one feels quite in the atmosphere of la guerre.

August 17, 1917: This morning...for just as we were feeding the kids their dinner we heard the anti-air guns in the field next to us go pop, pop, pop, and as this is the signal to rush the children under cover we were all on the run. As soon as they were safe we flew out...and there way up above the clouds was our “Boche” foiled of his prey, and turned homeward by the quick work of the gunners. The smoke from the bursting shells hung in the air like little white puff-balls, perfectly still, five in a row. This, I am assured, is only a teaser and nothing to what they have had.

August 27, 1917: You can’t imagine the ruin, which after three years is still almost untouched. The little church has been patched up and we struck the 1st Mass held there since the catastrophe in 1914. We took several pictures of the wreck, and one of an old woman standing in the door of a new little shanty that has been raised over the cellar of the old home....{W]e stopped to photo one of the numerous wayside crosses that mark the last resting place of some fleeing Germans, and found near it a hastily dug grave apparently abandoned before their man could be interred. It is a gruesome reminder of the shadow that lies over these bright and sunny fields, and one cannot help but feel suddenly shivery as one turns away.

September 20, 1917: For the past few nights there has been a never ending grumble of cannon just out of sight over the

hills, and all night long from the windows. I could see the flashes of light that preceded the boom. Also the star bombs were much in evidence, shooting up to consort with their brothers in the sky....

Boom! There the guns are beginning again—big fellows this time whose reverberations shake these walls fifteen miles away....

Source: American Friends Service Committee Records, Box General Administration 1917: Foreign Country—France, American Friends Service Committee Archives, Philadelphia.

Questions:

1. How does Elkington contrast her work in the maternity ward with a nearby factory making guns for the war?
2. What does she mean by feeling “quite in the atmosphere of las guerre”?
3. What do you think her feelings were when coming upon a makeshift grave of German soldiers?
4. How many miles away were the big guns, which rattled her windows?
5. Do you think she was proud of the work she was doing and did she feel that her contributions would further the cause of peace?
6. Who did she refer to as “Boche” and what new weapon of war was first introduced during this conflict?

Document 2: Joseph H. Haines, Letter to his Father (April 6, 1918)

[Joseph Haines, like Elkington was a member of the Germantown Monthly Meeting (Quaker Meeting House) and a graduate of Haverford College in 1898. He served in a Reconstruction Unit at Grunzy

(Somme), France, where he built and repaired houses and schools and assisted local citizens]

When night came we were naturally tired; so tired that I can hardly remember who was there or what we did. All this time others were securing the country side with automobiles to evacuate threatened villages, and they were often under shell fire. We had to load the trains with old people women and children, decrepit, sick or dying....

I could not think of the loss of our material work that has come but only of the tremendous gain we have made in friendship and goodwill among a people to whom we cannot even yet speak plainly. There is one thought ingrained in every one of us, and that is that we must go back to help them set their homes in order and begin life anew as soon as we can. If the people back of us in America give us half a chance, we can, when we do so, accomplish, I think twice the good that we have in the past....

We found the town we were to help clear up entirely deserted—I mean this literally. There were perhaps half a dozen civilians left and the Red Cross was in possession of the Hotel which they were running for themselves. I set to the next morning—after the town had been shelled and we had all taken refuge in the wine cellar down fifty steps and cut out of solid rock where most of the hotel (it was full of Red Cross workers) slept. But I went back to bed after having helped fit up a camion as ambulance to carry the dead and wounded from the shelling....

Source: American Friends Service Committee Records, Box General

Administration 1918: Foreign Service
Country—France Individuals: Joseph
Haines to L. Ralston, American Friends
Service Committee Archives, Philadelphia.

Questions:

1. How did Haines demonstrate his courage under fire? As a noncombatant did he see himself as a brave soldier without arms?
2. Did he believe that his example would inspire Americans critical of those who were conscientious objectors to reconsider their opinion?
3. Why did he want the people back in America to give him half a chance when it came to accomplishing good over evil?
4. What was the one thought ingrained in each and every one of these volunteers?

**Document 3: Edward C.M. Richards,
“Reminiscences of Wartime Relief Work
in Persia [n.d.]**

[During World War I Richards performed missionary and relief work in Persia (now Iran). In 1923, he published a longer account of his experiences; this excerpt is from his unpublished reflections]

At that time, April 1917, many sincere men believed that the most Christian thing to do was to give their lives in the front trenches, believing that in that way they were helping to do away with the evil of war. To hold my position honestly, and meet such men face to face, it was necessary for me to be willing to do something at least as disagreeable and dangerous, and to do it with the motive of keeping people alive, of bringing reconciliation and good will between hostile factions, and to do it using only methods which were uplifting and helpful and

beneficial to everybody concerned. I had to be willing to get killed, but to do so living everybody and trying to help everybody, including the Germans and the Turks, and all other people....

At that time, 1917, there was in West Persia a combination of war, racial antipathies and religious fanaticism which had come down through hundreds of years. That area had been the fighting ground of the Turkish and Russian armies since the beginning of the war. Massacres and flights of people had taken place, and were liable to occur at any time....There were only a few hospitals run by American missionary doctors, and most of the worst diseases were continually present: smallpox, cholera, typhoid, typhus, malaria, etc...

In July I arrived in Urumia (now Rezaiah) West Persia, where I was made secretary of the Relief Committee. During the summer, autumn, and early winter, I was busy riding from village to village over the plains, visiting, classifying, and arranging for feeding, clothing, and general care of the 500 odd orphans scattered through this stricken area. I organized some of the refugee Assyrians into a cloth-industry, giving several hundred women work weaving the native cloth which for countless generations had been an important material for men's clothing in the high mountains of Kurdistan....

Later on, I took charge of cleaning up the streets of the city of Urumia. This included one very unpleasant task; namely, the collecting and reburying of bodies dug up by the dogs in the graveyards, and partly eaten. The cleaning-up and keeping clean...of the

yards filled with refugees also fell on my shoulders, as did the care of the relief-transportation equipment of autos, horses, carts, harness, and the rest....

Source: American Friends Service Committee, Collected Records, CDG-A, Box 1, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, PA.

Questions:

1. What position did Richards take that he believed was honest and “unpleasant”?
2. Why were the Turks fighting the Russians when most of the battles took place in northern Europe?
3. What do you think was Richards’ most difficult assignment?
4. In terms of history, did Richards’ work also highlight the tragedy associated with the Armenian genocide that occurred as a result of World War I?

Document 4: Ruth Rose Hoffman, “Report to the Friends Committee of the Year’s Work Done in Siberia under the American Red Cross {July 1919}

[During the Russian Civil War Siberia was a battle zone between Bolshevik and anti-Red forces. The United States, Japan, and several European nations sent troops to support the anti-Bolshevik forces. Hoffman, a nurse working with the American Red Cross, apparently with Friends Committee support, reported on her work in public health and with refugees in the Siberian port city of Vladivostok]

As there were no available doctors in the unit at that time for giving medical assistance, I began to visit these barracks, August 15, 1918; I had done as much as I

could in the way of making the lives of these refugees healthier, mostly first aid treatment and taking the very sick into the hospitals....

My work was very difficult but most interesting....All the temporary lodging houses and prisons had to be investigated periodically. We had the most sick cases in the poorest Russian, Chinese and Korean sections of the city....

From January 1st up to July 26 I had located and admitted to the hospital five hundred (500) patient of whom two hundred and seventy-six (276) were Typhus fever cases. Nine hundred and seventy-five visits were made, mostly with the ambulance; six hundred (600) were instructed in the prevention and isolation of disease; four hundred and sixty-seven (467) patients were sent to clinics; clothing given to one hundred and fifty-five (155) bedridden patients, the other being referred to the city office. Medications, eggs and milk were taken to the home of one hundred and seventy-six (176). I also visited many city institutions, which asked for help and made recommendations as to what they really needed.



AFSC Volunteers in France, 1917, AFSC Archives, Philadelphia

As I did not have a physician in my work I had to diagnose and treat some quite serious patients.

In the Spring epidemic of measles, I had a small isolation ward of eight (8) beds with a Russian girl in charge of it, whom I trained for the work. We had about thirty (30) cases of measles. The Russian girl proved to be very good along this line and she obtained work after the clinic was closed in the American Red Cross Hospital. Right along in my work I tried to teach child Hygiene to the Russian mothers, who listened to me eagerly but in their everyday struggle for existence they could not remember it very long....

Source: American Friends Service Committee Records, Box General Administration 1919: Foreign Service Country—Germany to Russia, American Friends Service Committee Archives, Philadelphia]

Questions:

1. How did Hoffman feel about her work in Russia?
2. How difficult was it for her to communicate with so many patients speaking different languages?
3. Did she mind assuming the role of physician under most difficult circumstance and why was she willing to do so?
4. Why did she feel so compelled to try to teach Russian mothers the importance of child hygiene?
5. What happened to cause Russia to leave the war and how did this impact the Allied war effort against the Central Powers.

Document 5: Carlton McDowell, Motives of Humanitarian Service (1918)

[McDowell, a Quaker zoologist and relief worker explains his reasons why he and his companions sought to promote understanding, reconciliation, and peace through humanitarian service]

We went to mend houses; but the reason we wanted to mend houses was that it would give us a chance to try to mend hearts. Much of our work on houses has been lost; but I do not believe that any amount of cannonading will break down whatever influence we had on these people's hearts. We cannot say *how much* cheerfulness, hope and love we brought them—surely *some* reached them. I believe it possible that even now, when their troubles are keener than ever, their experience with us boys may somehow be giving them a little mental comfort. However that may be, the whole perplexing question of our coming will remain in the back of their minds. From time to time it will claim attention until finally a light dawns, until they finally realize why we came—why we crossed the ocean voluntarily, why we worked without pay, why in order to do this we were willing to leave our homes and our professions and take up jobs we never tried before. And when this answer comes to them it will never be forgotten; in the intimate traditions of these families will be handed down the account of the little group of men who worked for strangers because of their belief in the Great Brotherhood.

Source: Rufus Jones, *A Service of Love in War Time: American Friends Relief Work in*

Europe, 1917-1919. New York: Macmillan Co., 1920, p. 226

Questions

1. What did McDowell consider the greater good to civilization?
2. What did he hope his service without pay would eventually accomplish?
3. What did he mean by the Great Brotherhood?
4. What legacy did McDowell wish to convey to those who question his true motivations?

Essay Question

Based on your knowledge of history and events surrounding World War I, what lessons can be learned from the role that noncombatant humanitarian relief workers played when assessing the consequences of war on innocent civilians? How important is humanitarian relief efforts in times of war? Cite specific examples from the documents above where heroes of peace risked their lives to help others.

Further Reading

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Reframing How to Become More Inclusionary In Social Studies: An Educator and an Expert Reflect

Casey T. Jakubowski

The inclusion or exclusion of people, places, and events from history and a state's designated social studies curriculum is a political decision, made fraught with what makes the final cut is telling about a system or society (Osler, 2009). As a New York State certified social studies teacher, and now a teacher educator, I recognize the need to broaden the State's inclusion of so many different people, events, and history. Usually the addition of underrepresented voices to the predominant narrative focuses on peoples from outside European backgrounds. With the recent passing of my great aunt, and her connection to our family, and my exploration of genealogy, I was wondering why does Poland not appear as a large empire, and its accomplishments not recorded in the New York State Social Studies Standards? I am also concerned that Poland's narrative is cast as a victim of world history, and its large and cohesive diaspora ignored?

I was concerned, due to the positionality that I hold as a member of the educated elite (Camicia, 2015) raising this exclusion as a "minor complaint" since my ethnic backgrounds (Polish, Irish, and other European nations) are robustly included in the state standards. Yet, I was bothered, remembering what I knew, and what I taught in 9th and 10th grade social studies, and when I was an adjunct college professor teaching introductory world history and United States History (Jakubowski, 2016). Most American students do not know "their history" (Heafner & Fitchett, 2018). As I now have an opportunity to teach future elementary teachers with responsibility to implement social studies, my students and I are

partially aware of European history, and the diaspora of most Euro- American Immigrant history, so our pasts are not excluded from most classrooms. Yet Poles and Polonia have often been treated as "others" due to their Eastern European backgrounds, Catholic and Jewish religions, and the tragedy of the Polish nation forced into the Soviet Sphere of influence after World War II (Davies, 2005).

In the historiography of the empire, and its diaspora, Poland, has since 1066, leaned west with its culture, language, and religion (Davies, 2005). The nation of Poland uses Latin script, and adopted Western Christianity (Davies, 2005). Historically, its rulers, when not native Polish, have originated from France, the Holy Roman Empire, and western leaning states (Davies, 2005)

The Polish military, from the Siege of Vienna to World War II, have fought valiantly, and often against foreign aggressors (Davies, 2005). With the Cold War ramping up, and a desire by the US and the UK to appease Stalin, Poland's government in exile, its historical contributions to the Western War effort in World War II, and other places were erased from the textbooks (Olsen & Cloud, 2003).

Unfortunately, in New York's social studies curriculum and framework, a real exclusion of a large and resilient ethnic culture is missing. The importance and impact of Poland and Polonia to the growth and development of the United States needs telling, and it is really concerning that there is

a large gap in the curriculum(Thompson, 2005).

This paper serves as a review, from my lens as an ethnically identifying Polish American (Polonia) to examine one of the five largest states (by population) treatment of a large ethnic minority in its history education curriculum.

Literature review

This is a two part brief literature review. First is a brief introduction to some texts which may help teachers understand the significance of Poland and Polonia in history. The second part is a brief discussion of how exclusion from curricula can impact students. It is important to note, that while all history is significantly political, a question emerges: with almost 1 million Poles and Polonia in New York State, why is such a significant percentage of the population excluded from the social studies curriculum?

Poland and Polonia's history is robust, and reflects many advances and challenges. Polonia is defined as the diaspora of the Polish Ethnic population into the world (Davies, 2005). Very little of this profoundly engaging history, culture, and society is intentionally included in the New York State K-12 social studies frameworks. As I have written elsewhere (Jakubowski, 2021; 2020), teacher's backgrounds are critical and crucial to understanding their professional pathways. Further, the exclusion of Polish and Polonia's impact on world and US history is very disconcerting, especially as the role which the Pope, the nation, and its American diaspora played in ending the western-eastern cold war (Ubrico, 2006; Weigel, 2010). I would recommend that we create a more balanced approach to European history, and offer additional opportunities for students to learn about places beyond France, Britain, and Germany. One place to start is the extraordinary readable work by

Bukowczyk (2017) which examines the Polish diaspora to the United States. Recently published (Bukowczyk, 2021) work concerning Polish and Polonia women is a short, yet extraordinarily useful resource for teachers.

From the American Revolution (Pulaski & Kosciuszko) Polish nobility heroically assisted Washington and others to fight for American independence. Marie nee Sklodowska Curie, became the only winner of the Nobel prize in Chemistry and Physics. Poland was viewed as the breadbasket of Eastern Europe, and provided significant grains to Europe. After the division of Poland and the late 1800s uprisings, millions of Poles immigrated to the United States, where they became workers and leaders in the industrialization of cities in the Northeast. Through their ancestors' hard work, and creation of religious and cultural communities, especially in urban areas, Polonia anchored the rise in industry and community architecture with the soaring churches and foods which are hearty and now part of American foods. Dr Francis Fronczak, the first Polish American awarded a medical doctor degree, and became the Commissioner of Health, and led efforts during World War I and II for relief both in Europe and in the United States for displaced persons (Dabrowski, 2018).

When called upon to serve its adopted homeland in the trenches of World War I and II, as well as Korea, Vietnam, and the Middle East, Polonia produced statesmen, leaders, heroes, like LT. COL. Matthew Urban, and General John Shalikashvili (Bukowicz, 2017). With so much history to select, it is upsetting that Poland and Polonia are not a greater part of New York State's social studies curriculum (Jakubowski, 2016).

Literature review: Exclusions

There has recently been significant national debate on who, what, and why certain aspects of teaching are acceptable. As revealed by the debate over critical race theory, slavery, and under represented communities, many conservative state legislatures have enacted legislation banning the teaching of controversy. The public debate has led to a number of critiques of not only state legislatures, but of state standards in social studies, and who is included, who is excluded, and the politics behind the decisions (Popp, et al, 2021)

As one leading article reported (Au & Apple, 2009), all curriculum is designed to include or exclude people, events and memory for a multitude of reasons. With the current debates concerning Critical Race Theory, and what the term means, and the legality of teaching the topic in schools, many social studies teachers and elementary educators are concerned that a heritage crusade is emerging from the conservative powers to limit exposure to a wide range of topics, including slavery in the United States' schools (Giroux, 2021). Harris & Reynolds, (2014) in their review and study of history curriculum discovered that "feel a lack of personal connection to the past, as they do not see themselves in the history they are taught." The need to ensure students understand history is crucial and critical. It is even more important that as the United States, and New York diversify, the increase of historically marginalized groups are included in the curriculum. In a profoundly important study, Levstik (2008), investigated and found how absences in the state sponsored curriculum extended into the textbook, and classroom repertoire of teachers. Barton & Levstik (2018) also found this phenomena in a second study, and discovered that adolescents who are excluded from the curriculum as an identity group seek to understand what happened, both positively and negatively.

Where there is absence, there is silence. And silence, especially among Polonia, has historical roots in discrimination. As Pula (1995) and many others have reported, early Polish immigrants, and then later Polish Americans faced significant discrimination from the more settled white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants, and others. The anti-Eastern European, anti-Catholic, and other forms of bigotry in the nation created burdens within the communities. In Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Albany, and New York City, many Polonia members created their own communities, civic societies, and schools, as the education system was charged with creating Americans, and recruiting for the Protestant churches through public bible readings. As Bukowczyk (1998) revealed in his work, the Polish American Community was othered deeply and with true discrimination across the north eastern United States, as labor looked upon these post 1890 immigrants as obstacles towards increasing pay, benefits, and unionization.

Therefore, a rich historical tradition is missing from the United States and world, with the exclusion of this literature. And, with significant numbers of Polish Americans in the New York State cities, suburbs, and rural areas, we now turn to the actual study of New York State's Social Studies Curriculum.

The study

Utilizing critical discourse analysis (Gee, 2014) this paper examines the New York State Social Studies framework. Critical Discourse Analysis is the examination of the materials and resources within a document. Critical Discourse Analysis further asks why documents were created, and what the significant purpose for the communication to a broader range of people beyond the initial stakeholders who created the document.

The framework is crucial, as New York is one of the largest states in the United States, and is influential in publishing classroom resources such as textbooks. Further, many New York teachers are part of larger, national professional groups in the teaching of education majors, and social studies groups. This study reviewed the 2021 updates of the New York State Social Studies frameworks, or (NYSSSF, 2021) the guiding document for teachers and students in the 600+ school districts in New York State.

The genesis for the latest social studies framework was the desire of the New York State Education Department, in the Board of Regents action plan to update the framework after the release of the Common Core State Learning Standards, identified the need to include more “history” post 9-11. It was decided in 2014 to empanel a list of experts in multiple fields to create a more robust social studies curriculum, and a new set of Regents Exams, which are the penultimate end of course exams. With significant criticism of past regents exams by scholars (Dozono, 2020; Grant, 2001; Hursh, 2001; Maestri, 2006) the decision was made to implement new regents exam format, and mandate teachers and students, alike, focus on content specifications which was explicitly spelled out under broader key ideas and conceptual understandings (NYSSSF, 2021, p. 10). The new framework retained the 10 areas of core knowledge and skills from the National Council for the Social Studies, and implemented five skills of an engaged scholar, as part of the national College, Career, and Civic Life standards (Swan & Griffin, 2013). An Inquiry Arc suggested to teachers that the C3 Standards, along with state specific content, would create a “better social studies” experience for students (Swan & Griffin, 2013).

Undertaking Discourse Analysis, I started with an overall read of the K-12 New York State Framework. From the initial read, I explored for specific words related to Poland, the grade level of their first appearance, and then their frequency.

Results

Poland specifically appears once in the entire 150+ page document. In 11th grade United States history and geography, Poland is included as a “throwaway” to the cold war, specifically how decisions were made to impact people following World War II. The point of the specific bullet is focused on America, and its Cold War conflict with the USSR. While 11th grade is focused on the United States, the unit wants students to understand how the previously “insulated” United States was forced onto the world stage as an emerging superpower. What does this significant lack of content mean? An over 1000 year old empire, the home to a number of scientific, political, religious, cultural, environmental and archeological treasures is absent.

Discussion

How can teachers be helped, educated, and resourced when there is a glaring and profound absence of one of the more significant ethnic groups in the state? First, throughout the document, there are “latitudes” given to teachers to allow them to focus on “local history” as necessary. In the 2000 census, almost one million Polish and Polonia lived in New York State. Polish Americans *are* local to the State. Therefore, it is up to teachers in the classroom to include the Polish and Polish Americans across the curriculum, with little formal resources and training.

Second, the state of the current curriculum must be revised. With the (renewed) rise of Russian

aggression in Eastern Europe, and the continued immigration of Poles to North America as the European Union and the United Kingdom have reduced acceptance of Polonia migrants. The state education department's curriculum office must ensure that in their next revision to the state social studies scope and sequence, the Polish and Polish American community is represented in the topics covered.

Third, most students are unprepared with understanding the role of Eastern Europeans in US and American culture from the second great immigration wave post 1890. While the Irish, Armenian, Bosnian, and other tragedies are included, why are the achievements, and repression of the Polish not? Why does the 9th and 10th grade World history and Geography curriculum not include mention of the founding of Jagiellon University, the Liberal Veto by the Sejm? Why are the Western names of the scholars, such as Copernicus and Curie included, but not their Polish ones? The Polish Americans contribution to US history is profoundly lacking as well. Many immigrant Poles were part of the farming communities, the second industrialization in the United States, and the suburbanization following World War II. Many Polish American communities in the Northeast built the large churches which dot city skylines. The laborers, families, and homesteaders contributed to the growth and economic prosperity of the post World War II era. The Polonia community actively sent monetary aid to relatives in Poland suffering under communism. These Americans witnessed, supported and thrived, using their limited influence to help Pope John Paul II end communism in the Eastern European nations. Their Polish Language newspapers spread the business advertisements of local entrepreneurs, and their choices of houses, often vacated by previous immigrant communities enlivened downtowns, until

the Post World War II suburbanization efforts and red lining led to the decay we see today. Yet the Polish culture and tradition of many communities is rebounding, and there is hope that the revitalization of historic Polonia will lead to more knowledge and understanding (Pienkos, 2019).

Conclusion

History and Social Studies are an ever evolving part of the New York State school curriculum and standards. As literature reviewed above explains, excluding students from the curriculum leads to disengagement, and disassociation. In New York, one of the largest ethnic groups, the Polish and Polish Americans, are *de facto* excluded from over 99% of the curriculum. In reviewing the 2021 New York State Social Studies Frameworks, the total number of times Poland, Polish Americans, or related content is explicitly covered is once. Therefore, the State of New York is excluding one of the largest and most significant groups from study. The lack of inclusion of Polish and Polish American history effectively excludes future generations an opportunity to explore the contributions, interdisciplinary, of one of the largest empires, and important immigrant communities to the United States. It is imperative that the New York State Education Department right this wrong, in order to increase the inclusivity in its guide to teaching and learning for the fourth largest state in the nation.

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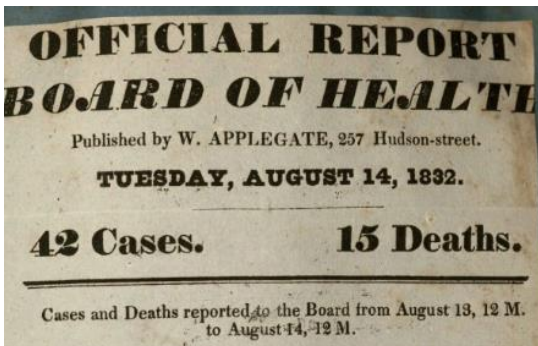
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New York Survived the 1832 Cholera Epidemic

Daniel S. Levy

(originally published in [History News Network](#))



After sweeping through Asia and killing hundreds of thousands in Europe, cholera neared New York in the spring of 1832. The city had long been afflicted by diseases like yellow fever, smallpox, diphtheria, Scarlet Fever and measles, but this ungodly pandemic would be like none it had ever experienced. New Yorkers tried to prepare as this new sickness spread south from Canada and fanned across the United States, with Thomas Wharton noting in his diary on June 19 how citizens kept busy “cleaning the streets and alleys, strewing the gutters with Chlorine of Lime, and After sweeping through Asia and killing hundreds of thousands in Europe, cholera neared New York in the spring of 1832. The city had long been afflicted by diseases like yellow fever, smallpox, diphtheria, Scarlet Fever and measles, but this ungodly pandemic would be like none it had ever experienced. New Yorkers tried to prepare as this new

sickness spread south from Canada and fanned across the United States, with Thomas Wharton noting in his diary on June 19 how citizens kept busy “cleaning the streets and alleys, strewing the gutters with Chlorine of Lime, and the druggists busily occupied in ... specifics and prescriptions.” Little, though, could slow its advance, and six days later a Mr. Fitzgerald who lived on Cherry St. became ill. While he recovered, his wife, Mary, and children, Margaret and Jeremiah, soon died. The disease progressed quickly. When Dr. John Stearns jotted down his observations on his visit with John Coldwell on Maiden Lane, he noted how the patient reported that “The attack was sudden & violent—his impression was that ‘he fell as if knocked down with an ax.’”

Churches, offices, warehouse and shops shuttered as 100,000 residents, half the city’s population, fled. Departing carts, carriages and people jammed the streets. Passengers packed ferries, and the *Evening Post* wrote on July 3 how “Almost every steamboat which left New York yesterday was crowded with a dense mass of fugitives flying in alarm from the imaginary pestilence.” But what they ran away from proved to be far from chimerical. Those who remained cowered at home. James Riker Jr.

wrote that his family “scarcely ventured farther than the apothecary’s opposite to obtain drugs, or examine the daily report of deaths by cholera.” Like others, the Rikers didn’t know what to do. Then his grandmother took sick on July 15. “As the day passed on she grew worse notwithstanding the efforts of a number of physicians to check the disease, and died in the night.” Riker’s uncle also perished “that gloomy night,” and the family “packed furniture enough to serve us... closed the house, and left the city in several wagons.”

Many believed cholera sprang from moral faults, drinking, depravity and filthy living. A report by hospital physicians noted how, “The disease fell in a very remarkable degree upon the dissolute and the intemperate.” The *New York Mercury* blamed places of “infamy,” commenting on a prostitute on Mott St. “who was decking herself before the glass at 1 o’clock yesterday, was carried away in a hearse at half past 3 o’clock.” And yet, pillars of society—doctors, alderman, clergymen and businessmen, along with Magdalen Astor Bristed, the eldest child of John Jacob Astor, the richest man in America—also died. Playwright William Dunlap wrote how “we begin to be reconciled to being killed.”

Ministers preached throughout that only the righteous would be saved, with Episcopal Bishop Benjamin Onderdonk imploring citizens to pray “in a truly devout and Christian frame of mind, with deep repentance for your sins.” While their congregations scattered, many religious figures stayed, with those like Father Félix

Varela and the Sisters of Charity caring for the physical and spiritual needs of their flocks.

People had no concept of cholera’s origins or how to treat such a plague. Most did sense the existence of a link between filth and sickness. Yet unbeknownst to the most learned doctors and scientists of the time, a microscopic comma-shaped bacterium called *Vibrio cholerae* caused the malady. The devastating sickness spreads through water tainted by human waste and brings on nausea, vomiting, leg cramps and diarrhea. The victim’s blood pressure drops, their eyes assume a hollow, sunken look and their skin wrinkles. Subsequent dehydration bestows on the flesh a bluish hue, thus earning cholera the name the “Blue Death.”

Even though they lacked real knowledge of what to do, doctors did their best. The Board of Health set up hospitals, while physicians searched for treatments. Most proved brutal. The evangelist Rev. Charles Grandison Finney recalled how “the means used for my recovery, gave my system a terrible shock.” The most widely attempted remedy was calomel, a chalky mercury-chloride compound, and when doctors saw their patients developing pus on the gums—a sign of mercury poisoning—they believed that their treatment had worked. Physicians also did bloodletting, applied mustard poultices, immersed patients in icy water, administered powdered camphor and had patients inhale nitrous oxide and drink brandy.

Homemade cures circulated around town. The *Evening Post* recommended that

their readers drink strained gruel, sago or tapioca. Some businesses offered disinfecting solutions, and the chemist Lewis Feuchtwanger sold cholera lamps to purify rooms by spreading “Perfumes, Scents, Essences, Aromatic Vinegar, Chloride of Soda and Lime.” And while physicians and pharmacists tried to save people, E.T. Coke commented on how quacks “flocked into the city from all quarters.”

Unfortunately, little that doctors, citizens or hucksters tried had positive effects. Death came painfully, often in just two days to a week. The minister Henry Dana Ward wrote of a friend named Maynard who “took the cholera bad.” Ward’s wife Abigail was “very attentive to him. And we were able to soothe the last moments of an invaluable life.” Yet “in the morning we buried him cold in the grave.” As painter John Casilear would note, “There is no business doing here if I except those done by Cholera, Doctors, Undertakers, Coffin makers.” Cemeteries became overwhelmed. So many bodies filled the areas that grave diggers found it easier to simply dig large trenches. In untended parts of the city, corpses lay in gutters. By the time the cholera had run its course in late

August, the city of more than 200,000 residents saw the death of 3,513.

It would take years before doctors and researchers understood the cause of the disease. In 1854 Dr. John Snow studied the pattern of deaths during a cholera outbreak in London. By mapping out the location of the stricken, he showed that the disease originated from a specific polluted street water pump. When officials closed the source, cases dropped. At the same time, the Italian microbiologist Filippo Pacini first identified the cholera bacterium, and in 1885 the Spanish physician Jaime Ferrán created the first vaccine. Yet despite newer and more effective vaccines, the sickness still takes the lives of some 120,000 people around the world each year.

While cholera continued to visit New York into the late 19th century—in 1849 it killed 5,071 citizens—New York always recovered. On August 25, 1832 merchant John Pintard wrote of his relief that the disease had finally quit the city. “The stores are all open, foot walks lined with bales & Boxes & streets crowded with carts & porters cars... Now all life & bustle, smiling faces, clerks busy in making out Bills, porters in unpacking & repacking Boxes, joy & animation in every countenance.”

How the First African American Doctor Fought for Women's Rights in Glasgow

Mathew D. Eddy



(This essay was originally published in [The Conversation](#))

James McCune Smith was the first African American to receive a medical doctorate from a university. Born in 1813 to a poor South Carolina runaway slave who had escaped to New York City, he went on to attend Glasgow University during the 1830s. When he returned to America, he became a leading black physician, a tireless abolitionist, activist and journalist. McCune Smith led an amazing life. He exposed false medical data in the 1840 American census. He supported women's suffrage alongside the noted feminist Susan B. Anthony. And

he wrote the introduction to Frederick Douglass's sensational 1855 autobiographical slave narrative, *My Bondage and My Freedom*. Now, for the first time, my research has revealed that McCune Smith was also the first African American known to be published in a British medical journal – and that he used this platform to reveal a cover-up by an ambitious medical professor who was experimenting on vulnerable women in Glasgow in the 1830s.

I am a historian of science and medicine. I study how people learned scientific skills and I am especially intrigued by the history of how scientists and physicians made discoveries and how that knowledge then circulated between the academy and the public. One way to track this process is to compare what students learned in educational settings to how they used their scientific training to solve problems and make decisions later in life. My forthcoming book, *Media and the Mind* (2020, Chicago University Press), for example, uses school and university notebooks to reconstruct how students historically learned to create, analyze and visualize scientific data in ways that helped them understand the human body and the

natural world when they finished their education.

Several years ago, I decided to investigate the history of how the testimony of hospital patients was transformed into scientific data by physicians. I eventually stumbled across the 1837 case of a young Glasgow doctor who sought to expose painful experimental drug trials that had been conducted on the impoverished women of a local hospital. That doctor was James McCune Smith. He had written articles detailing how the women of a local charity hospital were being subjected to a painful experimental drug. It was a career changing moment for me because I had not encountered this kind of activism in my previous research on medical education.

Who was this doctor? What led him to speak out? Where did he learn to place his knowledge of science and medicine in the service of equality and justice? Upon closer examination, despite his many accomplishments, virtually nothing had been written about McCune Smith's time in Glasgow or about his work as a practicing physician in New York. Like the children of many runaway slaves in New York, McCune Smith grew up in Five Points, Lower Manhattan, one of the poorest and most densely populated urban areas of America at that time. Though the state fully emancipated all former slaves in 1827, when McCune Smith was a teenager, discriminatory educational policies, unsanitary living conditions, chronic illness and infectious diseases ensured that the prospects for a free African American teenager in the early part of the 19th century

were limited. Indeed, in an article entitled "Freedom and Slavery for African-Americans," published in the *New York Tribune* in 1844, McCune Smith observed that only six of the 100 boys who attended school with him from 1826 to 1827 were "still now living". He noted further that they were "all white."

Though technically "free," the lives of African Americans in New York during the 1820s and 1830s were marred by the legacy of slavery and discrimination. Runaway slaves were openly hunted in the city's alleys, streets and wharves. McCune Smith reflected on these events in an essay that he wrote about the life of his school classmate, Henry Highland Garnet. An abolitionist and Presbyterian minister, Garnet was the first African American to speak before Congress. McCune Smith recalled the trauma experienced by Garnet's family in 1829 when they were tracked by slave-hunters. They barely escaped by jumping out of a two-story building and hiding in the house of a local grocer. When they returned to their home they found, in the words of McCune Smith: "The entire household furniture of the family was destroyed or stolen; and they were obliged to start anew in life empty-handed."

Despite many challenges, New York's African Americans founded their own businesses, churches, political associations, printing presses and more. In addition to receiving support and encouragement from a community of relatives and friends, McCune Smith's path to becoming a doctor was significantly aided by his education at the African Free School.

Older students were taught penmanship, drawing, grammar, geography, astronomy, natural philosophy and navigation. When American universities denied his medical school applications, the free school community played a role in raising funds for him to attend Glasgow University.

After sailing from New York to Liverpool, McCune Smith arrived in Glasgow in 1832. Thanks to maritime trade, it was one of the largest cities in the country and the university's medical school was one of the best in Europe. Britain had prohibited the slave trade in 1807 and it fully abolished slavery the year after his arrival in 1833. Though there were not many African Americans in Glasgow, black writers, had been operating in Britain since the 1770s. Then, in 1809 Edinburgh University admitted William Fergusson who was from Jamaica and was the university's first student of African descent. Though he took medical courses at the university, Fergusson did not stay to complete a medical doctorate. Instead, he received a license from the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh in 1813. He then practiced as a surgeon in the British military and eventually became governor of the then-British colony of Sierra Leone. McCune Smith joined the ranks of these torchbearers and became the first African American known to graduate with a BA, MA, and medical doctorate from Glasgow University. By the time McCune Smith began his studies in Glasgow, opposition to slavery had moved beyond the walls of the university. There was an active abolitionist community and it founded the Glasgow Emancipation Society in 1833. McCune

Smith, still only an undergraduate, was one of the founding members. After he graduated, a number of black students attended the university over the course of the century.

Despite living in a foreign country, McCune Smith excelled at his studies and received several academic awards. The Glasgow medical faculty placed equal emphasis on scientific rigor and hands-on clinical experience. In addition to learning chemistry, anatomy and physiology from some of Britain's leading doctors, he witnessed cutting-edge experiments and new medical technologies being demonstrated in his lectures. He graduated with honors in 1837 and was immediately given a prestigious clinical residency in Glasgow's Lock Hospital. He worked there alongside the eminent Scottish obstetrician and gynecologist, William Cumin, treating women who had contracted venereal diseases.

The difficulty in pursuing a project of this nature is that many of the scientific papers and publications of black physicians have been lost to the sands of time. Unlike the many collections that university libraries have dedicated to preserving the legacy of white doctors who were alumni or donors, there is no "James McCune Smith Medical Collection" where scholars can go to study his medical career and scientific ideas. No one has yet told the full story of how African Americans like McCune Smith became doctors or how they used their knowledge of medical science to fight injustice and prejudice. The hidden histories of these black physicians based in countries

spread around the Atlantic Ocean led me to start my current research project on how they used their scientific training to counter the rise of racist medical theories -theories which erroneously suggested that black bodies were physically different from other bodies and could more easily withstand the stress, pain and labour of enslavement.

Though a number of McCune Smith's articles were republished several years ago, the whereabouts of his personal medical library, clinical notebooks, patient records, office ledgers and article drafts are unknown. Likewise, his manuscript Glasgow diary and letters have been lost. Though aspects of his career have received attention from historians in recent years, a biography of his extraordinary life has not been written.

This was the situation when I discovered his efforts to expose the harmful drug trials that were being conducted on the women of the Glasgow Lock Hospital. The evidence consisted of two articles that he had published during the spring and summer of 1837 in the London Medical Gazette, a weekly journal with articles about medicine and science.

I originally came upon these articles by reading page after page of medical journals housed in the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. When I found them, they immediately stood out because they took the testimony of poor female patients seriously. When I realized that McCune Smith was the first African American to graduate from a Scottish university, I could not believe what I had discovered.

New discoveries

Discovering McCune Smith's articles was momentous because they are the first currently known to have been published by an African American medical doctor in any scientific journal. Scientists in the 19th century published articles for many reasons. Some wanted to popularize their research in a way that advanced their careers. Others hoped their research would benefit the general public.

The fascinating aspect about McCune Smith's articles in relation to the historical emergence of the scientific journal is that they were published to expose the unethical misapplication of scientific experiments. This means that they offer new insight into how he learned to combine the power of the press with his medical training to fight inequality and injustice in Britain prior to returning to New York.

The story they tell is extraordinary. The events occurred in the spring and summer of 1837 while McCune Smith was serving in the Glasgow Lock Hospital as a resident physician in gynecology. The hospital was a charity institution set up by the city for impoverished women suffering from acute venereal diseases such as gonorrhea and syphilis.

After consulting the ward's records and speaking with the patients, McCune Smith discovered that Alexander Hannay, a senior doctor in the hospital, was treating women suffering from gonorrhea with an experimental drug called silver nitrate, a compound that a handful of doctors used as

a topical treatment for infected skin tissue or to stop bleeding. But it was normally used in low concentrations mixed into a solution, with doctors emphasizing that it should be applied with caution and as a last resort.

But Hannay was administering the drug in a solid form, which meant that it was highly concentrated and caused a terrible burning sensation. He fancied this usage to be innovative and was relatively unfazed when his patients repeatedly asked for less painful forms of treatment. After speaking with the women and further consulting the hospital's records, McCune Smith realized that Hannay was effectively treating the women as guinea pigs – as non-consenting participants – in an experimental trial that involved a very painful drug.

At that time, silver nitrate was a newly available substance and its long-term effects were relatively unknown. There were a handful of military doctors who used it experimentally to cauterize skin ulcers or wounds of soldiers that would not stop bleeding. But some medical books classified it as a poison. Glasgow's medical students, particularly those who studied with Prof William Cumin, avoided using it on internal organs due to its unknown effects. Instead, when it came to gynecological cases involving ulcers or infections, students learned to use an alum solution because its effects were generally considered to be effective and less painful.

Hannay went beyond using the silver nitrate on the skin. He applied it to the internal reproductive organs of women, at least one of whom was pregnant. McCune

Smith's article pointed out that the baby subsequently died through complications surrounding a miscarriage. It also intimates that a few women died after the application of silver nitrate. Since the drug's effect on internal organs was unknown, he believed that the deaths could not be treated as a separate occurrence.

In addition to being McCune Smith's superior, Hannay was a medical professor at Glasgow's newly established Anderson University. The easiest thing for McCune Smith to do was to say nothing. The plight of the Lock Hospital patients would not have been a major concern for many medical men at the time. The patients were impoverished women and most doctors assumed they were former prostitutes.

But McCune Smith's perspective was different. Unlike his peers, he had spent his early years in New York City witnessing the pain and suffering caused by poverty, inequality and exploitation. So he decided to place his knowledge of medical science in the service of these women.

McCune Smith knew that there were other effective treatments for gonorrhea. This allowed him to see that Hannay was more interested in bolstering his reputation with a pharmaceutical discovery than helping his patients. But his studies had given him another equally powerful tool – data analysis. His ability to use this tool can be seen in his *London Medical Gazette* articles. The gazette was a journal of some repute, serving the British medical community as well as physicians based in Europe and America. In his article, he

wrote: “The materials of my paper on the subject of gonorrhea of women were collected whilst I held the office of clerk to the Glasgow Lock Hospital.”

He made his case against the experiments by extracting figures from handwritten registers that recorded the condition of patients being treated in the hospital over an entire year. He had learned to collect, categorize, and analyze data in the clinical lectures that were required for graduation. This method was part of the new science of “vital statistics” that used medical data to predict or prevent disease in people, cities and even countries. Known as “medical statistics” today, it was becoming more commonly used in journals that published articles on medical science.

McCune Smith’s articles showed that the drug trials were ineffective and presented an unwarranted risk. They also revealed that Hannay and his team of assistants had attempted to cover up data in the hospital records that damaged their claims about the drug’s efficacy and their position that its side effects were minimal. McCune Smith did not mince his words. He wrote: “By this novel and ingenious mode of recording the Hospital transactions for 1836, [Prof Hannay’s team] keeps out of view the evidence of the severity of the treatment, and the amount of mortality, while, at the same time, the residence of the patients in the house seems shorted, the cost of each diminished, and the treatment made to appear more than usually successful.”

Accordingly, he called for the trials to stop immediately. But McCune Smith

was not happy to simply cite statistics. He wanted to give these women a voice too. To achieve this, he emphasized the extreme pain that they were experiencing. Their suffering had been played down by those conducting the experimental trials. Hannay even suggested that the women were dishonest and unreliable witnesses. To counter this suggestion, McCune Smith quoted the women themselves, some of whom said that the drug felt like it was “burning their inside with caustic”. This was strong language. They were effectively saying that the drug felt like a flame being applied to their bodies.

McCune Smith’s decision to use this kind of visceral language on behalf of impoverished women in a scientific article was rare at the time. Nor was it common in the lengthy, fact-laden lectures given at Glasgow’s medical school. So where did McCune Smith learn to write like this? Finding an answer to this question has been difficult because hardly any of McCune Smith’s manuscripts from his Glasgow years are known to have survived. But thanks to a recent discovery that I made with the rare books librarian Robert MacLean in the Archives and Special Collections of Glasgow University, a better picture is starting to emerge.

Based on my previous research on Scottish student notekeeping, I knew that Glasgow University kept handwritten registers of books borrowed by students from its libraries during the 19th century. Luckily, it turned out that McCune Smith’s manuscript library borrowing record did, in fact, still exist. It was a gem that had

remained hidden for the past two centuries in the dusty pages of Glasgow's library registers.

The discovery was historic because it revealed that he definitely took the university's moral philosophy class. The course was taught by James Mylne and it encouraged students to judge the accuracy of statistical data when making moral decisions. The registers also showed that McCune Smith consulted the *Lancet*, the leading medical journal of research and reform that promoted the same kind of public health activism evinced in his 1837 *Gazette* articles.

Finding the student reading record for any historical figure is like striking gold. In McCune Smith's case it was doubly exciting because so little is known about his intellectual development. In addition to literature relevant to his studies, he checked out several 1835 issues of the *Lancet* which regularly identified links between pain and maltreatment.

It is likely these accounts inspired him to use a similar approach in his *gazette* articles. But even the *Lancet's* references to pain and cruelty barely addressed the plights of impoverished women, let alone those who had been regularly subjected to experimental drugs. In this respect McCune Smith's concern for the Lock Hospital patients surpassed the reform agenda promoted by Britain's most progressive medical journal.

Further investigations have revealed that there were many other black physicians who lived in America in the decades after

McCune Smith became a doctor. As revealed in research by the Massachusetts Historical Society, there was, for example, John van Surly DeGrasse. He studied at Bowdoin College in Maine, received a medical doctorate in the 1840s, set up a practice in Boston and became the first African American member of the Massachusetts Medical Association.

There was also Alexander Thomas Augusta, who, despite Virginia laws that banned free blacks from learning to read, was educated by a minister, moved to Toronto and graduated from Trinity College's medical school in 1856. Notably, both Augusta and DeGrasse served in the union army as physicians with the rank of major during the American Civil War.

After McCune Smith returned to America in the autumn of 1837, he served as a professional role model for African Americans who studied medicine from the 1840s onward. By the time younger black physicians such as DeGrasse and Augusta began their studies, McCune Smith had already opened a practice that served patients from both sides of the color line and had published several scientific articles. For the rest of his career his name was a frequent byline in articles about health and society published by the African American press, as well as larger newspapers with mixed readership, like the *New York Tribune*.

An excellent example of McCune Smith's later medical activism is the collection of articles that he published during the 1840s about the national census.

The main issue was that slavery advocates had noticed that the mortality rates of African Americans in northern asylums were higher than those of black people in the southern states. This led them to conclude, erroneously, that freedom somehow damaged their mental and physical health.

Rather than engage with their desire to co-opt convenient data, McCune Smith used his knowledge of medical statistics to skillfully undermine their attempts to find scientific data that fit their discriminatory world view. He conducted his own investigation and proved that the original collection of the figures on site in the northern asylums had been flawed and that, as a result, the data was incorrect and could not be used to accurately determine the health of black asylum patients.

McCune Smith did not stop there. He turned the tables on slavery advocates by transforming the new accurate mortality statistics into a tool that could be used to fight inequality. His 1844 *New York Tribune* article about the census concluded: “These facts prove that within 15 years after it became a Free State, a portion of the Free Black Population of New York have improved the ratio of their mortality 13.28% – a fact without parallel in the history of any People.”

Put simply, the correct data revealed that the health of African Americans unburdened by the deprivation and forced labour of slavery thrived once they left the south and lived lives as free citizens in the north.

McCune Smith’s publications are a significant early chapter in the history of how black activists have worked tirelessly over the past two centuries to disentangle erroneous interpretations of scientific data from discriminatory claims about poverty, gender and race. They provide crucial historical insight into the relationships between race, science and technology that exist today.

In many respects McCune Smith’s desire to locate and publicize correct data about asylum patients built on the approach that he had developed in his articles about the mistreatment of women in Glasgow’s Lock Hospital. He continued to publish articles throughout his career that challenged those who sought to use science to justify discrimination and inequality. In 1859 he even went so far as to challenge former President Thomas Jefferson’s discriminatory racial assumptions when he wrote: “His arrangement of these views is so mixed and confused, that we must depart from it.”

McCune Smith’s activism showed aspiring African Americans that becoming a professional black physician could be more than simply treating patients. For him, being an expert in medical science also included using his training to fight injustice and inequality.

His publications are an indispensable chapter in the American history of science and medicine. But they are an important part of British history too. Because it was in Britain where he first published articles that placed his knowledge of medicine in the service of equality and justice. It was the

libraries of Glasgow University – which now has a building named in his honor – and the wards of the Lock Hospital, which fed his towering intellect and fired his passion

for medical knowledge, as well as the pursuit of justice for the powerless and oppressed.



New Jersey Local History: Stephen Smith House and Underground Railroad at Cape May



Source: <https://stephensmithhouse.org/>

Stephen Smith was the original owner and builder of a summerhouse in Cape May, New Jersey.

Although born in the late eighteenth century, Smith was a nineteenth century philanthropist. During his lifetime, he was said to be the wealthiest Black American in the nation. He established the first home in the United States for aged and indigent Colored people. This home is still in existence today.

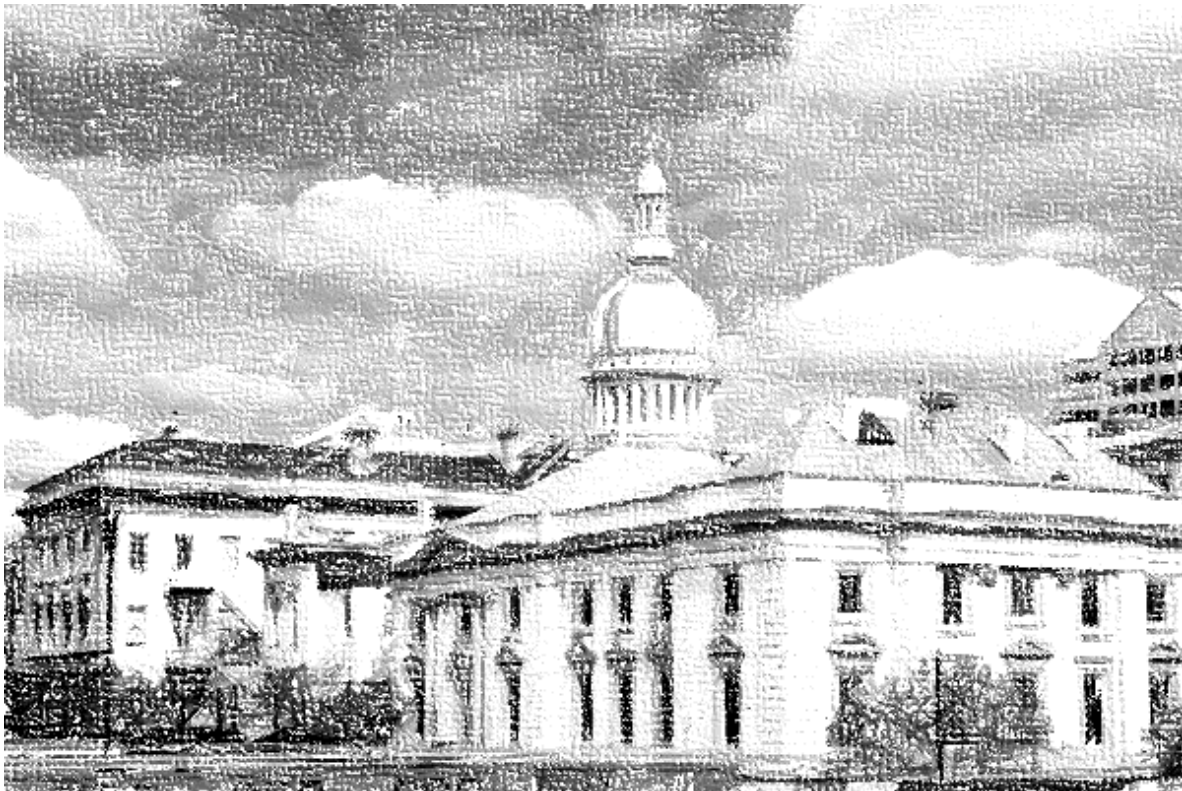
An energetic businessman, Mr. Smith had a coal mine, stone quarry and

lumber yards in Philadelphia and Columbia, Pennsylvania. His business activities led to many real estate holdings. He established Smith, Whipple & Co. with his cousin William Whipple. Stephen Smith was a devoted church and family man; married to Harriet Lee, they lived in a stone mansion on Lombard Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The vacation house was built by him in Cape May, New Jersey using material from his lumber yard. This house is still standing except for the carriage house, kitchen and fireplace room once visible in the rear of the building. Not having children of his own, he welcomed the offspring of his wife's secretary and friends; namely the Bascoms and Harlans. His secretary Anna Vidal, wife of Ulysses B. Vidal, brought their three children, Etienne, Marie and Anna Clorise to Cape May. Etienne engraved his name in a small glass windowpane with his diamond ring at this house. In later years Marie would point out the pane and recall the prank, for Etienne had long since emigrated to France. Stephen Smith was called "Daddy" Smith by the children and he relished the time consuming carriage ride to Cape May with them. Portraits of Stephen and Harriet were painted by the noted Black artist Edward Stridom and are today the property of the Pennsylvania Historical Society. An

avid abolitionist and agent in the Underground Railroad, Mr. Smith was active in politics and church affairs. Records of the AME church attest to his generosity.

Stephen Smith was born October 13, 1795 in Columbia, PA. At the age of nine he was purchased by an officer who was a Revolutionary War general named Thomas Boude. His mother escaped from her owner, found her son, and was taken in by Boudes. Weeks later her mistress (owner) followed and demanded her property. The Boudes' refused and were supported by the townspeople who believed in aiding a fugitive. Raised by the General Thomas Boude, in time, Stephen purchased his freedom. Before the general

died, he set Stephen up in the lumber business. Stephen earned the respect and confidence of the people of Columbia, PA and they supported his endeavors. At age 21, he was inspired by the eminent minister, Richard Allen, founder of the AME church, and at age 31 became licensed to preach. He was a Teller in the election of every Bishop since Richard Allen until his death in 1873. Smith built a public hall in Philadelphia for the use of the "People of Color"; but this was destroyed by fire in the riots of 1842. Stephen Smith was one of the Signers of Frederick Douglas' *Men of Color to Arms* appeal during the early part of the Civil War calling on Black Americans to join the Union Army.



New York Local History: Water from the Catskills

Michelle Young

Source:

<https://untappedcities.com/2015/06/22/some-of-nycs-drinking-water-comes-from-drowned-towns-in-the-catskills/>



Ashokan Reservoir in the Catskills

New York City has some of the best drinking water in the country, but it did not come without a price. Most are familiar with the Croton Aqueduct, the first to bring fresh water to the city in 1842 and updated in 1890. Catskill Aqueduct was next (a push after Brooklyn was incorporated into the City of New York), built between 1917 and 1924, bringing 40% of New York City's water from a series of reservoirs 163 miles away in upstate New York. New Yorkers may not know the six reservoirs of the Catskill Aqueduct, including Ashokan Reservoir, New York City's largest, were formed by flooding a dozen towns.

The plan for the Catskill Aqueduct began in 1905 when the New York City Board of Water Supply was formed, allowing for the acquisition of property by eminent domain and the construction of dams, reservoirs, and aqueducts. The area in question was formerly a farming area, with logging and the quarrying of bluestone, some of which ended up on the Brooklyn Bridge. Two thousand people were relocated, including a thousand New Yorkers with second homes. Thirty-two cemeteries were unearthed and the 1,800 residents reburied elsewhere, to limit water contamination. Residents were offered \$15 by the city (\$65 later for the Delaware Aqueduct) to disinter their relatives and move them elsewhere.

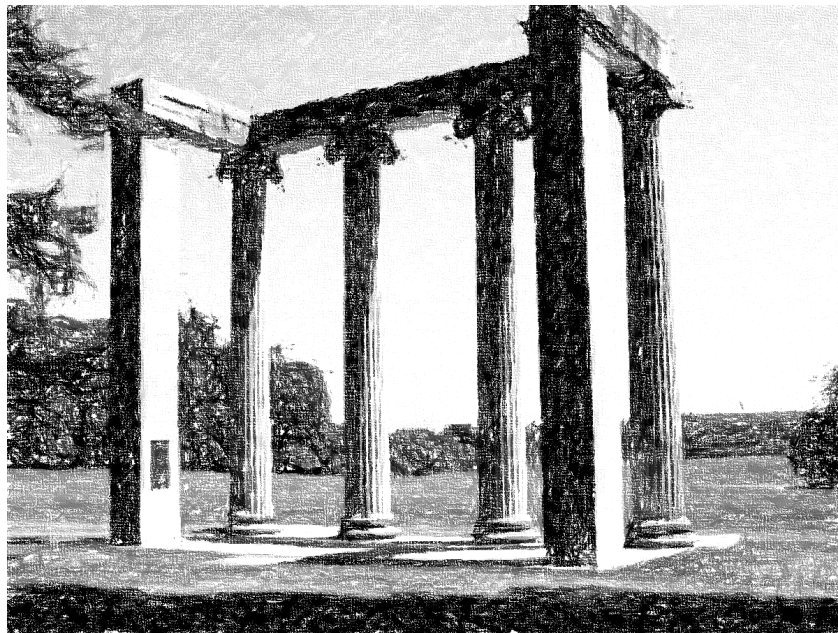
Buildings and industries were relocated or burned down, trees and brush were removed from the future reservoir floor—all the work done predominantly by local laborers, African-Americans from the south and Italian immigrants. To control the fighting that arose between labor groups, a police force that became the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) Police, was created. In sum, four towns were submerged while eight were relocated to build the Ashokan Reservoir. When the dam was completed, steam whistles were blown for

an hour warning residents that the water was coming. Today, remnants of foundations, walls, and more can still be seen, particularly when water levels are lower—often in the fall. Although access to the reservoirs has been limited since 9/11, you can see some of those archeological finds from bridges. You can also hike and bike along a ridge of the reservoir.

The last of the eminent domain lawsuits in the Ashokan Reservoir area was not settled in 1940 and it was not until 2002 that New York City made any moves to acknowledge the history in the Esopus Valley. The NYCDEP installed an outdoor exhibition in Olive, New York that commemorated the lost towns and the feat of the aqueduct itself, with the intention to add exhibits at five other reservoirs (although we were not able to find that the

exhibition or any others are still available). Signage now shows the sites of the former towns.

The Delaware Aqueduct is the most recent of the city's aqueducts and its story is similar to the Catskill Aqueduct. The Pepacton Reservoir (aka the Downsville Reservoir or the Downsville Dam) was formed by flooding four towns and submerging half of the existing Delaware and Northern Railroad. This reservoir provides 25% of the city's drinking water, and combined the Catskill and Delaware Aqueduct provides 90% of the city's water. In total, the construction of these reservoirs and aqueducts resulted in the destruction of 25 communities and the relocation of 5,500 across five New York State counties. Something to think about the next time you run the tap in New York City.



New York Local History: Underground Railroad in the North Country

Source: North Country Public Radio
<https://www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/story/45430/20220224/remembering-the-secret-history-of-the-underground-railroad-in-the-north-country>

A few minutes outside the small town of Peru in New York's Champlain Valley, there is a small farm that looks like any other in the area. A cluster of silos and red barns with fading paint are flanked by snow-covered fields and apple orchards, dormant for the winter. But this farm has something unique. A blue and yellow New York State historical marker identifies the property as a stop on the Underground Railroad, where "runaway slaves were concealed and protected on their way to freedom in Canada."



There was no actual train involved in the network, explains Jacqueline Madison, the President of the North Country Underground Railroad Historical

Association. "It was a trail of conductors who helped them along the way [and] safe houses where they could stay," she notes.

Communities from Watertown to Lake Champlain were part of that network of safe houses that helped people escape slavery in the American south during the decades leading up to the Civil War. Escapees typically traveled by foot or water. The railroad moniker was part of a secret code: safe places to stay were called stations and the owners of those properties were known as conductors. A full journey on the Underground Railroad typically took several months.

This is the history that Madison and the North Country Underground Railroad Historical Association are dedicated to preserving. The group operates a museum in Keeseville, in the Champlain Valley south of Plattsburgh. It features the stories from both sides of the Underground Railroad: Black passengers and white conductors. One exhibit is dedicated to the former owner of that historic Peru farmhouse, a man named Stephen Keese Smith. The abolitionist Quaker purchased the property in 1851 and quickly established one of the barns as a hiding place for runaway slaves headed to Canada. There is no way to know with certainty exactly how many people Keese Smith aided while working as a conductor.

But his later writings provide an estimate. “He talked about helping people get to freedom and he thinks he spent about \$1000 doing that,” Madison explained. “And if we spent \$2.50 per person, he would have helped over 400 people.”

Exact numbers are nearly impossible to come by in historical records because those helping escaped slaves often avoided keeping a paper trail. Involvement in the Underground Railroad was extremely dangerous for everyone, black or white. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 required that escaped slaves be returned to their former owners – and carried stiff penalties for anyone who aided them. “If you were caught helping someone get to freedom,” Madison noted, “you could lose your property, you could be jailed, you could be fined. Terrible things could happen to you, your family, and friends if they suspected them of helping as well.”

The North Star Underground Railroad Museum fills up the bottom floor of an old 19th Century house. It’s packed with maps, faded newspaper articles, and portraits of notable members of the North Country section of the covert network. Standing before a map, Madison explains the various routes freedom-seekers would have followed to reach Canada. A western path originating in Pennsylvania went through Buffalo, up to Watertown, and crossed the St. Lawrence River at Ogdensburg. Two escape routes followed Lake Champlain: one through Vermont and another running from Albany to Rouse’s Point along the lake’s western shore. To find

their way, escapees used folk songs learned on the southern plantations. They worked as a kind of secret oral map; with coded lyrics [guiding freedom seekers](#) on their journey north. One such tune called [Follow the Drinking Gourd](#) referenced landmarks like certain rivers and offered hints for how to identify friendly conductors. Drinking gourd was code for the Big Dipper – a celestial constellation that can be used to identify the North Star.

Although details can be hard to piece together, some stories of those who passed through the North Country to freedom have been recovered. An article written in 1837 by Vermont-born abolitionist Alvan Stewart for an anti-slavery newspaper recounts the story of an anonymous man who travelled through the North Country on his way to Canada. “I was headed to Ogdensburg, on my way north to Canada from South Carolina,” an actor declares in a re-enactment exhibit at the North Star Museum. “I had come up through the Champlain Canal, and then gone through Clinton and Franklin County.” That unknown man did eventually reach freedom north of the border, but his quest nearly ended in disaster just a few miles from his destination.

Outside of Ogdensburg, he stopped into a post office looking for work. Since New York had outlawed slavery in 1827, that would not necessarily have been out of place. However, slave owners offered rich rewards for the return for those who escaped, and slave catchers were permitted to operate even in anti-slavery states under

the Fugitive Slave Act. When the anonymous freedom seeker entered the post office near Ogdensburg, the postmaster recognized him and explained that a reward for his capture had been posted. “I said to him, if you send me back then they’ll do terrible things to me,” the re-enactment continues. “Whip me. Hang me. Skin me alive. I begged him not to turn me in.” In this case, the postmaster ignored the reward, worth about \$20,000 [in today’s terms](#), and helped the man cross the St. Lawrence River into Canada.

Other escaped slaves decided to settle in North Country. In 1840, a Franklin County landowner named Gerrit Smith pledged to donate more than 120,000 acres of wilderness land in the Adirondacks to free black men. It would eventually become a [settlement known as Timbuctoo](#). A man named [John Thomas](#) received 40 acres of un-cleared land from Smith. Thomas later sold that to buy a larger plot near Bloomingdale, NY, which he turned into a successful farm. Many years later, Thomas wrote his benefactor a letter, thanking Smith for the “generous donation” and revealing that he and his family greatly enjoyed the peace and prosperity of their “rural home.” Although Thomas was successfully established himself in the region, that was not the case for most recipients of Smith’s land. Harsh winters and tough soil drove

many of the Black farmers to sell the land they had received and move away. The climate was not the only danger; at least once, slave catchers came to the area looking for Thomas. According to Madison, they first approached his neighbors seeking their help. As Madison tells it, Thomas’ neighbors informed the slave catchers that he was armed, would forcibly resist capture, and declared their intention to assist Thomas in repelling the catchers. The slave catchers are believed to have given up their pursuit.

In his later letter to Smith, Thomas hinted that his adopted community had begun to treat him as one of their own. “I have breasted the storm of prejudice and opposition until I began to be regarded as an American citizen,” he wrote. This may also be a reference to civic participation. At the time, New York State required men to own at least \$250 worth of land to obtain the right to vote. Thomas’ obituary was published in the Malone Palladium in May 1895. It described him as “much respected in the community where he lived so long.” His descendants still live in that community. Through genealogy research, Madison and the North Star Museum discovered that two of John Thomas’ great-great grandsons still reside in the North Country. One of the descendants lives less than two miles from the cemetery in Vermontville where Thomas and his wife are buried.

New York Local History: Yonkers Sculpture Garden



Source: <https://westchestermagazine.com/things-to-do/arts-culture/yonkers-sculpture-garden-juneteenth/>

For Juneteenth 2022, the City of Yonkers debuted a permanent art exhibit honoring the legacy of the nation's first freed slaves. The Enslaved Africans' Rain Garden includes five life-size bronze sculptures created by artist Vinnie Bagwell depicting formerly enslaved Africans. The sculpture garden is located along the Yonkers Hudson River esplanade. According to Bagwell, "Public art sends a message about the values and priorities of a community. In the spirit of transformative justice for acts against the humanity of black people, I am grateful for those who supported this collective effort. The strongest aspect of the Enslaved Africans' Rain Garden coming to fruition is that it

begins to address the righting of so many wrongs by giving voice to the previously unheard via accessible art in a public place while connecting the goals of artistic and cultural opportunities to improving educational opportunities and economic development."

In Yonkers, Philipse Manor Hall was the seat of the Philipsburg Manor, a colonial estate that covered more than 52,000 acres of Westchester land. The Philipse family was involved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade and probably as many as two-dozen enslaved African slaves worked and lived at the manor. The enslaved Africans were freed in 1799, one of the first large emancipations in the United States. New York State finally ended slavery in 1827.

Teaching Asian American History

Alan Singer

*This article was originally published in History
News Network*

<https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/183088>



Corporal George Bushy holds the youngest child of Shigeho Kitamoto as she and her children are forced to leave Bainbridge Island, Washington. In 1942, the Kitamoto family was sent to an internment camp. (LOC)

The focus of Critical Race Theory has been on the treatment of people of African ancestry as the United States has been pressed to come to terms with its racist past and lingering racism today. It also should include the long history of anti-Asian violence and discrimination in this country. Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May is a time for teachers and students to highlight the contributions and influence of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans on the history, culture, and achievements of the United States.

Ex-President Donald Trump exacerbated anti-Asian hostility in this country with specious statements blaming China for the COVID-19 pandemic and the calling it the “Chinese virus” and “Kung Flu” for the COVID-19 pandemic. The Republican Party has tried to divide potential Democratic Party voters by arguing that affirmative action programs and school reforms addressing past discrimination against African Americans and Latinos are anti-Asian.

Recent deadly attacks on Asian Americans, in San Francisco, New York City, and one in Atlanta where six women were murdered, have been committed by very disturbed people who were agitated by a climate that allows anti-Asian stereotypes to go largely unchallenged. An article in the journal Education Week calls on schools to play a larger role in combatting the stereotypes and anti-Asian racism by making Asian immigrants and their experience more prominent in the United States history curriculum. This would be an important corrective.

On the 2020 Federal Census, people who identified as Asian or of Asian ancestry made up approximately 6% of the U.S. population or almost 20 million people. The Asian American population grew by 35.5% between 2010 and 2020. Another 4 million

Americans identified as mixed ancestry with a partial Asian heritage. The three largest groups were Chinese, about 5.4 million people, South Asians from India, 4.6 million, and Filipinos, 4.2 million. Chinese are the second largest immigrant group in the country. In 2019, California had the largest Asian American population, about 6.7 million people followed by New York (1.9 million), Texas (1.6 million), and New Jersey (958,000)

The first large influx of people from Asia into territories that would become the United States occurred during the California gold rush starting in 1849. Chinese contract workers were brought to the United States to take low paying, dangerous jobs in mining and railroad construction. Most were male and planned to return home after earning enough money to buy land and start a family. In 1850, the Chinese population of the United States was only 3,227 people. It increased to 35,000 in 1860, a little over 60,000 in 1870, and just over 100,000 in 1880, when anti-Asian laws blocked new Chinese arrivals. In 1857, *Harper's Weekly* reported, "The immigration of Chinese into California has attracted the attention of Congress. It appears that the Chinese immigrants, on settling there, persist in maintaining their allegiance to China; and under these circumstances the Senate voted on a resolution, December 19, making inquiry into the propriety of discouraging such emigration."

From the 1850s through the 1870s, the California state government systematically discriminated against Chinese. Among other actions, it required

special licenses for Chinese owned businesses and Chinese were not permitted to testify in court against a white person. In 1875, Congress passed and President Grant signed the Page Act, the first federal immigration law. It prohibited immigrants considered "undesirable" including any individual from Asia who was coming to the United States as a contract laborer, any Asian woman who would engage in prostitution, and all people considered to be convicts in their own country. In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act suspending the immigration of Chinese laborers for a period of 10 years. It was the first law in American history to place broad restrictions on immigration and the first law to ban a specific ethnic group. The law remained in effect until 1943.

Japanese Americans are a small immigrant group that has had a major role in United States history. In 1870, there were only 55 Japanese in the United States, not counting Hawaii which was not yet an American colony. In 1900, there were still only 24,000 Japanese in the continental United States, but Japanese were the largest ethnic group in Hawaii. By 1960, when Hawaii was admitted as a state, there were 464,000 Japanese in the United States. In 2019, under 1.5 million Americans claimed partial or full Japanese ancestry, less than 1/2 of a percent of the US population. The largest Japanese American communities are in California and Hawaii.

In Hawaii, Japanese immigrants labored on sugar and pineapple plantations where they were subject to harsh rules and exploitation by armed European American

overseers. On the plantation, Japanese workers had three to five year binding contracts and were jailed if they tried to leave. Those who eventually migrated to the mainland were subject to discriminatory laws and practices. California passed a law in 1913 banning Japanese from purchasing land.

Under the notorious Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 between the United States and Japan, Japanese officials stopped issuing passports for new laborers. Federal legislation in 1924 completely banned any immigration from Japan.

The situation worsened with Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and U.S. involvement in World War II. Dr. Seuss posted racist caricatures of Japanese and Japanese Americans as part of wartime propaganda and Executive Order 9066 which eliminated all civil rights for Japanese immigrants and their families living on the West Coast. An estimated 120,000 people were branded as risks and forced to abandon homes and businesses and relocate to concentration camps, mostly in inhospitable areas of the Rocky Mountains. This action was taken despite the fact that there was not a single case of espionage ever established against Japanese Americans or Japanese immigrants living in the United States. Over two-thirds of those forced into concentration camps were American born citizens. The fenced in camps were located in harsh terrain and patrolled by armed guards. Ironically, Japanese Americans in Hawaii were not imprisoned because they were needed to rebuild areas destroyed by the attacks. Young Japanese American men

were permitted to leave the concentration camps if they enlisted in the U.S. military. Japanese American soldiers served in a segregated unit, the 442nd, stationed in Italy and France. It was the most decorated American combat unit during World War II.

In 1944, in *Korematsu vs. United States*, the Supreme Court ruled by 6-3 that the detention of Japanese Americans was a "military necessity" and not based on race. In a dissent, Justice Robert Jackson called the exclusion order "the legalization of racism" and a violation of the 14th amendment. Fred Korematsu, who challenged the evacuation order and forced internment, was "convicted of an act not commonly thought a crime. It consists merely of being present in the state whereof he is a citizen, near the place where he was born, and where all his life he has lived." In 1983, a federal judge overturned Korematsu's conviction and in 1988, President Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act compensating more than 100,000 people of Japanese descent who were incarcerated in the World War II concentration camps.

Since 1965, the United States has large immigrant populations from Korea, the Philippines, Southeast Asia, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. Each group has its own history in the United States, however all have faced stereotypes and discrimination and been stereotyped. South Asian Americans, often identified as Moslems even when they are not, were targeted after the 9/11/2001 attack on the World Trade Center in New York. A case involving an immigrant from India in the 1920s, *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind*, established

that people from the Indian sub-continent could not become naturalized citizens of the United States because they were not a “white person” in the sense intended in the Naturalization Act of 1790.

One of the most important constitutional decisions about citizenship was a Supreme Court ruling in the case of the United States vs. Wong Kim Ark was a Chinese American born in San Francisco, California in 1873. His parents were Chinese immigrants who returned to China about 1890. In 1894, Wong Kim Ark traveled to China to visit them and was not allowed to reenter to the United States because officials at the arrival center claimed he was not a citizen. In 1898, the Supreme Court in a 6-2 decision ruled that he was a citizen of the United States because he was born in this country.

Despite decades of prejudice, Asian Americans have made major contributions to life in the United States. They include Vice-President Kamala Harris whose mother was an immigrant from India, Eric S. Yuan, the CEO of Zoom, Steven Chen, co-founder of YouTube, Nobel Prize winning scientists Chen Ning Yang and T. D. Lee, physicist Chien-Shiung Wu who worked on the Manhattan Project developing the atomic bomb, U.S. Senators Daniel Inouye (Dem-HI) and Tammy Duckworth (Dem-IL), film director Ang Lee, astronaut Kalpana Chawla, architect I. M. Pei, authors Maxine Hong Kingston, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Amy Tan, athletes Tiger Woods, Kristi Yamaguchi, and Michelle Kwan, musician Yo-Yo Ma, and actors Sandra Oh, Lucy Liu, Haing Somnang Ngor, George Takei (Mr. Sulu), and Bruce Lee.

Reimagining Public Safety Means Reinvesting in the Public

Linda McDonald Carter

Source: <https://www.nj.com/opinion/2022/01/reimagining-public-safety-means-reinvesting-in-the-public-opinion.html>

I was almost 13 in the summer of 1967. I remember it as particularly hot and humid. I lived in the E.W. Scudder Homes Public Housing Projects, one of many buildings in a public housing community in the Central Ward. I grew up around Black and Puerto Rican families, working-class factory workers, maids, taxi drivers, beauticians, barbers, laundry workers, laborers, dishwashers, and babysitters. This is my Newark, before the rebellion, before drugs and guns were brought into our community. I remember the Central Ward as a close-knit neighborhood with lots of jobs, resources, and opportunities for success. We were a family where no one went hungry or unhoused.



E.W. Scudder Homes, Newark

In recent years, the city has embraced progressive approaches to community policing by prioritizing violence prevention

and a working relationship with the community. But as we reimagine public safety in Newark, it's important to remember these tools are not new or foreign to our city. In reality, it's a return to our roots; back when public safety was an investment in the public.

Growing up, drugs, guns, and homelessness were foreign concepts. A Home Economics class could turn into an apprenticeship with the neighborhood seamstress. Folks relied on historical cultural skills, their talents, and the survival skills that helped our ancestors navigate through the Atlantic Slave Trade, chattel slavery, Jim Crow, segregation, and the Great Migration. We took care of our community. This was the Newark Central Ward's Black community. A thriving ecosystem within itself.

On July 12, 1967, everything erupted. After years of disrespect, dehumanization, and mistreatment outside the Central Ward, the Newark Rebellion began. I remember seeing police sharpshooters positioned on the roofs of the projects, aiming into our apartment, and my mother yelling for us to get down on the floor. I remember hearing the older men in the neighborhood say that the National Guard was told to "shoot to kill." I remember the same army tanks I saw in

Vietnam news footage surrounding Scudder Homes. I thought to myself, “Are we the enemy like the Viet Cong?”

In the aftermath, numerous commissions convened to examine the root causes of the Newark Rebellion and other similar uprisings across the country. President Lyndon Johnson and former New Jersey Governor Richard Hughes both held special commissions that concluded that addressing racial tensions, economic inequality, social disparities, and police brutality were necessary to prevent similar civil disturbances. However, instead of heeding these recommendations, the Johnson administration ramped up policing under the guise and justification of the ongoing “War on Crime.” His Republican successor, President Richard Nixon, continued the escalation during the “War on Drugs.”

Year after year, police departments received federal funds that ballooned their budgets from \$10 million to more than \$300 million annually, triggering poverty, inequality, and racial oppression in my hometown while scapegoating local residents to justify the militarization of police. This is one of the reasons I became

an attorney and eventually opened my own law firm, not necessarily to practice law and make money, but rather to help make a difference in my community. As a lawyer, I could assist with interpreting the language of law and providing direction on how to navigate and negotiate the justice system.

It’s also why I joined with Lisa Hendricks-Richardson, Rhonda Pope Stephenson, and Vanessa Williams Powell, to form one of the first and largest African American women’s law firms in New Jersey, Richardson, Stephenson, Powell and Carter, LLC in 1996. All we’ve ever wanted is to live in peace. We wanted to live in a nice home, make a living wage and take care of our families. So as we look to the future of public safety, it’s important to remember there was a time in our history where people didn’t routinely struggle with poverty, and crime was isolated. There was a time when resources for advancement were well-funded and readily available and our community flourished as a result. Newark will always thrive when it invests in its people. An investment in the people is the best money you’ll ever spend.

New York State's Lessons on Preventing a Crisis of Judicial Legitimacy

Bruce W. Dearstyne

(Reprinted from History News Network
<https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/182195>

Public concern about recent Supreme Court decisions on abortion, religious rights and other hot button issues is on the rise. Before the court began its current term last fall, a number of its justices took the highly unusual step of pleading for public understanding. Their court is just following the Constitution, the law, and judicial precedent, they say. Angry critics are so far not mollified, calling for expansion of the court's membership to counteract its alleged conservative biases. History suggests that attacks on courts peak in times of stress and social change when the courts wrestle with profound, unsettled issues and their decisions have broad ramifications. The criticisms usually fizzle as courts cautiously tack toward the center and align more closely with the perceived public consensus on key issues.

Historians' focus on the Supreme Court has obscured the fact that most regulatory and constitutional issues were thrashed out and decided in state rather than federal courts during much of our history, including the progressive period (ca. 1890-1920). Studying the New York Court of Appeals, the state's highest court, arguably second in importance only to the U.S.

Supreme Court in those days, provides insights into how courts balanced their obligations to the constitution and the need for new laws and regulations. The progressive period was a time of rapid population growth, economic transformation, and unprecedented government policies to regulate business and labor. Courts were panned then for striking down reform laws that judges said violated constitutional guarantees of personal liberty and due process of law.

As my forthcoming book *The Crucible of Public Policy: New York Courts in the Progressive Era* demonstrates, New York's high court was more progressive than many of its state counterparts or the U.S. Supreme Court at that time. It was inclined to validate progressive legislation. But it was criticized for what it did *not* do, i.e., not asserting a common law right to personal privacy in the absence of a specific statutory protection in a 1902 decision, *Roberson v. Rochester Folding Box Company and the Franklin Mills Company*. The high court also took heat for what it *did* do, e.g., invalidating a law banning night work by women in factories in 1907 (*People v. Williams*) and a workers' compensation law in 1911 (*Ives v. South Buffalo Railway Company*).

Former president (and New York governor) Theodore Roosevelt, seeking the Republican nomination for another term as president in 1912, criticized several courts for their “foolish and iniquitous decisions.” He called the New York workers’ compensation decision “flagrant in its defiance of right and justice” and “shortsighted in its inability to face the changed needs of our civilization.” TR proposed giving voters the right to recall and override state court decisions that declared laws unconstitutional. Some critics went even further, advocating letting voters recall erring judges as well as their decisions. Newspapers took up the cry: make the courts more responsive to the public.

Attacks by politicians and the media seemed for a while to threaten the Court of Appeals’ independence and authority. But the criticism gradually and quietly subsided through evolution and compromise. Some explanations of why this happened may provide insights for courts today:

- When the Court of Appeals refused to assert a public right in the absence of a clear authorizing statute, the legislature took the hint and stepped up. In 1903, after the *Roberson* decision, it passed New York’s first right-to-privacy law. When the new law came up for review, the Court of Appeals cheerfully approved it (*Rhodes v. Sperry Hutchinson*, 1908).
- Politicians, sometimes reluctantly, conceded the court’s assertion that the state constitution would not allow desirable new policies and therefore needed to be amended. Voters approved an amendment to that constitution to authorize a workers’ compensation law in

1913. The legislature then passed a new law which was stronger than the one the court had struck down in 1911. The Court of Appeals validated it (*Matter of Jensen v. Southern Pacific Company*, 1915).

The Court of Appeals changed its mind when presented with substantial new evidence on actual conditions and needs. In 1915, it validated a new legal ban on women’s factory night work similar to the one it had invalidated in 1907. The court was swayed by extensive new evidence on the baneful effects of night work presented by a state commission investigating factory conditions and an *amicus* brief prepared mostly by activist attorney (and future Supreme Court Justice) Louis D. Brandeis. The law is “within the power possessed by the legislature,” said the court. It is “constitutional [and] in the interest of public health and welfare of the people of the state” (*People v. Charles Schweinler Press*, 1915).

As new, more progressive-minded judges replaced more conservative ones, the Court of Appeals over time quietly backtracked and took a more relaxed, expansive view of some government responsibilities. In a 1905 decision, *Wright v. Hart*, the court struck down a law restricting bulk sale of goods as a violation of constitutional rights. But in 1916, considering a similar law passed later, the court admitted that “it is our duty to hold that the decision in *Wright v. Hart* is wrong.” Back in 1905, “such laws were new and strange.” Since then, other states had enacted such regulations and their courts had mostly approved. “The needs of successive generations may make restrictions imperative today which were vain and

capricious [in] times past” (*Klein v. Marvelas*, 1916).

Sometimes, the court approved the substance of regulatory laws but struck them down on technicalities. New York’s Commission of Gas and Electricity, created in 1905, had extensive statutory authority to regulate gas and electricity companies and decide maximum rates for their services and products. The commission was forerunner of what would later be called the administrative state – powerful administrative agencies with the authority to promulgate rules with the force of law, enforce regulatory compliance, and make binding decisions about public rights and services. The Court of Appeals strongly affirmed the legislature’s authority to create such agencies with unprecedented power. But it invalidated the law because it restricted companies’ rights to appeal commission decisions (*Saratoga Springs v. Saratoga Gas, Electric Light, Heat and Power Co.*, 1907). By then, it was moot point. The commission had been superseded by an even more powerful agency, the Public Service Commission, which supervised railroads as well as electric, gas, and other public utility companies. A law passed in 1907, included the sort of review provision that the court had found wanting in the 1905 law. The court’s strong affirmation of the principle of the administrative state in its *Saratoga* decision meant that the constitutionality of the PSC was not seriously challenged in court and also helped greenlight other powerful administrative agencies.

While judges seldom publicly responded to critics in those days, leading attorneys and the State Bar Association did. The association declared in 1913 that the courts were sound, their decisions well considered and well documented. The real problems were “misstatements and misrepresentations of the decisions and attitudes of the courts,” “fault finding of defeated litigants and their attorneys” and “abuse and misrepresentation” in the press. Recall of court decisions or judges “would destroy the independence of the judiciary and the impartial administration of justice.” It would substitute “for the training, intelligence and conscience of the judiciary, and settled rules of law, public clamor, agitation and constantly varying opinions of voters overruling the judgments of the courts and punishing judges for unpopular decisions.”

The media picked up on the Bar Association’s argument that independent courts protected the public interest. The recall proposal went nowhere in New York, though it did advance in some other states. Politicians’ criticism of the courts abated. A 1915 state constitutional convention passed on an opportunity to rein in the court. A 1921 legislative commission concluded that the state’s judicial system had “proved reasonably successful and satisfactory.” The Court of Appeals’ strategies of compromise, forbearance, openness to change and good judgment combined with public support for judicial independence helped preserve the court’s integrity and role as arbiter of constitutionality. That may be a good precedent for both the Supreme Court and its critics to consider in the months ahead.

Hazard NJ: How Climate Change Threatens NJ's Most Polluted Places

Michael S. Warren

Reprinted with permission from
<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/05/hazard-nj-superfund-sites-new-jersey-podcasts-investigating-climate-change-risks/>

New Jersey teachers, are you looking for a civic action project for your social studies classes? Students can research Superfund sites in New Jersey and lobby for quicker cleanup. According to this article reprinted from NJ Spotlight News, climate change will make cleanup efforts an emergency.

Oil refineries, fossil fuel power plants, landfills and aging factories: Whether they're active operations or aging hulks, they are among the commercial sites that spewed pollution for years, overwhelmingly in an age without environmental regulations and often at a profit while the public now pays the cost.

But the potentially most dangerous of all may be Superfund sites — places where polluters dumped unabated for decades and left behind toxic legacies so threatening to human health that the federal government has prioritized them for cleanup.

In some places, that work is done. But in New Jersey, 114 sites remain on the Superfund list, more than any other state. As cleanup work at these sites here has moved slowly or stalled out, the severe weather made worse by climate change poses a new threat. As increasingly intense storms like

Ida and Sandy douse New Jersey more frequently, advocates, environmental experts and government officials are raising concerns that the pollution contained in the state's Superfund sites could be released and create public health threats in the wake of future weather disasters. In "Hazard NJ," a podcast and multimedia reporting project, NJ Spotlight News examines how storms, rising sea levels and other threats from climate change are impacting New Jersey's most polluted places — and what that could mean for people living nearby and across the state.



Spurred by Hurricane Harvey's inundation of Houston in 2017, the U.S. Government Accountability Office released a report late 2019 detailing various threats climate change posed to the nation's Superfund sites, and the steps the Environmental Protection Agency, which oversees the sites, should take to deal with the problem. The GAO report laid out four distinct kinds of climate threats — sea level rise, storm surge,

flooding and wildfire — that could stir up and spread pollution from Superfund sites into surrounding areas, or damage the infrastructure and equipment being used to clean the sites. The report found roughly 60% of Superfund sites nationwide face one or more climate threat. In New Jersey, 88% of the toxic sites are at risk, according to Alfredo Gomez, director of the GAO's natural resources and environment team, who oversaw the report. "It's important to understand at each site, like what are the contaminants? Where are they? How are they safeguarded?" Gomez said. "And then what might potentially happen if a wildfire is there, or if there's flooding from any of these causes."

The EPA has since moved to adopt the report's recommendations and incorporate climate change considerations into the Superfund program's general operations — including new guidance on how to incorporate climate change information into risk assessments and responses at Superfund sites. The most important action taken so far, Gomez said, came in March when EPA Administrator Michael Regan issued the agency's latest strategic plan, which incorporates climate change considerations into the agency's goal of protecting human health. "EPA will consider climate change and weather science as part of standard operating practices in Superfund cleanup projects," the plan reads. But Gomez stressed that each site is unique, and he urged the EPA to continue to stay focused on the risks. "We're happy to see that EPA has taken action and moved forward," Gomez said. "But in terms of what's

happening at each specific site, I think requires a little bit more work."

Water creeping up higher and higher along New Jersey's sea and bay shores is perhaps the most visible impact of climate change in the state. Sea level rise occurs here at a rate roughly twice the global average, with the effects of global warming being compounded by the fact that much of the state is sinking. "We've seen sea levels rise at gauges at Sandy Hook and down at Atlantic City, which have century-long records, going up a foot, foot-and-a-half over the last century," said David Robinson, the New Jersey State Climatologist. "And the rise is accelerating; the pace of the increase is accelerating." Sea levels in New Jersey are projected to rise more than 5 feet by the end of this century, according to a state report published in 2020, and potentially even higher if global greenhouse-gas emissions are not cut quickly.

Most of the Superfund sites threatened by sea level rise in New Jersey are in industrial areas along the Delaware River, near the Raritan Bay or in the Meadowlands. Twenty-one sites in the state are projected to be inundated by just 3 feet of sea level rise, according to GAO analysis of data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. That total increases to 29 if sea levels climb to 8 feet.

Higher sea levels serve to make coastal storms like hurricanes and nor'easters more damaging, because they give storm surge a head start before rushing ashore. After reviewing NOAA data, the GAO found that 27 of New Jersey's Superfund sites could be

hit by surging waters from a Category 1 storm, and another 18 that would be threatened by flooding during a major Category 4 or Category 5 hurricane. The areas most threatened by storm surge generally match the places most threatened by sea level rise, as well as some inland areas along the Shore in South Jersey.

Not all flooding comes from the ocean, a point tropical storms Ida and Henri underlined last summer. Periods of heavy rain can quickly overwhelm low-lying areas, especially in urban and suburban communities where layers of pavement and concrete keep the water flowing rather than allowing the ground to absorb it. Climate change is subjecting New Jersey to more frequent, more intense rainstorms, leaving the state to face this kind of flooding more often. “We’re also seeing signs that, if you will, when it rains, it pours; that we’re seeing more of our precipitation in large events,” Robinson said. “We’re still getting the small events, but we’re really accenting it with some of these larger events.”

Flooding is by far the most common threat to the state’s Superfund sites, with 83 of them facing at least a 1% chance of flooding each year, according to GAO analysis of Federal Emergency Management Agency data. That puts them in what’s called the 100-year floodplain. Another 51 sites face a 0.2% chance of flooding each year, placing

them in the so-called 500-year floodplain. That’s a total of 134 sites threatened by flooding. Besides the 114 current Superfund sites in New Jersey, the GAO analysis also included 27 New Jersey sites that have been remediated and delisted.

It’s not just water. Climate change is increasing the threat of wildfires as well. Historically, New Jersey’s wildfire season is in the spring, from late April through May, when the weather is windy and the trees lack enough leaves to create real shade, allowing brush and debris along the forest floor to quickly dry out. But the state’s wildfire season is increasingly less confined to its traditional part of the calendar. Warmer temperatures and long dry spells in between intense storms make fires more likely throughout the year. “In the absence of daily rainfall, which we don’t get in this state, you can dry things out faster, with warmer temperatures, and thus the increased threat, on relatively short order, of wildfire,” Robinson said.

There are 80 Superfund sites in places of high wildfire potential statewide. That’s based on the GAO’s analysis of U.S. Forest Service maps. Most of those sites are in the Pinelands, but others are scattered across the Highlands and in grassy areas like the Meadowlands and the lower stretches of the Raritan River.

What is happening in America? Creating Photo Essays While Learning About the Past

Kristy A. Brugar

"If I could tell the story in words, I wouldn't need to lug around a camera." Lewis Hine

A picture is worth a thousand words.

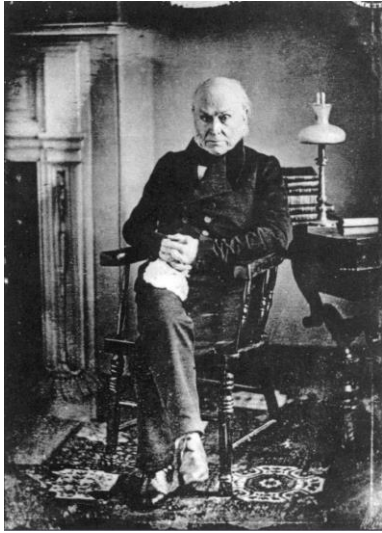
I have to see it to believe it.

These are common phrases we hear and that speak to the connection with, and power of visual materials, namely photographs. As we think about the power of photographs in our daily lives - 24-hour news cycle to Instagram and TikTok, as well as Darnella Frazier's Pulitzer recognized video of the murder of George Floyd come to mind. These images provide opportunities to enlighten, entertain, and empower people to change the world. In some ways, this onslaught of visual information is unique to contemporary society while in other ways it is technological evolution of the past 150 years. As media and the world are visually rich, it is essential that teachers and students are visual literate. This means one is able to interpret and to make meaning from information that is visually presented (e.g., data visualizations, fine art, graphs, maps, photographs). Brumberger (2011) stated, "the richest definitions [of visual literacy] include both an interpretative and a productive component." In other words, one should have the opportunity to and the ability to read, as well as write with and create visual images to convey understandings. In this article, I present an

opportunity for students to read, to write, and to create evidence-based arguments through the curation of historic photographs.

The purpose of social studies to prepare students for participation in democratic society and an interdependent world (National Council for the Social Studies, 2010). In order to prepare students for this important work as citizens, it is essential to recognize the role of literacy (reading, writing, observing, thinking, and listening) toward this pursuit. Several scholars have made efforts toward participatory citizenship using photography (e.g., Mathews & Adams, 2016; Powell & Serriere, 2016; Roberts & Brugar, 2017); one type of visual material. The use of photographs as documentation of daily life are excellent resources that are readily available for students to engage with in an effort to better understand aspects of life during particular places and different time periods. Often, we introduce our U.S. history students to historical photography with the introduction of the daguerreotype in the 1830s and the first photograph of a president (not sitting), John Quincy Adams, in 1843 (Figure 1.):

Figure 1: Daguerreotype portrait of John Quincy Adams, 1843. (Credit: VCG Wilson/Corbis via Getty Images)



This segues into the documentary nature of Matthew Brady's Civil War photography illustrating the destruction and invention associated with the time. Following the Civil War, photography becomes more widely available and used, particularly in journalism. Photojournalism is an example of civic participation – to inform the public about the reality, in images and words, about the world.

What is a photo essay? Why use/create a photo essay?

A photo essay is a group or collection of photographs which explore a theme or tell a particular story. When carefully curated and captioned, a photo essay conveys an understanding, evokes emotion, and potentially a call to action. As a result, photo essays are an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to read, interpret, organize, and synthesize understandings using visual evidence in an effort to better understand a time and place historically.

The Gilded Age (1860s to 1896/1900) into the Progressive Era (1897-

1920) are excellent time periods to use photography and/or photo essays. The use of photography during this time period makes these sources readily available through the Library of Congress and the National Archives for students to engage with to better understand aspects of life during this time period. Notably in this lesson, I use the photography of Jacob Riis (1849-1914) and Lewis Hines (1874-1940) which document life and injustices during these eras. Jacob Riis was a muckraking journalist and social documentary photographer. Similarly, Lewis Hines was a social documentary photographer who used documentary "wanted to show things that had to be corrected." Considering the sensitive/challenging nature of Riis' and Hines' photographs, it is important to carefully curate the photographs and prepare students for the difficult images. Considering the careful curation of photographs and guiding questions for exploration of these sources will enable students to read and explore primary source visuals as well as demonstrate their ability to use this kind of historical evidence to make an historical argument or claim.

Introducing the use of photographs as historical evidence

This lesson begins by asking students to go to the photo app on their phones and browse the ten most recent images. If all students do not have access to phones or photos, consider having students work in partnerships or small groups. As they browse, ask students to consider the impression each photograph leaves with them. Does the image make them feel

happy? Is it reminiscent of an event or experience? After a few minutes of browsing and considering (and possibly giggling and smiling), ask students to select the image that left the greatest impression. And consider (in preparation for sharing), the following questions:

- Why the photo makes the strong impression on you?
- What is the main focus of the photo?
- What is left out of the image?

For example, from my camera roll I selected the image of a puppy drinking from a fountain (Image 1.). This photo makes a strong impression because of what is both seen and unseen – it is reminiscent of a tranquil walk on beautiful day and brings a feeling a happiness. The focus of the photo is the puppy, Fern, who is about four months old (and already 45 pounds!) at the time of the photo. While she is the focus of the photograph, it is important to note someone is holding her leash and another dog as we all wait patiently for Fern to drink from the fountain as we watched and hoped she would not fall in!

Photo 1: Puppy Drinking From Fountain



Next, have students share their photo and responses to the three questions with another student or two. After students share in partnerships or small groups, open the floor to the whole class, “*What are some of the impressions individuals had from viewing the photographs?*” Student may note a feeling of pride as they selected an image in which they received an award or recognition. Another student may expression a feeling of happiness or joy when sharing a photograph of their extended family and loved ones.

“*What did the photographs focus on?*” Possible responses might include loved ones, unique sights, a specific/special event. Remind students that photographs are a type of historical evidence. They are primary sources that historians, including themselves, may use and interpret in order to construct a narrative of the past. This is an opportunity to step in with information about different kinds of photography. Provide a brief definitions and examples about the different types of photography historians might encounter during their research including portrait photography, nature photography, and documentary photography (Thomson, 2014).

- **Documentary Photography:** created to provide evidence of to document a particular event or situation.
- **Nature Photography:** Emphasize the marvels of the natural world including landscapes, wildlife, and plants
- **Portrait Photography/Portraiture:** Capture the personality of a person

or group of people. Often, portraits are commissioned for special occasions.

“What is left out of the image?”

Before students share responses to this question, remind them as the photograph, they have additional information about the individuals and setting that an outside viewer may not have. How does knowing what is left out of the image make an impression or help them understand the larger context?

Photographs as historical evidence.

Reiterate students, that photographs are a type of historical evidence and they are primary sources. And, let them know that Gilded Age and Progressive Era have rich photograph evidence. During these time periods, individuals like Lewis Hines and Jacob Riis took thousands, of photographs documenting life across the United States. Thus, providing us a glimpse into the past and the challenges people, particularly children experienced. Provide small groups of students (3-4 students per group) collections of the Hines’ and Riis’ photographs. I recommend identifying 20 to 25 images that can be printed for students to manipulated or electronically presented on Jamboard or Padlet (a platform that allows students to easily move images). (See suggested Ask them to examine the images and categorize them as portraits, nature, and documentary photographs. The exercise in categorizing provides students a first glance at the photographs and some preliminary conversation about what they are viewing in the context of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era.

After the preliminary organization of the photographs, guide students through a more concentrated look at a single photograph from the collection. If you are doing this activity at early in the unit, I suggest using the Library of Congress tool in which one observes, reflects, and questions the primary source. (See Figure 2):

Figure 2. Library of Congress, Primary Source Analysis Tool

(https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool_LOC.pdf)

OBSERVE	REFLECT	QUESTION
Provide responses here	Provide responses here	Provide responses here

If this lesson occurs during the unit or toward the end, when students have some understandings of the time period, consider modeling the strategy, Here and Now. In this strategy, students activate prior knowledge or anticipate content for the lesson as respond to a prompt or “quick write” about an image.

The teacher displays a photograph and asks students to note three things. First, how/what they feel when they look at the image? Second, how/what they think about the image? Third, what do you know about

the content and/or context of the photograph? (See Figure 3):

Figure 3: Classroom display of Here and Now Strategy

<p>Here and Now</p> <p>Feel</p> <p>Think</p> <p>Know</p> <p>Jacob Riis. Men stand in an alley known as "Bandit's Roost." Circa 1887-1890.</p>	
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The order of these prompts allows students to react, intellectualize, and then contextualize to what they know about the historic time and place.

After the students have 5-7 minutes to record their responses, begin a whole group conversation with what students know about the content or context. For this conversation, begin with the third question, what do you know about the content and/or context of the photograph? This situates the conversation in the unit of study and can, or will, inform the things students may be thinking about and how they feel about the contents of the photograph. For example, using the photograph of “Bandit’s Roost,” (Figure 4.) students may note the growth of urban centers and development of tenement housing. This could lead students to think the men are outside because living space inside the buildings was crowded.

Photo 2: Banndit’s Roost by Jacob Riis



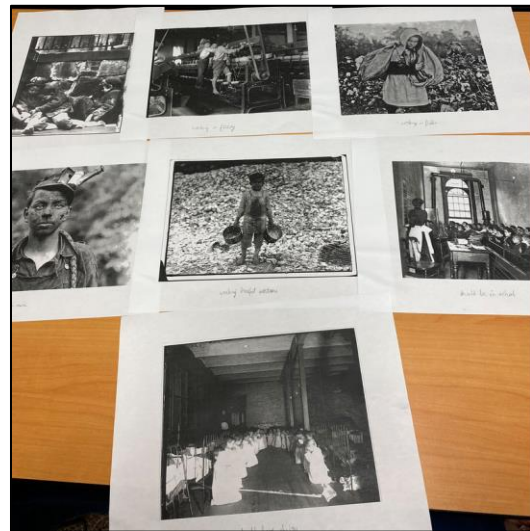
This whole class discussion serves as a segue to develop a caption for “Bandit’s Roost.” Ask students to synthesize in writing the discussion and summarize the image in a sentence or two. After a few

minutes, remind (or introduce to) students that images in text often have captions which are a sentence or two to direct the reader's attention to aspects of the image. Teachers may share examples of typical captions from students' textbooks or trade books before asking students to create their own. (For students learning to identify and write captions, consider these resources, Brugar & Roberts, 2015).

After modeling a photograph as a whole class, present students with a collection of images. They may work independently or in small groups with these collections. Direct students to consider the compelling questions of the lesson: What is happening in America? And, what should we do about it? Then, students have the opportunity to explore, discuss, and create captions for each of the photographs.

Based on their exploration and captions, ask students to create a photo essay which answers the lesson's compelling questions. The photo essay should include 7-10 images and students will create a title (that may read as a thesis statement) and brief captions for each of the photos included. After students have drafted, edited, and finalized their photo essay, have the essays displayed around the classroom or hallway for a gallery walk. The gallery walk will enable students to easily view

individual and collections of photos with captions. If students worked with photos electronically, provide time for others to explore online submissions. A possible extension is task students to record an explanation of their photo essay. This recording can be played by students who view their essay. As students explore, ask them to think about the variety of responses to the compelling questions and the ways in which various groups used a common collection of evidence, similarly and differently, to make their argument.



The opportunity for students to create photo essays is beneficial in several ways. Students have the demonstrate their skills and abilities to critical examine and curate sources in order to create an evidence-based argument.

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New Jersey Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Educational Resources

Source: <https://www.nj.gov/education/standards/dei/index.shtml>

The New Jersey Department of Education is deeply committed to ensuring that schools are safe, welcoming and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical abilities and religious beliefs. The New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) are designed to support the development of curricula that highlight the contributions and experiences of individuals with diverse abilities, cultures, identities and perspectives.

This website provides a wide range of resources that can be used to develop curricula, facilitate professional learning and engage community stakeholders in conversations on incorporating diversity and inclusion throughout the kindergarten through twelfth grade learning environment. The featured lessons, activities and resources were selected to support educators in implementing the new legislative requirements of the 2019 History and Contributions of Individuals with Disabilities and LGBT (N.J.S.A. 18A:35-4.35-6), Diversity and Inclusion statutes (N.J.S.A. 18A:35-4.36a). For more clarity on the requirements and differences between these two laws, please visit the Frequently Asked Questions.

All students deserve equitable access (N.J.A.C. 6A:7) to a high-quality education that is inclusive and reflective of the rich diversity of our state. This can be achieved through consideration of diverse histories, experiences and

perspectives that promote the dignity and respect of all individuals.

Culturally responsive practices create a supportive, inviting environment where students, particularly those who have been marginalized, feel a sense of belonging. Schools that engage in culturally responsive practices create an environment that acknowledges and embraces students' cultural referents and funds of knowledge, hold high expectations for all students and use an asset-based mindset when engaging with students. This school environment also gives students agency and voice as well as fosters critical thinking and self-reflection. In these schools, students see their cultural identities reflected in the curriculum, books, and materials.

Recommended Social Studies Sources for Culturally Responsive Practices

Contextualizing LGBT+ History within the Social Studies Curriculum (National Council for the Social Studies). This position statement is aimed at informing all who hold a stake in the PreK-12 communities regarding the ethical, moral, and civic imperative to contextualize LGBT+ history within the social studies curriculum.

Incorporating LGBTQIA+ Content in History Lessons (Edutopia). This article offers resources and a framework for creating an inclusive history curriculum that benefits all students by providing mirrors to their own lives and windows into others' lived experiences.

Issues in Social Studies: Unity and

Diversity (Annenberg Learner). This program examines how social studies teachers in any grade level can embrace both unity and diversity in their classrooms. Topics range from exploring democratic values to building awareness of student diversity. Through examples of students connecting with one another and embracing the different cultures within their community, teachers can reflect on how to best address issues of unity and diversity in their classroom.

Supporting Curricular Promotion and

Intersectional Valuing of Women in History and Current Events (National Council for the Social Studies). This position statement affirms the importance of women as citizens and thereby calls for greater attention to women within social studies by offering recommendations for policy and practice.

Teaching Black History Year-Round Requires

Rigorous Sight (Edutopia). This article provides strategies for incorporating Black history throughout the year-round curriculum.

Toward Responsibility: Social Studies Education

that Respects and Affirms Indigenous Peoples and Nations (National Council for the Social Studies). This position statement supports the creation and implementation of social studies curricula that explicitly present and emphasize accurate narratives of the lives, experiences, and histories of Indigenous Peoples and provides recommendations for educators and administrators.

Queer America Podcast (Learning for Justice).

This webpage provides an exploration of the history of sexual identity and gender identity in

the United States. Leila Rupp and John D’Emilio host this podcast series to help educators integrate LGBTQ history into their curriculum.

Recommended videos

The Danger of a Single Story. Novelist

Chimamanda Adichie tells the story of how she found her authentic cultural voice and warns that if we hear only a single story about another person or country, we risk a critical misunderstanding.

Freedom Reads: Anti-Bias Book Talk. A video

series that is part anti-bias training and part book review. Each short segment explores anti-bias books for the home and classroom with the goal to strengthen parents’ and teachers’ anti-bias and anti-racism lens and their ability to critically analyze children’s media.

Introduction to Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. A

brief video where education experts Jackie Jordan Irvine, Geneva Gay and Kris Gutierrez explain how to implement culturally relevant pedagogy.

Mirrors, Windows and Sliding Glass Doors with

Rudine Sims Bishop. Rudine Sims Bishop uses "Mirrors, Windows and Sliding Glass Doors" as an analogy to briefly discuss the importance of diversity in books and the authors who write them.

Reflecting on Anti-bias Education in Action: The

Early Years. A film that features vignettes of anti-bias strategies in early childhood classrooms interspersed with teachers reflecting on their practice.

Recommended webinars

Deepening Your Understanding of Race and Racism: A Tool for Anti-Racist Teaching. PBS' virtual professional learning series videos explores the role media plays in understanding of race and racism. Hear from experts who share advice on how educators can use media to confront injustice and create anti-racist classroom environments.

Freedom Reads: Anti-Bias Book Talk. A video series that is part anti-bias training, part book review. Each short segment explores anti-bias books for home and the classroom with the goal to strengthen parents' and teachers' anti-bias, anti-racism lens and their ability to critically analyze children's media.

Learning for Justice Webinars. Free on-demand webinars for educators that address various topics related to bias, class, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, rights, sexual identity, and slavery.

Sample social studies lessons: general

26 Mini-Films for Exploring Race, Bias and Identity with Students. *New York Times* documentaries ranging in time from one to seven minutes that tackle issues of race, bias and identity. The mini-films are accompanied by teaching ideas, related readings and student activities.

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage and History in the U.S. A Teacher's Guide from EDSITEment offering a collection of lessons and resources for K-12 social studies, literature, and arts classrooms that center around the experiences, achievements, and perspectives of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders across U.S. history.

Breaking Bias: Lessons from the Amistad. The New Jersey State Bar Foundation has created this curriculum and guide, which looks at African American history through an anti-bias lens and highlights the contributions that African Americans have made to the United States as well as the lessons our country has learned from this history.

Children's Books: Portrayals of People with Disabilities. A search tool containing information and synopses of children's and young adult literature about or having to do with people with disabilities. The name of the author and illustrator, year of publication, publisher, appropriate grade level, and award status of the book is provided.

An Educator's Guide to Expanding Narratives about American History & Culture. A collection from PBS Learning Media showcasing the ideas, achievements and contributions of American people of all backgrounds across eras. The content highlighted within each topic is intended to expand the scope of voices centered in curricula by elevating Black, Indigenous, and People of Color stories.

Emerging America Model Lessons on Disability History. A variety of inquiry-based, teacher-designed lessons that demonstrate strategies to enliven historical content through engaging learning activities and incorporating a rich mix of primary sources sets that align disability history with common U.S. History topics.

Immigrant History Initiative. The organization produces videos, lesson plans and curriculum to educate and empower communities through the untold stories of immigrant diasporas in America.

Let's Talk: Facilitating Critical Conversations with Students

A guide for educators that offers classroom-ready strategies teachers can use to plan discussions and to facilitate conversations with students about social inequality and discrimination.

Mismatch. An online conversation platform that is purpose-built to cultivate skills and offer practice in civil dialogue between middle school, high school and college students in different parts of the United States. Like a modern-day “pen pal” program, Mismatch connects students across distance and guides them through structured, meaningful conversations with one another.

Museum of disABILITY History. Virtual exhibits, lesson plans and primary resources that examine people with disabilities throughout history.

National Geographic Race Discussion Guide for Teachers. A guide designed to foster authentic classroom dialogues, cultivate safe learning environments and provide students with the opportunity for cross-cultural understanding. This guide was published as a companion to “The Race Issue” (a special edition issue exploring race and diversity in the 21st century) and includes a wide range of resources.

Native Knowledge (NK) 360° Education Initiative. The Smithsonian Institute provides educational materials, virtual student programs and teacher training that incorporate Native narratives, more comprehensive histories and accurate information to enlighten, and inform teaching and learning about Native America. NK360° challenges common assumptions about Native peoples and offers a view that includes not only

the past, but also the vibrancy of Native peoples and cultures today.

Teaching with Historic Places. A collection from the National Parks Service that offers more than 160 classroom-ready lesson plans that use historic sites as a means for exploring American history that highlights African American, American Indian, Asian American & Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Immigrant and Women’s history. Educators and their students can work through these online lesson plans directly on the computer or print them out and photocopy them for distribution.

The Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience. The Museum offers an authentic and unique perspective on the American story. The website portal gives teachers access to lesson plans, curriculum sets by ethnic group and other tools to blend Asian and Pacific Islander histories into social studies, language arts and history courses.

Grades K-2

Exploring Gender Stereotypes Through Role Plays

The lesson plan offers role play activities and essential questions that provide children a chance to use creative, dramatic expression to consider not only the roots of gender stereotypes, but also the consequences and strategies for counteracting them.

Family First Grade Unit

An inquiry driven unit that engages students in expanding their understandings of families and the idea that families can be both similar and different. Although much of family life may be shared—language, religion, culture and traditions—there are important differences across these elements. The compelling question

“How can families be the same and different?” offers students opportunities to explore a range of family dimensions, such as structure, activities and traditions.

Holidays Kindergarten Unit

An inquiry driven unit that encourages kindergartners to expand their study of self and others by deepening their understanding of the role of traditions, holidays and symbols in establishing cultural identity and unity. The compelling question “What makes holidays special?” reflects an enduring conversation about how and why people engage in ritual and tradition.

Identity Kindergarten Unit

A kindergarten inquiry driven unit that leads students through an investigation of self by recognizing that all humans have both unique and similar characteristics. By investigating the compelling question “Is everyone unique?” students begin to see how they are similar to and different from their classmates.

Lesson Plans to Welcome All Families into Your School

Teacher-friendly lesson plans designed to help educators create classrooms and schools that foster a sense of belonging for all of students, families and caregivers. A key focus of this website is to provide comprehensive resources for educators to teach about all kinds of families inclusive of LGBTQ families and to affirm all identities across the gender spectrum.

What is Ableism?

The lesson plan enables students to share what they already know about physical disabilities, stereotypes regarding people with disabilities and issues of fairness and accessibility. In

addition, students will start learning vocabulary for talking about ableism.

Grades 3-5

Analyzing Gender Stereotypes in the Media

Students analyze and critique messages about gender that they get from various media. Students will focus on toys and toy advertisements, challenging themselves to think past what advertisements tell them about their gender identity.

Exploring Your Immigrant Stories

Through hands-on exercises, students will discover similarities and differences they share with other children and learn to appreciate diversity among their peers and the diversity of immigrants all over the world.

The Rich Tapestry of Religion in the United States

The three lesson unit helps students assess the religious diversity of the United States, explore different religious and non-religious worldviews, and consider how freedom of religion relates to their own lives and the lives of others.

Understanding My Family's History

After exposure to relevant literature in class, students will research their family history by interviewing their parents. They will use this information along with visual props to tell their story to classmates.

Grades 6-8

In My Other Life

Students examine the world through multiple perspectives to learn about examples of what it might be like to grow up in Asian, African or Latin American countries.

Native American Cultures Across the U.S.

Activities for students to explore multiple sources and perspectives to understand diversity within and across Native Americans. In addition, students will compare how American Indians are represented in today's society with their actual customs, traditions and way of life.

Poverty and Unemployment: Exploring the Connections

The lesson explores the connections between poverty and unemployment. Discovering that there are not enough living-wage jobs available for everyone who wants one, students begin to see how poverty is caused by systemic factors, not individual shortcomings.

Underreported Stories of Migration

The unit asks students to consider the following questions: How are migrants portrayed in the news and media? Who gets to tell the story of migration, and what aspects of the story tend to go underreported? How do these stories and the perspectives from which they're told, impact our own perceptions of migration?

Grades 9-12

Brick by Brick: Exploring and Archiving the

History of the City of Newark. Students explore the intersection of the history of the City of Newark (aka Brick City) and global migration using a variety of historical documents, texts and visuals in which everyday people and the disenfranchised occupy an important space of representation.

Debunking Stereotypes About Muslims and Islam.

An activity that is designed to help students identify similarities and differences between

the United States Muslim population and the entire United States population.

Disability History in the Classroom. Lesson plans that integrate disability history with larger themes commonly addressed in secondary U.S. history, civics, government and law courses. All the lessons use primary sources, background essays, provide pedagogical objectives and include a study guide.

A Historical Primer on Economic (In) Equality.

Classroom experiences that critically investigate the causes and meaning of poverty in our own nation offer students tools for change, and new ways to interpret the world around them.

Not "Indians," Many Tribes: Native American Diversity. An EDSITEment lesson plan designed to bring awareness of Native American diversity as students learn about three vastly different Native groups. Students will explore archival documents such as vintage photographs, traditional stories, photos of artifacts and recipes to understand how the interaction between environment and culture influenced Native American diversity.

Perspectives and Their Implications: Riding the

Wave of Human Connection. Activities in which students explore concepts of migration through the lens of cultural identity and perspective. What are elements of culture that shape us, shape how we see others, and shape how we are seen in return? Students will investigate shifts in cultural norms and stereotypes specific to forced migration and captivity as depicted in *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare and supplemented

through a variety of texts, discussions, and reflections.

Restoring Women to World Studies. The unit enables students to better appreciate how gender functions within different societies at different times; understand how it both shapes individual lives and offers individuals opportunities to shape society; see similarities in women's experiences as well as differences; and appreciate that experiences of gender are influenced by other categories of identity (class, race, ethnicity, etc.) and are not frozen or merely restrictive but changing and challenged by women who respond to traditional understandings of gender roles and hierarchies.

Teaching About Rights: Historical Context, Contemporary Challenges. The unit is intended for world History, World Geography and Comparative Government courses. Throughout the unit, students use primary sources to examine the gradual bestowal of rights on different groups, the rights currently guaranteed by individual countries and international bodies, and the areas where rights continue to be in conflict.

The LGBTQ Rights Movement: An Introduction.

The book explores the broader diversity of the LGBTQ community, especially in terms of race and ethnicity, creating a collective portrait of the LGBTQ movement that reflects this diversity. The book is divided between a readable, detailed, concise historical chronology and individual biographies of key figures in the history of the LGBTQ movement.

Whites, Blacks, and the Blues. A lesson that enables students to explore the intersections of whites, blacks, and others around the blues and deepen their understanding of discrimination and prejudice. They will consider the ways in which music can, or cannot, create opportunities for people of different cultures, and with varying degrees of power, to relate to one another and find common ground.

An additional online source is CARE Anti-Racist Education.:

<https://antiracistfuture.org/2022/01/what-does-antiracist-education-look-like-in-practice/>

Teaching about the Underlying Causes of the Great Depression

Alan Singer



Stock Market Price Index		Standard of Living of American Farmers	
• 1921	50 points	• 1921	80% of 1914
• 1922	70	• 1922	87%
• 1923	70	• 1923	89%
• 1924	75	• 1924	89%
• 1925	90	• 1925	95%
• 1926	100	• 1926	91%
• 1927	120	• 1927	88%
• 1928	160	• 1928	91%
• 1929	190	• 1929	92%

Sometimes a person clinches an argument by saying “Look at the facts” or “Look at the numbers.” But there is also an old saying, “Figures lie when liars figure.” Different numbers can tell different stories. The standard narrative is that the 1920s was a period of prosperity brought to a close by the collapse of the Stock Market in October 1929 plunging the industrial world into a decade long economic depression and possibly precipitating World War II. A major theme in social studies frameworks is identifying underlying and immediate causes of events. While the Stock Market collapse was the immediate cause of the Great Depression, students need to understand that there were underlying causes that at least some

contemporary economists recognized as troublesome. While stock prices increased nearly four-fold from 1921 to 1929, the standard of living of American farmers never returned to pre-World War I levels, real wages for workers declined after 1920, and poverty was widespread, which meant stagnating demand for soaring industrial production. As industrial capacity expanded and the price of corporate shares, often purchased on margin or with credit, kept rising, it may have been only a matter of time until the House of Cards tumbled. Of course, learning about the economy in the 1920s has implications for understanding the economy today. In this article, “Lots of Prosperity If You Let Coolidge Juggle Statistics,” labor economist Leland Olds looked at the declining standard of living for American workers during the so-called economic boom of the 1920s.

Questions

1. Where did Leland Olds find the data to support his arguments about the American economy?
2. What did President Coolidge claim about the American economy?
3. Why did Olds dispute the claims made by President Coolidge and Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover?
4. In your opinion, should the decline in the standard of living of farmers and the failure of factory wages and employment to return to 1920-levels be considered an underlying cause of the Great Depression? Explain.

“Lots of Prosperity If You Let Coolidge Juggle Statistics” by Leland Olds. *The Federated Press Labor Letter*, v. 10, n. 9, December 2, 1925: 5

How both Pres. Coolidge and his Secretary of Commerce misuse statistics in order to sell their brand of prosperity to the country is suggested in U.S. Department of Labor figures for employment and wages in October. These figures show that the average wage paid by factories in October was nearly one-tenth lower than the average of 1920 while factory workers as a group are getting only about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total wages paid them in 1920.

“In 1920,” according to Coolidge’s statement . . . , “wages were about 100% above the prewar rates and the average wholesale price of commodities was about 120% above the prewar rates. A steady increase in the wage index took place, so that during the last year it was 120% above the prewar rate. Yet the wholesale price level declined to only 57% above the prewar level. Thus as a result of greater economy and efficiency, and the elimination of waste in the conduct of the national government and of the business of the country, prices went down while wages went up. The wage earner received more while the dollar of the consumer will purchase more.”

Coolidge is using the same figures which feature the annual report of Secretary. Hoover, who refers to the alleged facts as “one of the most extraordinary transformations in economic history.” Both Coolidge and Hoover contrive to set up this “transformation” by contrasting the price level of goods produced by farms, mines and factories with union wage scales paid in such industries as building construction, printing and street railways. But the facts, based on federal figures, are that with the exception of coal miners the average producer of goods covered by the wholesale price index is getting considerably lower than in 1920.

The average factory wage in 1920, according to the Department of Labor, was \$29.60 a week. In October 1925, the department shows it as \$26.90. Coolidge might have pointed with some justification to the increase of about \$1 over October, 1924. But wholesale prices also advanced over 7% in those 12 months. The striking contradiction to Coolidge’s figures is the average wage decrease of \$2.70 a week from 1920.

Of even greater importance in terms of the wage earner’s prosperity as a class is the decrease of \$350,000,000 a month in the total distributed in wages in 1925 compared with 1920. The total wages paid all factory workers averaged about \$1,350,000,000 a month in 1920 and only \$1,000,000,000 a month in 1925. The workers evidently get materially less to spend. The major part of this huge drop in factory wages is due to a decrease of 1,626,000 in the number of workers employed. This sharp drop in the number of jobs available is neglected in Coolidge’s hurrahing for prosperity.

The exact position of the large section of the population dependent on factory employment in October 1925 may be defined by the following figures. Average factory employment in the first 10 months of 1925 was 30,000 more than in the same period of 1924. This means that an average of \$23,000,000 more in wages was paid monthly in the first 10 months of 1925 than in the same period of 1925. But the number employed is still 1,626,000 short of the average employed in 1920. The total distributed as factory wages this October was approximately \$318,000,000 short of the monthly average in 1920.

Ping-Pong Ball Citizenship Quiz

League of Women Voters of Rensselaer County



The League of Women Voters of Rensselaer County (www.lwvrc.org) developed a Ping-Pong Ball Citizenship Quiz for students in grade 6th through 9th that is easily adapted for other grades and test review. Place 50 numbered Ping-Pong balls in a glass fish bowl. A student pulls out one of the numbered Ping-Pong Balls and then has to answer a question drawn from the United States naturalization test. A student gets five chances to get three questions correct.

1. What ocean is on the East Coast of the US? *Atlantic*
2. What are the 2 parts of the US Congress? *Senate and House (of Representatives)*
3. Why does the flag have 50 stars? *50 states or one for each state*
4. Who signs bills to become law? *The President*
5. How many US Senators are there? *100*
6. We elect a President for how many years? *Four years*
7. What did Susan B. Anthony do? *Fought for women's rights/fought for Civil Rights*
8. What was one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did? *Freed slaves/ Emancipation Proclamation/ saved or preserved the Union/ Led the US during the Civil War*
9. What movement tried to end racial discrimination? *Civil Rights movement*
10. What is the capital of your state? *Albany*
11. What is the capital of the US? *Washington, DC*
12. Name one state that borders Mexico? *California/Arizona/New Mexico/Texas*
13. Why did the colonists fight the British? *Because of high taxes/ because the British army stayed in their houses/ they didn't have self-government*
14. Who is the "Father of our Country"? *George Washington*
15. What do we show loyalty to when we say the Pledge of Allegiance? *The US/the flag*
16. What are 2 ways that Americans can participate in their democracy? *Vote/join a political party/ given an elected official your opinion on an issue/ run for office/ write to a newspaper/ help with a campaign/ join a civic group/ call your Senators or Representatives/ publicly support or oppose an issue or policy/ join a community group*
17. Name one branch or part of the government: *Congress/ legislative/*

- President/ executive/ the courts/ judicial*
18. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?
All people of the state
 19. What did the Declaration of Independence do? *Said the U.S. is free (from Great Britain)*
 20. How many Justices are on the Supreme Court? *9*
 21. In what month do we vote for President? *November*
 22. Who is the Governor of your state now? *Kathy Hochul*
 23. What is one reason colonists came to America? *Freedom/ political liberty/ religious freedom/ economic opportunity/ escape persecution/ practice their religion*
 24. What is the name of the national anthem? *The Star-Spangled Banner*
 25. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do? *Fought for Civil Rights/ worked for equality for all Americans*
 26. What is the name of the President of the U.S. now? *Joe Biden*
 27. If the President can no longer serve, who becomes President? *Vice President*
 28. Who vetoes bills? *The President*
 29. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted? *July 4, 1776*
 30. What is the Supreme law of the land? *The Constitution*
 31. What is the name of the Vice President of the U.S. now? *Kamala Harris*
 32. How old do citizens have to be to vote for President? *18*
 33. What major event happened on 9/11/2001 in the U.S.? *Terrorists attacked the US*
 34. What do we call the first 10 amendments to the Constitution? *The Bill of Rights*
 35. What ocean is on the West coast of the U.S.? *The Pacific Ocean*
 36. When do we celebrate Independence Day? *July 4th*
 37. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence? *Thomas Jefferson*
 38. Who was the first President? *George Washington*
 39. What is the political party of the President now? *Democrat*
 40. Why does the flag have 13 stripes? *13 original colonies*
 41. What is one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for? *Diplomat/ the almanac/ started first free library (electricity???)*
 42. What is the “rule of law?” *Everyone must follow the law*
 43. Name the U.S. war between the North and the South: *The Civil War/ War between the States*
 44. Where is the Statue of Liberty? *New York City/New York Harbor*
 45. Name one of the longest rivers in the US: *Missouri or Mississippi*
 46. What is freedom of religion? *You can practice any or no religion*
 47. What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence? *Life/Liberty/Pursuit of Happiness*
 48. Who lived in America before Europeans arrived? *American Indians/Native Americans*
 49. What is the highest court in the U.S.? *The Supreme Court*
 50. What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves? *Africans/people from Africa*

Abortion in America

Michael Schulman

This unit was prepared by Michael Schulman after the leak of the Supreme Court draft opinion by Justice Samuel Alito.

AIM: How did abortion become a political issue?

Do Now: Analyze the images below and answer the questions.



What differences do you notice between the images?	
What similarities do you notice between the images?	
What stands out to you from these images?	

How America politicised abortion | The Economist <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jerdBX3JeOk>

How abortion became a partisan issue in America

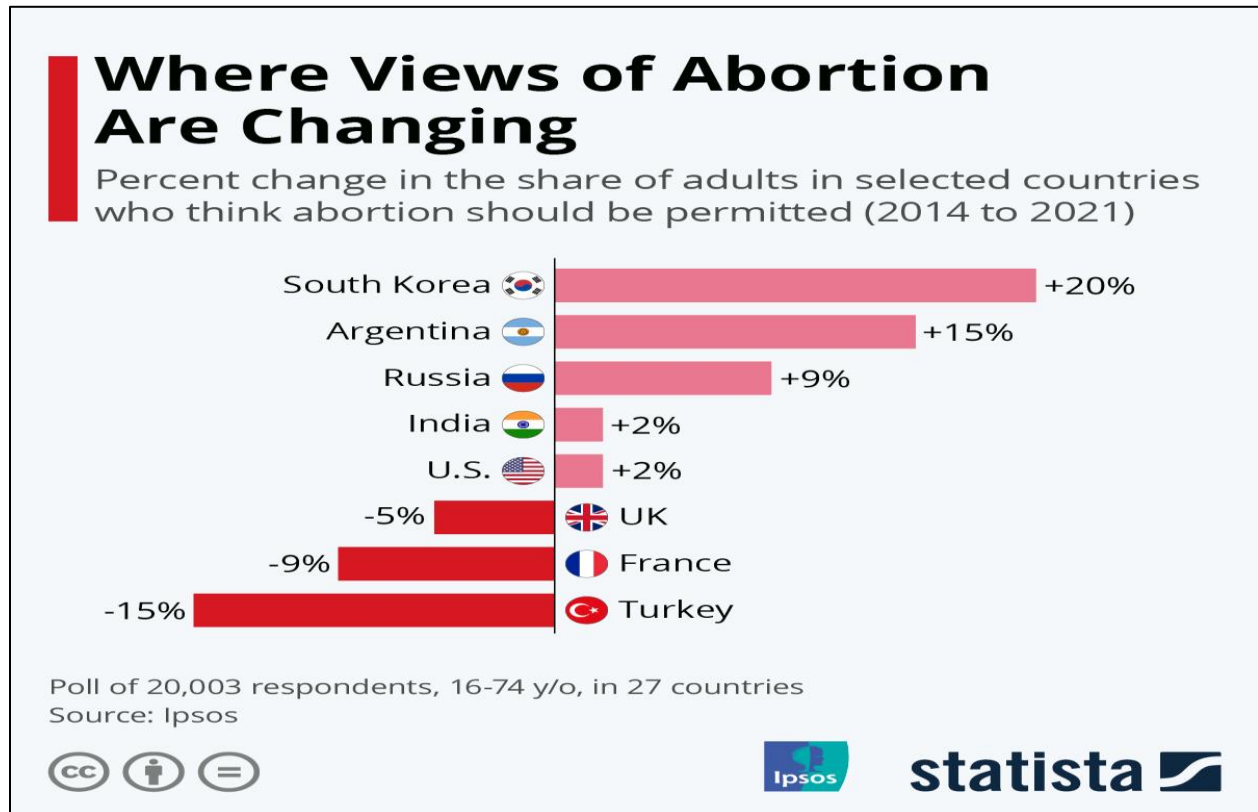
<https://www.vox.com/2019/4/10/18295513/abortion-2020-roe-joe-biden-democrats-republicans>

Exit Task: Discuss the politicization of abortion in America.

Consider:

- How did abortion become political?
- What are the different perspectives on abortion based on political party?
- How does the issue of abortion impact elections?
- Would this issue impact your vote?

AIM: How do Americans feel about abortion?



How does the American perspective on abortion compare with the rest of the world?	
What does this data suggest about America's perspective on abortion?	

Watch this video on NBC news on American's perspective on abortion and answer below.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UT9uiKwrjc>

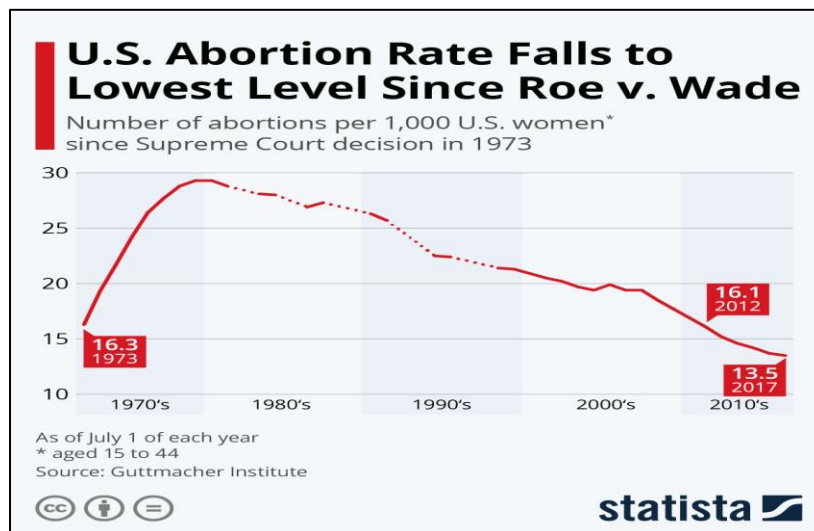
Based on this video, what is the American perspective on abortion?	
What other information would you want to have to better understand American perspectives on abortion?	

Read this Pew Research paper on abortion and complete the guiding questions.
<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/05/06/americas-abortion-quandary/>

List 5 statistics that stand out to you, with an explanation for why each stands out to you.	
Is there any information that you believe is missing? Why or why not? What else would you want to know	

Exit Task: What does the data studied suggest about the American perspective on abortion? Does the information you studied change or reinforce your opinion on the matter? Explain.

AIM: Who gets abortions in America?



What has happened to the rate of abortions in America over the past 40+ years?	
What do you think has accounted for these changes?	

Who Gets Abortions in America? *New York Times*, December 14, 2021

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/14/upshot/who-gets-abortion-in-america.html>

Who is getting abortions in America? ABC Nightly News,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7w9tfX7jsg>

Exit Task: What does the data studied suggest about abortions in America?
Does the information you studied change or reinforce your opinion on the matter? Explain.

AIM: How has the decision of whether or not to receive an abortion impact the lives of American families?

Do Now: Answer the prompt below.

To this point, we have studied the following in regards to abortion in America:

- Consequences of the potential end of Roe
- Statistics on who gets abortions
- American polling on abortion
- The politics of abortion

In your opinion, what else should we study before concluding our look at abortion in America?

Read [this article](#), and answer the prompts below:

Which story of a woman choosing not to get an abortion stands out most to you? Why?

Which story of a woman choosing to get an abortion stands out to you? Why?

Do you notice any trends among those who chose to get an abortion? Those who did not get an abortion? Explain.

Is there anything you expected to see in these stories but did not? Explain.

Exit Task: In studying abortion in America, is it important to study these individual stories surrounding abortion? Explain why or why not.

AIM: How does the issue of abortion in Mexico differ than in the United States?

Day 1: Listen to podcast from the *New York Times* and answer the prompts below.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/podcasts/the-daily/mexico-abortion-roe-v-wade.html>

Discuss the work done by Veronica and Las Libres to help women in Mexico gain more access

to abortions.	
Describe Sophia’s journey to getting an abortion.	
Based on this podcast, how are Mexico and the United States heading in different directions in regards to abortion rights and access?	

Day 2: Read the article from the *New Yorker* and answer the questions below.

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/mexicos-historic-step-toward-legalizing-abortion>

Describe the decision made by the Mexican Supreme Court.	
What is the potential result of the court's decision?	
How is this decision ideologically different than the potential decision coming down from the US Supreme Court?	

Exit Task: Discuss the status of abortion rights in Mexico and the US, how are they similar? Different? What accounts for these similarities and differences? Does this shock you? Why or why not?

AIM: What would the end of Roe mean?

Key Terms: *Pro Choice*: an idea held that abortion should be legal. *Pro Life*: an idea held that abortion should not be legal. **Warm Up:** Take 10 minutes to answer the questions below.

What do you know about abortion, a medical procedure to end a pregnancy?	
How do you feel about this issue? Why?	
Where, and from whom, have you learned about this issue?	
What do you know about Roe v Wade?	

Watch the video Roe v. Wade | Homework Help from the Bill of Rights Institute and record any questions you have. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHv4WaHtRZA>
Read “What would the end of abortion mean?” *New York Times*, May 3, 2022, and answer the questions below. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/03/upshot/abortion-united-states-roe-wade.html>

How would the Supreme Court’s draft opinion — if unchanged when the final ruling is issued — affect abortion access? Would such a ruling make abortion illegal nationwide? Explain.	
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Based on the forecasts by the Center for Reproductive Rights and the Guttmacher Institute, are New York's laws likely to change? How do you feel after reading those predictions?	
How does Texas provide an example of what might happen if Roe is overturned? What options will be available to women seeking an abortion if laws change in their state?	
What do statistics show about the women who receive abortions in America? What is your reaction to this information? Why?	
How does the United States compare with the rest of the world in terms of abortion access?	
What are the next steps after such a decision and the possible resulting changes?	
Exit task: Is this a topic you are interested in continuing to study in this class? Explain why or why not. If not, what topics would you be interested in studying? If so, what else do you want to study in regards to this topic?	

Abortion in America

Instructions: As a result of our mini unit on abortion in America, complete the writing task below.

<p>Considering your opinion prior to our study of abortion in America, has your opinion changed or remained the same over the past week as a result of our studies? Explain why or why not, citing evidence from the studied materials. You may wish to consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The consequences of the potential end of <i>Roe v Wade</i>● Statistics on abortion<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Those who get abortion○ American polling● Politics on abortion● Individual stories
--

Teaching Climate Change in Elementary Schools

Alexis Farina and Sarah Reigrod

Young students have creative, wondering minds. If educators give their students opportunities to discover and think critically, teaching climate change will not be too difficult of a topic to teach. Students at the elementary level can gradually build their knowledge of climate through authentic experiences and connections with the world and others. Children's books that help teach about climate change and inspire climate activism include *Greta and the Giants: Inspired by Greta Thunberg's Stand to Save the World* Book by Zoë Tucker and Zoe Persico, *Our House is on Fire* by Jeanette Winter, and *Old Enough to Save the Planet* by Loll Kirby. The traditional story of Goldilocks and the three bears can help students understand the idea that there is an

optimal zone, neither too hot or too cold, for the survival of human civilization. Students can engage in hands on approaches to learn about the effects of climate change on the world. Demonstrations and experiments provide students with both a visual and tactile approach to any abstract concepts. As a civics activity, younger students can become involved in school and community clean up campaigns and discussions with adults on how they can reduce the family's carbon footprint. Our focus as educators needs to be on our students and their future. Students are never too small to have big ideas, especially about the climate. You might just have the next Greta Thunberg as a student in your class.

I Am The Earth

by Liberian Climate Activist Victor Kehwin

I am the earth, I am your home,
But you destroy, My skin and bone,
But I forgive, And I forget,
And let you live, But i regret.
Do you realise,
I am your only hope,
So don't stand around and mope,
I need saving,
It's up to you,
This is what I need you to do.
No more plastic,
And no more waste,
Because I am fading at a fast pace,
I need love, And I need care
Because you are polluting my air,
Protect me for generations to come...

Finally, Goldilocks took a little mouthful from the smallest bowl.
"Mmmm!" she sighed. "This porridge is perfect!"
And she ate it all up.



Goldilocks discovers when conditions are "Just Right!"

Creating a Greenhouse Gas

Source: https://www.um.edu.mt/projects/xjenzatv/experiment-17.php#:~:text=;https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_hVctjuPbY

- Materials: 2 transparent plastic bags; rubber bands; 5 tsps. baking soda; 1/2 cup white vinegar; 2 thermometers.
1. Completely flatten a plastic bag to push out all air.
 2. Fill the first plastic bag with carbon dioxide by adding baking soda and vinegar.
 3. When the bag is full of carbon dioxide insert a thermometer.
 4. Use a rubber band to seal tightly.
 5. Fill the second plastic bag with air and insert a thermometer.
 6. Use a rubber band to seal tightly.
 7. Wait 10 minutes and check the temperatures in the two bags.



Carbon Footprint Worksheet (Source: TeachingEngineering.org)

Carbon Footprint Worksheet		
Instructions: Answer the questions below, then fill in the corresponding values on the far right. Tally the values to find your carbon footprint. Only fill in one value for each question, unless otherwise stated.		
Ex. Do you turn off the lights when you leave a room? a. Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> b. No <input type="radio"/>	a. 133 b. 268	133
1. How do you get to school?		
a. walk	a. 0	
b. bike	b. 0	
c. car	c. 1115	
d. bus	d. 131	
e. carpool	e. 459	
2. Do you eat mostly...		
a. fast food	a. 4818	
b. home cooked food	b. 629	
3. Do you eat mostly...		
a. vegetables/fruits	a. 153	
b. meat	b. 644	
c. bread	c. 364	
4. Do you turn off lights when you leave a room?		
a. yes	a. 133	
b. no	b. 268	
5. Do you unplug appliances/chargers when not in use?		
a. yes	a. 9	
b. no	b. 18	
6. How do you dry clothes?		
a. hang to dry	a. 0	
b. dryer	b. 750	
c. both	c. 375	
7. Do you turn off the water when brushing your teeth?		
a. yes	a. 34	
b. No	b. 274	
8. Do you turn off the TV when you're not watching it?		
a. yes	a. 47	
b. no	b. 140	
9. Do you turn off your video game system when you're not using it?		
a. yes	a. 29	
b. no	b. 90	
c. don't have/use one	c. 0	
10. Do you recycle? (for this question, select all that apply)		
a. magazines	a. -15	
b. newspaper	b. -90	
c. glass	c. -7	
d. plastic	d. -19	
e. aluminum and steel cans	e. -86	
Add together all the values in the far right column and report here: Use the workspace on the next page to do your work.		<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100px;"></div>

Deforestation is the clearing of forests on a large scale. It occurs most heavily in tropical rainforests. **1**

An estimated 18 million acres of the world's forests are destroyed each year. That's close to the size of South Carolina. **3**

More than 2,000 of the 3,000 identified plants with cancer-fighting properties grow only in rainforests. **6**

One strategy to preserve tropical forests is to teach farming methods that do not destroy the forests. In 'shade farming,' certain crops like coffee are grown within the forest without cutting down many trees. **7**

Forests cover about 30% of earth's land. Forests hold 70% of the world's plants and animals. **2**

The biggest direct cause of tropical deforestation is subsistence agriculture: converting the land into pasture for livestock or to grow crops, in order to provide for one's family. **4**

There are many causes, both direct and indirect, for deforestation. For example, to improve transportation routes, a country might encourage road expansion into forests. The new roads give access to loggers, settlers, and large-scale commercial activities. **5**

If deforestation continues at its current rate, it will take less than 100 years to destroy all rainforests on earth. **8**

DID YOU KNOW?

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Climate Change: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Understanding Its Causes and Impact

Edited by Romelo Green from material prepared by Juliana Baloglou, Michael Cammarata, Alexis Farina, Christopher Heilig, Tyler Petrosini, Sarah Reigrod, Stephanie Rosovoglou, Benjamin Shapiro, and Richard Stamm

Climate change is an impending threat to the future of civilization on Earth, yet we believe there is insufficient discussion in schools. This is in part because the topic spans the narrow confines of individual disciplines. This material offers an interdisciplinary approach to understanding climate change that can be imbedded in the global history or the government curriculums. As sea levels rise, people living on the coasts of New York and New Jersey will be immediately impacted, but the current climate emergency and the near future climate catastrophe will eventually have much broader effects with challenges we face as a global community. We propose an interdisciplinary approach to understanding and addressing climate change with parallel instruction in different subject classes.

To refute climate denialism, there needs to be a deep understanding of both the science and history of the Earth's climate. In science classes, students should examine how the CO₂ concentration in the Earth's atmosphere is gradually yet steadily increasing because of the greenhouse effect in what scientists call a transient climate response. It is resulting in higher temperatures, desertification, melting ice sheets, rising sea levels, and new flora and fauna patterns. This reaction, *Earth system sensitivity*,

will eventually produce a new climate *equilibrium* as the Earth's climate adjusts. Although the CO₂ concentration will stabilize, the question is whether human civilization as we know it will survive until a new environmental balance is reached or even after the equilibrium is established. In math classes students can analyze statistical data and in English classes they can read and discuss both fiction and non-fiction works on climate change.

Pioneering research on the greenhouse effect first began in the early 1800s by scientists from several European countries and the United States. Since the end of World War II, science has greatly expanded our knowledge about the impact of the Industrial Revolution and the emission of greenhouse gasses on the Earth's climate. In 1965, a federal government Environmental Pollution Panel issued a report on climate change and the impact it would have by the year 2000. In 1975, geoscientist Wallace Broecker accurately predicted how greenhouse gas emissions would impact the Earth's climate by 2015. In 1979, the National Academy of Sciences concluded that the Earth's atmosphere was changing because of human activity.

Social studies classes should address the historic impact of climate change on different civilizations and current policy choices. There has been an increase in weather and climate disasters accumulating over 1.6 trillion dollars worth of damages since 1980. New York City has been reclassified as humid subtropical. Summer averages above 72 degrees F and Winter averages over 27 degrees F. One current

impact of climate change is the drastic increase in wildfires in the United States and globally. California is experiencing a warmer and dryer climate in which forests have become increasingly flammable. Six of the twenty largest wildfires in California history occurred in 2020, signifying the significant change in the Earth's climate. The United States alone saw over 60,000 wildfires burning approximately 10.2 million acres of land in 2020.

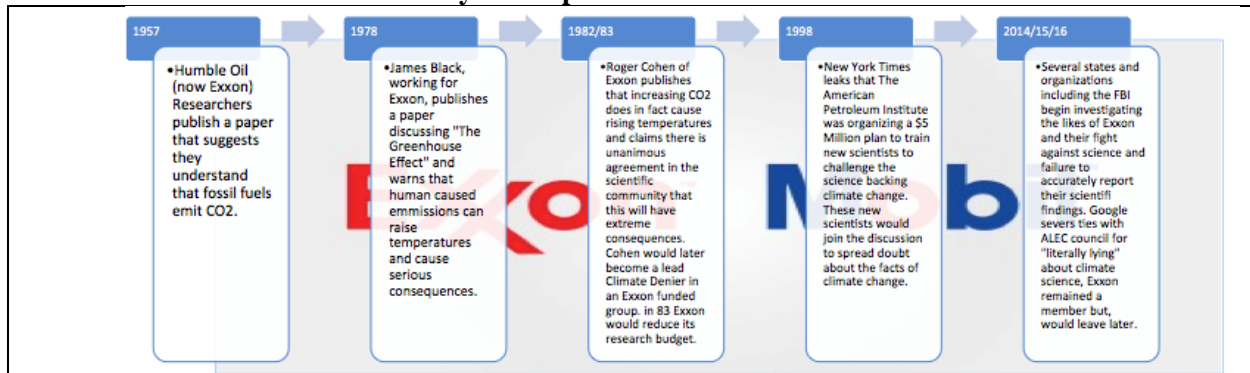
Following the February 2021 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, there was an updated report that on global climate emissions and a “red alert” was

declared. The report highlighted the lack of urgency and action against greenhouse gas polluters as countries with large carbon footprints were lowering their climate commitments. Students can make connections between poverty, racism, unemployment, COVID-19, and disproportionate climate vulnerability in the United States and globally. As a civics component in social studies, students can conduct research, examine documentation critically, and become involved as climate activists. Findings about climate change can be presented at school and community forums to encourage action on climate change.

Recommended Climate Videos

Introduction to the Planetary Boundaries, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIXxfLQuhsE>
Carbon Footprint https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8q7_aV8eLUE
Adaptation and Mitigation | Climate Wisconsin, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmBDZKOdbkY>
Greta and eight young activists reveal how the climate crisis is shaping their lives, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7dwoqJzETA>
New York City Climate Strike, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3tEp6UO508>
“We’re Melting the Arctic and Reviving Deadly Germs”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSA5HNFbwnk>

History of Corporate Climate Denialism



Questions

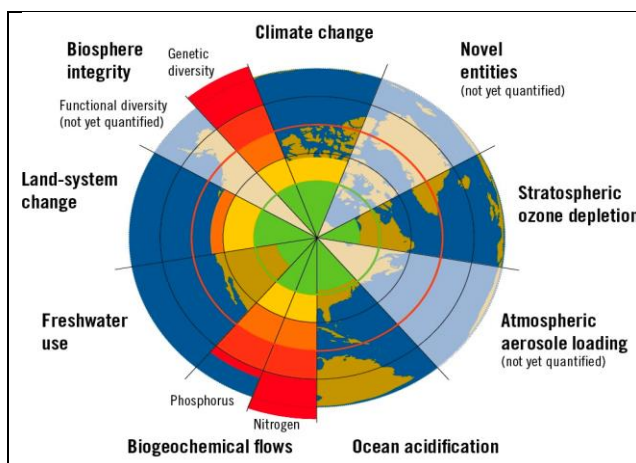
1. When did Exxon originally discover the link between fossil fuels and CO₂ emissions?
2. Who did James Black and Roger Cohen work for and what did they say in their published papers?
3. What was the goal of the American Petroleum Institute's \$5 Million plan?
4. Do you think we should trust companies like Exxon to be honest with their scientific reports? Why or why not?

Trajectories of the Earth System in the Anthropocene

Source: Steffen, W., Rockström, J., Richardson, K., *et al.* 2018, August 6. “Trajectories of the Earth system in the Anthropocene,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*, 115 (33), 8252-8259. <https://www.pnas.org/content/115/33/8252>.

“Hothouse Earth is likely to be uncontrollable and dangerous to many, particularly if we transition into it in only a century or two, and it poses severe risks for health, economies, political stability (especially for the most climate vulnerable), and ultimately, the habitability of the planet for humans . . . Our analysis suggests that the Earth System may be approaching a planetary threshold that could lock in a continuing rapid pathway toward much hotter conditions — Hothouse Earth. This pathway would be propelled by strong, intrinsic, biogeophysical feedbacks difficult to influence by human actions, a pathway that could not be reversed, steered, or substantially slowed. Where such a threshold might be is uncertain, but it could be only decades ahead at a temperature rise of $\sim 2.0^{\circ}\text{C}$ above preindustrial, and thus, it could be within the range of the Paris Accord temperature targets. The impacts of a Hothouse Earth pathway on human societies would likely be massive, sometimes abrupt, and undoubtedly disruptive. Avoiding this threshold by creating a Stabilized Earth pathway can only be achieved

and maintained by a coordinated, deliberate effort by human societies to manage our relationship with the rest of the Earth System, recognizing that humanity is an integral, interacting component of the system. Humanity is now facing the need for critical decisions and actions that could influence our future for centuries, if not millennia . . . We suggest that a deep transformation based on a fundamental reorientation of human values, equity, behavior, institutions, economies, and technologies is required. Even so, the pathway toward Stabilized Earth will involve considerable changes to the structure and functioning of the Earth System, suggesting that resilience-building strategies be given much higher priority than at present in decision making. Some signs are emerging that societies are initiating some of the necessary transformations. However, these transformations are still in initial stages, and the social/political tipping points that definitively move the current trajectory away from Hothouse Earth have not yet been crossed.”



Questions

1. According to the research study “Trajectories of the Earth System in the Anthropocene,” why is there danger of a “Hothouse Earth”?
2. The article identifies nine potential climate “tipping points.” In your opinion, which ones are of the greatest concern?

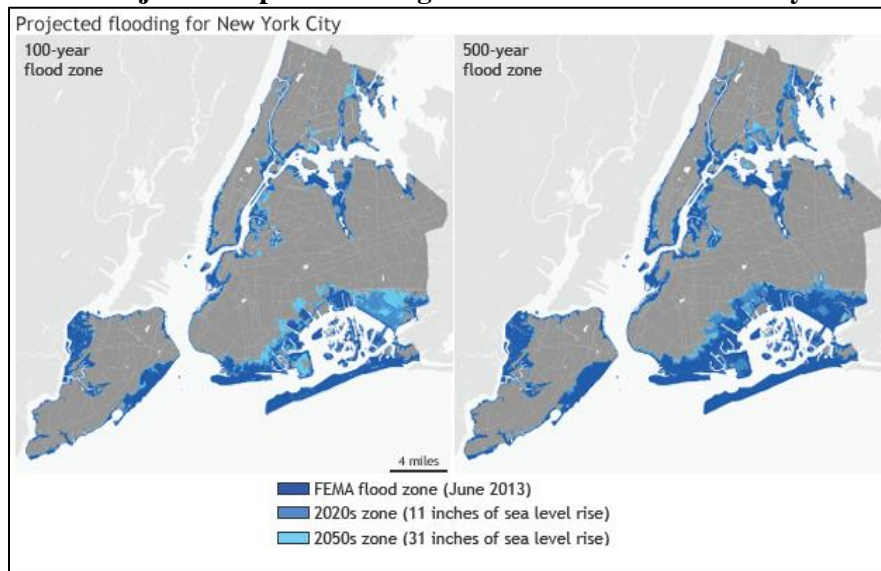
Nine Potential Climate Tipping Points

Source: Robert McSweeney, 2020, October 2. "Nine 'tipping points' that could be triggered by climate change," *Carbon Brief*.

https://www.carbonbrief.org/explainer-nine-tipping-points-that-could-be-triggered-by-climate-change?utm_source=web&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=TPContentBox

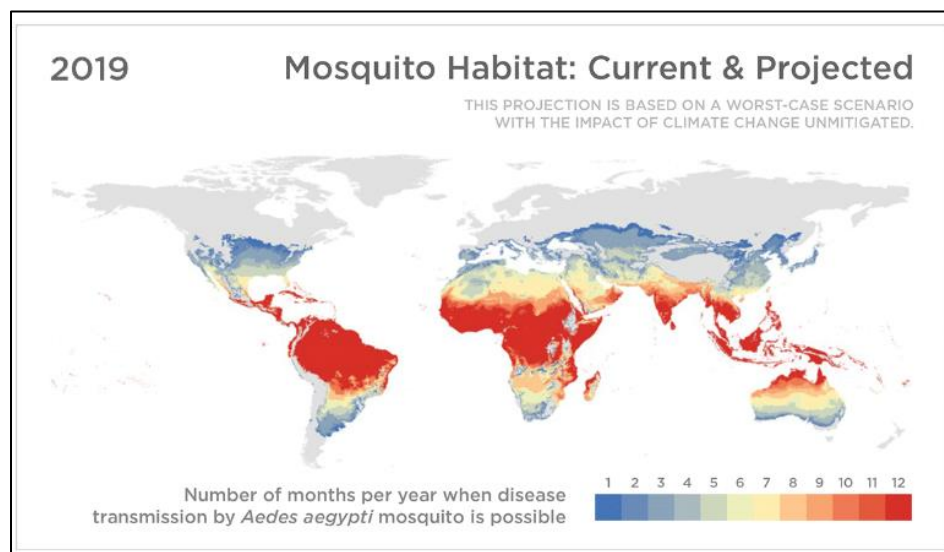
1. Shutdown of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation. The Atlantic Gulf Stream current brings warm water and weather to Europe and makes Northern Europe habitable. Release of cold fresh water into the Atlantic Ocean from the melting of the Greenland ice cap could shift Atlantic currents. This current has weakened by about 15% since the mid-20th century.
2. Disintegration of the West Antarctic ice sheet. This ice sheet holds enough ice to raise global sea levels by over 10 feet, dramatically affecting coastlines around the world.
3. Amazon rainforest dieback. Evaporation from the Amazon rainforest is responsible for generating a significant portion of the Earth's cloud cover and rain.
4. West African monsoon shift. Monsoons bring rainfall to West Africa and the Sahel. A shift in rain patterns would destroy agriculture and make this area uninhabitable.
5. Melting Permafrost. Permanently frozen ground in the Northern Hemisphere holds vast amounts of carbon from dead plants and animals that accumulated over thousands of years and stored carbon dioxide and methane. Permafrost may contain twice as much carbon as there currently is in the Earth's atmosphere.
6. Coral reef die-off could interrupt the global food chain.
7. Indian monsoon shift. India, with a population of 1.3 billion people, receives around 70% of its annual rainfall from seasonal monsoons. A shift in monsoon rains would devastate India, Bangladesh, and South East Asia.
8. Disintegration of the Greenland ice sheet. The Greenland ice sheet is the second largest on Earth. It holds enough water to raise global sea levels by 24 feet. Melting of the Greenland ice sheet is already accelerating.
9. Boreal forest shift. Boreal forests are found in the cold climates of the northern hemisphere high latitudes and account for a third of the Earth's forests. The trees in Boreal forests may store more than a third of the terrestrial carbon.

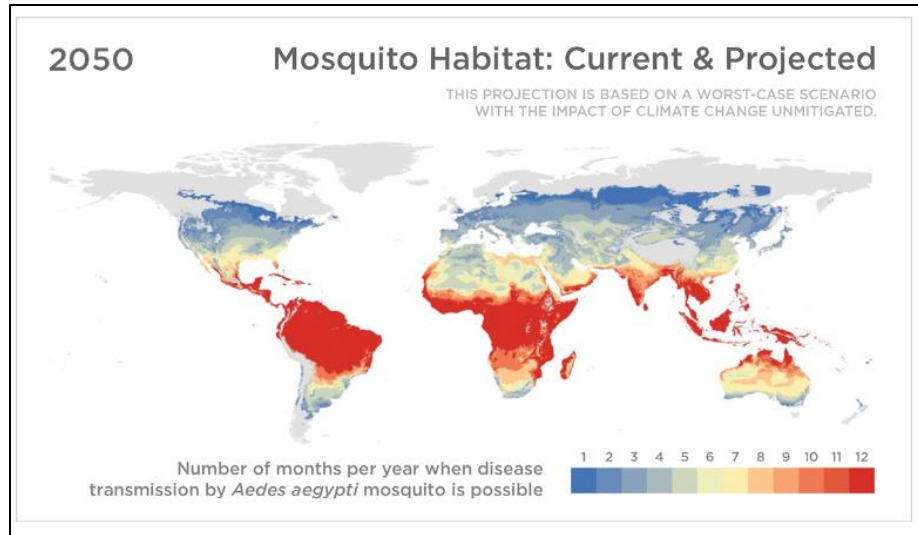
Projected Impact of Rising Sea Levels on New York City



Changes in Mosquito Range and the Spread of Mosquito Borne Diseases

Disease-bearing mosquitoes are on the move. Scientists have been pretty sure of that for decades. As temperatures rise in certain parts of the world, warmth-seeking mosquitoes will invade, making themselves at home in previously inhospitable patches of the globe. These mosquitoes will come carrying diseases like Dengue, Zika, and more. Now researchers are trying to figure out exactly how far north these mosquitoes will migrate. Based on their worst-case scenario projections, the researchers believe as many as a billion people could be newly exposed to these illnesses within the century. "We're really worried about major urban centers in places like Europe, the United States and China especially," says Colin Carlson, co-lead author of the study and postdoctoral fellow at Georgetown University, who specializes in ecological modeling.





An Alternative Perspective: Humanity will find ways to adapt to climate change

Source: *The Economist*, September 19, 2019, <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2019/09/19/humanity-will-find-ways-to-adapt-to-climate-change>, adapted by Newsela

Questions

1. What are the problems with economic mitigation?
2. What are some proposals for adapting to climate change?
3. What are the problems in adapting to climate change?
4. What are the benefits of adapting to climate change?
5. In your opinion, is adapting to climate change the best strategy? Explain.

A. After destructive storms like Hurricane Dorian, those affected have decisions to make. Should they invest in cellar pumps and better drainage? Should they rebuild with more robust design and materials? Should they move? These judgments are informed by a harsh reality: the weather will get worse. Seas will be higher, rain more diluvial and storms fiercer. People with means will naturally adjust — as they should. Adaptation is essential to reduce the human and economic costs of climate change.

B. Efforts to slow global warming must overcome devilish political obstacles. The benefits to reduced warming accrue over decades and centuries, whereas the cost of cutting emissions must be paid upfront by taxpayers who cannot expect to see much return in their lifetimes. Mitigation, as efforts to curb emissions are called, is subject to a vicious collective-action problem. Climate harms are determined much more by what everyone else does than by what you do. Each actor has an incentive to free-ride on the sacrifices of others. Cutting emissions requires every large country saddling voters with expense and inconvenience that will mostly help people elsewhere, or not yet born.

C. The term “mitigation” refers to efforts to curb emissions. Mitigation is hampered by a serious collective-action problem. This means that individual impacts on the environment seem less significant than the impact of the larger group. Individuals might feel that their own actions do not matter much. Some people think they don't have to make sacrifices because other people are already doing so . . . Cutting emissions requires every large country asking its voters to deal with expense and inconvenience that will mostly help people elsewhere, or not yet born.

D. Adaptation . . . can pay off even when a person acts alone, out of pure self-interest. Homeowners invest in energy-efficient thermostats in order to benefit from lower utility bills. There are no political

problems to untangle. Government actions are only slightly more complicated because they require political agreement to spend public money on environmental projects. However, the people paying for these improvements are often the ones who are benefiting.

E. Some individuals may adapt by choosing to take a job in a place with less extreme weather. A few cities are making more obvious adaptations. New York City plans to construct a series of raised flood-control berms around the southern end of Manhattan. As demand rises for ways to ease the pain of climate change, supply will respond. A growing market for goods will force producers to come up with new products.

F. Experts predict that the effects of climate change will be much more serious if people do not adapt . . . The Global Commission on Adaptation . . . has listed \$1.8 trillion worth of investments that could enable adaptation. The largest one is spending on making infrastructure (roads, ports, electricity, sanitation, sewer and communications systems) climate-proof.

Climate Evidence Museum Tour

Exhibit 1: Tree Rings

One of the main methods scientists use to determine the climate of a certain area is to use sections of a tree's trunk. As trees grow outwards they form rings showing how much they grew during a certain amount of time. These rings can tell us how old the tree is and what the weather was like during each year of the tree's life. The light-colored rings represent wood that grew in the spring and early summer, while dark rings represent wood that grew in the late summer and fall; with a pair of light and dark rings equaling one year of the tree's life.

These rings can also show conditions such as rain and temperature as trees are sensitive to local climate conditions giving scientists some information about that area's local climate in the past. For example, tree rings usually grow wider in warm, wet years and they are thinner in years when it is cold and dry. While if the tree has experienced stressful conditions, such as a drought, the tree might hardly grow at all in those years.

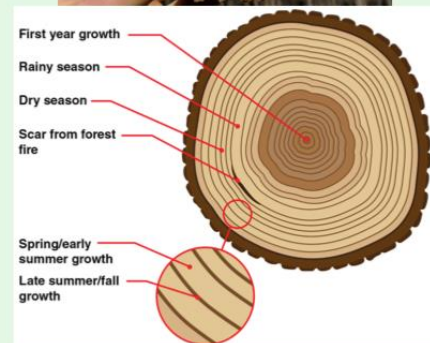


Exhibit 2: Ice Cores

Ice Cores are pieces of ice that are cut out of a polar ice sheet so scientists can gather information what Earth was like when that layer of snow fell. Such as how when snow deposits onto a growing glacier, the temperature of the air imprints onto the water molecules. Additionally, as the ice compacts over time, tiny bubbles of the atmosphere, which includes greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane, become trapped inside the ice. These preserved air pockets provide samples of what the atmosphere was like when that layer of ice formed by measuring the content of the trapped air and its chemical makeup.

The icy layers also hold air particles, such as dust, ash, pollen, trace elements and sea salts, that were in the atmosphere at that time the snow fell. These particles remain in the ice thousands of years later, providing physical evidence of past global events, such as major volcanic eruptions, asteroid strikes, changes in elevation, or even shifting wind patterns.



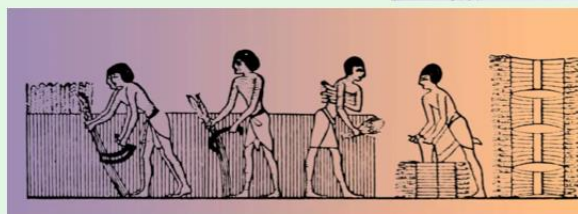
Exhibit 3: Seabed Sediment Cores

A new avenue of study in the field of paleoclimatology (the study of past climates) is the examination of sediment cores from the seaboard of oceans, lakes, and seas. These cores once brought up to the surface are examined to look at amount of fossilized aquatic plants and animals. As the ocean is coupled with the atmosphere they will respond to changes in the other. With the changing amount of Carbon Dioxide and Oxygen in the atmosphere can determine which types of oceanic life will flourish and which will decline. Causing a discoloration in sediment sample as lighter sediment bands sample contains carbonate shells from many marine organisms while darker sediment bands show a lack of shells and contain mostly mineral sediments.



Exhibit 4: Past Records and Harvests

One of the more nuanced causes for climate change in the past is the examination of historical records on crop production, harvest yields, seasonal weather reports, and archaeological evidence left behind. As scientists and economic historians worked together to determine what the likely ambient temperature of the climate at the time and that may have affected the food supply and thus society at the time. Such as how the devastation of the Mayan, the Akkadian, and the Norse Greenland civilizations may have been preceded by periods of cooling climate that led to lower crop yields which meant more unrest and an eventually unraveling of their societies. By examining these clues left by our ancestors we can draw parallels between then and now to better understand our ever changing planet.



An Interdisciplinary Approach Should Include Climate Fiction

Literature can help make the threat of climate change more real and meaningful for students. Students will be able to empathize with characters and their stories all over the world and realize that these stories are grounded in truth. These stories also deal with how people respond to different situations in society and cultures. We want to challenge and inspire students to speak up on behalf of these writers and their message on climate change.

<i>Flight Behavior</i>	Barbara Kingsolver	Dellarobia Turnbow is a restless farm wife who gave up her own plans when she accidentally became pregnant at seventeen. As she hikes up a mountain road behind her house, she encounters a shocking sight: a silent, forested valley filled with what looks like a lake of fire. She can only understand it as a cautionary miracle, but it sparks a controversy as others seek to explain it.
<i>Something New Under The Sun</i>	Alexandra Kleeman	The novelist, Patrick Hamlin, has come to Hollywood to oversee the production of a film adaptation of one of his books, preventing Cassidy Carter's behavior from ruining the film, and turning this effort into success. But California is not as he imagined: drought, wildfire, and corporate corruption are everywhere, and the company behind a mysterious new brand of synthetic water seems to be at the root of it all. He partners with Cassidy to investigate the truth.
<i>Termination Shock</i>	Neil Stephenson	This book presents a future world where the greenhouse effect has resulted in superstorms, rising sea levels, global flooding, heat waves, and pandemics. One man has an idea for reversing global warming. A group of

		characters are brought together from different cultures and continents who are affected by global warming.
<i>Disappearing Earth</i>	Julia Philips	Two sisters, Sophia, eight, and Alyona, eleven, go missing from a beach on the Russian Kamchatka Peninsula <i>Disappearing Earth</i> enters the lives of women and girls in this tightly knit community who are connected by the crime: a witness, a neighbor, a detective, and a mother.
<i>The Drowned World</i>	J.G. Ballard	Set during the year 2145, <i>The Drowned World</i> imagines a terrifying future in which solar radiation and global warming have melted the ice caps, and Triassic-era jungles have overrun a submerged and tropical London.
<i>The Ministry for the Future</i>	Kim Stanley Robinson	In the near future, a heat wave of survivable “wet-bulb” temperatures in a small Indian town kills nearly all its inhabitants. A new international climate-crisis body, the Ministry for the Future, is assigned to defend all living creatures present and future that cannot speak for themselves. The book melds atmospheric and oceanic physics, military strategy, economic history, and government policy.
<i>Parable of the Sower</i>	Octavia Butler	In <i>Parable of the Sower</i> global climate change, including droughts and rising seas, and economic crises lead to social chaos in the future – the early 2020s. The main character is a 15-year-old Black girl who lives in a protected gated community but figures out what is going on outside. She realizes she must make her voice heard to protect her loved ones from the imminent disasters.

The following four articles are part of a special section in this issue of *Teaching Social Studies*. All are from the research of educators in their search for primary documents at the Dey Mansion, Monmouth County Historical Association, and New Jersey Historical Society. Their work was funded by a Project Grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission and directed by Dr. Lucia McMahon (William Paterson University), Mark Pearcy (Rider University) and Hank Bitten (Executive Director of the NJ Council for the Social Studies.) The goal of the project was to identify people living in New Jersey during the time of the American Revolution and to present their stories as a reflection of the challenges they experienced as a result of the conflict. The substance of the articles below is for readers to connect the perspective of historical events by ordinary people living in or near the places where they are currently living in New Jersey. This new scholarship provides an additional level of understanding to the political and military research that most readers are familiar with. The complete project is available on our [Teaching Social Studies blog](#).

Reflections on 1770's Diaries of New Jersey Quakers

Robert Ciarletta

It is thrilling to go back in time and encounter writing from a few hundred years ago. I love uncovering the stories, experiences, and feelings embedded there. For those of us who love language, we can also use these texts to observe how the language we use changes just as human life evolves. For my research, I read the diaries of two New Jersey Quakers (the Religious Society of Friends). The writers are John Hunt, a farmer who regularly partook in meetings with other friends in Evesham, now part of Moorestown; the other is Margaret Hill Morris, a nurse practitioner and widow who had four children and lived in Burlington. When reading these diaries, I had to adjust to the different spellings, sounds, diction, and structure, since it is so different from how we write today. To fully appreciate these diaries, you must also

recognize that the Quakers wrote in a sort of language of faith. Faith encompassed their lives so much so that it became a central theme in their diaries, arguably just as much as the American Revolution itself. No matter what subject these people wrote about, they constantly alluded to passages from the Bible and looked up to God as a way to make sense of their world.

As you dive in, the language reveals that New Jerseyans used to have a lot of daily items and objects that are so unfamiliar to a reader today. Many of us buy our food pre-packaged at the grocery store, or we order items through online marketplaces like Amazon. Though all of this is convenient, we tend to know little about the processes that go into creating our necessities. On the other hand, early Americans like Hunt must

have been quite skilled since they produced numerous things for themselves. For instance, he wrote about tools like a *sider press* (another way to write *cider*), a *cheespress*, *silk reel*, and others. It is beneficial to expose students to texts like this because it adds a level of dignity to another way of living, and may spark students' interest in old tools and artifacts.

It is also fun to pick up on the patterns that differentiate someone else's English from our own. One common quirk is that Hunt used the letter 'd' as an inflectional suffix to signal the past tense of verbs, whereas we use 'e'd. For instance, *prayed*, *composed*, and *stayed* were written as *prayd*, *composd*, and *stayd* in Hunt's diary. What great, local proof to our students that our language is dynamic! His diary also proves that the names of our places have changed in history; he spelled *Moorestown* as *Mourstown*.

These diaries also show that sometimes life can seem ordinary until the moment when it suddenly is not so, anymore. After the French and Indian war, the Friends promoted pacifism with new vigor³², intending to be a light to the world. But peace did not last, and they felt helpless when the war reached a point of no return. It was impossible to feel safe; their beliefs could only remove them from the war so much. And if you choose to help neither side, does that create zero enemies for you? Or does it possibly create two? There is

danger in a decision to declare yourself neutral, and Hunt and Morris had to navigate the war this way.

The Quakers were appalled at the effects of the war on their communities and lives. When John Hunt entered the Evesham meeting house on January 1, 1777, he found soldiers lying in filth, comparing them to animals in a stable. He also writes about the tense situations a year later in 1778, when people around him are dying from a smallpox epidemic, and British soldiers are plundering neighboring homes. It was dismal—the townspeople dying around him, and always on edge anticipating the soldiers coming. He kept these entries brief, not wanting to give the bad all of his focus. The next day he would be back to normal again, and write about farming or attending a meeting.

Hunt's diary reveals his industry too. A single task occupied him for days on end. For example, he wrote *2-4 mowing* to signify that mowing dominated the second through fourth days of the month. And he not only labored physically but also in thought. William Penn said that Quakers should write at least one line in a journal daily³³, and this inspired Hunt. I would get bored writing the same things every day, but Hunt wrote continually to keep track of his days and gain wisdom from a holistic view of his life. He wrote for the sake of writing, and I find that beautiful.

³² Kashatus, William C. "Quakers' painful choice during the American revolution." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Jul. 5, 2015.

³³ "John Hunt Papers." TriCollege Libraries, <https://archives.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/resources/524/Ojohu>.

And, you can find duality in Margaret Morris' diary if you choose to read it. At first, she was overwhelmed by the war, but writing her diary helped her to think clearly and grasp this reality. As you read her diary, you see her use words like '*terrible* and *horrid*' to describe the war, and she seems scared. She also writes about seeing soldiers march past her town on their way to meet death, and this suggests an emotional, fearful side of Morris. And then as I read further, she had a similar moment to John Hunt that caught my interest. On January 3, 1777, Morris sneaks into a house next door at night and finds soldiers sprawled on the floor, "like animals". Yes, one part of her pitied these men. But this was also the moment when I knew Morris was not the kind of woman to just sit home scared during a war, but she also wanted to make sense of things for herself. A light bulb went off in her mind that the soldiers were deserters since she realized that they shouldn't have been around. Morris does not shy away from what she sees but keeps it to herself in her diary, a form of secret knowledge.

By the end of the war, Morris gained boldness and found herself. While her

neighbors were able to leave for the countryside, she had to stay with her family. She survived cannon fire, evaded a hunt for Tories, and hid one of them in her home. Moreover, she followed her own convictions and gave generously to American troops, despite the mandate in 1776 that Quakers who gave to either side (non-civilians) would be disowned³⁴. In chronicling extensive information daily about the war in her diary, she found a sense of confidence and purpose. Later, Morris opened her own medical and apothecary practice in Burlington, in 1779³⁵. Morris was well-equipped to provide for her family and protect them.

So, when people read your diary centuries later, are you still an ordinary person? And what if you provide insight about a time so critical to our nation's story, like the American Revolution? Hunt and Morris' slice of the human experience represents something greater, even if the impact of their writing seemed insignificant to themselves at the time. Their diaries tell us about the whole New Jersey revolution experience. And when one's experiences are immortalized like this, you do in fact become a bit more than ordinary.

³⁴ Mekeel, Arthur J. "The Relation of the Quakers to the American Revolution." *Quaker History*, 65(1), pp. 3-18. Friends Historical Association.

³⁵ Brandt, Susan. "'Getting into a Little Business': Margaret Hill Morris and Women's Medical

Entrepreneurship during the American Revolution." *Early American Studies*, 13(4), pp. 774-807. University of Pennsylvania Press.

“Telling Our Story”: Living in New Jersey Before and During the Revolution

David A. DiCostanzo



A Depiction of the Greenwich Tea Party (Dec. 22, 1774)

Several Social Studies teachers from around the state conducted research for a grant from the New Jersey Council for the Social Studies (NJCSS). This grant examined the histories of ordinary people in New Jersey and how the events leading up to and during the Revolutionary War impacted their lives. The grant, “Telling Our Story: Living in New Jersey Before and During the American Revolution”, is an ongoing effort by the N.J.C.S.S. to prepare educators in New Jersey for the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution during the 2025-26 school year. The 250th anniversary celebrations will continue

through 2031 and is part of the overall mission of the N.J.C.S.S. to provide and make available meaningful lessons and activities to students, teachers, and the public.

The life of colonists living before and during the American Revolution in New Jersey is a fascinating aspect of American history. It’s been pointed out that “Generations of scholars have echoed historian Leonard Lundin’s 1940 argument that New Jersey was the “cockpit” of the American Revolution, a central site in the struggle over the fate of the continent.”³⁶ The fact that New Jersey lies between Philadelphia and New York City was significant. Both of these cities were major hubs of activity during the revolutionary era. The Declaration of Independence was drafted by the “Committee of Five” in Philadelphia. Dozens of battles during the American Revolution took place in and around New Jersey. George Washington’s victory in the Battle of Trenton is regarded by many as one of the major turning points in the American Revolution. New York City would serve as our nation’s capital from 1785 until 1790 before moving to

³⁶ Gigantino, James A. *The American Revolution in New Jersey: Where the Battlefield Meets the Home Front*, Rutgers University Press, 2014, P. 1.

Washington D.C. during John Adams presidency.

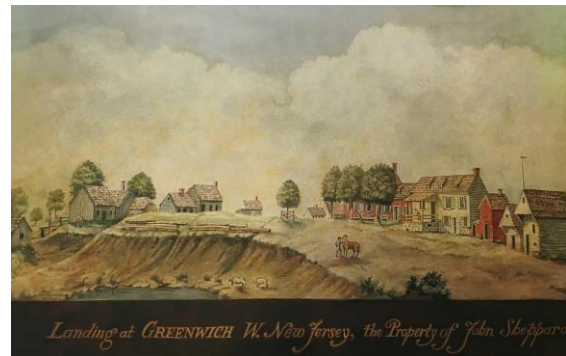
What was life like living in New Jersey before and during the Revolution? It's reasonable to conclude that many, if not a majority, of the residents in New Jersey felt a certain sense of pride about the revolutionary cause. In contrast, many New Jersey residents, including Benjamin Franklin's son William, did remain loyal to Great Britain throughout the American Revolution. William Franklin would serve as the Colonial Governor of New Jersey until 1776 when he was incarcerated for a couple of years. In 1782, William Franklin departed for Great Britain and would live abroad for the rest of his life. The relationship between father and son would remain permanently strained over William's support of the British crown.

Exploring primary sources, such as journal entries, pamphlets, and letters related to the lives of people in various counties throughout New Jersey during the American Revolution is the most accurate method we have in determining how people lived. Discovering how people from this era lived is important work because it engages students and residents in various counties throughout New Jersey about the birth of representative government in America. The majority of the counties in New Jersey have a rich history associated with the American Revolution. Several battles took place in various counties throughout New Jersey. The city of Burlington in Burlington County was the capital of West Jersey and Perth Amboy in Middlesex County was the capital of East Jersey prior to the American

Revolution. In 1790, Trenton would become the official state capital. Cumberland County also has a rich history associated with the American Revolution. Many of the people who lived in Cumberland County before and during the Revolution were huge supporters of American independence.

Historical background

Cumberland County has a rich history associated with the American Revolution. The Greenwich Tea Party took place in Cumberland County in 1774 in support of the revolutionary cause. Greenwich is located along the Cohansey River which flows into the much larger Delaware river.



Greenwich, New Jersey, from the banks of the Cohansey River (ca. 1800). The town dates back to the original English settlement of the region in 1676 by the Quaker proprietor John Fenwick.

During the 18th Century, Greenwich was a stop for boats transporting goods. It is commonly held by historians that:

“In mid-December of 1774, a British ship called the *Greyhound* was carrying a shipment of tea up the Cohansey River towards Philadelphia. Along the way, the *Greyhound* docked at Greenwich, and tea was hidden in the home of a

local British sympathizer named Daniel Bowen. On the night of December 22, local residents were meeting at the Cumberland County Courthouse to discuss the recent guidelines stated by the Continental Congress. During the meeting, they were made aware of the hidden tea, and a five-man committee was appointed to determine what should be done about it. While this was occurring, a group of local citizens decided to take matters into their own hands. They confiscated the tea and burned it near where the monument stands today. Some of the tea burners faced civil and criminal charges. However, due in part to sympathies of the local citizens for the tea burners' cause, the trials were not completed.”³⁷



A Depiction of the Greenwich Tea Party (December 22, 1774)

This event took place about a year after the famous Boston Tea Party which is widely considered one of the most important and legendary occurrences during the Revolutionary era. It has been determined that “it would be difficult, following the Greenwich Tea Burning, to find a region more in tune with the Revolutionary call of Witherspoon, the Continental Congress and the Philadelphia and New York Synod than Cohansey.”³⁸ Clearly, the citizens of Greenwich wanted to leave an indelible mark on this time period as well. A monument to the tea party was dedicated in Greenwich on September 30, 1908. A couple of the images below show the sides of the monument that list the names of the twenty-three men thought to have participated in the Greenwich Tea Burning. Most of these men would go on to serve in the Continental Army during the American Revolution, including Reverend Philip Vickers Fithian.³⁹ Reverend Philip Vickers Fithian life and family is the primary focus of this grant which includes a documentary and a couple of learning activities.

Ordinary people: *Reverend Philip Vickers Fithian*

³⁷ Frazza, Al. Revolutionary War Sites in Greenwich, New Jersey, Revolutionary War New Jersey, December, 2021.
https://www.revolutionarywarnewjersey.com/new_jersey_revolutionary_war_sites/towns/greenwich_nj_revolutionary_war_sites.htm

³⁸ Fea, John. The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment

in Early America, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009, P 149.

³⁹ Frazza, Al. Revolutionary War Sites in Greenwich, New Jersey, Revolutionary War New Jersey, December, 2021.
https://www.revolutionarywarnewjersey.com/new_jersey_revolutionary_war_sites/towns/greenwich_nj_revolutionary_war_sites.htm



Reverend Philip Vickers Fithian was born in Greenwich, Cumberland County, New Jersey, in 1747. Philip was the eldest son of Joseph and Hannah Fithian. Fithian had fond memories of his childhood in Greenwich and often referred to the town affectionately. His various journal entries and letters to various people including several members of his family contain his thoughts and observations on a wide-range of topics including American independence, plantation life, the treatment of African-American slaves, and religion. It is commonly held that:

“Philip attended Princeton University, which was then called the College of New Jersey, in 1771-1772 to study for the clergy. He studied under the college president John Witherspoon, who would later sign the Declaration of Independence. Philip also met other future Revolutionary War figures such

as James Madison, Aaron Burr, and Philip Freneau, who were attending the college as students. After graduating, he spent some time in Virginia as a tutor and then returned to Greenwich where he became a Presbyterian minister. He preached at a number of locations, including the Greenwich Presbyterian church. Philip was a supporter of the American cause of independence and is believed to have been one of the Greenwich Tea Burners.”⁴⁰

Fithian’s letters “did not commit his own thoughts on independence immediately to paper so far as we know. Yet for him and many of his contemporaries, the great Declaration marked the climax of a long personal patriotic odyssey. Fithian’s actions after July 4, 1776, speak eloquently of his inner convictions. Love of country, religious conviction, and the bravery of his friends and relatives in service swept Fithian, along with his old friend, Andrew Hunter, Jr., into the Revolution.”⁴¹ Like thousands of colonists, Fithian clearly had an emotional response the day the Declaration of Independence was signed. He clearly had positive feelings related to the Colonies’ call for independence.

After graduating from Princeton, Fithian returned home and it has been surmised that “the year spent reading and

[rsey revolutionary war sites/towns/greenwich nj revolutionary war sites.htm](https://www.revolutionarywarnewjersey.com/new_jersey_revolutionary_war_sites/towns/greenwich_nj_revolutionary_war_sites.htm)

⁴⁰ Frazza, Al. Revolutionary War Sites in Greenwich, New Jersey, Revolutionary War New Jersey, December, 2021.

https://www.revolutionarywarnewjersey.com/new_je

[rsey revolutionary war sites/towns/greenwich nj revolutionary war sites.htm](https://www.revolutionarywarnewjersey.com/new_jersey_revolutionary_war_sites/towns/greenwich_nj_revolutionary_war_sites.htm)

⁴¹ McCluskey, Vincent Stanley, Ph.D. The Life and Times of Philip Fithian Vickers, (William & Mary Dissertation) New York University, 1991.

preparation for ordination, cultivating the affective bonds with friends that were essential to a civil society, and learning hard lessons from his relationship with Elizabeth Beatty simultaneously enhanced his local attachment to Cohansey and sharpened his skills as a learned gentleman. His way of improvement, rooted in Presbyterian notions of moral and societal progress, was lived daily in the context of this remote landscape. Indeed, for Philip, “rural enlightenment” was not an oxymoron.”⁴² He clearly used the comfort of living in the country as a way of improving himself spiritually, emotionally, and intellectuality.

When Fithian was in Virginia as a tutor he was very critical of slavery. In various letters to members of his family Fithian made it clear that “learning of the food allowance for slaves and hearing of harsh treatment of those considered to be difficult, he wrote of their owners, “Good God! Are these Christians?” Some overseers he called ‘bloody’, and he believed that black slaves from Africa were less economical than free white tenant farmers would be.”⁴³ This mindset wasn’t unusual for a Presbyterian minister from Greenwich. A large segment of the population in Cumberland County during this time period

was against the practice of slavery. Several southern counties in New Jersey including Burlington and “neighboring counties (Gloucester and Cumberland) also saw a significant decline in the number of slaves after 1790, while the slave population in East Jersey counties grew between 20 and 30 percent.”⁴⁴ In general, slavery in New Jersey during the late 18th century was actually more evident in the northern part of the state. The data indicates that, “in 1790, it’s estimated there were 120 slaves in Cumberland County and 141 in Cape May County. By 1800, that number dwindled to 75 and 98, respectively, until finally, in 1830, Cumberland had only two slaves and Cape May had three.”⁴⁵ In fact, “local Quakers who, unlike Quakers in North Jersey, didn’t own slaves sold small plots of land to the free blacks.”⁴⁶

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⁴² Fea, John. *The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America*, Pennsylvania, 2009, P 105.

⁴³ Parker, Franklin; Parker, Betty J. *Philip Vickers Fithian (1747-1776), a Princeton Tutor on a Virginia Plantation*, ERIC, 1996. P.8

⁴⁴ Montclair State University Anthropology. Part 5 – The Struggle For Abolition,

<https://www.montclair.edu/anthropology/research/slavery-in-nj/part-5/> , Accessed January 12, 2022.

⁴⁵ Bennett, Eileen. *Slavery Slumbers in Cumberland's History*, The Press of Atlantic City, November, 1997.

⁴⁶ Barlas, Thomas *Cumberland County played a large role in Underground Railroad Route*, The Press of Atlantic City, April, 2015.

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Jersey, didn’t own slaves sold small plots of land to the free blacks.”⁵¹

Cumberland County also played a large role in the Underground Railroad. It has been reported that “there’s a small church in Cumberland County that played a large role in South Jersey’s efforts to help runaway slaves seek their freedom. The Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Springtown, Greenwich Township, was a significant stop along an Underground Railroad route running from Maryland’s Eastern Shore to Canada.”⁵² The church still stands today as a reminder of those who helped guide African-Americans to freedom.

Fithian would serve as a military chaplain in the local militia and traveled north with the soldiers from Cumberland County to help in the defense of New York. Due to crowded and unsanitary conditions, a great deal of disease spread throughout the camp where Fithian was posted. A smallpox epidemic was sweeping through New York during this time and would eventually lead to the decision to vaccinate the entire Continental Army. Fithian became very ill

⁴⁷ Parker, Franklin; Parker, Betty J. Philip Vickers Fithian (1747-1776), a Princeton Tutor on a Virginia Plantation, ERIC, 1996. P.8

⁴⁸ Montclair State University Anthropology. Part 5 – The Struggle For Abolition, <https://www.montclair.edu/anthropology/research/slavery-in-nj/part-5/> , Accessed January 12, 2022.

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⁵⁰ Bennett, Eileen. Slavery Slumbers in Cumberland's History, The Press of Atlantic City, November, 1997.

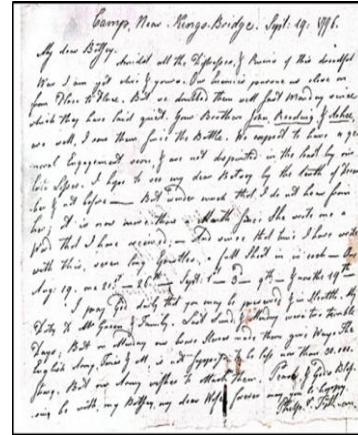
⁵¹ Barlas, Thomas Cumberland County played a large role in Underground Railroad Route, The Press of Atlantic City, April, 2015.

⁵² Barlas, Thomas Cumberland County played a large role in Underground Railroad Route, The Press of Atlantic City, April, 2015.

in late September of 1776 with a high fever and with boils all over his body. Fithian held on as long as he could but died on October 8th at the age of 29. He is remembered for his various accomplishments as well as his views on slavery, and his support of the Colonies. John Fea, who wrote a well-researched book on Fithian makes it clear that “such chronicling—the stuff of encyclopedia entries and biographical dictionaries—only scratches the surface of Philip’s life. It fails to acknowledge the inner man, the prolific writer who used words—letters and diary entries mostly—to make peace with the ideas that warred for his soul. Philip was a man of passion raised in a Presbyterian world of order.”⁵³ As his numerous journal entries and letters reveal, Reverend Philip Vickers Fithian died for the cause of liberty.



The Battle of Harlem Heights, September 16, 1776



This is the last known letter that Philip Fithian wrote to Elizabeth Beatty Fithian, dated September, 19 1776. Courtesy of the Lummi Library, Cumberland County (N.J.) Historical Society

[Transcription of September, 19 1776 Letter](#)

As mentioned, Fithian kept several journals and wrote numerous letters to various people about his beliefs and experiences. These documents demonstrate that “Philip is an Enlightenment (and American) success story: the oldest son of a grain grower who turns his back on the farm to pursue a college education and a life or learning. On the other hand, his life reminds us that even the most eager of eighteenth-century Enlightenment hopefuls balance rational quests for improvement that could not be explained by reason alone.”⁵⁴ This grant focused on some of the key people in his life. His wife, father-in-law, and cousin were all major influences in Fithian’s life. These ordinary individuals provided a tremendous amount of insight into what life

⁵³ Fea, John. Presbyterians in Love, *Commonplace: The Journal of Early American Life*, January, 2008. <http://commonplace.online/article/presbyterians-in-love/>

⁵⁴ Fea, John. *The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009, P 7.

was like for people living in New Jersey before and during the American Revolution.

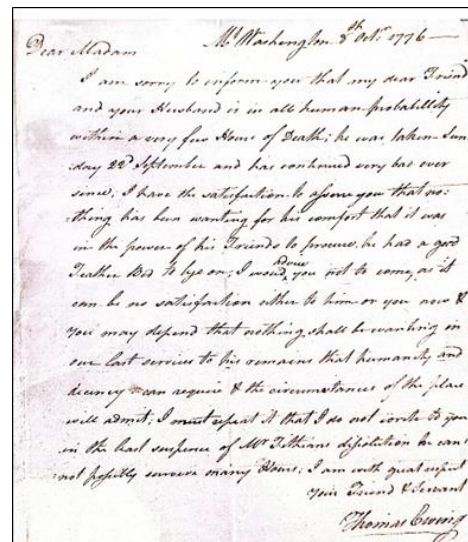
Elizabeth Beatty Fithian

About six years before his death, Philip began to court Elizabeth “Betsy” Beatty. Unfortunately, no known image of Elizabeth Beatty Fithian exists. What we do know is that Elizabeth, whom Philip referred to as “Laura”, was born on March 26, 1752 in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania. She was the fourth child of Charles and Ann Beatty. Charles Beatty, who was a highly respected clergyman from Neshaminy, was helpful in Philip’s education in the clergy. It is clear that “Philip first met Elizabeth “Betsy” Beatty in the spring of 1770 when she visited the southern New Jersey town of Deerfield to attend her sister Mary’s wedding to Enoch Green, the local Presbyterian minister.”⁵⁵ Subsequently, Betsy would make several trips to Deerfield to visit her sister Mary and would on occasion see Philip. Philip would also travel to Neshaminy to meet with her father Charles and to call on Elizabeth.

In accordance with the customs of the time period “much of Philip and Betsy’s courtship was conducted through letters, the exchange of sentiments usually flowed in only one direction. Perhaps Betsy did not like to write. Perhaps she preferred more intimate encounters or feared the lack of privacy inherent in letter writing. Or perhaps

she did not want to encourage her suitor with a reply. Whatever the case, women generally did not write as much as men, especially when it came to love and courtship letters. In other words, Betsy may simply have been following the conventions of her day.”⁵⁶ Many of the letters from Philip to Elizabeth included poetry he used to describe his feelings for her. After a long and somewhat tense courtship, the couple finally married on October 25, 1775 at the Deerfield Presbyterian Church in Cumberland County.

Below is an image and a link to a transcription of a letter written to Elizabeth Fithian by Thomas Ewing a few hours before Philip’s death:



This is a letter written to Elizabeth Beatty Fithian from Thomas Ewing, dated October, 8 1776. Courtesy of the Lumis Library, Cumberland County (N.J.) Historical Society.

⁵⁵ Fea, John. Presbyterians in Love, Commonplace: The Journal of Early American Life, January, 2008. <http://commonplace.online/article/presbyterians-in-love/>

⁵⁶ Fea, John. Presbyterians in Love, Commonplace: The Journal of Early American Life, January, 2008. <http://commonplace.online/article/presbyterians-in-love/>

After her husband's tragic death, Elizabeth would go on to marry Philip's second cousin Joel Fithian on February 2, 1780, brother of Dr. Enoch Fithian and grandson of Samuel, an emigrant from Long Island, dating back to 1700, and first of the name in Cumberland County. Mr. Joel Fithian represented the county in the legislature, and was an elder in the Presbyterian Church.⁵⁷ Elizabeth would have nine children with Joel. Elizabeth would die at the age of seventy-three on August 6, 1825 in Stow Creek Landing, Cumberland County. She is buried next to her second husband, Joel, in the Greenwich Presbyterian Church Cemetery which is also in Cumberland County.

Reverend Charles Beatty



Reverend Charles Beatty was the father of Elizabeth. As mentioned, Reverend Beatty had a positive influence on Fithian as

a clergyman. Fithian actually followed in his father-in-law's footsteps. Reverend Beatty served as a military chaplain during the French and Indian War. Between 1770 and 1772, Philip would travel to Neshaminy to preach in that area, meet with Reverend Beatty, and to call on his daughter Elizabeth. In various letters Philip describes that while at Princeton "he joined fellow classmates on weekend excursions into the country to visit Charles Beatty's church in Neshaminy (about thirty miles from Princeton), and it was during these visits he made his first serious attempts to court Betsy."⁵⁸ Charles Beatty was born sometime in Ireland in 1715. It is well documented that:

"While very young he sailed for America, and, with other passengers, was landed on Cape Cod in a nearly famished condition, the ship having run short of provisions. Making his way to the neighborhood of Philadelphia, he began peddling in the vicinity. On one of his excursions, he stopped at the "Log College" near Neshaminy, and fell into conversation with its founder, the Rev. William Tennent, who discovering that the young peddler had a classical education, and possessed the true missionary spirit, persuaded him to study for the ministry, and he was ordained on 13 Oct., 1742. He became pastor of the

⁵⁷ WikiTree Contributor.
<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Beatty-1996>,
WikiTree, Where Genealogists Collaborate,
Accessed 14 December 2021.

⁵⁸ Fea, John. *The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America*, Pennsylvania Press, 2009, P 81.

Presbyterian church at the forks of Neshaminy, Pa26 May, 1743.”⁵⁹

Beatty married Ann Reading on June 24, 1746. They would go on to have eleven children together. Like Fithian, Beatty would also write numerous letters and keep extensive journals about his life including his various travels to Europe, the British Isles, and through many areas of Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. It’s important to note that “in 1766, Mr. Beatty made a prolonged missionary tour through the frontier settlements of Pennsylvania. Some of his sermons were printed, and he published the “Journal of a Two Months’ Tour among the Frontier Inhabitants of Pennsylvania” (London, 1768), also a letter to the Rev. John Erskine, advocating the theory that the American Indians are the descendants of the lost Hebrew tribes.”⁶⁰

Like Fithian, Beatty’s journals and letters cover a wide range of topics. American independence was a topic of conversation noted in his journal. Beatty refers to a conversation he had at a dinner in February of 1769 while fundraising in England. In his journal he states “the question discussed was whether America wd. not be subjected to greater difficulties by being independent than depending upon the Legislature of Great Britain. Several Spoke to the Question — I Spoke twice —

the Chairman in summing up the whole seemed to give it in the affirmative.”⁶¹ This mindset was not uncommon in the late 1760s because many people, both at home and abroad, were still torn about the relationship between the Colonies and Great Britain.

Reverend Beatty spent time doing missionary work in Virginia, along the Shenandoah Valley, and in various parts of Western Pennsylvania and Ohio. Beatty didn’t technically live in New Jersey prior to and during the American Revolution but he spent a considerable amount of time visiting and preaching in the state. Furthermore, two of his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, settled in Cumberland County after they were married. One of his sons, Dr. John Beatty, resided in Princeton before and during the American Revolution. It is also important to point out that Reverend Beatty was a huge supporter of the College of New Jersey (Princeton) and served as a trustee for several years. In fact, he died prematurely of yellow fever while on a visit to Barbados trying to raise money for the then struggling college in 1772. The sugar trade brought tremendous wealth to Barbados during this time period. Beatty’s journals would go on to be edited by research historian Guy Soulliard and published by the United Presbyterian Church in 1962.

⁵⁹ WikiTree Contributor.
<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Beatty-495> ,
WikiTree, Where Genealogists Collaborate,
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⁶⁰ WikiTree Contributor.
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⁶¹ Klett, Guy, S. Journals of Charles Beatty 1762-1769, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1962.

Joel Fithian

Joel and Philip were second cousins who grew up together in Greenwich and Joel would serve as the co-executor of Philip's will. Joel Fithian would also serve as an elder in Greenwich Presbyterian Church and was a participant in the tea burning that took place in December 1774. The Fithian family had deep roots in Cumberland County.

"The Fithian family of Cumberland County descended from William, who according to tradition was a native of Wales. He was a soldier under Cromwell and present at the execution of Charles I. After the restoration of Charles II, he was proscribed as a regicide and obliged to flee the country. He came first to Boston, then to Lynn, from there to New Haven, finally settling in East Hampton, Long Island. He died about 1678. His son Samuel, married Priscilla Burnett, March 6, 1679: removing to Fairfield about 1698, he soon afterwards settled in Greenwich, where he died in 1702." ⁶²

Joel Fithian was the eldest son of Samuel and Pricilla Fithian. Joel was born on Sept. 29, 1748. He was well educated growing up and with his father's guidance and encouragement Joel pursued a career of public service. At the age of twenty-eight

"his patriotism led to his election as sheriff in 1776, an office of much responsibility and attended with no little danger in the exciting times of the early part of the Revolutionary War. He served also in 1777 and 1778, when feeling his presence needed in the field he commanded a company in Colonel Enos Seeley's battalion and rendered service at the battle of Princeton and elsewhere." ⁶³

Joel served as a captain during the American Revolution and settled in Greenwich when he had concluded his military service. Joel would eventually marry his second cousin's widow Elizabeth "Betsy" Beatty Fithian. Joel Fithian was first married to Rachel Holmes who died in 1779 at the age of twenty-eight. Rachel gave birth to a boy prior to her death. Elizabeth and Joel were married on February 2, 1780. In letters written by Elizabeth Beatty Fithian it is made clear that "immediately following the wedding, Betsy returned with Joel to the familiar sur-roundings of the Cohansey. Her brother, Reading, surmised that Betsy's "partiality for that country" and the fact that Joel was a "good fat farmer" convinced her to remarry. Their courtship probably lacked the passion of Betsy's relationship with Philip, but Joel certainly offered his new bride stability and security. Joel and Betsy would have nine children together. They named their third son Philip." ⁶⁴ Joel Fithian

⁶² Andrews, Stephen. *The Tea-Burners of Cumberland County Who Burned at Cargo of Tea at Greenwich, New Jersey December 22, 1774, Vineland, Cumberland County, New Jersey, 1908.*

⁶³ Andrews, Stephen. *The Tea-Burners of Cumberland County Who Burned at Cargo of Tea at*

Greenwich, New Jersey December 22, 1774, Vineland, Cumberland County, New Jersey, 1908.

⁶⁴ Fea, John. *The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009, P 211.

served in the state legislature for several years before dying in 1821. He is buried next to his second wife Elizabeth in Cumberland County.

Conclusion

The life of colonists living before and during the American Revolution in New Jersey is a fascinating aspect of American history. It is difficult to characterize these individuals as ordinary because they lived through such an historic and uncertain time. Discovering how people from this era lived is important work because it engages students and residents in various counties throughout New Jersey about the birth of representative government in America. Cumberland County has a rich history associated with the American Revolution. Many of the people who lived in Cumberland County before and during the Revolution were huge supporters of American independence. It's an acceptable assumption that many, if not a majority, of the residents of New Jersey felt a certain sense of pride about the revolutionary cause.

What was life like for these individuals who lived in New Jersey before and during the American Revolution? Duty to one's family, public service, the belief in American independence, and a strong religious fervor were all important values

that each of them possessed. It's also important that we ask "what can we learn from the life of Philip Vickers Fithian? He reminds us that Enlightenment cosmopolitanism always existed in compromise with local attachments."⁶⁵ Greenwich was Philip's local "attachment" that he would return to throughout his life for rest and self-reflection. Philip used the comfort of his home as a way of improving himself spirituality, emotionally, and intellectuality. He was one of the thousands of ordinary individuals that died for the cause of liberty.

What can our students learn from studying these ordinary people? Maybe the importance of living your life in a certain way can be appreciated and realized? Some historians argue that even today "Americans still pursue self-betterment through higher education and career advancement in cosmopolitanism. They are often willing to fight and die for modern ideas such as liberty and freedom. Yet, they also long for the passion, love, and faith that bring meaning, in a transcendent way to their lives."⁶⁶ Like the ordinary people examined as a part of this grant, the majority of Americans today, at some level, are still seeking ways to improve themselves and our country while living during uncertain and historic times. We are still seeking democratic values, encouraging civic

⁶⁵ Fea, John. *The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009, P 211.

⁶⁶ Fea, John. *The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009, P 215.

participation and working towards a country that supports opportunities for all Americans regardless of a person's religion, skin color, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic background. The history teachers of New Jersey have a unique opportunity to use these lessons and activities related to these ordinary people from the American Revolution to help their students improve themselves not only as citizens but also as human beings.

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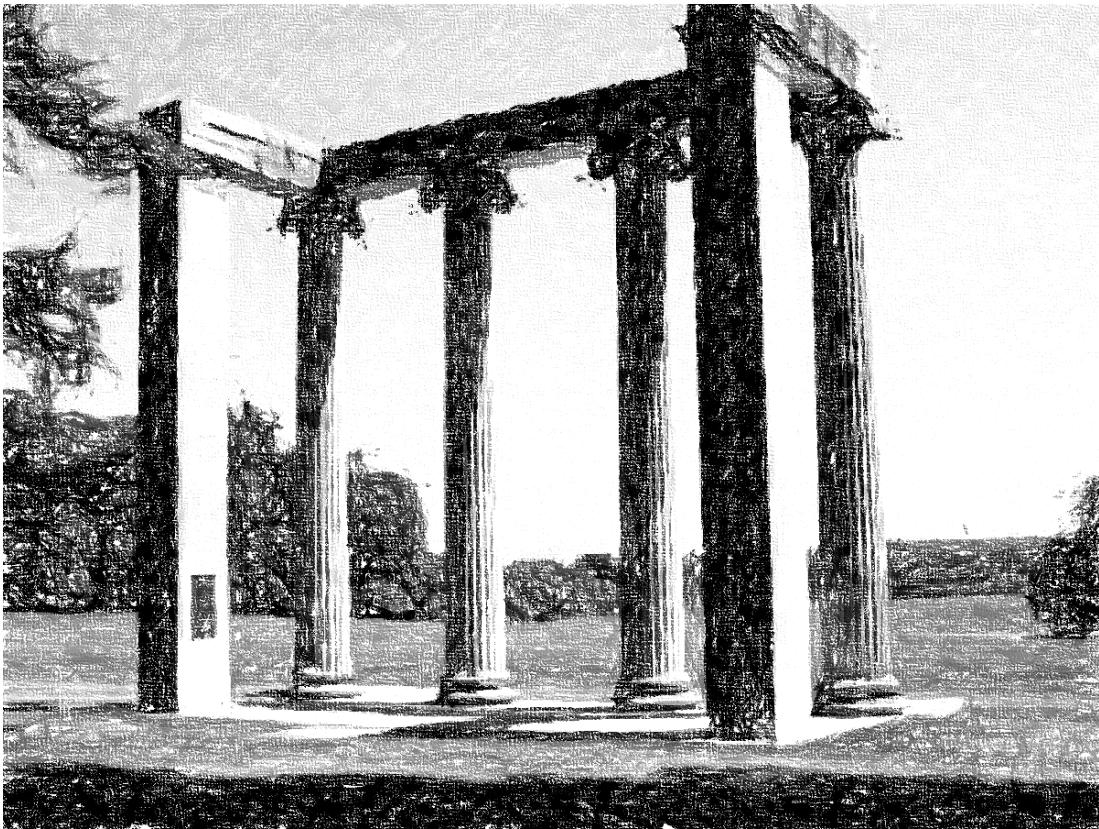
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An Educator's Perspective on Teaching the Voices of Enslaved People in New Jersey as Part of Local History

Robert Fenster

Few high school history textbooks have much to say about slavery in the northern colonies and states. While coverage of the evils of slavery has dramatically increased in recent years, the focus has always been on enslaved people in the south. Although slavery is mentioned 14 times in the NJSLS 2020 standards, the only connection to slavery in New Jersey is 6.1.8.History CC.4.a: "Explain the growing resistance to slavery and New Jersey's role in the Underground Railroad,"⁶⁷ implying that New Jersey was a hotbed of abolitionism instead of the dark reality: the gradual abolition law in 1804 maintained slavery for life for those born before its passage, and the so-called Act to Abolish Slavery in 1846 replaced slavery with apprenticeship for life⁶⁸. The ratification of the 13th Amendment didn't merely free the enslaved in states that were in rebellion, but 16 enslaved people in New Jersey.⁶⁹

Is it at all surprising that most students graduate high school in New Jersey

unaware of the enduring nature of this institution in their home state? Although it might be argued that malignant forces are behind a whitewashing of New Jersey history, it seems more likely that a collective reductionism is at work here. There are only so many days to "cover" the curriculum, so some simplification is necessary. It's easier for students to understand the binary depiction of the southern enslaver states being evil, while the north is the home of abolition. However, that sort of teaching is oversimplified and not only does injustice to actual history, but to the lives of thousands of people who were enslaved in New Jersey.

In the summer of 2020, I was fortunate to participate in Slavery in the Colonial North, a National Endowment for the Humanities institute held at Philipsburg Manor in Sleepy Hollow, New York under the guidance of Leslie Harris and Jacqueline Simmons. There I was inspired to dig deeper into New Jersey history. I went to the Somerset County clerk's office and

⁶⁷New Jersey Student Learning Standards - Social Studies, accessed January 8, 2022, <https://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2020/2020%20NJSLS-SS.pdf>.

⁶⁸An Act For the Gradual Abolition of Slavery (1804), accessed January 8, 2022, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbpe.0990100b/?sp=1>. Selected New Jersey Laws related to slavery and Free People of Color, accessed January 8, 2022, [https://www.montclair.edu/anthropology/wp-](https://www.montclair.edu/anthropology/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2021/06/Slavery-in-New-Jersey-Literature-Review-Appendix-B-Slave-Codes_Remediated.pdf)

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⁶⁹ Julia Martin, "Slavery's legacy is written all over North Jersey, if you know where to look," NorthJersey.com, accessed January 8, 2022, <https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/essex/montclair/2021/02/28/american-dream-paramus-nj-part-north-jersey-slavery-legacy/4212248001/>.

examined birth certificates and manumission records of enslaved people from Hillsborough, the town I teach in. Some of the names of the enslavers were recognizable to my students because their descendants are still in town or particular roads are named for them. Although that lesson was in and of itself was impactful, it didn't do enough to explore the lives of enslaved men and women.

Before I began to focus on agency, I would often be asked by students, "Why didn't they fight back?" I would turn the question back to the class and ask them to consider possible answers. Typically students would suggest a fear of consequences, a lack of options in a world of systemic oppression, or white access to authority and weaponry. Although these are all somewhat valid in particular circumstances, and the conversation worthwhile, a better immediate response would have been, "They did, and in many ways." No U.S. history class should lack a focus on the myriad ways that enslaved people resisted: open rebellion, self-liberation, sabotage, poisoning, self-harm,, defiance of rules governing marriage, religion, and literacy, and the development of a unique culture to name just a few. During the American Revolution, thousands of enslaved people self-liberated and joined

the British military in the hopes of bringing down the institution of slavery for themselves and others. A smaller number served as substitutes in the Continental Army or state militias with the hope of gaining their freedom through their service.

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to adequately examining the lives of the enslaved is a lack of primary sources. Many enslaved people did not know how to write or were actively prevented from learning. As a consequence, most of the sources from the relevant time periods are secondary sources, which require historians to draw inferences after filtering for the potential biases of the original authors. In some cases, the bias is overt and easy to spot; for example, the writing of any white supremacist. On the other hand, *Memoir of Quamino Buccau, A Pious Methodist*, is written by William Allinson, an abolitionist. Although the book provides some basic biographical information, its focus belies the author's utter lack of interest in the enslaved person's internal life, reducing him to a prop.⁷⁰ Allinson and other similar contemporary writers may have had good intentions, but they tend to infantilize their subjects, providing their own form of racist depiction to the mix.

⁷⁰Kenneth E. Marshall, *Manhood Enslaved: Bondmen in Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-*

Century New Jersey (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2011), 18

Finding Our Place in Revolutionary History

Karen Parker

All human beings want to feel like they belong to something bigger. This is especially true when students reach adolescence, their whole psyche revolves around being liked, accepted, and belonging to a group. The importance of that “place” that they hold is the driving force held together by peers, social media, cliques, fashion, and home. Relating part of their place to history and pique that sense of belonging to that history, not feeling left out of it as a spectator, not feeling odd or different from the people and feeling like they are connected with the locations, can be the key to the level of engagement. Luckily, in New Jersey, it is not difficult to find Revolutionary era connections in our backyards and neighborhoods.

There is a disconnect with children during their education of history. Students often feel disconnected because of the difficulties in relating to elapsed time, distant places, and unfamiliar habits and customs. As educators, it is our challenge to create as many opportunities for connections as possible, to have the students relate to some “thin and brittle” threads of familiarities, and often we can wrestle grudging interest in the topics presented. History, unlike active experimentation in science and the excitement of fiction in language arts, is unsurprisingly often

deposited toward the end of the favorite subject list, to muddle around in student’s heads where they view the facts as dull lists of events and dates of forced importance with scattered entertaining facts - more so if they relate to a holiday that includes time off from school.

To connect with people from generations past, it is important to find that common ground with today. Where I grew up in Morris County, I lived a short drive from an active and preserved area of Revolutionary history, spending many hours of my childhood roaming the woods and fields of Revolutionary significance, taking short field trips to Jockey Hollow, Fort Mifflin, and the Ford Mansion. Where I teach in Hunterdon County, the most notable area is Washington’s Crossing State Park, with which many of my students are completely unfamiliar, and the war to them seems very distant. It is important to find nearby locations and people that are connected to the Revolution era.

In my research for the New Jersey Council for the Social Studies, I was looking for information on people from Hunterdon County who were actively involved in the Revolutionary War. There were many references to soldiers, the Commissary General for Washington’s army and the

local militia, but I came across one primary source that I thought might catch the interest of my students.

Through researching into the life of this average local person, James Parker, reading about his daily missives on the management of the property, connections to the effects that the war had on the common people became evident. Parker's connections began as a proprietor whose primary residence was in one of the colonial capitals, Perth Amboy. He was a major landowner in Hunterdon County, owning land in what is now Kingwood, Union, Bethlehem, and Tewksbury Townships and built a large stone house in Union Township called *Shipley*. It is interesting to note that many people in this local area were not following the political patriots, but many had loyalist leanings or were ambivalent. Mr. Parker was one of those who did not support the patriotic feelings and was sentenced and jailed by the New Jersey Council of Safety during the summer of 1777, in Morristown, for refusing to take an oath renouncing loyalty to Britain. He was paroled and exchanged for a Patriot held in New York in 1778. At this time, he spent more and more of his time in Hunterdon County, overseeing his lands. Some think that he was avoiding the political climate of the large shore town of Perth Amboy, though he documents in his farm journal his travels back and forth to his original home for proprietor meetings. Some other examples of Parker's political leanings come from an entry in his journal that appeared sympathetic to a local loyalist family, the Voughts who lived in Clinton, known then as Hunt's Mill, about three miles away from

Parker's home in Pittstown.. On December 18, 1778, Doc Smith took his contribution to a relief fund for women, wives of people gone into the British line and had all of their effects sold. This is the same date that the Voughts had all of their belongings auctioned off. These families were considered traitors by the New Jersey Legislature, which allowed all of their property and possessions to be confiscated. At this time, a large amount of the British army and many of their sympathizers occupied areas of New York and Staten Island) (Gigantino 2015)

The farm journal expresses many tasks that most would take for granted at the time, documented in amazing detail, though commonplace and ordinary back then. These entries in this primary source give glimpses of insight on the challenges of conducting business during the Revolutionary War. He notes that on July 1, 1778, he was in the meadow with great firing heard at a distance, "*Regulars and Continental troops engaged in general or skirmishes since Sunday last.*" He notes that it was a "severe engagement" and we can assume that he was hearing the Battle of Monmouth and he must have been at Perth Amboy to be in the proximity to hear the fighting, even though he does not mention it. There are no references of any major engagement during this time period anywhere near his lands in Hunterdon County.

Financial struggle, even for wealthy proprietors, was a part of daily life. The farm journal mentions the use of many different denominations of hard currency:

Continental Dollars, Johannes and Moidore, which were Portuguese gold coins, English Guineas, New York Currency, English Pounds and Spanish dollars. In January of 1779, Parker discusses an issue with the prevalence of counterfeiting, by mentioning that he was buying land from Abraham Bonnell. He could not confirm if the money he was paying with was counterfeit. Bonnell said he didn't believe any was, due to being very careful to examine the bills and that the mark of a printer was not necessarily a proof of authenticity. At one point he mentions, *"Paid for bushel of wheat in hard money."* This may have been noted because of the general lack of coinage and the use of continental paper money. He noted on March 5, 1780 that taxes were collected but there was a scarcity of money, and on March 13 taxes were collected on his Bethlehem property, and he complains about having no money until he could collect on his debts. On March 23, taxes were collected on Tewksbury property, and he mentions that he is owed more money than he can pay; he can't pay the taxes until his debtors pay. For the same year, he was taxed on 200 acres, was able to pay three-quarters of the bill but had no continental money, so he borrowed it.

Everyone knows that Continental and British troops moved all around New Jersey. It is common knowledge that they were located near the famous areas of conflict such as Monmouth, Trenton, Princeton, and Washington's Crossing at the Delaware River. Troops on both sides of the war marched through Hunterdon County and stopped to rest their soldiers and horses.

On December 4, 1778, Parker mentions being told by Moore Furman, a local miller and merchant who was well connected as a Deputy Quartermaster General for New Jersey, that Gen.

Burgoyne's army was marching to Virginia and would be quartered in the neighborhood as they marched along. On December 5, troops of the 1st Division came down with three companies of men, eight officers. He notes little business was conducted due to attending the troops. On December 6th, the 1st Division "marcht" off and the 2nd division came in. Charles Stewart (local and the Commissary General of Washington's army) spared a gallon of spirits. On December 7th the 2nd division left, no others came, on December 8th, the 3rd division troops came with six companies and five officers of the 62nd regiment, on December 9th, the 3rd division left. Parker noted that the Brunswick troops arrived with three officers and 78 men on the 10th and that little work was accomplished when troops were there. December 11th was active with part of a company of 'foreign troops' that were there with a major, two horses, a baggage wagon with four more horses; this group left on December 13th. Imagine the disruption of regular life and business when these troops had been quartered on the property.

May 15, 1779 brought troops from the Continental army through the Pittstown area. James Parker notes that the Regiment of the New Jersey Brigade, commanded by Colonel Ogden, marched to Pittstown on the way to Easton with 300-350 men. The Continental troops pastured horses in local fields. Parker notes that he put into pasture

twelve Continental horses, then took on seven more Continental horses, ending the day with a total of twenty. On August 25th, he received from Nehemiah Dunham, who built the stone mill in nearby Clinton, five barrels of flour for Continental service. On August 25th, he put into pasture 12 Continental horses. On August 26th he took seven more Continental horses, September 4th put up nine more Continental horses and on September 18th, all Continental horses left.

In today's military, food and supplies are provided by the government, but back in Revolutionary times, troops were expected to be supplied by local people, sometimes with promissory notes, sometimes by donation with no recompense. Sometimes a tax was paid to help sponsor troops. In Parker's journal he mentions that on July 12, 1779, he paid Adam Hope a tax toward raising a state regiment, as assessed by Colonel Beavers and Charles Coke, of 45 dollars. On August 25th, he received from Nehemiah Dunham of Clinton five barrels of flour for Continental service. He noted a meeting in Pittstown on January 18, 1780, *"Spent day in Pittstown where residents met to deliver cattle and grain collected for the army."*

Students need to imagine for themselves that not all of the population of New Jersey followed the Patriot cause, most sources agree that in the colonies they made up only about thirty to forty percent of the

population. They believe that around twenty percent were acknowledged Loyalists, while the remaining population were neutral. There were many risks on both ends of the political spectrum, with neighbors who harassed or reported neighbors, or turned their coats when it was to their benefit. They need to experience the feelings of taking sides, or remaining neutral in situations. It is important to realize that everyone in New Jersey was involved in the Revolutionary War because it influenced their ordinary lives in ways that did not directly involve battles, shooting, famous officers and other incidents memorialized with statues and National Parks. The areas right around the corner, a barn down the street, an old house, mill or tavern, a name of a road in New Jersey, may have been owned or named after ordinary people whose stories were intimately intertwined with the Revolutionary War.

The decisions of James Parker and others were difficult for them and they have relevance for us today whenever we receive criticism for our decisions.

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The Real Historians of New Jersey: How to Connect with the Past in 170 Miles

Susan Soprano

How often do you get the opportunity to “practice what you preach?” After a decade of teaching social studies, writing social studies curriculum, and leading professional development, I couldn’t tell you how many times I’ve discussed the importance of thinking like a historian. After years of working so hard in my career, I was looking forward to spending the first part of the 2021-2022 school year bonding with my new son on maternity leave. As I dreamed of spending my days in pajamas, drinking coffee that has gone cold, an email comes in from Hank Bitten at the NJ Council for Social Studies. The email contained an application for a grant project to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. The project would focus specifically on the work and decisions of lesser-known NJ citizens during the war. As I took another sip of my cold coffee, I thought, “Yeah! I can make some time for this!” I realized that after so many years of promoting research, citing sources, making history come to life, etc., I’ve had less time than I’d care to admit actually doing it. I saw this grant project as an opportunity to bring my knowledge of early American history to life.

My work on this project began in November 2021 at the Dey Mansion in Totowa, NJ. The mansion served as Washington’s headquarters during the Revolution in 1780. Over 600 pieces of correspondence from Washington are a part of the artifacts in the mansion’s collection. Me and other members of the grant project worked with educational director Jessica Bush for a day of learning and engaging with history at the Dey

Mansion. Bush spoke candidly about slavery at the Dey Mansion and about how the institution of slavery was prevalent in New Jersey during the war. History books do not often discuss this. My interest was piqued here and I planned on focusing on slavery for my part of the project. As a teacher in Passaic County, I planned to focus on slavery and early abolition here.

The next day, the grant team met at the Monmouth County Historical Association (MCHA) in Freehold, NJ. We worked with Reference Librarian and Archivist, Dana Howell. She led us upstairs to a table filled with documents, many of which could take hours, even days to read. I cautiously walked up to the table and scooped up some primary sources thinking, “Well, I’ll start here.” The very first document I picked up was a manumission paper written by this man named Samuel Allinson. He’s not a Passaic County man, but somehow, I was led right to the topic I planned to focus on. Right here, I was hooked on Allinson. I began to look for more documents containing his name, and I dove into the internet to learn more. I left the Monmouth County Historical Association pleased with the work I had done.

Over the next several weeks, I put together an activity and documentary on Samuel Allinson that could be utilized by New Jersey middle school students, and their families alike. Through this project, I am helping NJ residents understand the significance of the lesser known Samuel Allinson. He was a Burlington County native (fun fact: never

been there!) who was a Quaker, lawyer, and abolitionist. He helped provide education to free blacks living in his county, and he was a supporter of the Loyalist cause during the Revolution. He was able to manumit over 30 slaves. There is evidence of his correspondence with George Washington, William Livingston, and Patrick Henry. His correspondence speaks to his beliefs that liberty for all included the enslaved, thus leading him to question the ideals of liberty that the Patriots were fighting vehemently for. In many ways, we are still discussing the very questions that Allinson had about freedom in his time.

I had an opportunity to review excerpts from *The Ragged Road to Abolition* by Jim Gigantino. I was thankful enough to speak with Jim virtually in mid-January to review some final details about Allinson's work, and about the early abolitionist cause of Quakers like him. He describes Allinson as being "savvy" and "astute", knowing that he was fighting for an unpopular cause. He stood out in Burlington County and among the Quaker community.

Before I finalized my project, I took another trip back to MCHA where I again met with Dana. I went there wondering if there was any more information available on Allinson's work as an abolitionist. At first, Dana thought she wouldn't have much on a Burlington County resident, but within no time, she located the *Freedom Papers*—a collection of 37 manumission documents all finalized by Samuel Allinson! This gave me the evidence I needed to show the abolitionist work he was doing in the late 1700s. An added bonus of working with Dana was getting an opportunity to view the *Beneath the Floorboard* exhibit at Marlpit Hall, a property that is maintained by the MCHA. Artifacts here show how slavery is a part of Monmouth County's history, and tells the story of

seven slaves who lived in this home. For more information on this exhibit, see

<https://www.monmouthhistory.org/beneath-the-floorboards>

Ultimately, the team working on this grant project will introduce you to lesser known "heroes" of the Revolution who lived all over the state. This is such important work for educators to take part in. From my experience in this project, I have two main points to reflect on:

1. *Don't miss any opportunity to learn more!* The experiences that I had doing research were hands-on and challenging. Aside from the work I've created, I'm left with unanswered questions about abolition and lives of the enslaved in NJ that have been hidden for far too long. I can't help but wonder what could have happened in our country if only abolition was fought for more feverishly at the Constitutional Convention. Knowing about the work of Samuel Allinson will enrich my teaching of the American Revolution and early abolition in the United States. These new insights will allow students to engage with primary texts that support the work of Quakers right here in their own state.

2. *Make connections!* Because I decided to work on this project, I am now connected with historians all around NJ, and in Arkansas (Jim Gigantino). Hopefully these relationships will grow, and it's worth will be reflected in my teaching. In the near future, I hope to plan and lead professional development that will allow my colleagues to become teacher-scholars, similar to the experience I had on this project. It is my hope that this type of "hands-on" learning will ignite passion, and will remind educators why they do what they do.

And who knows, maybe one day I'll take a drive to Allinson's old haunts (with cold coffee in hand, obviously).

Counter-Reading Archival Sources to Teach the Histories of Enslaved Persons in Revolutionary America

Bill Smith

“Dispossessed lives” in a “silent past,” the vast methodological and archival difficulties of writing the history of enslaved persons cast a shadow demonstrating “the impossibility of fully recovering the experiences of the enslaved and the emancipated.”⁷¹ The difficulty of researching enslavement and uncovering enslaved persons’ lived experiences is a formidable task requiring innovative methodologies such as counter-reading the archives and reading official sources such as newspapers, legal records, and runaway advertisements “against the grain.”⁷² Over the past three decades, historians have completed groundbreaking research using these methodological approaches, bringing the reading public, teachers, and students to a closer understanding of the experiences of enslaved persons.

Social historians of the latter half of the twentieth century emphasized the importance of “history from below,” establishing the significance of recovering and teaching about the experiences of the people outside of the traditional historical

narrative.⁷³ However, much of our public-school curricula and resources continue to emphasize treaties, wars, and political leaders. In this pedagogical zero-sum game, the time spent teaching “Great Man History” often comes at the expense of teaching about the groups who are marginalized by the traditional historical narrative. And while countless educators across the country do incredible work teaching their students about the lives of people outside of the conventional historical narrative, uncovering and teaching about the lives of enslaved persons undoubtedly presents immense difficulties. To address these challenges, teachers can incorporate the slave narratives written during the abolitionist movement by formerly enslaved persons such as Frederick Douglass, Charles Ball, and Harriet Jacobs into their lessons. Teachers can also use the WPA Narratives, which cataloged hundreds of interviews of formerly enslaved persons, though teachers should familiarize

⁷¹ Marisa J. Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); and Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 116.

⁷² For further elaboration on the methodology of counter-reading the archives or reading against the grain, see Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, (Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press Books,

1995); Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*; and Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*.

⁷³ The seminal work on “history from the bottom up” is E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, (Vintage, 1963). Other works include Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), Julius Scott, *The Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution*, (Verso, 2018), among many others.

themselves with the methodological challenges of using these interviews.⁷⁴

Most of the autobiographical slave narratives of the abolitionist movement were written during the three decades preceding the American Civil War, and the WPA Narratives were collected as part of the New Deal with interviews from people enslaved during the 1850s and 1860s. However, the historical silence for educators hoping to research and teach about the enslaved who lived around the time of the American Revolution is almost deafening. Uncovering enslaved persons' experiences from this time period requires counter-reading archival sources such as runaway advertisements. The runaway advertisements that inundated colonial and Revolutionary newspapers from enslavers hoping to recover self-emancipating enslaved persons are an "ironic source of details about the lives of slaves who might otherwise be lost to history," providing information about "their appearance, their life story, how they carried themselves, and what they were wearing." According to historian Joshua Rothman, "each one of these" runaway advertisements "is sort of a little biography."⁷⁵

An invaluable resource for historians, runaway advertisements can also be used in the classroom by educators hoping to provide the histories of the enslaved persons who lived during the Revolutionary era. Teachers can find thousands

of runaway advertisements in databases available online, including, but not limited to the North Carolina Runaway Slave Notices and the Texas Runaway Slave Project.⁷⁶ "Freedom on the Move: A database of fugitives from American Slavery" offers teachers perhaps the most extensive collection of runaway advertisements.⁷⁷ As a crowdsourced project, "Freedom on the Move" also allows teachers and their students to participate in the project, transcribing runaway advertisements for future generations.

Teachers in New York and New Jersey can find a wealth of resources in the book *"Pretends to Be Free": Runaway Slave Advertisements from Colonial and Revolutionary New York and New Jersey*. This edited collection of 662 runaway advertisements from New York and New Jersey also provides teaching aids such as illustrations, tables, and maps.⁷⁸ Teachers can also show students runaway advertisements purchased by Founding Fathers such as George Washington while contextualizing the ads with secondary sources such as Erica Dunbar Armstrong's masterful book *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge*. Additionally, teachers can assign Professor Armstrong's edition of the book specifically written for young readers: *Never Caught, the Story of Ona Judge: George and Martha Washington's Courageous Slave Who Dared to Run Away*.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ The WPA Narratives are held by the Library of Congress. The Library of Congress has also published an article titled "The Limitations of the Slave Narrative Collection," as part of their *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936 to 1938*.

⁷⁵ Danny Lewis, "An Archive of Fugitive Slave Ads Sheds New Light on Lost Histories," *Smithsonian Magazine*, May 25, 2016. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/archive-fugitive-slave-ads-could-shed-new-light-lost-histories-180959194/>. Accessed 1/29/2022.

⁷⁶ "Texas Runaway Slave Project," *East Texas Digital Archives*, (Stephen F. Austin University), <https://digital.sfasu.edu/digital/collection/RSP>. "North

Carolina Runaway Slave Notices, 1750-1865," Digital Library on American Slavery, <http://dlas.uncg.edu/notices/>.

⁷⁷ "Freedom on the Move: Rediscovering The Stories Of Self-Liberating People." <https://freedomonthemove.org/#educators>.

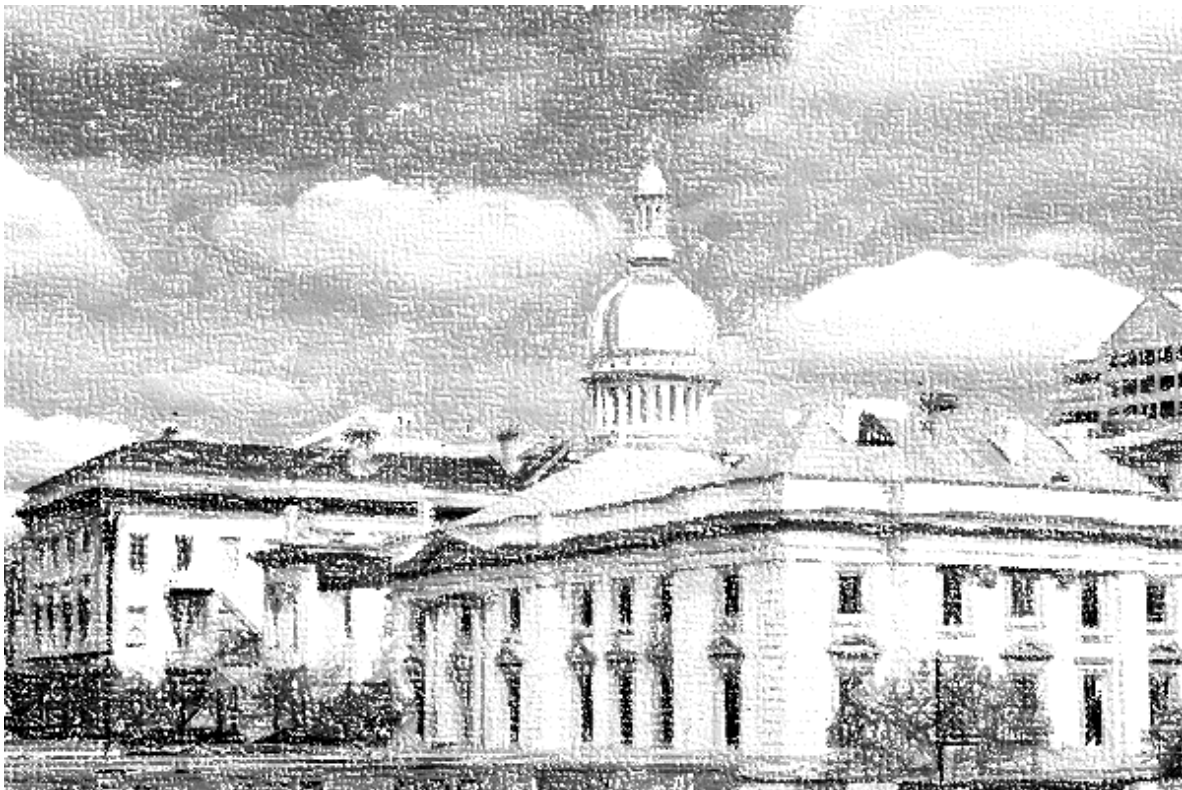
⁷⁸ Graham Russell, et al., *"Pretends to Be Free": Runaway Slave Advertisements from Colonial and Revolutionary New York and New Jersey*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019).

⁷⁹ Erica Dunbar Armstrong, *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017). Erica Dunbar Armstrong, *Never Caught, the Story of Ona Judge*

Termed “the Tweets of the master class,” by Cornell University historian Ed Baptist, teachers should introduce runaway advertisements by first adding the context of why they were written, by whom, and with what objective. While students are learning about the enslaved persons in the advertisement, they must not lose sight of the fact that these were written by enslavers who paid money to run ads hoping to capture human beings they believed were their property. *Colonial Williamsburg’s* “How to Read a Runaway Ad” urges researchers and teachers to “recognize the bias,” noting that the “adjectives used in runaway

advertisements often painted a negative picture of a person.” Colonial Williamsburg’s accessible “How to” guide also tells researchers to “be open,” “question the ad,” and “look for patterns.”⁸⁰

Most importantly, teachers should impress upon their students that the enslaved persons in these runaway advertisements might have otherwise been lost to history without these archival sources. Ultimately, by using these sources in the classroom, teachers and students are not only learning about history, but they are also helping to recreate lost histories.



George and Martha Washington’s Courageous Slave Who Dared to Run Away; Young Readers Edition, (New York: Aladdin, 2020).

⁸⁰ Deirdre Jones, “How to Read a Runaway Ad,” Colonial Williamsburg, June 11, 2020. <https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/learn/deep-dives/how-read-runaway-ad/>. Accessed 1/29/2022.

Book Reviews

***I am an American: The Wong Kim Ark Story*, by Martha Brockenbrough with Grace Lin (Little, Brown, 2021) (Review by Valerie Ooka Pang)**

This review was originally published in the International Examiner and is republished with permission.

<https://iexaminer.org/honoring-remembering-and-sharing-the-life-of-kim-ark-and-his-fight-for-justice/>

Has anyone questioned your citizenship? Has anyone ever said to you, “You don’t belong here. Go back to where you came from!”? Meaning you are not an American and should go back to where you came from. This happened to me often in Eastern Washington where I grew up, yet if I was to go back to where I came from, that would have been Seattle, Washington, where I was born. Why didn’t other youngsters think of me as an American? I could also be an immigrant who became an American like Wing Luke, who was the first person of color elected to the Seattle City Council.

Race is a powerful element of American society. People judge others based on their skin color, physical characteristics, stature and cultural practices. I am Japanese American and many of the young people I grew up with did not think of Japanese Americans as Americans. I was seen as a foreigner and so did not belong in the United States, though I lived in the state of Washington all of my life. I wish there had been a book like *I am an American: The Wong Kim Ark Story* so their teachers could read it to their students. The book is about how Wong Kim Ark went to court and fought for his right as an American citizen.

In 1873, Wong Kim Ark was born in San Francisco, California to parents from China. Chinese immigrants suffered much prejudice living

in California. His parents left San Francisco in 1890 to go back to China while he stayed with relatives in California. Wong Kim Ark visited his parents in 1894 on a temporary trip. When he returned to San Francisco, he was not allowed to enter the United States because officials said he was not a citizen. He was put in prison because of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Law that did not allow Chinese workers into the United States. Lawyers sued to get him out of prison in district court.

At that time Wong Kim Ark was about 21 years old. He argued that since he was born in San Francisco, he was a citizen. Members of the Chinese community pooled their finances and hired several lawyers to represent Wong Kim Ark. His case went all the way to the Supreme Court, and the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that due to the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, since Wong Kim Ark was born in the United States, he was a citizen even though his parents were from China.

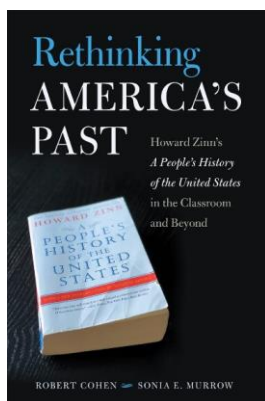
The Supreme Court decision of Wong Kim Ark is important because often race is used as an obstacle in establishing citizenship for other Asian Americans and people of color. The Supreme Court ruled that birth in the United States establishes citizenship. The Wong Kim Ark case supports his statement of “I am an American.” Even after the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Kim Ark, he had to carry a certificate of identity “to prove he was an American.” Racism was still strong in the United States.

This is an excellent story to read to children to show that the United States is a diverse country, and its citizens are members of many different ethnic and racial groups. Every student and teacher

should know who Wong Kim Ark is and how he helped to establish citizenship rights for people of color in the United States. Most learners and educators do not know about the contributions that many Asian American and Pacific Islander people have made to our civil rights.

Consider purchasing this book for your children or educators. There should be more AAPI role models presented in school. This book is an exceptional resource. There is additional information about the case at the end of the text. The timeline of historical events is especially informative. It includes dates about Wong Kim Ark's life and different immigration legislation. As Wong Kim Ark said, "I am an American."

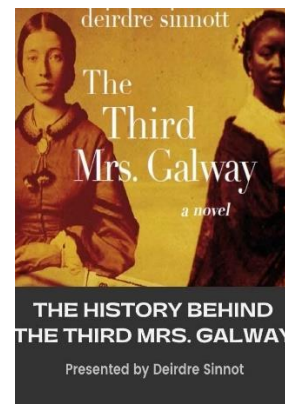
***Rethinking America's Past*, by Robert Cohen and Sonia Murrow (Univ. of Georgia Press, 2021)**



This book is subtitled, "Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* in the Classroom and beyond." It is intended for use in university teacher education classes but it is a valuable resource for secondary school teachers. Chen is a social studies educator at New York University and Murrow at Brooklyn College – CUNY. Whether you agree with Zinn's focus or not, no work of United States history has had a greater impact on social studies education than *A People's History*. In this book, Cohen and Murrow

"use archival and classroom evidence to assess the impact that Zinn's classic work has had on historical teaching and learning and on American culture." The authors conclude that despite Donald Trump's charge that Zinn's work and publications like the 1619 Project are designed to indoctrinate students, "Zinn's book has been used by teachers to have students debate and rethink conventional versions of American history." *Rethinking America's Past* also explore how "Zinn's work fostered deeper, more critical renderings of the American past in movies and on stage and television."

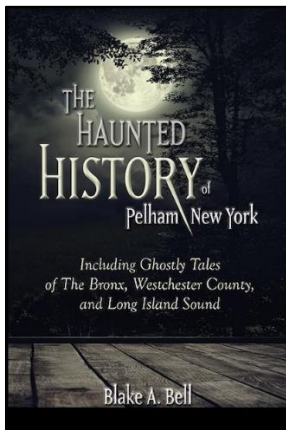
***The Third Mrs. Galway*, by Deirdre Sinnott (Kaylie Jones Books, 2021)**



Antislavery agitation is rocking Utica in 1835 when Helen Galway, a young bride, discovers an enslaved family hiding in her shed, setting in motion the exhumation of long-buried family secrets. Suddenly, she is at the center of the era's greatest moral dilemma: Should she be a "good wife" and report the fugitives? Or will she defy convention and come to their aid? According to *Historical Novels Review* "This suspenseful novel vividly breathes life into the early years of the United States, and the burden of slavery the young Republic carries with it . . . This book engrosses the reader and does what historical fiction does best. In

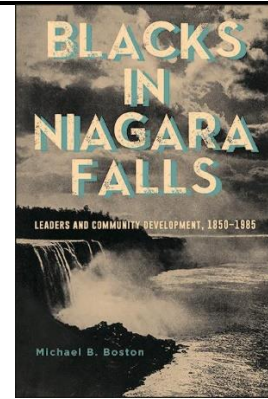
bringing the past into sharp focus, it shines a light on our present day. Highly recommended.” Deirde Sinnott is a Utica native who originated her city's Abolition History Day Celebration and is a historical consultant for the Fort Stanwix Underground Railroad History Project.

The Haunted History of Pelham, New York Including Ghostly Tales of The Bronx, Westchester County, and Long Island Sound, by Blake Bell (SUNY Press, 2022)



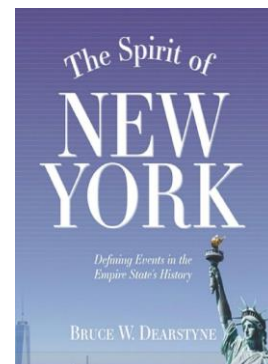
The Haunted History of Pelham, New York fuses New York history and folklore. Blake A. Bell weaves together accounts of ghosts, spirits, and specters with well-documented historical developments that underlie each of the ghost stories. Chapters include Indigenous American Hauntings, Revolutionary War Specters, Ghostly Treasure Guards, and Phantom Ships off Pelham Shores. Bell relates entertaining and dramatic ghost stories that have been passed from generation to generation as he helps readers understand how local lore came to be and why it is important to an understanding of the region, its culture, and its self-awareness.

Blacks in Niagara Falls, Leaders and Community Development, 1850-1985, by Michael B. Boston (SUNY Press, 2021)



Blacks in Niagara Falls examines the history of Black residents of Niagara Falls, New York from the Underground Railroad to the Age of Urban Renewal in the 1980s. Over time, African Americans moved from the margins of society to become active in community affairs. Blacks moved to Niagara Falls in search of economic opportunities and established essential institutions including businesses, churches, and community organizations. Boston is an Associate Professor of African and African American Studies at the SUNY Brockport.

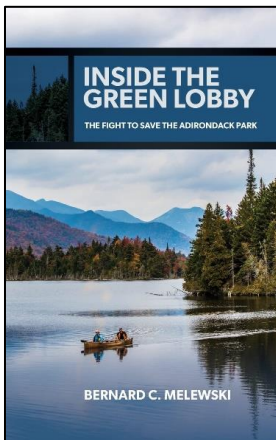
The Spirit of New York: Defining Events in the Empire State's History, by Bruce W. Dearstyne (SUNY Press, 2022)



The Spirit of New York presents New York State history through nineteen dramatic events starting with the launch of the state government in April 1777 and the concluding with the debut of the musical Hamilton in 2015. Readers meet the people who made history in New York State including John Jay, the lead writer of the first state

constitution, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, crusader for women's rights, Glenn Curtiss, New York's aviation pioneer, Jackie Robinson, the first to desegregate Major League Baseball, and Lois Gibbs, an environmental activist. This new edition includes recent events like Occupy Wall Street and Superstorm Sandy.

***Inside the Green Lobby: The Fight to Save the Adirondack Park*, by Bernard Melewski (SUNY Press, 2022)**

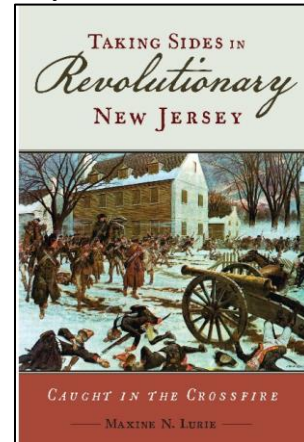


Inside the Green Lobby recounts Melewski's efforts in the Albany State Capitol in Albany and Congress, of a lobbyist to save the six-million acre Adirondack Park from twin threats of acid rain and the breakup of private land holdings. *Inside the Green Lobby* documents events that led to the acquisition by New York State of tens of thousands of acres within the park.

***Taking Sides in Revolutionary New Jersey: Caught in the Crossfire*, by Maxine N. Laurie (Rutgers University Press, 2022)**

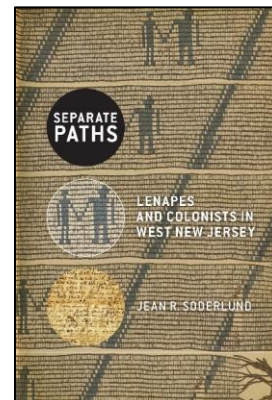
Laurie recounts how in New Jersey, where more battles of the American Revolution were fought than in any of the other British colonies, it became a vicious civil war. People took sides based on family connections, religious affiliation, political

beliefs, the ebb and flow of the war, and where they lived in the colony.



New Jersey had the highest number of casualties and a great deal of physical damage. The costs were high no matter what side individuals took. *Taking Sides* uses brief biographies to illustrate the American Revolution's complexity, quoting from documents, pamphlets, diaries, letters, and poetry.

***Separate Paths: Lenapes and Colonists in West New Jersey*, by Jean R. Soderlund (Rutgers University Press, 2022)**



Separate Paths: Lenapes and Colonists in West New Jersey is the first cross-cultural study of European colonization in the region south of the Falls of the Delaware River (now Trenton). Lenape men and women welcomed their allies, the Swedes and Finns, to escape more rigid English regimes on the west bank of the Delaware, offering land to establish farms, share resources, and trade. In the

1670s, Quaker men and women challenged this model with strategies to acquire all Lenape territory for their own use and to sell as real estate to new immigrants. Though the Lenapes remained sovereign and “old settlers” retained their Swedish Lutheran religion and ethnic autonomy, the West Jersey proprietors had considerable success in excluding Lenapes from their land. The Friends believed God favored their endeavor with epidemics of smallpox and other European diseases that destroyed Lenape families and communities. Affluent Quakers also introduced enslavement of imported Africans and Natives.

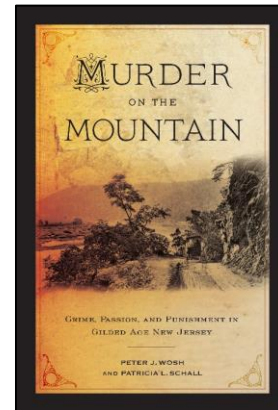
***Port Newark and the Origins of Container Shipping*, by Angus Kress Gillespie (Rutgers University Press, 2022)**



Today container shipping is a vital part of the global economy. Goods from all around the world, from vegetables to automobiles, are placed in large metal containers that are transported across the ocean in ships and then loaded onto tractor-trailers and railroad flatbeds. This study traces the birth of containerization to Port Newark, New Jersey, in 1956 when trucker Malcom McLean thought of a brilliant new way to transport cargo. McLean’s idea was backed by New York banks and the U.S. military, who used containerization to ship supplies to troops in Vietnam.

***Murder on the Mountain: Crime, Passion, and Punishment in Gilded Age New Jersey*, by Peter J.**

Wosh and Patrica L. Schall (Rutgers University Press, 2022)



Murder on the Mountain tells the story of Margaret Klem and John Meierhofer, Bavarian immigrants who arrived in New Jersey in the 1850s, got married, and started a small farm in West Orange. When John returned from the Civil War, he was a changed man, neglecting his work and beating his wife. Margaret was left to manage the farm and endure the suspicion of neighbors, who gossiped about her alleged affairs. One day in 1879, John turned up dead with a bullet in the back of his head. Margaret and a farmhand, Dutch immigrant Frank Lammens, were accused of the crime, and went to the gallows, making Margaret the last woman to be executed by the state of New Jersey

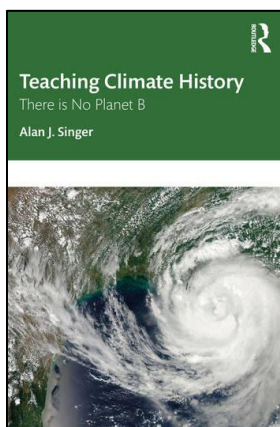
The New Press republished two edited document collections in its “Remembering” series.

Remembering Slavery is an annotated collection of interviews from the 1930s and 1940s conducted by the Federal Writers Project to record remembrances of aging African Americans about slavery in the United States. The recordings are part of the Library of Congress’ collection. *Remembering Slavery* was edited by historians Ira Berlin, Marc Favreau, and Steven F. Miller and originally published in 1996. The new edition includes a foreword by Harvard University Professor of History Annette Gordon Reed.

Chapters focus on the relationship between the enslaved and slaveholders, work, family life, culture, and freedom. One of the striking things about the interviews is how some of the people being interviewed were uncertain about their ages but were very clear about how and when they became free. *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Talk about Life in the Segregated South* was originally published in 2001. It was edited by Duke University history professors William H. Chafe, Raymond Gavis, and Robert Korstad. *Remembering Jim Crow* is a collection of oral histories conducted by the Behind the Veil Project at Duke University starting in the 1990s. Chapters include Bitter Truths, Heritage and Memory, Families and Communities, Lessons Well Learned, Work, and Resistance and Political Struggles. The new edition includes over 50 photographs. A great strength of the book is that it introduces students to 72 ordinary people rather than movement leaders, ordinary people who built lives under very difficult racist conditions and struggled to transform the United States.

***Teaching Climate History*, by Alan Singer
(Routledge, 2022)**

Reviewed by Tiffany Kassem-Benchimol



In *Teaching Climate History: There is NO Planet B*, Alan Singer shares with readers the ways that climate change has impacted human civilization

on both a global and local scale. He offers a variety of ways that social studies educators can include the study of climate history in the curriculum. The book highlights the influence, both positive and negative, of individuals and groups who are involved in contemporary efforts to combat climate change. There are easily accessible companion activity sheets and lesson ideas on his [website](#). Singer also has a brief lecture on climate history on [YouTube](#).

Teaching Climate History is organized around the history of climate change, how it impacted life on Earth in the past, and uses this history to explain how it will impact on our future, both immediate and longer term. This is a timely book because of the impact of climate change on life today and because our students are the future generation that will have to bear the burden of solving the problems caused by climate change that previous generations created.

The entire book was informative with lesson ideas at the ending of each chapter. There were a few chapters that I found myself more drawn to because I found the specific topics or questions within the chapter more interesting and thought provoking: Chapter Six, “Climate Change and Human Evolution, Chapter Seven, “Extreme Heat,” and Chapter Twelve, “Climate Change Deniers and Minimizers.”

In Chapter six, “Climate Change and Human Evolution,” Singer discusses the influence of climate change on human evolution on the East African Rift Valley and the Serengeti plains. Fascinating are references to the work of Stephen J. Gould, Konrad Fialkowski, and Marvin Harris on the evolution of the human brain as hominids experienced climate change in the region (32-33). Migration from receding forests onto the savannah in search of food was critical to hominid evolution. Larger brains were initially part of the process of transfer heat that maintained body temperature. The

fact that *homo erectus* become more intelligent because of this environmental adaptation was a side benefit. Teaching documents aligned with this chapter include an abstract from *Earth and Planetary Science Letters* by Peter deMenocal with guiding questions. To provide multiple entry points for learners, I would also include photographs illustrating of the evolution of hominids and images of different climate zones.

Chapter seven, “Extreme Heat,” discusses the serious health impact to prolonged extreme heat that is devastating different regions of the world. Singer offers the reader what I call a “fun fact,” the kind of information that students easily remember. In 2020, Death Valley, California had the highest ever reliably recorded temperature on the planet, 130°F (36). A *New York Times* article he cites, “How Hot Is Too Hot,” exams just how much heat and humidity a human body can withstand. Singer points out although they have the lowest carbon footprint, the world’s poor have been more profoundly impacted by global warming (37). This leads to four important and thought-provoking compelling questions (39). As a teacher, I am curious to see the different answers that students come up with when being asked these opinion questions.

1. To what extent is climate inequality a product of historic colonialism, imperialism, and racism?
2. Will climate change be addressed effectively by the industrialized developed world while its impact is still most drastically felt by people living in developing countries?
3. If capitalist industrialization produced the climate crisis, can it be relied on to end the climate crisis or does the very nature of capitalism based on short-term profit prevent decisive action?

4. Do nations with heavy carbon footprints have an obligation to open their doors to admit climate refugees?

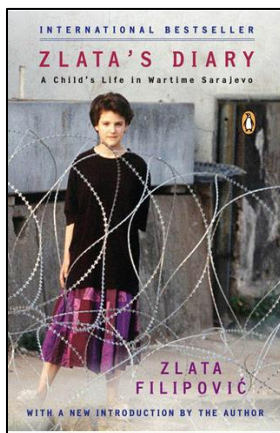
In the chapter on “Climate Change Deniers and Minimizers,” Singer highlights the influence they have on government policies and legislation on a local and global level. Global climate agreements like the Kyoto and Paris Climate Agreements have been met with little urgency or sense of accountability, and no concrete solutions.

The United States played hopscotch with these agreements as Presidential administrations changed and the United States Senate refused to confirm treat obligations. The chapter examines the role that tobacco and fossil fuel industries have played in undermining public confidence in science and in shaping public opinion. The influence the fossil fuel industry has inside the United States government is terrifying. James Inhofe, who has been a Senator since 1994, representing Nebraska as a Republican, calls human-induced climate change a hoax and argues global warming would be beneficial to mankind. The conservative American Legislative Exchange Council, founded with fossil fuel dollars, shapes state legislation that limit regulation of the fossil fuel industry (67). To promote their anti-climate action agenda, fossil fuel companies place ads posing as members of the scientific community, fund suspect “research” to support their claims, and undercut public health efforts (64-65, 68). In the teaching document provided at the end of the chapter, students analyze primary sources demonstrating the ways that Exxon has tried to undermine an effective response to climate change. The document is a bit lengthier than other teaching documents so it might need to be modified for students at different performance levels. It inspired me to create a visual interactive timeline using the information provided.

After reading *Teaching Climate History*, I realize that there are an unlimited number of ways to educate students on climate change in social studies classes, no matter the specific curriculum content. The book lends itself to an interdisciplinary approach to teaching, pairing history, economics, geography, civics, science, math, literature, and even art.

Climate changed numerous times during the history of planet Earth and with a variety of causes. Humans also affected local environments in the past. But now human industrial civilization based on the extraction and burning of fossil fuels is threatening to change the climate in unprecedented ways. The full impact of climate change may not affect our generation, but what about our children and grandchildren? Singer provides teachers with knowledge and information that can help combat climate change through education. As Greta Thunberg made very clear, “Our house is on fire.”

***Zlata’s Diary: A Pre-Teen Comes to Terms with War*, by Zlata Filipov (Review by Christopher Grau)**



Even as the news reports on war crimes committed by Russia in its invasion of Ukraine saturates cable television, the majority of American students are far removed from global conflict, and understanding the catastrophic effects of war is largely through the lenses of classroom lessons and

reading. Some books do this especially well: *Anne Frank*, *The Diary of a Young Girl*, *Night*, *When Broken Glass Floats*, *I Am Malala*, etc. Each of these books breathes life back into powerful memories of wartime existence and depicts a human side of war in ways that simply cannot be presented in a textbook or government report. *Zlata's Diary* (Penguin, 1995) is no different. It was written by a young Bosnian or Bosniak girl named Zlata Filipović who began recording her thoughts and insights at the age of 10, just months before her Bosnian home city of Sarajevo was besieged by Serbian troops as a part of the larger Bosnian War.

The Bosnian War from 1992 to 1995 was a direct result of the breakup of Yugoslavia. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the secession of Slovenia and Croatia from Yugoslavia in 1991, Bosnia and Herzegovina passed a referendum in support of independence from Serbia.

Backed by the Serbian government and the remnants of the Yugoslav People's Army, Bosnian Serbs fought to secure ethnic Serb territory and quell any hopes of an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina (Greenberg, *et al.*, 2000). The majority of *Zlata's Diary* addresses a defining characteristic of the Bosnian War, the use of indiscriminate shelling of cities and towns as a primary method of warfare (Horvath & Woodhams, 2013), something we see again in the Russian assault on Ukraine. Because of this, much of the writing that comprises *Zlata's Diary* was written while Zlata was in her cellar, and those of neighbors and friends, where her family was often without heat, electricity, gas, or running water.

Although *Zlata's Diary* never addresses it, the Bosnian War has come to be notoriously associated with the first internationally recognized and persecuted instances of systemic mass rape as an instrument of war (Torn, 2001). During the conflict as many as 50,000 women were raped,

mostly by Serbian forces (Burg and Schoup, 1999 & Crowe, 2014). While the Bosnian War was not the first conflict to bear witness to the use of rape as a strategy of warfare, it was the first conflict in which wartime systemic rape and sexual enslavement was declared a crime against humanity, second only to the war crime of genocide, when the International Criminal Tribunal convened towards the end of the war in 1995 (Osborn, 2001).

By then, the Serbs had lost momentum due in large part to effective NATO intervention, an alliance formed between Bosniaks and Croats, and a flow of anti-tank missiles supplied by Pakistan to Bosnian Muslims (Cohen, 1995; Holbrooke, 1999). The war officially came to an end with the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also known as the Dayton Accords, which provided for an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina composed of two halves, one half Serbian –the Republika Srpska – and the other half Croat and Bosnian –the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While *Zlata's Diary* covers just the beginning and middle years of the conflict from the end of 1991 to 1993, and recounts her experiences in Sarajevo alone, the Bosnian War raged for four long years and destroyed cities and displaced people far beyond Sarajevo, with effects still being felt today. The war and its concluding agreement have continually been criticized for creating weak and ineffective political structures as well as failing to address overt acts of ethnic cleansing witnessed throughout the conflict.

On several accounts throughout her diary, Zlata mentions how the international press coverage of her diary compared her to Anne Frank and *The Diary of a Young Girl*. While Zlata pushes back on this label for fear that it might implicate her with the same tragic fate that met Anne Frank, the label itself

speaks to the invaluable nature of her diary as an insight into the micro-effects of war on the individual that is so often overlooked when “the children” (Zlata’s interchangeable term for “politicians”) play their game of politics. Indeed, *Zlata's Diary*, like *The Diary of a Young Girl* and World War II, is so unique partly because of its priceless accuracy and authenticity found few other places in records of the Bosnian War. As the events of World War II, the Holocaust, and the socio-cultural environments in which they occurred draw further into the past, though losing no less importance or relevance, students may find it more difficult to empathize with Anne Frank’s circumstances compared to that of Zlata’s. *Zlata's Diary* recounts the effects of a war that occurred in a far more modern and familiar setting that more closely replicates the contemporary world, environment, social setting, and culture in which today’s students live. Anne Frank did not have MTV, television, washing machines, dryers, or any other modern conveniences that Zlata was familiar with and dependent on in the same ways that today’s students are. It might be “easier” for them to place themselves in the shoes of Zlata than Anne Frank.

This is not a contest and both *The Diary of a Young Girl* and *Zlata's Diary* are incredibly important primary source documents to introduce in social studies classroom as we study just how similar – in its causes and effects – war is across varying time periods and groups of people. I think it would make for an interesting unit to read and analyze *The Diary of a Young Girl* and *Zlata's Diary* simultaneously, with constant compare-and-contrast analysis across a broad range of questions and topics including how war necessitates similar and different life by the victimized, the role of race, religion, and nationality in the onset of conflict, and the role politics and ideology play in the exacerbation of conflict. I might also use *Zlata's*

Diary and *The Diary of a Young Girl* as part of a civics unit that underscores the importance of peaceful diplomacy over violent resolution, as well as the influence that individuals can have on global affairs and their legacies.

Zlata's Diary is an ideal text to use when trying to get students to better understand the NCSS Thematic Strand, "Individuals, Groups, and Institutions." *Zlata's Diary* brings a global conflict to a far more personal level and, in doing so, emphasizes the idea that social studies curriculums, historians, teachers, and researchers alike may focus too much on the "game" of politics and "the children" that play it as the primary drivers and definers of war when in reality it is raw human desperation, love, loyalty, loss and desire that motivate and end wars – feelings far removed from the game of politics and international relations that are so often focused on in classrooms. *Zlata's Diary* places humans, rather than ideas, ideologies, politics, or economics at the heart of an act of devastation and destruction that has for so long defined a large part of our existence on this planet. Human feelings and emotion drive warfare in the past and present as much, if not more, than politics, economics, religion, and ideology. *Zlata's Diary* will be a key element in my effort to teach just that.

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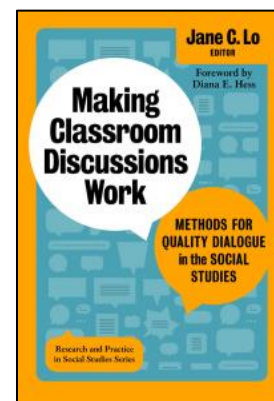
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Making Classroom Discussions Work, by Jane C. Lo (Review by Chenyu Li)



Noting that quality discussions are needed in social studies classrooms and are essential to democratic engagement, Jane C. Lo's (2022) *Making classroom discussions work* is a guidebook that aims to help social studies teachers, teacher educators, and school administrators build such discussions. For social studies educators, this book

complements existing literatures on social studies pedagogies by focusing exclusively on engaging students in deliberation. Lo defines quality discussions as “content-specific, educative group conversations” that include multiple perspectives, opportunities for self-reflection, and collective construction of knowledge (Lo, p. viii). Aligned with the definition of a quality discussion, the book is divided into three parts, each with a distinct but interconnected theme related to building class discussions. Part I focuses on the basic pedagogy of discussion facilitation in social studies classrooms. The chapters in Part I establish the foundational understanding that a reader needs to know to facilitate a quality discussion. The five guiding principles in Chapter 1 speak to the core values of quality discussions. The principles’ emphasis on cooperative learning, critical thinking, and students’ self-assessment resonates with the definition of quality discussions. Educators could use these principles as criteria to implement a new discussion strategy, improve their existing pedagogy, and provide constructive feedback to their colleagues’ teaching practices. Part II focuses on the different discussion strategies. The strategies listed in Part II are grounded in specific scenarios with clear-to-follow protocols. The authors of the chapters are also candid in their reflections of their pedagogical moves. For teachers, Part II guides them in the planning and the implementation of a classroom discussion. Preservice teachers would find Part II to be especially helpful because it addresses the challenges that they would encounter in their facilitation of discussions. Part III emphasizes on equity in discussions. Lo argues that equity matters not only because discussions need to be “equitably distributed and facilitated” but also because equitable discussions are aligned with the goal of establishing a just and equitable society in civic education (Lo, p. 5). For every justice-oriented educator, equity should be one of the guiding principles in their pedagogies. The dedication of

four chapters on the theme of equity could better prepare preservice social studies teachers to serve the needs of their diverse students. It could also offer a useful lens for experienced teachers to reflect on and improve their teaching practices. Even though equity is not explicitly mentioned in Lo’s definition of quality discussions, she suggests that “[conducting] equitable productive discussions” is one of the goals of the book (p. 6). The theme of equity makes this book stand out among other prominent teacher-facing social studies pedagogies books which primarily focus on literacy skills and historical thinking skills (Wineburg et al., 2013; Monte-Sano et al., 2014; Larson & Keiper, 2011). Thus, this book review will focus on the role of equity in the book’s articulation of quality discussions. My objective is to analyze the extent to which students from subjugated communities could benefit from the discussion strategies outlined in the book. Three aspects of discussions will be addressed in my analysis: equitable participation in discussions, equitable format of participation, and equity-oriented discussion topics.

A quality discussion needs to ensure equitable participation. In the beginning of the book, when introducing the guiding principles for classroom discussions, Larson argues that “students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds” should collaborate in a discussion. In terms of assessment, a teacher needs to “differentiate the form and use of discussion assessment” because students’ cultures, personalities, and genders may affect their participation (p. 22). Larson also notes that emergent bilingual and multilingual learners may need extra support in their participation. Even though equity is not explicitly mentioned, Larson’s principles reflect some elements of equity, including considering students’ diverse backgrounds and different needs when planning and facilitating a discussion. However, Larson’s elaboration of the principles offers a rather general

overlook of the various factors that may affect student participation. The ways through which each of those factors influences participation is not elaborated. Additionally, Larson emphasizes that a discussion is “at its simplest a structured activity in which the process of conversing encourages students to pool ideas and information and illuminate alternative perspectives” (p. 11), but the role of equity is ambiguous in this definition. What alternative perspectives should a discussion illuminate? Which students’ ideas should a discussion amplify? Further elaboration with a focus on equity could draw a direct linkage between the guiding principles for a discussion and the book’s goal on equity.

Equitable participation is both explicitly and implicitly addressed in the rest of the book. In their argument on the participation of students of color in critical civic inquiry, Mirra & Garcia ask an important question – “Within a systemically inequitable society along the lines of race, class, gender, and other social constructs, can we ever deliberate as equals?” (pp. 192-193). Their emphasis on equitable participation is well-justified, especially when critical civic inquiry is about deliberation on issues such as race, gender, and wealth inequality. Students with different racial, gender, socioeconomic backgrounds may participate in the discussions of those issues differently. Their concern with students’ inequitable participation is echoed by McAvoy & Lowery’s discussion of deliberation. Citing Lo’s research, they believe that the voices of students from marginalized communities may be silenced in the process of reaching a consensus in a class deliberation. Their research also found that girls were more hesitant to speak in both deliberations and debates. In their suggestions to teachers, McAvoy & Lowery write that “[...] teachers ought to pay attention to the dynamics in the room, use strategies that scaffold the development of

discussion skills, and be ready to attend to the emotional aspect of discussion” (p. 103). Through the lens of equitable participation, their suggestions are rather generic. The dynamics of a class could be influenced by the many factors that Mirra & Garcia mention in their chapter, and these dynamics may contribute to or hinder an equitable discussion. McAvoy & Lowery could elaborate on the nurturing of a class dynamic that could lead to equitable participation. For instance, they point out the emotional aspect of a discussion. From my experience as a social studies teacher, emotions could prevent a student from participating in a discussion, but students’ emotional reactions to an issue could bring authenticity and humanity to a discussion. The role that emotion plays in social studies classrooms remain an ambiguous topic (Sheppard et al., 2015). Nevertheless, an equitable discussion would be a discussion that respects and invites emotions, particularly those from marginalized communities, into its dialogue. It should also prevent the emotions of other students from dominating the dialogue. The commitment to equitable participation requires the construction of equitable discussion formats and protocols.

The methods of constructing equitable discussion formats and protocols are featured prominently throughout the book. The first guiding principle in Larson’s principles for class discussions is cooperative learning. Larson argues that small group sizes, heterogeneous grouping, and the emphasis on “safe space” are all important in cooperative learning. In Parker’s discussion on structured academic controversy, he elaborates on the specific elements in cooperative learning, which include positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face interaction, and teacher-assigned heterogeneous learning groups (p. 74). Through such arrangement, a teacher could help student navigate multiple perspectives and prepare them for democratic engagement. Parker’s

definition of heterogeneous grouping encompasses a wide range of social identities and learning needs, but the act of mixing students with different identities together could create emotions and power dynamics that hinder equitable participation. The format of heterogeneous grouping needs clear and rigid structures for students to follow. A teacher who is interested in incorporating heterogeneous grouping in an equitable discussion should also read the discussion set-up outlined by McAvoy & Lowery (Chapter 6), the structure for students' self-reflection in Mirra & Garcia's article (Chapter 12), the "read-inquire-write" model in the article by Rebull et al. (Chapter 8), and the online discussion norms mentioned in Hodgin's article (Chapter 9). Together, these chapters provide specific guidance for laying the structural groundwork for an equitable discussion.

The opportunity to conduct discussions online offers an alternative path to equitable discussions. Using the Internet as a force for equity is featured in multiple chapters. The Internet could break down many traditional barriers to knowledge and offer deliberation platforms that render certain social identities invisible and irrelevant. Mirra & Garcia believe that Digital Democratic Dialogue could bring authentic and productive discussions across geographical and social boundaries. In their case studies, students from different U.S. states engaged in dialogues and storytellings with each other, and the participants found commonalities and envisioned future with their distant peers (Chapter 12). Such dialogues challenge the conventional source of information and place individual experiences at the center stage. The exposure to different stories and perspectives is also highlighted in Hodgin's discussion on online civic and political dialogues. Aiming to guide students' online civic learning towards online civic actions, Hodgin offers practical guiding questions that a teacher could use when designing their lessons on online discussions

(Chapter 9). Both chapters envision the use of the Internet as a powerful tool to challenge a monolithic understanding of the world. With the appropriate support, the voices from marginalized communities could be amplified on the Internet, and online discussions could nurture civic participation among the youth whose communities have been historically silenced and oppressed. Even though not addressed directly in the chapters, online discussions could have positive implications for global education as well. Through the Internet, students could dialogue with youth from across the world, especially with those from non-Western countries. Non-western knowledge has historically been devalued and marginalized by Eurocentrism and its associated education system. Hearing non-Western youth's perspectives and experiences could help American students challenge the dominance of Eurocentrism in American curricula, and so it could contribute to a more equitable outlook of the world that incorporates a diverse range of perspectives. The book's discussion of the Internet extends beyond seeing students as the only participants. In their argument on preparing teachers for discussion facilitation, Kawashima-Ginsberg et al. suggest that online professional developments and collaborations offer teachers safe spaces in which they could learn through trial and error. They note that online trainings particularly useful for rural teachers who may have limited access to professional developments (pp. 38-39). Highlighting the need of rural teachers and teachers who may feel vulnerable in in-person settings reflects the authors' commitment to equity. Teachers' equitable access to discussion strategies is essential in bringing equity to classroom discussions nationwide. However, the book's discussion of the Internet's role in equitable discussions could extend to its application in teaching English language learners. Supporting bilingual and multilingual learners is one of Larson's principles for facilitating class discussions

(Chapter 1), and the Internet could offer them an equitable access to a discussion that is otherwise harder to achieve in an in-person setting.

The book could help its readers develop engaging discussion topics, but the authors could incorporate equity more extensively into their argument. In his chapter on structural academic controversy, Parker writes that “teachers must present two sides of the selected controversy” (p. 81). Even though students may gain exposure to multiple perspectives, the power dynamics among the different sides of an argument is not explored. One of Parker’s examples, for instance, asks, “is mass incarceration of African Americans the new Jim Crow?” (p. 75). It would be problematic to present the two sides of the argument as equals. Presenting the two sides as equals is also likely to trigger emotional responses from students, especially African American students. In preparing students for the discussion, Parker writes that students would need to “talk about [a text’s] “position, facts, and arguments” and “anticipate the arguments the opposing pair will make” (p. 83). What Parker could also include is students’ discussion about the biases of the text and the text’s power relationship with other texts. Parker agrees that structural academic controversy values liberal democracy and its principles, including “popular sovereignty, equality, liberty, pluralism, evidence-based reasoning (science), and respect” (p. 86). A key principle missing from the list is ethics. When a discussion topic is inherently an ethical question, especially one that concerns the rights of minoritized groups, it would be inappropriate to encourage students see both sides of the argument as equal in value. McAvoy & Lowery’s advice on topics for deliberation could help teachers construct questions appropriate for discussions. They ask teachers to be sensitive about their topic selection and pose questions that is action-oriented. This action-oriented approach resonates with Hodgin’s

articulation of online discussions (Chapter 9). While participating in civic actions is a crucial skill in social studies education, equity should be a part of the conversation. For example, who is leading a social action? Whose interest does an action serve? Would the results of an action be equitably distributed? Reisman suggests that a historical question should be grounded in documentary evidence instead of asking whether an action was justified or not using today’s values (pp. 114-115). While Reisman’s suggestion could avoid some potential controversy regarding a discussion topic, it is still necessary for students to make connections between past injustice to current injustice. Equity should not be absent from the conversation. The book offers multiple practical approaches to posing a discussion topic, but equity should be an orientation that is explicitly addressed in those approaches.

Since helping educators conduct equitable productive discussions is the main objective of the book, equity should be reflected throughout the chapters. Most of the chapters either explicitly or implicitly address equitable participation, equitable format, and equity-oriented discussion questions, but the theme of equity could play a bigger role. For example, equity should be included in Lo’s definition of a quality discussion. Instead of a separate part for chapters dedicated to the theme of equity, equity should be addressed in all chapters. Nevertheless, the book offers an extensive yet practical roadmap to conducting classroom discussions for educators. With the principle of equity in mind, educators could use the book as a guide to design future discussions, reflect upon their existing practices, and offer constructive feedbacks to their colleagues.

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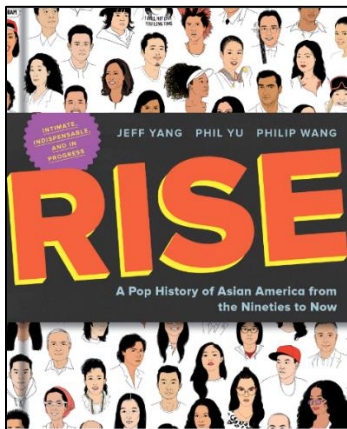
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Rise: A Pop History of Asian American from the Nineties to Now, by Jeff Yang, Phil Yu, and Philip Wang, Illustrated by Julia Kuo (Mariner Books, 2022) (Reviewed by Valerie Ooka Pang)



What do you know about your Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) students? Did you know there are over 50 different ethnic groups who speak more than 100 languages in the community? They certainly are not all the same.

Rise: A Pop History of Asian Americans from the Nineties to Now is an excellent resource for teachers, students, and others about the lives of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by Jeff Yang, Phil Yu, and Philip Wang.

AAPIs geographically arise out of many different parts of the world such as the Far East which include Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Okinawan, Taiwanese, and Tibetan. There are many AAPIs whose roots come from Southeast Asian like Bruneian, Burmese, Cambodian, Filipino, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, and Vietnamese. Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are a complex community and include Carolinian, Chamorro, Fijian, Guamanian, Native Hawaiians, and Palauan.

There are so many more ethnic groups not listed. See the table below for a more inclusive list that shows the vast diversity in the AAPI community. So when people say Asians are all alike, this is not true; we are from many different cultural communities. We are not all the same.

Many Asian Americans are not recent immigrants. In the book, *Rise*, the authors remind readers that some of the earliest Asian Americans were Filipinos who jumped from Spanish galleons and settled in the Louisiana bayous in the 1760s. They became Americans long before many other White communities who migrated to what is now known as the United States. Filipino immigrants lived on the land before the Revolutionary War. In the section of the book called “Before,” Yang reminds us that the term of “Asian American” was developed by graduate students at UC Berkeley, Yuji Ichioka and Emma Gee in 1968. They followed the lead of Huey P. Newton of the Black Panthers’ African American Movement to rally Asian Americans together and in opposition to terms such as “Orientals” or “Mongoloids.” The pan Asian term of Asian American became their

rallying cry against the stereotypes of being weak, invisible, and foreign.

The first section in the book explains some of the roots of the Asian American movement and the push back against institutional and social racism that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders had experienced for over a hundred of years. AAPIs were targets of racism for many years in the United States and forced to live in many ghettos like Chinatowns, Koreatowns, Japantowns, and Little Saigons. Chinese immigrants were the first community identified by nationality to be barred from coming in to the country with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Law that was expanded to include other Asians too from East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia in 1924. In 1942, the community that was incarcerated in mass was Japanese American of which the majority were American-born citizens.

Many Pacific Islanders do not think of themselves as Asian Americans and that is why they prefer to have the PI designation separate from Asian American. PI voices of professors, artists, and others are highlighted in the book. They do not like the AAPI designation because they believe the pan-Asian label ignores the different histories of Pacific Islanders. Pacific Islanders are indigenous people who often find their stories pushed aside by stories of immigrants. They explain by saying, “We are Samoan, Tongan, and Maori.”

In the 1980’s movies reinforced the weird and geeky foreigner stereotype for Asian Americans in films like *Sixteen Candles*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. Did you miss that? If so, maybe you agreed with the portrayals and did not give the foreigners, who were despised and spoke with a strange accent, a second thought. To many viewers, these were accurate portrayals of Asian Americans. They were odd and ate eyeball soup and chilled monkey brains as seen

in Indiana Jones movies. Audiences would laugh at them. This was not funny to some of AAPIs.

An Asian American syllabus: Overview of pop culture of the decade

There are sections in *Rise* called “The Asian American Syllabus.” For each decade up to the present, the authors describe novels, television series, political figures, celebrities, and movies that provide an overview of pop culture. In each of the decades, media featuring AAPIs is discussed. A novel that they recommended was Carlos Bulosan’s *America Is In the Heart* first published in 1943 about his bittersweet experiences as a farm laborer from the Philippines. He is treated badly, but he never gives up hope that America is the land of opportunity for everyone. The Rogers and Hammerstein musical *Flower Drum Song* made in 1961 was one of the few pieces where many Asian Americans played Asian characters. There were movies like *The Joy Luck Club* (1993) where beautiful and strong Asian American women were portrayed on the screen. This was a first. More recently, we had movies about AAPI families like *The Farewell* and *The Terror: Infamy*, both released in 2019.

There’s so much in this book that I cannot cover all of it, but here are some ideas of how to use various sections in your classroom. The sections called “Founding Fathers and Mothers” can be used by teachers to enrich the knowledge of your students about AAPI political leaders. Students can investigate and present about important contributors to our nation such as Fred Korematsu, Yuri Kochiyama, Dalip Singh Saund, Mazie Hirono, Tammy Duckworth, or Raja Krishnamoorthi. Students may be surprised to find out that there are many well-known Asian Americans who they do not think of as Asia. H.E.R. is Filipina and Bruno Mars’s mom was also Filipina. Chloé Wang, known professionally as Chloe Bennet on Marvel’s Agents

of S.H.I.E.L.D. is Chinese American. Norah Jones' father was Indian musician Ravi Shankar. Fred Armisen is Korean American. Tyga, the rapper is named for Tiger Woods and is Vietnamese American. Eddie Van Halen's mother was part Indonesian American. Asian Americans can be found in many different avenues of American life. It may be fun for students to describe each of these persons and then ask their classmates, "Who Am I?"

A lot of energy and expertise has gone into this extraordinary resource. Help to stop Asian hate by providing accurate information that demonstrates the many contributions and work that AAPIs have contributed to the United States. We are not foreigners. We are not "Orientals." We are not "Yellow Peril." We are proud Americans. We have worked hard to make the United States an inclusive, and equitable nation.

Rise: A Pop History of Asian America from the Nineties to Now is phenomenal reference that teachers can use to teach their students now only

about historical, political, popular, and sociological information about AAPIs, but also contemporary issues like the first AAPI action heroes, Simu Liu and Kumail Nanjiani. There is also information about Supreme Court issues that AAPIs led such as *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* (1898) where Wong Kim Ark, with the help of the Chinese American community, fought for his citizenship. He won his case because he was born in San Francisco and the Court ruled that any person born in the United States was a U.S. citizen and protected by the U.S. Constitution. Wong Kim Ark fought for his rights and this case has been used many times for others who also were born in the United States but denied being a citizen because they were people of color.

I hope that you will take the time to learn about the AAPI community and their contributions to the U.S.. As Carlos Bulosan wrote in his novel, *Amer-ica Is In the Heart*, "All of us, from the first Adams to the last Filipino, native born or alien, educated or illiterate—We are America!" (Rise,p. 20).

Diversity of AAPI Ethnic Communities

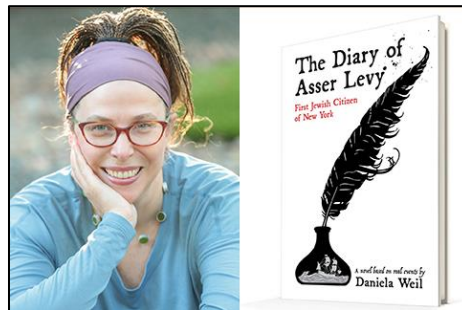
General Categories	Can Include These Communities
East Asians	Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Okinawan, Taiwanese, Tibetan.
Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders	Carolinian, Chamorro, Chuukese, Fijian, Guamanian, Hawaiian, Kosraean, Marshalllese, Native Hawaiian, Niuean, Palauan, Pohnpeian, Papua New Guinean, Samoan, Tokelauan, Tongan, Yapese.
Southeast Asians	Bruneians, Burmese, Cambodian, Filipino, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Malaysian, Mien, Singaporean, Timorese, Thai, and Vietnamese
Central Asians	Afghani, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgians, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mongolian, Tajik, Turkmen, Uzbek.
South Asians	Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Indian, Maldivians, Nepali, Pakistani, Sri Lankan.
West Asians- A controversial category. Many people from this area do not identify themselves as Asian Americans.	West Asia is known as the Middle East. People from these countries may be members of this region such as Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey (straddles Europe and Asia) United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Resources for Teachers on Asian American History

Anti-Asian Violence Resources <https://anti-asianviolenceresources.carrrd.co/>
 Asian American Education Project <https://asianamericanedu.org/>
 Asian Pacific American Heritage Month <https://asianpacificheritage.gov/for-teachers/>
 Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence. (2022). *Definitions*. <https://www.api-gbv.org/resources/census-data-api-identities/> Center of East Asian Studies <https://ceas.uchicago.edu/content/external-resources-educators>

Facing History and Ourselves <https://facingtoday.facinghistory.org/11-resources-for-teaching-about-aapi-experiences>
International Examiner. Honoring, Remembering, and Sharing Kim Ark and his fight for justice,
<https://iexaminer.org/honoring-remembering-and-sharing-the-life-of-kim-ark-and-his-fight-for-justice/>
Learning for Justice <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/after-atlanta-teaching-about-asian-american-identity-and-history>
PBS <https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/asian-americans-pbs/>
Zinn Education Project <https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/teaching-about-asian-pacific-americans/>

The Diary of Asser Levy: First Jewish Citizen of New York by Daniela Weil (Reviewed by Hank Bitten)



In the teaching of world history or global studies, the concept of continuity and change over time is important for students in understanding the big picture of history. In learning about the American colonies, the migration of populations and the perspectives of ordinary people are important in understanding the diversity of the people living in the New World.

Teachers are able to understand the big picture of the 20th century and the rise of the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Soviet Union, India, China, Israel, and the United States. Some teachers may also understand how the fall of Austria Hungary, Tsarist Russia, Ottoman Empire, Japan, and Germany changed the world. We teach about the permanent members of the UN Security Council but also recognize the power and influence of the media, investment firms, energy cartels, and technology firms. History is complicated.

The Diary of Asser Levy provides an opportunity to understand the big picture of European history in the context of Brazil, the

western Caribbean, the Dutch colonies in America, and the Roman Catholic Church. The book is less than 100 pages and packed with a chronological memory over a period of twelve years. Students can easily read the accounts of a day in the life of Asser Levy, or a week or a month in a matter of a few minutes. The photographs and images are designed to connect students with the historical content and promote inquiry, literacy, and memory.

The book is written from the perspective of a teenager or young adult about age 16-18. He lived in Recife, Brazil in a prosperous Jewish community. In the 17th century, the Dutch were a powerful empire and one in competition with Portugal, Britain and the Holy Roman Empire. The entries of the diary take place only six years after the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia ending the Thirty Years War in Europe and marking the “Golden Age” of the Netherlands and the Dutch empire in Europe, East Asia, Africa, and the Americas. The Spanish Century of the 16th century was characterized by “God, gold, and glory” was now declining in influence as new states were rising.

The conflict between the Dutch and Portugal is an extension of the Thirty Years War in Europe and a victory for the Protestant beliefs a century after the Protestant Reformation. The ‘new economy’ in Europe was based on their global markets. For Portugal and Netherlands, it was the spice trade in East Asia and sugar and sweets in the New World. Most teachers do not even mention the trade wars of the 17th century and the *Diary of Asser Levy* provides a point of inquiry for students to ask, “why do the Dutch want Salvador or Recife in Brazil?”

The military operations by the Dutch in Brazil took less than two weeks and 10,000 soldiers. Although the control of Salvador and Recife would be difficult to maintain over time, it changed the way of life for ordinary people who were citizens of the Dutch empire! Conflict is always unsettling because it separates families, postpones dreams, and presents challenges to the spiritual beliefs ordinary people value. This is the point of entry of Daniel Weil into your classroom and her influence on what your students will be thinking.

The evacuation

“The Dutch have waged war against the crown of Portugal,” Barreto proclaimed, “yet we shall not retaliate. I will give all foreigners a period of three months to leave Brazil. You may take back any possessions you can carry. We shall provide additional ships needed to return you to your homeland.” (January 26, 1654, 16)

Although this appears a welcome gesture and is better than imprisonment or death, it uprooted the lives of more than 1,600 Jews living a prosperous life after a century of persecution in Europe under the Inquisition. Many Jews were forced to be baptized in Spain and Portugal and as a result many fled to Amsterdam. Under the protection of Dutch laws, the Jews in Recife were allowed to openly practice their religious beliefs

and established, Kahal Zur Yisrael, the first synagogue in the New World. Isaac Aboab da Fancseca was the first rabbi in the New World. The Kahal Zur Israel congregation had an elementary and secondary school and supported charities in Recife. Many textbooks call attention to the Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island, which was built more than one hundred years later in 1763.



The Jewish population of Recife had to sell possessions, close their businesses, end the education of their children, and return to Amsterdam, a place they left more than twenty years ago. Middle school students familiar with the voyage of Columbus, Virginia Company, Pilgrims, and the Massachusetts Bay Company might speculate what the voyage back to Amsterdam in February 1654. Use this situation to simulate the family discussions in the homes of Recife.

- *What were the sleeping accommodations like?*
- *Was there adequate food on the ship?*
- *Were the ships seaworthy in storms?*
- *Did people experience sickness?*
- *Was there danger from enemies or pirates?*
- *Were families together or separated?*
- *What dangers did young men and women experience?*

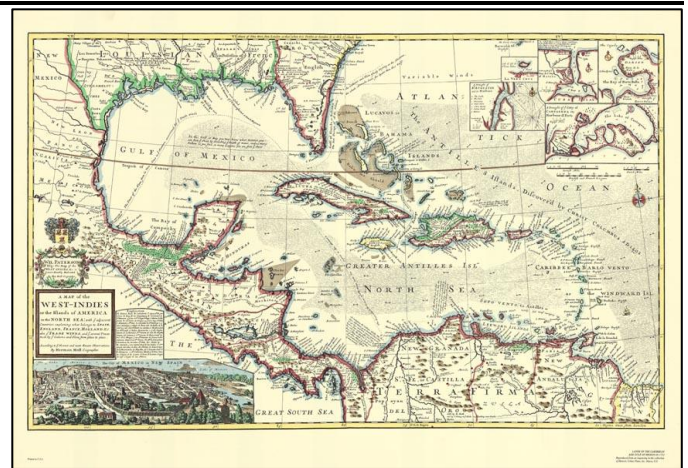
Stranded in the Caribbean

Asser Levy wrote in his diary on March 20, 1654, *"This morning, the Falcon rocked harder than usual. I fumbled my way up to the deck to see what was going on. An ominous grey sky had replaced the blue, and strong winds howled. Ripples turned into waves, and waves into giant swells. The captain ordered all passengers to take cover below. Lightning exploded over the ship. The Falcon was being tossed around like a toy boat."* (27)

What choices did passengers who are also refugees have at sea? Did they have any rights as Dutch citizens? Would their religious beliefs sentence them to prison, would able workers be kidnapped, could they be killed? Would they feel safe in a Spanish or Portuguese port in the Caribbean?

Five days later on March 25th, Asser Levy wrote with an exclamation, "Red flag!" Pirates! The most likely encounter middle and high school students have with pirates, is the Disney experience of 'Pirates of the Caribbean.' For Asser Levy and the other refugees fleeing Brazil, this was a death sentence, perhaps their greatest fear. They would lose their possessions, men might be kidnapped, women raped, and death or injury to anyone who dared challenge the pirates.

Use the two maps below for students to make a claim about the voyage from Recife, to the place of the storm, the boarding of the ship by pirates, and arriving in Jamaica. [On the first map, Jamaica is just south of the eastern end of Cuba and Recife is not visible. In the second map, Recife is on the most extreme end of the eastern coast of Brazil and Jamaica is south of Cuba.]



On April 1, about one week later, the *Falcon*, in need of repairs, drifted close to Jamaica. Understanding the geography of the Caribbean, especially the journey of approximately 40 days at sea from Recife to Jamaica should result in many questions and arguments that need evidence. Try to follow the diary and map the intended route of the *Falcon* with the actual route taking them to Jamaica.

Students studying colonial America are generally familiar with the religious exodus of people with Protestant faiths coming to Virginia, Massachusetts, New Sweden, and Connecticut. They likely understand the settlement of Maryland and the passing of the Toleration Act, 1648. Ask your students if people kept or lost their rights when their ship docked in a Spanish port. How did the Inquisition play out in real time when their 'passports' were checked? Asser Levy and the Jewish passengers on the *Falcon* were now under interrogation and the penalty of imprisonment or death for heresy.



Draw a line from the place in the image of Asser Levy to answer the following questions:

- What does he see with his eyes?
- What is he thinking in his head?
- What sounds does he hear with his ears?
- What sentences will he write with his hand and pen?
- What does he smell with his nose?
- What does he feel in his heart?
- When he arrives on shore, where will his feet take him?
- What are his fears?
- Why is he holding a weapon?
- What are his hopes?

Frustrated in New Amsterdam

This morning, September 5, 1654, “the *St. Catherine* turned and entered a large bay. The ship slipped through a narrow passage between two forested hills. We drifted into calm, sheltered waters, leaving the agitated open ocean behind, In the distance, the top of an island covered in mist slowly became visible. All the passengers came up on deck to witness the sight.” (41)

When studying the past, we do not have all the answers. In fact, asking the right questions is necessary to the historical context when documents and artifacts are not available or never existed. Ask your students to draw a picture of Asser Levy who departed Cuba on August 15 and now, 21 days later, has arrived in New Amsterdam.

The traditional opportunities to learn about diversity in the American colonies focus on Roman Catholics in Maryland and the banishment of Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams from Massachusetts Bay, it is 1654, so the Charter of Liberties has not been adopted in Philadelphia, and a safe haven for debtors in Georgia is still 80 years in the future. The evidence in Asser Levy’s diary provides inquiry into the lives of Jews who were Dutch citizens.

There are also clues in this book about self-government in the colonies. Most students learn about the representative government in Virginia’s House of Burgesses, the Mayflower Compact, the town meetings in New England, the power of the

purse in determining local taxes, and the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut. *The Diary of Asser Levy* provides a unique look into the authority of judges and the colonial court system. It also provides a prompt for discussions about civic engagement to correct what Asser Levy believes to be arbitrary or unfair decisions.

- September 9, 1654: *“Two days have passed since our trial. Today, we had to return to court with Mr. Petersen and face La Motthe again.*
- *The captain made his case. He had not been paid the remaining guilders. Mr. Pietersen begged for a little more time.*
- *“The Jews have not paid their legal debt to Captain La Motthe,” Stuyvesant declared. “However, they have sufficient property on the St. Catherine. I will allow the captain to sell all of the Jews’ belongings at public auction within four days.”* (51)

For high school students, consider comparing the court system in New Amsterdam with the experiences of four enslaved persons in the courts of Virginia around 1650. The arrival of the 23 Jewish refugees from Brazil corresponds directly with the arrival of 300 enslaved individuals from Brazil in New Amsterdam. The double arrival presented problems for this colony of 1,000 residents regarding diversity, language barriers, housing, and work. By 1660, New Amsterdam was considered the most significant slave port in North America. These ‘threads,’ or themes, that are part of the historical tapestry of the colonial experience are available to your students through supplementary texts, *The Diary of Asser Levy*, and digital resources.

The information in *The Diary of Asser Levy* is a rich resource for student inquiry, especially for teachers who want to involve their students with guided research, interdisciplinary connections, understanding the diversity of the American

experience, and evaluating decisions. The illustrations in the book from colonial New York, with specific street addresses, also provides information for teaching how communities have changed over time. For example, the history behind Pearl Street, Mill Lane, Maiden Lane, William Street, Water Street, and Wall Street are part of the local historical narrative.

Resilience and Restoration

The subtitle of *The Diary of Asser Levy* is, “First Jewish Citizen of New York.” Brainstorm with your students if it should be changed to, “First Jewish Dutch citizen of New York,” “First Citizen Advocate,” “First Jewish Homeowner in America,” “First Refugee in New York,” “First Jewish Banker,” etc. According to the author, Daniela Weil, Asser Levy was the 38th wealthiest person in America. History comes to life for our students when they make connections with the relevance of today. The websites in the Works Cited section provide digital resources for further exploration and investigation. Of particular note are www.newmasterdamhistorycenter.org, www.unsung.nyc/#home, and www.archives.nyc/newamsterdam.

It is the resilience and civic engagement of Asser Levy as a young man under age 20 who spoke for justice, pursued equality, advocated for the right to employment, homeownership, freedom of religious expression, and made the colony of New Amsterdam, and after 1664 the colony of New York, a safer and better place. This is not a book or lesson about any one person or group of people. Instead, it is a starting point for a deeper discussion about the ordinary people who are the ‘soul’ of America more than a century before the Declaration of independence and the birth of a United States of America.

In this context, students might reflect on the legacy of Asser Levy and how history and New York

remember him, when his memory was first discovered, if communities outside of New York have places named in his honor, and how he will most likely be remembered in the future of this century and specifically on August 22, 2054, the 400th anniversary of his arrival in New Amsterdam!



Asser Levy Park, Brooklyn, NY (near Coney Island)

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