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Does Lecturing Have a Place in the Social Studies Classroom?

The October 2009 issue of *Social Education* included an article by Jason Stacy, a historian and social studies educator at Southern Illinois University. In the article, "The Guide on Stage: In Defense of Good Lecturing in the History Classroom" (275), Stacy challenges the idea that good teaching means student-centered instruction.

According to Stacy, "It is wrong to assume that certain methods of teaching are inherently poor pedagogy." Stacy loves lecturing and performing in front of the classroom and claims that his secondary school students loved and responded to this approach. For Stacy and his students, good learning required "listening and, maybe, thinking," and most important, that the teacher be "entertaining." He promotes lecturing as a highly efficient information delivery system.

Stacy calls his approach interactive lecturing. He organizes his lectures around a historical problem, a comparison, or the defense of a particular thesis. His lectures are very structured. If Stacy speaks for ten minutes, students spend two minutes discussing an open-ended question based on the lecture. If he speaks for twenty minutes, students discuss two open-ended questions for two minutes each. Stacy coordinates a Teaching American History grant in Illinois where he pressed for this approach to teaching.

Social Science Docket asked social studies teachers and teacher educators in New York and New Jersey to reply to Jason Stacy's arguments.

Alan Singer, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY, editor, *Social Science Docket*: I have no doubt that Jason Stacy is a wonderful lecturer, but I think he confuses teaching and learning social studies with watching television. For most people, but obviously not all, watching television is a passive experience. Yes, sometimes they think; but watching television is primarily about entertainment. Usually people only stir to get snacks or go to the bathroom.

People in our society adopt a wide range of styles in the ways that they dress, work, and live their lives. Their styles suit their personalities, talents, preferences, and experiences. Teachers are no different. Some prefer and consider themselves more effective using one style or method of teaching, some prefer others, and some experiment with different approaches. Early in my teaching career, my lessons tended to be teacher-centered largely because I was unsure of myself and afraid of what would happen if students experienced freedom in the classroom. Whether I was struggling with students to get them to complete a particular assignment or was entertaining them in an attempt to draw them into lessons, I tried to hold the classroom reins tightly in my hands. It was not until I became more confident of my own knowledge of social studies and in my ability as a teacher that I was comfortable organizing a classroom where students actively participated as historians and social scientists, and were allowed to make choices about what and how they would learn.

Although I am an advocate of student-centered, activity-based, lessons, I do not believe there is only one way to teach a social studies lesson, or that it is desirable to always teach the same way. A strength of the activity-based approach to teaching is that the types of activities teachers can use are very different. They include analyzing primary source documents, discussions, graphing and mapping, singing and dancing, dramatics, or creating cartoons, posters, and poems. What the activities have in common is that they all involve students in learning by doing. Variety in instructional methods helps keep students interested, and flexibility in lesson design allows teachers to take into account the dynamic of a particular class.

Acknowledging that competent teachers can have different teaching styles does not mean that all teaching is equally effective for every grade level and for achieving every classroom goal. Advocates of direct instruction (e.g., lecturing, "chalk and talk" -- the teacher says something and then writes it on the board) claim that students in their classrooms learn because the classrooms are well structured and students remain focused. Students are told what they need to know, drilled to impress it on their memories, required to copy from the board, tested, and either punished or rewarded based on their scores.

I am suspicious about what students actually learn in this kind of classroom. If John Dewey is correct, and experience is the most significant teacher, then, whatever the content presented in these classes, the primary lessons students learn are related to values and

behavior. Students learn to be passive, to submit to authority without questioning, to blend in, to remain silent and hidden, to memorize enough data so they can pass a test, to avoid the consequences of a poor grade, and that people should compete rather than work together. They learn that some people's ideas are not valued and that, although teachers have the right to choose a teaching style that suits them, there is no room for individual difference in student learning styles.

Direct instruction classrooms, even those that claim to be interactive, run counter to the kind of classrooms and effective teaching described by people like Dewey, Paulo Freire, Maxine Greene, and James Banks. I think this is the case in any secondary school subject, but especially for social studies, where our expressed goals include developing active citizens and critical thinkers prepared to offer leadership in a democratic society.

Sometimes pre-service teachers ask me, "Is it ever okay to lecture?" They are talking about lessons dominated by extended presentations of information or long, detailed answers to student questions. For middle school social studies classes, my answer is always "no." When teachers do this, they only lose the students.

In high school, I think that this kind of "teacher talk" should be avoided. At best, it is a last resort, when a teacher is unable to find a way to involve students in examining materials and questions. I do not mean that a teacher is not allowed to express any ideas or answer a question. Rather, I am suggesting that, instead of launching into long extemporaneous monologues, we need to find materials that make it possible for students to participate in our lessons.

Formal lectures -- the kind we associate with college classes, where a teacher thinks out loud about an idea while students are jotting down their reactions and questions -- can be consistent with an activity-based approach. High school students need to be able to gather, organize, and evaluate information that is presented in a number of forms. When a teacher has a clear skills goal for students, an engaging manner, an interesting topic, and uses the technique judiciously, formal lecturing can be an effective approach. But it should not be your primary approach to teaching social studies.

In the last couple of years, I organized a series of six short lectures of about twenty minutes each for students in an inner-city high school who wanted to

experience a college-style classroom. Prior to the lectures, students were given a list of the main themes that were going to be introduced and spent a class period examining the primary source documents that would be referred to in the presentation. During the lecture they took notes and then they met in small groups to discuss their understanding of the material and their questions. This was followed by a full class discussion. For homework, students were assigned a 500-word, two-page essay answering a question posed during the lecture. These essays were presented in class and discussed the next day.

Jason Stacy calls himself a guide on the stage. He may be a good entertainer, but whatever his students say, I am not convinced his approach is good social studies teaching.

Rozella Kirchgassner, High School for Law Enforcement, Queens, NY, President of the Association of Teachers of Social Studies: Based upon the description offered by Jason Stacy, I would not refer to the practice he uses as lecturing in the traditional sense of the term. An effective educator presents data in the form of text or commentary using a variety of forms and formats. Whether that format involves a map, graph, chart, video presentation, interactive dialog, PowerPoint or a ten minute lecture, so long as there is interactive processing time allotted and the opportunity for weighted and thoughtful discussion, it could realistically fit into a "workshop" model lesson. The major problem I have with a lecture is the lack of opportunity for listeners to process and respond to the information and/or concepts presented. Many lecturers are oblivious to the interests, concerns, or perspectives of their listeners and are more interested in indoctrination than in information processing. A common rule of thumb for attention maintenance is a person's age. Thus, the average fifteen year old can focus attention for approximately 15 minutes. Any presentation, including a lecture, which extended longer than that time frame would require some level of interactive processing at roughly the same intervals to retain effectiveness.

Charles Howlett, Molloy College, Rockville Centre, NY: I am fond of reminding teachers and students of a story that took place in the early 1940s between the noted publisher Alfred A. Knopf and the leading Columbia University cultural historian Jacques Barzun. Knopf approached Barzun and asked him to consider

writing a book about teaching. To which Barzun responded why would anyone be interested. Knopf politely responded by simply stating, “the substance of what we think, though born in thought, must live in ink.” Barzun then considered Knopf request and the end product was an important book entitled, “Teacher in America.”

If teachers put their thoughts and ideas into "ink" the result of such endeavor would be exciting and worthwhile lectures. Clearly, lecturing is a necessary component for social studies educators to organize their thoughts and information. It should be the passageway to more effective engagement with students. Combining lectures with primary source documents and visuals should make daily lessons more interesting. The important point is that lecturing forces educators to put their ideas and information into proper context. It is not about copying information from the textbook. Rather, lecturing enables educators to think through the information they need to convey to their students. It also enables them to work as actors in the process of engagement and processing.

For me, lecturing is not all about talking and reading a script. Instead, it is a form of organized information delivery. Lecturing requires social studies educators to get their act together, to become involved in the delivery of historical information, and, most importantly, to make discerning and critical judgments. For these very reasons, lecturing is not power point script reading. It is actually writing the essence of history from one's own perspective and then relating it to student comprehension and learning. If done right, lecturing not only engages students but requires them to listen carefully and take notes in a discriminating and judicious fashion. Let's not abandon lecture for the sake of entertainment and expediency.

Catherine Snyder, Union College, Schenectady, NY:

I agree with the premise: It is wrong to assume that certain methods of teaching are inherently poor pedagogy. Poor pedagogy, in my opinion, is anything that does not work with a group of students in a particular setting at a particular time. In other words, a method that might work effectively with a group of 9th graders in September might be poor pedagogy by April. In order to effectively deliver instruction, teachers have to be continually aware of their students' learning styles combined with their evolving abilities. The lecture technique de scribed by Dr. Stacey only offers the opportunity to teach a limited set of skills

within the social studies curriculum. It offers the opportunity for students to practice keen listening skills, something most educators would agree our students need to practice, but there is only limited opportunity for discourse and analysis and no opportunity for application. Adolescents need more than two or four minutes to pursue a line of inquiry; particularly if it is new material, which a lecture presumably would be. Because they are hearing material for the first time, they need to establish a frame of reference for the new learning before genuine critical discourse and application (something Dr. Stacey's method does not offer) are possibilities. Also, like any method, if used too often it would privilege one kind of learning over others. While I would welcome Dr. Stacey's method into my repertoire as a teacher, I would use it sparingly and with carefully selected curriculum.

Paul Vermette, Niagara University, Lewiston, NY:

I have many questions for Jason Stacey. If we recall that thinking causes learning, we have to ask, “Where does the student thinking happen?” in these lectures. Lecturing and storytelling (lecture's little sibling) may really be good for learners, but how does he know? If the lesson involves questioning, Think-Pair-shares, and reaction papers, is it still a lecture?

If the telling comes after a powerful student experience, it may have some value in helping students understand what they have just experienced, but that is a big “IF”. If the lecture is immediately followed by student application of concepts or generalizations, then it may have some value (as long as teacher assesses quality of application). But students cannot practice “information” or a “story,” which is the focus of most social studies lectures.

Lecture may have a role if we believe that students do not need to learn anything in class (or a course) that may help them become better citizens or conceptually smarter people. If Social Studies (not just History) is only about “facts and stuff,” then it does not matter what students do in class; they do not even have to be there. Finally, if the lecture is a response to a real felt student question, and is followed by a student reaction to the lecture, then you have conversation that is a powerful learning tool, but not just a lecture. I have spent 15 years working with the History Department at Niagara University trying to get professors to cut back on lecturing, increase discussion, and add more engaging work to their classes. I am disappointed that

Stacey was published in *Social Education*. He sets classroom teaching back many years.

Michael Pezone, Law, Government, and Community Service Campus Magnet High School, Queens, NY: I don't know Jason Stacy, and have no reason to doubt that he is a fine educator who is well regarded by his students. What follows, therefore, are my concerns about lecturing as a pedagogical strategy and are not a commentary on his practice. My primary concern relates to the "hidden curriculum" embodied in the practice of lecturing. In addition to the content transmitted to students, they also learn that the teacher is an authority figure who possesses privileged knowledge; it is the teacher's responsibility to impart such knowledge, while students are passive recipients.

In addition, I am concerned that although students are encouraged and required to react "critically" to lectures, very few high school students are expert enough to analyze and dissect the ways in which historical issues and events are framed and defined by the lecturer's particular viewpoint.

While listening is a critically important skill for students to develop, why can't they read the material and then listen to one another during discussion? If the answer is that the educational experience depends on the delivery and showmanship of the lecturer, I humbly suggest that our role as educators should be to take a back seat and to empower students to be the primary actors in the classroom. I have always felt that it requires very little real talent for an educated adult to dazzle a roomful of children — the "teacher as entertainer" smacks of ego to me, sort of a pedagogical "hey, look at me!"

Sarah Roberts, Graduate School of Education, University at Buffalo: "Do you lecture?" I asked the well-respected social studies educator. "Absolutely! Social studies is a series of great stories!" I was surprised by his response because I knew his classroom to be student-centered and interactive. However, on second thought, I knew I should not be surprised. When questioned about their interest in teaching social studies, prospective and current students of the University at Buffalo Graduate School of Education's Social Studies Education Program often respond that they love stories. Yet few, if any, have thought concretely about how to tell stories in their future social studies classroom. For this reason in fall 2009, I

included interactive lecturing as a pedagogical method in my social studies methods course.

The pre-service teachers wanted to learn how to tell stories well and the veteran educator suggested I teach them. What we learned together, however, is that interactive lecturing was not the means to do so, at least not for us. We practiced critical and active listening skills together; we wrote lesson plans with detailed lectures embedded with content knowledge, prompts to engage students in critiquing the content; we prepared student guides for note-taking and to hone listening skills; we practiced lecturing. As their professional knowledge grew during the semester through classroom observations and through their studies, they realized that lecturing well does not necessarily equate to telling stories for the purpose of engaged and critical listening, learning, or teaching. Paulo Freire wrote that we must read "the world in a word." Next year, I will be teaching storytelling as a social studies teaching and learning method instead of interactive lecture. While storytelling is a form of lecturing, conceptually it sets a different mood in the classroom. Pre-service teachers loved social studies because they loved the stories, not because they loved the lectures.

John Gunn, Queens College - CUNY: In his October 2009 article in *Social Education* Jason Stacy defends the use of "the interactive lecture" in "the history classroom." For Stacy an "interactive lecture" is distinguished from ordinary lectures by two features: 1) interspersed within the lecture, time is allotted for student discussion of lecture content and 2) an "interactive lecture" may be: "problem-centered," "comparative" or "thesis-driven." Stacy's defense of the interactive lecture is driven by the disfavor of the lecture form in schools of education and among administrators and his enjoyment of lecturing and his perception that lecturing is enjoyed by colleagues and students and that it is effective.

Stacy attempts to ground his defense of the interactive lecture in constructivist theory. He claims the "essence of the constructivist model of learning," is captured by the statement, "In history knowledge of factual material is required before a student can begin to interact with the material" and he goes on to elaborate, "An interactive lecturer . . . presents new material in the context of known material, fostering moments that demand "assimilation" and "accommodation" (275).

Although there is disagreement over what constitutes constructivism and how it might be translated into classroom practice, Stacy's interactive lecture collides with a core assumption of constructivism, i.e., that students learn by actively constructing knowledge. In Orwellian manner Stacey uses constructivist concepts to camouflage traditional teaching. In *How Teachers Taught* Larry Cuban (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993) developed the concept of "teacher-centered" instruction to describe the predominant patterns of pedagogy in U.S. schools, and particularly high schools, he discovered have been in existence over the last century. Stacy's interactive lecture is an exemplar of teacher centered instruction because of its reliance on teacher talk, whole-class instruction, the teachers' control of time and of course content. In *A Place Called School* John Goodlad (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. 1984), and colleagues noticed that this form of instruction was prevalent and correlated with "high levels of student passivity."

Given Stacy's amnesia it is useful to recall Dewey's alternative view which models "assimilation" and "accommodation" of curricular concepts and methods without reifying either of them. In *The School and Society* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1990), Dewey presented the concepts "voluntary" and "reflective" attention to theorize students' psychological investment with a problem or question. Dewey defined voluntary attention as, "when the child entertains results in the form of problems or questions, the solution of which he [sic] is to seek for himself." Reflective attention, a concept close to constructivism's notion of "metacognition," is defined as existing when ". . . the child can conceive of the end as something to be found out, discovered; and can control his [sic] acts and images so as to help in the inquiry and solution" (146).

In *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1990) Dewey reminds us that disciplinary knowledge developed over the breadth of human history as a result of concerted human efforts to organize and systematize experience (189-190). The contemporary upshot is that disciplinary knowledge often appears as "logically ordered facts" which are "torn away from their original place in experience." (184) As an antidote to this dilemma of modernity, Dewey argues that curricula need to be "psychologized" (i.e., made meaningful for students) by "reinstating into experience the subject matter of the studies" (200). Dewey's argument suggests that

students will be engaged in social studies, or history, if they are allowed to pose questions rooted in their experience without being initially constrained by the disciplinary concepts and content. With regard to social studies, Goodlad comments that in a subject that "would appear to be of great human interest . . . the topics of study become removed from their intrinsically human character, reduced to the dates and places readers will recall memorizing for tests" (212). Dewey's notion that curricular knowledge is ultimately derived from human experience and projects offers clues as to how one might introduce students to problems and to develop understanding of disciplinary concepts in a social studies class.

At the conclusion *How Teachers Taught*, Larry Cuban attempted to explain the century-long persistence of teacher-centered instruction he chronicled. He argued that central to the persistence of teacher-centered instruction are "long term cultural beliefs about the nature of knowledge" and "what teaching and learning should be." (260) Cuban states the belief that teaching and learning ". . . depended on those who were informed telling the uninformed what was important to know" arose "millennia ago" (248) Stacey's belief, cited above, that students must first learn history facts and content before they can "begin to interact with the material" is a modern version of this millennia-old viewpoint. This belief makes the constructivist goal of integrating of new knowledge into students' preexisting knowledge difficult since it presumes that social studies content is removed from students' questions and experience.

Stacy's defense and enjoyment of the interactive lecture is understandable. We know from Cuban and Goodlad that when Stacy began teaching there were few models of constructivist teaching available. The absence of such models would make learning and applying abstract pedagogical theory difficult. The prevalence of teacher-centered instruction may help us understand Stacy's widely shared sentiment that he "took precious little from my education classes." A brief list of other causes for the educational landscape Stacy entered into, and came to view as positive, would include administrative resistance to constructivist modes of teaching, a lack of clarity of the proper goals of social studies or history courses, and the enormous demands that moving to student centered instruction would place on teachers to rethink curricula and to manage students in this new cognitive environment. It is perhaps not surprising that researchers have recently

noticed that schools that have been able to raise student achievement have also been ones strong professional communities characterized by high degrees of inter-teacher trust and teacher capacity to effect school change and whose professional communities are deeply focused on instructional issues. One imagines that had Stacy been lucky enough to be a teacher in such a school his education classes might have made more sense and he might have developed a more substantive conception of constructivism.

D.W. is a member of the New Jersey Council for the Social Studies who asked that her name and school district not be included.

Some of my fondest memories of college were the many lectures sponsored by campus organizations that held me captivated in my spare time. When I began substitute teaching, after having students complete the assigned work left by their teachers, I found that I was able to engage my student audiences with mini-lectures for the balance of the time period. I worked inner city schools in three different urban districts and the students I reached the most and fastest included those least expected to succeed otherwise. Some students actually tried cutting their regular classes to hear my lectures and many teachers and supervisors complimented my ability to capture and hold the attention of students who often had difficulty in school.

After many years of teaching full time, I believe some of my greatest classroom experiences and outcomes as a high school teacher have come from the occasional lectures I have given. So much of modern educational pedagogy concludes that lectures are an ineffective means to educate. However, everything from the looks on my students' faces, to their increased participation, *unrequested* comments, plus year-end surveys, tells me otherwise.

My lectures do not ban students from participating. A period of time is always left at the end for questions

and comments and for activities, but the majority of the class period is reserved for lecturing with some type of assessment.

When I read the request from the *Social Science Docket* for responses to a teacher who said lecturing can be a crucial method for teaching, I jumped at the opportunity. It is something I have long been passionate about yet felt helpless in the face of all the contrary "master teacher" dogma that dictates how we should be teaching. At times and places with emphasis on course pacing, some lecturing allows more content coverage; something crucial in survey courses such as history that have a very broad curriculum.

I recently hosted a couple of English teachers who are in a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) program in China. During their stay they gave a power point assisted lecture as part of their presentation about cultural aspects of China. One of the things I learned from them was that in China (at least places where they have lived and taught), the only type of teaching expected is lectures. Students are not expected to participate and resist efforts to encourage them to do otherwise. Although I disagree with the idea that discouraging student participation is good teaching methodology, and I definitely believe that active, student-centered learning should be the primary practice, my point is that lectures are valid, for at least part of a lesson, and should not be completely eliminated.

At a time when there is tremendous concern about improving student academic performance, it is worth noting that students in and from China do exceedingly well on national and international standardized tests. In fact, surveys and studies generally show they do better than students who are educated in the United States, despite, or perhaps because of, their lecture-centered teaching pedagogy. It seems to me that is a good argument for infusing some lecturing into social studies instruction.

Social Movements Transform the United States

This issue of *Social Science Docket* exams social movements and the ways they transformed the United States. There are articles and lesson materials on the African American Civil Rights movement, the Labor movement, the Women's Rights movement, and Gay Rights. Articles on immigrant rights and peace movements were included in recent theme issues of *Social Science Docket*. The opening article by Alan Singer is based on presentations at New York City metropolitan area high schools in programs that focused on the commemoration of Martin Luther King's birthday and the inauguration of Barack Obama as President of the United States in January 2009.

Martin Luther King Day and the Inauguration of Barack Obama

by Alan Singer

My name is Alan Singer and I am here to recruit you.

Some of you have seen the movie *Milk*, about Harvey Milk, a gay activist in San Francisco, where he tells audiences he wants to recruit them. It is a powerful line from a powerful movie. At another point in the movie Harvey Milk says, "Without hope life is not worth living – you've got to give them hope." Not only am I here today to recruit you, but I am here to share with you my hope for the future.

It is fitting that I share it with you at this time – Martin Luther King's Birthday and the African American Civil Rights Movement are celebrated next week on Monday, and on Tuesday, in a historic first, Barack Obama will be inaugurated as the 44th President of the United States, the first President who is not European American. But while I respect these men and their achievements, my hope does not lie with Martin Luther King or Barack Obama. In fact I am skeptical about what President Obama will be able to achieve.

My hope for the future actually lies with you.

Because of the election of Barack Obama, there will be a lot of talk in the next few days that the Civil Rights movement has finally been successfully completed. As an activist and a historian, I disagree.

The African American Civil Rights Movement in the United States was a major world historic event that motivated people to fight for social justice in this country and others. Its activism, ideology, and achievements contributed to the women's rights movement, the gay and lesbian rights movement, the struggle for immigrant rights, and the anti-war movement in this country. It inspired anti-Apartheid activists in South Africa and national liberation movements in third world countries.

In many ways, I am a product of the Civil Rights Movement. I did not march in 1963, I was only thirteen

years old, but I did march at the twentieth anniversary celebration in Washington DC in 1983 and at many other protests demanding an end to imperialist war, equality for all citizens, immigrant rights, and social justice. The last time I marched was on Sunday when I joined a group of people at Times Square in New York City demanding an end to the U.S. supported Israeli attack on Gaza and the occupation of Palestinian lands in Gaza and the West Bank.

The traditional myth about the Civil Rights Movement, the one that is taught in schools and promoted by politicians and the national media, is that Rosa Parks sat down, Martin Luther King stood up, and somehow the whole world changed. The new myth, currently being refined, adds the legend of Barack Obama to the equation.

But the real story is that the Civil Rights Movement was a mass democratic movement to expand human equality and guarantee citizenship rights for Black Americans. While some individual activists stood out, it involved hundreds of thousands of people, including many White people, who could not abide the U.S. history of racial oppression dating back to slavery days. It is worth noting that many of the Whites involved in the Civil Rights movement were radicals – communists and socialists – who had been involved in earlier protest movements, particularly the building of the labor movement, and a disproportionate number were Jews who had their own experience with racism and bigotry.

King and Parks played crucial and symbolic roles in the Civil Rights Movement, but so did Thurgood Marshall, Myles Horton, Fanny Lou Hammer, Ella Baker, A. Philip Randolph, Walther Reuther, Medger Evers, John Lewis, Bayard Rustin, Pete Seeger, Presidents Eisenhower and Johnson, as well as activists who were critics of racial integration and non-violent

civil disobedience such as Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X, and the Black Panthers.

The stories of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King have been sanitized to rob them of their radicalism and power. Rosa Parks was not a little old lady who sat down in the White only section of the bus because she was tired. She was a trained organizer, a graduate of the Highlander School, where she studied civil disobedience and social movements, and a leader of the Montgomery, Alabama NAACP. She made a conscious choice to break an unjust law in order to provoke a response and promote a movement for social change. Ms. Parks was not even that old when she was arrested. She was only 42 when she refused to change her seat and made history.

Martin Luther King, although you would never know it from Monday's commemoration, challenged the war in Vietnam, U.S. imperialism, and laws that victimized working people and the poor, not just racial discrimination. When he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, he was helping organize a sanitation workers union. If Dr. King had not been assassinated, but had lived to become an old radical activist who constantly questioned American policy, I suspect he would never have become so venerated. It is better for a country to have heroes who are dead, because they cannot make embarrassing statements opposing continuing injustice and unnecessary wars.

The African American Civil Rights movement is over. It ran its course and it had impressive achievements. It started in the 1940s when A. Philip Randolph and others challenged segregation in the military and in war-related industries. It picked up steam in the 1950s with the *Brown v. Topeka*, Kansas Board of Education decision and the Montgomery Bus boycott. It peaked with the 1963 March on Washington and the Selma to Montgomery march that led to the 1965 voting rights act.

The Civil Rights movement ended legal segregation in the United States and as I noted before, it led to a generation of activism in many different areas. But it was a coalition of people with disparate goals and it gradually came apart after 1965. Many of its White allies felt the movement's goals had been achieved with the *Brown* decision and passage of anti-discrimination laws and voting protection. Many Blacks, including Reverend Martin Luther King, were disappointed with the limited impact of legal change. They felt that changes in the law were only a beginning and that these had to be followed with programs to

promote economic and social equality. In many urban centers, disappointment turned into rage and rage into rioting, further alienating Whites who wanted Blacks to be satisfied with incremental change and limited gains.

The African American Civil Rights Movement ended, probably with the assassination of Dr. King in April 1968 and the abandonment of Great Society social programs by the Democratic Party, but social inequality continues. What kind of country is it when young Black men are more likely to be incarcerated than in college, inner city youth unemployment at the best of times hovers about fifty percent, and children who already have internet access at home are the ones most likely to have it in school?

I believe the United States needs a new social movement, a movement for social justice – and that is the movement I am recruiting you to join. I am not recruiting you to believe in a particular ideology, political program, or point of view. The world is constantly changing – you are constantly changing – and it would be foolish to pigeonhole you at the age of fourteen or sixteen and demand that you support a particular cause for the rest of your lives. What I am recruiting you for is to make a commitment to three ways of looking at the world. I want you to be critical thinkers, to reject received truths, and to demand the right to evaluate evidence and underlying ideas. I am recruiting you to become thinking human beings.

I am also recruiting you to become compassionate human beings with respect for diversity. You need to be concerned with the needs of others who share this planet with us, to recognize their humanity, and to understand that they want the same things that you do for themselves and their families -- adequate food and housing, decent education and medical care, and hope for the future. You also need to understand just because someone does not live your way, practice your religion, or make the same choices that you make, does not mean they are wrong or inferior to you.

And finally, I am recruiting you to a life of civic activism – as full participants in shaping the future of a democratic society that supposedly values an interchange of ideas and an open expression of disagreement.

At the 2004 Republican national convention in New York City, I was marching with a group of teachers in protest against the war in Iraq. After we had been standing in one place for a while, a young social studies teacher asked me how long we had been

marching. I thought for a few seconds and responded “forty years.” She laughed and said, “I mean really.” “Forty years,” I said, “I’ve been marching for forty years.” I invite you all to march with me.

It is time for a new social movement in the United States – a movement for social justice that ensures political, social, and economic rights for all people, citizens and non-citizens, Americans and everybody else – and I am here to recruit you.

A big issue today in this region of the country is the rights of undocumented immigrants who live amongst us and play a crucial role in the work force. Will you turn your backs on them, or will you advocate and organize to defend them? Each of you will have to make a decision.

On Tuesday, President-elect Obama becomes President Obama. The nation and world will be listening carefully to his inaugural address. The country and the global economy are in a severe economic downturn that might turn into a Great Depression on the magnitude of the 1930s. Based on the past, we know that when things like this happen, working and poor people, the elderly, racial and ethnic minorities, and especially children, the people with the least, will be asked to bear the heaviest burdens.

President Obama can choose to be a leader in the movement for social justice. He can choose to participate. But we have no guarantees. In fact, the

only one you can really control is yourself. During the 1930s workers organizing labor unions sang:

“You got to go down and join the union, you got to join it for yourself, nobody hear can join it for you, you got to go down and join the union for yourself.”

This means you have to decide to be an activist for social justice committed to full participation in decision-making in a democratic society for yourself.

In his last speech, Reverend Martin Luther King told his audience: “We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop . . . I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!” Martin Luther King did not tell what the promised land would look like but as a lifetime social activist I am sure that he knew.

Some of you may remember the silly children’s song about the bear who went over the mountain to see what he could see. On the other side, he saw another mountain. Each time the bear climbed the mountain, he found another mountain that had to be climbed. Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement climbed their mountain. It is time for you to start climbing yours.

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Using Media to Analyze Social Movements

by Staci Anson

In September 1957, Little Rock School District in Arkansas was desegregated when nine African American students were the first to brave the taunts and the media frenzy in order to attend school. The *Denver Post* wrote “The governor of Arkansas, in defiance of a federal court order, is attempting to bar Negroes from attending a Little Rock high school.” The *Birmingham Post-Herald*, however, described the events differently. “Governor Faubus says the guardsmen are on duty to preserve peace and maintain order. Certainly that is one of his responsibilities as governor. There is little room for doubt that public sentiment in Arkansas supports Governor Faubus. A majority of the people not only in Arkansas but throughout the South are opposed to the integration of the schools.” These different views reflect public sentiment from different geographic regions. In fact, you could examine almost any Civil Rights event of the time and see divergent views printed in different U.S. newspapers.

I use different media perspectives in my U.S. history classes at Ramapo High School in Franklin Lakes, NJ to build up the analytical skills of my students, especially in my Civil Rights unit. I want students to understand how different media portray the same event and why such differences occur. I also want them to be able to weigh different perspectives as they determine what actually happened in history.

I use document-based questions and essays in all of my classes, from freshmen world civilizations to 11th and 12th grade electives. However, document analysis should not only occur when a teacher provides sources. Students should be able to locate sources independently. I have United States history students take full advantage of the primary sources available in our school databases and on websites. It allows them to move from a passive learner to a more proactive one.

On day one of the Unit on the Civil Rights Movement, students are asked to draw conclusions as to why a northern or western newspaper might write something different about a Civil Rights event than a southern paper. After a brief discussion, I steer the class towards an analysis activity by asking students to hypothesize the following: How could we, as a class, go about testing this idea that northern and southern newspaper would portray a Civil Rights event differently?

After students share their ideas, I hand out an assignment sheet with the task: You will now be asked to analyze how *one* Civil Rights event was portrayed in different forms of media. You will not just be summarizing what happened during the event, you must analyze the perspective and biases of the different forms of media you examine. Then, after watching video clips and reading newspaper articles from the North and the South, write a 2 to 3 page essay analyzing the different media coverage of a Civil Rights Movement event of your choice.

Students begin their research by selecting a topic or event from the “videos and more” database found on the Eyes on the Prize PBS website (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/>). After they watch the video, they locate and analyze four newspaper articles from the time period (they can use the Eyes on the Prize website, *The New York Times Historical* databases, and the *Proquest Historic Newspapers* database.) As they go through the video and the articles, they must analyze the sources, looking at their perspectives and possible biases.

I have used this activity in both my Advanced Placement and College Prep level classes, and in each case, students have been able to draw valid conclusions as to why events are portrayed differently in different parts of the country. This lesson teaches more than just the history of the Civil Rights Movement. It reinforces the ideas that historians must always examine what they read with a critical eye and that it is very easy for media to become biased depending on who is doing the reporting.

This lesson can easily be modified so that students can examine a multitude of issues, events and time periods. I have anthropology students use international media sources when analyzing the concept of arranged marriages in order to avoid a Eurocentric outlook. They develop a deeper understanding of why many cultures arrange marriages, and what role those arrangements play in the different societies. I have also used a similar lesson with my freshmen world civilizations class in which they examine the war in Bosnia. Regardless of the subject, students practice analytical skills that enhance active learning and prepare them to be more productive citizens in society.

Women's Liberation Movements: Past, Present, and Future

by Jillian Saccone

The struggle for women's liberation in the United States can be categorized by periods of feminist activity, ideas, and actions. For over two centuries women have worked to secure the legal, social, and cultural equalities they have today, but the movement is not over. The women's liberation movement in the United States can usefully be divided into three historical "waves" or time periods.

The First Wave – The Right to Vote

The first wave in efforts by women to achieve social and political equality occurred during the 19th and early 20th centuries and it is most closely identified with the struggle by women for the right to vote. In 1848, the first women's rights convention was held at Seneca Falls, New York. It produced the Declaration of Sentiments, modeled on the Declaration of Independence, and demanded equal treatment of women and men under the law.

After passage of the 15th Amendment to the Constitution guaranteed the right to vote to Black men, women's rights advocates concentrated on obtaining the right to vote. Among the leaders of this campaign were Susan B. Anthony of New York State and Alice Paul of New Jersey. There were strategic differences among suffragettes; some fought on a state-by-state basis while others wanted to focus on a national amendment. Some strictly obeyed the law and conformed to social conventions while others launched hunger strikes and obstructed governmental operations. The first wave of the women's movement culminated in the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1919. After 70 years of persistent and tireless effort, women finally secured the right to vote.

The Second Wave – Achieving Full Citizenship

During its second wave, the women's liberation movement fought to end discrimination and achieve full citizenship rights for women in the United States. This movement was a response to exclusion from jobs and schools after World War II and the sterility of life in the suburbs. It was inspired by the African American Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

A major manifesto of the second wave of protest was *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan. Published in 1963, it exploded the myth that women were content with second-class citizenship. The book, which described the dissatisfaction felt by middle-class housewives with narrow roles imposed on them by society, became a national bestseller. A second major figure in the second wave was Gloria Steinem, editor

of Ms. Magazine. In 1966, Steinem and Friedan helped found the National Organization for Women (NOW) with the express goal of ending sexual discrimination in the workplace. The second wave of feminism made widespread use of lobbying, litigating and public demonstrations.

During the second wave of struggle women made considerable progress towards full human rights. They expanded access to birth control and with the Roe v. Wade decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, secured the legal right to have an abortion. The availability of contraceptives and the ability to terminate unwanted pregnancies contributed to a cultural revolution in American society in which women began to see themselves as full and equal sexual beings.

Affirmative action and campaigns against sexual harassment transformed the work place. In 1972, Title IX of the Education Amendment prohibited sex discrimination in schools. As a result, many women began to join athletic programs and enrolled in higher education.

The Third Wave – Re-Focusing

The third wave of the women's movement has been very different from earlier struggles because so much has already been achieved. Many women now reject the label feminist or call themselves post-feminists. Women in the third wave have always had the right to vote, the right to obtain contraceptives, and to go to college and pursue a career. The third wave has taken on new issues, such as the successful campaign to secure the Violence Against Women Act, which fund services for victims of rape and domestic violence. Issues that continue to confront women are pay inequality and the demand that they juggle career and family while men are able to avoid this kind of dual responsibility. Many women continue to struggle with individual problems such a depression and body image issues. One area third wave women have shown considerable progress is in achieving greater electoral success and in serving in high government positions.

Documents from the First Wave of Feminism

A. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Address, First Annual Meeting of the Woman's State Temperance Society, Rochester, New York, June 1, 1853: "We have been obliged to preach woman's rights, because many, instead of listening to what we had to say on temperance, have questioned the right of a woman to speak on any subject. In all courts of justice and legislative assemblies, if the right of the speaker to be there be questioned, all business waits until that point be settled. Now, it is not settled in the mass of minds that woman has any rights on this footstool, and much less a right to stand on an even pedestal with man, look him in the face as an equal, and rebuke the sins of her day and generation. Let it be clearly understood, then, that we are a woman's rights Society; that we believe it woman's duty to speak whenever she feels the impression [urge] to do so; that it is her right to be present in all the councils of Church and State. The fact that our agents are women, settles the question of our character on this point."

Questions

1. Where was this speech given?
2. Why did Elizabeth Cady Stanton make this statement?

B. Marriage Contract signed by Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell, May 1, 1855: "While acknowledging our mutual affection by publicly assuming the relationship of husband and wife, yet in justice to ourselves and a great principle, we deem it a duty to declare that this act on our part implies no sanction of, nor promise of voluntary obedience to such of the present laws of marriage, as refuse to recognize the wife as an independent, rational being, while they confer upon the husband an injurious and unnatural superiority, investing him with legal powers which no honorable man would exercise, and which no man should possess. We protest especially against the laws which give to the husband: 1. The custody of the wife's person; 2. The exclusive control and guardianship of their children; 3. The sole ownership of her personal, and use of her real estate, unless previously settled upon her, or placed in the hands of trustees, as in the case of minors, lunatics, and idiots; 4. The absolute right to the product of her industry; 5. Also against laws which give to the widower so much larger and more permanent interest in the property of his deceased wife, than they give to the widow in that of the deceased husband; 6. Finally, against the whole system by which "the legal existence of the wife is suspended during marriage," so that in most States, she neither has a legal part in the choice of her residence, nor can she make a will, nor sue or be sued in her own name, nor inherit property. We believe that personal independence and equal human rights can never be forfeited, except for crime; that marriage should be an equal and permanent partnership, and so recognized by law; that until it is so recognized, married partners should provide against the radical injustice of present laws, by every means in their power."

Questions

1. Why did Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell sign this contract?
2. Why did they feel it was necessary?

C. Susan B. Anthony, Rochester, New York, defends her effort to vote in the 1872 Presidential election: "I stand before you tonight under indictment for the alleged crime of having voted at the last presidential election, without having a lawful right to vote. It shall be my work this evening to prove to you that in thus voting, I not only committed no crime, but, instead, simply exercised my citizen's rights, guaranteed to me and all United States citizens by the National Constitution, beyond the power of any state to deny."

Questions

1. What crime was Susan B. Anthony accused of committing?
2. How did Susan B. Anthony respond to the accusation?

Second-Wave Feminists Transform American Society

From 1950 to 1980, Betty Friedan, author of *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), Gloria Steinem, founder and editor of *Ms.* magazine, Helen Gurley Brown, author of *Sex and the Single Girl* (1962) and editor of *Cosmopolitan*, and Ellen Willis, founder of the radical women's group Redstockings, helped to redefine what it means to be a woman in the United States. Read the quotes on this activity sheet and conduct research on their lives. What contributions did they make in the struggle for equal rights for women? Do you agree or disagree with their ideas? Why?



Betty Friedan (1921 – 2006)

“The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the United States. Each suburban wife struggled with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night--she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question—‘Is this all?’”



Gloria Steinem (1934 –)

“This is no simple reform. It really is a revolution. Sex and race because they are easy and visible differences have been the primary ways of organizing human beings into superior and inferior groups and into the cheap labor in which this system still depends. We are talking about a society in which there will be no roles other than those chosen or those earned. We are really talking about humanism . . . Law and justice are not always the same. When they aren't, destroying the law may be the first step toward changing it.”



Helen Gurley Brown (1922 –)

“So you're single. You can still have sex. You can have a great life. And if you marry, don't just sponge off a man or be the gold-medal-winning mother. Don't use men to get what you want in life – get it for yourself.”



Ellen Willis (1941-2006)

“My deepest impulses are optimistic, an attitude that seems to me as spiritually necessary and proper as it is intellectually suspect.”

“On one level the sixties revolt was an impressive illustration of Lenin's remark that the capitalist will sell you the rope to hang him with.”

Hillary Rodham Clinton – Third Wave Feminist

Hillary Rodham was born on October 26, 1947, in Park Ridge, Illinois. She is one of three siblings. Her parents were very supportive and encouraged her pursuit of a career in law and politics. Hillary entered Yale Law School in 1969 where she met her future husband, William Jefferson “Bill” Clinton, who would become the 42nd President of the United States. They developed a strong bond through political campaigns. They married in 1975 and have one child named Chelsea.

While raising Chelsea, Hillary began her career as a lawyer and she was Arkansas’ First Lady for twelve years when Bill was governor. She also taught law at the University of Arkansas. When Bill Clinton was elected President, Hillary became an important advisor and an advocate for healthcare reform and children. She believes “All of us have to recognize that we owe our children more than we have been giving them.”

Reflecting on her experiences, Hillary explained, “Our lives are a mixture of different roles. Most of us are doing the best we can to find whatever the right balance is... For me, that balance is family, work and service.”

When Hillary was elected United States Senator from New York in November 2000 she became the first “First Lady” elected to the Senate. After the terrorists’ attacks on September 11, 2001, Hillary was a dedicated advocate for funding the rebuilding of New York City and the health concerns of first responders. She also became a strong supporter of increased funding for the United States military.

In 2006, Hillary was reelected to the Senate, and in 2007 she began campaigning for the Democratic Party’s Presidential nomination. After a grueling campaign in which she won a number of primaries, Hillary lost the nomination to Senator Barack Obama of Illinois. When Obama was elected President, he selected Hillary Clinton to become the 67th Secretary of State of the United States.

While running for President, Hillary explained her key foreign policies ideals. “I believe strongly that we have to get back to leading on issues like health care and education and women’s rights around the world. I have introduced bipartisan legislation called The Education for All Act, to have the U.S. lead the world in putting the 77 million kids who aren’t in school into school. I believe we should demonstrate our commitment to people who are poor, disenfranchised, disempowered before we talk about putting troops anywhere. The U.S. has to be seen again as a peacekeeper, and we have lost that standing in these last seven years. So I think we have to concentrate first and foremost on restoring our moral authority in the world and our standing in the world.”

Hillary Rodham Clinton has given many women the inspiration and courage to enter politics and public service. She is a positive role model for the young women of our generation.

To learn more about Hillary Rodham Clinton, visit the following websites:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/first_ladies/hillaryclinton/

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/biog/115321.htm>

<http://www.justhillary.com/bio.php>



Carolyn Herbst - Teacher, Activist, and Feminist

by Maureen Sweeney

Carolyn Herbst does not see herself as a women's rights activist. She was simply a woman doing what she thought was right. As a graduate of Hunter College with a certification in English Education, Carolyn only hoped to be able to get a full-time teaching position. She started as a per diem sub in 1964 and was laid off and rehired more than five times before finally being appointed to Eli Whitney Vocational High School.

Carolyn Herbst entered the building expecting to teach, but soon found herself serving as the equal opportunity coordinator in the building. She had the job of overseeing the sexual integration of female students and teachers into positions traditionally held by men. The position was created in response to new laws that outlawed racial and sexual discrimination. Male and female students would no longer be separated in classrooms, have segregated shop classes, or segregated programs. Carolyn's responsibility was to make sure new guidelines were implemented.

Carolyn Herbst became a one-woman whirlwind, integrating classrooms, teacher's lounges, and faculty conferences. She tried her best to have the male and female lounge signs removed from doors. She also insisted that male and female faculty sit together in faculty conferences instead of on opposite sides of the auditorium. With the backing of the assistant principal, she brought speakers into the building to hold staff development workshops on sexism. She wrote press releases for local newspapers discussing the merits of students in non-traditional shop classes such as female cabinetmakers and male nurses.

Carolyn Herbst was met with resistance from what she calls the "old boys club." When she became a member of the social studies department she was greeted with the comment, "Great, someone who can make us coffee!" She was offended but kept her cool and calmly replied, "I don't do that, but I can fix your xerox machine." There were many occasions where Herbst found herself the butt of a cruel joke, verbally assaulted, or had her life threatened. Once a fellow teacher blocked her path to the lounge quoting the Bible, "Thou shall not pass".

Another time she was accosted in the hallway by a female teacher who was upset that titles such as Mr.,

Miss, and Mrs. were removed from the school roster. The teacher screamed that she had "worked hard to get her Mrs. and that would not be taken away from her." The female teacher was irate someone would attempt to "belittle" her in such a fashion.

Another issue Carolyn Herbst found herself dealing with was gender segregation in the teachers' lounge. When she attempted to enter the male lounge where most of her colleagues could be found discussing politics, she discovered a picture of herself being gang raped on the wall. She was also disgusted by the sense men had that they had the right to physically touch and harass women.

Carolyn Herbst tried her best to help Eli Whitney acclimate to the new laws even if it meant she had to drag them kicking and screaming into the "new world." She looks back on her time at Whitney as a learning experience.

Carolyn Herbst is now retired from teaching, but she is still involved in education in New York City. She writes curriculum for the New York City Council for Social Studies and serves on the board of the Association of Teachers of Social Studies. She enjoys traveling and visited Latin America in 1981 in order to prepare a curriculum package for New York City schools. She remains active in the United Federation of Teachers and travels to attend functions and workshops across the country.

Carolyn Herbst believes the women's rights movement was "simply one part of the greater Civil Rights Movement". The idea she tried to bring to Eli Whitney High School was that we are one people, no matter if we are male or female. People can think, reason, and feel. These things are not exclusive to males or females.

Carolyn Herbst compares her own local role in the struggle for women's rights to a "tree in the forest." Individual trees are crucial to the survival of the forest. In a similar way, small struggles and small victories are vital to the success of any movement for social change.

Carolyn Herbst was a women's rights organizer in a hostile environment. She worked hard and believed in what she was doing everyday she was there. Eli Whitney Vocational High School no longer exists, but the contributions made by Carolyn Herbst continue to influence New York City schools and the lives of young women and men.

Alice Paul: A Woman Who Gave Her Life to Her Cause

by Shannon Alexander



Suffragettes protest in front of the White House in Washington DC, February 1917.

Too often when students think of great American pioneers, they think of men. Whatever criteria are used to make up the lists of most significant Americans, Alice Paul belongs on those lists. She was an American suffragist and women's rights advocate during the early 20th century that dedicated her entire life to fight for the rights of all women. Through her efforts, she helped redefine the nature of American society.

Alice's childhood and religious upbringing strongly influenced her activism. She was born on January 11, 1885 in Moorestown, New Jersey to William and Tacie Paul. The eldest of four children, Alice spent her childhood at Paulsdale, a 265 acre farm, where she was raised as a Hicksite Quaker. Quakers beliefs, such as gender equality and education for women, challenged societal norms at the time. Another major influence on Alice was her mother's involvement in the women's suffrage movement. Tacie Paul was an active member of the National American Women's Suffrage Association and regularly brought Alice to meetings.

After graduating at the top of her class at a Quaker High School in Moorestown, Alice continued her education at Swarthmore College, a Quaker institution founded by her grandfather. After Swarthmore, she began graduate work at the New York School of Philanthropy and also attended the University of Pennsylvania where she received a M.A in Sociology in 1907. Alice later studied sociology and economics in England and earned a doctorate in Economics at the University of Pennsylvania and a law degree.

The time that Alice spent in England was a turning point in her political and social life. Alice befriended Christabel Pankhurst, daughter of a leader of the British Suffragist Movement and founder of the Women's Social and Political Union. The organization's motto was "Deeds, not words" and it was notorious for breaking the law. The radical ideals of the Pankhurst women inspired Alice and transformed her into a radical militant suffragette.

Direct Action To Promote Women's Rights

While in England, Alice became involved in direct action to promote women's rights. She and her supporters smashed windows, threw rocks, and participated in hunger strikes, demonstrations and picket lines. She was arrested on several occasions. It was at this time when she also met Lucy Burns, who would be greatly involved in Alice's work in the United States in the years to come. By 1910, Alice had left England and returned to the United

States bringing the radical ideals and philosophies of the English Suffragettes with her. She planned to implement these ideals to help reshape the American Women's Rights Suffrage movement.

Alice Paul demanded that the United States pass a new constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote. She challenged the N.A.W.S.A., which focused on state campaigns rather than calling for a constitutional amendment and supported President Wilson. Alice blamed Wilson and his administration for not making women's suffrage a priority.

In 1911 the American Women's Suffragist movement moved from advocacy to activism. Alice and Lucy Burns took over the N.A.W.S.A. Congressional Congress in Washington D.C. and organized one of the largest parades supporting the right of women to vote. On March 3, 1913, 8,000 women – suffragists, educators, students, mothers, and daughters – marched down Pennsylvania Avenue towards the White House. The parade ended in chaos when police officers ignored a mob of men who attacked the marchers. Over 300 women were injured.

In 1913, Alice left the N.A.W.S.A and founded the Congressional Union for Women's Suffrage, whose sole priority was a constitutional amendment. In 1915, the group was renamed the National Women's Party. The reorganization of the NWP and the creation of Silent Sentinels marked a new level of struggle. On January 10, 1917 Alice and the Silent Sentinels began a two and a half year picket demonstration outside the White House. President Wilson was initially amused by the suffragettes. However, his attitude changed after the United States entered the war in 1917. When women continued to picket and referred to the President as "Kaiser Wilson," they were arrested for "obstructing traffic." Alice Paul and the others were sent to Occaquan Workhouse, a woman's prison in Virginia, where they were forced to live in unsanitary cells, brutalized, abused, and generally mistreated.

Hunger Strikes and Prison

While imprisoned, Alice Paul continued to protest for women's suffrage by launching a hunger strike. Prison doctors forcibly feed her, sticking tubes down her throat and shoving food into her stomach. Though these procedures were torturous, Alice never succumbed. Her actions gained her widespread support and other women began to follow in her footsteps. After a 22-day hunger strike, one of the prison doctors was quoted saying Alice Paul "has the spirit of Joan of

Arc and it is useless to try to change it. She may die, but she will never give up."

On November 15, 1917, the superintendent of the workhouse and over forty men beat, choked, dragged, and brutalized many of the women prisoners. One of the victims was a 73-year old woman. When the press released news about the attacks, the hunger strikes, and the torturous force-feeding methods, the public became outraged. The women received widespread sympathy from the public and politicians, including President Wilson.

In 1920, the 19th Amendment was ratified and women gained the right to vote. For the rest of her life, Alice Paul continued to fight for women's rights, both domestically and internationally. In 1923, she announced a campaign for a constitutional amendment, which she called the "Lucretia Mott Amendment" or the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). It would say "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction." The ERA was first introduced in Congress in 1923 and continued to appear in every session of Congress until in 1972. It finally passed in 1972, but it failed to be ratified by the states.

From the 1920s through the 1950s, Alice Paul traveled across South America and Europe advocating women's rights. During World War II, she became involved in a Peace Movement that helped give refuge to victims under the Nazi regime. She strongly believed that if women were more involved in World War I, World War II would never have happened. In 1938, she helped establish the World's Woman Party (WWP) in Geneva Switzerland. The WWP worked closely with the League of Nations to ensure equal rights for men and women.

Upon her return to the United States in the 1950s, Alice campaigned to abolish sex discrimination. Her efforts were successful, and the sexual discrimination clause (title VII) was added to the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Alice Paul never married or had children. Her entire life was devoted to the cause of women's rights. She died from heart failure in 1977 at the age of 92 in Moorestown, New Jersey.

***Iron Jawed Angels* (2004) is a highly recommended HBO movie starring Hillary Swank as Alice Paul.**

Women Pilots Help Win World War II

by Christa Kadletz

War production needs during World War II helped to transform the traditional role of women in the United States workforce and gave a tremendous boost to the post-war women's rights movement. On May 28, 1943 the *Port Jefferson Times* declared, "If enough fighters and torpedo bombers are to reach our boys in the Pacific and European fronts, their wives and mothers, sisters and sweethearts, are going to have to help build them."

Prior to the official declaration of war in December 1941, 12 million women were employed in the U.S. This figure jumped to 19 million during the war years. For the first time, married women with children and African-American men and women were hired by Grumman Aircraft in Bethpage on Long Island. Grumman soon became known for its Navy fighter aircrafts and for employing 20,000 women whom had never worked in the aircraft industry before.

The company was innovative and accommodated to the new phenomenon of "working moms." It provided childcare, helped them with car maintenance, and published a weekly newsletter with helpful housekeeping advice and quick recipes. This abruptly stopped with the end of the war in 1945; all but three women who had worked at Grumman were laid off and not rehired.

One woman, Ottilie Gattuss of Lynbrook, wrote President Truman complaining that "I was one of the first women to be employed by the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corp. back in March of 1942, now I am given to understand that the Grumman Corp. will not rehire any women in their shop. The only jobs open to women are office jobs which pay an average wage of \$20.00 to \$22.00 a week. I happen to be a widow with a mother and son to support and no other means of income. I pay \$45.00 a month for rent exclusive of my gas and light and at the present time there is no cheaper place to rent on Long Island. Those being the conditions, I am unable to manage on a \$22.00 a week salary."

Despite doubts by male workers whether women had the ability to do physically demanding and highly skilled tasks, the women workers quickly proved them wrong. As the war continued, the role of women became even more important. Women served as riveters, welders, and assembly line workers. They built and repaired planes that American pilots used as they pushed for victory. Some women even had the opportunity to become test pilots.

Grumman started a 10-week aviation construction training courses to teach the new employees to read blueprints, rivet bolts, and perform other assembly line skills. The women quickly proved they were up to the task. In a 1943 edition of Grumman's in-house employee newspaper, *Plane News*, the head of the electrical department, reported that he preferred a female work force. He claimed that because of their smaller size and greater dexterity, "the girls . . . in many instances are much more capable than men in assembling delicate parts." On April 22, 1943 Adelphi College held a "Nassau at War" expo where Long Islanders Martha Myskowski, and Betty Relli held the crowd spellbound as they set a record 19.2 rivets per minute.

As thousands of new airplanes were coming off assembly lines, the Army Air Force was faced with another problem. They needed to deliver planes to military bases across the nation, but most American pilots were overseas fighting the war. To deal with the backlog, the government launched an experimental program to train women pilots to fly military aircraft. From 1942 to 1944, more than 1,000 women were trained to ferry aircraft, test planes,



Myskowski, and Relli at "Nassau at War" Expo

instruct male pilots, and tow targets for anti-aircraft artillery practice. The women came from all socioeconomic backgrounds: teachers, nurses, secretaries, factory workers, waitresses, students, housewives, debutantes, actresses, and even a Ziegfeld chorus girl. Technically they were civilians and not considered military personnel. They were pioneers who often faced disbelief and resentment from male officers. These female pilots were fearless. Thirty-eight women were killed in the line of duty. However, for these women, “killed in the line of duty,” did not mean a military burial, honorable recognition, or survivor benefits for their families. In some cases the families did not even receive the remains of their loved ones.



Grumman Aviation Poster

women featured in the book faced personal and collective challenges and they opened the doors for women who followed them. In 1911 the first female pilot flew in the U.S. Sixty-five years later the military finally recognized the ability of women and began pilot training. Women pilots flew during Panama, Grenada and Desert Storm actions, but their missions were excluded from combat records. It was not until 1993 that American women flew official combat missions.

Lillian Yonally, Margaret Werber (Gilman) and Eleanor Collins (Faust) were Long Island natives who were among the first U.S. women to fly planes during WWII. Technically, they were civilians and not considered military personnel. Lillian Yonally was a clerk at Grumman when she decided to apply to join the WASPs. Lillian towed target aircraft for anti-aircraft practice. Sometimes the desert winds combined with the load she was hauling almost caused the plane to stall and the cockpit could get up to 115 degrees. Lillian described her decision to become a pilot in a *Newsday* article as “something that came up that needed to be done that I was willing to do.”

Margaret Werber of Manhasset was also responsible for towing targets. She is one of many finally getting her due. President Obama recently signed legislation awarding America's highest civilian honor, the Congressional Gold Medal, to the women who served as Air Force Service Pilots during World War II.

In 1944, Eleanor Collins answered a *New York Times* advertisement encouraging women to do their patriotic duty and join the Army Air Force. She was 21 years old and had never been in a plane. 25,000 women applied to the program but only 1,800 were accepted. Eleanor trained in Texas as a member of the WASPs along with Lillian and Margaret.

Written histories of war usually focus on battles, politics, and heroes. They usually neglect the stories of ordinary people, especially women. *Sisters of War* (Indianapolis, IN: Dog Ear Publishing, 2008) by Peg Trout focuses on the almost 400,000 women who served in World War II and changed American society. The fifty-three

The Civil Rights Movement in New York and New Jersey

by Claire Lamothe

When the African American Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s is taught in United States History, the focus is usually on the South. The campaign for equality in the North during the Civil Rights Movement is often ignored. In the South, laws enforced strict separation of the races in schools, jobs, restaurants, housing, and other public places. In the North, African Americans were limited in different ways. No laws prevented them from entering certain restaurants, yet they knew where they would not be welcome. Northern Blacks did not deal with Jim Crow; instead they were passed over for good jobs and decent housing. Unresolved issues of discrimination, segregation, and injustice that plagued Northern states during that time are still problems in New York and New Jersey. New York City metropolitan area suburbs in both states remain largely segregated, especially on Long Island in New York.

The Great Migration of the 1920s brought large numbers of African Americans to the cities of New York and New Jersey from the South, but the Great Depression and World War II slowed economic and social progress. During the Civil Rights decades, Northern Blacks and their White allies launched campaigns to desegregate schools, pass anti-bias laws, stop police brutality, and end housing and job discrimination. Key organizations in these struggles were CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) and the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). They were opposed by white homeowner and taxpayer groups and in some cases by a resurrected Ku Klux Klan.

Job opportunities were a major concern for African Americans living in the North. Even in times of economic prosperity and worker shortages, Blacks remained among the last people hired and the first fired. When they were able to find jobs, they were often trapped in low paying dangerous work. A major part of the struggle against job discrimination in the North was picketing and boycotts of stores organized by CORE under the slogan "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work."

It was not until the 1960s that schools on Long Island began to hire African American teachers. Minority bus driver were not hired there until the late 1960s and early 1970s. Police and fire departments,

even volunteer fire departments, tended to be all-White, and some suspected them of being Klan strongholds. According to an April 6, 1966 article in *Newsday*, a veteran White fire fighter was forced into early retirement when he advocated for the admission of Blacks into the fire department. Julius O. Pearse finally became the first Black officer in the Freeport Fire Department in 1962.



Demanding Jobs

Anna Hedgeman was a leader in campaigns to end job discrimination in both New Jersey and New York. In the 1930s and 1940s, Hedgeman worked for the YWCA in New Jersey, Harlem, and Brooklyn. While in Jersey City, she was involved in campaigns for workplace equality, especially for Jersey City washerwomen. Hedgeman went undercover to learn about the exploitation that these women faced. One lesson she learned was that domestic workers had better bring their own clocks to work with them because they could not trust employers to pay them for their full time. As an official with the Harlem YMCA, Hedgeman was involved in organizing the unemployed. Hedgeman later entered politics and in the 1950s she was a member of New York City Mayor Wagner's cabinet. She was also active in planning the 1963 March on Washington and in demanding that women be treated as the equal of men in the Civil Rights movement.

Many public facilities in the North remained closed to African Americans. Some of the most intense racial conflicts of the twentieth century were sparked

by incidents at beaches and swimming pools. Parks, beaches, and pools were separate and unequal. Many Black communities did not even have pools. When youths attempted to break color barriers and enter pools or parks, they were met by violent resistance.

Housing in many suburban communities remained segregated because of blockbusting by real estate brokers, redlining by banks and mortgage brokers, and urban renewal projects that pushed Blacks out of newly desirable areas. Blockbusting occurred when real estate brokers would take advantage of racial prejudice to frighten White families into selling their homes at below market value so that the brokers could re-sell to Black families at a large profit. Redlining was when bankers and mortgage brokers restricted African American renters and homebuyers to specific communities. Housing patterns today reflect discrimination from the 1950s and 1960s. On Long Island you have all-White and all-minority towns such as Garden City and Hempstead existing side-by-side.

According to Dr. Eugene Reed, a Long Island dentist and civil rights activist, the major problems facing Northern Blacks were education and housing, which for the most part went hand in hand because town boundaries determined school zoning. Long Island had de facto segregation, which meant that the racial segregation in Long Island was not in place as a result of laws, but because of more subtle forms of discrimination.

The battle for school integration in the North began after World War II. Black children were often trapped in the worst, under-funded schools and were more likely to drop out. In one case involving the village of Hillburn, New York in Rockland County, Black children who lived on one side of Route 17 were sent to the antiquated three-room wood frame school, while half a mile away on the other side of Route 17 White children attended a state-of-the-art school with a library, clinic, music room, gymnasium, and large playground. Black parents went on strike and with the legal support of Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP were able to secure a settlement that allowed 26 Black students to attend the newer school.

On Long Island there were major campaigns challenging school segregation. In Amityville, civil rights advocates threatened boycotts. As Hempstead's African American population grew it was suggested that the district be combined with the neighboring districts of Garden City and Uniondale. However, residents from those towns opposed combining the districts.



Malverne Parents Fight Against School Integration

The battle over school integration on Long Island was fiercest in Malverne, a district with three elementary schools. Students in two of the schools were predominately White. The other school was zoned for Lakeview, a predominately Black community in the district. The NAACP called on the New York State Commissioner to reorganize attendance areas to end the de facto segregation. White parents in Malverne were outraged and protested against the integration of the schools in the name of preserving "neighborhood schools." Civil Rights activist believed that the "pro-neighborhood" parents were teaching their children to be racist. After three years of legal battles, on February 21, 1966, nine housewives were arrested for attempting to physically block preparations to integrate Malverne's elementary schools.

Among the White supporters of the Civil Rights movement were left-wing organizations such as the Communist and Socialist parties. Northern Communist parties attacked the South's penal system, especially the chain gangs that resembled the shackles of slavery. They were vocal defenders of the Scottsboro boys, a group of young men unfairly accused of raping a White woman and organized rallies in support of them in New York, Chicago, Detroit, and Philadelphia. Many Jewish groups were also at the forefront of the battle for Civil Rights. The American Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the Jewish Labor Committee headed national efforts to pass anti-discrimination laws and were involved in local battles to end workplace discrimination.

What My Job Means to Me

The document below is part of an essay written by Hortense Johnson, an African American woman, who worked at the Picatinny Arsenal in Dover, New Jersey during World War II. It was written as part of an essay contest for women employed in private or government war factories and published by the Urban League in OPPORTUNITY Magazine in April 1943. The Urban League is still a leading civil rights organization. As winner of the first prize, Ms. Johnson received fifty dollars in War Bonds and War Savings Stamps.

A. Of course I'm vital to victory, just as millions of men and women who are fighting to save America's chances for Democracy, even if they never shoulder a gun nor bind a wound. It's true that my job isn't so exciting or complicated. Perhaps there are millions of girls who could do my job as well as I – certainly there are thousands. I am an inspector in a war plant. For eight hours a day, six days a week, I stand in line with five other girls, performing a routine operation that is part of our production schedule. We inspect wooden boxes that are to hold various kinds of munitions, and that range from eight inches to six feet. When we approve them they are ready to be packed with shells, bombs, fuses, parachutes – and other headaches for Hitler and Hirohito.

B. Of course, the work is hard and sometimes dangerous, but victory in this war isn't going to come the easy way, without danger. And we brown women of America need victory so much, so desperately. America is a long way from perfect. We resent the racial injustices that we meet every day of our lives. But it's one thing to resent and fight against racial injustices; it's another thing to let them break your spirit, so that you quit this struggle and turn the country over to the Hitler and the Talmadges [Governor of Georgia] and Dies' [Congressman from Texas] who will run this country if Hitler wins.

C. America can't win this war without all of us, and we know it. We must prove it to white Americans as well – that our country can't get along without the labor and sacrifice of her brown daughters, can't win unless we all fight and work and save. So the hardships of war work become willing sacrifices to victory, not to victory for Democrats, but to victory by a country that someday, please God, will win Democracy.

D. I imagine that our boys at the front develop the same kind of tolerance, the same kind of partnership, for the same reason. Wouldn't it be great if the white workers who are fellow-fighters with us in war production, would develop more of the same spirit of partnership? What can we do to make them realize that colored people must be given equal opportunity in every walk of life to make that partnership real – to build an impregnable, free, and democratic America.

E. I'm not fooling myself about this war. Victory won't mean victory for Democracy – yet. But that will come later, because most of us who are fighting for victory today will keep on fighting to win the peace – maybe a long time after the war is over, maybe a hundred years after. By doing my share today, I'm keeping a place for some brown woman tomorrow, and for the brown son of that woman the day after tomorrow. Sterling Brown once wrote, "The strong men keep a-comin on," and millions of those men have dark skins. There will be dark women marching by their side, and I like to think that I'm one of them.

Questions

1. Who was Hortense Johnson?
2. Why did Hortense Johnson believe that victory is very important?
3. What did Hortense Johnson anticipate would happen after the war?
4. In your opinion, why was the prize War Bonds and War Savings Stamps?
5. Do you agree with Hortense Johnson's reasons for working hard for victory and her expectations for the post-war era? Explain.

William Shelton Describes Racism During World War II

William Shelton began his twenty-six years in the U.S. military as a member of the all-Black 369th New York National Guard Regiment that was known as the Harlem Hellfighters. Shelton was sent for basic training to Camp Wolters, Texas, where he became aware of “separate and unequal” on the post and in nearby Galveston. He later became an officer. **Source:** *The Invisible soldier: the experience of the black soldier, World War II* edited by Mary Penick Motley (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1987) p. 55-60.

The 369th was one of the few all-Negro units in the army. It was activated from the New York National Guard. I was assigned to Battery A of the 1st Battalion. There were a large number of Puerto Ricans in the 369th, which with the exception of the replacements, brought in to bring it up to strength, was made up completely by men from New York. All of us were proud of our unit and we were good at our jobs.

Before going overseas we were assigned to the Four Rivers shipyards in Boston for defense purposes, the unit had no problems in Massachusetts; the people there were most hospitable. From Massachusetts we were sent to Hawaii. When we came into Pearl Harbor, we could see the damaged ships, some of which were still smoking; it took the fires a long time to burn themselves out. We were billeted at Schofield Barracks. At night the sky was visible through the many bullet holes put there during the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Segments of our regiment were assigned to the all-White 1st Marine Division and sent to Camp Malakoli where we were run through various training tests to see if the unit was qualified. In the tests we had no trouble, but here for the first time I ran into problems within the service. There were innumerable fights between the marines and the enlisted personnel of the 369th. There was no overall breakout, but individual and small-group battles were daily occurrences. This disturbed the officers in charge, but the 369th was not taking any racial guff off of anyone.

After completion of our training at Camp Malakoli, my unit, the searchlight unit, was assigned to Maui, the garden spot of the islands. Once, while on Maui, a Puerto Rican friend and I were waiting in a store for the GI bus. Three White GIs entered wearing side arms. They stood silently for a while. Finally one spoke up saying, “You know I haven’t killed a nigger in a long time.” His buddies tried to get this character to shut up but he was quite bellicose. We ignored him since we were unarmed. Upon returning to camp we alerted our CO to the situation and from then on, on or off duty we wore arms; no more loudmouths.

I had applied for Officer Candidate School in artillery. I passed exams and left Maui for Camp Davis, North Carolina, just outside of Wilmington. All of our instructors were White as was our cadre, with the exception of the cooks. We Negroes constituted something of a problem. We were housed in the typical barracks, but instead of being in the large area with the Whites we were given private dwellings at the end of the building, the quarters of the NCOs. With exception of this we ate at the same mess, attended the same classes, and even used the same latrine.

There was no social life for Black officer candidates since all such facilities were closed to us. Any recreation we got was strictly on pass. Of the 600 men in the class I believe six were Blacks. Three of them passed the course. Three hundreds of the total class were punched out. I’ll say the officers there were tough on everybody, so I cannot call them unfair.

As an officer I was assigned to the 227th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion at Camp Stewart, Georgia. I was a specialist in automatic weapons, was made an officer over a platoon. This first assignment was the beginning of everything wrong for me in the United States Army. I stayed there in the 227th until the riot. A rumor started that a colored soldier’s wife from New York had come to see him and that she was White. They stayed at the guesthouse on the post. When he took her to the bus station for her return trip the rumor got out that they had considerable trouble. How much truth I really don’t know, but it was enough to turn Stewart upside down.

I remember one night it looked like a small Battle of the Bulge. Instead of Americans against Germans it was Black Americans versus White Americans on an army post that perpetuated segregation and prejudice. There were three soldiers killed, two or three MPs killed, and a large number of troops hospitalized.

Questions

1. Who was William Shelton?
2. What started the trouble at Camp Stewart, Georgia?
3. In your opinion, why did their experience in the military convince many Black soldiers to demand equal rights?

Martin Luther King Confronts Racism in Camden, New Jersey (1950)

In 1950 Martin Luther King Jr. was a student at the Crozer Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. In June, he and a group of friends had a confrontation with a Camden, New Jersey tavern owner who refused to serve them. King and his friends charged Nichols violated the state civil rights law. Nichol's statement below, prepared by his lawyer, defends his refusal to serve the group and his brandishing of a gun. It implies wrongdoing on the part of one of the complainants, who was described as "quite insistent that Mr. Nichols sell him package goods or a bottle and this caused Nichols to become upset and excited because he knew that he was being asked to do something which constitutes a violation." The case was dropped when three witnesses refused to testify.

State of New Jersey vs. Ernest Nichols, Defendant

Around 12:45 A.M., Monday morning June 12, 1950 four colored persons came into tavern of Ernest Nichols, which is located at Route S-41 and Camden Pike, in the Township of Maple Shade, and County of Burlington. At the time in question, one of the four walked up to the proprietor, Ernest Nichols, and asked his for "package goods." This Mr. Nichols refused to sell and stated that it was Sunday and that he could not sell "package goods" on Sunday or after 10:00 P.M. on any day. Then the applicant asked for a bottle of beer and it is alleged that Mr. Nichols answered "no beer, Mr! Today is Sunday." The applicant was quite insistent that Mr. Nichols sell him package goods or a bottle and this cause Nichols to become upset and excited because he knew that he was being asked to do something which constitutes a violation and which might get him into trouble, were he to submit the request of the colored man.

It is alleged that Mr. Nichols, while the colored folks were still in his tavern, obtained a gun and walked out of the door of his tavern and while outside fired the gun in the air. Mr. Nichols claims that this act was not intended as a threat to his colored patrons. The colored patrons, on the other hand, while they admit that the gun was not pointed at them or any of them, seemed to think that it was a threat. Mr. Nichols on the other hand states that he has been held up before and he wanted to alert his watchdog who was somewhere outside on the tavern grounds.

Admittedly my client was excited and upset and perhaps gave the impression that he was and is antagonistic to negroes and does not want to serve them because of their color. On the other hand, it is well known and can be proven without doubt, that for years Mr. Nichols has served colored patrons.

Mr. Nichols became so excited and upset because he was under the impression that the visit by the four colored patrons was an obvious attempt to get him to violate the law so that they could report his misconduct and violation to the authorities. He felt that the colored gentleman who asked for "package goods", who appeared to be intelligent man, was well acquainted with the regulation prohibiting taverns from selling bottle goods or "package goods" on Sunday and after 10:00 in the evening. This circumstance, in itself, made my client very suspicious of the actions and requests of the complainants. He thought at the time that surely the colored gentleman knew that his request constituted a violation. The colored patrons lest the tavern and within a few minutes returned again to chat with certain patrons at the bar. This tended to confirm my client's conviction that the complaints were endeavoring to in some way ensnare him in some violation of the law.

Questions

1. What happened to Martin Luther King, Jr. and his friends?
2. In your opinion, is the testimony of the defendant reliable? Explain.
3. In your opinion, what would be the impact of an experience like this on a man such as Martin Luther King, Jr?

Anna Hedgeman Demands Acknowledgement for Black Women

Anna Hedgeman was the only woman on the organizing committee for the 1963 March on Washington demanding African American Civil Rights. A week before the March the final program was presented to the committee for review. Hedgeman wrote a letter to A. Philip Randolph, director of the March, when she learned that no women were scheduled to speak. Because of Hedgeman's complaint, Daisy Bates was invited to say a few words and Rosa Parks was presented from the podium.

"In light of the role of negro women in the struggle for freedom and especially in light of the extra burden they have carried because of the castration of our Negro man in this culture, it is incredible that no woman should appear as a speaker at the historic March on Washington Meeting at the Lincoln Memorial.

Since the 'Big Six' [Civil Rights leaders Martin Luther King, Jr., Roy Wilkins, A. Philip Randolph, James Farmer, Whitney Young, and John Lewis] have not given women the quality of participation which they have earned through the years, I would like to suggest the following:

That a Negro woman make a brief statement and present the other Heroines just as you suggested that the Chairman might do.

It has occurred to me that no woman or man could object to Mrs. Medgar Evers, the widow of our freedom Martyr, for this role. Her performance on television just after the murder of her husband proves her ability to make even one sentence memorable.

Questions

1. What was Anna Hedgeman's complaint?
2. What did she propose?
3. If you were in her position, would you have risked the success of the march on Washington to stand by your principles? Explain.

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Angelo Herndon and the Struggle for Justice

by Charles Howlett

Building a new social order required an intense commitment to racial and economic justice and nowhere was this more apparent than in the American south. There, many African-American coal miners experienced brutal discrimination. Unequal treatment and unequal pay was the standard. Angelo Herndon was one worker who experienced this firsthand. Angered at his treatment as well as the system of segregation that restricted African American lives, he found a safe haven when he joined the Communist Party in order to challenge these conditions. In 1931, the party had taken the lead in the fight for racial justice after nine Black male youths were accused of raping two White girls in Scottsboro, Alabama. The youths were convicted by all-White juries based on slim evidence and members of the Communist Party battled for their release. Admiring their efforts, Herndon joined the party and began organizing unemployed Blacks in Birmingham, Alabama; he also assisted in the creation of the Unemployed Councils and played a prominent role in organizing protests composed of Black and White workers who had lost their jobs.

The Unemployed Councils were largely a local, decentralized movement situated in certain local communities and initiated by the Communist Party. The councils' strength rested in their ability to mediate and resolve specific grievances affecting the fate of the jobless in those communities, which included forcing concessions from local relief officials and even blocking police from enforcing evictions. Communist Party members often focused their demonstrations on direct work to support the unemployed, particularly federal relief and unemployment insurance.

In 1932, at only nineteen years of age, Herndon was instrumental in organizing an interracial hunger march in Atlanta, Georgia. The plight of unemployed southern miners, especially Blacks, was particularly acute. Herndon was anxious to draw attention to the injustices African American workers faced in the South and the laws used to silence unions and political organizations that favored the working class. When the Communist Party took up the cause of racial justice in the South, anyone remotely associated with the party found themselves under suspicion. Atlanta police officers arrested Herndon when he attempted to pick up mail at his post office box. He was held without bail and charged under an old Civil War statute of "inciting to insurrection." The charge was considered a capital crime.

The Communist Party's legal defense arm, the International Labor Defense, defended Herndon. It retained the services of Black Atlanta attorney, Benjamin Davis, Jr., who tried in case. Davis hammered away at the constitutionality of the Atlanta's jury and grand jury system, which excluded Blacks from serving, the constitutionality of the insurrection law, and the use of racial epithets used by the prosecutor and the judge during the trial. In early 1933, Herndon was found guilty by an all-White jury. He was sentenced to eighteen to twenty years in prison on a chain gang.

The actions of the prosecutor and judge and the severity of the sentence were outrageous when all Herndon did was attempt to organize a peaceful demonstration composed of unemployed White and Black workers. His conviction led to a nationwide movement in his defense. African American organizations such as the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, labor unions, the Communist Party, and religious-pacifists groups such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation supported an appeal his conviction. The appeal process dragged on for four years until the case reached the nation's highest court. By a five-to-four majority, the Supreme Court ruled that Herndon's conviction was unconstitutional, invalidated the Georgia statute, and ordered Herndon released from prison. Herndon's trial and the appeals educated the public about abuses in the southern legal system and helped establish the connection between economic depression and racial injustice in the south.



Herndon in prison

Angelo Herndon: “You Cannot Kill the Working Class” (1937)

Angelo Herndon was an African American coal miner who became a leading Communist in the United States during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The excerpts are from his memoir, *You Cannot Kill the Working Class*. New York: International Labor Defense and League of Struggle for Negro Rights, 1937. Excerpts were reprinted in Timothy McCarthy & John McMillan, eds. *The Radical Reader* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 344-348.

A. We lived in the company town. It was pretty bad. The houses were just shacks and unpaved streets. We seldom had anything to eat that was right. We had to buy everything from the company store, or we’d have lost our jobs . . . I remember paying 30 cents a pound for pork-chops in the company store and then noticing that the butcher in town was selling them for 20 cents. The company store prices were just robbery without a pistol.

The safety conditions in the mine were rotten . . . There were some bad accidents while I was there. I took all the skin off my right hand pushing a car up into the facing. The cars didn’t have enough grease and there were no cross-ties just behind me to brace my feet against. That was a bit of the company’s economy . . . This DeBardeleben mine in Lexington was where the Jim-Crow system first hit me. The Negroes [Blacks] and Whites seldom came in contact with each other . . . The Negroes worked on the North side of the mine and the Whites on the South. The Negroes never got a look-in on most of the better-paying jobs. They couldn’t be section foremen, or electricians, or surveyors, or head bank boss, or checkweighman, or steel sharpeners, or engineers. They could only load the coal, run the motors, be mule-boys, pick the coal, muck the rock . . . They were only allowed to do the muscle work.

Besides that, the Negro miners got the worst places to work. We worked in the low coal, only 3 or 4 feet high. We had to wear knee pads, and work stretched flat on our bellies most of the time . . . One day in June 1930, walking home from work, I came across some handbills put out by the Unemployment Council in Birmingham . . . I joined the Unemployment Council, and some weeks later the Communist Party.

B. We organized a number of block committees of the Unemployment Councils and got rent and relief for a large number of families. We agitated endlessly for unemployment insurance. In the middle of June 1932, the state closed down all the relief stations. A drive was organized to send all the jobless to the farms. We gave out leaflets calling for a mass demonstration at the courthouse to demand that the relief be continued. About 1,000 workers came, 600 of them White. We told the commissioners we didn’t intend to starve. We reminded them that \$800,000 had been collected in the Community Chest drive. The commissioners said there wasn’t a cent to be had.

On the night of July 11, I went to the Post Office to get my mail. I felt myself grabbed from behind and turned over to see a police officer. I was placed in a cell, and was shown a large electric chair, and told to spill everything I knew about the movement. I refused to talk, and was held incommunicado for eleven days. Finally I smuggled out a letter through another prisoner, and the International Labor Defense got on the job.

Assistant Solicitor John Hudson rigged up the charge against me. It was the charge of “inciting to insurrection.” It was based on an old statute passed in 1861, when the Negro people were still chattel slaves, and the White masters needed a law to crush slave insurrection and kill those found giving aid to the slaves . . .

The trial was set for January 16, 1933. The state of Georgia displayed the literature that had been taken from my room, and read passages of it to the jury. They questioned me in great detail. Did I believe that the bosses and government ought to pay insurance to unemployed workers? That Negroes should have complete equality with White people? . . . The state held that my membership in the Communist Party, my possession of Communist literature, was enough to send me to the electric chair. They said to the jury: “Stamp this damnable thing out now with a conviction that will automatically carry with it a penalty of electrocution.” And the hand-picked lily-White jury responded: “We the jury, find the defendant guilty as charged, but recommend that mercy be shown and fix his sentence at from 18 to 20 years.” I spoke to the court and said: “They can hold this Angelo Herndon and hundreds of others, but it will never stop these demonstrations on the part of Negro and White workers who demand a decent place to live in and proper food for their kids to eat . . . If you really want to do anything about the case, you must go out and indict the social system. But this you will not do, for your role is to defend the system under which the toiling masses are robbed and oppressed.”

Teachers Whose Lives were Shaped by Segregation and the Battle for Civil Rights

In 1896, the United States Supreme Court in its *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision ruled that racially separate facilities were consistent with the Constitution's promise of equality. This ruling established racial segregation as the law of the land. It was not overturned until the *Brown v. Topeka, Kansas* decision in 1954.

Garland Core, Jr. a social studies teacher from Brooklyn, New York, has combated racism his entire life. He grew up in Alabama where expectations and opportunities for young Black men were very low. Leona Gipson, a teacher in Hempstead, New York, grew up in Clarendon County, South Carolina, an area of the south that played a major role in the NAACP's legal strategy to overturn segregation. It was one of the communities where Kenneth Clark, a psychologist from the City College of New York, conducted the doll experiments that documented the impact of racial segregation on young children.

While most histories focus on racial segregation in the South, racial discrimination was also rampant in the North. Blacks were denied jobs in many industries as well as blocked from living in certain neighborhoods or towns. Public facilities were closed to them and their children were often denied access to quality schools and colleges. Mary Kennedy Carter's life experience forces us to rethink long held assumptions about race and racism in the United States. Although Mary and her family confronted segregation in Ohio, she was never a victim. A retired social studies teacher from Long Island, New York, she has led a life of activism challenging racism and struggling for social justices. Garland Core, Jr. and Mary Kennedy Carter were interviewed by Amanda Kelaher. Leona Gipson was interviewed by Alan Singer.

Many Whites played important roles in the struggle for African American Civil Rights. Leo Silverstone, a social studies teacher and school administrator in Brooklyn and Queens was an active participant in freedom marches and demonstrations in the 1960s. Leo Silverstone was interviewed by Laura Argenzio. Sal Zaccaro was interviewed by Joyce Kenny Loftus.

Garland Core, Jr. – From Alabama to New York

I was born on December 14, 1945 in Tuskegee, Alabama and grew up in Auburn. It was not an easy time or place to enter the world if you were African American. As I grew up I witnessed exclusion, unfairness, and segregation first hand. My parents were not educated past elementary school and they worked as manual laborers. My mother cleaned houses for upper-class White families and my father did maintenance at Auburn University which was a segregated all-White institution at the time. These jobs were typical for African Americans in the Jim Crow South. As a child, I had to work when I wasn't attending school in a segregated one-room schoolhouse for Black children. I picked cotton, shined shoes, and did a variety of farm work, including shoveling manure used for fertilizer. Desegregation of the public schools in that part of Alabama did not start until 1965.

The school I attended was a Julius Rosenwald school created by the chairman of Sears Roebuck. He traveled around the South and donated money to start schools for Black children in rural areas. Teachers were recruited from traditionally Black colleges.

Rosenwald was also a major financial supporter of artists involved in the Harlem Renaissance. Our school had no modern technology. It had an outhouse, a well for drinking water, and little state supervision. The teachers and families were responsible for the upkeep of the school building, including painting it and preserving the wood with a mixture they made out of motor oil. Many of the teachers lived with local families during the school year.

As a child I had two teachers who both studied science with George Washington Carver at the Tuskegee Institute. Ms. Jones was in charge of grades 1-3. Ms. Harris was in charge of grades 4-6. Education was very important to my family. We had to learn because many parents did not have the chance to finish school. We were taught by constant drilling and testing in reading, spelling, and math and required to give oral presentations. We solved math problems in our heads while standing in front of the class. Reading focused on Black history to promote self-esteem. There was no social promotion at that time. We had to learn everything to be promoted.

Church played a major role in our lives. Sunday school was mandatory and we were taught literacy skills along with the Bible. Church helped Southern Blacks survive the hell that was segregation. It taught us pride in our rich history and self-esteem. We were told, "If you learn who you are they cannot take that away from you." The number one rule for the members of the village where we lived was "Don't disrespect your family or your community." All the local adults were involved in teaching the village's children.

My grandfather was one of the only sugar cane farmers in this area of Alabama who had a mill for processing molasses and syrup. Blacks and poor Whites worked for him and he was respected by people of all races. My grandfather would drive through the different communities selling molasses, sugar cane, and syrup. Accompanying him on trips was how I learned to relate to people from different races.

Black children were harassed and physically attacked by Whites. When I was about ten-years old Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus in Montgomery and she was arrested. Blacks organized a boycott of the bus system and asked people to support them and send money. Children in our community gave out leaflets to tell people about what was going on but we had to be home before dark because the KKK would drive past with guns and shoot at us. This happened to me and a group of my friends. We had to hide in the woods and be careful of rattlesnakes. We carried rocks to throw so we could protect ourselves.

I attended a racially segregated middle and high school. Although I graduated with honors in 1963, I was not offered a college scholarship. The only option available for continuing my education was to go into the military so I would be covered by the GI Bill. Recruiters continually visited my high school. Our shop teacher, who we affectionately called Chief Roberts, was a Korean War veteran. He recommended that we enlist so we would be eligible for special training and avoid combat in Vietnam. He warned that Blacks, Hispanics, and poor Whites that were drafted were sent directly to the front lines. I volunteered for three years and applied for careers as a radiology technician, medical laboratory technician, or dental technician. However, some jobs were still closed to Blacks. After completing basic training at Fort Jackson in South Carolina, I was trained as a dental technician and sent to Fort St. Houston in Texas. After that I was shipped to Fort Dix and then to Germany.

While in Germany, I studied the language on the base and at Erlangen University, helped German bands

learn how to play jazz (I played percussion), and traveled with different theater groups. Germany learned American-style racism during and after World War II when some American soldiers told the Europeans that "Jews had horns and Niggers had tails." In one small town I met a German family with a young child who wanted to touch my hair and my skin to see if the color would come off. I responded to them in German and told the child it was okay.

After military service I returned to the states and stayed with a granduncle who was a World War II veteran and lived in Harlem, New York. Using my GI benefits, I attended New York City Technical College in Brooklyn and graduated in June 1972. My dream of being a dental technician was cancelled when I was told I needed a union card to work and the union would not accept me unless I already had a job. I found a job through the *New York Times* selling publications and dictionaries in the New York metropolitan area. Because I was a successful salesman, I was offered a position at Texaco Oil and promised that I would be able to move up the "ladder" as I gained more experience. However, the company had Black employees training White men and women and then promoted them over us. After three and a half years of discrimination, broken promises, and no mobility, a group of Black men including myself quit. Some of these men started their own businesses and today they are very successful. I got a job working for Phillip Morris and decided he return to school at Baruch College, even though the man who interviewed me tried to discourage me from returning to school. As an employee of Phillip Morris, I traveled to Canada, Hong Kong, Europe, and several counties in South America. I also worked as a mentor in a troubled public school. This, along with my experience teaching in Sunday School, convinced me to attend a New York City recruiting fair trying to get more Black and Hispanic men to teach American youth. In 1994, I decided to retire from Phillip Morris and become a teacher.

For the last thirteen years I have taught social studies at a pre-k through eighth grade school in Brooklyn. I stress helping students build their self-esteem and turning them into well-rounded citizens. In my school I try to create a village safety net for students like the one I new as a boy in Alabama. I also remain active in my church, in the Baruch alumni organization, and promote expanding the coverage of African heritage in the curriculum.

Leonia Gipson Remembers Clarendon County, South Carolina

I was born on April 1, 1958 near Summerton in the rural area of Clarendon County, South Carolina. My parents were Albertis and Edith Gipson. I am from a large, close-knit family of ten sisters and three brothers. I was one of the younger ones. My father was a farmer, a sharecropper. He owned some of his own land, but he mostly rented. Our family lived in a farmhouse without electricity or running water. The children read and did homework by kerosene lanterns and we went to the bathroom in an outhouse. All of our family worked on the farm together. As a child, I worked tobacco and cotton fields in the summer and after school. Our whole family got up at six o'clock in the morning to work on the farm. We did our schoolwork and chores when we got home.

As a child in the South in the 1960s you realized that Black and White people lived in two different worlds. People live differently and you did not cross the line. The city of Summerton had paved streets and supermarkets for the White people. In the rural area of Clarendon County where Black people lived there were not any paved streets until 1973. Black people in the rural area depended on farms and gardens for food and for survival.

My father worked very hard but we rarely had very much. When he took the crop to the market he had to pay the stores back for the fertilizer, seed and supplies he needed to run the farm. Sometimes he came home without any money. During the summer he received a farm subsidy check in the mail from the government, but he used it to pay off old bills at the store and for supplies for next season. My father was a very skilled man and he often worked for local White people. He was a carpenter and a hunting and fishing guide. When he took people out to hunt and fish we would sometimes get hand-me-down clothes from them. My father was a survivor who did whatever was necessary to make a living for his family.

Photo: Liberty Hill School, <http://americanhistory.si.edu/> (Courtesy of South Carolina Department of Archives and History). Clarendon County's 61 "colored" schools were scattered throughout the region. Most were small wooden structures that accommodated one or two classrooms. In the 1949-50 school year, for every dollar spent on a White child only 24 cents was allotted for a Black student.



I learned to read before I went to school because my older siblings taught me reading and arithmetic. By the time I started elementary school, Black kids traveled on their own school bus, but it was often difficult to get to school because the roads where we lived were not paved. When it rained they flooded and the bus would stall. The schools in Clarendon County were still racially segregated when I was a child and the school for Black children did not have enough books or materials. It included grades 1 through 8. There was no restroom in the school so the children had to walk over to the Spring Hill A.M.E. church to use the outhouse. I was lucky as a student because my

first grade teacher allowed me to use a reader that belonged to another student and gave me a notebook and pencil when I needed them. She was an inspirational teacher and is one of the reasons I later decided to become a teacher.

A lot of Blacks were fearful about pushing too hard for integration. I remember local people, including some of my teachers, talk about Reverend DeLaine, and how "Whites ran him out of Clarendon County" for trying to integrate the public schools. Whites despised Reverend DeLaine so much that they would not let him be buried in his hometown. That is truly hatred. In those days, when Black people spoke

about this great man, they worried someone might report them to the Whites. When I was in high school, the Spring Hill A.M.E. church began to have an annual memorial service and started a scholarship in his honor.

Black farmers had to purchase fertilizer and seed from the White storekeepers and were afraid that if they became involved in integration campaigns they would lose credit. The White storekeeper in the town of Davis Station refused to sell to Mr. Briggs after he joined the court case. We had a large family so my father could not be openly involved. I remember that when the middle school was finally integrated, a young White guy came with a truck and took away my father's tractor and plow without saying anything; he just took them away. But my father had mules, so he was able to continue farming. My father was a gifted farmer who always reserved some sweet potatoes and white potatoes for the next crop. When they would sprout, he would cut the buds, plant them, and we would have plenty to eat. He had a special way of storing cotton and corn seeds in oil and he used animal manure as his fertilizer. His skills helped my family to weather the storm of racial conflict sweeping through Clarendon County.

I do not remember my parents speaking harshly about Whites. They grasped the racial boundaries in our community and realized that they had to endure them. Later, when I read the novels *Black Boy* and *Native Son* by Richard Wright, I had a better understanding of how my parents were trying to survive impossible circumstances.

Usually the only time we saw White people was during the summer when children from the city came to our area to attend the Bob Cooper summer camp. However in 1971, when I was twelve years old, they began planning to integrate the Summerton Middle School. The facilities at this school were amazing. It had a gym, an auditorium and bathrooms. I remember my parents talking about White and Black kids going to school together. My father, who talked with local White people that he worked for, thought it would never happen. A local White man named William Bronson who owned property near the Spring Hill A.M.E. Church offered to build us a new segregated Negro Spring Hill Elementary School. The school year at the integrated middle school was supposed to begin by the middle of August but they kept putting off the date. When it finally started at the end of September, the only children and teachers in the school were Black. All the White kids and staff had disappeared.

They went to Clarendon Hall, a private school, or to schools in other towns.

The White community was not willing to pay for that fine school for Black kids. The funding for the public middle school was taken away and the school superintendent channeled the money to Clarendon Hall, the White private school. Within five years the middle school was closed and all of the Black students were transferred to the high school. The school was all Black except for one White family that came from the north and one White teacher who stayed working at the school after it became Black. He taught American history, driver's education and ran the high school cafeteria. I always felt he taught us one-sided history, the White side and how they dominated. I don't know why he stayed. When I entered the high school, it had one wing with an air conditioner but it did not have a science lab.

When I went to college I discovered that I never had a real quality education. The teachers tried but they were not really prepared in the way teachers were in integrated or White public schools. Other students at the college who had attended integrated schools knew so much more than I did. They knew about apartheid in South Africa, Roe v. Wade, Watergate, the Holocaust and the Civil Rights movement. It was not until I entered college that I learned about the role Clarendon County had played in the Civil Rights movement. Ignorance is an "evil," so I spent long hours researching these topics. A nation does itself a tremendous disservice when it does not properly educate the minds of its students using all the available resources.

With all of the problems today, I think things are better because Black people have choices. The cycle of poverty can be broken. Up until the mid-1990s, Clarendon County had an all-White city council. That has changed. A lot of the White people sold their homes and fled. Blacks are now living in these homes. Twenty years ago you could not stand in the drive way and now you are living in the homes. Today there is a brand new high school in Summerton and it has White and Black students, though there are very few Whites in the community.

Most of my brothers and sisters eventually left South Carolina. I came north to New York in September 1980. We have been successful in our new homes because of the strength we got from our parents who taught us how to work hard. Working hard and the desire to have a better life were imbedded inside of us.

Mary Kennedy Carter – A Life Time of Activism

I was born in 1934 in southeastern Ohio and grew up in segregated communities there with my five brothers and sisters. Most African Americans in the area worked as servants or manual laborers. I was lucky because my mother was a teacher, which was quite unusual. My father was a barber who worked out of our home. He had both Black and White clients. Ours was a very religious family and education was an important part of our lives. In school, we were taught that Africa was a continent of savages and that Blacks were inferior to Whites. However my parents challenged these ideas at home and taught us to take pride in our heritage.

Racism was pervasive in our part of Ohio. As a young child I had Black and White friends, but as soon as we became teenagers we were separated. You could not go out in mixed groups or on dates because the recreational facilities, roller-skating, swimming, and bowling, were segregated. If Black families wanted to swim, they traveled to the all-Black swimming pool in neighboring Middletown. If we wanted to roller skate, we were permitted to use the Hamilton, Ohio rink, but only one day a week. Because of these restrictions, entertainment usually meant just gathering with friends and family members in our homes and yards where we would play games, listen to music, and hang out.



Mary Carter (front left) was part of team that received a NCSS Program of Excellence Award

At the movie theater, Blacks had to sit in the back seats and they could not go into the restaurants or “eating places” and sit down. One of my brothers played on the football team. The coach said that whoever scored the winning touchdown would get a free ice cream at the local ice cream shop. However, when my brother scored the winning points he was not allowed in the store.

All of the children in my family went to college, which was very unusual for a Black family in our community. I attended Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. It was an overwhelmingly White school, but there were enough Blacks there that we could feel comfortable “doing our thing.” I originally wanted to become a foreign language teacher but because of discrimination in hiring the only job I was assured of getting was as an elementary school teacher. My first job was at an elementary school with a predominantly Polish population in Cleveland, Ohio. I was one of five Black teachers at the school – all female. After teaching in predominantly white schools in Dayton, Ohio and San Diego, California, I received a fellowship to study at Teachers College at Columbia University in New York City and was then able to teach at a teacher preparation college in Uganda in Africa. I was thrilled to finally be on the continent of my ancestors. It was the first time in my life that I was part of the “majority” population. It was a fantastic experience being able to meet the President of countries and other top officials.

Although I was asked to stay in Uganda, I decided to return to the United States. I moved to New York where I worked as an editor and writer for McGraw Hill Publishers. While there I met my husband. After leaving McGraw Hill I was hired by the Roosevelt school district on Long Island to develop and teach Black history. At that time it was an elective for seniors. In this position I was also able to bring many speakers to the school including Jackie Robinson and Betty Shabazz (the widow of Malcolm X). I loved my experience at Roosevelt, but resigned after having a baby. Years later I was hired to teach in Rockville Center on Long Island. At the time Rockville Center schools had been forced by New York State to integrate. In Rockville Center I was able to help unite members of the school by developing a model human rights curriculum. I preached diversity, anti-violence, and multiculturalism and created after-school student

clubs to promote these values. The first one was known as PINK, “prejudice is not kool.” After PINK became an established part of the school curriculum, we changed the name to BLUE or Build Lasting Unity Everywhere. This club was even more successful because more male students were inclined to join. They hesitated before because they thought the name PINK was too feminine. I consider these clubs one of my greatest accomplishments and I am pleased that they continued after I retired.

My activism has been closely connected with my teaching. It includes writing curriculum, teaching children and teachers, and conducting workshops about ways for all of us to live together harmoniously and as contributing members of our great country. While at Rockville Center, I served as a member of a statewide committee that was supposed to develop a curriculum of inclusion that would have included the history and culture of all people in the New York State school curriculum. The curriculum met a lot of political resistance and was never implemented. Part of the problem was that committee members wanted to stress a common culture without addressing the fact that minority groups had been left out of the history of the United States and world history in the past and this situation needed to be corrected.

While at Hofstra I became part of a team developing and field-testing the New York and

Slavery: Complicity and Resistance curriculum that was developed with the support of the New York State Council for the Social Studies. In 2005, the curriculum won the Program of Excellence Award from the National Council for the Social Studies. I am currently a member of the New York State Amistad Commission, which was established by the State Legislature to investigate how issues of race are taught in American History classrooms. As part of the commission, I am trying to get the curriculum officially adopted by the State Education Department and taught in more schools.

For the latest part of my career I have become the historian for my church in Roosevelt, New York and have been a teacher educator at Hofstra University on Long Island. I supervise student teachers and teach social studies methods classes and classes on educational issues. Most of my students are White and were raised in largely White suburban communities. A major focus of my classes is helping them to recognize the importance of diversity, the richness and strengths it brings to all of our lives. All students need to know the history of Africa and Egypt and the contributions they have made to world history. This is not just something to be taught to Black children. They also all need to understand that many White people played important roles in the struggles for minority rights.

Leo Silverstone – Teacher and Activist

Leo Silverstone was a teacher and political activist involved in historical events such as the Korean War and the civil rights movement. Mr. Silverstone began his teaching career in the late 1950s.

I joined the union on my first day as a teacher because I had a family heritage of this type of behavior. Everyone in my family was involved in either trade unions or socialism. My grandmother would lecture from a bench in Union Square about socialism, while I stood along side her. I was six-years-old at the time.

After the Korean War, I decided to go to Teachers College at Columbia. The first teaching job I got was in Flushing, Queens. However, I was fired after three months because of a retrenchment. After that I got a job teaching 7th and 8th grade science in an elementary school. The principal and I were the only men in the building. I taught myself science, even though my degree was in social studies. From that school, I went to work in a junior high in Astoria, which was the first school in NYC where almost all of the teachers were

union members. I was there for three years teaching everything but social studies. For my tenure observation, my superintendent popped in when I was teaching mathematics. I soon moved to Newtown High School in Elmhurst, Queens as a replacement for someone who had been marked unsatisfactory and dismissed.

My proudest teaching moment was in October 1960, when we had the first strike of day school teachers. There were only six pickets at our school (me, my wife, my father, a parent from a neighboring high school, the wife of the only pro-union principal in the city, and another teacher), but we managed to keep out 18 or 19 other teachers. Because of this one-day strike teachers secured the right to vote for union representation and to have collective bargaining. When I returned to class, I was given a standing ovation by

the students who realized we were fighting for them as well.

Newtown High School was very well run and the principal and I got along very well. I was there for about eight years and became a dean and guidance counselor. From there I moved to James Monroe High School in the Bronx as a counselor and then to the Board of Education High School Division office to serve as a hearing officer for students suspensions. Later I transferred to Franklin K. Lane High School on the Brooklyn-Queens border as an administrative assistant principal. I applied for principal positions on a number of occasions and was told by the superintendent that I was often the best candidate, but that someone else was selected for “political” reasons. I retired from Lane in 1990.

One reason I participated in the civil rights movement was because I believed I had a responsibility to act and rectify things that were not right. As a Jew, I also reacted to what had happened to Jews when they were deprived of their rights. I was involved in marching, bus riding, demonstrations, and lobbying for legal changes, including “Freedom Summer” in 1964. We “freedom rode” to desegregate the buses and broke all the segregation rules. While in Jackson, Mississippi, we were stopped by sheriff’s deputies at night and were thrown in jail for disturbing the peace. Luckily, a group of people from Great Neck, New York sent money to bail us out of jail. I was also involved in the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery led by Dr. Martin Luther King. We marched on the side of the road and nobody would give us food or water. White car drivers with shotguns and rifles threatened us as they passed by. The front of the line was confronted by the chief of police, dogs, and water hoses. It was all televised. The publicity that it got showed the nation what was happening and helped secure passage of the Voting Rights Act. Martin Luther King Jr. was charismatic, powerful guy who was committed to a peaceful approach to change. He gave off an aura of power. After he was killed, I flew down to Memphis. We marched through Memphis and then went to Atlanta for the funeral. Dr. King was a great catalyst for social justice.

Sal Zaccaro - Social Studies Teacher, Malverne High School

I started working in Malverne in 1961. I did my student teaching here the year before. When I started teaching it was a mostly White school. There were a

handful of Black students, but no Black staff members. Lakeview, however, was in a period of racial transition. White flight had already begun.

I was teaching world history at the time. This included African history the way the Europeans had seen the Africans, as inferiors. The course had nothing to do with Black history, Black culture, Black hopes, or dreams. The kids only got more from me because of my personal interest. I never had any courses in African history in college so I studied it on my own. I found it fascinating.

I was a grade advisor to the class of 1964. A lot of bad things happened at that time in this building. We had a Black student who was a super personality student. One day, I saw him outside my classroom with a very sad face; this kid was never without a smile. I went out to talk to him. He told me that he had just come from his guidance counselor. The counselor said to him, “So Henry, do you think you would like to be a painter?” Henry had a pretty good view of himself and personal dignity. He said, “No, I’m not really that artistic.” But the counselor said, “No, I meant a house painter.” The guidance counselor thought he was saying a perfectly innocent thing. This is an example of the low expectations the guidance staff and the district had for Black kids.

That same year, I received a phone call one night from the brother of one of my students. The student, an extraordinary athlete, received many scholarship offers. The brothers told me that the coach was no help with the scholarships. Every time a letter came from a new school, the coach would say, “Oh, take that one, take that one.” The young man was confused and didn’t know what to do. I advised him to be very careful where he went to school. In 1964, there were very hard racial attitudes in many parts of the country. I told him that he needed to go to a school that would give him extra time, extra courses, would pay for summer school, and would guarantee him a degree. Otherwise, if something happened to his knee, his football and college careers would be over.

Once, when we were fighting to integrate the Malverne schools, I was told that my certification was in doubt. How could that be? I had been teaching for a while. I knew that they were playing dirty. I called the wife of Ewell Finley, the head of the United Committee for Action Now. I wanted to let them know that I was being harassed because of my political views. I later received a letter from the State Education Commissioner stating that my certification was not at

risk and it was permanent. That was some of the dirty tricks that were played.

During the 1960s there was a terrible war going on in Vietnam. People tried to get out of going into the army and protested against the war. People also protested for civil rights. I was arrested several times in my life for civil disobedience during the Vietnam and Civil Rights era.

The kids at Malverne got involved in protests because they wanted Black history and Swahili classes. The school board in Malverne was retrogressive about racial issues and any change, so the kids and the school board had a confrontation.

In 1969-70, things got worse. The school board election was racial in every sense of the word. One candidate put out a letter that went to houses in Lynbrook and Malverne, but not to Black families living in Lakeview. It said, "Do you want your kids to go through the dark streets of Lakeview?" I was very active in school affairs. There was an extraordinary African American fellow named Ewell Finley, who was a candidate for the school board, and I supported him.

One day I went to my car and there was paint all over it. Another night, I came to my car and it was egged. The night of the election, I found a watermelon in my car with the words "Nigger lover" written in black magic marker. I had to change my phone number twice because people were harassing my family. At the election, a little girl said to me, "We're going to get you now you nigger lover." Right here in this school, and I was a teacher! One woman spit in the face of Mr. Finley. I was standing so close that she got spittle on my face. She said to me, "Why don't you go back to where you came from?"

When the kids became active in the school things got really bad. One day, 139 of us were arrested. The kids were taken to Mineola. They had things done to them that were illegal. At that time, only known drug offenders were strip-searched. That wasn't the case with these kids. They were humiliated. Some of the kids told me what happened. They said they were going to tear the place apart. I began to be frightened. I knew that the institutions were much more powerful than they were.

There were two meetings that night to discuss what was going on. One was a parents' meeting in a church in Lakeview. Meanwhile, the kids were meeting at Mr. Finley's house. I went to the parent's meeting, but all that was happening was bickering. I didn't want to waste my time so I said that I was going to talk to the

kids. One of the parents got offended and said that the kids didn't want to see me. They didn't want to see any adults. So I said fine, they can tell me if they want to.

I went to see the kids. The mood at their meeting was very ugly and I was very scared. I asked them to listen to me for a minute. I told them that some of them could lose their lives if they rioted and that there is no more powerful weapon than silence. I told them to make signs, as they were planning to, and to march on the curb with their parents behind them. They agreed to do it. There really was a good mix of students at the meeting. They were Black and White. The kids had found a common ground.

That night I went home and contacted everyone that I knew in the media because media coverage would protect the students. The next day I stood there with them. I couldn't believe that no other teacher had enough courage to stand up for what is right and stand with these kids. To me that was the greatest betrayal of these kids. How dare they teach these kids and not stand up for them! The kids stood outside the school for three days until the school board met with their representatives.

This was the beginning of a few token changes. However, some horrible things were still done. The principal of the high school wrote letters to colleges where the students who demonstrated had applied. He told the college that these students were troublemakers.

Over the years, more and more Black families moved into Lakeview, and more and more White families moved out. Today, two-thirds of the students in Malverne schools are Black, but two-thirds of the taxpayers and voters are White, so racial conflict continues. We have had school board members and superintendents send their kids to private schools. I bet you didn't know that this district used to be called the Birmingham of the North.

The Origin of Labor Day and the Labor Day Parade

By Jennifer Dassaro

The first Labor Day parade was held on Tuesday, September 5, 1882 in New York City. It was organized by the Central Labor Union (CLU). The CLU decided that the observance of Labor Day should include a street parade to demonstrate to the public “the strength and esprit de corps of the trade and labor organizations” of the community. It was followed by a festival for the recreation and amusement of workers and their families. This became the pattern for future celebrations of Labor Day. Workers that participated in the initial Labor Day parade had to take an unpaid day off from work. The parade route traveled up Broadway, from City Hall Plaza to Union Square. Marchers carried banners with slogans such as “Labor Built this Country, Labor Shall Rule It”; “Eight Hours for a Legal Days Work”; “Less Hours, More Pay”; and “Agitate, Educate, Organize.”

The New York Times reported that the parade “was conducted in an orderly and pleasant manner” and that the Grand Marshall was determined “that no person under the influence of liquor should take part in the procession.” It concluded with a picnic at Elm Park (92nd street and Ninth Avenue). Labor leaders gave speeches and marchers relaxed and ate with their families.



Early Labor Day Parade in New York City

In 1884, the CLU changed the date of the Labor Day parade to the first Monday in September. That year other cities also began having parades. In 1887 six states passed legislation creating a Labor Day

including New Jersey and New York. By 1894 thirty-one states honored Labor Day. That year, in support of striking workers at the Pullman Car Company in Illinois, the American Railway Union (ARU) led by Eugene V. Debs boycotted all trains hauling Pullman Cars. When the strike crippled transportation in the United States, President Grover Cleveland sent in 12,000 Marines to put down the boycott. In the midst of all of this, Cleveland signed into law the establishment of a national Labor Day on the first Monday of September. His motives in creating Labor Day may have been to counter his harsh treatment of the ARU and to appear to be more union-friendly than he really was.



Buffalo, New York Labor Day parade, 1900

Whatever Cleveland’s motives may have been, the Labor Day parade in New York City disappeared between 1894 and 1902. From 1902 until 1914 the parade was held with fluctuating degrees of participation and it was canceled in 1914 because of the outbreak of World War I. In 1918, a “Win the War Rally” took place in lieu of a Labor Day parade.

In 1920 Labor Day was replaced by a victory celebration called Lafayette-Marne Day in *The New York Times*. In 1924, a “Defense Day” was held on the first Monday of September and mock battles took place at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn. After that, the parade and an official observance of Labor Day in New York City seem to have disappeared until 1959.

In the 1960s the Labor Day parade was resurrected and became very popular with prominent politicians serving as Grand Marshalls. In 1961, there were over 200,000 participants. In 1968 anti-Vietnam war protesters marched.

In 1996, the New York City Central Labor Council changed the day of the Labor Day parade from the first Monday in September to the following Saturday. This was done because many union members and potential participants now used Labor Day as a last chance for a summer vacation and because the Labor Council did not want to compete with a Caribbean parade in Brooklyn held on Labor Day that attracted many working people.

There continues to be disagreement over who came up with the idea for the first Labor Day. Both Matthew Maguire and Peter J. McGuire have their supporters. Matthew Maguire was a machinist from Patterson, New Jersey who served as Secretary of Local 344 of the International Association of Machinists and later as Secretary of the Central Labor Union (CLU). According to Ted Watts, author of the book *The First Labor Day Parade* (1983), the CLU, founded in the 1870s, was affiliated with the Knights of Labor. He contends that the 1882 parade was planned to coincide with a Knights of Labor Convention being held in New York City.

The Knights of Labor were an all-inclusive union that welcomed women and African-Americans as members. It sought to unite all “producers” including factory workers, skilled craft workers, and small business owners. The group rejected “non-producers”—people who did not engage in physical labor, such as bankers, lawyers, and academics. In 1886, the Knights claimed to have between 700,000 and 1 million members. After the Haymarket Square Riot in Chicago, Illinois, in 1886, the Knights of Labor declined as an effective organization. The emergence of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1886 also contributed to this decline.

The other possible founder of the Labor Day parade in New York City is Peter (P.J.) McGuire. McGuire was a member of the Carpenters’ Union in New York City and later was a co-founder of the AFL. The AFL differed from the Knights of Labor in that its members were largely skilled craftsmen. The AFL was less political than the Knights and focused on short-term, realistic goals such as improved working conditions, higher pay, and control over hiring. The

AFL used boycotts and collective bargaining to negotiate terms and tried to avoid strikes.

“Labor Day differs in every essential way from the other holidays of the year in any country. All other holidays are in a more or less degree connected with conflicts and battles of man's prowess over man, of strife and discord for greed and power, of glories achieved by one nation over another. Labor Day . . . is devoted to no man, living or dead, to no sect, race, or nation.” – Samuel Gompers

The disagreement over who came up with the idea for a Labor Day parade may have its roots in political disagreements. According to Ted Watts and the New Jersey Historical Society website, Matthew Maguire’s socialist politics may have made him too much of a controversial figure in the labor movement to be given credit. Maguire's involvement in the establishment of the first Labor Day was essentially swept under the rug to give labor a more moderate, non-political public face.

When President Grover Cleveland created a national Labor Day in 1894, he gave the pen he used to sign the law to Samuel Gompers, president of the AFL. This led people to believe that the AFL had initiated Labor Day. In 1897 P.J. McGuire publically claimed responsibility for the idea and given his ties to the AFL few questioned his claim. There does seem to be evidence that history was re-written to leave Matthew Maguire out and favor the AFL.

Celebration of Labor Day and the Labor Day parade seem to change with changes in American society. In the 19th century it was a vehicle for the labor movement to rally and attract new members. In the 20th century the parade was not a constant, but when it was held it often served as a way to express patriotism. Most recently it has been moved to a new day to accommodate a large immigrant community. In its latest rendition, there has been a rekindling of its original labor ties as the unions try to show their political strength and influence politicians.

The Uprising of 20,000

By Jennifer Dassaro

In 1909 the ready-made clothing industry was booming and the center of ladies' garment production was New York City. The latest fashion for women was the shirtwaist, a women's blouse that buttoned in the front like a man's shirt. Most of the garment workers of the time were young Jewish women, who came to America seeking a better life, free from the prejudices of Russia and other Eastern European countries. They often worked seven days a week from 7 AM until 8 PM for \$6 a week. Workers were docked for arriving a few minutes late, talking, missing Sunday shifts, or taking too long in the rest room. The normal 56-hour week might stretch to 70 hours without overtime pay. The pay was below poverty rates, and work during the slack season was assigned preferentially. Workers had to pay for their own sewing needles. Some had to rent the chairs they sat on and pay for the electricity of their sewing machines. Safety was an afterthought. Flammable material was everywhere, and exit doors were often locked so that the workers could be searched on the way out.

On November 22, 1909 the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) met at Cooper Union to discuss the possibility of a general strike. The ILGWU membership was about 70% women, but the leadership was mostly men. Speakers at this meeting included AFL president, Samuel Gompers.

The notoriously cautious Gompers did not like strikes as a tool. But he told the group, "There comes a time when not to strike is but to rivet the chains of slavery upon our wrists."

Gompers' speech was met with applause. As he left the stage a young Ukrainian woman named Clara Lemlich stood up and shouted in Yiddish, "I have listened to all the speakers. I would not have further patience for talk, as I am one of those who feels and suffers from the things pictured. I move that we go on a general strike!" The crowd cheered her and voted for a general strike. Clara then led the union in a traditional Yiddish oath: "If I turn traitor to the cause I now pledge, may this hand wither from the arm I now raise."

The next day 15,000 shirtwaist workers went on strike. Three days later the strikers numbered 20,000, effecting over 500 factories in the city. The scope and

size of the strike seemed to stun the factory owners and the press. A November 25th newspaper article quoted a manufacturer as saying, "We cannot understand why so many people can be swayed to join in a strike that has no merit. Our employees were perfectly satisfied, and they made no demands. It is a foolish, hysterical strike, and not 5 per cent of the strikers know what they are striking for."

Even the courts went against the women strikers. A judge, who sentenced a woman to jail for picketing said, "You are striking against God and Nature, whose law is that man shall earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. You are on strike against God!"

By December many of the smaller manufacturers had given in to the union's demands in order to meet contracts due before Christmas. Facing the strength of the strikers, the larger firms joined together and began hiring thugs and paying police to arrest the striking women. Many of the strikers were arrested and fined. In order to avoid too many arrests and to maintain the integrity of the women picketing, the ILGWU issued a list of rules for conducting a picket. They included: Don't walk in groups of more than two or three; Don't call anyone "scab" or use abusive language of any kind; and, if a policeman arrest you and you are sure that you have committed no offence, take down his number and give it to your union officers.

Wealthy suffragists who were prominent in New York City society began sympathizing with the women striking. They linked the shirtwaist makers struggle for better pay and work conditions with the fight to gain the women's right to vote. Women like Anne Morgan, J.P. Morgan's daughter, and Alva Belmont, wife of William Vanderbilt held luncheons and rallies to gain public support for the shirtwaist makers' strike. They raised money to bail women out of jail and to pay fines incurred as a result of the strike.

Soon the press began favoring the cause of the strike. By February 1910 most of the shirtwaist factories had met striker's demands. The gains for the union included, higher pay, shorter hours, and recognition of the union. The unions failed to get closed shop agreements (where companies only hired union workers.) and some companies, like the Triangle Shirtwaist Company, still refused to negotiate and workers there had to return to work without having any of their demands met.

The Uprising of 20,000: New York City, 1909

The Uprising of 20,000 took place from November 22, 1909 until February 1910. Local 25 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union met at Cooper Union on November 22, 1909 to consider a general strike for better work conditions. The strikers were mostly young immigrant women. Document A is a list of rules issued by the Ladies' Shirtwaist Makers Union advising these young women on the rules of conduct while picketing. Document B is a song that was part of the organizing drive. (www.ashp.cuny.edu/heaven/fuprising.html).



RULES FOR PICKETS

1. Don't walk in groups of more than two or three.
2. Don't stand in front of the shop; walk up and down the block.
3. Don't stop the person you wish to talk to; walk alongside of him.
4. Don't get excited and shout when you are talking.
5. Don't put your hand on the person you are speaking to. Don't touch his sleeve or button. This may be construed as a "technical assault."
6. Don't call anyone "scab" or use abusive language of any kind.
7. Plead, persuade; appeal, but do not threaten.
8. If a policeman arrest you and you are sure that you have committed no offence, take down his number and give it to your union officers.

Questions

1. Why do you think such a list of rules was deemed necessary? Pick one and explain why you think it was important enough for the union to list.
2. Which rules strike you as interesting or odd? Explain.
3. How is this list reflective of behavior expected from women during this time period? Explain using specific rules.

The Uprising of the Twenty Thousands (Dedicated to the Waist makers of 1909)

In the black of the winter of nineteen nine,
When we froze and bled on the picket line,
We showed the world that women could fight
And we rose and won with women's might.

Chorus:

Hail the waist makers of nineteen nine,
Making their stand on the picket line,
Breaking the power of those who reign,
Pointing the way, smashing the chain.

And we gave new courage to the men
Who carried on in nineteen ten
And shoulder to shoulder we'll win through,
Led by the I.L.G.W.U

Questions

1. What emotion does the song evoke? Explain.
2. What does the last verse mean?
3. How does this song challenge the traditional views of women during this time period?

Clara Lemlich: Labor Leader

Clara Lemlich was born in the Ukraine in 1886 to a Jewish family. In 1903 Clara and the family left the Ukraine, then part of Russia, and moved to the United States due to violence against Jews in Russia. Clara soon found work in the garment industry of New York City. The Industrial Revolution gave way to the sewing machine and the beginning of the ready-made clothing industry. The latest in women's fashion was the shirtwaist, a women's blouse that buttoned up the front like a men's shirt.

In November of 1909 the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (I.L.G.W.U) was considering a general strike as a means to gain much needed improvements in work conditions. The average wage for a shirtwaist maker was \$6 a week for a 7 day, 90 hour work week. The typical day started at 7A.M. and ended at 8 P.M. with a half hour break for lunch. Conditions in the factories were cramped, dark, dangerous, and had little ventilation.

Clara had been an outspoken advocate for the rights of garment workers. Clara joined the ILGWU shortly after arriving in New York, and was soon elected to the executive board. The ILGWU leadership was mostly male and tended to be conservative, thus the union membership stagnated. The common perception of the times was that poor, immigrant women were impossible to organize. Clara, on the other hand, was outspoken and didn't hesitate to lead several small strikes. By the November 1909 meeting she had already been arrested 17 times, and just a few weeks earlier had several ribs broken by police batons. She was fearless, dedicated and charming.

At a meeting of the I.L.G.W.U., held on November 22, 1909 at Cooper Union, Clara spoke of strike in front of a large crowd of union members. Impatient with the male speakers, who were being long-winded, Clara spoke up and declared in Yiddish, "I have no further patience for talk as I am one of those who feels and suffers from the things pictured. I move that we go on a general strike." After this action Clara led the union members in a traditional Yiddish oath: "If I turn traitor to the cause I now pledge, may this hand wither from the arm I now raise." Approximately 20,000 out of the 32,000 workers in the shirtwaist trade in The City walked out over the next two days.



Despite opposition from factory owners, who hired scabs to work and thugs to harm strikers, the women of the I.L.W.G.U. were ultimately successful. The strike ended on February 10, 1910, with most of the factories conceding to a wage increase and recognition of the union.

After the strike garment shop owners refused to hire Clara, so she turned her considerable energies to the suffrage movement, founding a working-class suffrage group. Marriage and three children transformed Clara's activism; she began organizing wives and mothers around issues like housing, food, and education. First for the Communist Party, then outside of it, Clara helped to found housewives' organizations, supporting the wives and families of striking workers and agitating for better housing and food conditions. Later in life she surveyed trade unionism in Europe and protested nuclear weapons and the executions of the Rosenbergs. Ever a fighter, in her last days at a nursing home, Clara helped to organize the orderlies.

Teaching about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire: Selected Lesson Plans & Educational Materials

Annotated list of resources prepared by Adrienne Andi Sosin

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire took place on March 25, 1911, almost one hundred years ago. It was, until the World Trade Center was destroyed on September 11, 2001, the worst workplace disaster in the nation. Public outrage over the Triangle Fire led to major changes in health and safety regulation of industry, and in the role of government to control business and labor.

The following lesson plans and materials focus on teaching and learning about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire as an example of historical inquiry and because it represents a singularly important moment in American social history. Studying about the Triangle Fire teaches students about the labor movement, civil rights and human rights, and provides thematic context for teachers and students to improve literacy and technology skills as they acquire content information about society's heritage and present conditions for working people.

This annotated list is a result of research undertaken for the Education & Labor Collaborative (<http://education.adelphi.edu/edulc/>), to address the injustices youth will face as future members of the workforce in a global economy due to lack of foundational knowledge of the history of working men and women, the importance of unions and advocacy groups that speak out for working people, and the benefits of collective action.

The lesson plans, online resources, print resources and miscellaneous materials listed below are largely addressed toward teachers and students at the middle school level and above, but can be modified to meet the needs of younger students. These items have been selected for their topical focus, presentation quality and availability to teachers. While the lessons differ in how they address the topic and resources used, each source has been reviewed for accuracy, bias, and currency. Additional resources are continually being added to this list. They will be available at the resources page of the Remember the Triangle Fire Coalition (<http://rememberthetrianglefire.org/>).

Lesson Plans

Learning Conversations With History: The Triangle Fire by Anne Campbell And Irene Rabinowitz. Published by the UFT Teacher Center Professional Development Program, a collaboration of the United Federation of Teachers, the New York State Education Department, New York City public schools and participating school districts, as well as metropolitan area universities and cultural institutions. The lesson is designed for Grades 4-6 and includes guided reading selections, small group activity suggestions and KWL, inquiry & Semantic Map graphic organizer exercises. <http://www.ufttc.org/ftp/pub/specialedition/SpecialEdition17.pdf>.

The Triangle Fire: From Industrialism to Progressivism by Joanne Reitano, La Guardia Community College CUNY. This US History module is part of the American Social History Project. It is intended for use in the college introductory U.S. history survey course. <http://www.ashp.cuny.edu/investigatinghistory/m9.html>

Worker Safety - The Triangle Fire Legacy by Patricia Bonner. An EconEdLink Online lesson available from the Council for Economic Education. Includes worksheet activities and website resources about Triangle as well as more recent worker tragedies. <http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.php?lesson=EM542&page=teacher>

Teaching American History in Maryland by Nancy Bramucci. The Triangle Fire lesson is keyed to national standards developed by the National Center for History in the Schools. <http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards.html>. Access to primary, secondary, and media sources at: <http://teachingamericanhistorymd.net/000001/000000/000024/html/t24.html>

11th Grade Inquiry Unit into the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911 by Miriam Laska . Urban Dreams was a project of the Oakland Unified School District Office of Instructional Technology designed to support History and English teachers

grades 9-12, by providing technology tools and professional development opportunities.
<http://urbandreams.ousd.k12.ca.us/lessonplans/triangle/index.html>

Triangle Fire and Labor Movement: A Cincinnati Museum Center Online Exhibit prepared by Ethel Rowe. Lesson questions reference materials at the Cornell ILR Triangle website and other websites.
<http://www.350th.org/er/lp/haven/lp11.html>.

Fire in the Sky: The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire Causes and Consequences by Christopher Czajka of the National Teacher Training Institute.
<http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/ntti/resources/lessons/fireinthesky/index.html>

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Disaster. A teaching guide keyed to a video segment from the documentary *The Jewish Americans* produced by WNET Channel 13. Focuses on characters, setting, plot, and theme using graphic organizers.
<http://www.teachersdomain.org/resource/vtl07.la.rv.tex.t.triangle/>

The Triangle Fire: A Curriculum Guide from Washington Post Newspapers in Education. Includes an interview with David Von Drehle and an activity to develop sensitivity about how important cutters were to the process of making shirtwaists.
[http://www.washpost.com/nielessonplans.nsf/0/C227D93127B86A7385256D9D006FB99D/\\$File/1-TriangleFinal.pdf](http://www.washpost.com/nielessonplans.nsf/0/C227D93127B86A7385256D9D006FB99D/$File/1-TriangleFinal.pdf)

Go & Learn: Primary Documents and Lesson Plans from the Jewish Women's Archive. Features speech by Rose Schneiderman at Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire protest. Lessons contain religious content.
<http://jwa.org/teach/golearn/sep08/>

Online Resources

Cornell School of Industrial & Labor Relations Kheel Center. This website is a resource for documents, teaching ideas, images, and an extensive bibliography. <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire>

American Labor Studies Center. Contains additional online resources that supplement the Triangle Fire

accounts, making it an indispensable resource for teaching labor studies. <http://labor-studies.org>.

The Triangle Fire of 1911 by John M. Hoenig, Article appeared in *History Magazine* April/May 2005.
<http://www.fisheries.vims.edu/hoenig/pdfs/Triangle.pdf>

The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911 by Robert W. Whalen. Scholarly paper presented at Gotham Center for NYC History. <http://www.gothamcenter.org/festival/2001/confpapers/whalen.pdf>

EyeWitness to History. "City Life at the turn of the 20th Century." Describes the fire and subsequent trial looking at Immigration in the Early 20th Century.
<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/snpim3.htm>

Curriculum of United States Labor History for Teachers sponsored by the Illinois Labor History Society. <http://www.kentlaw.edu/ilhs/curricul.htm>

Places Where Women Made History. National Parks Services website.
<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/pwwmh/ny30.htm>

Trial By Fire. By David von Drehle. Smithsonian magazine, August 2006
<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/presence-aug06.html?c=y&page=1>

Online Images: Art & Illustrations

Graphic Depiction of the Asch Building shows a cut-away layout of what the Triangle factory would look like as the fire began on the 8th floor.
<http://www.nickrotondo.biz/triangle.html>

History of the Needlecraft Industry. A mural commissioned by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union depicts the Triangle Fire.
http://www.english.illinois.edu/MAPS/poets/m_r/pinsky/triangle.htm

Ben Shahn mural. A triptych depicts immigrants arriving through Ellis Island, workers organizing through unions for better working conditions.
<http://www.njn.net/artsculture/shahn/mural.html>

Library of Congress Exhibit. Includes images from Shirtwaist Fire. <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/haventohome/haven-century.html>

Selected Print Books and Resources

Argersinger, J. (2009). *The Triangle Fire: A Brief History with Documents*. Bedford Series in History and Culture.

Bigelow, W. & Diamond, N. (1988). *The power in our hands: A curriculum on the history of work and workers in the United States*. NY: Monthly Review Press.

Boyer, R. & Morais, H. (2003) *Labor's Untold Story*. Pittsburgh, PA: UE. See pp.184-187.

Finn, P. (2009). *Literacy With an Attitude: Educating Working-Class Children in their Own Self-Interest*. 2nd Ed. Albany: SUNY Press.

Greenwald, R. (2005) *The Triangle Fire, the Protocols of Peace, and Industrial Democracy in Progressive Era New York*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University.

Lieurance, S. (2003). *The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire and Sweatshop Reform in American History*. Enslow.

Linné, R., Benin, L. & Sosin, A. (2009). *Organizing the Curriculum: Perspectives on Teaching the US Labor Movement*. Rotterdam, NY: Sense Publishers.

Stein, L. (2001). *The Triangle Fire*. Cornell University.

Stein, L. (1977). *Out of the Sweatshop: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy*. NY: Quadrangle.

Von Drehle, D. (2003). *Triangle: The Fire That Changed America*. Atlantic Monthly Press.

Wertheimer, B. (1977). *We Were There: The Story of Working Women in America*. NY Pantheon Books. Chapter 16.

Zinn, H. (2003). *A People's History of the United States*. NY: Harper Perennial. Chapter 13.

Literature, Media & Dramatic Portrayals

Burns, R. *New York: Part IV*. PBS. DVD format.

Coles, N. & Zandy, J., eds. (2006) *American Working Class Literature: An Anthology*. Oxford University. Includes Rose Schneiderman, "A Cap Maker's Story" (1905), Rose Schneiderman, "Triangle Memorial Speech" (1911), Morris Rosenfeld, "Requiem on the Triangle Fire" (1911), and contemporary poetry.

George Altomare of the United Federation of Teachers

George Altomare, a social studies teacher, was one of the principal architects of the United Federation of Teachers in the 1950s and 1960s. He later served as UFT High School Vice President and after he “retired” he continued to work as the union’s director of professional committees. George Altomare’s active and aggressive organizing and leadership in creating the UFT and work since fighting for teachers’ and human rights is testament to all social struggles and labor movements. To learn more about the history of the United Federation of Teachers visit <http://www.uft.org/about/history/>. George Altomare was interviewed for this article by John Mannebach.

Al Shanker, Dan Sanders, and I all started teaching at Junior High School 126, which incidentally was later renamed the Shanker School, in Astoria, Queens. We started in 1953 and I taught there for three years. In the first week we were taken back by our undignified treatment by the Assistant Principal, Abe Greenberg. He was such a real tyrant that we said, “We have to join a union.” There were two unions for teachers at that point, the New York City Teachers Guild and the Teachers Union. The Teachers Union was a leftwing, communist leaning organization, and we didn’t want to join them. We wanted to join the labor movement, which we could do through the Teachers Guild. Immediately we went on an organizing drive at our school. At that time most schools didn’t have a single member in the Guild, and there was very low membership in the high schools. We were appalled that we could get almost everybody to join in our school and yet the rest of the city hardly had a member per school. Soon we got on the executive board of the union.

A Chance to Show Unity

There were some high school members of the New York City Teachers Guild, but the high schools had very great enmity against the Guild. Prior to 1947 there was a high school salary differential. High school teachers had to have a Bachelor’s degree, which was not required of elementary school teachers, and they had to have an additional 30 credits or a Masters degree. They also had to pass tests that were very difficult. While junior high school teacher made more than elementary school teachers, you could earn as much as 30-35% more as a high school teacher.

In 1947 the city was in a terrible situation. There was a shortage of teachers and the baby boomers were coming into the schools. This influx affected elementary schools first so the city needed to attract elementary school teachers. They didn’t want to “waste” money on teachers for the junior high or high schools and decided to equalize salaries so that the elementary school teachers get exactly what the high school teachers get.”

At that point, hundreds, maybe thousands, of high school teachers quit the Teachers Guild and joined the High School Teachers Association, which was loosely allied to the National Education Association. The NEA was anti-union at that time and opposed collective bargaining.

I went to the high schools in 1956 and I tried, but could not convince people that there should be a merger into one teachers’ union. They said, “What about the high school differential?” And I said, “Well,

if you’re not unified, you won’t get money anyway, so you may as well be together.” A few joined that way but it was very difficult. The high school teachers were saying, “We’ll merge if we all have the high school differential.” That was the challenge. There would not be a UFT today if that could not be solved.

In 1959 there were a lot of things happening. In February a new semester began in the high schools. There were about twenty evening schools in New York City where kids who dropped out of school would go. The teachers worked for what they called, “blood money.” They would teach five classes in the day and then at night they would teach two double classes. The teachers would only make 12 dollars a night, but if you had little money and a family, you had to do it.

Anti-Strike Laws

At this time there was an anti-strike law called the Condon-Wadlin Act. It prohibited public employees, including teachers, from going on strike. They could lose their jobs and be jailed for striking. Two teachers at the evening high school in Jamaica High School started a petition for mass resignations to avoid the Condon-Wadlin Act. They got over 90% of the teachers to sign their intention to resign. It was the equivalent of a wildcat strike, however they called it a mass resignation.

Dave Selden, Al Shanker, myself, and others, said, “This is a chance to show unity,” so we went to support them in the bitter cold. For some reason, whenever you strike it’s always extra cold. We brought

coffee and doughnuts and walked the picket line. After about a month Mayor Wagner gave in and doubled the evening school teachers' salary from \$12 a night to \$24. It was really a victory.

A Merger and the Creation of the UFT

After the "strike," without authorization, I had secret meetings in my apartment with a group of teachers including John Bailey, a pro-merger member of the executive board of the High School Teachers Association. We got the Vice President of the HSTA, Samuel Hochberg, to join us in secretly working out a merger strategy. At these meetings I learned an important thing about compromise.

The best compromises come when you accept the best argument of your opponent and in return they accept your best argument. We accepted the High School Teachers' argument that they were better prepared as teachers because they had earned either a Masters degrees or its equivalent. We decided to demand a promotional differential, but not just for high school teachers. Any teacher that had a Bachelor's degree plus 30 additional credits or a Masters degree would be eligible.

After those meetings, we tried to have a merger between the Teacher's Guild and the High School Teachers Association, but they refused. John Bailey and I place a big ad in the *World Telegram and Sun* where we said that we were forming a new teachers' organization, the Committee for Action through Unity.

I was still on the executive board of the Teachers Guild, and I was not authorized to do this. The High School Teacher's Association also did not authorize John. We announced that the CATU would be recruiting people and would merge with whatever organization agreed to merge with us. People started sending in checks and soon we had over 1,500 members, which was more than the Teacher's Guild.

When I went to the next board meeting of the Teacher's Guild Jules Kolodny made a motion to censure me. But Al Shanker said "If you censure George you lose the high school members," so they relented. They decided to contact the rest of the group's officials and said, "We will talk."

We figured out a new constitution that would promote unity and protect the interests of the high school teachers by creating different divisions. We also decided that if necessary we would strike for collective bargaining and the promotional differential.

On March 16, 1960, the delegate assembly of the Teachers Guild approved the plan. That was the birth of the United Federation of Teachers, Local 2. We tried to meet with the Board of Education and prepared for a strike. However, for legal purposes we called it a work stoppage and not a strike.

1960 Strike and Collective Bargaining

The date for the work stoppage, which never took place, was to be May 17, 1960. Mayor Wagner got involved and promised us collective bargaining, but they were broken promises. The Monday before Election Day was a school day and we decided that was the day we would strike. Over five thousand teachers joined us and another two thousand called in sick. Approximately 7,600 out of 50,000 went on strike on that day. While most schools remained open, we did close about fifty junior high schools, fifty elementary schools, and eleven or twelve high schools.

The mayor now organized a fact finding committee the included Harry Van Arsdale, the head of the Central Labor Council and labor representatives from the Electricians union, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and the Men's Clothing Union. They recommended a collective bargaining election to determine exclusive bargaining rights. In December 1961, the United Federation of Teachers won the right to represent New York City teachers.

The UFT and Civil Rights

It is very difficult to say you want the right to collective bargaining — rights for employees — without saying you want rights for everyone. That is why the UFT was a strong supporter of the Civil Rights movement. I did a lot of work to get buses and people to the great March on Washington in 1963. As you got closer to Washington you started to see enormous numbers of buses and cars. Before you knew it there was a long traffic jam. The march itself was so *quiet*. It was amazingly quiet. It was also historic.

Most people give credit for the march on Washington to Martin Luther King, Jr. He was great and made the "I Have a Dream" speech. But the march was actually named "The March for Jobs and Freedom." It was organized by the labor movement, by A. Philip Randolph, the first Black vice-president of the AFL-CIO, and Bayard Rustin, who was his second in command at the A. Philip Randolph Institute. Rustin was in charge of all the details and he did his job with union help.

In 1964, the UFT took a position in favor of using busses to desegregate New York City schools. We couldn't strike in support of desegregation, it would be a violation of the Condon-Wadlin Act, but we did vote to strike in support of anyone who was disciplined or fired because they honored a civil rights picket line.

Later in 1964 before Martin Luther King got the Nobel Peace Prize, we gave him our John Dewey Award. I was lucky enough to be the host of the award dinner. Dr. King was not very talkative, but you could feel the strength within him. I led him around and I'd say, "Do you want a picture with Martin Luther King?" I wanted a picture myself, but no one ever said anything. At the end he did sign my program. Years later someone found a picture of Martin Luther King speaking with me standing beside him.

Ocean Hill – Brownsville

The main issue of the 1968 strike was the forced transfer of White UFT members who had been teaching in Ocean Hill, a Black neighborhood. They were good teachers and were removed because the community board believed that Black kids should have Black teachers. The same theory would mean White kids should have White teachers, and this would be discrimination, which was a violation of the union's contract.

The UFT warned the local board and the City Board of Education that we would respond to the forced transfers. When the teachers were not reinstated, we launched a series of strikes from September through mid-November in defense of our contract. The entire thing could have been avoided but Mayor Lindsay did not act.

New York City was unique at the time having very tough written, oral, and teaching demonstration tests. This caused a lag as the student population changed but members of new groups entering the city had difficulty passing the tests and becoming teachers. Even though there were many Italian-Americans in New York City, there were very few Italian-Americans, like myself, who were teaching. They just didn't pass the tests. There was a similar problem for Black teachers. The community control people did not want to deal with changing the system and they violated the labor contract by transferring teachers against their wishes.

The UFT met with community leaders, Black organization leaders, and the Ford Foundation to see if we could have greater community involvement in

decision-making. The UFT was not against community involvement or community tripartite control. We had a series of meetings with these groups and with the experimental districts to try to increase parental involvement in the schools. But the Ford Foundation, backed by Mayor Lindsay, changed local school governance without our agreement. If they had worked with the UFT the strike could have been avoided.

The Ocean Hill-Brownsville strike created such enmity that for 20 years many Blacks were still against the UFT. Today, the UFT has formed coalition after coalition with community leaders and groups from different racial and ethnic backgrounds and we have our old labor and Civil Rights coalition back.

Teach or Wash Cars?

New York Times, January 26, 1955, p. 24

We welcome Mayor Wagner's announcement that a salary rise is in the making for New York City's public school teachers. But before the Mayor and the Board of Estimate make up their minds too firmly on the size of this increase we hope they will take the trouble to sound out the opinion of responsible citizens, including businessmen and others interested in education. It happened that, in the same issue of this newspaper that carried the news of the Mayor's decision, a new story appeared about a threatened strike in Manhattan and Bronx garages. Wages of employees in these garages are now \$65.99 a week for floor men and \$72.35 for washers. The union is asking for a 10-cent-an-hour increase and other benefits.

A starting teacher with a college degree gets \$66 a week in New York's public schools, or less than a car washer. A starting teacher, with a college education and other professional training, but not yet a master's degree, gets \$18 less per week than a starting Sanitation Department worker who sweeps streets, drives a truck or loads garbage. The Sanitation man's pay starts at \$84 a week. Take-home pay for the beginning unmarried teacher can be as little as \$2,417 a year, or \$46 a week, after federal tax and pension deductions. The United States Labor Department has just reported that in December the average factory worker with no dependents had take-home pay of \$61.36 a week after deductions. We contend that there is something wrong with society's scale of values when this situation exists, and that it calls for correction.

LGBT Literature in the Social Studies Classroom

by Nicole Sieben

A high school curriculum that ignores Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender (LGBT) issues is unbalanced and unjust. It does not represent the various sexual orientations or gender variances within the school; it merely continues to perpetuate the false assumption of heteronormativity, the idea that everyone is straight unless otherwise specified, that so many students are socialized to believe. What educators choose not to teach sends perhaps an even stronger message to students than what educators choose to teach. If educators choose to omit LGBT history and literature from the curriculum, students receive messages of negative separateness and odd dissimilarity that are harmful not only to the self-esteem of LGBT youth, but also to the maturation of straight youth.

A common rationalization for leaving LGBT literature and issues out of the curriculum is the fear of controversial discussions arising. However, just because a topic may cause debate in a classroom, it does not necessitate its deletion from the curriculum. As an English teacher, I have seen how Shakespeare's themes have sparked many heated debates in classrooms. However, most English educators agree that Shakespeare's plays are a necessary staple of the ELA curriculum. Moreover, contrary to some conservative beliefs, teaching LGBT themes does not teach straight students how to engage in LGBT acts, it teaches the acceptance of all sexualities in our culture. This message of inclusiveness is vital for the maturation and social, emotional, and cognitive development of all adolescents.

LGBT literature can be brought into the social studies classroom as part of an interdisciplinary program that pairs English and social studies classes, as a way of engaging students in discussion about LGBT issues such as single-sex marriage in contemporary society, or in elective classes (e.g., Sociology). LGBT literature helps students explore essential questions such as: Is love ever wrong? Do we value diversity in America? What is a family? What factors contribute to identity and self-actualization? What types of sacrifices or compromises are justified? What issues necessitate private vs. public disclosure? How can we move from a culture of tolerance to one of acceptance?

There are a few works of fiction that implicitly address LGBT issues or have LGBT characters that fall within the popular literary selections of the New York State ELA 7-12 curriculum and can be used there or in social studies classes. *The Color Purple*, by Alice Walker, explores African American life in the Jim Crow South in the early twentieth century. It includes a bisexual character that is instrumental in helping the main character to find her freedom and her voice as a Black woman. This book can be read in English classes or referenced in social studies classes while eleventh grade students are learning about conditions for African Americans after the Civil War. While the issue of the main character finding her voice is discussed often in classrooms, the relationship that she has with another woman is often glazed over to avoid talking about a lesbian relationship. However, by ignoring the presence of this relationship, teachers are sending a message to students that talking about homosexual acts of love is not acceptable. When this type of curricular deletion occurs, those that do identify as LGBT may feel as if their lifestyles have been ignored and invalidated.

In a number of other books homosexual relationships between characters are usually overlooked as well. Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native* includes a gay male character that grapples with transvestitism. In a number of poems in *Leaves of Grass*, Walt Whitman, ponders the meaning of gayness. While this book is often taught in the midst of other American literary works, the sexuality of the author and the theme of homosexuality are not usually addressed in high school classrooms. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky and *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger also have underlying LGBT themes identified by literary scholars that can be brought into classroom conversations.

Teachers may choose to teach LGBT literature explicitly in units that directly address sexual difference. Some essential questions that can be used to frame these units include: Does sexuality influence other aspects of life? Do we value sexual diversity in America? Do we provide options for sexual diversity in America? Should sexual identity be compromised for safety? Is there evidence of heteronormativity in our culture? Does who we love determine how we love? What kind of romantic relationships are socially deviant?

Exceptional LGBT themed books for the classroom are: *Annie on my Mind*, by Nancy Garden; *Weetzie Bat*, by Francesca Lia Block; *Boy Meets Boy*, by David Levithan; *Donorboy: A Novel*, by Brendan Halpin; *Luna*, by Julie Anne Peters; *Tale of Two Summers*, by Brian Sloan; *Rainbow Boys*, by Alex Sanchez; *Am I Blue? Coming Out from the Silence*, edited by Marion Dane Bauer; *Athletic Shorts*, by Chris Crutcher; *Parrotfish*, by Ellen Wittlinger; *Thinking Straight*, by Robin Reardon; and *After Tupac and C Foster* and *From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun* by Jacqueline Woodson.

Annie on My Mind, written by Nancy Garden, is a book about two high school girls who discover a romantic love that they have for each other. This book can be taught in middle school. It is a powerful novel about self-discovery; all adolescents can benefit from reading this book because they can all relate to the universal themes in the novel while discussing LGBT issues. *Am I Blue? Coming Out from the Silence*, edited by Marion Dane Bauer is a collection of sixteen short stories written by esteemed young adult authors that deal with children “coming out,” parents who are gay, and adolescents questioning their sexual identities.

Regardless of whether educators choose implicit or explicit infusion, LGBT literature should not be taught in isolation. If LGBT literature is presented in a vacuum during one particular unit or on one particular day set aside for those themes, students may see them as unique phenomena deserving of attention only during specific times. It is not enough to create a Diversity Day during the school year when there are celebrations of LGBT issues. LGBT love is only considered controversial at this point in time because it is barely talked about in schools. If students begin to see these lifestyles as normal human interactions, these topics will become less taboo.

Singing Social Movements

by Sherill Spruill and Laura Wasdo

Virtually every social movement in the twentieth century generated powerful freedom songs that rallied supporters to their causes. In this article we examine songs from the African American Civil Rights, Women’s Liberation, and Labor movements that teachers can present as primary source documents introducing students to struggles that reshaped the United States. This music tends to fall within the genre of folk songs, which are relatively short and simple songs with repetitive lyrics and easy melodic patterns that can be quickly learned and sung almost immediately. Many traditional folk songs borrowed preexisting tunes, often from church music, and the authors of the lyrics are often unknown.

Civil Rights Songs

Songs such as “Oh Freedom” and “We Shall Overcome” were principle songs to fuel the fervor of the African American population in the struggle for equal rights. “Oh Freedom” dates back to slavery and expressed the desire of enslaved Africans for an end to bondage. Joan Baez sang this song at the 1963 March on Washington just before the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. “We Shall Overcome” was originally called “I Shall Overcome.” Singer/musician/activist Pete Seeger

changed the “I” to “we” to build solidarity during boycotts and protest marches. Its powerful and encouraging lyrics speak of faith in our collective ability to rise above circumstance and conquer social oppression. Other songs that came out of civil rights struggles are “People Get Ready,” “A Change is Gonna Come,” “Free at Last,” and “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” the song written by James Weldon Johnson that became identified as the Negro National Anthem.

Women’s Rights Songs

Music has been part of the struggle for women’s rights since the women’s suffrage movement began in the 1820s. A pioneer of the music and arts portion of the women’s liberation movement of the 70’s was Holly Near, an actress, writer, social activist, and singer. Near composed and sang songs dealing with problems facing women as well as commentaries on broader political issues. In 1979, she wrote and sang “We Are A Gentle Angry People,” which gave voice to not just women, but all people who feel they have no means of expression. Singer/songwriter Helen Reddy became famous for her song “I Am Woman.” This song, in which she declared we are strong, we are invincible, we are women, was noted for enraging men and inspiring women. It became one of the signature

anthems of the women's movement in the 1970's. Loretta Lynn, who performed as a Country and Western singer, also wrote and sang the song "The Pill." The song encouraged women to take control of their reproductive lives and sexual freedom, in addition to establishing their own individual identities apart from men.

Labor Songs

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the American Labor Movement generated hundreds of songs identified with different trades, unions, and struggles. Many songs of the Labor Movement come from gospel and spiritual songs. "Solidarity Forever" is considered the "national anthem" of the Labor Movement. It was written by Ralph Chaplin, a member of the radical Industrial Workers of the World, in 1915, and is sung to the tune of the Civil War era "Battle Hymn of the Republic." It declares that workers are the crucial builders of society and protests that they are denied the just rewards for their hard work. Florence Reese wrote "Which Side Are You On?" in 1931. Reese's husband was a union organizer and she wrote the song after they were harassed by deputies hired by a mining company. The song has roots in the traditional gospel song, "Lay the Lilly Low." "Sit Down" comes from a sit-down strike in a General Motors factory in Flint, Michigan during the 1930s Great Depression. It introduces students to radical labor tactics at a time when workers seized factories. It is a particularly powerful song today because of the number of people losing jobs during the current Great Recession. The repetitive chorus of "Sit Down" is easy to imitate and students can change the lyrics to fit any crisis.

Many songs bridge social movements and show connections between the different struggles for equality and change. "We Shall Not Be Moved" was considered an anthem of both labor and civil rights movements. "Bread and Roses" celebrates both the labor and women's movements. "Bread and Roses," a

poem written in December 1911 by James Oppenheim, became a slogan for women textile workers on strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts in 1912. The poem was put to music by Mimi Farina in 1976 and became an important part of the contemporary Women's Liberation Movement.

Teaching Ideas

Students can update the lyrics to a song such as "Which Side Are You On?" or rearrange the traditional lyrics to fit a more contemporary musical genre like rap. They can use "Solidarity Forever" as an example and write a new protest song using an old tune. Students can create a powerpoint slide show or a video to illustrating song such as "Sit Down" or "Oh Freedom." Students can design a poster or CD cover illustrating themes from songs such as "I Am Woman" by Helen Reddy or "Independent Woman" by Destiny's Child. For a more ambitious group project, teachers can have students assemble an annotated list of freedom songs from different social movements.

Recommended Websites

Civil Rights Movement

http://www.cocojames.com/freedom_songs.htm

<http://folkmusic.about.com/od/toptens/tp/CivilRightsSong.htm>

Women's Movement

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/fighton/>

<http://www.voicesacrosstime.org>

http://womenshistory.about.com/od/60s70s/Sixties_Seventies.htm

Labor Movement

<http://folkmusic.about.com/od/toptens/tp/BestLaborSongs.htm>

<http://www.mcneilmusic.com/wrkunion.html>

<http://www.labor-studies.org/laborsongs.php>

<http://library.albany.edu/speccoll/documentinglabor/laborsongs.htm>

<http://unionsong.com/>

A Journey Through Cultural and Social Difference

by Ellen Durrigan Santora

Ten years ago I returned “home” to New York State. I grew up in Panther Lake, New York, a small, spring-fed lake seven miles north of Oneida Lake in the foothills of the Adirondacks. I first confronted cultural and social difference while attending a one-room school. Among my most vivid memories were the boy’s relentless taunts, a kind teacher who involved us in 4-H, and lots of black and white *National Geographics*. Those *National Geographics* first stimulated my interest in world travel and my eventual commitment to teach social studies as a subject that broadened students’ cultural understanding.

It did not take me long, as a child, to realize that I came from a different background than the other children in this one-room country school. Their dads were loggers and farmers, mine “ran a bar;” I was Catholic and was picked up from school once a week to attend release-time religious education; they were Baptists, if anything, and at that time, in that area, Protestants did not have release-time; they knew little of foreign countries, my dad was born in England of Irish descent, and I was a proud Irish-American. My parents taught me to be proud of who I was, and as I got older, I silently interpreted this to mean that others were inferior. As a social studies teacher and teacher educator, I struggled to overcome this, to learn cultural and social humility and to encourage my students to consider how sociocultural and socioeconomic privilege and subordination conditions not only academic and social entitlements but also how we relate to each other in the school setting.

From seventh grade on, I attended public rural schools with the sons and daughters of farmers, laborers, self-employed tradesmen, technicians, and teachers. I remember feeling I had to compensate for my lack of social experience by “proving” that I could be just as successful as my more privileged friends. Success, for me, meant academic achievement. I believed, then, that success was a direct result of effort, a belief fostered by my own cultural and racial privilege. As a teacher, I was challenged to understand both students who are privileged and those who grow up within a collective inheritance of palpable group oppression and for whom effort is not always directly rewarded with success.

I moved into adulthood in the sixties. My own social struggle became part of who I was; I resisted the authority of the privileged and resolved some of my identity issues through involvement in religious efforts to understand and act against social injustice. LeMoyne College, although it was academically humbling, elevated my social consciousness and taught me to think more critically and inclusively. Yes, I did march for social justice! How could I not, with Daniel Berrigan as an advisor, “teacher,” and social and political activist. In case you’re not a 60’s buff, Father Daniel Berrigan, S.J., was a committed civil rights and antiwar activist and one of the Catonsville Nine who destroyed draft records outside Baltimore to protest the Vietnam War. His was the work of *praxis*, of liberation theology.

Teaching as Praxis

Praxis, a term first used by Aristotle, was more recently used by Paulo Freire to refer to the goal-directed activity associated with a socially conscious, reflective philosophy. It is often connected to struggles for social justice. Later while working on my doctorate, I came to understand that teaching, itself, could be *praxis* when teachers worked to construct more equitable and just classroom environments – places where students understand and see beyond their differences to challenge social injustice, whether in the past or the present, places where students envision a different world.

As an adult, I have been fortunate to experience living, traveling, studying, and teaching in a number of different places both in and out of this country. I lived in Germany, Alaska, New York, California, Oregon, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Alabama; I taught in seven different states, and traveled throughout Europe, the Middle East, the United States and Canada. In 1990, I received a Hays-Fulbright Fellowship to study in Egypt and Jordan. While these experiences have made me confront my cultural and national identity and the need to understand our global connections, they have also taught me to view my own culture and its biases with guarded attention and to listen and observe carefully and learn as others reveal, through their words and actions, the overt and hidden facets of their cultures. Finally my travels have caused me to use my “bully pulpit” as a social studies educator to speak out about

global injustice with cultural sensitivity when and wherever it reveals itself – and particularly to act regardless of its personal or professional costs.

Learning about Diversity

In the 1980s, I moved to California. Teaching in urban California was quite different from teaching in suburban New York; in fact, it was “culture shock.” I had to rely on my students – Filipinos, Mexicans, Vietnamese, Koreans, Chinese, African-Americans, Israeli, and European-Americans – to teach me about their cultures and their experiences. My experiences sensitized me to my students’ cultural pluralism as well as my own ethnocentrism. During my first months, when we were studying the War of 1812, one of my Filipino students asked why the “Star Spangled Banner” started with his name, “Jose?” At first, I took him seriously, and it took me a while to realize that he was “putting me on” – telling me, in his own unspoiled way, that I was naïve and needed to wake-up to the reality of teaching at Crittenden Middle School. I learned that many of my students had abilities that I had heretofore not considered important for academic learning – humor, profound social insight, the ability to engage in collaborative ways of learning, and the capacity to show what they were learning in a multitude of non-traditional and often metaphorical ways.

I also learned that they brought perspectives of historical events and political themes that altered how and what they learned. Tiffany, an African-American student, confronted me when I asked the students to interpret cartoons, many of which came from *The Liberator*. I noticed that she was wiggling in her chair and seemed very uncomfortable. I said, “Tiffany, what’s going on?”

As best as I can recall, she responded, “Why do we have to learn this stuff? It makes me sick.”

I probed, “What upsets you so much?”

“It makes us look stupid.”

“How so?” I asked.

“We didn’t do anything about this – the hangings, the tar and feathering, the families. Only stupid people wouldn’t have tried to do something.”

“How many of you feel the way Tiffany does about these cartoons?” Many of the African-American students raised their hands.

I explained, “You know, the slaves did resist. While these cartoons may have been drawn by Whites, it was a former slave who published them in his newspaper. Also, slaves resisted through the songs they

sang and the ways they passed messages about the Underground Railroad, etc.”

“Then why haven’t any of our teachers taught us about this?” they asked. Through this conversation I learned that focusing on oppression and exploitation was likely to convey the impression that people of color had only been victims and not effective leaders and actors in shaping their own histories. In addition, I realized that as a result of students’ previous social studies experiences, they had practiced tuning-out the school curriculum. I learned that I needed to create spaces for students to talk and interact in ways that addressed the many questions and perspectives they brought to social studies learning.

During my doctoral studies, at a time when I had to consider where I would do my dissertation research, my mind turned, once again, to California. I wanted to study how students of diverse cultures shared knowledge in collaborative settings – to see how they traversed the borders of their different cultural perspectives. I was struck by a number of classroom events of which I will share just one. José (these names are pseudonyms), a Mexican-American, was working in a group with two European-American students, Karrie and Fred, and one Chinese-American student, Zhijian. In Mexico, José’s mother had been a dentist, and he had two uncles who were Mexican doctors. His group was studying primary sources related to why Mexicans migrate to the United States. Zhijian said that one reason Mexicans came to the U.S. was because doctors were bad in Mexico. Fred wrote this into the group’s responses in spite of José’s efforts to complicate the situation.

José said, “ [T]here’s good doctors there [in Mexico] but [they cost] too much money.”

Karrie came back sarcastically with, “Better medical health . . . They get like, EGADS, never mind, public operations.”

What struck me was that the group had summarily dismissed José’s personal cultural knowledge and chose not only to believe that Mexicans came for better doctors and medical care but that their immigration was a drain on American resources. When I questioned Carrie, Fred and Zhijian separately about this, they said that José couldn’t be trusted to provide accurate information, and Karrie added that he was “one of those Mexican boys” an implication that his association with a group Latino boys discredited his knowledge (These boys were actually Peruvian,

Columbian, and Mexican-Americans. All were born in the U.S.). There was no effort to uncover the source of José's knowledge, and they did not otherwise engage José's concerns. While there were many lessons I could learn from this, the most important were that teachers had to model how students should respond to conflicting perspectives, and especially conflicting cultural perspectives, and they also had to stress the need to exercise social justice in students' interactions with each other. These skills were a pre-requisite to group work that asked students to engage with controversial issues. This experience has also inspired me to create opportunities to use students' differences to enrich everyone's social studies learning.

Transiting the Borderlands

More recently, I lived in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where I taught at the University of Alabama. During my three years in Alabama, I never ceased feeling like a newcomer to the South and to higher education. Transiting the "borderlands" between my own historical working-class and feminist consciousness, regionalism, and beliefs about education and those of my colleagues and students who grew up in a distinctive Southern culture that was not only racially but also socioeconomically, and "colonially" impacted was difficult. It challenged my deepest assumptions about interaction, cooperation, and most especially, about education and social studies education. As I studied the "mind of the South," I began to understand that what everyone wanted most was to crawl out from behind the veil of "colonialism" imposed by Northern mediated representations of the South during the Antebellum, Reconstruction, Civil Rights, and Desegregation eras.

In Alabama, high standards often meant imposed, unrealistic standards. Equality in higher education involved overlooking the need to build an equitable support system for students whose previous educational experiences did not adequately prepare them for life in the 21st century. I was confronted with a vivid example of this when I identified a master's thesis that was poorly done. I asked about the policy

regarding "passing" the master's thesis. While there were no clear performance standards, no rubric, the tacit standard appeared to be racially constructed. I was told that I should pass the student because, "You know, he's Black." The implication was that different standards existed for White and Black students. I inferred that such flawed reactions were generated by a failure to confront the systemic racism implicit in a double standard – a failure to provide essential support to students who had long been victimized by an inadequate educational system.

Discoveries

Through many years of teaching, my memory traces the growth in my understanding of the significance of culture to communication and personal interaction. Through my own cultural blinders, I suffered my inability to communicate with my Alaskan Inuit students about the significance of democratic governance. I remember how I first discovered my own culture of whiteness when some of my African-American students vehemently rejected learning about the cruelties of slavery and apartheid. I recall how I later empathized with their enthusiasm for depicting their African heritage. I recall my sense of sisterhood with an Egyptian woman who justified her own liberation within the structure of the traditional Egyptian family and another who viewed her veil as a sign that she had freely chosen the traditional ways of Islam.

Through these experiences, I learned the dangers of ethnocentric ways of seeing others; I developed an appreciation for understanding the world through multiple perspectives; and I advocated for those outside the cultural mainstream. Yet, I would go so far as to say that there is a lot more learning about others to be done – learning that will continue to alter my beliefs and practices. And I admit that I still catch myself thinking about the lives of others in ways that are unconnected to my own life although I fully realize, as Paulo Freire said in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, that the interconnected realities of dominance and subordination dehumanize everyone.

Teaching about Social Activists Through Our Favorite Picture Books

by Jeannette Balantic, Jonie Kipling, and Andrea Libresco

This article is part of the ongoing series “Every Book is a Social Studies Book.” If you have picture books you love that you believe are excellent vehicles for the teaching of social studies concepts, please email catasl@hofstra.edu.

Every teacher has a favorite biography of Martin Luther King, Jr. that they use each January 15 or during Black History Month. Many elementary teachers read *Martin’s Big Words* by Doreen Rappaport, which highlights quotes that shaped or reflect King’s life as a Civil Rights activist. This document-based picture book is an excellent choice to engage students in an analysis of Dr. King’s words. However, there are myriad books on Dr. King that give insight into other aspects of his work and life.

Walter Dean Myers’ *I’ve Seen the Promised Land: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.* complements *Martin’s Big Words* by providing rich detail of the actions taken by Dr. King and other protesters and the reactions they met from other citizens. Myers’ book traces the chronology of Dr. King’s life and participation in the Civil Rights Movement, including the conflicts among Civil Rights activists regarding tactics. The juxtaposition of the two books enables students to see the value of multiple sources in the investigation of any individual or event.

Reading the two books one after the other enables students to see the importance of consulting multiple sources to gain a deeper understanding of a person’s life and impact on history. The analysis of these two biographies serves as a model for students to read and share biographies on different historical activists in their literature circles.

We frame our class analysis of the Martin Luther King, Jr. biographies around the same questions that will ultimately guide student literature circles on different activists. *What social need did the individual respond to? How did this shape their motivation to be a change agent? What personal, family, or social characteristics shaped this individual’s ability to be a change agent? What obstacles did the individual face in the struggle for change? How did your individual contribute to the society in which she or he lived?*

Each question is written on a separate piece of chart paper. Students respond to the questions first based on our reading of *Martin’s Big Words* and we record those answers in blue. After we read *I’ve Seen the Promised Land*, we answer the questions again and record those answer in red. Students can see that different books yield different information on the same historical figure. Some of our students get so excited about the comparison that they read other books on Dr. King to try to find out more information. This new information is added to our chart paper.

The final part of the analysis of Dr. King’s life is an examination of monuments erected to honor his leadership in the Civil Rights Movement. There are many monuments designed to honor Dr. King in a variety of communities and photographs are available on-line.

Now that students appreciate the value of reading multiple works on the same person, they are ready to participate in literature circles to analyze biographies of citizens who made a difference in America. Each student reads a different biography about the same person and they share what they discover. Students work in small groups to complete this assignment. They select an individual who made a difference from this list: Abigail Adams, Susan B. Anthony, Mary McLeod Bethune, Elizabeth Blackwell, Nelly Bly, John Brown, Rachel Carson, Cesar Chavez, Frederick Douglass, Benjamin Franklin, Dolores Huerta, Langston Hughes, Thomas Jefferson, Thurgood Marshall, Malcolm X, Jackie Robinson, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Ida B. Wells-Barnett. At the library, each student in the group selects a biography at her or his reading level. As students read their biographies, they focus on the four questions that guided their reading of the Martin Luther King, Jr. books.

Students come together to share and compare what they learned from their biographies. Each group also designs a monument to honor the leadership of the person they researched. Students present their monument ideas and sketches to the class. During these presentations, students must answer the question, *How did your individual contribute to the society in which they lived?* Ultimately, the sketches are hung around the classroom with a museum card (index card) that explains how the individual contributed to society.

Our class discussion revolves around the extent to which individuals can make a difference in society. In addition, we have students consider how reading life stories of significant individuals affects the way they want to live their own lives. Finally, we ask students to assess their books as biographies and elicit from them the attributes of a good biography.

Interdisciplinary Instruction Enhancing Student Literacy

by Esther Fusco, Leah Solomon, Jason Pastore, Annette Ferrara, and Robin Peppard

The Ralph G. Reed Middle School in Central Islip, New York is a culturally diverse school with approximately 900 students. The population is 60% Hispanic, 30% African American, 5% Asian, and 5% White. About 50% of the students qualify for free/reduced lunch. While located in suburbia, it more exemplifies the demographics of an urban school.

A group of 7th grade teachers at Reed developed an interdisciplinary unit around the theme of survival in the Arctic. It involved instruction in English, mathematics, social studies, and science. Goals were for students to think more deeply about the connections between the academic subjects and to improve students' critical thinking and content reading skills. The team focused on reading skills emphasized on state standardized tests including: *concepts and their definitions, chronological sequence, comparison and contrast, and episodes*. In designing the unit, there was a continual emphasis on the development of language, thinking, and active process experiences.

In developing the interdisciplinary unit, the team built on the model described by H. H. Jacobs in *Interdisciplinary Curriculum: Design and Implementation* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1989). A major focus in planning was on essential questions that would be addressed in all of the subject areas. They included: What is survival?; What are the skills necessary for an animal or individual to survive in any given environment?; How do organisms adapt in order to survive?; What cultural differences impact on individual survival?; What problem solving skills are needed for survival?; What skills do you need to survive in your home, school, and community?

Coordinated vocabulary development was crucial for creating background knowledge and enhancing the ability of students to comprehend the big ideas of the unit. Concepts included in the unit of study were Adaptation, Arctic, Biome, Coming of Age, Culture, Diversity, Ecosystems, Environmental Conditions, Habitat, Interdependence, Migration, Organism, Perseverance, Problem Solving, Symbolism, Systems, Terrain, Tundra, and Wilderness.

Teachers developed their content knowledge focus for the unit. In English students were introduced to the vocabulary. *Kayuktuk: An Arctic Quest* (Ballyhoo Books, 2004) was read aloud to the students in order for them to hear the vocabulary in context. After the story was read, a myriad of questions were asked in order to develop an understanding of the story and its theme. In a "coming of age" story, it is important for a student to understand the process a character goes through in order to transform into a greater being. In the science class, students created a glossary of the Inupiat words from the story and included them on the class's content word wall. Several students drew pictures to illustrate the words. The science teacher had the students preview a documentary on the arctic wilderness to be familiar with the biome of Alaska where *Kayuktuk* took place and the ecosystem of the tundra. The students wrote about what they learned about the Arctic tundra and the animals that inhabit it. To incorporate math, the teacher had students calculate and measure the dimensions of a tent Aknik might live in. Students were amazed by the size of this tupik and how all of his things had to fit in such a small, shared space. They compared Aknik's living space to their home space and then to their bedrooms.

In social studies, students examined the geography of the land, migration of Native Americans, rituals and beliefs, cultural comparisons, identity, and environmental factors. Students found it particularly interesting to see the role the environment played in cultural differences and how cultures adapted to the surrounding terrain. They compared similarities between the environment and cultures in the Arctic to their own environment and cultures.

Connecting the concepts across the curriculum helped to create the glue that brings the disciplines together and makes the information come alive. The highlight of the unit was when students performed an adapted version of *Kayuktuk: An Arctic Quest* for the author of the book, Brian Heinz, who visited the school. Their sense of pride and awareness of their knowledge and skills was evident in their performance and their conversation with the author.

Teachers Explore the 21st Century Immigrant Experience

by Andrea Honigsfeld

Today, immigrants and their children account for one in every five Americans. Educators across the U.S. – particularly in states such as New York, California, and Texas with large immigrant groups – not only face the challenge of teaching students with limited English proficiency and without the background knowledge needed for Social Studies, but also must grapple with understanding and relating to their students' and their families' contemporary immigrant experiences.

Over the years I have field-tested professional development activities for pre-service and in-service teacher education courses and workshops designed to explore the 21st century immigrant experience. These activities invite educators to deepen their cross-cultural understanding and intercultural competence, and to enhance their sensitivity to the diverse needs of immigrant children and children of immigrants. They are based on ideas presented in C. Suárez-Orozco & M. Suárez-Orozco, M. *Children of Immigration* (Harvard University Press, 2001).

Four Corners

To explore beliefs related to immigration, participants individually read through the following list of statements and jot down whether they *Agree*, *Strongly Agree*, *Disagree*, or *Strongly Disagree* with each of the ten statements. In preparation for the kinesthetic component of the activity, there should be one of four large signs (SA, A, D, or SD indicating the four possible choices) placed in each of the four corners of the room. After participants rate the statements, the first one is read aloud. Participants move to the appropriate corner in the room to indicate their response. A small group discussion in each corner allows teachers who came to similar decisions to share their arguments, whereas a large group discussion will lead to sharing and accepting opposing viewpoints. The same process is repeated with each subsequent statement. This activity was adapted from http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/for_educators_lesson_plan_02.html. It can also be used with high school students.

Statements about Immigrants

1. There are too many immigrants coming to the United States.
2. The U.S. government should put more Immigration and Naturalization Service border patrol agents on the border with Mexico.
3. Illegal immigrants take away jobs from U.S. citizens.
4. U.S. immigration policy has been fair to all groups entering the U.S.
5. If a country is having economic problems, the U.S. should allow its residents to come here for a better life.

6. Immigration has helped the United States.

7. Having a variety of cultures and languages in America benefits everyone.

8. Most immigrants come to the U.S. just to get on welfare.

9. Everyone who comes to the U.S. should be required to learn English.

10. If a country is having political problems, the U.S. should allow persecuted citizens from this country to seek asylum here.

Other Activities

- Brainstorm a list of possible questions that would provide essential information about first- or second-generation immigrant students.
- Teachers think about some newcomers (recent immigrants) in the school. They then answer the following questions. What strengths and values do they bring to the school community? What are their most salient needs? What can the school community do to help?
- Choose five students and find out about their own or their families' accomplishments and successes. What kind of life did they leave behind? Have they survived or achieved success against all odds? Are they literate in multiple languages? Often times, the focus is on deficits and what students lack. This activity invites teachers to acknowledge what students and their families have accomplished and how they have lived thorough significant experiences and contributed to the community. Share your findings with a colleague who also teaches the same students.

Curriculum Reviews

Zinn Education Project

Review by Matthew Crichton

Howard Zinn, who recently died, was a historian and author of the groundbreaking *A People's History of the United States* (New York: Harper, 2003). Zinn views historical events through the eyes of the ordinary people and focuses on their struggles against oppression, rather than from the perspective of leaders or conquerors. The Zinn Education Project (<http://www.zinnedproject.org/>) is a new effort to influence the secondary school curriculum. The website offers historical documents and lesson ideas organized chronologically and thematically. It also includes lists of resources.

A companion to the website is *A People's History for the Classroom* by Bill Bigelow (Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools, 2008). Bigelow includes several projects for the United States history curriculum that look to correct how we teach certain topics including the discovery of America, the U.S. – Mexico War, the labor movement, the Vietnam War, desegregation of schools, and terrorism. Each topic features an in-depth project for students and includes a list of materials, handouts, time requirements, and suggested lesson procedure. It is very effectively presented and what might otherwise have been a complicated process is easy to follow.

Of particular interest for me as a middle school social studies teacher was the project for the U.S. – Mexico War. All students in a class are given a card with a different role to play and different views about the war. Many people were undecided about support for the war and some actively opposed it. As an end product, students complete a questionnaire using the information they collected from each other.

Another resource I found valuable was *A Young People's History of the United States* edited by Rebecca Stetoff (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2009). It is an adapted version of Zinn's book designed for middle school students. The two-volume makes Zinn's alternate take on the history available to younger readers. One of my students, who read a chapter on racism in the United States, said that the book "answered so many of the unasked questions."

For teachers looking for primary source documents, I recommend *Voices of a People's History*

by Howard Zinn and Anthony Arnove (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2009). Many of the great songs, speeches, and documents Zinn used to write *A People's History* are included here. Zinn and Arnove provide a brief introduction for each document. This book became the source for the History Channel's production of *The People Speak* (www.history.com/content/people-speak). The website has video footage of Matt Damon reading and explaining the Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Bratt reading a letter written by a runaway slave to his former master, Christina Kirk as Susan B. Anthony, Josh Brolin as Bartolomeo Vanzetti, and Jasmine Guy as Marianne Wright Edelman.

History Alive!

Review by Elizabeth Acevedo Moncayo

The Teacher's Curriculum Institute's *History Alive!* Program has drastically improved student motivation and their success rate in my classroom at High School of Graphic Communication Arts in Manhattan. My students are predominately Hispanic 60% and Black 35%. Many of are low-level readers and are not prepared for High School level work. *History Alive's Spiral Curriculum* allows them to work their way up Bloom's Taxonomy and become high-level critical thinkers. Although it was developed by teachers in California, it can easily be adapted to fit the curriculum standards for New York and New Jersey.

Because History Alive was designed with the understanding that students have multiple intelligences, each lesson aims to use at least one Multiple Intelligence Teaching Strategies – Visual Discovery, Social Studies Skill Builder, Experiential Exercise, Writing for Understanding, Response Groups, and Problem Solving Group Work.

I had great success with a Writing for Understanding Activity titled *The Lewis and Clark Expedition* that is available as a sample lesson on their website (http://www.teachtc.com/docs/samples/HA_TheUnitedStates_SampleChapter.pdf). In this activity, students experience the Lewis and Clark expedition as they study primary source materials, maps, illustrations, and Clark's own journal entries, to create their own journal entry about life on the new frontier.

In my ninth grade global history classes I have used a Response Group activity on the legacy of the Roman Empire. Students read and take notes on ten

explanations for the fall of the Roman Empire and analyze political cartoons that support the different views. The activity concludes with students writing opinion papers on whether the United States will ever fall. They support their theses by comparing Ancient Rome and the United States today.

In Problem Solving Group Work activities, students work in heterogeneous groups to create projects that require multiple abilities so that every student can contribute. One of the lessons where I use this strategy involves students in an attempt to solve problems faced by early river civilizations.

When freshmen enter my classroom, they tend to feel defeated by school and do not believe they will be able to accomplish anything. The *History Alive Spiral Curriculum* allows them to achieve small academic victories as they move forward on Bloom's Taxonomy scale increasing the level of their critical thinking. One negative aspect of the program is that it is expensive. Each unit, which provides about two weeks worth of lessons, cost about \$400.00. The curriculum also requires many hours of prep work outside of the classroom, but that is balanced by the ease with which it is implemented in the classroom. I strongly recommend this program.

The Antislavery Literature Project

Review by John Mannebach

For teachers taking a traditional teaching approach, *The Antislavery Literature Project* (<http://antislavery.esever.org>) is a useful website for social studies teachers in New York and New Jersey. If you use an unconventional approach, it is even more valuable. Many of the resources made available by the project are difficult to find, and are rarely used in the classroom. The site's goal is to "increase public access to literature crucial to understanding African American experience, U.S. and hemispheric history of slavery, and human rights philosophies." Navigation bar categories include: "Antislavery Teaching Guides," "Children's Literature," "Contemporary Slavery," "Legacies," "News and Papers," "Slave Narratives," "Poetry," "Prose Fiction," "Proslavery Literature," "Religious Literature," "Tracts, Essays, Speeches," "Travel Accounts," "Treatises & General Literature," and "Videos & Podcasts." *The Antislavery Literature Project* comprises hundreds of documents, pieces of literature, and images which examine slavery issues.

For me, the most interesting categories are the "Antislavery Teaching Guides," "Children's

Literature," and "Slave Narratives." "Jeffrey Brace, *The Blind African Slave*," is a useful guide for Global History classes when studying the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. It tells the story of Jeffrey Brace, born in Mali, and transported across the Atlantic to slavery in Barbados and later New England. Chapter 4 describes the manner in which Jeffrey Brace was taken, how he was confined in the slave ship, his experiences, and the experiences of other captives. Chapter 5 tells the story of a female slave who was whipped to death in front of her younger brother. Other chapters detail horrible whippings and hardships told from a poignant first person perspective. The narrative is laced with songs and scripture illustrating the importance of religion and songs on slave and early African American culture.

"Early African American Antislavery Sermons" focus on the importance of religious oratory for African American history and culture. Some teachers or students may feel uncomfortable addressing religious themes or reading religious documents, yet the teaching guide points out the commonalities between religious sermons and secular texts and explains how these themes can help us understand slave and African American culture.

"Henry Clarke Wright, *The Natick Resolution*," is a useful supplement to studying about John Brown and the raid on Harpers Ferry. The documents feature letters from Wright condemning and militantly calling for the abolition of slavery to Brown himself, to Governor Wise of Virginia, who ordered Brown's execution, and several to William Lloyd Garrison, editor of an abolitionist newspaper.

The children's literature section provides material for teachers working with the upper elementary school grades. Of particular note is the "The Antislavery Alphabet," an anonymous document first published in 1847. Another useful piece of children's literature is "The Liberty Cap." Eliza Lee Follen, who wrote "The Liberty Cap" in 1846 compares slavery in the United States with slavery in ancient Rome. "The Liberty Cap" also features a great poem, "Am I Not a Man and a Brother?"

The Antislavery Literature Project is a people's history. The "Slave Narratives" section lists several individual slave narratives and links to other Internet collections. "Other than the pieces by Frederick Douglass, Venture Smith, Sojourner Truth, Booker T. Washington, almost all of the narratives are written by unknown figures. In this section there is a collection on "Contemporary Slave Narratives," where recent former

slaves tell their stories. These narratives come from Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Central America, Cambodia, China, South Africa, India, Britain, and other locations around the globe. All of these narratives were recorded within the last 15 years.

The “Videos and Podcasts” section features talks from University professors and historians, readings of narratives and poetry, and other interesting visual and aural resources. Practically every form of expression from non-fiction histories, biographies and autobiographies, to fiction literature, poetry, oration, art, photography, and hymns are available to be studied and investigated at *The Antislavery Literature Project*.

Teaching Revolution ‘67

Review by Jillian Saccone

Nineteen-Sixty Seven was one of the most turbulent years in the history of the United States. Urban riots in minority communities shook the nation. *Teaching Revolution ‘67* documents events in Newark, New Jersey during the summer of 1967. It explores social and economic injustices that led to an eruption of violence and civil unrest for five days.

The curriculum was developed by a number of New Jersey social studies teachers in conjunction with the New Jersey Council for the Humanities. One of its goals is to stimulate a broader understanding of the meaning of democracy as students explore roles played by the local, state, and federal governments and actions taken by the citizens of Newark.

The curriculum is divided into three units: Government and Civics, Economics and Geography, and Media and The Newark Riots. It includes a 90-minute documentary film that explains the underlying conflicts in American society at the time including racism, police brutality, inner-city poverty, white flight, suburbanization, and political corruption. It also explores the rioting that took place from July 12-17. The film is the centerpiece of many of the lessons in the package. It successfully provides students with a sense of what it was like living in Newark that summer.

The Newark riots were precipitated on July 12, 1967 by a rumor that a police officer beat an African American man over a traffic ticket so severely that the man needed medical attention. The following day a mass demonstration protesting police brutality erupted into violence, the setting of fires, and looting. On July

14 National Guard was sent to Newark to reestablish order. Barbed wire fences were placed in the streets and National Guard units and police opened fire on housing projects in African American neighborhoods claiming they were firing at “snipers.” Twenty-two people were killed, over one hundred people were injured, and about a thousand were arrested. On July 17, the National Guard was ordered to leave the city to help relieve the tension between the military and Newark’s citizens.

The film that accompanies this curriculum is well done; it depicts the civil unrest that summer in Newark and would be a valuable addition to the curriculum in any classroom, not just in New Jersey. The research conducted by the authors of the curriculum package demonstrates command of a great deal of information, however, this can be a problem. In some lessons the level of detail obscures the main points.

A focus on essential questions would be useful. As I read through the curriculum I considered the following. Why did the protest get out of control? Why would people destroy their own neighborhoods? Was this a police riot? Were the police persecuted? Why were conditions in Newark so bad? Why is it important to learn about civil unrest? I liked the curriculum focus on media and media bias. This has given me a number of teaching ideas for my own classroom.

Teaching Revolution ‘67 would work best if it were better integrated into the overall high school curriculum. Events in Newark could be placed in a timeline of events in the entire country. Students could read *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry in English classes while studying about the Newark Riots in social studies.

The simulation lesson would be more engaging for students if they were assigned to be specific participants (neighborhood residents, political leaders, activists, police, national guardsmen, etc.) in the events that unfolded. The package could also be coupled with civics projects. Students should be able to take what they learned from an in-depth study of events in Newark to become community activists addressing ongoing problems in their neighborhoods. An important question to be explored would be: How can civil unrest be avoided in the future? Students would develop problem-solving skills and develop the habit of participation.

Book Reviews

Citizenship As A Verb

Review by Andrea Libresco

Young Citizens of the World: Teaching Elementary Social Studies Through Civic Engagement by Marilynne Boyle-Baise and Jack Zevin (New York: Routledge, 2009).

For all those who went into teaching elementary social studies because they see it as a calling to nurture, from an early age, citizens who are wide awake in the world, this book is for you. This elementary social studies methods text is passionate and persuasive; it relies on current and past research; and it makes the case for and helps teachers commit to teaching for civic engagement.

Early and often, the authors reinforce that their conception of citizenship education is not to be confused with the conservative and individualistic “character education.” Nor do they subscribe to the “social science for its own sake” or “expanding horizons” models. They also do not advocate the narrow “learn and follow the rules and laws” orientation. Their notion of citizenship education is to foster informed, deliberative and activist citizens in a multicultural democracy, which includes: “learning big ideas about democracy, nationality, equality and diversity; constructing a civic identity; practicing democratic skills; and participating in public affairs” (11). Thus, their book is designed to help teachers help children answer essential questions, such as, “What does it mean to be an American, and who is the “we” in the “we the people?;” “What is an outstanding citizen, and how do I take an active role in the community?;” “What is history, and how do I learn to investigate it?;” “Where do I live in the world, and what is my worldview?;” and “What is humane for humanity, and how can I help improve life for me and others?” (1).

Civic Engagement

Clearly, the authors go beyond the traditional “responsible citizen” conception and emphasize the importance of doing one’s homework; that is, looking critically at society, and researching societal problems and their potential solutions to come to thoughtful and justice-oriented decisions. Boyle-Baise from Indiana University and Zevin from Queens College-CUNY

point out that this conception of civic engagement is not easily found in elementary schools. While I would argue that it is even rarer these days with the advent of testing and its concomitant shrinking time for social studies at the elementary level, I also believe, along with the authors, that teachers are often uncomfortable with this conception of citizenship, as it raises difficult topics without easy answers.

Historic Roots

One of the great strengths of the book is that the authors show that their conception of social studies education is not a new one. They trace its historic roots, highlighting progressive educator Harold Rugg’s emphasis on class discussion (as opposed to debate) to shed light, not heat, on problems of the day; on inquiry, where students learn from and with each other; on service-learning, where students learn from and with their community; and on active learning through field trips and participation in school governance (17).

In addition to Rugg, the authors credit Shirley Engle and Anna Ochoa for their work on the importance of decision-making, where students need “open eyes and awareness of democratic values . . . to make intelligent political judgments related to controversial issues in our society” (17). Boyle-Baise and Zevin also cite Walter Parker extensively for his “knowledge-plus” position that emphasizes a combination of fact-finding, decision-making and action-taking (18).

The book begins with these historic roots of the field, then lays out the framework for the book, namely, that the authors consider citizenship to be a verb, whereby students will ultimately become informed, active players in their local, national and global communities. The book then focuses on teaching about democratic principles, learning how to support democratic talk, and nurturing what the authors call “world-mindedness” in students. The text also devotes chapters to different methodologies and content areas, including history mystery, which stresses the importance of investigating multiple perspectives; the analysis of biographies of civic activists as a means to teach civic history; the linking of economic decision-making to civic engagement; and the investigation of place and space as a way to foster a global outlook.

Each chapter begins with a discussion of what the topic is and why it matters, which gets at the concept of essential questions. The authors then present the

research about how children learn social studies, followed by a section on the scholarly social studies content knowledge that teachers need to know to teach the topic; the authors model the process of teachers doing their homework quite effectively. They round out each topic with resources, strategies, an opportunity for teachers to reflect on what they learned in each chapter and connections to earlier chapters.

Extras in the book include an appendix containing a variety of different lesson plan formats that focus on teaching for ideas, inquiry, and deliberation through drama and writing. I found this feature to be a little problematic. While I appreciate, and believe that methods students would appreciate, the variety of creative teaching strategies included in this appendix, for beginning teachers, the multiplicity of lesson plans might confuse more than illuminate. This appendix would work better if these strategies were spoken of as approaches that could fit into any lesson plan format, so that prospective and current elementary teachers would feel comfortable using them in any situation.

Compelling Features

There are several features of this text that are particularly compelling. The authors make thoughtful use of children's literature throughout. Their activities with the picture book, *Aunt Flossie's Hats (and Crab Cakes Later)*, delve into the process and content of oral history and reinforce the disposition that history is something you *do* (28). The entire chapter that they devote to biography is outstanding. Students use a variety of sources, including different children's books, to create their own biographies that piece together a fuller picture of citizen-activists. Boyle-Baise and Zevin emphasize that teachers need to provide support to their students as they conduct their inquiries, and teach students how to examine primary sources. They aptly counsel, "Avoid telling students, 'Go to the library and do research'" (136). To insure that students' completed biographies will not be merely conventional timelines of their subjects' lives, the authors recommend that the finished biographies include a "Citizens Take Action" page, where students connect subjects' deeds to the times in which they lived, showing how they made a difference.

Another feature of the book that I admire is its integration of social studies content with the pedagogical content. Boyle-Baise and Zevin know that teachers cannot make thoughtful choices about which concepts to emphasize, which essential questions to

pose, and how to move students to engagement without a firm grasp of the social studies content that they will be teaching. Thus, they include teacher knowledge sections about the lessons and units that they highlight (e.g., they provide content on women's rights struggles in the chapter that teaches the strategy of history mystery), modeling for prospective teachers the homework that they will have to do as part of their preparation. The authors do not do so to privilege knowledge acquisition, for they do not believe that historic knowledge is the end result of social study; rather, they see it as a means to the end of engaged and active democratic citizenship.

Deliberative Democracy

Perhaps the most effective parts of the text can be found in the detailing of the elements of deliberative democracy. The authors underscore the need for students to learn to discuss and deliberate, but they remind teachers that, "you will need to provide direct support for them to do so . . . Your role in deliberation and discussion matters" (64). They provide five steps for coming to consensus at class meetings: define the problem in concrete terms; brainstorm solutions; discuss compromises; reach consensus; and, evaluate the decision (66). They also recommend a classroom chart detailing the elements of "citizen talk": listen to each other; add to what other people say; support your ideas with facts from the book; respect the ideas of everyone (67). While teachers often emphasize listening and respect, it is less common to remind students that an equally important part of "citizen talk" includes supporting one's ideas with data.

Boyle-Baise and Zevin dare teachers to approach instruction differently. They argue for teaching for big ideas, for inquiry, for deliberation, for developing "an inquisitive habit of mind;" and they argue for providing students opportunities to creatively apply the content they have learned through writing, art, music and drama. Finally, they dare teachers to "treat engagement as an everyday aspect of citizenship" (241), where being informed, thinking it through and taking action become a way of life for their students, a necessity in any healthy democracy. This text is surely an excellent first step toward that worthy end.

New York and Slavery: Another View

by Chris Wiley

New York and Slavery: Time to Teach the Truth by Alan Singer (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008) was initially reviewed in *Social Science Docket* 9 (2) Summer-Fall 2009.

New York and Slavery: Time to Teach the Truth outlines how slavery was critical to the success of the Empire state. Noting that a greater percentage of households in New York City owned slaves than in South Carolina, the author discussed how slavery was crucial to the British and Dutch colonial settlements, building the wall on Wall Street, clearing the path that would be Broadway, and putting up many buildings. Moreover, New York City financiers, bankers, and merchants sponsored slave voyages and funded the southern plantation system in the South during the antebellum period.

To conclude that slavery made New York wealthy or that it was the main driving force, as this book and the New York Historical Society exhibits on slavery in New York did is an exaggeration. According to Russell Shorto, author of "The Island at the Top of the World", enslaved and free Black were 15% of the population of New Amsterdam. But slavery was not the institution it would later become in its rigidity. Moreover, poor Whites were always the vast majority of the labor force working on the Wall and Broadway (as well as the buildings). While slaves at their peak were 20% of New York City population in 1750 (14% in the state), this was much smaller than most other cities or the entire south, none of which achieved the success that New York City eventually did.

Slavery's Importance Exaggerated

Moreover, this was before New York City was propelled into the major city it became. New York City was a town of 11,000 at this time, and slavery quickly collapsed from 20% of the population in 1750 to a mere 4.5% by 1800. Germans were 40% of the population by the early 1700s and would still be 35% by 1890, when New York City had 2 million people; yet no one claims that Germans were critical to the success of New York City, at least not along the lines that people do when it comes to slavery.

Mexico City and Lima, Peru had slave populations upwards of 50% but did not succeed along New York City lines; ditto for many cities in Brazil. New York City rise came during the 19th century, long after slavery's demise there. New York City developed an economy that was highly diversified and went through an industrial capitalist transformation, which was a far different trajectory than the slave-owning South, with an economy that was largely based on the export of one staple crop.

It was the Erie Canal, Not Slavery

New York City captured a large portion of the cotton exports of the U.S. But according to economist Douglas North, total cotton output in 1860 was 6% of the nation's total GNP. New York City also controlled hundreds of millions of dollars worth of exports along the Erie Canal, far exceeding that of the cotton trade.

Edward Rothstein of *The New York Times* declared the NYHS exhibitions argument about New York City's centrality to slavery and vice versa were overstated at times. It was a society with slaves, not a slave society according to Ira Berlin in "Many Thousands Gone," and while slaves participated in many different tasks, free White labor, most of them poor, always made up the vast majority of workers (80-90%). New York may have had more slaves than Charleston numerically speaking, but New York also had the largest population of total persons on the continent as well. Southern slaves were engaged in agriculture while New York City slaves engaged in a variety of purposes, from household work to the docks and some construction. But they never formed a majority of the labor force, even aside from the fact that 40% of all households in the city owned slaves in 1750. But the average number of slaves owned was only one. In comparison, the average slave owner in South Carolina owned 10 slaves each.

Roughly 40% of all Blacks in the North were free by 1790 compared to less than 5% in the South. Slavery in the North was much different than in the South, particularly with regards to work and manumission. By 1790, slaves in the North were a mere two percent of the population, versus a third in the South.

Let's not replace one exaggeration, New York and the North were the land of the free, with another, New York City was built by slavery.

Kokrobitey Institute Summer Seminar on Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition

by John Davidek (<http://www.projectsbeyondfulbright2006.blogspot.com/>)

During the summer of 2009 I participated in a program in Accra, Ghana for social studies teachers called “The Middle Passage: A Shared History of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.” It was an immense success far exceeding my expectations. The program was sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition, and the McMillan Center for International and Area Studies, Yale University. For information about future programs go to http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/seminar_descriptions/seminar_walvin.html.



Slave Traders operated out of Elmina Castle

Program participants included ten United States high school teachers, ten Ghanaian educators and ten British teachers, most of whom were associated with the Liverpool Museum for the study of slavery, resistance, and abolition. We spent ten days as participants in workshops at the Kokrobitey Institute, located just outside of Accra. It is a large complex that is situated on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean. The institute has been utilized by high school and college groups from many parts of the world.

The program covered the costs of flights, lodging, and seminar materials. Following the seminar, participants were also reimbursed for all reasonable costs for domestic travel to and from JFK and for costs associated with passports, visas, vaccinations, and some medications that are required for travel to Ghana.

The Middle Passages seminar focused on both historical content and classroom pedagogy, and included visits to historical and cultural sites in Ghana. As part of the program we developed collaborative

teaching units with our international partners. Classes were led by professors James Walvin and Stephanie Smallwood. They covered the history of African-European contact, the nature of African societies in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, the existing slave trading practices in Africa, the impact of the slave trade on regions of Africa, the character of the coastal trade in the forts and castles, the experience of the Middle Passage, and the numbers and experience of African arrivals in the Americas.

Everyone was well received by our Ghanaian hosts. The dormitory accommodations were very good. I shared a room with four Liverpool teachers and three Ghanaians. It was very comfortable — thanks, in part, to the mosquito netting on the beds! The food we enjoyed was Ghanaian and international. The dining area was located next to the ocean. It was a most delightful experience to eat good food near the sound of waves pounding on the beach. One could also hear the waves at night, which made falling asleep a memorable experience. We didn't have much “free” time because the seminar was intense and purposeful. I liked it that way. I was there to learn and did just that.

At one point in our many group discussions, I commented on crossing the Atlantic Ocean in an army troop ship. It took eight days. I was so sea sick that I actually prayed death would take me out of my misery. Be reminded that I was receiving three meals a day and had a bunk-type bed, navy-style. In other words, it was reasonably comfortable, all things considered. Nevertheless, I will never forget the sickening smell of vomit. The “head”, as the toilet area was called, actually had vomit and human waste that sloshed back and forth on the floor following the rhythm of the waves that pushed the ship to and fro like a toy in a washbasin.

I was the only seminar participant who crossed the ocean in a ship, so I had a unique perspective. But one did not have to attend a seminar in Accra, Ghana to understand the degradation and suffering of captive Africans who were thrust into the holds of European slave ships, then shipped off for waiting plantations in the New World. The horror, if you survived, usually lasted anywhere from six to eight weeks.

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