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Democratic Learning Communities: Citizenship Education in Practice
by James Carpenter

Social studies teachers clearly accept citizenship education as part of their mission. They understand the need for a well-informed citizenry to ensure the survival of democracy. As Walter Parker (2010a) has argued, students are essentially idiots; not in the sense of the current usage but rather as originally used by the ancient Greeks. For them, an idiot was self-centered, individualistic, and uncaring about community issues. In other words, an idiot was one who did not participate in public affairs. Given this condition, we would be wrong to assume that active citizenship and appreciation for democracy are somehow innate qualities. As Parker (2010b) puts it, “democratic citizens don’t grow on trees or appear out of the blue;” rather they “must be educated from idiocy to puberty and citizenship” (p. 12, original emphasis). Of course, there are many approaches to teaching citizenship and conflicting visions of what content our students need to learn. In this essay I suggest that in addition to these issues, social studies teachers – indeed all teachers, regardless of content area or grade level – can impact a student’s citizenship development by teaching democratically.

Teaching Democratically
What do I mean by teaching democratically? First, let me address some possible perspectives on the meaning of democracy. For some, democracy refers to a political system characterized by popular election of officials, majority rules, and other procedural elements. For others democracy is a political ideology based on iconic values such as freedom and equality. Still others combine these two versions into one understanding. John Dewey (1916/1966) offers another perspective. For Dewey, “democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience” (p. 87). In other words, democracy is a shared way of life. From this perspective, democracy should permeate our lives in all areas: work, school, community, etc. It is with this understanding that I encourage educators to teach democratically. This is what the idiots of ancient Greece did not understand.

Usually when I say this, people react from the perspective of the aforementioned democratic political practices. They fear ‘turning the asylum over to the inmates.’ They profess their classroom is a ‘benevolent dictatorship, not a democracy.’ I believe this is viewing democracy too narrowly. I am not saying that students should vote on what they study or whether they should have homework or not. Democratic teaching does not mean chaos, it means modeling behaviors and skills inherent in democratic citizenship. It means allowing students to engage in some democratic practices. I am suggesting that we need to do more than trace the historic antecedents of democracy back to the Athenians and more than outline democratic political ideology from the Enlightenment to the Declaration of Independence. I am arguing we need to better prepare our students with a broader understanding of what democracy entails. Since democratic citizenship is not in our DNA, teachers need to develop in their students an understanding of values such as freedom, equity, justice and diversity. Additionally, students need to learn that democracy is more accurately characterized by responsible citizen involvement. For example, disagreement should not degenerate into partisan name calling and obstructionism; rather disagreement should be deliberative with the goal of the common good always in view. This is how compromise occurs.

In the movie Crimson Tide, Captain Ramsay (played by Gene Hackman) tells the executive officer (played by Denzel Washington), “We are here to protect democracy, Mr. Hunter, not to practice it.” Too often this is the case in schools in general and in our classrooms in particular. Since democratic citizenship is not innate, students need to gain experience in a wide range of civic behaviors. Few if any skills are learned just by reading about them. Students must apply what they have learned in real situations. Citizenship and democratic behavior are no different. But how do we do this?
Democratic Learning Communities

Students need to have more democratic experiences in school. Voting in student government elections and for class officers is not enough. Voting is only one, very narrow indicator of citizen participation. If we accept Dewey’s expanded definition of democracy, citizens will have democratic experiences in multiple contexts. The classroom – especially the social studies classroom – is the perfect place for students to learn these skills and values. Many teachers promote their classrooms as learning communities. I am advocating that we expand this idea to promote democratic learning communities. Let’s convert our social studies classrooms into what Parker (1996) has called “laboratories of democracy” (pp. 1-16).

What do I mean by democratic learning communities? My understanding of this term includes three important characteristics. First, democratic learning communities are safe learning environments for students. I mean safe in more than just a physical sense for students: they are academically safe places where students can take risks, they can fail without ridicule or punishment, and they learn that rarely is there one correct interpretation of an event. Current events and historical issues have multiple perspectives and students need to learn to question their presentation in texts, in the media, and even by the teacher. Democratic learning communities are also ideologically safe places. Truths are not absolute and knowledge and curricula are, in fact, political. Education is not neutral. Therefore students should feel safe in offering different viewpoints; safe in that they need not fear being ridiculed or shouted down for expressing unpopular ideas. Deliberative disagreement should be modeled and encouraged. Furthermore, a democratically safe classroom does not tolerate prejudicial comments based on race, gender, sexual orientation, class, or disability. Students need to learn that casual pejorative use of words such as ‘gay’ or ‘retard’ is unacceptable.

A second characteristic of a democratic learning community is student-centeredness. Students need to be actively engaged in their learning and not just passively copying notes from a power point presentation or completing worksheets. Students should be able to ask questions and not be turned off by being told there is no time to respond to them. Questioning is a sign of interest and can be a springboard to genuine dialogue. Usually questions can be refocused to the lesson or can re-channel a student’s interest in the topic. Have students critique multiple sources (texts, newspapers, news broadcasts, internet sources) for bias, sources omitted, and loaded vocabulary. Students can individually or cooperatively investigate historical events or current issues. Using current events offers a way to connect the students’ world of now to historical events. For example, reports of atrocities in Afghanistan can be linked to Vietnam or World War II or any war that is part of the curriculum. For projects and assessments allow students to choose from a menu of options: a traditional research paper, a power point slide show, and a web quest are just three examples. For a high school class I taught, students had to construct a portfolio of what citizenship meant to them. I received traditional research papers, photo essays, videos, and music CDs to fulfill this project. And we have to accept that digital technology and the internet have altered student understanding of democracy as well as how they view research and information gathering. A student-centered classroom will allow for this.

The final characteristic of a democratic learning community is empowerment. Students can have a real say in establishing classroom procedures and influencing curricular decisions. Again, I am not encouraging teachers abdicating control of their classroom. Democracy, while often messy, is purposeful. I have seen teachers include students in determining the rules of behavior for their classes, including defining punishments for those who break the rules. They have included amending processes. What is needed is the guidance to show the need for rules for a classroom to efficiently and fairly achieve its objectives. Comparing the democratic learning community and its rules to the greater community outside is helpful. Ordinances and laws are passed in order to maintain safety and efficiency in their village, town, or city. The same holds true for the classroom community. Flexibility and student input on homework, larger assignments and test dates also empowers students. For example, if I schedule a unit test for Friday and my students tell me they also have a major chemistry test and an English essay due, it stands to reason one or more of these assessments is
going to suffer. If students negotiate to move the test to Monday, they have gained a real sense that their voices are being heard. I really haven’t lost anything and I have reinforced democratic practice in my classroom. Students should do better on my exam, they should do better on their other coursework, and they feel that their concerns have been heard and addressed. I would do this with a couple of caveats: (1) Friday will not be a free day; we will start the next unit; and (2) Don’t blame me for ruining their weekend. Students who experience and practice democracy in the classroom will more readily accept that they can be active and not passive citizens. They will learn that they have a voice and that it can – and needs to be – heard. For virtually everything we learn in our lives, there is an application phase. We don’t learn to ride a bicycle without practicing it; we apply what we learn about writing an essay or solving a math problem; we rehearse important events like graduations and weddings. Why would we not have our students practice what it means to be a democratic citizen?

Conclusion

Creating democratic learning communities is a mutually beneficial process. While students gain valuable experience in understanding democratic values such as justice, equity, responsibility, and tolerance, teachers also benefit. They can expect a more active and vibrant classroom. Students will participate more. A democratic learning community is a more dynamic classroom. Students will look forward to a class where they feel respected and valued. Classroom management will shift from unruly behavior due to boredom or resistance to trying to manage more interesting and exciting discussions. Teaching will be even more fun for the teacher. Rather than simply dispensing information, teachers share in the learning experiences of their students. Importantly, teachers need not fear that this teaching will negatively impact their students’ performance on end of the year tests. Democratic learning communities alter how teachers teach, not what they teach. To assist them, there are some excellent resources available. For example, James Loewen (2010) and Jack Zevin and David Gerwin (2010, 2011) provide great examples of how to teach without obsessing over coverage. And as S. G. Grant (2007) has noted, “ambitious teaching” and good test scores are not incompatible (pp. 49-50). Furthermore, the democratic experiences of students will have a greater impact than what they have learned for an end of the year exam.

The key figure in creating democratic learning communities is, of course, the teacher. While the results are worth it, the path to get there may be difficult. There is an adjustment when teachers share some of their authority with their students. They also have to be patient from the first day of classes in the fall since they will be combating years of student experiences with undemocratic or antidemocratic learning environments. However, I want to emphasize that teachers are not abdicating their responsibilities. This style of teaching requires a different and more challenging role. It is the teacher who guides the experiences students will have, and he or she must ensure the class is academically, ideologically, and personally safe for students. As Dewey (1938/1963) noted “it is then the business of the educator to see in what direction an experience is heading” (p. 38). We provide experiences for our students to prepare them for college and their careers. It is time we also prepare them to be democratic citizens.

References

How Important Are Democratic Classrooms?

Mark Schwarz, Rockaway Borough (NJ) School District, Social Studies curriculum coordinator: It is possible to both create democratic classrooms and respond to assessment pressure if Social Studies teachers focus their assessments on commonly agreed upon core skills, as opposed to the simple measurement of a prescribed set of knowledge. Democratic practices can then be included as part of those core skills and assessed accordingly. For this reason, I am generally supportive of the common core and New Jersey’s standards initiatives. By focusing on student mastery and delineating a progression of skill proficiencies, the CCSS and the NJCCCS set forth a path by which students may become functional and competitive in a modern society. This includes an understanding of government principles, economic forces, geopolitical issues, and their roles as citizens.

Ken Kaufman, Progress High School, Brooklyn, NY: Carpenter speaks of teaching citizenship as an element of a living democracy. This democracy is both political and social. He takes the view of John Dewey that democracy is primarily “a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience.” However, according to the “Race to the Top” mantra the best teacher is the one whose students score the highest on exams; not who are engaged learners or well-informed citizens! Further, the best teacher is the one whose students advance the most during the school year or provide the most “value added.” This is the dictum to which I am supposed to subscribe. This is a requirement for non-tenured teachers. For a tenured teacher to be in the good graces of a principal it must become a part of everyday life. This aspect of life in schools is not even mentioned. How can we create democratic classrooms if we have to follow a daily script? In many school districts every chalkboard must be the same, tests must be the same, work must be the same. How can there be an aura of student centeredness and feelings of student empowerment if a district is not democratically oriented?

Firuza Uddin, High School for Media and Communications, New York City: It is crucial for us to promote democracy in our classrooms. Students in democratic classrooms take more ownership of and responsibility for their own learning. A social studies classroom should be a “laboratory of democracy.” However, it is important for teachers to create and promote a democratically safe classroom that does not tolerate prejudicial comments. Students must feel safe offering their views. Teachers should emphasize that differing viewpoints must be respected at all times.

Ashley Cannone, Locust Valley (NY) School District: The classroom should be a place where students can openly express their beliefs and also play a role in the establishment of class procedures. This may be difficult for teachers who are used to having complete control over their class, but in the end it will be beneficial to both the students and the teacher.

Marc Silvagni, St. Francis Prep, Queens, NY: The author repeats statements about teaching democratically and democratic classrooms, but offers little about how to teach this way. Plato considered democracy a stage in devolution of society into anarchy.

Joseph Sansone, Sewanaka (NY) school district: According to the ancient Greeks children are born individualistic and unable to focus on community affairs. Democracy must be learned and the social studies classroom is the best venue for students to do so. I do not think a full-out democratic classroom with the students voting on every decision is feasible, but the students need to feel like their input has some importance. Employing a democratic classroom does not affect what is taught, only how it is taught, and therefore it does not affect pace of instruction.

Michael Schulman, Uniondale (NY) School District: The Democratic Learning Community approach to be successful must be implemented in an entire school not just by an individual teacher. If the students have rights and a voice period one and then in period two through eight are treated as mindless drones, by the time the school day is over they will forget the democratic feelings and community involvement they experienced during their first period class. An important part of democracy is due process. A school can decide that any student who faces suspension or punishment have the option of facing a jury of their peers that includes students, teachers, and administrators.
How Labor’s Story is Distorted in History Textbooks

By Paul Cole, Lori Megivern, and Jeff Hilgert

http://labor-studies.org/labor-spotlight/american-labor-and-u-s-history-textbooks/


Imagine opening a high school U.S. History textbook and finding at most a passing sentence about Valley Forge, the Missouri Compromise, or the League of Nations. Imagine not finding a word about Benjamin Franklin, Lewis and Clark, Sitting Bull, Andrew Carnegie, or Rosa Parks. Imagine if these events and people just disappeared as if they never existed, or rated no more than a glancing phrase. That is what has happened in history textbooks when it comes to labor’s part in the American story, and to the men and women who led the labor movement.

Today’s major high school texts do not ignore unions and the labor movement altogether. Each of the books we reviewed presents a modicum of important information, including facts about organizations such as the Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Still, these textbooks provide what we believe to be a narrow and sometimes seriously misleading view of what unions are and have done in the past; they neglect the labor movement’s role in shaping and defending American democracy; and they pay hardly any attention to organized labor in the past half-century. As Clarence Darrow argued in 1909, “With all their faults, trade-unions have done more for humanity than any other organization of men that ever existed.”

The textbooks fall short in their coverage of labor in three specific ways. First, they devote little space to the labor movement and the development of unions generally. Second, when they do cover the development of unions, the textbooks’ accounts are often biased against the positive contributions of unions to American history, focusing instead upon strikes and “labor unrest.” Third, their discussions of other important social, political, and economic movements (such as the civil rights movement or the Progressive Movement and their gains) often downplay or ignore the important role unions and their members played in these movements.

Textbooks should recognize that there is a history of working people and the labor movement in the United States that is significant, intelligible, and coherent. It is an important component of American history and the story of our democracy. We urge the publishers and authors of U.S. history textbooks not to let this history be lost. We urge them to add textbook content that includes the historic struggle of unions to fight for just and fair working conditions and to achieve social progress.

We also urge textbook publishers and author to convey the ongoing international aspect of union work in the field of democracy and human rights, as well unions’ ongoing struggle, at home and abroad, to achieve better lives for workers regarding essential, bread-and-butter workplace issues such as wages, hours, and health care benefits. In short, publishers should provide students with a comprehensive and complete story of the contributions
American organized labor has made and is making to economic, political, social, and cultural life in America and around the globe. Textbooks should analyze labor and workplace issues in the context of the role unions have played as a pillar of a healthy democracy. The right to organize a union and bargain collectively is a fundamental right set out in the First Amendment of the Constitution (freedom of assembly) and in federal labor and employment laws. From the writings of the earliest American unions, to the most recent demonstrations in Wisconsin, it is clear that unions’ ongoing struggle to defend the constitutional rights that are inherent in labor rights is a struggle that is at the core of what defines American democracy.

**Fair and Balanced?**

Textbook depictions of conflict between labor and management (and occasional government) should be fair and balanced. Textbooks should not present union organizing or labor protests against abusive or unconstitutional working conditions as an intrinsically and exclusively violent action. The social setting and background in labor disputes usually tells a much more complicated and nuanced story: one that demonstrates that American social, judicial, regulatory, and communications institutions have too often been biased in favor or employers who inflicted on workers cruel and dangerous working conditions, including child labor and sweatshop conditions-and who ruthlessly suppressed unions. Textbooks should tell the missing half of the story: that strikes, protests, and campaigns by labor arose in response to-and often have been the only viable and available response to-systemic abuse and deprivation of American workers, including children, women, and minorities.

We urge textbook publishers not to ignore shortcomings by unions that should be included or to paint unions rosily, but simply to remember to present a balanced view to also highlight the positive consequences and achievements of major strikes and labor demonstrations in American history. The role of, and rationale for, strikes should be explained, and the context in which they occur should be given and linked to the decision to strike. Textbooks should also note that strikes are employed in very rare but highly publicized cases (according to the News Media Guild, 98 percent of union contracts in the United States are settled each year without a strike), and that the right to strike is an internationally recognized worker and human right. Collective bargaining should be presented both as an exercise in workplace and American democracy, in which workers and employers seek to mutually agree on the terms and conditions of employment as well as the steps to resolve differences.

History textbooks should spotlight the legal and regulatory obstacles to workers’ freedom of association supported by the U.S. business community and created by legislation and the judiciary throughout U.S. labor history. Textbooks should also note that the systemic suppression of unions and systemic violations of worker rights are among modern Western industrialized democracies, almost uniquely American.

The individual achievements and contributions of more labor union leaders should be acknowledged in U.S. history textbooks, just as the contributions of American political, industrial, technical, and military leaders. Students should understand that our nations was shaped by labor leaders’ vision, work, and in many cases, bravery in the face of imprisonment, injury, or death. Textbooks should highlight the significant role that the organized labor movement has played throughout U.S. history in advancing state and federal legislation to promote economic, political, and social equality. They should stress that unions routinely focus on social and economical issues that affect the broader society and go well beyond their members’ workplace concerns.

Union membership in the U.S. is declining. We urge textbook authors and publishers, however, to portray some of the real reasons for the decline of unions: the erosion of American manufacturing; outsourcing and off-shoring; laws and regulatory systems that are hostile to unions and labor rights; and the ongoing anti-union campaigns of employers which are sadly tolerated by our society and our legal, political, and regulatory systems. We urge textbook publishers and authors not to portray unions as irrelevant (recent events in Wisconsin, Chicago, and other cities and states certainly indicate that that is far from the truth). We also urge them to fully portray the political strength of union members, their families, and their supporters, which recent events demonstrate is far from irrelevant.
Teachers Discuss Teaching about Unions

Dana Chibbaro, Director of Social Studies, Newark, NJ: Students need to understand that historically unions for workers arose in response to abuses that people experienced in the workplace. Teachers can create activities where students would become historical detectives who examine primary and secondary sources to uncover the reasons that workers formed labor unions in the past. Our job as teachers is not to advocate for unions but to help students understand why some workers formed unions in the past and think they are still important in the present. To answer questions about the present, students will need to examine the progression of labor relations and labor laws that have been put into effect to protect workers. Personally, I think unions that operate as professional associations and support our professional development are vitally important. Whatever my personal opinion, the goal is for students to decide on their own after looking at documents and data whether labor unions are still necessary. New Jersey has a rich labor history but I would not mandate the study of any particular events or people. That should be left up to individual teachers to decide as they shape lessons to address Common Core standards. Important goals with the Common Core include getting students to examine complex text to dig deeper into a topic and draw evidence and conclusions after examining multiple perspectives and a variety of evidence.

Dennis Banks, Social Studies Educator, SUNY Oneonta: Discussion of labor unions and the labor movement in the United States often lacks historical context. Students need to examine what this country was like prior to the growth of unions. What was going on? What were the problems? How have unions grown, evolved, and changed, and how has this impacted on the lives of workers and their families? Teachers should not avoid discussion of the role of unions today and the attacks being made on union workers, but this discussion should not take place in a vacuum. As a teacher and a unionized worker, I benefit from the role played by labor unions in the negotiating process and in the advocating for their membership. But to be really effective, they need to work with and make an impression on government and in the private sector on big business. They need to prove their value by showing a willingness to discuss issues and not have everything be confrontational. In younger grades students should learn about different types of jobs and the lives of working people. Labor unions can be mentioned here as part of the discussion of justice and fairness, but they really should become a major focus in middle school and high school.

Bill Lanchantin, Cambridge (NY) Central School District: It is important to focus on the importance of the history of labor unions in U.S. history curriculum because unionized workers built this country. Students should understand that before there were unions, workers had little protection and could be taken advantage of by powerful employers. Middle school students should be familiar with the reasons for the organization of the Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations, as well as the pros and cons of unions today. Recently, there has been a lot of hostility towards unions because some unionized workers receive health benefits and pensions that a lot of Americans do not have. One question students should explore is whether these types of benefits can be provided for everyone, especially given the financial problems of state and local governments.

Erica Martin, Chittenango (NY) Middle School: Social studies teachers need to remind students of how things were for working people prior to labor unions. Students are disconnected from unions and the roles they play in our lives. There has been a strong anti-union “mantra” in our society that gives them a distorted picture. They are unaware of struggles by unions for minimum wage, work safety, social security, and child labor laws, things that benefit people whether they are union members or not. The same laws that protect factory workers from dangerous chemicals also protect the surrounding communities. I make labor unions a major focus when we learn about industrialization. Important topics include the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, the Haymarket riots, the
Pullman strike, and the formation of the early unions. Labor unions for working people and union benefits should not be a left-right political issue; unions benefit everyone.

Gail Shelly Black Horse Pike (NJ) Regional School District: Students are exposed to a massive assault on unions in general, especially teachers unions, in the media, so they are already getting a very negative view of unions. It is really important for social studies teachers to balance this perspective by clarifying for students why unions were created. In order for students to decide what they think about the merits of labor unions today, they need to understand how unions have protected the rights of workers, ensured fair employment conditions, and improved wages and hours for working people. I think much of the criticism of teachers and teachers unions today grows out of a lack of understanding by the public about what teachers really do, the obstacles that they face, and the constant training they receive. As a school administrator I see both the benefits of having union protection and some of the drawbacks. Schools are reforming the way we evaluate teachers and I think that was a long time coming. But we must recognize a lot of teachers find this frightening and they fear losing the basic protections that they had as workers.

Ray Belarmino, Roy W. Brown Middle School, Bergenfield, NJ: Students need to understand how unions have struggled since the beginning of the 20th century to improve living and working conditions for working people. Because of unions workers have rights on the job, safer working conditions, and they can earn decent wages. Unions still have a role to play because they are the organized collective voice of people whose voices would not be heard otherwise. Without unions to negotiate with management rights would not be protected and workers could be abused and exploited which still happens in non-union industries and countries where workers do not have the right to organize.

Michael George, Fisher Island (NY) UFSD: It is important that students understand the history of labor unions in the United States, their contributions, but also that they have not always been popular. Two areas we look at are the initial growth of the labor movement at the beginning of the 20th century and the enormous expansion of unions during the New Deal. Discussion of labor unions in the past and present can generate a lot of student excitement because unions are in the news today and because families of students often have sharply conflicting views about the role played by labor unions today.

Lynn Tiede, Columbia Secondary School, New York, NY: It is critical that teachers help students understand that it was the labor unions that challenged all the negative effects of the developing unregulated capitalism during the Industrial Revolution. I do a very extensive unit just looking at all those changes that were taking place. We look at history from the ground up to see the impact of the changes taking place on people's lives and how this leads to an almost natural development of the unions to protect the humanity of the worker and their ability to earn a living wage that can support an entire family. A specific topic I focus on in eighth grade is how the labor movement was galvanized by the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire. In our society, many people have the attitude that we do not need labor unions anymore, even people who think they were a good idea in the past. Personally, I am very happy that teachers have a union. I hope I can extend this feeling about unions to my students because I believe their families and the entire society benefits when unions are stronger.
Revisiting the Brooklyn Bridge, Supporting Occupy Wall Street
by Carolyn Herbst

Whatever you may have read or heard about the use of violence on the Day of Action in support of Occupy Wall Street in Lower Manhattan on November 17, 2011, based on the experience of someone who was there, it was not true. That Thursday evening, thirty thousand people rallied peacefully in Foley Square and marched across the Brooklyn Bridge. The event was organized by New York City labor unions including the United Federation of Teachers. There was a permit for the rally and for the march. I know all of this because I was there.

I walked across the Brooklyn Bridge with Occupy Wall Street, slowly, with my cane and with most other people half my age or younger. There were thousands and thousands of people. There were many signs and electric candles. I carried a tiny electric candle instead of a sign. As I walked, I began to compose this article in my head. It was something I felt I had to do.

I started with a contingent from the Health and Hospital Workers Union 1199. The marchers walked slowly, but since I walked even slower, I fell behind and walked along with numerous other contingents in line behind me. There were university students in debt from college loans, other union workers, two different brass marching bands, and various chants. The mood was festive and positive. I am glad so many young people were involved. It has been a very long time since young people were awakened to a cause. When I was young I was involved in the civil rights movement, and anti-war and anti-bomb movements. As they chanted, “we are the 99 %,” they were identifying a very real problem in this country. You cannot solve a problem until you identify it and those young people were bringing it to the attention of the American people.

At least a dozen of the young marchers stopped me to talk. They all asked me for my "story," saying I must have important reasons to march, since it was more difficult with a walking cane. I was interviewed by a man doing live video streaming during the event. Actually I was not such an anomaly; there were other older people, but walking canes were few.

As I walked across the Brooklyn Bridge, I thought about how in the 1980s, my husband and I had written a series of lesson plans on the building of the Brooklyn Bridge which were published in the NYSCSS journal Social Science Record, a forerunner of Social Studies Docket. The lesson plans were the outgrowth of a summer social history course. We also did a presentation on them at the National Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference in New York City in 1986.

As I walked I kept thinking about the numerous parallels between the Gilded Age, when the Brooklyn Bridge was built, and now. There was the huge dichotomy of income between the very rich on top and everyone else. There was only a small middle class (something many fear may happen again). The very rich paid few taxes. Many public services were dependent on charity rather than tax money. The health care delivery system was problematic. Government favors were bought through funding of political campaigns by the very rich. Workers were unemployed or exploited.

These are social studies issues. We need re-thinking, we need reform, and we need change. As Social Studies educators we have much to do in educating youth to think of possibilities.
Beginning on September 17, 2011, chants of “We are the 99%” rang through the streets and parks of New York, Oakland, Detroit, and other major cities around the world. A leaderless movement with little interest in traditional avenues of civic participation (e.g., writing elected officials), Occupy Wall Street (OWS) attracted extensive media coverage, the ire of conservatives, and tepid Democratic approval. OWS remains something the United States, long the paragon of capitalism, is uncomfortable with: a political movement focused on economic inequality. The many detractors of OWS accused the movement of “class warfare” and being “un-American.” In a society long devoted to individual improvement and the “American Dream,” the structural importance of class has been neglected in both public discourse and social studies textbooks and curriculum. This article compares the class-based language of the 1863 Civil War draft riots and the 21st century Occupy Wall Street movement.

Although other historical events more closely reflect the tactics of OWS, such as the Flint, Michigan autoworkers strike of 1936-1937, the choice of the draft riots was deliberate. In an age of accountability, with teachers having to prepare students for standardized tests, the Civil War and the draft riots have a high likelihood of appearing on the U.S. History Regents Exam. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has voiced support for standardized testing for high school students, so this may soon be a concern for that state's social studies teachers as well. Preparing students to talk about issues of class, along with the dominant textbook narrative of the draft riots and racial violence, will help them understand the complexities of the past. It will hopefully make for a more engaging exploration of the nation’s history.

The Language of Class

Opponents of Occupy Wall Street are part of a long tradition of attacks against communists, socialists, and even mainstream Democrats. Rush Limbaugh, the nationally syndicated radio talk show host, called OWS protesters “pure genuine parasites,” “bored trust-fund kids,” and a “parade of human debris.” Ex-George W. Bush adviser Karl Rove described the protesters as “self-described socialists, anarchists” and “anti-Semites.” Despite these attacks, OWS’ class rhetoric demonstrates a continuity that exists throughout American history. Comparing messages on signs at the OWS protests at Zuccotti Park with the class-based rhetoric of the New York City draft riots is a way to incorporate class into the curriculum.

Before police forcefully removed occupiers from Zuccotti Park, the protesters’ signs highlighted their anger at class inequities. Some, such as “People before profits,” pointed to the capital accumulation apparent in corporatism. Others, such as “Wall Street is Nero and Rome is Burning,” made historic references. Many focused on the disparity between the income of the top 1% and the rest of the nation or a broken political and economic system. Signs like “Too Broke 2 Speak to My Rep,” “I Can't Afford My Own Politician so I Made this Sign,” and “Money Talks” touched upon angst at the Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Committee* (2010) which eliminated laws restricting individual corporate donations to political campaigns. An American flag graced with corporate logos instead of stars relayed the same message. CEOs, with their exorbitant salaries and stock options, became the face of the 1%. Although protesters blamed a disparate group of individuals like the Koch brothers, the energy moguls who contribute to “libertarian” causes, corporations such as Bank of America and J.P. Morgan Chase, and the Federal Reserve, the overall message was clear: the rich were benefiting in a system that catered to them and something needed to be done about it.

Political action and protest about class issues is not new to New York City. Before it deteriorated into a racial attack on African Americans, the Civil War era draft riots raised issues more closely related to social class. The draft riots, three days of violence, looting, and destruction of private property, provide teachers an opportunity to incorporate the study of social class into their Civil War unit plans. Civil War era New York had a tightly knit Protestant mercantile and manufacturing elite organized around the Union League Club that identified with the war effort. They sat on top of the economic pyramid in a city with a
large population of skilled artisans and journeymen, and a vast, impoverished immigrant working class.

Because the conscription law allowed the affluent to hire substitutes if drafted, it was a source of class tension. The rioters did attack African Americans, a point made in most textbooks, but they also targeted the city’s merchant and industrial bourgeoisie and the Republican Party that was considered their partner.

Burrows and Wallace (2000) in Gotham: A history of New York City to 1898, examine the relationship between the riot and class issues. On the second day of the riots, they recount, “Rioters swept the streets clear of wealthy individuals — readily identifiable by their clothes and bearing. Men shouted, ‘There goes a $300 man!’ and ‘Down with the rich men!’ Protesters attacked the homes of the genteel, trashing (more often than [stealing]) the fancy furniture” (892-893). The wealthy prepared for an assault and Wall Street, which was the best defended part of the city. “Customs House workers prepared bombs with forty-second fuses. Employees of the Bank Note Company readied tanks of sulfuric acid to spill on attackers." In addition, the Sub-Treasury Building, at the corner of Nassau Street, provided guns and bottles of vitriol, a chemical compound of sulfuric acid, to employees at windows and troops with howitzers stationed themselves nearby. A gunboat was even anchored at the foot of Wall Street (893). Merchants, bankers, and industrialists, New York’s well-to-do, demanded federal martial law to control the city’s “dangerous class” (899).

The draft riots had a lasting impact on issues of class in New York City. Upper-class New Yorkers discovered that democracy bred danger and promoted reforms aimed at reducing the influence of the working-class on local government. Exploring class rhetoric and violent protest during the Civil War provides important historical context for understanding the urban squalor, poor working conditions, and social reform of the Gilded Age, topics that are prominent in the social studies curriculum. The angst the working- and lower-class felt toward the wealthy bourgeoisie, not to mention the distrust of the upper class toward workers, grew out of the Civil War draft riots.

Although Occupy Wall Street inhabits a different world, one with U.S. military hegemony, globalization, and the use of social media, a similar distrust and angst of the wealthy bourgeoisie remains among the nation’s lower-class. A key difference, though, is that OWS has attracted sympathy from middle-class individuals, many of whom have felt the pain of the Great Recession. Even if OWS no longer has the newsworthiness it did when the protests started, it still provides avenues for exploring class issues and connecting the past to the present.

Class in the Classroom

Finding ways to connect class issues from the past to the present provides a way to have students understand both the grievances of the lower-class during the New York City draft riots and those protesting corporatism and unfair economic policies in streets and parks in cities around the world today. This approach helps students bridge the gap between the familiar, the world they see and hear about, and the unfamiliar, the past. This can be done with activities that introduce present day news headlines, pictures of protests, and short editorials and news articles. Teachers can also create now-and-then contrasts, focusing on questions like: How was life different for workers during the Civil War and today? Did conditions during the Civil War for working people justify the riots? Were complaints by OWS participants similar to and/or different from those of the rioters? Has the U.S. since the Civil War become a society where everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed?

This approach to teaching issues of class does not have to begin or end with the New York City draft riots. Approaching other historic events such as Bacon’s Rebellion (1676), Shay’s Rebellion (1786-1787), the Flint autoworker’s sit-in strike (1936-1937), and Martin Luther King’s protests against economic injustice with class as a central focus has the ability to transform state-mandated curricula into dynamic, thought-provoking explorations of the past, ones that draw meaningful and powerful connections to the present.
I am a strong advocate of the role of the county historian as a promoter of historical education, community heritage, and cultural tourism. Although the position is a required by state law, the actual job requirements and benefits are left up to the individual counties. Unfortunately some counties have no historians, some use an organization to fulfill the role, some have volunteers perhaps with some office support, some have part-time historians, and others have full-time positions where individuals take a leadership role. I met Amie Alden, the Livingston County (NY) Historian, at a conference and had the opportunity to learn about what she is doing which is quite impressive.

Livingston County is located at the western edge of the Finger Lakes vacation region, but it also may be considered part of Western New York. Its population of around 65,000 is comparable to many other counties outside the New York City metropolitan area.

There are two simple ways of indicating the strong commitment of the County to the position of County Historian. First, the position of County Historian is listed on the County website. While that may seem trivial, the historian position is not always listed on a county or municipality’s webpage. Second, the department is listed separately on the webpage; it is not just part of another department such as records or archives or clerk.

The Livingston County Historian Department consists of a full time county historian who oversees a research center mainly comprised of books, subject binders, and archival documents with a part time clerk and a part time deputy located in its own facility. The county has a separate full time Records Manager who oversees government records. Defining precisely what records are government and what are historical is a subjective decision and it is perfectly reasonable for a county to have one person in overall responsibility for both provided sufficient staff, space, and facilities for the maintenance of historical collections exist. The Livingston County Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator are to be commended for their support of the County Historian function.

In Livingston County, there are seventeen towns and the Livingston County historian is in contact with them by phone and email. The historian organizes regular formal and informal gatherings and publishes a newsletter of events and activities that is distributed to all county departments and Board of Supervisors. All newsletters can be accessed through the County Historian’s page of the County website.

In a recent presentation at the County School Superintendents luncheon, County Historian Amie Alden presented a newly developed interactive website financed primarily by the Livingston County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism. Not only is the County historian in touch with school superintendents, but she also maintains contact with social studies curriculum people in each district and may attend teacher meetings or professional development. As County Historian, Amie Alden also presented at an advanced placement class and at a BOCES Career Day. Communication with school officials works both ways. Municipal historians need to be kept abreast of what it means to teach to standards and what the impact of the proposed Common Core Curriculum will be teaching state and local history. Superintendents need to know about anniversaries and exhibits that are underway or forthcoming.

Other responsibilities of the County Historian include public talks, radio interviews, attending historic events such as for the Sesquicentennial, and attending conferences. Alden has served on the board of the Livingston County Historical Society and created the Friends of Livingston County History. According to Alden, the main reasons she attends conferences are “education, contacts, and sharing of experiences.” Connecting with others working in the field of local history is what she finds most beneficial. People at these conferences provide links to resources that assist in her research and vice versa.
As a participant in a Teaching American History grant, I became very interested in finding colonial resources on the towns my students live in — Oakland, Wyckoff and Franklin Lakes, NJ. I started looking at local history books and newspapers, visiting historical societies and libraries, and even paying for a membership to ancestry.com. During this research, I stumbled across an advertisement. It was printed in the *New York Gazette* in 1774. A man by the name of Thomas Boggs was selling his estate in Oakland, NJ. The ad simply stated:

Ramapough [Oakland], in the township of Franklin, and county of Bergen, and in the eastern division of the province of East New-Jersey, about ten miles distant from Ringwood and Sterling, and 15 miles from a landing, and 20 from Hackensack, a very valuable farm, containing 93 acres, of the best land, either for tillage or pasturage; twenty acres of which are now mowable yielding heavy burdens of English hay every season, and the whole well wooded and watered; being within good fence. On the premises are a new stone house, of a complete structure, having four fireplaces, a good large cellar, and a well of the very best of water that never fails in the driest seasons, close to the kitchen door. A new large framed barn, an orchard, of various kinds of fruit trees; and also one of the best grist-mills on the continent, with two run of stones, fed by a stream which has proved inexhaustible when most others failed; and all in good repair; the place itself being commodiously situated either for a gentleman, a merchant, or an inn-keeper, as nature has implanted pleasure and health in its level meads, environed by rivulets, and being in the midst of a populous country, with its conveniences renders it a profitable seat.

Also to be sold on said day on the premises, some male slaves, and a strong healthy female slave, all of unexceptionable character, together with horses, cows, sheep and hogs, with many other articles unnecessary to mention here…. by THOMAS BOGGS, Living on the premises.

This struck a cord. I wanted to know where in Oakland this was, who Thomas Boggs was, and why he was selling his home on the eve of the Revolution. What resulted was not only a search for answers, but an extensive lesson plan on Oakland in the 1770s. I learned that in 1754, Boggs purchased 100 acres of land in Oakland, once part of Franklin Township. Then in the 1760s, Boggs married Catherine Van Buskurk of Paramus. Besides working their farm, the Boggs ran a tavern. In 1764, Thomas Boggs decided to expand his business interests by purchasing a gristmill on Rte. 202 in Mahwah. Then, in 1774 Thomas Boggs advertised his farm, house, tavern, slaves, and livestock for sale in a NY newspaper. Whether or not the Boggs family was able to sell the property is unknown, however, 1780 is the last time one can find Thomas Boggs in the local census. During the revolution, there is no evidence of Mr. Boggs’ loyalties. However, the Van Buskurk family was split between loyalists and patriots. Many formed a large part of the loyalist Buskirk regiment. Eventually, Boggs disappear from the Bergen County records. Instead, there are records showing a Thomas Boggs of NJ living in Nova Scotia and in business with a fellow NJ loyalist.

When I teach about the causes of the Revolution and the war itself, I do what many teachers across the country do. I have my students examine the different acts leading up to the war and how the colonies grew divided over remaining loyal to the crown or becoming independent. What my students do not realize is that the very towns they live in were divided between loyalists, patriots and those that tried to remain neutral. While Oakland did not experience fighting during the war, the Continental Army did march up and down Rte. 202 to and from different battle sites and the British army raid ed the area. At the same time, Oakland’s 100 families were divided between patriot and loyalist views, with more leaning towards the loyalist side. In 1776, when the Crown required all men to swear an oath of loyalty to England, many local families took the oath. However, many signed more out of the need to protect their own personal property from being confiscated. When the Continental Army took control of NJ, they too required an oath of loyalty from residents, and again, many pledged allegiance for the sake of their home and belongings. Tensions ran so high that in 1775 the town’s first English teacher was arrested for his pro-British sympathies. After the war,
he returned to the town, but old feelings did not die and he was driven out of town yet again.

Once I brought the revolutionary history to my student’s world, my next step was to introduce Thomas Boggs. I gave students the advertisement and immediately they notice that slaves are included in the sale. They also always ask where the house is and they usually conclude Boggs was rich as he had a lot of land and livestock. However, these types of responses do not elicit higher order thinking skills nor does it challenge them to figure out what it was like to live in their hometown a couple hundred years ago.

What I do next is to work on bridging connections between the ad and the history they have already learned in class. We discuss who the early settlers to the Middle Colonies were. We review the institution of slavery in the North, the labor market in the 18th century, the farming and mill economy in the Middle Colonies, and the daily life in the former Dutch colonies. Students then work together to reconstruct the life and times of a family living in Oakland, NJ, focusing on economics, social issues, and daily life.

After examining daily life, my students move on to the next step — the Revolution. They will have covered the events leading up to the Revolution in the days prior to this part of the unit. Infused in this earlier teaching was a continual connection to the events taking place in New Jersey, emphasizing the political and social decisions individuals faced as revolutionary sentiment spread. In addition, there are the ramifications on land and slave owners as a result of this growing tension.

The idea of scaffolding in education is key to moving students from simply questions and answers to critical thinking and analyzing. With a foundation laid, students can now analyze the advertisement in regards to the Revolution. It becomes a mystery to solve. Why would someone in their very town want to sell their home and farm on the eve of the Revolution? After discussing potential loyalties and characteristics of the seller based on the document and their knowledge of the time period, students will be given some brief biographical information on Thomas Boggs. They will be asked in class discussion how this information might further help them determine who the Boggs were, what their life in Oakland was like and why they might want to sell their home and property. I will also review the terms loyalist and patriot and will explain how New Jersey was very ethnically diverse, and although there were tendencies for certain groups to be Loyalist or Patriot, the lines were very blurry.

With this in mind I ask my students to analyze the extent to which the revolution disrupted Oakland and its surrounding communities in regards to farming, slavery, labor, and even gender. They also analyze the extent to which the divisions between loyalist and patriots impacted residents. As we continue this analysis, students write an historical narrative in which they reconstruct the Boggs’ family and what might have happened to them during the war. It does not matter whether the individual students think the family sided with the loyalist or patriot cause. What is important is for them to analyze a primary source, apply prior knowledge, and draw conclusions as to the impact of national events on individual and local levels.

A teacher can apply this approach to almost any colonial era town. There are many ways to find resources related to a geographic location. While ancestry.com is a pay site and does give access to many sources all in one location, there are other more economical ways to find information. The Library of Congress and other historical databases can give one a wealth of primary and secondary source information stretching from early newspapers to excerpts from books. Instead of an advertisement, it is easy to just print out a page from a census report and pick a family or individual, and then use the brief biographical information as a starting point. Many local libraries, historical societies and even religious organizations have town histories, biographies, census reports, birth and death records, oral histories, local newspapers, photographs, and maps. One could also go to http://www.censusfinder.com/new-jersey-historical-museums.htm and explore resources related to a specific geographic area. In addition, an educator could find an endless array of historical maps on the Rutgers University website (http://mapmaker.rutgers.edu/MAPS.html). Although all of their resources are not digitized, the New Jersey Historical Society (www.jerseyhistory.org) is another great resource. Ebay and the local history book series Images of America are also great places to look for old historical photographs, postcards, and maps.
The Erie Canal – as a Geographer Sees It
by Timothy McDonnell

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What does a geographer see when looking at the eastern half of North America? First we see the Atlantic seaboard, with its many bays and estuaries. One of them, very centrally located, is the majestic Hudson River that stretches northward from New York City. When the first European ship sailed on this waterway, the captain (Henry Hudson, of course) thought he was on passageway to the Orient. That turned out to be a total fantasy. Nevertheless, this discovery was historic. It began the process of the building of the Empire State.

Next, we might notice the five inland seas, better known as the Great Lakes. We instantly recognize them as being natural corridors leading into the continent’s interior. Finally, we zoom in on the ancient chain of mountains of the Appalachians, which roughly parallel the coastline. Whereas lakes and rivers are connectors, these mountains are barriers.

But what if we zoom in on those mountains? On first inspection, they seem to stretch almost uninterrupted from Maine to Georgia. I say almost because there are two narrow breaks in the chain that are both in New York State. The first is cut by the Hudson River about an hour’s drive north of the Bronx. Here the very navigable estuary knifes through a section of the Appalachians known locally as the Hudson Highlands. The fortress of West Point is strategically placed here. Boats of all sizes can sail upstream all the way to Troy without the need of locks. It is no coincidence that Robert Fulton invented the steamboat on this very river in 1807.

A look at a relief map of New York reveals the second break in the mountains. It is the Mohawk Valley, a ribbon of green lowlands surrounded by the Adirondacks to the north and the foothills of the Catskills to the south. In this valley the Mohawk River flows from north of Rome, New York to the Hudson River near Albany. If you follow this river westward you cross over to the low country of Lake Ontario, one of the Great Lakes. A small stream called Wood Creek flows into Oneida Lake, which in turn empties into Lake Ontario by the Oswego River. The continent’s interior is open to you!

Sailing up the Hudson River is fairly easy. There are no major obstacles for over a hundred miles; but the Mohawk River is another story. Although it is nearly at sea level, it has many rapids and cataracts, including the formidable Cohoes Falls near its mouth. Water levels in the river fluctuate with the seasons. The Mohawk is better suited for small boats, like canoes and rafts. Native Americans (i.e. the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois) used this waterway for centuries, as did the trappers and explorers who followed them. Many portages are required to make it up the Mohawk and then down the Oswego River to Lake Ontario. The most important is at Rome, New York, which sits on a divide, separating the waters flowing toward the Hudson from those flowing toward the Great Lakes.

What happens once an 18th century traveler reaches Lake Ontario? The outlet of this lake is the St. Lawrence River that flows through Québec into the North Atlantic Ocean. In essence, you have returned to the starting point. So, instead you could go west. About 100 miles from Oswego is the mouth of a river that carries all the water of the Upper Lakes into Ontario. Lake Erie is just 35 miles to the south. But in the middle of that river is the biggest obstacle of all – two thundering cataracts, cascading over a great escarpment known as Niagara Falls. The total drop, including rapids above and below the falls, is around three hundred feet. Once our traveler is above that barrier, it is fairly smooth sailing into Lake Erie at Buffalo. Lakes Huron, Michigan, and Superior loom to
the west. Beaver pelts and fertile farmland beckon. To protect this route, a fort was built where the Niagara River greets Lake Ontario. It was built by the French, captured by the British, and then ceded by treaty to the Americans. Whoever controlled this choke point, controlled the continent!

We need to mention once again that this is the easiest route westward anywhere on the east coast. Visionaries dreamed of making it better by making improvements, like deepening little Wood Creek, or building locks around the Little Falls on the Mohawk River. When the United States was born after the Revolution, some New Yorkers had more ambitious plans. They wanted a Grand Canal.

Physical Geography of New York

The physical geography of New York and the Great Lakes Region is the result of many geological forces stretching over millions of years. Collisions between tectonic plates before the Age of Dinosaurs uplifted the Appalachian Mountains. Rivers, large and small, gradually eroded down the highlands to a fraction of their original height. The final chapter began around two million years ago, when a climate change launched the planet into an Ice Age. Several times great continental ice sheets or glaciers pushed their way southward from northern Canada. They receded during warmer interglacial periods. The last invasion of ice reached its culmination around 20,000 years ago. All of New York State was covered, except for a small section along the Pennsylvania border.

Over many centuries the ice slowly receded northward altering the New York landscape drastically. The glaciers had carved deep north-south trending valleys. Some filled with water and became the Finger Lakes. Large basins gouged out by glacial erosion filled with water and became the Great Lakes. The bottoms of most of the lakes are below sea level. The thick ice sheets dumped sediment almost everywhere.

As the ice sheets melted, floodwaters forced their way to the sea. The St. Lawrence Valley was blocked, and a large lake, known to geologists as Lake Iroquois, formed behind it. This lake can be considered a precursor to Lake Ontario, but it stretched much further south. Its outflow rushed down the Mohawk and the Hudson Valleys, deepening both of them. Meltwater from a glacier in the Champlain Valley added to the torrent.

These spillover channels created the final touches of New York’s geography and made the building of the Erie Canal possible. Water rushing down the Mohawk Valley smashed through a divide at Little Falls. East-west trending valleys in Syracuse and near Rochester were also carved by these Ice Age rivers. The canal would later be located in those channels. In western New York loosely packed deposits of dirt and rock covered the landscape, which made it was much easier to dig through than to blast through solid bedrock.

Fast-forward to 1817. Three wars had been fought here: the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and the War of 1812. Native peoples were driven from the ancestral lands and onto small reservations. The young nation was flexing its muscles. Thousands of New England Yankees and European immigrants flocked to Upstate New York, drawn by its fertile soil, another gift of the Ice Age. But they were isolated from the rest of the country.

Planning the Grand Canal

Sitting in a jail in Canandaigua for unpaid debts, Jesse Hawley wrote articles for a local paper outlining a plan for a grand canal. Others suggested that it be a national project of improvement while many considered it folly. Thomas Jefferson thought that a canal would not be built for a hundred years. DeWitt Clinton entered the political stage. He was a member of an illustrious political family and as a former mayor of New York City. Clinton had the influence and the arrogance to push the plan through the state legislature. Surveyors marked off a route, and on July 4, 1817 the first shovelfuls of dirt were dug outside Rome. “Clinton’s Ditch” was finally being constructed.

Why did they start in the middle of the state? This was the easiest section to build. No locks were necessary between Syracuse and Rome. It also permitted construction in two directions, toward Albany to the east and the Great Lakes to the west. Many suggested that the canal end at Oswego on Lake Ontario but this would be a “dead end” unless we just wanted to trade with British Canada. Even though it would be much longer and more expensive to build, the Grand Western Canal would be an Erie Canal.

Looking back nearly two centuries, it seems like a modest endeavor. The original Erie Canal was only 30-feet wide and four feet deep. However, considering the technology available at the time, it was an amazing
engineering feat. They had to learn as they went along. Many clever inventions made the digging process faster, like a stump-pulling machine and a hydraulic cement that hardened under water. All labor, of course, was done by human and animal power. New York’s special geographic features made it manageable, but there were still serious obstacles that needed to be overcome. First, there were streams that flowed north and south. Since the canal was a manmade ditch, it needed to cross over streams and rivers on aqueducts. Lake Erie is 571 feet above sea level. That meant that 83 locks needed to be constructed to gently raise or lower boats along the 363 miles of this artificial river.

The self-trained engineers had to deal with special conditions in different parts of the state. There was the Mohawk Gorge east of Schenectady where the river drops nearly two hundred feet in just a few miles. The largest drop is the Cohoes Falls. The only solution was to build two dozen locks on the south side of the river. Farther west, it was determined that the best plan would be to move the canal to the north side, so two very long aqueducts were constructed crossing the wild Mohawk at Crescent and at Rexford. In Central New York, they had to cross the desolate Montezuma Marshes north of Cayuga Lake. Many workers died of diseases carried by mosquitoes. Every time they dug, the sides of the prism fell in. They could not finish this section until late fall, when cold temperatures allowed them to secure the sides of the ditch.

Across the Irondequoit Valley

Near Rochester, the canal needed to cross the Irondequoit Valley. There were small ridges in the valley that they connected together with fill to form a ridge. The aptly named Great Embankment carried boats seventy feet above the valley floor without any locks. In Rochester the canal needed to cross the Genesee River, which is very prone to flooding. They constructed an aqueduct completely out of stone.

In Western New York, progress was easier due to the flat terrain between Rochester and Lockport. But then they reached the most formidable obstacle of all, the Niagara Escarpment, the same cliff responsible for Niagara Falls. They used a plan designed by Nathan Roberts that used five double locks that climbed up the seventy-foot escarpment like a staircase. Then they blasted a path through solid dolomite rock all the way to Pendleton, NY. This seven-mile masterpiece of engineering was gently filled with water supplied by Lake Erie itself. This last section of the canal was not completed until the fall of 1825.

Celebrating Completion of the Canal

On October 26, 1825 a cannon boomed in Buffalo Harbor. A few miles down the canal another cannon was fired, which prompted a succession of blasts all the way to Albany and then down the Hudson to New York Harbor. Then the signal rebounded back to the shores of Lake Erie. This was rapid communication in the days before telegraphs and satellite dishes. A flotilla of boats, including one carrying DeWitt Clinton began the long trip eastward from Buffalo. There were galas and ceremonies at nearly all towns along the canal and on the Hudson River. The largest was saved for New York City. After the shouting was over, the canal closed for the season, but in 1826, the Grand Western Canal began to make money.

Since it is much cheaper to transport non-perishable goods by water than over land, the cost of freight dropped around ninety percent when the canal was the route of choice. Flour ground in Rochester and salt mined in Syracuse could be shipped to New York City at a low cost making the trade very profitable.

Although “downstaters” were originally opposed to the Erie Canal, it soon became obvious they were the major beneficiaries. New York City became America’s First City as Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Boston were left far behind. Canal cities also prospered. Most doubled, even tripled their populations before the Civil War. Most of the trade from the Great Lakes Region was funneled through Buffalo, the “Queen City of the Lakes.”

Rochester became the young nation’s first boomtown, as flourmills sprang up around the falls of the Genesee River. The city had a Wild West reputation similar to Tombstone a half-century later. Smaller cities on the Mohawk River became textile centers. They enjoyed the economic benefits of waterpower from the rapids on the river and the cheap transportation offered by the canal. Albany, the state capital, thrived as the port where the canal met the Hudson. Steamboats towing canal line boats in long queues became a common site on the river.

The canal brought people and prosperity to the Empire State. In fact, it was actually too successful,
which created some big problems. Other parts of the state felt left out and clamored for their own canals. In a frenzy of construction in the 1830s and 1840s lateral canals were constructed in all parts of the state. Some were quite successful, especially the Champlain, Oswego, and the Cayuga-Seneca Canals. They connected the main line Erie Canal to Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario, and the two largest Finger Lakes respectively. But other canals violated a basic rule of Geography 101. “Just because something works here, it doesn’t follow that it will work there.” Some canals went against the physical geography of the state. For example, the Genesee Valley Canal was built to connect Rochester to Olean on the Allegheny River and required over 100 locks. These canals did not last long and most were gone by the 1870s when railroads stole their business.

Expanding the Canal

Another problem created by success was the need for the expansion of Clinton’s Ditch. The four-foot deep canal was inadequate for freight being hauled just ten years after it opened. The state authorized the construction of an Enlarged Erie Canal that was not completed until 1862. The water was now seven feet deep and the canal was seventy feet wide. The 72 locks were doubled, which allowed upstream and downstream traffic to flow more smoothly. The vestiges of a neglected Clinton’s Ditch faded away. Today, most of the surviving structures are the remnants of the Enlarged Erie Canal.

The Erie Canal was America’s first information highway. Ideas spread westward from New England and mingled with the frontier egalitarianism of the Ohio Valley. The canal became a hotbed of new ideas and “radical” causes including abolitionism and women’s rights. The Underground Railroad was well established here. It is no accident that Frederick Douglass chose to move to Rochester where he established his anti-slavery newspaper The North Star. He also operated a station on the UGRR on the outskirts of the city. It was no geographic accident that the first meeting where women’s suffrage was demanded was held in the canal town of Seneca Falls. The canal success is why most immigrants entered this country through the Port of New York. The poor working conditions they endured launched the union movement with New York on the front lines. When the “modern” Barge Canal was built in the early 1900s, the immigrants were a significant part of the labor force.

Today the economic advantage that the Erie Canal once gave New York is not so important. Other forms of transportation such as railroads and interstate highways can go over mountains. They are not seasonal and they allow for much faster travel. Even the Barge Canal is no longer a major commercial waterway. The modern canal is primarily a recreation playground for boaters, hikers, bikers, and eco-tourists. Most canal towns actively promote their waterfronts, which helps the local economy. The recently created Erie Canalway National Historic Corridor, part of the U.S. Park Service, has been very instrumental in promoting tourism and business in this region. It is important to remember that the old “towpath” canals are part of this corridor. Preserving their historic locks, aqueducts, bridges, and other structures is just as important as promoting marinas on the modern canal. New York was, is, and should always be a Canal State. Without our magnificent waterway that connects the Great Lakes to New York Harbor, we would not have become the Empire State.
The period of New York State history from 1800 to 1860 is generally underrepresented in social studies curriculum as well as in children’s and young adult literature. Yet at this time areas of the state held a crucial place in the development of ideas and reform for the nation as a whole. In fact, it has been called the “Burned Over District” (Cross, 1967/1982) because of the convulsions of religious, utopian, and political revivals that shook these Central and Western New York State counties. The name was inspired by the perception that the area had been so heavily evangelized and swept by social movements during these antebellum movements as to have no "fuel" (unconverted population) left over to "burn" (convert, move) (Cross, 1967/1982). One impact of these revivals and movements was the spread and impact of the Abolitionists who demanded the emancipation of slaves. Another momentous result was the call for women’s rights and the rise of the Suffragist movement, eventually resulting in voting and other legal rights for women.

The Erie Canal was a key contributor to the influx of both people and new religious and social ideas into the region. Western New York State had mills, factories, and farms, and towns along the main route of the canal and its vast feeder system became centers of commerce and culture. Although it started as a controversial undertaking, the Erie Canal ultimately opened in 1825 with much celebration. It ran from Troy to Buffalo and transformed towns along its banks. It turned places like Rochester, Seneca Falls and Palmyra into hotbeds of new ideas as Abolitionists and religious revivalists moved from New England to these new Western areas with good farmland and like-minded neighbors. The canal also brought industrialists who opened mills and small factories along nearby rivers, contributing to the wealth and attractiveness of these communities.

The “burning” religious, utopian, and social reform movements were less authoritarian than the religion and government experienced in older New England communities. The more unstructured environment of Western New York provided spaces for grass roots participation by its citizens and women played active roles in each of these movements.

During the first decades of the 19th century, women often preached in informal churches. The emergence of religious groups such as the Shakers, the Spiritualist Movement, popularized by the Fox sisters of Hydesville, New York, the Seventh Day Adventists, and Jemima Wilkerson, the Universal Friend, contributed to women’s leadership and ownership. Even Charles Grandison Finney’s revivals focused on individual relationship with God. Utopian movements such as the Oneida Society, a successful community in central New York, also provided a key role for women. Radical social movements such as Temperance Societies and Abolitionist groups, while they involved women as members, initially prevented them from speaking and from leadership roles. But they all provided important models for organization and an entry for the beginnings of the Women’s Suffrage movement.

Several women who played a significant part in the history of this period were involved in both the Abolition and the women’s rights movements. Elizabeth Cady Stanton met long-time Quaker Abolitionist Lucretia Mott at an Abolitionist convention in London, where they were forced, with other women, to sit, unspeaking, in the balcony. Their experience being silenced eventually led to the meeting that resulted in the Declaration of Sentiments, the women’s rights manifesto, at Seneca Falls in 1848. Susan B. Anthony, raised as a Quaker and very active in the Abolitionist Movement, met Stanton two years later in Seneca Falls, beginning a life-long collaboration for legal and voting rights for women. These three women also knew and worked closely with Abolitionists and escaped slaves Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, who were both also involved in the struggle for women’s rights.

Curriculum Material
There are very few well-researched and readable books available for the upper elementary and middle school reader on this era in New York State history. However there are several simplified biographies for
younger readers on Stanton and Anthony biographies of Lucretia Mott for a wider range of readers.

Jean Fritz, a prolific author of historical books for very young readers, wrote *You want women to vote, Lizzie Stanton?* This lively biography provides an account of Stanton's accomplishments against a background that explores women's roles in society at that time. The author shows Stanton's frustration with limitations placed on women. Vivid anecdotes depict her later work for women's rights, the difficulties for women speaking in public, and her responsibilities in raising seven children. It is recommended for ages 9-12 and is very easy to read.

For middle school and high school readers, Penny Coleman’s *Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: A friendship that changed the world* uses a variety of well-documented sources to illustrate how the two worked together to improve the lives of American women. The book includes a thorough description of the economic realities of gender discrimination and its impact on property rights, jobs, and the allocation of resources and labor within the household. *Mother, Aunt Susan and Me*, by William Jacobs is recommended for ages 9-12. It is an easy read that depicts the history of the women's suffrage movement in a fictional format narrated by sixteen-year-old Harriot Stanton as she highlights the activities of her mother, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony. Maryann Weidt’s *Fighting for Equal Rights: A Story About Susan B. Anthony* (ages 9-12) is a straightforward biography outlining Anthony’s life from childhood and schooling to speechmaker and author. The author examines the impact of her Quaker upbringing, her involvement with the Daughters of Temperance, and her role in the Women’s Rights Movement. It includes a useful bibliography and index.

Two historical fiction mysteries intended for adults make interesting and informative reading for middle and high school students. Monfredo’s *North Star Conspiracy* and *Seneca Falls Inheritance* are well researched and vividly illuminate the time and place. The main character is a Seneca Falls librarian. *Seneca Falls Inheritance* is set at the time of the first Women’s Rights meeting in 1848 and provides rich descriptions of daily life and the ideas and interactions of the various social movements. *North Star Conspiracy* follows the northward escape of fugitive slaves with the women’s rights movement in the background. Both novels include a bibliography.

There are several biographies for early elementary school readers that can be used for research. Deborah Hopkinson’s *Susan B. Anthony: Fighter for women’s rights*, for ages 4-8, outlines the women's suffrage movement and provides biographical information on Anthony. *Elizabeth leads the way: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the right to vote*, by Tanya Stone, for ages 6-9, is a good introduction to this important American woman and her work. It begins asking the reader, “What would you do if someone told you you can’t be what you want to be because you are a girl? The short biography focuses on the Women’s Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848.

Two biographies of Lucretia Mott extend and enrich the period. *Lucretia Mott: A Photo-Illustrated Biography* by Lucile Davis and Andrea Libresco, recommended for ages 4-8, is brief but well documented with illustrations contemporary to the period. For older readers, Dorothy Sterling’s *Lucretia Mott* is well researched, and provides a full portrait of this important woman, from her birth in Nantucket to her key role in the Abolitionist Movement. It details her involvement with Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Sojourner Truth.
Global Revolutionaries With Local Ties
by Amanda Carmelitano and William Gibbons with contributions from Jerez Kaye, Atif Khalil, and Justin Sulsky

Giuseppe Garibaldi, Italy (1807-1882)

Giuseppe Garibaldi, born in 1807, was a true global revolutionary. He played a prominent role in numerous revolutions and independence struggles, including unification movements in Europe, Tunisia, and South America. Garibaldi was born in Nice, a French territory that was taken from Italy. At the age of twenty-five he became a merchant marine captain. Garibaldi joined the Italian unification movement that sought to unite Italy and free it from Austrian influence and participated in the unsuccessful Carbonari uprising in 1834. He was captured and sentenced to death, but was able to escape to South America where he participated in the War of the Ragamuffins (1835-1845), a rebel uprising against the colonial rulers of Brazil, and a civil war in Uruguay. Garibaldi returned to Italy during the uprisings and unrest of 1848 and commanded part of the Republican army.

When the insurrection was defeated, Garibaldi once again was forced to flee Europe. This time he stayed with Italian exiles in New York City. For a short period of time, he worked in a candle shop on Staten Island. The shop, at 420 Tompkins Avenue, is now a Museum for Italian-American heritage. After a number of years traveling and working in Latin America, Garibaldi returned to Italy in 1854. Starting in 1860, Garibaldi and his followers gradually gained control over Sicily and the southern peninsula. He eventually handed over the entire territory to Victor Emmanuel who would become king of a united Italy. Garibaldi’s efforts in the Unification Wars of Italy made him a global hero. During the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln offered him a Union command in the army. Garibaldi turned the offer down because he felt that Lincoln was not making a sweeping enough condemnation of slavery. He died in June of 1882.

Speech by Giuseppe Garibaldi to Italian Troops (1860)
Source: http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/garibaldi.htm

Young men, Italy owes to you an undertaking that has merited the applause of the universe. You have conquered and you will conquer still . . . To this wonderful page in our country's history another more glorious still will be added, and the slave shall show at last to his free brothers a sharpened sword forged from the links of his fetters. To arms, then, all of you! all of you! And the oppressors and the mighty shall disappear like dust. You, too, women, cast away all the cowards from your embraces; they will give you only cowards for children, and you who are the daughters of the land of beauty must bear children who are noble and brave. Let timid doctrinaires depart from among us to carry their servility and their miserable fears elsewhere. This people is its own master. It wishes to be the brother of other peoples, but to look on the insolent [powerful] with a proud glance, not to grovel before them imploring its own freedom. It will no longer follow in the trail of men whose hearts are foul. No! No! No! . . . Providence has presented Italy with Victor Emmanuel. Every Italian should rally round him. By the side of Victor Emmanuel every quarrel should be forgotten, all rancor [disagreement] depart.

Questions
1. How does Garibaldi try to inspire his followers in this speech?
2. What message does Garibaldi have for Italian women?
3. Garibaldi traveled the world participating in revolutionary movements. In your opinion, should he be considered a hero of Italy or a hero of the world? Explain.
Thaddeus Kosciusko, Poland (1746-1817)

Thaddeus Kosciusko was born in a noble family near a town that it now located in Belarus. In 1765, he enrolled in the Corps of Cadets, a school set up to educate and train military and government personnel. After graduation he moved to Paris where he studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and Sculpture. In France, Kosciusko became intrigued by Enlightenment ideas. When news arrived of the outbreak of the American Revolution, he volunteered to fight with the revolutionaries and was commissioned as a Colonel of Engineers in the Continental Army. He was sent to Pennsylvania to help build forts and fortify camps so that they would be able to withstand attacks by the British. Kosciusko is credited with strategically knocking down trees, damming off rivers, and deploying scorched earth practices to slow the advance of the British Army. After reading the Declaration of Independence, Kosciusko became a close friend of Thomas Jefferson. He also became a staunch opponent of slavery. In 1784, Kosciusko became a Major General in the Polish army and helped defend a model constitution and independent government against a Russian invasion. After Poland was defeated he fled to Germany, but returned two years later to lead an uprising against the Russian occupation. Defeated once again, he traveled back to the United States and then settled in Switzerland where he died in 1817. Because of his support for American Independence, there are numerous monuments honoring Kosciusko in the United States including the Kosciusko Bridge, which connects Greenpoint, Brooklyn to Maspeth, Queens.

Last Will and Testament of Thaddeus Kosciusko, 1783

“I beg Mr. Jefferson that in case I should die without will or testament he should buy out of my money so many Negroes and free them that the restart Sum should be Sufficient to give them education and provide for their maintenance. That is to say each should know before, the duty of a Citizen in the free Government, that he must defend his Country against foreign as well internal Enemies who would wish to change the Constitution for the worst to enslave them by degree afterwards.

To have good and human heart sensible for the sufferings of others, each must be married and have 100 acres of land, with instruments, Cattle for tillage and know how to manage and Govern it as well to know how to behave to neighbors, always with kindness and ready to help them-to themselves frugal, to their Children give good education.

I mean as to the heart and the duty to the Country, in gratitude to me to make themselves happy as possible.”

Questions
1. What did Thaddeus Kosciusko embrace the cause of the American Revolution?
2. How did Kosciusko help the Continental Army?
3. In your opinion, why would an Enlightenment thinker and man of action such as Kosciusko oppose slavery?
José Martí, Cuba (1853-1895)

José Martí, born in Havana, is considered the national hero of Cuba. As a teenager, he was considered a talented artist and he later became a well-known poet. In 1869, while sixteen, he wrote articles in support of Cuban independence from Spain and opposed to slavery. He was convicted of treason and sedition and sentenced to six years in prison. Because of his parent’s influence, his sentence was reduced to one year in prison followed by exile in Spain, where he earned a law degree. After traveling and living in France, Mexico, and Guatemala, he returned to Cuba in 1878. He worked as a teacher but after a year was accused of conspiring to overthrow Spanish rule. He was exiled to Spain again but decided to live in New York City.

In New York City, Martí served as a representative for the governments of Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina, wrote for several newspapers, and produced several volumes of poetry. He also worked with Cuban exiles as part of the Cuban Revolutionary Committee of New York raising support for the independence movement. In 1894, Martí and a group of exiles attempted to return to Cuba and start a revolution, but the expedition failed. A year later, Martí joined a better organized group that was able to establish a military base on the island, however he was killed in one of the early battles. The rebellion failed and Cuba did not gain independence until after the Spanish-American War of 1898. José Martí is still honored in Cuba. Havana’s main airport is the José Martí International Airport and his birthday is a national holiday. The song “Guantanamera” features his poetry.

Montecristi Manifesto of the Cuban Revolutionary Party (1895)

Today, as we proclaim from the threshold of the earth, in veneration of the spirit and doctrines that produce and animate the wholehearted and humanitarian war for which the people of Cuba unite once more, invincible and indivisible, it is fitting that we evoke, as guides and helpers to our people, the magnanimous founders whose labor the grateful country takes up once again, and the honor that must prevent Cubans from wounding by word or deed those who gave their lives for them. And thus, making this declaration in the name of the patria and deposing before her and her free faculty of constitution the identical labor of two generations, the Delegate of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, created to organize and support the current war, and the Commander in Chief elected by all the active members of the Liberating army, in their shared responsibility to those they represent and in demonstration of the unity and solidity of the Cuban revolution, sign this declaration together.

Questions
1. What happened when as a teenager, José Martí challenged slavery and Spanish colonial rule in Cuba?
2. What did José Martí do while in exile in New York City?
3. In your opinion, why is José Martí considered a Cuban national hero?

“Versos Sencillos” (Guantanamera) by José Martí

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yo soy un hombre sincero</td>
<td>I am a truthful man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De donde crecen las palmas</td>
<td>From this land of palm trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yo soy un hombre sincero</td>
<td>I am a truthful man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De donde crecen las palmas</td>
<td>From this land of palm trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y antes de morirme quiero</td>
<td>Before dying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Echar mis versos del alma</td>
<td>I want to share these poems of my soul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, France (1757-1834)

Gilbert du Motier, the Marquis de Lafayette, was a French aristocrat and military officer. At the age of nineteen, he made several attempts to get to America to aid the revolution. At one point he bought his own boat, which was seized by the British navy. He was initially denied a commission to the Continental Army, but was approved after offering to serve without pay and assigned to serve with George Washington. He was wounded in the leg at the Battle of Brandywine in September 1777. After returning to France, Lafayette worked with Benjamin Franklin to gain support and funding for the American Revolution. He returned to America in 1781 with nearly six thousand soldiers to help combat the British and was present when Cornwallis surrendered to the Continental army. After returning to France, Lafayette found himself in the middle of the French Revolution. After taking part in the Tennis Court Oath, he was appointed commander-in-chief of the National Guard of France under control of the National Assembly. After the King almost escaped, Lafayette was accused of loyalist tendencies and was placed under house arrest.

In Prospect Park in Brooklyn there is a large Marquis de Lafayette monument and in each borough of New York City there is a Lafayette Street or Lafayette Avenue. In 2003, the United States Congress granted the Marquis de Lafayette and his descendants honorary American citizenship.

General Washington letter to Congress, November 1, 1777

“The Marquis de La Fayette is extremely solicitous of having a command equal to his rank. I do not know in what light Congress will view the matter, but it appears to me, from a consideration of his illustrious and important connections, the attachment which he has manifested for our cause, and the consequences which his return in disgust might produce, that it will be advisable to gratify his wishes, and the more so as several gentlemen from France who came over under some assurances have gone back disappointed in their expectations. His conduct with respect to them stands in a favorable point of view having interested himself to remove their uneasiness and urged the impropriety of their making any unfavorable representations upon their arrival at home. Besides, he is sensible, discreet in his manners, has made great proficiency in our language, and from the disposition he discovered at the battle of Brandywine possesses a large share of bravery and military ardor.”

Recollections of the Private Life of General Lafayette (1836)

“I have always loved liberty with the enthusiasm that actuates the religious man with the passion of a lover, and with the conviction of a geometrion. On leaving college, where nothing had displeased me more than a state of dependence, I viewed the greatness and the littleness of the court with contempt, the frivolities of society with pity, the minute pedantry of the army with disgust, and oppression of every sort with indignation. The attraction of the American Revolution transported me suddenly to my place. I felt myself tranquil only when sailing between the continent whose powers I had braved, and that where, although our arrival and our ultimate success were problematical, I could, at the age of nineteen, take refuge in the alternative of conquering or perishing in the cause to which I had devoted myself.”

Questions
1. Why did a French aristocrat like the Marquis de Lafayette decide to enlist in the American Revolutionary cause?
2. Why did General Washington want Congress to offer Lafayette a commission in the Continental army?
3. In your opinion, what was the impact of the Marquis de Lafayette on history?
Thomas Paine, England, (1737 – 1809)

Thomas Paine was an Enlightenment thinker, author, and revolutionary who participated in revolutionary struggles in the United States, France, and Great Britain. He was the son of a poor Quaker and as a young man worked as a sailor, excise officer, and teacher. He moved from England to the American colonies a couple of years before the American Revolution. He lived in Philadelphia where became editor of the Pennsylvania Magazine. Paine is best remembered as an essayist. In Common Sense, written in January 1776, Paine argued it was unjust for an island to rule a continent and that rulers who govern based on heredity contribute nothing to the people they rule over. The Rights of Man, published in 1791, defended the right of people to reject rulers who do not safeguard them, their natural rights, or the national interests. The British government convicted Paine of seditious libel for writing The Rights of Man. He avoided punishment because he was in France. However, Paine was temporarily jailed in France as a foreigner trying to influence the direction of the French Revolution. Thomas Paine later returned to the United States at the request of President Thomas Jefferson and lived in Greenwich Village in New York City.

The Ideas of Thomas Paine

“All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.” - Age of Reason

“Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections, the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.” – Common Sense

“Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries by a government, which we might expect in a country without government, our calamities is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer! Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least. Wherefore, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever form thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.” - Common Sense

Questions
1. What were Thomas Paine’s views on religion?
2. According to Paine, what is the difference between society and government?
3. In your opinion, what does Paine mean when he describes government as the “lesser of two evils”?
On July 12, 1923, with little fanfare, The New York Times reported “Miss Mary S. McDowell, a Quakeress, dismissed in 1918 as a public school teacher by the Board of Education because she refused to sign unqualifiedly the loyalty pledge, insisting that religious principles prevented her taking part conscientiously in war activities was reinstated as a teacher yesterday.” A brief statement by the Board of Education’s Committee on Law noted, “the punishment meted out to Miss McDowell was too severe. She was tried at a time of great public excitement.” The decision to reinstate McDowell to her teaching position in the New York City Education system marked a major victory for this heroine of conscience. It was the first time in New York State education history that a teacher had been reinstated after alleged questions about loyalty. Equally noteworthy, the McDowell case represented the first test of religious principles and academic freedom heard by a state court system in the United States.

World War I marked the first time that academic freedom in the United States became a burning issue. During the war, teachers were subjected to a loyalty oath, as schools became “seminaries of patriotism.” Despite the recent formation of the American Federation of Teachers, educators accused of disloyalty were unable to count on the union because it lacked the necessary firepower to initiate legislative change. Without tenure laws to protect them, teachers were at the peril of school boards, which determined that every educator march to their tune. School administrators and officials were quick to follow through with new policies demanding loyalty and allegiance to the flag. For instance, New York City Associate Superintendent of Schools, Dr. John Tildsley, a principal figure in the McDowell case, vigorously argued, that “The public schools should be the expression of the country’s ideals, the purpose of its institutions, and philosophy of its life and government.”

Nowhere was this more obvious than in New York State and, New York City. Although there were elaborate hearings with defense counsel, the decisions had really been determined in advance. Three teachers from De Witt Clinton High School were suspended and then dismissed for questioning American military involvement. Elementary schoolteacher Miss Fannie Ross was suspended for six months after being found guilty of opposing the draft and military enlistment. German-born Gertrude Pignol was fired for possessing a locket that was engraved by her father because it held a picture of the Kaiser’s grandfather.

What precipitated these suspensions and firings were the events surrounding Brooklyn schoolteacher and Socialist Party member Jessie Wallace Hughan. In 1915, she helped establish the Anti-Enlistment League, garnering the signature of some 3,500 men. In March 1917, a month before the United States entered the war, the Board of Education instituted proceedings to remove her from her high school position. Despite tremendous pressure from the press, public, and school board, Hughan retained her job because the dispute took place before America went to war, but, her case precipitated the legislative activity that enabled New York school boards to fire teachers who did not endorse the war effort.

During the war, and immediately following, charges were brought against teachers refusing to sign loyalty oaths and to teach patriotism. Many more teachers left their positions before being charged. In most instances, no records were kept because there was no court trial or effort to seek judicial relief. Due process was accorded by Board of Education hearings. The absence of tenure laws placed teachers at the mercy of local school boards causing many opposed to the war to keep their opinions to themselves.

In these cases, New York City teachers who were intimidated into submission, suspended, or fired were victims because of their political beliefs. Matters involving religious conscience were never addressed since the teachers under investigation opposed the war on socialist or ethnic grounds. Although McDowell was not the only schoolteacher to challenge her dismissal because of the loyalty oath, her case became historically significant for four reasons: (1) she took her case to court to seek relief, albeit unsuccessfully; (2) her case marked increasing female participation in control over their professional careers; (3) her ordeal demonstrated how school officials, as well as the courts, turned a blind eye to the issue of separation.
of church and state in order to achieve patriotic conformity despite the disclaimer by school officials that religious conscience was not at the heart of the matter; and (4) it was the only case in New York where a teacher accused of insubordination related to loyalty was subsequently reinstated and a school board publicly acknowledging the “great public hysteria” as cause for her dismissal.

Mary Stone McDowell was born on March 22, 1876 in Jersey City and was a birthright member of the New York Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. In 1896, she graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Swarthmore College, attended Oxford University on a fellowship, and in 1900 received a Master’s degree in classical languages from Columbia University Teachers College.

In February 1905, she received a permanent appointment as a Latin teacher at Richmond Hill High School, Queens, and was subsequently transferred to the Manual Training High School in Brooklyn. Until the outbreak of war in Europe and the preparedness campaign in the United States, teacher evaluations showed that McDowell was an efficient teacher with a flawless record. According to her principal, Dr. Horace Mann Snyder, she was “In every way the best. She is not of the 2:30 type”; “She is a Quaker and her example could not be better.”

On January 10, 1918, seven months after the U.S. declared war on Germany, McDowell was summoned before the New York City Board of Superintendents. She was questioned extensively by the Chairman of the Committee on High Schools about her loyalty. She responded “no” when asked, “Are you willing to assist the Government at the present time by every means in your power in carrying on the present war?” After a lengthy deliberation the Board of Superintendents recommended that charges of “conduct unbecoming a teacher” be brought against her and recommended suspension from teaching duties “pending an investigation . . . pointing to disloyalty.” At the Board of Education’s monthly meeting on January 24, 1918, a resolution was passed recommending McDowell’s suspension based on the Superintendent’s allegation that “Miss McDowell has refused to sign, unqualifiedly the loyalty pledge circulated in the Public Schools.”

All eyes were glued on her hearing, which began on May 15, 1918. A special four-member Board of Education committee led the prosecution. The defense team was headed by Austen G. Fox, an active civil libertarian, and assisted by John Broomell, a Quaker. The case received extensive news coverage, highlighted by a New York Evening Post observation that the room was “filled to its capacity by teachers, members of the Board of Superintendents, and other persons interested in the proceedings.” Fox, attempting to dramatize the event, argued that this was “one of the momentous cases in American history dealing with the right of religious freedom,” and “the first time in the history of the United States that a Quaker has been put on public trial for holding that faith.” The prosecution denied that the case had “any such significance.” Those in attendance sat riveted as both sides sought to make their case. In an impassioned closing argument, Fox proclaimed: “It is far more important that freedom of conscience and tolerance should be preserved than that this lady should be removed from her position.” McIntyre countered: “The defendant contends that she is not obliged to comply with the regulations laid down for teachers because she is a Quaker. We say that it is necessary for the peace and safety of the State that our schools should have teachers who are in sympathy with this war.”

Her hearing ended after two and a half hours. The board deliberated for a month before upholding by a 4-0 vote the “charge of conduct unbecoming a teacher.” On June 19, 1918, McDowell was dismissed as teacher in the New York City public school system. Her defense team immediately charged “her dismissal violated federal and state Constitutions by discrimination against her on account of her religion.” More confident in the judicial system than in the Board of Education, they filed an application with the New York State Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus (a petition asking the Court to issue an order directing someone to perform an
action). Despite well-reasoned arguments in the respondent brief, the writ, and a plea for McDowell’s reinstatement, the Court rejected the application, insisting that it should have been a matter for the Commissioner of Education to decide.

Later John H. Finley, State Commissioner of Education, upheld the board’s decision arguing “[R]eligion had nothing to do with the situation . . . she was dismissed solely because of her attitude toward the government in war.” He ruled that “[i]f a teacher asserts that she will not support the government in taking up ‘arms against the foe’ she should not be retained in her position.” Of course, Finley’s decision was colored by his own patriotic proclivities as evidenced by an address he gave earlier to the State Teachers Association in which he proclaimed: “The same degree of loyalty is asked of the teacher as of the soldier. If he cannot give that, his place is not in the public school.”

This quiet, unassuming, and steadfast witness for peace was heartbroken by the outcome of this legal fight. She was also financially broke and forced to work for little pay as a secretary for the religious pacifist group, Fellowship of Reconciliation. During this period, her personal struggle for redemption was compounded by postwar fears of Bolshevism in America. Throughout the United States, efforts were made to destroy the Industrial Workers of the World, all in the name of Americanism, as well as to crack down on striking workers, such as the Boston police, steelworkers in western Pennsylvania, and dockworkers who walked off the job in Seattle. Teachers were by no means immune and loyalty oaths were the clubs used as a conformist measure.

Nevertheless, after five arduous years, Mary McDowell was reinstated. From 1923 until her retirement in 1943, McDowell continued to do what she did best: teach students. After retirement, she supported peace causes in keeping with her Quaker faith. War Tax Resistance was popularized by her long before its widespread use during the Vietnam War. She passed away in December 1955.

Shortly after her death, a school in Brooklyn was named in her honor. Today, numbers of special needs children enter its doors on 40 Benson Street. Her 1918 trial by fire, which tested her religious convictions and subsequent efforts on behalf of world peace, she helped organize the Pacifist Teachers League during the Second World War, have not been forgotten.

McDowell was included in the 1964 “Profiles in Courage” television series, a show based on the 1956 Pulitzer Prize-winning book by President John F. Kennedy, which detailed the lives of historical figures who, despite public rebuke, stood by their conscience. This was her legacy as teacher and agent of change to both academic freedom and the power of conscience.

**HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATORS USA**

“Every individual and every organ of society… shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms. “ - Preamble, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Human rights education is a lifelong process of teaching and learning that helps individuals develop the knowledge, skills, and values to fully exercise and protect the human rights of themselves and others; to fulfill their responsibilities in the context of internationally agreed upon rights principles; and to achieve justice and peace in our worlds. Over 35 states already integrate aspects of human rights education in their academic standards. Many schools and teachers include it in intrinsically in their policies and practices. The Network supports, enhances, and broadens these efforts in Pre-K to graduate- level formal and non-formal educational settings Human Rights Educators USA (http://www.hreusa.net) promotes human dignity, justice, and peace by cultivating an expansive, vibrant base of support for Human Rights Education (HRE) in the United States. To achieve these goals, Human Rights Educators USA facilitates mutual collaboration and support to maximize members’ efforts to integrate HRE into formal and non-formal educational settings, such as schools, universities, and organizations working with youth; fosters education that promotes respect for every child’s dignity, provides opportunities for meaningful participation, and upholds freedom from discrimination and all forms of violence; advocates for the inclusions of HRE in national and state education policies, standards, and curricula and pedagogy; provides HRE resources and pre-service and in-service teacher training; contributes to global research and scholarship on HRE; and empowers educators and learners. For more information or to join visit http://www.hreusa.net.
Teaching about Immigration to the United States

The material in this section on immigration to the United States was developed by participants in the Our American Democracy TAHG organized out of Fannie Lou Hamer H.S. in the Bronx. Participants included Godfrey Ajoku, Kevin Breslin, Anna Chacko, Benjamin Delcamp, Mike Fox, Bill Hendrick, Kelly Lima, and Pablo Muriel. The grant is administered by Emily Sintz of Fannie Lou Hamer High School and John Gunn of CUNY-Queens.

Between 1880 and 1920, almost 24 million immigrants arrived in the U.S., primarily from Southern and Eastern Europe. New immigrants typically settled in the cities along the eastern seaboard and entered low-paying, wage-labor jobs. They filled the factories and worked at other poorly paid jobs such as unskilled construction work. They built the infrastructure of the cities, roads, subways, sewers, and water aqueducts. These immigrants often arrived with little money and were forced into substandard housing in the worst sections of the overcrowded cities.

The arrival of millions of new immigrants led to unplanned growth in urban centers and multiple problems. Many cities had problems with sanitation, leading to overflowing sewers, uncollected garbage, impure water, and a general stench in the air. Crime rates rose along with soaring populations and overcrowding.

Many native-born Americans blamed the new immigrants for the unsettling situation in the cities and for taking over “their” nation. In 1882, Congress began to pass legislation limiting immigration. This first immigration act levied a fifty-cent tax on each immigrant and prohibited people previously convicted of political offences, “lunatics,” and those likely to become public charges. In 1891, legislation established the Bureau of Immigration within the Treasury Department and disqualified polygamists, those afflicted with a “loathsome” or “dangerous” disease, and those convicted of a crime involving “moral turpitude” for immigration. In 1917, Congress overrode a presidential veto to enact legislation that required a literacy test for immigration — an adult immigrant had to be able to read forty words in any language. This legislation also barred immigration from Asia except Japan and the Philippines. Following American involvement in the First World War anti-immigrant sentiment grew as thousands of people from war-torn Europe flooded into the U.S. In 1920-1921, approximately 800,000 people came to the United States; about two-thirds of whom were from southern and eastern Europe. In 1921, Congress enacted the Emergency Quota Act, the first quantitative immigration law. This stopgap legislation restricted the number of immigrants by their country of origin. Only 3% of the people from that nation living in the U.S. in 1910 were allowed to immigrate. The Immigration Act of 1924 made the quota system permanent and reduced the percentage allowed into the U.S. from 3% based on the 1910 census to 2% based on the 1890 census numbers. This change from the 1910 to the 1890 census shifted the nationality totals to a time when relatively few southern and eastern European immigrants had arrived in this country. The legislation was enacted in order to prevent more “New Immigrants” from arriving and essentially the U.S. closed itself off to mass immigration.
Congress Debates Immigration Restriction (1924)

Instructions: Using your knowledge of U.S. history, prepare a narrative response in which you:
• describe the historical context from which the two documents emerged; and
• compare and contrast the governmental actions Clancy and Smith would most likely favor in support of the views they expressed in the passages.

Congressman Robert H. Clancy, Republican from Detroit, Denounces Immigration Quotas

“Since the foundations of the American commonwealth were laid in colonial times over 300 years ago, vigorous complaint and more or less bitter persecution have been aimed at newcomers to our shores. Also the congressional reports of about 1840 are full of abuse of English, Scotch, Welsh immigrants as paupers, criminals, and so forth. Old citizens in Detroit of Irish and German descent have told me of the fierce tirades and propaganda directed against the great waves of Irish and Germans who came over from 1840 on for a few decades to escape civil, racial, and religious persecution in their native lands . . . But today it is the Italians, Spanish, Poles, Jews, Greeks, Russians, Balkanians, and so forth, who are the racial lepers . . . In this bill we find racial discrimination at its worst—a deliberate attempt to go back 84 years in our census taken every 10 years so that a blow may be aimed at peoples of eastern and southern Europe, particularly at our recent allies in the Great War — Poland and Italy. Of course the Jews too are aimed at, not directly, because they have no country in Europe they can call their own, but they are set down among the inferior peoples. Much of the animus against Poland and Russia, old and new, with the countries that have arisen from the ruins of the dead Czar’s European dominions, is directed against the Jew . . . [T]he racial discriminations of this bill are un-American. . . . I cannot stultify myself by voting for the present bill and overwhelm my country with racial hatreds and racial lines and antagonisms drawn even tighter than they are today.”


Senator Ellison DuRant Smith of South Carolina Speaks for Immigration Restriction

I think that we have sufficient stock in America now for us to shut the door, Americanize what we have, and save the resources of America for the natural increase of our population. We all know that one of the most prolific causes of war is the desire for increased land ownership for the overflow of a congested population. We are increasing at such a rate that in the natural course of things in a comparatively few years the landed resources, the natural resources of the country, shall be taken up by the natural increase of our population. It seems to me the part of wisdom now that we have throughout the length and breadth of continental America a population which is beginning to encroach upon the reserve and virgin resources of the country to keep it in trust for the multiplying population of the country . . . Thank God we have in America perhaps the largest percentage of any country in the world of the pure, unadulterated Anglo-Saxon stock; certainly the greatest of any nation in the Nordic breed. It is for the preservation of that splendid stock that has characterized us that I would make this not an asylum for the oppressed of all countries, but a country to assimilate and perfect that splendid type of manhood that has made America the foremost Nation in her progress and in her power, and yet the youngest of all the nations. I myself believe that the preservation of her institutions depends upon us now taking counsel with our condition and our experience during the last World War.

Detained on Ellis Island

Source: http://www.saveellisisland.org/

Roughly 20% of immigrants passing through Ellis Island were marked for medical and mental testing.

Mary Masare Thome (Interviewer: Nancy Dallett)
Born: February 26, 1902 in Czechoslovakia (Austria-Hungary); Arrived: 1909 at age 7

My father left two years before we did. There wasn’t enough work, and he wanted to get ahead. Unfortunately he came at a very poor time, because there was a Depression in 1909, ’10, and ’11. My father came to Kenosha, Wisconsin because he knew people there. He didn’t let my mother know that he wasn’t working. There was a philanthropist who helped people come from Europe. He asked my father whether his wife was a hard worker and he said, “Of course she is,” so he loaned him two hundred dollars to pay for our passage. That was in 1909. My mother, my brother Michael, and I. We were in steerage and I remember getting water for everyone who wanted it and wasn’t able to get it. I think it took about two weeks. We brought our own food. We had dried fruit, dried meat, and dried bread. That lasted us all the journey, all the way to Kenosha. We never bought food of any kind.

When we came to Ellis Island my brother Michael had a boil on the back of his neck and he was stooping over. My mother told him to straighten up and walk straight so the doctor won’t know what is wrong with him. Of course, the doctors did and we were separated from our friends that we were coming over with. It took my mother ten years to get to see them again.

The reason everyone had to have a physical was they would take care of minor illness. If it was something serious, you were sent back to where you came from. That was a disaster to anyone that it happened to. Fortunately they took care of Mike’s boil and aside from getting separated from our friends there weren’t any bad after effects.

On Ellis Island I remember big wooden benches, sitting on them, and I remember they gave us some kind of box lunch. I had never tasted crackers and bananas. On the way from the boat to train station my mother had a large wicker trunk and a sort of blanket that tied up and those two pieces contained all our worldly goods. She would take me and one of the bundles and walk a ways, turning back all the time to watch the other child that she left behind with the other bundle. Then she would go back and get the other one. At one point a man offered to help her by taking one of the bundles and she agreed, and then she was scared that she’d never see it again.

Questions
1. Where did the speaker come from?
2. When did she arrive in America?
3. What happened to her father when he arrived in America?
4. What was the journey over to America like?
5. Why was the family they detained at Ellis Island?
**Irving (Israel) Chait** (Interviewer: Debbie Dane)

Born: 1902 in Russia, Arrived: 1913 on “the Kursk”

When I left Russia in 1913 the Czar was in power. My father, somehow or other his, his mind was always on the United States even though he really had a wonderful life there. We didn’t feel any anti-Semitism. There were no pogroms where we lived. My father would open his store in the morning, close it in the evening, and then have free time, except for Saturday when it was closed for the Jewish Sabbath. My mother was not crazy about the idea of leaving Russia.

But my father decided to go to the United States with his brother. I think it was about the time of the Russo-Japanese War (1905). From America, he wrote with visas and passports and tickets. He sent us everything so we could join him. We had to go to doctors because this country wanted only healthy people here. They found that my mother’s eyes were bad. They called it trachoma, which is a bacterial infection of the eye. There was only one doctor in the town. So she went to quite a big city to get attention until, of course, they told her, okay. My father sent us tickets to go second class, because second class you didn’t have to go into Ellis Island. We boarded the ship and at that time it took twelve days to cross the ocean.

We had a beautiful cabin. My younger brother, who was seven years younger than I am, got measles while on ship. They put him in the hospital on the ship and my mother was there with him. There was another little boy that also had the measles at the same time and about two or three days before the ship landed in Brooklyn the little boy died. The moment that happened my mother started crying. She didn’t sleep and kept crying so when the ship landed her eyes are all red. She had trachoma again. They took us by a small ship, more like a tugboat, to Ellis Island. The first thing she hears is that if she has to go back to Russia the children must go back with her. Fortunately, my father turned to the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society and they were able to help our family stay in America.

**Questions**

1. Where did Irving Chait come from?
2. When did he arrive in America?
3. What was life in the old country for Irving Chait and his family?
4. What was the journey over to America like?
5. Why was the family they detained at Ellis Island?

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**John Titone** (Interviewer: Willa Appel)

Born: 1912 in Sicily Arrived: 1920 and 1923, age 9 first trip

To me, coming to the United States was an adventure. I was going someplace. I never thought in my mind that I was going to come back. It was in the 1920s. It must have been winter because we got stuck in the harbor in the snow and ice when we got to New York.

In Palermo, before you can go to the ship, they medically examined you right on the pier. When you get to Naples to get on the big ship that brings you here, you get medically examined again and vaccinated whether you like it or not. Whatever they give you, you get all those big marks. The ship was the Giuseppe Verde. We were in third class. The room was little and below deck. There were upper and lower beds and the mattresses were burlap bags full of hay. If you happened to turn the wrong way the hay’s would prick you and it would itch. It was very uncomfortable.

Before we could go to the dining room they would have someone on the ship with a bell in their hand and they would swing it. One day, I was in such a hurry that I ran to go eat and I didn’t see the bell coming and I got hit right on the chin. I was hurt very bad. We had these long tables. When the ocean was stormy, they would have ropes from one end of the table to the other with openings for the glass and openings for the dish. We ate processed food, not freshly cooked or anything. They would just dump cans full of stuff and serve it.

Lots of people got seasick, especially the very young and very old. If you over-eat, you go right on the side of the boat. Worse than the Atlantic Ocean was the crossing between Palermo and Naples. They have currents so ship
really takes a beating. The first thing in the morning when you’re crossing from Palermo to Naples, they give you lemon juice or black coffee. It is supposed to help with the nausea.

At Ellis Island, even though they have interpreters, it’s not the same. In Sicily, if you go from one town to another, ten miles away, they have a dialect of their own. So, you know, here you come to America, you’re strange. When we did get to Ellis Island my mother and two sisters were all detained because of me. I had ringworm on my head. After a few months, my sisters were allowed to enter because my relatives had put up a bond.

Questions
1. Where did the speaker come from?
2. When did he arrive in America?
3. What was life in the old country for the speaker and his family?
4. What was the journey over to America like?
5. Why was the family they detained at Ellis Island?

Julia (Geulah) Persoff Schatzberg (Interviewer: Janet Levine)
Born: May 5, 1917 in Palestine (Jerusalem) Arrived: 1929 at age 12

My father left for the United States about five, six years before we joined him he came here. I must have been four or five when he left and I didn’t even remember him. I remember having a wonderful time living in Jerusalem. There was a lot of music and laughter in the house. Looking back I realized that my mother had a very difficult time. She had five children to bring up alone. There was no indoor plumbing. There was no electricity. I had a twin brother who died at about a year and a half. She had another child after me, so it must have been very difficult for her. He wasn’t making much money. He wasn’t able to support us. So she had to earn money. She took in boarders. For a while she was preparing food and we would take it to the people she prepared meals for. It was a meals-on-wheels. We were the wheels. Then she opened a restaurant with an aunt and ran that for a while. But times were very hard for her, but there was always food for me.

I assume my father came to the United States for economic reasons. It was difficult to earn enough to support a large family, and he thought he would do better here. Of course, he came here at a bad time and he didn’t really do much better. We came in 1929 when I was twelve, but things were already difficult when he came here in the earlier twenties.

I came with my older sister and younger brother. My two oldest brothers came about a year before we did. It was just a matter of getting all the money together. My had a brother who lived in New York and he helped, he sent some money, and she also took a loan. We traveled to the United States on a French liner named Aliza. We traveled in steerage. We slept on mats on the floor. I don’t remember beds. We just had the clothes on our backs, nothing else.

I remember getting off the ship and coming into Ellis Island. My sister was taken from us and put into quarantine in the hospital here on Ellis Island before we came into the big hall. We came into this huge room, just my brother and I, and I remember wondering how my father will ever find us in this big city with so many people.

We slept here on double-decker beds, the first time I had ever seen one. I don’t remember how many nights. I remember being taken outdoors to play. We were given games and toys, which impressed us. I was also very impressed with how white the bread was here. By the time our father finally did come I didn’t recognize him but my brother did.

Questions
1. Where did the speaker come from?
2. When did he arrive in America?
3. What was life in the old country for the speaker and his family?
4. What was the journey over to America like?
5. Why was the family they detained at Ellis Island?
Did Arizona Illegally Declare War on Mexican Immigrants?

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arizona_SB_1070

**Background:** An Arizona law titled “The Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act” has received national and international attention because it mandates law enforcement to check the immigration status of anyone if they have “reasonable suspicion that the person is an immigrant who is unlawfully present in the United States.” Critics of the law claim it encourages racial and ethnic profiling and is being used as a weapon to intimidate the Mexican American population of the state. In June 2012 the United States Supreme Court unanimously upheld the legality of the provision requiring immigration status checks during law enforcement stops.

**Task:** Below are edited excerpts from Arizona SB 1070. Examine the segments below and answer the questions that follow.

According to Arizona SB 1070:
- Any lawful contact made by a law enforcement official or agency of this state or local government where there is reasonable suspicion that the person is an immigrant who is unlawfully present in the United States, a reasonable attempt shall be made to determine the immigration status of the person.
- If an immigrant who is unlawfully present in the United States is convicted of breaking a state or local law, on his release from prison or payment of any fine that is given, the immigrant shall be transferred immediately to the custody of the United States immigration and customs enforcement or the United States customs and border protection for deportation.
- Despite any other law, a law enforcement agency may transport an immigrant who is unlawfully present in the country and in custody to a federal facility in this state or to any other point of transfer into federal custody.
- A law enforcement officer, without a warrant, may arrest a person if the officer has good reason to believe that the person has committed any crime that will cause them to be deported from the United States.

**Questions:**
1. What state passed “The Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act” recently? Where is that state located? What other states or countries are around it?
2. Who does the “The Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act” focus on? Why does it focus on this group of people?
3. What reasons could be given to explain why this law is needed and necessary? What controversy could the law cause?
4. Explain the following: “Critics of the legislation say it encourages racial profiling.” What is racial profiling? How could this law encourage, or create, racial profiling?
5. Do you agree with the Supreme Court decision upholding the law? Explain your views.
Why did Caribbean immigrants come to the United States?

Gabriel Adams by his granddaughter Dolores

Source: http://blogs.ancestry.com/circle/?cat=17&paged=2

This is a picture of my grandfather and three of his children. His name was Gabriel Adams. He was born in 1870 in Kingston, British West Indies. Gabriel came to the United States in 1913 and passed through Ellis Island. He eventually moved to Boston, Massachusetts, in 1915 and sent for his family in Jamaica. In the picture are my two aunts and my uncle. My grandmother was sick that day and unable to make the photo shoot. Gabriel had secured a job as a baggage man with the Boston Railroad in 1921. That was considered a good job for a man of color.

Questions
1. When did Gabriel Adams come to the United States?
2. Who is in the picture?
3. In your opinion, why was a job on the Boston Railroad considered a “good job for a man of color”?

Caribbean Immigration to the United States

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jamaican_American

Official Black immigration to the United States from the Caribbean increased from 412 people in 1899 to 12,245 in 1924. The actual number of Black immigrants and temporary migrant entering the United States yearly was probably twice as high. By 1930, 178,000 documented first-generation Blacks and their children lived in the United States. About 100,000 of these immigrants were from the British West Indies, especially Jamaica.

Questions
1. How many Black immigrants from the Caribbean entered the United States in 1924?
2. In your opinion, why did so many Blacks who entered the United States avoid official channels?
3. The picture above is of women from Guadalupe, a French-speaking island in the Caribbean, at Ellis Island. In your opinion, why was it easier for Caribbean women to enter the United States through official channels than for men?
Marcus Garvey, Jamaican Immigrant (1887 – 1940)

Marcus Garvey was born in St. Ann’s Bay, Jamaica in 1887. He arrived in Harlem, New York from the British West Indies in 1916. His goal was to mobilize people of African ancestry from around the world to retake Africa from European control and turn it into a Black homeland.

In Jamaica, Garvey founded the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), a group that wanted to promote Black resettlement in Africa. Garvey originally came to the United States to meet with Booker T. Washington and promote his organization, however Washington died before Garvey arrived. Garvey later incorporated the UNIA in New York and claimed it had over a million members in forty countries. Garvey and the UNIA started the Black Star shipping line to help Africans return home.

Marcus Garvey was a frequent speaker at Harlem’s “Speakers Corner” at Lenox Avenue and 135th Street. He also published a newspaper, Negro World, that sold over 200,000 copies a week. In 1920, Garvey declared himself the Provisional President of Africa. In 1920, fifty thousand people paraded in Harlem in support of his movement and 25,000 jammed into a rally at Madison Square Garden.

Some American Black leaders sharply disagreed with Garvey because he was willing to accept racism and segregation in the United States as long as a Black could have control over Africa. The U.S. federal government saw Garvey as a threat because of his mass following. They investigated the Black Star Line and in 1923 arrested Garvey for mail fraud. Garvey was convicted and sent to prison in 1925. His followers claimed that the fraud conviction was based on a narrow technicality and the real reason for the prosecution was to silence Garvey. In 1927, Garvey was pardoned by President Coolidge and deported back to Jamaica. He died in London in 1940.

“The Negro’s Greatest Enemy” by Marcus Garvey (1923) (adapted)

“...We are working for the peace of the world which we believe can only come about when all races are given their due ... We believe the black people should have a country of their own where they should be given the fullest opportunity to develop politically, socially and industrially. The black people should not be encouraged to remain in white people’s countries and expect to be Presidents, Governors, Mayors, Senators, Congressmen, Judges, and social and industrial leaders ... I was born in the Island of Jamaica, British West Indies. My parents were black Negroes. My father was a man of brilliant intellect and dashing courage. My mother was a sober and conscientious Christian. I became a printer’s apprentice at an early age, while still attending school. At eighteen I had an excellent position as manager of a large printing establishment, but I got mixed up with public life. I started to take an interest in the politics of my country, and then I saw the injustice done to my race because it was black. I asked, “Where is the black man’s Government?” “Where is his King and his kingdom?” “Where is his President, his country, and his ambassador, his army, his navy, his men of big affairs?” I could not find them, and then I declared, “I will help to make them.”

Questions
1. What was Marcus Garvey’s political goal?
2. How did Garvey reach out to Black Americans?
3. Why were some Black leaders critical of Garvey?
President Urges Congress Repeal Chinese Exclusion Act as War Aid

Source: The New York Times, October 12, 1943

Directions: Below is an article from The New York Times detailing Franklin D Roosevelt’s reaction to Chinese Exclusion. Write a two-paragraph reaction to this article. Focus on answering the following: Why does Roosevelt support repealing Chinese Exclusion? What surprises you about Chinese Exclusion? How do you think Congress will react? How do you think American citizens will react? How would World War II impact the decision to repeal Chinese Exclusion?

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11 -- President Roosevelt asked Congress today to repeal Chinese exclusion laws as a means of assuring our Chinese allies that we regard them as full partners in the war against Axis aggression. Repeal of the exclusion laws, the earliest dating back to 1882, and putting Chinese under the same immigrant quota regulations of the 1920's would allow an immigration of about 100 Chinese a year, Mr. Roosevelt said. This, he said, would certainly not cause unemployment in this country or provide any measurable competition in American's search for jobs. "I regard this legislation," he said, "as important in the cause of winning the war and of establishing a secure peace," commenting that it would also silence "the distorted Japanese propaganda. Nations, like individuals, make mistakes," he said. "We must be big enough to acknowledge our mistakes of the past and to correct them."

Following is the text of President Roosevelt's message:

"China is our ally. For many long years she stood alone in the fight against aggression. Today we fight at her side. She has continued her gallant struggle against very great odds. China has understood that the strategy of victory in this world war first required the concentration of the greater part of our strength upon the European front. She has understood that the amount of supplies we could make available to her has been limited by difficulties of transportation. She knows that substantial aid will be forthcoming as soon as possible -- aid not only in the form of weapons and supplies, but also in carrying out plans already made for offensive, effective action. We and our Allies will aim our forces at the heart of Japan -- in ever-increasing strength until the common enemy is driven from China's soil.

But China's resistance does not depend alone on guns and planes and on attacks on land, on the sea and from the air. It is based as much in the spirit of her people and her faith in her Allies. We owe it to the Chinese to strengthen that faith. One step in this direction is to wipe from the statute books those anachronisms in our law which forbid the immigration of Chinese people into this country and which bar Chinese residents from American citizenship."
United States Immigration Legislation and Restriction


1790. Naturalization Act of 1790 established rules for naturalized citizenship but placed no restrictions on immigration. Limited naturalization to immigrants who were “free white persons” of “good moral character.” Required two years residence in the U.S. and one year in the state of residence prior to applying for citizenship.

1795. The Naturalization Act of 1795 lengthened residency to become citizen to five years.

1798. Lengthened residency to 14 years and registration to establish date of initial residency. Repealed in 1802.

1870. The Naturalization Act of 1870 permitted Black immigrants to become naturalized citizens.

1875. Page Act was the first federal immigration law. Prohibited immigrants considered “undesirable” including any individual from Asia who was coming to America to be a contract laborer, any Asian woman who would engage in prostitution, and all people considered to be convicts in their own country.


1891. Established a Commissioner of Immigration in the Treasury Department.

1892. Geary Act extended and strengthened the Chinese Exclusion Act.

1903. Anarchist Exclusion Act codified previous immigration law and added four new inadmissible classes: anarchists, epileptics, beggars, and importers of prostitutes.

1906. Naturalization Act of 1906 standardized naturalization procedures, made some knowledge of English a requirement for citizenship, and established the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization.

1907. Gentlemen's Agreement was an informal agreement between the United States and Japan to prevent further Japanese migration to the United States.

1917. Barred Zone Act further restricted immigration from Asia and introduced a reading test for all immigrants over 14 years of age, with certain exceptions for children, wives and elderly family members.


1921. Emergency Quota Act restricted annual immigration from a given country to 3% of the number of people from that country living in the U.S. in 1910.

1924. Johnson–Reed Act limited the annual number of immigrants from any country to 2% of the number of people from that country who were already living in the United States in 1890. Total annual immigration was capped.


1952. McCarran-Walter Act somewhat liberalized immigration from Asia, but increased the power of the government to deport illegal immigrants suspected of Communist sympathies.

1965. Hart-Cellar Act discontinued quotas based on national origin. Preference was given to immigrants who had U.S. relatives. Mexican immigration was restricted for the first time.


1986. Immigration Reform and Control Act granted a path to citizenship to undocumented immigrants who had been in the United States before 1982 but made it a crime to hire an illegal immigrant.


2005. REAL ID Act (2005) created more restrictions on political asylum, severely curtailed habeas corpus relief for immigrants, increased immigration enforcement mechanisms, altered judicial review, and imposed federal restrictions on the issuance of state driver's licenses to immigrants and others.

DREAM ACT (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) was first introduced in the Senate in 2001. It provide conditional permanent residency to certain undocumented aliens of good moral character who graduate from U.S. high schools, arrived in the U.S. as minors, and lived in the country continuously for at least five years prior to the bill’s enactment. On June 15, 2012, President Obama announced that his administration would stop deporting young illegal immigrants who match certain criteria previously proposed under the DREAM ACT.
Is Amnesty for Undocumented Immigrants a Good Solution?
prepared Firuza Uddin

Background: With over 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States, the issue of undocumented immigration continues to divide Americans. People who support a path to citizenship generally refer to “undocumented immigrants.” In 1986 President Ronald Reagan signed a sweeping immigration reform bill into law that was sold as a “crackdown” implementing tighter security at the Mexican border with stiff penalties for hiring undocumented workers. The bill made any undocumented immigrant who entered the United States prior to 1982 eligible for amnesty that would allow them to apply for legal residency and eventually for citizenship.

The Development, Relief and Education of Alien Minors Act, also known as the Dream Act, is a bi-partition bill first introduced into Congress in 2001 and reintroduced in 2009. It would help young people brought to the United States by undocumented parents while they were children continue their education and find a path to citizenship. To qualify for the DREAM Act an applicant must adhere to several guidelines that include:

- The applicant must have entered the United States prior to their 16th birthday.
- The applicant must have been in the United States for at least 5 consecutive years prior to the bill passing.
- The applicant must have graduated from High School, obtained a GED or currently be enrolled in College.
- The applicant must currently be 30 and under at the time they are applying.
- The applicant must have good moral standing (no previous or current convictions).

Today people who oppose revising immigration rules generally refer to “illegal aliens.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRO: Undocumented immigrants benefit the U.S. economy through additional tax revenue, expansion of the low-cost labor pool, and increased money in circulation. Undocumented immigrants bring good values, have motivations consistent with the American dream, and perform jobs that Americans generally find undesirable. Opposition to immigration stems from racism.</th>
<th>CON: Illegal aliens break the law by crossing the U.S. border without proper documentation or by overstaying their visas. They should be deported and not rewarded with a path to citizenship and access to social services. Illegal aliens are criminals who take American jobs, lower wages, and are social and economic burdens to law-abiding, tax-paying Americans.</th>
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| **The Case For Amnesty**
“Whether you fine illegal aliens or stick them in English classes, at the end of the day, illegals would be allowed to stay and become citizens under this bill. That's amnesty. And that's a good thing for America. Amnesty won't depress wages - globalization has already done that. Amnesty will not undermine the rule of law . . . It sounds counterintuitive, but with immigration, forgiving a crime may be the best way to restore law and order. Amnesty won't necessarily add to the social-services burden . . . Amnesty would offer millions . . . a fighting chance at self-sufficiency and social mobility.” - Nathan Thornburgh, Senior Editor of TIME magazine | **The Case Against Amnesty**
“Do not grant amnesty to illegal aliens. Regardless of the penalties imposed, any program that grants individuals who are unlawfully present the legal permission to remain here rewards illegal behavior and is unfair to those who obey the law and go through the regulatory and administrative requirements to enter the country legally. Those who enter the United States illegally should not be rewarded with permanent legal status or other such benefits, and they should be penalized in any road to citizenship. Those who enter and remain in the country illegally are violating the law, and condoning or encouraging such violations increases the likelihood of further illegal conduct.” - The Heritage Foundation |

Task: Write a letter to your representatives in the House of Representatives or the Senate either supporting or opposing amnesty for undocumented immigrants and/or the DREAM Act.
**Paper Sons: How Chinese Evaded Immigration Restrictions**

*by Sue Leung Eichler*

**Background:** In 1906, the San Francisco earthquake and fire destroyed local public records. As a result, many Chinese claimed that they were born in San Francisco. With this citizenship, Chinese fathers could claim citizenship for offspring born in China. Following trips to China, a man would report the birth of a child or two upon his return. Sometimes, the father would report the birth of a son when in reality there was no such event. This created an immigration “slot” that would be available for sale to boys who had no family relationships in the U.S.Merchant brokers often acted as middlemen to handle the sale of slots. Sons who entered the country in this fashion were known as “paper sons.” The fact that such deception and lies was practiced was entirely due to the exclusion law. All the “paper sons” wanted was to emigrate to America in search of a better life.

**Sources:** http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist11/papersons.html; http://www.paperson.com/faq.htm

**My Father’s Story**

My father passed away in November 2007 at age ninety; the name on the death certificate was Yee Dor Leung. However, for many decades he had lived his life in America with another identity, another name, F. H. Lee. My father initially came to the United States in 1936 as one of five “Lee” sons. How did this occur? My father’s story is a story not unlike those of past and present immigrants who envision America as a land of opportunity. For my father and all the Chinese immigrants of his generation, America was “Gold Mountain.”

A little background history of American immigration law and practices will help illuminate the history of my father’s arrival to this country. With the passage of the anti-Chinese Immigration Law of 1882, all immigration from China was essentially closed; the few exceptions were scholars, diplomats and merchants and their families. Some of these merchants had no children in China but claimed they had sons in China so that they could sell immigration papers to young men who wanted to come to America, hence the term, “paper son.” Then, in the San Francisco earthquake and its accompanying fires of 1906 all the immigration records were burned. This natural disaster allowed many Chinese in California to make claims about the sons that that were supposedly registered before the earthquake. Many paper sons were born, among them my father.

My father bought papers as a “Lee” son and came to the US in the midst of the world’s economic depression. My father’s rationale: the high tariffs of the US had ruined his family’s fabric business so he decided to make his fortune here. I do not know the details of the purchase of the legal papers but I am familiar with some of the details of the interrogation process at the immigration center. (It should be noted that my father never spoke about his experiences until he was interviewed by my sons for their family history projects for school assignments. This was and is not uncommon among paper sons.)

My father vividly recalled the interrogation as an unfriendly ordeal in which the immigration officials tried to “trick” him with endless questions, sometimes repeating the questions to see whether his responses had changed. To prepare for this “test” my dad and his paper brothers had memorized numerous details about their “family” and the family residence in the village. He was asked, among many questions, about the number and identity of the people who lived in the family home, the number of rooms in the house, the location of the bedrooms, the number and placement of windows in each room and the number of steps in the front of the house. The immigration officials asked each of the “brothers” the exact questions and if any one of them had deviated from their script, they would all have been exposed and deported. Fortunately, the Lee boys passed the rigorous examination.

My dad worked at a number of jobs in seeking his fortune. He was content and made sufficient money to return to China in 1947 to find himself a bride. He and my mother came to the United States in 1948 and made a successful life for themselves and ultimately their four children. My father eventually had his real name legally restored and became a US citizen in 1968. For a multitude of reasons many paper sons have never taken this step to reestablish their identity. My father had lost contact with his paper brothers but if they were like my father, they would have fulfilled the American dream.
During the 1980s, the black market in Bangladesh was selling visas to enter the United States. People used their life savings to purchase them and travel to the U.S. where they hoped to provide a better life for their families. My father first illegally immigrated to the states in 1986, crossing the border from Mexico with a few other Bengali men who managed to drive all the way up to New York City.

In New York my father lived in a small apartment in Astoria with Bengali roommates and worked as a "window cleaner" in a restaurant in Manhattan. In 1989, he returned to Bangladesh to get married. Many Bengali parents were desperate to arrange marriages for their daughters to suitors living in America. For South Asian families it was considered a “lucky ticket” away from the poverty.

My mother and I came to this country in 1991 when I was almost two years old. We arrived with another family using different names. My mother risked her family and life to join a man she hardly knew in a foreign land where she was forced to learn a new language and culture. At first the three of us lived in the Astoria apartment with my father’s Bengali roommates. There was a growing Bengali population in the community. Many families lived on the same streets and visited each other for lunch, dinners, and holidays. Many of these families were illegal like us and hoped that one day their application for legal status would be approved. The lucky few arrived legally through a lottery system or because they had relatives who were already American citizens.

**Becoming American**

Since I came at a very young age, I quickly assimilated American culture and language. I rarely watched Bengali TV shows and did not learn to read and write in Bangla. My younger siblings, who were born in the United States, had very poor knowledge of the Bengali culture and language. Our lack of interest in our roots did not offend our parents. I think they wanted us to become “Americanized” and maybe use that as a justification to stay here. All the Bengali children attended the same public school. In this close knit community I was never considered “different” from the other kids. We shared the dream of going to college, having a career, and living a happy American life. Not once did it cross my mind that my stay here was threatened because of my illegal status.

I do remember how every year some of our Bengali friends would visit other countries (mostly Bangladesh and England), but we were not able to. I remember envious friends who came back with gifts from their grandparents and relatives. My parents told me we could not go because we did not have a “green card,” but said there was hope that we would have one soon. As a seven year old, I did not understand what that meant except that one day we would be given the magical “green card” and everything would be okay.

**Suburban Life and American Normalcy**

In 2000 my family moved from Astoria to the suburbs of Long Island. During the next ten years I began to learn more about my legal status. I remember how after 9/11 my parents considered moving to Canada because it was very threatening to be an illegal immigrant, especially a Muslim, at that time. No matter how terrified my parents were they never really wanted to leave. Their love and attachment for America was far greater than their fear of getting deported. By this time my parents were legally authorized to work and had received social security numbers.

During my junior year of high school I wanted to work like my friends and learned that I needed a social security number. When I asked my mother what my SSN was she never gave me a straight answer. I figured she was using that as an excuse because she did not want me to work. However, when I had to apply for colleges and asked for my SSN again my parents revealed what my status really was. I was an illegal immigrant who had no status whatsoever. I remember not being able to go on a class trip to the White House because I needed a U.S. passport. My teacher and
friends felt sorry for me and I dreaded their pity. That incident officially convinced me that I was not like the rest of my classmates and friends.

All those years of working hard to earn good grades in school with the hope that I would get into a good college, drive, and dorm suddenly seemed unreal. People like me had to learn how to “settle” for the few opportunities we had. Maybe I could attend a community college or a CUNY school because of their affordable tuition rates and willingness to accept undocumented students. I wondered what was the point of going to college, spending all that money, and not being able to get a real job? So far, my only option was working “off the books” as a supermarket cashier at less than minimum wage. I only hoped that politicians would set politics aside and grant amnesty or even pass the DREAM Act for people like me.

**Trying to Acquire Legal Status**

Throughout the years, my parents consulted countless immigration lawyers hoping to regularize our status. In my opinion it was useless. I think the only thing even they cared about was their consultation fee. When I was fifteen, my aunt, who was a U.S. citizen, offered to adopt me so I could attain legal status, however, the plan failed because I was one year too old to get adopted. It seemed that all the doors closed for me and there was no way of getting out of my hopeless situation. One of my dad’s friend recommended that I get married to an American citizen. I remember the heartache that it caused my parents and the guilt they felt for “ruining” my life and having to consider settling for a paper marriage for their daughter.

In fall 2007, during my first semester at Queens College, we met a lawyer who made our path to legal status seem possible. The lawyer recommended that we apply for a “Cancellation of Removal” that would also make me eligible to apply for a SSN and legally work. This route required us to appear in front of a judge and make a case for why we should stay in the U.S. instead of being deported to Bangladesh. This was a huge risk for my family and me since one wrong move would cause us to get deported, but we were willing to take it.

We began listing reasons why we should be allowed to stay in the country. Because of my siblings, my parents’ case was easier than mine. My siblings were “anchor babies” who made it more likely my parents would be allowed to legally reside in the states. It would be unjust for parents to be forced to leave young children who were American citizens behind if they were deported. At the same time the children would not be able to physically, socially, and mentally tolerate conditions in Bangladesh. My case was more challenging, since I was already 21 years old and did not have anyone depending on me.

**Our Day in Court**

In August 2010 our court date arrived. About three months before my grandmother passed away in Bangladesh. Due to our legal circumstances, we were not able to see her for the last time or attend her funeral. I had not seen my grandmother since I was two. It was painful not being able to have memories of her. My siblings never met her and my father had to forever live with guilt because he was not able to see his mother for a last time. Everybody kept telling us that our deceased grandmother would bless us and help us get through this ordeal. It was one consoling thought we all kept holding on to. As we entered the courtroom, I dreaded what was about to happen but was also extremely anxious to get it over with. The judge called us in one by one. I did not get to hear my parents hearing but I later learned that even my poor father shed several tears, which was something I never expected. Finally, the judge called me into the room.

Honestly, the whole event was such a huge blur I do not know how I endured it. I was interrogated with questions about my age, date of birth, education, and knowledge of and desire to return to Bangladesh to live with relatives whom I barely knew. My heart shuddered when the judge asked what I would do if I had to return to Bangladesh forever. To me, it was a foreign land; America was the only country that I knew. The thought of leaving my house, college, job, and friends to live anywhere else was just out of the question. After a few minutes of deliberation, the judge finally delivered her decision. She acknowledged the many injustices that a deportation would cause to our family and granted my parents and me permanent residency in the United States with the possibility of applying for citizenship in four or five years.

The judge’s decision was an emotional one for my family and we heard it with a mixture of unbelievable joy and tears. We were no longer vulnerable and living in fear. Our eighteen-year struggle ended in victory and we are forever grateful.
While Presidential candidates have debated their ideas in the press, on the campaign stump, and on the floor of the Senate since the beginning of the republic, the first televised Presidential debate between John F. Kennedy (D) and Richard Nixon (R) was not until 1960. Mass media had actually changed the nature of campaigning over a decade earlier. There was a nationally broadcast debate between Republican Presidential contenders Thomas E. Dewey and Harold Stassen, on the radio in 1948. Democratic Party rivals Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver debated on television in 1956.

Today, Americans expect Presidential candidates to debate. During the 2012 campaign, Republican Party candidates faced off more than twenty times between May 5, 2011 and February 22, 2012. This fall the Presidential major party nominees will meet three times, including an October 16, 2012 televised debate at Hofstra University, and the Vice-Presidential nominees once.

This expectation was not always the case. Following the Kennedy-Nixon debate there was not another televised Presidential debate until 1976 when Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford faced-off three times. 1976 was also the first time there was a formal debate between Vice-Presidential candidates. In 1964 and 1972, incumbent Presidents did not want to elevate the public stature of their opponents. In 1968, Richard Nixon, still smarting from the 1960 debate with John Kennedy, may not have wanted the public to see his five o’clock shadow and beady eyes on television again.

According to Hendrick Hertzberg, a senior editor and staff writer at The New Yorker and a former speechwriter for President Jimmy Carter (http://www.newyorker.com/talk/comment/2012/02/13/120213taco_talk_hertzberg), the first great public Presidential “debates” were in 1796 and 1800 between John Adams, the candidate of the Federalist Party and Thomas Jefferson of the Democratic-Republicans. In this case the candidates never directly faced each other and much of the debate was carried on by surrogates in the press. The Federalists were largely based in New England and tended to favor a strong central government, while the Democratic-Republicans, with broader support in the South, where champions of state authority. New York State was the crucial swing or battle ground state, supporting the winning candidate in both elections, Adams in 1796 and Jefferson in 1800.

In 1860, the Democratic Party dissolved into three competing factions. One based largely in the North supported Stephen Douglas for President. A group based in the South nominated John Breckinridge. John Bell of the Constitutional Union Party drew most of his supports from the border states. This division allowed Abraham Lincoln of the minority Republican Party to get elected with only 38% of the popular vote. Lincoln’s election without any Southern electoral votes was an immediate cause of the American Civil War. There were no face-to-face debates in this election either, however in 1858, Lincoln and Douglas ran against each other for a Senate seat from Illinois and faced-off seven times in public.

The 1896 presidential election occurred during a time of extreme social strife in the United States. During this period, known as the Gilded Age, there was a great divide between the rich and the poor in America and the key
issues in this Presidential campaign were economic. William McKinley, the Republican candidate was Governor of Ohio. The Democratic Party candidate was Congressman William J. Bryan from Nebraska. McKinley, the Republican Party, and their business supporters wanted “tight” money backed by gold. Bryan and his wing of the Democratic Party wanted to pursue inflationary policies that would alleviate debt. Their proposal to monetarize silver had strong support among small farmers but many Democrats abandoned Bryan because of this position. During the 1896 election campaign, both candidates traveled the country making speeches condemning the other’s economic policies. McKinley warned that if Bryan was elected, the country would face massive inflation. Bryan argued that with McKinley as president poor farmers would remain destitute.

In 1912 a divided party also led to the election of a minority candidate. In this case The Republican Party split and two former Presidents both ran for office, William Taft on the Republican line and former President Theodore Roosevelt as the Bull Moose or Progressive Party candidate. The hostility between the Taft and Roosevelt wings enabled Woodrow Wilson, the Democratic Party candidate to get elected.

The 1932 presidential election between Republican incumbent Herbert Hoover and New York State Governor Franklin Roosevelt, the Democrat, was a major turning point in American history. Roosevelt blamed the depression on Hoover and promised an active government committed to experimentation and change. Hoover promised to continue his Reconstruction effort and guide America back to prosperity. In the midst of the Great Depression, the American people were inspired by Roosevelt’s promises and he was elected by a landslide vote.

The 1964 Presidential election was a mandate on Civil Rights legislation and the Great Society, a continuation of FDR’s New Deal. Much of the Presidential debate also centered on who could best protect the American people from the threat of nuclear war. Democrat liberal Lyndon Johnson defeated Republican conservative Barry Goldwater in a landslide. However, the 1968 election marked another turning point and a move toward more conservative and limited government. In a three-way race, Republican Richard Nixon defeated Democratic Vice-President Hubert Humphrey and Alabama Governor George Wallace to led a breakaway group of Democrats, largely from the South, who opposed the party’s Civil Rights stands. Debate in the 1972 election largely revolved around U.S. policy in Vietnam and Southeast Asia and Republican incumbent Richard Nixon easily defeated Democratic challenger George McGovern. However, Watergate and other scandals helped Democrats regain the Presidency in 1976 win James “Jimmy” Carter defeated Gerald Ford. The Carter presidency was largely deemed to be disappointing and in 1980 he was defeated in his bid for reelection by Republican Ronald Reagan, a former Governor of California. There were two Presidential debates scheduled in 1980, however Carter refused to participate in the first one because a third party candidate was included. Carter and Reagan faced-off alone in the second debate. Reagan was reelected in 1984 and his Vice-President, George Bush, was elected President in 1988.

The 1992 election was another three-way race as wealthy independent Ross Perot challenged the Republican incumbent, George Bush, and the Democratic Party challenger Bill Clinton. Perot had enough popular support in public opinion polls that he was able to participate in the televised Presidential debates. Perot ran again in 1996 against Clinton and the Republican challenger Senator Bob Dole, but because of a late start he was not able to qualify for the debates.

The 2000 election was between Republican George W. Bush, the former Governor of Texas, and Vice-President Al Gore, the Democratic Party nominee. Bush was elected in one of the closest and most controversial elections in U.S. history when the United States Supreme Court stopped a recount in Florida and Gore conceded. Bush was reelected in 2004, defeated Democratic Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, but his presidency was plagued by terrorist attacks, national security concerns, economic downturns, and controversial wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. These problems contributed to a Democratic victory in 2008 when Senator Barack Obama of Illinois, the first African American nominated by a major political party, defeated Senator John McCain, a Republican from Arizona. The 2008 election was the first time a debate was held at Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York.
Face-Off: William McKinley v. William J. Bryan, 1896

One of the key issues during the 1896 presidential election was coinage of money. William McKinley believed that the best way to issue money was with the gold standard. This meant that all money in circulation was backed gold stored in the national treasury. This kept the amount of money in circulation low and inflation at a minimum. Bryan believed that it was more important to make money accessible to the common man. He was a bimetallist who wanted paper money backed by both gold and silver. This would increase the amount of money in circulation, and the resulting inflation would ease the debt burden of poor farmers.

William McKinley (R)

“Bimetallism cannot be secured by independent action on our part.”

William J. Bryan (D)

“You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.”

Questions
1. What was the key issue in the 1896 election?
2. What were the differences between McKinley and Bryan’s platforms?
3. Why do you think McKinley won the 1896 Presidential election?

MCKINLEY: “We must not be misled by phrases, nor deluded by false theories. Free silver would not mean that silver dollars were to be freely had without cost or labor. It would mean the free use of the mints of the United States for the few who are owners of silver bullion, but would make silver coin no freer to the many who are engaged in other enterprises. It would not make labor easier, the hours of labor shorter, or the pay better. It would not make farming less laborious, or more profitable. It would not start a factory or make a demand for an additional day's labor . . . . Bimetallism cannot be secured by independent action on our part. Until international agreement is had it is the plain duty of the United States to maintain the gold standard. It is the recognized and sole standard of the great commercial nations of the world, with which we trade more largely than any other . . . . Another issue of supreme importance is that of protection. The peril of free silver is a menace to be feared; we are already experiencing the effects of partial free trade. The one must be averted; the other corrected. The Republican party is wedded to the doctrine of protection and was never more earnest in its support and advocacy than now.”

Source: http://www.famousquotes.me.uk/speeches/presidential-speeches/presidential-speech-william-mckinley.htm

BRYAN: “[T]he money question was the paramount issue . . . . The man who is employed for wages is as much a businessman as his employer . . . . The farmer who goes forth in the morning and toils all day . . . . is as much a businessman as the man who goes upon the Board of Trade . . . . The miners who go 1,000 feet into the earth . . . . are as much businessmen as the few financial magnates who in a backroom corner make the money of the world . . . . It is for these that we speak . . . . We are fighting in the defense of our homes, our families, and posterity . . . . The Democratic idea has been that if you legislate to make the masses prosperous their prosperity will find its way up and through every class that rests upon it . . . . If they dare to come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we shall fight them to the uttermost, having behind us the producing masses of the nation and the world. Having behind us the commercial interests and the laboring interests and all the toiling masses, we shall answer their demands for a gold standard by saying to them, you shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.”

Source: http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5354/

This 1912 Presidential debate never occurred. The election was between incumbent Republican President William Howard Taft of Ohio, Democratic Party challenger Woodrow Wilson, the Governor of New Jersey, former President Theodore Roosevelt of New York who broke with the Republican Party and formed his own Bull Moose Party, and Socialist Party candidate Eugene Debs of Indiana. This hypothetical debate presents opposing viewpoints taken from campaign speeches. A major issue in the campaign was the relationship between big businesses, also known as trusts and monopolies, and the government. Transcripts of the speeches are available at http://www.ssa.gov/history/trspeech.html; http://www.infoplease.com/hist/state-of-the-union/124.html; http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5723/; and http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5725/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Woodrow Wilson (D)</th>
<th>William Taft (R)</th>
<th>Theodore Roosevelt (BM)</th>
<th>Eugene Debs (S)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Break up partnership between big business and the government.”</td>
<td>“Business will adjust itself.”</td>
<td>“Control business.”</td>
<td>“Aspiration of the working class to freedom.”</td>
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Questions
1. What does Wilson present as the solution to economic problems facing the nation?
2. How do Taft and Roosevelt respond to Wilson’s proposal?
3. How does Debs respond to all of the “reform” proposals?
4. In your opinion, what does a four-way race for President say about the United States in 1912?

WILSON: “Take the thing as a whole, and it looks strangely like economic mastery over the very lives and fortunes of those who do the daily work of the nation. And all this under the overwhelming power and sovereignty of the national government. What most of us are fighting for is to break up this very partnership between big business and the government.”

TAFT: “The trust question in the enforcement of the Sherman antitrust law is gradually solving itself, is maintaining the principle and restoring the practice of competition, and if the law is quietly but firmly enforced, business will adjust itself to the statutory requirements, and the unrest in commercial circles provoked by the trust discussion will disappear.”

ROOSEVELT: “Our aim is to control business, not to strangle it – and, above all, not to continue a policy of make-believe strangle toward big concerns that do evil, and constant menace toward both big and little concerns that do well. Our aim is to promote prosperity… wish to control big business …good wages for the wage-workers and reasonable prices for the consumers.”

DEBS: “When the owners of the trusts finance a party to put themselves out of business; when they turn over their wealth to the people from whom they stole it and go to work for a living, it will be time enough to consider the merits of the Roosevelt Progressive party.”
# Face-Off: Herbert Hoover v. Franklin Roosevelt, 1932

The 1932 election was between incumbent Republican President Herbert Hoover and Democratic Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York. No Presidential debate was actually held. This hypothetical debate is based on campaign speeches. The primary issue during the campaign was ending the Great Depression. Transcripts of the speeches are available at: http://newdeal.feri.org/speeches/1932d.htm; http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=23269#axzz1xDPwVnLJ

**Questions**
1. What did Hoover offer as a solution to the Great Depression?
2. Why did Roosevelt demand bold experimentation?
3. What concrete proposals did they offer in these speeches?
4. In your opinion, why did voters elect Roosevelt?

## HOOVER:

“We must build up men and women in their own homes.”

The very basis of safety to American agriculture is the protective tariff. The Republican Party originated and proposes to maintain the protective tariff on agricultural products . . . We must build up men and women in their own homes, on their own farms, where they may find their own security and express their own individuality. Now, a nation on such foundations is a nation where the real satisfactions of life and happiness thrive. It is where real freedom of mind and aspiration secure that individual progress in morals, in spirit and accomplishment, the sum of which makes up the greatness of American life. Some will say this is a mere ideal. I am not ashamed of ideals. America was founded upon them, but they must be the premise for practical action.”

## ROOSEVELT:

“The country needs and, unless I mistake its temper, the country demands bold, persistent experimentation. It is common sense to take a method and try it: If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something. The millions who are in want will not stand by silently forever while the things to satisfy their needs are within easy reach. We need enthusiasm, imagination and the ability to face facts, even unpleasant ones, bravely. We need to correct, by drastic means if necessary, the faults in our economic system from which we now suffer. We need the courage of the young. Yours is not the task of making your way in the world, but the task of remaking the world which you will find before you. May every one of us be granted the courage, the faith and the vision to give the best that is in us to that remaking!”

**Summary Question:** If you were voting for President of the United States in 1932, which candidate would you have voted for? Explain.
### Face-Off: John Kennedy v. Richard Nixon, 1960

**John F. Kennedy (D)**

“I support federal aid to education and federal aid to teachers’ salaries.”

**Richard Nixon (R)**

“Kennedy either has to raise taxes or he has to unbalance the budget.”

One of the key issues that candidates faced during the 1960 Presidential election was the economy. Americans wanted to know how Vice President Nixon and Senator Kennedy planned on alleviating the economic pressure they faced. Kennedy believed more governmental intervention was the answer, while Nixon feared this would cause massive national debt. He believed state and community governments had to take greater responsibility for meeting social needs. The 1960 debate was notable as the first televised debate. Videos of the debate can be found on youtube.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QazmVHAO0os

### Questions

1. What issue or issues are discussed in this segment of the debate?
2. What were the differences between Kennedy and Nixon?
3. What was their underlying philosophical disagreement?

| KENNEDY: “I’m not satisfied when the United States had last year the lowest rate of economic growth of any major industrialized society in the world. Because economic growth means strength and vitality; it means we're able to sustain our defenses; it means we're able to meet our commitments abroad. I'm not satisfied when . . . four million Americans wait every month for a food package from the government, which averages five cents a day per individual. I saw cases in West Virginia, here in the United States, where children took home part of their school lunch in order to feed their families because I don’t think we’re meeting our obligations toward these Americans . . .

I'm not satisfied when many of our teachers are inadequately paid, or when our children go to school part-time shifts. I think we should have an educational system second to none . . .

I support federal aid to education and federal aid for teachers' salaries. I think that's a good investment. And I think to heap the burden further on the property tax, which is already strained in many of our communities, will . . . (result with) our children will not being adequately educated.” |
|---|
| NIXON: “What kind of programs are we for? We are for programs that will expand educational opportunities . . . We are for programs . . . which will see that our medical care for the aged . . . better handled than it is at the present time. We want to see that (the old) do have adequate medical care . . . I think that the means that I advocate will reach that goal better than the means that (Kennedy) advocates . . .

I would say that in all of these proposals Senator Kennedy has made, will result in one of two things: either he has to raise taxes or he has to unbalance the budget. If he unbalances the budget that means you have inflation . . .

I favor higher salaries for teachers. But…the way that you get higher salaries for teachers is to support school construction, which means that all of the local school districts . . . then have money which is freed to raise the standards for teachers' salaries . . . once you put the responsibility on the federal government for paying a portion of teachers' salaries, your local communities and your states are not going to meet the responsibility as much as they should.” |

### Summary Question

If you were a voter in 1960, which candidate would you have supported? Why?
Face-Off: Barry Goldwater v. Lyndon B. Johnson, 1964

No debate was held during the 1964 Presidential campaign. The election was between incumbent Democratic President Lyndon Johnson of Texas and Republican Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona. This hypothetical debate is based on campaign speeches. The primary issues were Civil Rights and fear of nuclear war. Transcripts of the speeches are available at:
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/daily/may98/goldwaterspeech.htm
http://www.4president.org/speeches/lbj1964convention.htm

Questions
1. What issues do Goldwater and Johnson discuss?
2. What does Goldwater define as the Republican cause?
3. What does President Johnson promise to do?
4. In your opinion, who wins this debate?

GOLDWATER: “The task of preserving and enlarging freedom at home and safeguarding it from the forces of tyranny abroad is great enough to challenge all our resources and to require all our strength. Anyone who joins us in all sincerity, we welcome. Those who do not care for our cause, we don't expect to enter our ranks in any case. And let our Republicanism...not be made fuzzy and futile by unthinking and stupid labels. I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue. The beauty of the very system we Republicans are pledged to restore and revitalize, the beauty of this Federal system of ours is in its reconciliation of diversity with unity. We must not see malice in honest differences of opinion, and no matter how great, so long as they are not inconsistent with the pledges we have given to each other in and through our Constitution. Our Republican cause is not to level out the world or make its people conform in computer regimented sameness. Our Republican cause is to free our people and light the way for liberty throughout the world. Ours is a very human cause for very humane goals.”

JOHNSON: “There is no place in today's world for weakness. But there is also no place in today's world for recklessness. We cannot act rashly with the nuclear weapons that could destroy us all. The only course is to press with all our mind and all our will to make sure, doubly sure, that these weapons are never really used at all. This is a dangerous and a difficult world in which we live tonight. I promise no easy answers. But I do promise this. I pledge the firmness to defend freedom, the strength to support that firmness, and a constant, patient effort to move the world toward peace instead of war. And here at home one of our greatest responsibilities is to assure fair play for all of our people. Every American has the right to be treated as a person. He should be able to find a job. He should be able to educate his children, he should be able to vote in elections and he should be judged on his merits as a person. Well, this is the fixed policy and the fixed determination of the Democratic Party and the United States of America. So long as I am your President I intend to carry out what the Constitution demands – and justice requires – equal justice under law for all Americans.”

Summary Question: If you were voting in 1964, which candidate would you have supported? Why?
Face-Off: Richard Nixon v. George McGovern, 1972

The 1972 election occurred during a time when many Americans were growing weary of the conflict between the United States and Vietnam. Every day more young American men were being killed in Vietnam and troops were experiencing very few victories. Both Richard Nixon and George McGovern ran campaigns promising that they would end the war in Vietnam if elected. The difference between the two campaigns was the way in which each man would conclude the war. Nixon favored what he called a slow, honorable end to the war. McGovern promised Americans that he could end the war immediately if he was elected president.

Questions
1. What was the key issue in this Presidential election?
2. What was the difference between Nixon and McGovern’s platforms?
3. Why do you think Nixon won the 1972 election?

NIXON: “No President in our history believed that America should ask an enemy for peace on terms that would betray our allies and destroy respect for the United States all over the world. As your President, I pledge that I shall always uphold that proud bipartisan tradition. Standing in this Convention Hall four years ago, I pledged to seek an honorable end to the war in Vietnam. We have made great progress toward that end. We have brought over half a million men home, and more will be coming home...We have offered a cease-fire, a total withdrawal of all American forces, an exchange of all prisoners of war, internationally supervised free elections with the Communists participating in the elections and in the supervision.

There are three things, however, that we have not and that we will not offer. We will never abandon our prisoners of war. Second, we will not join our enemies in imposing a Communist government on our allies... And we will never stain the honor of the United States of America...Now I realize that many, particularly in this political year, wonder why we insist on an honorable peace in Vietnam. From a political standpoint they suggest that since I was not in office when over a half million American men were sent there, that I should end the war by agreeing to impose a Communist government on the people of South Vietnam and just blame the whole catastrophe on my predecessors.”

Source: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=3537#axzz1wxRxByTo

MCGOVERN: “This is also a time, not for death, but for life.”

“In 1968 many Americans thought they were voting to bring our sons home from Vietnam in peace, and since then 20,000 of our sons have come home in coffins. I have no secret plan for peace. I have a public plan. And as one whose heart has ached for the past ten years over the agony of Vietnam, I will halt a senseless bombing of Indochina on Inaugural Day... There will be no more Asian children running ablaze from bombed-out schools. There will be no more talk of bombing the dikes or the cities of the North. And within 90 days of my inauguration, every American soldier and every American prisoner will be out of the jungle and out of their cells and then home in America where they belong... And then let us resolve that never again will we send the precious young blood of this country to die trying to prop up a corrupt military dictatorship abroad. This is also the time to turn away from excessive preoccupation overseas to the rebuilding of our own nation. America must be restored to a proper role in the world. But we can do that only through the recovery of confidence in ourselves.”

Source: http://www.4president.org/speeches/mcGovern1972acceptance.htm

In 1976, the two presidential candidates primarily grappled over issues regarding the economic recession. Upon the resignation of Vice-President Agnew and President Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford had become the first president not first elected president or vice-president. During Ford’s time as presidency, the United States experienced an economic recession that set the stage for the presidential election of 1976. Videos of the Ford-Carter debates can be found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8rg9c4pUrg

**Questions**

1. How would you summarize Ford’s approach to fixing the economy?
2. How would you summarize Carter’s approach to fixing the economy?
3. Compare and contrast both Carter’s and Ford’s approach in fixing the economy.
4. Which approach do you predict will be the most effective? Be sure to explain why.

**FORD**

“In my judgment the best way to get jobs is to expand the private sector.”

“In my judgment, the best way to get jobs is to expand the private sector, where five out of six jobs today exist in our economy. We can do that by reducing Federal taxes, as I proposed about a year ago when I called for a tax reduction of $28 billion, three-quarters of it to go to private taxpayers and one-quarter to the business sector. We could add to jobs in the major metropolitan areas by a proposal that I recommended that would give tax incentives to business to move into the inner city and to expand or to build new plants so that they would take a plant or expand a plant where people are and people are currently unemployed. We could also help our youth with some of the proposals that would give to young people an opportunity to work and learn at the same time, just like we give money to young people who are going to college.”

**CARTER**

“We will never have a balanced budget until we get our people back to work.”

“Yes. First of all it's to recognize the tremendous economic strength of this country and to set the putting back to work of our people as a top priority. This is an effort that ought to be done primarily by strong leadership in the White House, the inspiration of our people, the tapping of business, agriculture, industry, labor, and government at all levels to work on this project. We will never have an end to the inflationary spiral, and we will never have a balanced budget until we get our people back to work. Another very important aspect of our economy would be to increase production in every way possible, to hold down taxes on individuals, and to shift the tax burdens on to those who have avoided paying taxes in the past.”

**Summary Question:** If you were voting in 1976, which candidate would you have supported? Why?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jimmy Carter (D)</th>
<th>Ronald Reagan (R)</th>
<th>John Anderson (Independent)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reagan’s economic plan is “Voodoo economics.”</td>
<td>“Take Government off the backs of the great people of this country.”</td>
<td>“Cut spending and raise taxes to pay off debt.”</td>
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**Questions**

1. How did the candidates view the role of the national government in addressing economic problems of the nation?
2. In your opinion, why was inflation such an important campaign issue?
3. If you were a voter in 1980, which candidate would you have supported? Why?

**CARTER:** “We did have a very severe inflation pressure brought about by the OPEC price increase. It averaged about 18% in the first quarter of this year... The most recent figures, the last three months, on the third quarter of this year, the inflation rate is 7% - still too high, but it illustrates very vividly that in addition to providing an enormous number of jobs - nine million new jobs in the last three and a half years - that the inflationary threat is still urgent on us... To add nine million new jobs, to control inflation, and to plan for the future with an energy policy now intact as a foundation is our plan for the years ahead.”

**REAGAN:** “I think this idea that has been spawned here in our country that inflation somehow came upon us like a plague and therefore it’s uncontrollable and no one can do anything about it, is entirely spurious and it’s dangerous to say this to the people... We don’t have inflation because the people are living too well. We have inflation because the Government is living too well... The President’s economic plan calls for increasing the taxes to the point that we finally take so much money away from the people that we can balance the budget... But we will have a very poor nation and a very unsound economy if we follow that path.”

**ANDERSON:** “I... oppose an election year tax cut... I simply think that when we are confronting a budget deficit this year - and this fiscal year will end in about 10 days, and we are confronted with the possibility of a deficit of $60 billion, perhaps as much as $63 billion - that simply would be irresponsible. That, once again, the printing presses will start to roll; once again we will see the monetization of that debt result in a higher rate of inflation... When I was a candidate in my own state of Illinois, I proposed $11.3 billion, specifically, in cuts in the Federal budget. I think we've got to have fiscal restraint.”
In 1992 the economy and health care were the biggest issues. Third Party candidate Ross Perot had sufficient support to qualify for the televised debates. In the election he received almost a fifth of the popular vote and many pundits believe that is the reason Clinton was elected. In the first debate they discussed their plans for health care reform. A transcript of the debate is available online at http://www.nytimes.com/1992/10/12/us/the-1992-campaign-transcript-of-first-tv-debate-among-bush-clinton-and-perot.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm.

Questions
1. What did the candidates propose as a way to hold down health care costs?
2. In your opinion, why were the economy, taxes and health care the main campaign issues?
3. If you were a voter in 1992, which candidate would you have supported? Why?

**CLINTON**: “We would present a plan to control health-care costs and phase in health-care coverage for all Americans. Until we control health-care costs, we're not going to control the deficit. It is the No. 1 culprit... The average senior citizen is spending a higher percentage of income on health care today than they were in 1965 before Medicare came in. The President’s got another proposal that will require them to pay $400 a year more for the next five years, but if you don’t have the guts to control costs by changing the insurance system, in taking on the bureaucracies and the regulation of health care in the private and public sector, you can't fix this problem.”

**BUSH**: Governor Clinton clicked off the things - you've got to take on insurance companies and bureaucracies - he failed to take on somebody else; the malpractice-suit people. Those that bring these lawsuits - against these frivolous trial-lawyer lawsuits that are running to cost of medical care up by 25 to 50 billion. And he refuses to put anything, controls, on these crazy lawsuits. If you want to help somebody, don't run the costs up by making doctors have to have five or six tests where one would do for fear of being sued, or have somebody along the highway not stop to pick up a guy and help him because he's afraid a trial lawyer will come along and sue him.”

**PEROT**: “We've got the most expensive health-care system in the world. It ranks behind 15 other nations in - when we come to life expectancy, and 22 other nations when we come to infant mortality. So we don't have the best. Pretty simple, folks. If you're paying more and you don't have the best, if all else fails, go copy the people who have the best who spend less, right? Well, we can do better than that. Again, we've got plans lying all over the place in Washington - nobody every implements them. Now I'm back to square one if you want to stop talking about it and do it, than I'll be glad to go up there and we'll get it done.”
On October 6, 1996, Republican Senator Bob Dole of Kansas and Democratic President of Arkansas faced-off in the Bushnell theatre in Hartford, Connecticut in the first of two debates of the 1996 Presidential election campaign. This debate focused on domestic policy issues. The moderator was Jim Lehrer of News Hour on PBS. Among the topics was the future of public education. A transcript of the debate is available at http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-6-1996-debate-transcript. A video is online at http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/4598.

Bob Dole (R)
“What we want to do is called opportunity scholarships.”

Bob Dole (R):
“I feel strongly about education. I want to help young people have an education, just as I had an education after World War II with the GI bill of Rights. We’ve had millions of young men and women in subsequent wars change the face of the nation because the government helped with their education . . . what we want to do is called opportunity scholarships . . . So it seems to me that we ought to take that money we can save from the Department of Education, put it into opportunity scholarships and tell little Landale Shakespeare out in Cleveland, Ohio, and tell your mother and father, you’re going to get to go to school because we’re going to match what the state puts up, and you’re going to go to the school of your choice. I don't fault the President or the vice president for sending their children to private schools or better schools. I applaud them for it, I don't criticize them. But why shouldn't everybody have that choice. Why shouldn't low income Americans and low middle income Americans. I’m excited about it. It's going to be a big, big opportunity for a lot of people.”

Bill Clinton (D)
“I support school choice.”

Bill Clinton (D):
“I support school choice. I have advocated expansions of public school choice alternatives and I said the creation of 3,000 new schools that we are going to help the states to finance. But if you're going to have a private voucher plan, that ought to be determined by states in localities where they're raising and spending most of the money. I simply think it's wrong to take money away from programs that are helping build basic skills for kids, 90 percent of them are in the public schools; to take money away from programs that are helping fund the school lunch program, that are helping to fund the other programs, that are helping our schools to improve their standards. Our schools are getting better, and our schools can be made to be even better still with the right kind of community leadership and partnership at the school level. I have been a strong force for reform . . . We need to be doing more in education, not less.”

Questions
1. On what issues do Senator Dole and President Clinton agree?
2. What does Senator Dole propose to give educational opportunity to all?
3. What is President Clinton’s response to the Dole plan?
4. In your opinion, who has a better plan for educational reform? Explain.

Summary Question: If you were voting in 1996, which candidate would you have supported? Why?
Face-Off: George W. Bush v. Al Gore, 2000

On October 3, 2000, Republican governor George W. Bush of Texas and Democratic Vice President Al Gore of Tennessee faced-off at the University of Massachusetts in Boston in the first debate of the 2000 Presidential election campaign. This debate focused on domestic policy issues including Education, Social Security and taxes. The moderator was Jim Lehrer of NewsHour on PBS. A major concern was the future of the Social Security program. A transcript of the debate is available at: http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-3-2000-transcript. A video is online at: http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/159295-1

Questions
1. Why is Social Security such an important issue?
2. How does Bush want to change Social Security?
3. What does Gore want to do with Social Security?
4. In your opinion, who has the better plan for the future of Social Security? Explain.

Summary Question: If you were a voter in 2000, which candidate would you have supported? Why?
# Face-Off: George W. Bush v. John Kerry, 2004

In 2004, President George W. Bush, a Republican, was challenged in his bid for reelection by Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC, the major issue in this election was who could best lead the American defense against terrorism.

**Questions**
1. According to Bush, how has the U.S. responded to the attack on 9/11?
2. What does Kerry believe should be done to improve America’s role in the world?
3. In your opinion, which approach will be more effective? Why?

**George W. Bush (R)**

“We've upheld the doctrine that said if you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist.”

**John Kerry (D)**

“America is safest and strongest when we are leading the world and we are leading strong alliances.”

**BUSH**: “We pursued al Qaeda wherever al Qaeda tries to hide. Seventy-five percent of known al Qaeda leaders have been brought to justice. The rest of them know we're after them. We've upheld the doctrine that said if you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist. And the Taliban are no longer in power. Ten million people have registered to vote in Afghanistan in the upcoming presidential election. In Iraq, we saw a threat, and we realized that after September the 11th, we must take threats seriously, before they fully materialize. Saddam Hussein now sits in a prison cell. America and the world are safer for it. We continue to pursue our policy of disrupting those who proliferate weapons of mass destruction.”

**KERRY**: “I believe America is safest and strongest when we are leading the world and we are leading strong alliances. I'll never give a veto to any country over our security. But I also know how to lead those alliances. This president has left them in shatters across the globe, and we're now 90 percent of the casualties in Iraq and 90 percent of the costs. I think that's wrong, and I think we can do better. I have a better plan for homeland security. I have a better plan to be able to fight the war on terror by strengthening our military, strengthening our intelligence, by going after the financing more authoritatively, by doing what we need to do to rebuild the alliances, by reaching out to the Muslim world, which the president has almost not done, and beginning to isolate the radical Islamic Muslims, not have them isolate the United States of America. We can do a better job of training the Iraqi forces to defend themselves, and I know that we can do a better job of preparing for elections.”

**Summary Question**: If you were a voter in 2004, which candidate would you have supported? Why?

On October 15, 2008, Republican Senator John McCain of Arizona and Democratic Senator Barack Obama of Illinois faced-off at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY in the third and final debate of the 2008 Presidential election campaign. This debate focused on domestic policy issues. The moderator was Bob Schieffer of CBS News. During opening comments, he reported it was “Another very bad day on Wall Street.” The first question asked candidates to explain why the public should endorse their plan for addressing the country’s economic crisis. A transcript of the debate is available at http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/washington/2008/10/debate-transcri.html. A video is online at http://video.msnbc.msn.com/msnbc-tv/27207488#27207488.

Questions
1. On what issues do Senator McCain and Senator Obama agree?
2. What does Senator McCain propose as a “short-term fix”?
3. What is Senator Obama’s response to the McCain plan?
4. In your opinion, who has a better grasp of economic issues? Explain.

MCCAIN: “Americans are hurting right now, and they’re angry . . . They’re innocent victims of greed and excess on Wall Street and as well as Washington . . . But we also have to have a short-term fix . . . and long-term fixes. Let me just talk to you about one of the short-term fixes. The catalyst for this housing crisis was the Fannie and Freddie Mae that caused subprime lending situation that now caused the housing market in America to collapse. I am convinced that, until we reverse this continued decline in home ownership and put a floor under it, and so that people have not only the hope and belief they can stay in their homes and realize the American dream, but that value will come up. Now, we have allocated $750 billion. Let’s take $300 (billion) of that $750 billion and go in and buy those home loan mortgages and negotiate with those people in their homes, . . . so that they can afford to pay the mortgage, stay in their home. Now, I know the criticism of this. Well, what about the citizen that stayed in their homes? That paid their mortgage payments? It doesn’t help that person in their home if the next door neighbor’s house is abandoned. And so we’ve got to reverse this. We ought to put the homeowners first.”

OBAMA: “I think everybody understands at this point that we are experiencing the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression . . . I’ve proposed four specific things that I think can help. Number one, let’s focus on jobs. I want to end the tax breaks for companies that are shipping jobs overseas and provide a tax credit for every company that’s creating a job right here in America. Number two, let’s help families right away by providing them a tax cut -- a middle-class tax cut for people making less than $200,000 . . . Senator McCain and I agree with your idea that we’ve got to help home-owners . . . I disagree with Senator McCain in how to do it . . . The way Senator McCain has designed his plan, it could be a giveaway to banks if we’re buying full price for mortgages that now are worth a lot less. And we don’t want to waste taxpayer money. And we’ve got to get the financial package working much quicker than it has been working . . . We’ve got some long-term challenges in this economy that have to be dealt with. We’ve got to fix our energy policy that’s giving our wealth away. We’ve got to fix our health care system and we’ve got to invest in our education system for every young person to be able to learn.”
Summary Question: If you were a voter in 2008, which candidate would you have supported? Why?

Face-Off: Mitt Romney v. Barack Obama, 2012

Mitt Romney (R)  
“We have not made the progress we need to make to put people back to work.”

Barack Obama (D)  
“The most important thing we can do is to make sure that we are creating jobs in this country.”

Questions
1. How were Romney and Obama’s views on jobs and taxes similar and different?
2. In your opinion, why were economic issues at the center of the 2012 presidential campaign?
3. If you were a voter in 2012, which candidate would you have supported? Why?

Romney on Jobs: “When I was governor of Massachusetts, to get a high school degree, you had to pass an exam. If you graduated in the top quarter of your class, we gave you a John and Abigail Adams scholarship, four years tuition free in the college of your choice in Massachusetts, it’s a public institution . . . When you come out in 2014, I presume I’m going to be president. I’m going to make sure you get a job . . . We have not made the progress we need to make to put people back to work. That’s why I put out a five-point plan that gets America 12 million new jobs in four years and rising take-home pay. It’s going to help Jeremy get a job when he comes out of school. It’s going to help people across the country that are unemployed right now.”

Obama on Jobs: “The most important thing we can do is to make sure that we are creating jobs in this country. But not just jobs, good paying jobs. Ones that can support a family . . . I want to build manufacturing jobs in this country again . . . We’ve got to make sure that we have the best education system in the world . . . I want everybody to get a great education and we’ve worked hard to make sure that student loans are available for folks like you . . . Governor Romney doesn’t have a five-point plan. He has a one-point plan. And that plan is to make sure that folks at the top play by a different set of rules. That’s been his philosophy in the private sector, that’s been his philosophy as governor, that’s been his philosophy as a presidential candidate.”

Romney on Taxes: “I want to bring the rates down, I want to simplify the tax code, and I want to get middle-income taxpayers to have lower taxes . . . Middle-income taxpayers have been buried over the past four years. Because I’m going to bring rates down across the board for everybody, but I’m going to limit deductions and exemptions and credits, particularly for people at the high end, because I am not going to have people at the high end pay less than they’re paying now.”

Obama on Taxes: “I want to give middle-class families and folks who are striving to get into the middle-class some relief because they have been hit hard over the last decade . . . If we’re serious about reducing the deficit . . . in addition to some tough spending cuts, we’ve also got to make sure that the wealthy do a little bit more. So what I’ve said is, your first $250,000.00 worth of income, no change . . . above $250,000, we can go back to the tax rates we had when Bill Clinton was president.”
Albert Marrin began his career as a junior high social studies teacher whose drive to make history come alive for students led him to write more than fifty nonfiction books for young people. In *Years of Dust* (Dutton Children’s Books, 2009), Marrin presents the story of the Dust Bowl primarily from an ecological perspective. In addition, he explores the Dust Bowl’s geographic significance, economic impact, impact on the American social landscape, and place within the history of Great Depression. The book is recommended for grades 4-6. Intermixing of all of these topics makes the book ideal for interdisciplinary instruction. A New York Times review described it as a museum in the form of a book.

*Years of Dust* examines the Dust Bowl, which began in 1931, as a man-made ecological disaster created by the loss of the natural Plains ecosystem and explores many fundamental environmental, social, and political questions facing the United States today. The bison population and other key inhabitants of the Plains ecosystem had symbiotic relationships with the native sod that allowed it to flourish, retain water, and hold topsoil in place. After hunters destroyed the bison population, farmers and ranchers brought large numbers of domestic ranching animals that over-compacted the topsoil and overgrazed the native grasses, leaving it sparse and unhealthy. Further, the great Plow-Up during the 1920s turned vast stretches of healthy sod into rows of crops that died back every season and permitted the topsoil to easily erode. These factors left the land unable to withstand the heat, drought, and locust plagues of the 1930s. Just as the Great Depression was about to settle in with its full force, the topsoil in America’s breadbasket was simply picked up and blown away. The dust storms were so severe that dust from the Great Plains actually accumulated on the lawn of the White House in Washington DC.

The author illustrates the impact of the Dust Bowl on the daily activities of everyday people with sorrowful stories and dusty looking photographs that engage the reader’s empathy with those forced to migrate away. This approach places Dust Bowl refugees within migrant and immigrant experiences and makes it accessible to students. While reading *Years of Dust* students can discuss current attitudes to migrants and immigrants in the United States in general and in their own communities.

*Years of Dust* explored how the policies of the federal government during the New Deal and land conservation efforts were used to correct the ecological mistakes of the past. They included policies like those designed to adjust farming techniques, government payoffs to take land out of production, and the employment of the Civilian Conservation Corps to plant trees to create wind barriers.

In the concluding chapter, Marrin connects the Dust Bowl of the 1930s to the present and future by comparing it to growing desertification today, although he does not discuss global warming. Marrin provides specific examples of how students may be directly impacted by current ecological disasters taking place in this country and abroad.
“Then I'll Be Free To Travel Home”:
Audio Series on Africans and Slavery in New York State
Review by Adeola Tella-Williams

There are many historical documents, tapes and video that journey the plight of African Americans in North America, the Caribbean, and South America. The series "Then I'll Be Free To Travel Home" audio focuses on the legacy of African Americans, specifically in New York State. The 13 part one-hour programs detail the journey of the first free Africans as traders and interpreters, and their longstanding contributions to New York and America. Listeners are also privileged to learn all there is to know about Manhattans historic switch from Dutch Colonial rule to British Colonial domination, and in the midst of the exchange the dramatic end to African free will.

Teachers of 7th and 11th grade United States History will benefit from parts 1-12. Most of the historical information covered deals with Dutch Colonial policies and later British Colonial policies towards Africans in the 17th and 18th centuries, which is mainly covered in the 7th grade United States History Curriculum. If a teacher wants to get a better understanding of the relationship between the Dutch and Africans or the Africans and Native Americans these programs are worthwhile. In addition, if the teacher wants to comprehend how Africans were used to build lower Manhattan or how they inhabited parts of Brooklyn, the series is a good place to begin. The historical accuracy of the talks can be investigated using the Internet or the local library. Many of the narrators are professors and journalists of the highest regard.

Using the “Then I'll Be Free To Travel Home” audio series in the classroom will be beneficial to students of all ages. Middle School and even elementary students can use the listening audio to help their auditory growth. Secondly, the audio can be used in various projects dealing with Dutch and British Colonial rule. For example, in a classroom of 25 students the teacher can break the students into focus groups to listen to one program. Prior to the class assignment the teacher would have prepared a list of questions for the students to answer as they listen and then report their findings to the class. Another way this audio can be used is in sections. When the curriculum calls for more in depth accounts of slavery in New York State or just in the North the teacher can focus the attention of the students to the part he/she wants the students to grasp. There are endless ways to use this documentary; the bottom line is it is full of uncut accounts, but child friendly, of who and what really made New York, New York.

“Then I'll Be Free To Travel Home” is available online at http://www.prx.org/series/23292-then-i'll-be-free-to-travel-home-the-legacy-of-the.
Using Evidence to Support an Idea
by Richard Tauber and Kiesha Wilburn

This eighth-grade exit project (http://lrmslibrary.wikispaces.com/SS+Exit+Project) is designed to allow students to demonstrate proficiency in Social Studies by supporting an argument with evidence. The project replaces the 8th-grade New York State social studies standardized exam and counts for 20% of a student’s entire year grade. Each student selects one of the following statements and accompanying tasks. They also receive a schedule outlining when different aspects of the project must be completed.


Statement 1. Although America is a great country, there are many examples of groups of people who suffered long periods of injustice.
Task: Discuss three groups who suffered injustice. Make sure to give specific examples (you can choose: Slaves, Native Americans, freedmen, women, immigrants, workers, Japanese-Americans, etc…)

Statement 2. The best aspect of the U.S. Constitution is that it can be amended.
Task: Discuss three amendments (not the Bill of Rights) that changed America. You must use evidence for each amendment.

Statement 3. Technology both helps and hurts society.
Task: Discuss the positive and negatives of Industrialization and modern technology on society.

Starting in February, students spend three-to-five days in the library where they conduct research and create a wiki page that includes notes, visual pages, and a bibliography. Their final wikis will have an essay and multimedia presentation embedded. By mid-April or spring break students submit a two-to-three-page paper based on their research (double-spaced typed in Times New Roman 12 pt. font) with additional cover and bibliography pages. Three or four days of class time is also allocated for this work. For the final project due in May, students create a multi-media presentation using programs such as PowerPoint or Animoto outlining their paper. Multi-media presentations are shown to the class.

New York State Council for the Social Studies
New York State Social Studies Supervisory Association

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