

Stanford University
School of Education
Summer 2009

ED 268A

Teaching History/Social Science

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The Rationale

Education 268 A is the first part of a three-part course in the teaching and learning of history/social science. The summer quarter is a whirlwind introduction to the themes and issues we will explore until the end of our time together in the winter. Our course draws on the frameworks laid out in the California History-Social Science Standards (available as a *pdf* document at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/fd/documents/hist-social-sci-frame.pdf>) If you haven't read the California Standards, you might print them out and have a look—at all 249 pages. (Do so sitting down!)

Although the social studies curriculum is made up of many different disciplines, at its core is the discipline of history, and that is the main focus in our three-quarter sequence.

Summer quarter has three interwoven strands. *First*, we will consider what history is, and how it differs from students' everyday notions about what the past is. We will attempt to understand and be more explicit than we might have been previously about how historical knowledge is made, why historians change their minds, and how new historical questions develop. *Second*, we will examine what it means to *learn* history—how does historical thinking develop over time? How can we “see” historical thinking so that we can shape, guide, and assess it? The *third* strand brings together the first two as we consider what it means to teach history. By the end of three quarters of C&I you will emerge with concrete strategies that you can directly apply in your own classrooms.

Carl Becker claimed in his presidential address to the American Historical Association on December 29, 1931 that “every man is his own historian.”¹ Becker neither meant that we are skilled in reading documentary evidence nor that we all possess the capacity for turning such evidence into compelling narrative. Instead, Becker argued that each of us is called on to construct stories of our own past and, by extension, the broader past that produced who we are in the present.

¹ The American Historical Association has placed this essay on its website, along with several other key essays on historical understanding, http://www.theaha.org/info/AHA_History/clbecker.htm

The past surrounds us, obviously. But we should not confuse “the past” with history. The past, as heritage, sentiment, nostalgia, or tradition, teaches us to revere and to sanctify. It aims to make us proud of our ancestors and to feel bonded with them in the present. It anchors us in time and gives us a shield against the eroding winds of modernity. The past teaches us to preserve and to respect, to recite and to follow.

As a school subject in a democracy, history has different aims. Taught well, it forces us to raise questions and often unsettles us with the questions it raises. It teaches us how to function in a democracy by sharpening our skills to discern truth from falsehood. It teaches us, above all, that to understand the past we must listen to multiple voices and come to reasoned conclusions about what to believe. It teaches us that the claims we make should be backed by *evidence* – primary sources, secondary sources, and sources that reflect different perspectives and different beliefs.

To engage in source work, students will have to engage with multiple texts, but often they come to us expecting to do what has sufficed in the past: reading the textbook and repeating back what it says. Often these same students will be reading considerably below grade level. Whether we like it or not, we must all become *reading teachers*. For without the ability to read -- and to think critically about that reading -- our students will always be on the outside looking in, watching others make decisions about matters that affect them. In STEP, our job is to help you become teachers of your subject matter, but also teachers who possess a repertoire of skills for developing students’ capacities as literate and effective citizens.

REQUIRED READINGS²

Summer

- James W. Loewen, (2007). *Lies My Teacher Told Me*. New York: Free Press.
- Sam Wineburg, (2001). *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past*, Philadelphia, PA: Temple.
- Jo Ann Robinson, (2001). *Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press.
- Course Reader

OFFICE HOURS

Office hours will be set on the first day of class. You can always see us by making an appointment during another time. If you want to make sure to see us, contact us by e-mail (which is preferable to trying to catch us during the hectic minutes of break).

² We will continue to use several of these books during Fall & Winter quarters as well.

ASSIGNMENTS

Snapshot Autobiography: The “Snapshot Autobiography” is intended to be a short introduction to the themes of historical writing: issues of selection, significance, storytelling, truth, and felicity. Take a piece of 8 ½ by 11 piece of paper and fold it, accordion-style, so that it forms three panels—or, counting front and back, six panels. The first panel is the title page for your “Snapshot Autobiography”; the back page is reserved for an “About the Author” section. This leaves four panels. In each of these four panels select the four most important events that have shaped you as a person (everyone should begin, in Panel Two, with “My Birth”). Fill 2/3 of each panel with your narrative and use the bottom 1/3 as a place to illustrate your narrative with a small (hand-drawn) picture.³ Don’t spend a lot of time on the pictures or the narrative. Have fun. **Due: Tomorrow!**

Reading Guides: Five Reading Guides will be posted on Coursework (<http://coursework.stanford.edu>). Reading Guides are brief writing assignments due at the beginning of class. These reading guides should be typed. All five guides are required in order to earn full credit for this assignment, a 4.0. Four acceptable guides earn a 3.0. Under four guides receives no credit. Because of the compressed schedule of summer quarter, late reading guides will not be accepted.

Seeing Student Thinking: This assignment asks you to think critically about how students make sense of historical sources. You will be given sources to use and then you will conduct a “think-aloud” exercise with an adolescent (ideally with a student at the middle school). You will write up your findings in a two-page (single-spaced) analysis. This assignment is due next **Wednesday, July 8** so start thinking about the participants you will recruit.

“Opening Up History”: For this assignment, the culmination of our time together, you will create a one-day mini-lesson that challenges kids’ notions that history is static, fixed, and already known—a dry compilation of boring names and dates. Because textbooks are a ubiquitous feature in the classroom, you should build your lesson around -- or in response to -- a conventional textbook narrative. In your lesson, you should find some way to problematize the book’s narrative—by challenging it, expanding it, articulating its silences, questioning its assumptions, pointing out its narrowness, and so on. You should bring in ONE other primary or secondary source document to shed light on the textbook.⁴ You should use one of the formats listed on the “Textbooks are your Friend” handout (on Coursework). Remember, however, that this is a single 50-minute lesson and therefore has to stand by itself.

Choosing a Topic. So as not to become overwhelmed, choose a topic of moderate grain size—not World War II or the Renaissance, but something more self-contained, e.g., the Allies’ refusal to bomb railroad lines to Auschwitz, the passage of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, the antecedents of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Mussolini’s invasion of Ethiopia, the events leading up to sending US troops to Vietnam, the

³ Hand-drawn, really. This is a clipart-free zone!

⁴ Using two documents is optional, but you may not use more than two.

Sykes-Picot Agreement, and so on. (Important Guideline: If the textbook devotes more than *one page* to your topic then you've bitten off a chunk that is too large.) By next **Monday, July 6**, you should have a topic identified and *bring in a copy of the one page textbook excerpt you will use for your mini-lesson*; we will schedule individual meetings on that day. (Both the STEP curriculum library and the Cubberley Library have recent and fairly recent textbooks; for that matter, you can also use an old textbook).

Format: Your final paper should be organized into four parts.

Part 1: **State the historical question your lesson will address.** In two pages (double-spaced), analyze the textbook selection you choose. How does the textbook present this historical topic? How might the textbook narrative or account be opened up or problematized? You might consider asking: what is emphasized? what is ignored? whose voice is heard? whose voice is silenced? To engage in this analysis you will have to know more about the topic than what is contained in the brief textbook account, so *choose a topic you already know something about*.

Part 2: In two to three pages (single spaced), write up a mini-lesson that contains the following sections: goals for student learning; the sequence of activities you will use to achieve these goals; the materials (one other source, not to exceed one page in length) you will use and how you will scaffold them; a rough estimate of how much time each activity will take; how you will "see" student thinking; and how you will close the lesson. Be sure to add what you imagine students will learn before and after this particular lesson. (You can assume that students have read your textbook narrative prior to the lesson.) Note: *This section can be written in non-essay bulleted form*.

Part 3: Write an accompanying essay of two to three pages (double-spaced) that explains how this lesson challenges students' belief that history consists of names and dates and is already a finished story. Be sure to connect your ideas to readings from class.

Part 4: In the appendix to your paper, include a legible copy of the textbook selection (no more than one page) you will use. Include any supplementary materials and *format documents to be ready for classroom use* (e.g., large type font, lots of white space, no more than 300 words per document). Include full references of all the works you consulted, including the textbook.

Due: Monday, July 13, by 12 PM, in Eric's box in STEP.

A note about written work: Your written work must reflect care and professionalism. Twelve-point type (Times or Courier; this is Times New Roman) is *required*. A few other issues:

- (1) faxes and email attachments will not be accepted unless you have prior approval from the instructor;
- (2) *do not* print your paper back to back (it makes writing marginal comments extremely difficult);
- (3) late work must be cleared with us via email at least three days prior to the due date (this applies to the Summer; a different policy will be in force

during the Fall). Otherwise, the assignment will not be accepted except in dire cases of medical or family emergencies.

SCHEDULE OF SUMMER READINGS/CLASSES

Day 1, Monday, June 29	Inquiring into History
	Introduction to the Course, Assignments, Goals
<i>Read for today:</i>	•Tom Holt, <i>Thinking Historically</i>
Day 2, Tuesday, June 30	What's History, Anyway?
	•Wineburg & Martin, Reading and re-writing history http://www.ascd.org/authors/ed_lead/el200409_wineburg.html •Linda Levstik & Keith Barton (2001), "Teaching As Scaffolding" from <i>Doing History</i>
§ <u>Assignment Due:</u>	Snapshot Autobiography Reading Guide #1
Day 3, Wednesday, July 1	History as a Way of Knowing
<i>Read for today:</i>	•Wineburg, Chapter 1, <i>Historical thinking and other unnatural acts</i> •Jeanie Oakes (1985), <i>Keeping Track</i> . (excerpt) •Textbook selection on Spanish American War
§ <u>Assignment Due:</u>	Reading Guide #2
Day 4, Thursday, July 2	Using Textbooks Strategically
<i>Read for today:</i>	•James W. Loewen, (2007). <i>Lies My Teacher Told Me</i> . New York: Free Press. (Introduction & Chapter 1, pp. 1-30 & Afterword pp. 355-362). • Wineburg, Chapter 3, "On the Reading of Historical Texts: Notes on the Breach between School and Academy" • excerpt from textbook <i>The Americans</i> and <i>A Midwives' Tale</i> .
§ <u>Assignment Due:</u>	Reading Guide #3

****Happy 4th of July****

Day 5, Monday, July 6

Frameworks of the Mind

Read for today:

- Anderson, Richard C. (1977). The notion of schemata and the educational enterprise: General discussion of the conference. [excerpt] In R. C. Anderson, R. J. Spiro, & W. E. Montague (Eds.), *Schooling and the acquisition of knowledge* (pp 415-432). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Gourevitch, P. (1995). What they saw at the Holocaust Museum. *New York Times Magazine*, February 12, pp. 44-45.

§ Assignment Due:

- Reading Guide #4
- One-page sketch of plans for “Opening up History,” including copy of textbook excerpt

Day 6, Tuesday, July 7

Context

Read for today:

- Jo Ann Robinson, (2001). *Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press.

§ Assignment Due:

- Reading Guide #5

Day 7, Wednesday, July 8

Perspective

Read for today:

- Dower, J. (1996). Three narratives of our humanity. In Edward T. Linenthal & Tom Engelhardt (Eds.), *History wars: The Enola Gay and other battles for the American past*. New York: Henry Holt.

- examples of Japanese perspectives

- Paul Fussell, “Thank God for the Atomic Bomb.” In Paul Fussell, *Thank God for the Atomic Bomb and Other Essays*. New York: Ballantine Books.

- Richard Kohn (1996). History at risk: The case of the *Enola Gay*. In Edward T. Linenthal & Tom Engelhardt (Eds.), *History wars: The Enola Gay and other battles for the American past*. New York: Henry Holt.

§ Assignment Due:

- Seeing Student Thinking*

Day 8, Thursday, July 9

Final Class

Read for today:

•Grant Wiggins (1989). The Futility of Trying to Teach Everything of Importance. *Educational Leadership*. p. 44-59.

§*OPENING UP TEXTBOOK* Due: **Monday, July 13, by 12 PM, in Eric's box in STEP**

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

Snapshot Autobiography	10%*	
Reading Guides (all five)	20%*	
Seeing Student Thinking	30%	
Opening Up Textbook		40%

*graded C/NC

The Web

Learning about resources available on the Web is an absolutely indispensable part of this course. No one today can claim excellence as a history/social science teacher without a deep familiarity with digitized on-line source materials. For an overview of history-on-the-web see Roy N. Rosenzweig's incredible gateway to history <http://historymatters.gmu.edu>. For most issues in the US curriculum, *History Matters* is the portal to enter first. For a brief introduction to how the Web has changed social studies teaching, see John K. Lee, Digital History in the History/Social Studies Classroom, *The History Teacher*, at <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ht/35.4/lee.html>

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu>

[see especially the list for "Favorite Sites"]

You will want to see our attempts to use the Web as a place for teaching Historical Thinking.

<http://www.historicalthinkingmatters.org>

The rest of this very brief list is ever-changing. If you find something not on here that really knocks your socks off, let us know.

Portals-General

<http://www.besthistorysites.net>

[A good all-purpose portal with links to world and US sites]

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook.html>

[An excellent portal for modern World history]

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/whm/whmfinding.php>

[George Mason's World History portal]

<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/education/index.html>

[The British Museum's education page has many links to world history sites]

American History

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/amhome.html>

[American Memory, Library of Congress; an unbelievable collection of primary documents]

<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/>

[Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History; a lot of good stuff]

<http://www.jimcrowhistory.org/home.htm>

[Best site for anything having to do with Jim Crow]

<http://www.withoutsanctuary.org/>

[History of lynching in the US; an impressive site, difficult to witness]

<http://www.authentichistory.com/>

[Primary sources and American popular culture; excellent audio of famous speeches]

<http://www.teachvietnam.org>

[Good starting place for Vietnam]

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/>

[PBS's American Experience is a gold mine]

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/>

[100 important documents in American History]

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/>

[The National Geographic Society has fabulous on-line maps and many other excellent resources]

http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/history_culture.html

[The Smithsonian's website has some great lesson plans and other resources]

World History

<http://worldhistoryforusall.sdsu.edu/>

[A wealth of resources for teaching world history]

A Few Specialized Sites

NBC News Archive

<http://www.icue.com/>

[Great short video clips from NBC news]

Lincoln

<http://www.papersofabrahamlincoln.org/>

Journals:

<http://www.historycooperative.org/>

[History journals, including *The History Teacher*, a very good outlet for exchanges between high school and college teachers]

Japanese Internment

<http://www.densho.org/>

[Fabulous site with many great teaching resources]

Nazi Propaganda

<http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/ww2era.htm>

[Excellent site for the context of anti-Semitism]

Holocaust

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

[The US Holocaust Museum is a fabulous site, particularly its resources for teachers]

Professional Organizations You Should Consider Joining

Organization of American Historians <http://www.oah.org/>

(by joining as a teacher you automatically get the *Magazine of History*, a monthly publication with source materials and lesson plans).

American Historical Association <http://www.historians.org/>

World History Association <http://www.thewha.org/>

National Council for the Social Studies <http://www.ncss.org>

National Council of History Education <http://www.history.org/nche>

Historical Association (UK) <http://www.history.org.uk/>

(The Historical Association in Great Britain has many good resources)