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Books we should actually burn:
why history textbooks are best left on the shelves

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the
Department of Educational Foundations & Policy Studies
West Chester University
West Chester, Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science:
Transformative Education & Social Change

By

Troy A. Everly

August 2023

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Abstract

This Critical Action Research (CAR) thesis combines my personal experience and the research of others to investigate the problems surrounding history textbooks.

American History textbooks do a poor job of holistically explaining the past and often default to what publishers consider “safe” or “neutral” points of view. Textbooks present history from a white-male perspective lifting those stories while disregarding, discounting, white-washing, or ignoring the contributions, impacts, or experiences of people of color. After analyzing this concern I will discuss solutions and alternatives to history textbooks and why I have concluded that it is best practice to leave these books on the shelves (or in a burn pit) where they belong.

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Positionality

Bursting the Bubble

My aspiration to be a teacher began in high school. I went to Garnet Valley School District, an upper-middle-class school district that is overwhelmingly white. Living and attending school in this “bubble” gave me a twisted and inaccurate view of our country and world. Wanting to be a teacher, I went to Millersville University and went through their teacher preparation program. I had a generic class and field experience that included “urban education.” We spent about five weeks in an “urban” school in York, PA. Even with this experience, I still lived in that bubble from GV. Flash forward to student teaching, and I was placed in Central York High School for 15 weeks. Central York was another upper-middle-class district with plenty of resources and funding for education. However, this school district was much more diverse than GV. The bubble was starting to see some cracks and fissures.

Now that I have set the stage, it is time to explain what made that bubble burst: my first teaching job. My first teaching job was in Hagerstown, MD. Hagerstown, I learned, was known as the “drug triangle” because drugs from 3 major cities (Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and Baltimore) flow through Hagerstown. As a result of this and other factors, Hagerstown is a highly impoverished area. I worked in a Title I school, and over 80% of the students were on free or reduced lunch.

Additionally, the student population was highly diverse. This experience was the first time in my teaching career and in my life that I saw the effects of poverty in education. Students would come to school in the same clothes every day, the mother of one of my students was 25

with an 11-year-old daughter, and many students did not have parents who were involved in their education because of their job schedules. These examples are only a tiny snapshot of the experiences that helped burst my bubble. However, with all the issues students were experiencing being impoverished, their schooling was not affected by that poverty. The reason was that schools in Maryland are part of a county system. All schools in the county (regardless of their geographical location) receive the same funding from the county. As a result, my school had all the technology and resources that a school in the more affluent areas of the county would receive. So while the students and their issues at home were a new experience, the school still had all the resources I expected in the classroom/school from my previous experiences.

My recent teaching experience at Southeast Delco School District has destroyed the bubble I lived in at GV. At my current school, 100% of the students are on free or reduced lunch, and we severely need more resources than I was accustomed to in a classroom. Some examples are the school does not have air-conditioning, during all of 2020, the district was virtual (and the school was not 1-1 with technology), and the insane reliance on for-profit programs like Study Island and Exact Path. The high school I went to (Garnet Valley) is 20 minutes away from my current school, but the school building, the resources inside the school building, and the curriculum are incredibly different. So, why does it have to be like this?

How I Got Here

After the death of George Floyd and the responding BLM protests, I took it upon myself to do more as both a white person and an educator in the push for racial justice. I read many books that dealt with social justice (and lack thereof) during the height of the pandemic when we were stuck at home. Books like *STAMPED* and *Lies My Teacher Told Me* truly opened my eyes to the injustices we do as social studies educators when we do not teach students the ugly parts of

our nation's past. For some clarification, at my first teaching job, I taught Ancient Civilizations, something far and away from the many troubles that plague American History. When I accepted my current position (as I read all these books), I started at a new district where I teach American History. It was like a perfect storm of reading about the truth while simultaneously needing to teach that truth to my students. Now that I was teaching American History, the stakes became much higher to ensure I did my part to promote the change I wanted.

I had access to an American History textbook. Access to my textbook confirmed my fears about not teaching the truth. The textbook glosses over many issues and makes no effort to draw through-lines about race in this country. This journey led me to the TESC program and my concern with history textbooks.

My context of teaching middle school students in a predominantly African-American community has influenced my passion for my concern. I see firsthand, every day, the community that will be positively impacted by the changes I want to see in textbooks. Many students are aware of social justice issues but need more context or background in social justice, and their textbooks will do little to remedy that. My goal is to help my students realize there is more than what their texts tell them.

I have a unique perspective and context to see and be a part of schools on opposite ends of the racial and socio-economic spectrum. The school I attended was upper-middle class, and the vast majority were white. My history textbook did little to educate me on the issues I learned about in my reading journey this past year. I bring this up because if I had been exposed to a more accurate and inclusive history as a student, I would not have needed to search for this information independently. Plus, imagine those other students in my classes who did not go on to be social studies teachers. They may go through their life with this false/warped understanding of

our nation's history. Now my fellow 27-year-old white classmates may be going through their life, misunderstanding why organizations like BLM even exist. Or, even more dramatic, they may think that racial justice is an effort to take things away from white people versus making society more inclusive. When people don't understand something (like BLM), they tend to reject it. That rejection will and has had violent consequences and consequences politically for African-Americans.

I am uniquely positioned regarding this issue because of my position as a white middle school social studies teacher. I feel like both an insider and an outsider regarding this issue. On the one hand, I deal with history and history textbooks every day in my classroom. However, as a white man, I am not necessarily negatively affected by the "white-washed" history we often see in textbooks. On the other hand, textbooks can be a racist tool, and now that it is in the hands of white men such as myself, it puts me in the middle of using the approved racist tool or using different tools that are not necessarily approved by the curriculum. I am also in a precarious position because my current teaching job has allowed me immense flexibility regarding the tools I use in the classroom. Still, that flexibility is built more out of incompetence than a deliberate decision by my district administration. So I can almost guarantee that other teachers in the district are using the textbook simply because they think it is what they should be using.

My Thematic Concern: A Broad Introduction

My concern revolves around the major problems I see with history textbooks, specifically, how history textbooks do an abysmal job of describing the history of people of color and make no attempts to shine a light on those groups and give them equal representation and time as their white counterparts. It is also essential to push for representation and emphasize different narratives in these books. Certain voices and experiences have been given the spotlight

in the past. Now it's time to give more women and people of color the space in these books for narratives and experiences. The question then becomes, why are these narratives and experiences ignored and overlooked in our textbooks? According to Faragher (2017), textbooks and history curricula choose to teach the sacred parts of history while omitting or neglecting the profane. There are examples of progress made to teach the profane, but conservatives shoot it down by worrying about national pride, patriotism, and guilt. Conservatives do not want examinations of the contradictions between our nation's ideals and the time we fell short. Faragher (2017) continues by saying the implications of this are white students are bored in history class (due to the lack of conflict) or students of color are bored because they are not represented. We should avoid textbooks in a social studies classroom because they do not teach students the truth about our nation's past.

Additionally, while Faragher (2017) argues that white students find history textbooks boring, others may find them boring. According to a study by Lester & Cheek (1997), students use a social studies textbook in class 3-5 times per week. Also, students surveyed disliked their social studies textbook the second most of all subjects (losing only to math). So, not only are we doing a disservice to students by teaching them a sanitized version of history, but we are also boring them by revolving our curriculum around a tool most students find disengaging. To make social studies classes as informative and engaging as possible, we must do away with textbooks.

This engagement is critical when looking at the history of African Americans. History textbooks do little to expose the throughlines of racism throughout our nation's history and the corresponding results of our country's racist past. Author James Loewen is the cornerstone of this type of research. His books: *Lies my teacher told me: everything your American history textbook got wrong* and *Teaching What Really Happened: How to Avoid the Tyranny of*

Textbooks and Get Students Excited About Doing History are some of the most recognizable books in this field. In Loewen's: *Lies my teacher told me: everything your American history textbook got wrong* (1999), he discusses many instances when history textbooks do an inferior job of telling the truth. In everything from Columbus to the Vietnam War, Loewen describes how textbooks take a safe approach to history by not providing multiple perspectives but instead providing either the patriotic perspective or the perspective that will not cause any controversy. In Loewen's later work: *Teaching What Really Happened: How to Avoid the Tyranny of Textbooks and Get Students Excited About Doing History* (2018), he takes his work further by giving educators tools to teach history without the textbook. This book was assigned for my pre-teacher social studies course. These books will be the foundation for much of my research on this topic.

This concern is urgent and essential to address because it is harder for every generation of students to learn this "sanitized" and "white-washed" history to make systemic change in this country. For example, Critical Race Theory (CRT) has a prominent role in my concern. CRT asks how race played a role in creating and implementing our institutions here in the US (Love, 2019.) According to Love (2019), "CRT challenges color blindness, meritocracy, and neutrality" (p.136.) CRT will have a significant impact on my concern because many textbooks try to remain "neutral" or "color-blind" and CRT directly challenges those ideas. CRT questions institutions and how race plays a pivotal role in creating those institutions. Education is an institution, and textbooks are a product of said institution. CRT can help me to analyze these institutions to understand better how race has impacted their creation. In my experience in the classroom, textbooks make absolutely no effort to look at the systemic problems of racism. They may address slavery, Jim Crow, the KKK, and discrimination in the housing market, but they do

not draw through-lines connecting those topics. CRT points out that all of these are related, but textbooks do everything in their power to act as if they are all separate and unrelated/unfortunate events in our history.

I am learning that CRT can be applied to any race, not just African Americans. For example, CRT can be applied to racial groups such as American Indians or Native Americans. If any racial group is ignored, passed over, or white-washed in textbooks, CRT can help me to understand it. A specific example of using CRT to look at American Indians in textbooks comes from Padgett (2015), who asserts that “One of the goals of Tribal Critical Race Theory is to change how American Indians view schools, but that is an impossible goal when American Indian students cannot see their mothers, sisters, and grandmothers portrayed in the textbooks” (p. 163). It would be an inappropriate and unfair approach to CRT if I only looked at one racial group, so I plan to examine as many groups as possible to apply them to my concern.

In summary, by talking about the problems that I have addressed above with textbooks, we as a society can progress. This problem affects everyone, whether you are white or a person of color. A warped or inaccurate view of history can have dire consequences in civil society. We are currently seeing a push in school districts around the country to avoid “controversial” topics such as race because those people, in my opinion, have been misled by the textbooks and curriculum they experienced in their social studies classes. My concern ultimately hopes to help educate the masses more responsibly by telling the truth.

Looking Ahead

The following chapters will dive into each portion of my conceptual framework. Chapter 2 discusses my philosophical/theoretical positionality. This will start with my overall views on education and move into more specifics of my thematic concern. Chapter 3 starts with the history

of my concern, moves into the consequences of using history textbooks in the classroom, and ends with the alternatives to history textbooks. Chapters 4 and 5 detail the curriculum one could implement and how to assess that curriculum to inform your practice and appease all stakeholders.

Chapter 2

Thematic Concern, Conceptual Framework, Critical Lexicon, & Philosophy

Critical Action Research

Critical Action Research (CAR) in this context combines my personal experience and the research of others to investigate the problems surrounding history textbooks. The researcher (me) actively exposes and shines a light on a societal problem. Instead of taking a traditional research stance of removing the researcher and taking a neutral and sterile approach to dissecting a problem, we acknowledge that we are human with feelings and biases regarding our selected topic. Instead of pretending our emotions and prejudices do not exist, we present them and recognize them upfront. There is a specific type of CAR called Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) that aims to get students involved with solving problems they face. In an attempt to fix problems in education, many researchers may need to pay more attention to students' abilities to solve these problems. YPAR directly involves students and considers them essential stakeholders in solving problems faced in education.

Thematic Concern Statement

In my experience, American History textbooks do a poor job of holistically explaining the past and often default to what publishers consider “safe” or “neutral” points of view. Textbooks present history from a white-male perspective lifting those stories while disregarding, discounting, white-washing, or ignoring the contributions, impacts, or experiences of people of color. I will use Critical Action Research to examine this problem in this thesis. First, this thesis will use CAR to critically explore these problems of history textbooks looking at this issue historically, looking at the first textbooks used in the English Colonies, up until more modern

discussions coming from Howard Zinn and James Loewen. We will then look at how textbooks produce trauma and deficit thinking. Spend time discussing proposed solutions such as inquiry-based classrooms, and we end with a look at how to create inquiry-based assignments and ensure we are using them as authentically as possible.

Conceptual Framework

1. What is my philosophical/theoretical positionality?
2. What is the history of my concern?
3. What are the consequences of using history textbooks in the classroom?
4. What should we use instead?

Critical Lexicon

Constitutive Terms

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is actively negating progressive and transformative ideals in schools and society. Neoliberalism is a political and economic system that looks at everyone and everything through the lens of their contributions to capital and Capitalism. People's worth is measured in how well they contribute to our capitalist system. We are all gears in the machine of Capitalism, and one of the goals of schools is to make sure each gear functions to grow and increase capital. About Neoliberalism and schools, a significant function of a school in a Neoliberal system is to make efficient capitalistic workers. In this system, even learning is secondary unless that learning involves becoming a positive contributor to the capitalistic system in the United States. In a Neoliberal society, there is no alternative to the capitalist system. Democracy and Capitalism are synonymous, according to Neoliberalism. All of society's problems will be solved under this system. It promotes the idea that government cannot solve our problems; only corporations and

the “free-market” approach can do that. (In reality, this is backward because the only institution that can regulate corporate power is government.) Neoliberalism claims that the problems of our society: social injustice, ecological destruction, human welfare/health, etc. can all be solved through Capitalism (Vallier, 2021).

↔learner↔teacher↔

↔learner↔teacher↔ is a phrase/term/way of thinking Paulo Freire and others use. This way of thinking uses the idea that teachers are constantly learning and should constantly be learning. That learning can come furthering our education, students, or our lives and lived experiences. Freire claims we are “unfinished” as humans, and we need to continue throughout our lives to pursue new knowledge and always question what we believe to be true. The reason for the arrows is a representation of the relationship between being a learner and being a teacher. We can be the learner or the teacher in any one instance or interaction. The teacher and the students can play both roles as teacher and learner, especially in a classroom (Freire, 1998).

Primary/Secondary Sources

A primary source is information (newspaper, book, interview, website, journal, etc.) from the study period. For example, if the time period of study is the Revolutionary War, a primary source would be the Declaration of Independence. This source comes from that time period, making it primary. Reversely, a secondary source is a source of information *not from* the time period of study. For example, if we stick with the time period of the Revolutionary War, a secondary source would be a New York Times article about the Declaration of Independence published in 1974. Because the source comes from a time other than the time period of study, it is secondary. A history textbook is a secondary source (UC Santa Cruz, n.d.).

Operative Terms

For the purpose of this thesis, the following definitions will apply:

Inquiry/Inquiry-Based

A solution offered in this thesis is using inquiry or inquiry-based learning in a social studies classroom. Inquiry in a social studies classroom attempts to solve complex problems by asking questions. For example, you present your students with a question about the past and use a combination of primary and secondary sources to answer that question. The “answer” to these questions is what you can prove with evidence (facts) from those primary and secondary sources. There is no prescribed right or wrong answer.

Philosophy of Education

I am a heterosexual, white, privileged man. More often than not, textbooks were written for me (as a student) and written by people like me now. I need to understand that in pursuing textbooks to represent marginalized groups better, I need to get input from those groups. The last thing I want is to come across as the “white savior” and think I am doing something no one else is doing. The communities that do not feel represented in textbooks have clarified that in formal and informal works and literature. It is my job to find those works and use them to the best of my ability to paint a picture that is not what I want to see but what they want. On a similar note, being someone in my position, I can use my privilege to teach other white students that it is just as much their responsibility to help fix these problems. Textbooks that are more inclusive and accurate will benefit all in society, not just specific marginalized groups.

The Broad Educational Problems Getting in the Way

First, let's look at equitable funding in education or the lack thereof. For example, schools are separated by school districts in states like Pennsylvania and New York. According to EdBuild (2021), the most egregious case of school inequity is in New York. Two school districts, Rochester City and Penfield Central, touch each other but could not be more different. Rochester City has a poverty rate of 5% and spends \$13,521 per student. Penfield Central has a poverty rate of 47% and spends \$3,905 per student. What could explain how two districts that touch each other could be so vastly different? One word: racism. Additional information found in EdBuild (2021) includes the following:

In the 1950s and 60s, Rochester saw an influx of black residents seeking manufacturing jobs. Meanwhile, white city-dwellers began to leave for the suburbs. Penfield grew rapidly, and it took steps to safeguard its affluence. It essentially banned new

construction of multi-family housing and set minimum sizes for homes and yards, a policy that would come to be known as “exclusionary zoning.” This put Penfield out of reach for lower-income families. (para. 1)

Because school districts are funded through local property taxes, house values are key drivers of educational inequity. In this specific case, black families were forced to live in Rochester City, and when the local economy began declining, the jobs went away, and so did the amount of money the school district could use. Today according to EdBuild (2021), Rochester City’s median household income is \$32,347, with 90% of residents being classified as non-white. Meanwhile, Penfield Central’s median household income is \$80,926, with 16% of residents being classified as non-white. Therefore, the key to combating school inequity is addressing the fact that local property taxes fund schools, creating inequitable funding in education.

Now, I have seen firsthand in my own experience this blatant inequity in education. My current school is about 20 minutes away from the school district I attended as a student in Delaware County, PA. The school district I attended as a student (Garnet Valley) is a predominantly white, upper-middle-class school district. We had clean schools, all the latest technology, multiple options for lunch, and plenty of up-to-date modern amenities. The school district I teach at (Southeast Delco) is primarily black, with 100% of the students on free/reduced lunch. Our school needs to be cleaner, and students have two options at lunch (what they are serving or a PB&J), projectors propped up on textbooks, and no air-conditioning. Why should school districts, 20 minutes apart, in the same state and even county, look so different?

I bring up county because, at my previous job in MD, they use a county system (all schools in a county are a part of the same district.) This setup meant that even though I was at a school with a high percentage of impoverished families, we still had similar (if not the same)

amenities as parts of the county with less poverty and higher property taxes. While there were some discrepancies, the system was much more equitable than my PA example. Mahon (2019) puts it best:

In 2016, a national study by EdBuild identified what it called the “50 most segregating borders.” By that, the authors were referring to neighboring districts with large differences in income. Pennsylvania had six borders on the list, including multiple ones for the Reading School District in Berks County. Meanwhile, states with countywide school districts — for example, Maryland — were almost entirely absent from the list. (para. 27)

As I stated previously, the county system is imperfect, but it does not allow for these massive inequities we see in Pennsylvania.

Second, let us look at standardized testing and its problems in education. According to Gershon (2015), standardized testing began as aptitude tests for the military during WWI. These tests would eventually morph into modern tests like the I.Q. and SAT. During the height of the Cold War, the US saw a much more aggressive push for standardized testing because of fears that U.S. students would not be able to compete in a global economy. This push all came to a head when a report called *A Nation At Risk* was published in 1983. According to Ansary (2007):

When the report was released in April 1983, it claimed that American students were plummeting academically, that schools suffered from uneven standards, and that teachers were not prepared. The report noted that our economy and national security would crumble if something weren't done. (para. 12)

Ansary (2007) states that while the report caught on like wildfire, none was based on reality. Test scores steadily rose in reading and writing from the '70s to 1988, and America had the most 22-

year-olds in the world with bachelor's degrees in 1988. This reality starkly contrasted with what *A Nation At Risk* claimed; however, the damage had been done. The U.S. has steadily been pushing more and more standardized testing ever since.

Well, how does standardized testing negatively affect students? Those with more resources can put those resources toward doing well on these assessments. Gershon (2015) writes, "...modern critics note that standardized test scores largely reflect socioeconomic privilege. That's partly because rich kids with mediocre scores can juice their results with expensive private test preparation courses" (para. 7). Standardized test scores more accurately reflect socioeconomic privilege than they show how "smart" a student is or is going to be in the future. Yet, students in Pennsylvania take the PSSA every year from grades 3 to 8 in math and reading and science in grades 4 and 8. Then when they get to high school, they must pass the Algebra, Biology, and Literature Keystones. A note from my experience shows how much stress these assessments put on schools. Teachers and administrators in my district are scared of the PSSA. If you could lose your job over some trivial mistake while helping to administer this test, wouldn't that scare and stress you out too?

Additionally, during my current district's 20-21 school year, we were 100% virtual the entire year due to the pandemic. However, because of the PSSA, we had to bring students into our buildings for three weeks during a pandemic just to take these assessments. Therefore, we will never achieve my ideals in my philosophy of education if we give standardized tests this much weight.

Third, as my philosophy of education explains, an inquiry-based approach to learning is best. However, in today's world of standardized testing and "teaching to the test," that approach is noticeably absent. For example, as a social studies teacher, the curriculum (in my experience)

is often tied directly to a textbook. In my current district, the entire curriculum is listed as textbook sections, with topics addressed in those sections. Textbooks are the opposite of inquiry because textbooks, in my view, are often taught (and viewed by students) as an arbiter of knowledge. If the textbook says it, that's scripture. This mindset is especially problematic when talking about history.

Lastly, our current education system is designed to make it harder and harder for teachers to build rapport with their students. For example, in my experience (tying things back to equity) schools that are better funded have smaller class sizes. Smaller class sizes on their own make it much easier to build rapport with students. However, teachers like myself often have to teach in classrooms of 30+ students multiple times a day, making it very hard to build rapport. On top of that, standardized testing is reducing students to Distinguished, Proficient, Basic, and Below-Basic. Due to standardized testing, we see students as a score or a category rather than human beings with thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Plus, tying it back to textbooks, when we sanitize history and tell students they cannot handle the truth, how should we expect them to trust us as teachers? How can I build a rapport with someone who knows (or will eventually learn) that I only gave them part of the story? Building rapport requires us, as teachers, to see students as human beings. All of the problems I have addressed here do everything in their power to dehumanize them, and it is no wonder that building a rapport with students is so hard.

What do inequity in funding, standardized testing, non-inquiry approaches, and refusing teacher autonomy have in common? Neoliberalism. So then the question becomes, why is Neoliberalism bad? Neoliberalism takes the best parts of humanity out of the human (love, freedom, etc.) in a classroom or a cubicle. This system doesn't care how happy, fulfilled, or educated you are as long as you contribute your maximum potential to Capitalism. Most

importantly, Neoliberalism has no desire to fix any problems in society because, in Neoliberalism, the system functions best when we don't care about individuals, the community, or even the planet. If it's best for Capitalism, that is what will happen.

A specific example of how Neoliberalism affects schools in a macro-sense comes from Chicago in 2013. Chicago in 2013 saw the closure of almost 50 public schools. The purpose? These public schools were being replaced by “for-profit” charter schools. Vaughan and Gutierrez (2017), explain:

School choice, in the form of charter and selective enrollment schools, for example, has become a cornerstone of neoliberal education policy, especially in large cities with majority students of color and low-income students. Schools that cannot compete for their market share of students are forced out of the system, and “under-enrolled” schools are reconstituted or closed. (p.7)

“For-profit” charter schools are replacing public schools in Chicago because, from a Neoliberal lens, running schools like a business is good for Capitalism. According to Vaughan and Gutierrez (2017), this especially hurts our most vulnerable student populations because they are most likely the ones whose public schools are closing in favor of “for-profit” charter schools.

Overall, Vaughan and Gutierrez (2017) had three significant findings from their study on the impact of these Neoliberal practices on Chicago's Public Schools (CPS). First, the school closings were framed as an answer to the inequity in CPS, but parents and the community experienced only harmful impacts. Second, parents and the community wanted a more democratic choice of which schools closed. They felt that CPS had pre-determined which schools were closing with no input from the community. Third, “While neoliberal policies seek to emphasize schooling for private purposes, many parents rejected CPS's rationale for school

closings and argued for a broader purpose for school.” This last finding by Vaughan and Gutierrez (2017) is especially relevant because parents and the community know that schools are more than producing workers for the US economy. Yet, CPS sees each student through a Neoliberal lens. As a result, public schools are closing in favor of private “for-profit” institutions.

Neoliberalism wants everyone to remain politically neutral because a politically neutral society is doing nothing to change the current system's circumstances. I was taught to be a “neutral” social studies teacher. The more I engage in this program (and the longer I teach), the more I realize that’s impossible. We are trying to work against so many non-neutral factors in schools (like textbooks.) It’s only fair and ethical not to be neutral because neutrality promotes and enables the status quo (Neoliberalism.) If we remain impartial, we will never achieve our goals of creating a more democratic, equitable classroom. According to Freire (1998), “Education never was, is not, and never will be neutral or indifferent in regard to the reproduction of the dominant ideology...” (p. 72). The dominant ideology he is referring to is Neoliberalism. Most of the problems in education can be related to Neoliberalism. Freire (1998) continues in *Pedagogy of Freedom and* describes how the “dominant classes” use education to “immobilize the classes” by once again using Neoliberalism to enforce the status quo while at the same time using the status quo to implement Neoliberalism (p. 72).

This dominant ideology of Neoliberalism is perpetuated by systems of power in the United States. These systems of power that promote and enable Neoliberalism are corporations and corporate influence. Corporations have invaded every aspect of society, from government to schools. In our capitalist society, those corporations (or even specific people) with the most money have the most influence and power. Corporations will only care about individual humans

in our society if it's in the market's best interest. Unfortunately, if the goal is to make the most money as quickly and efficiently as possible, individuals and their needs don't matter. Freire (1998) states: "The fatalistic philosophy of neoliberal politics of which I have speaking is a case in point of how human interests are abandoned whenever they threaten the values of the market" (p. 73). Corporations will never have "human interests" at heart because human interests do, in fact, "threaten the values of the market." For example, we must stop the planet's destruction via fossil fuels to combat climate catastrophe. However, eliminating our reliance on fossil fuels "threatens the market's values." If Capitalism is to work at its best, individual human interests (healthcare, social justice, combating climate change) are unimportant and a hurdle to making Capitalism work as efficiently as possible. Freire calls it the "fatalistic philosophy of neoliberal politics" because in a Neoliberal system if people dying is best for the market, then Neoliberalism wants that to happen. Neoliberalism doesn't care who lives or dies as long as there is still money to make.

Additional Thoughts

An essential concept in my philosophy of education is the idea of the ↔learner↔teacher↔. This concept promotes the idea that no one person knows everything, that a teacher constantly learns, and that even learners (students) can teach others. It's a participatory democratic process of information and thoughts flowing from one person to another. Unfortunately, in today's world, we continue to see a rise in right-wing Fascism and Neoliberalism in our society. The ultimate goal of right-wing ideology seems to be to make our community "ignorant" or "docile" and, consequently, make a society full of ignorant and docile workers. This ideology is the opposite of the ↔learner↔teacher↔ mindset. Fascism encourages the development of the passive authoritarian personality and discourages the dominated from

developing the confidence to question what they are taught by the dominant. The goal is to remove critical thinking and prevent anyone from becoming “critically conscious,” as Freire would say. That actual knowledge is the knowledge you don’t know everything; even what you think you know should constantly be challenged and questioned. If we genuinely want to embrace the ↔learner↔teacher↔ mindset in our classrooms, we must first encourage this mindset in our society.

In *Pedagogy of Freedom* (1998), Freire states: “Finally, I can not avoid a permanently critical attitude toward what I consider to be the scourge of neoliberalism, with its cynical fatalism and inflexible negations of the right to dream differently, to dream of utopia” (p. 3). Here it seems Freire is discussing how neoliberalism causes the death of one's ability to dream of a better society (utopia). If ↔learner↔teacher↔ cannot have democratic discussions (and dream of utopia), we will never achieve that dream of utopia. When Freire discusses this “utopia,” he is speaking of the ideas of utopia and not of an actual perfect society. This society works to create more freedom, justice, equality, and democracy. Neoliberalism and Fascism want to kill the dreamer in all of us. We all can imagine a better society, but if we have a culture that continues to beat the dream of utopia out of us, we will never be able to achieve that utopia.

Now, what is that utopia that Freire mentions? Specifically, it is a world where teachers (in a classroom or elsewhere) see themselves as not transfers of knowledge but agents for constructing knowledge. It’s a world where all parties are active in discussions, and all people are active participants (Freire, 1998). When we realize that no single person or institution has all the answers (or even most of the solutions), we can begin to use each other to discover, recognize, address, and work to overcome complex problems we face in society. Everyone must come together to solve society's most extensive and complex issues. If we fall under the delusion

that one set of ideas or group of people has the answers to these problems, we are doomed to find ourselves in a dystopian versus utopian future.

Freire (1998) also makes another point: “We cannot criticize an author unless we actually know his or her work. To base a criticism merely on ideas about the author gleaned from a book cover is an insult” (p. 6). This point is an example of our modern news ecosystem. We constantly rely on others to interpret statements/people/ideas for us. We expect to be told what to think, not think for ourselves. We can’t become critical thinkers or ↔learner↔teacher↔ if we rely on everybody but ourselves to interpret the world around us. In *Pedagogy of Freedom* (1998), Freire discusses the “banking model.” The “banking model” is when (in the case of education) the teacher is the holder of knowledge, and their job is to actively bestow that knowledge onto the passive receiver of knowledge (a student.) The “banking model” is the opposite of the ↔learner↔teacher↔. This model removes the learner from the teacher and the teacher from the learner. If a teacher truly believes in the concept of ↔learner↔teacher↔, they would understand that lecturing students to memorize information simply is taking the learning out of the ↔learner↔teacher↔.

There needs to be dialogue and conversations happening *with* students, not *at* students. Students have insights and understanding of the world that the teacher may not, especially if the teacher is part of a dominant class (i.e., white male) and the students are part of a historically marginalized group. No single person or entity has all the answers, and acting as they do is the “scourge of neoliberalism,” where corporations and Capitalism believe they have all the answers. In schools, we need a system of democratic ideals where the teacher can learn as much from the student and the student from the teacher. Students should have agency and a voice in their education, as citizens have agency and a say in a Democracy. Schools often claim in their

mission statements that they are “educating students to be productive members of a democratic society,” yet, schools are often the least democratic places. Students often have no say in their classes: where they sit, when they go to the bathroom, what they wear, when they can speak, eat, etc. Schools are ideal for this democratic practice to be honed because schools are, by definition, learning institutions. Teachers have daily opportunities to learn something new from their students in their classrooms, and teachers should be as open to gaining new knowledge and perspectives as we expect our students to be available to new knowledge and attitudes.

Now, what should schools be like in the classrooms themselves? Ultimately, it should be about nurturing curiosity and producing new knowledge instead of transferring old knowledge. As a social studies teacher, the traditional social studies model has always been knowledge is learned and guided through textbooks. The history textbook is to social studies class as the bible is to Christianity. As a high school student in the not-so-distant past (2010-2014), the textbook dominated my history classes. I distinctly remember my AP US history class requiring reading the text and taking notes as a standard requirement. This requirement is the opposite of nurturing curiosity and producing new knowledge. Textbooks simply transfer old knowledge from the book to the person. Instead, teaching needs to be about encouraging students to ask questions and learning new and exciting information by asking those questions. Freire (1998) says it best: “...to teach is to create possibilities for the construction and production of knowledge rather than to be engaged simply in a game of transferring knowledge” (p. 29). As a social studies teacher, I need to break out of the mold of transferring the same old knowledge from the book to the person. That is not where learning happens. Learning happens when we as a class look at multiple points of view on a historical topic and discuss the past as something not set in stone. The problem with textbooks is that they provide one point of view, and that point of view offers no imagination and

stifles creativity and curiosity in the classroom. Textbooks rely on memorization and the regurgitation of facts. Freire (1998), once again, puts it perfectly: “The teacher of geography who truncates the curiosity of the student in the name of the efficiency of mechanical memorization hampers both the freedom and the capacity for adventure of the student. There is no education here. Only domestication” (p. 36). The word “domestication” is so fitting here because textbooks are essentially domesticating students with history. Making them docile and unquestioning, loyal to their master as a dog is devoted to its owner. If you tell a dog to sit, they sit. If you say to a dog, stay, they stay. If textbooks tell students that racism ended with the civil rights movement, they believe it. If you tell students that the USA won the Vietnam War, students think that is the truth. Students are human beings, and subjecting them to history through a textbook is equivalent to teaching a domesticated dog to sit and stay, never questioning or challenging.

Freire discusses two topics that align nicely with this topic and my philosophy of education. They include the concepts of “right thinking” and “unfinishedness.” First, right thinking is the concept Freire (1998) discusses in *Pedagogy of Freedom*, in which the “right way” of thinking is knowing that whatever you may think is correct may be wrong (or correct thinking is the kind of thinking that always knows it might be incorrect.) How this pertains to the problems with history textbooks is that history textbooks present information as if it is the absolute truth. So much of history is presented by textbooks through one way of thinking or the lens of one group of people. For these books to allow for no conversation or critical thinking of the past is the opposite of how I want students to behave in my classroom.

Second, the concept of “unfinishedness” is another idea Freire discusses at length in *Pedagogy of Freedom (1998)*. He describes unfinishedness as the idea that humans constantly

change and evolve. We are never truly finished growing and learning. Freire (1998) describes unfinishedness as a part of the human condition:

I like being human because I know that my passing through the world is not predetermined, preestablished. That my destiny is not a given but something that needs to be constructed and for which I must assume responsibility. I like being human because I am involved with others in making history out of possibility, not simply resigned to fatalistic stagnation. (p. 36)

Textbooks take all of this out of being human. Textbooks are “predetermined, preestablished” in how they present the past, present, and future. Students cannot know the possibilities of what we are capable of as humans if they are constantly presented with information that tells them the opposite.

Another important aspect of my philosophy of education and what society says (but not always put into practice) is getting students to ask questions or think critically. Humans are generally curious; if we are presented with a problem or question, we want to get to the bottom of the problem or find an answer. If I offer a question to students, they generally want to find the answer. Freire (1998) explains curiosity and questioning in the following way: “What is really essential in this process is that both the teacher and the students know that open, curious questioning, whether in speaking or listening, is what grounds them mutually-not a simple passive pretense in dialogue” (p. 61). When we are “passive” in our learning, “banking” information from the textbook or a teacher lecture, curiosity is removed from the students. Textbooks don’t allow students to question. What is written in them is often presented as unchallenged and accepted as a universal truth. History has never, or will never be, stagnant. Our understanding of it is constantly changing and questioned. Freire (1998) puts it perfectly:

“History exists only where time is problematized and not simply a given. A future that is inexorable is a denial of history” (p. 49). To deny students the opportunity to question history is denying students the opportunity to learn history. My philosophy of teaching history is to give students the breadth and scope to interrogate our past; textbooks provide no range or capacity to do that. Understanding the past through authentic inquiry and questioning will lead us to create a better future where we can tackle climate destruction, racial inequities, and so much more.

Solutions and Changes

In a free, democratic society, our public school system in the United States should align more with Finland's. According to Tung (2012), Finland has one of the best-performing school systems in the world while spending less on education per student than the United States. Additionally, Finland relies much less on standardized tests than its American counterparts, achieving better on the international PISA test. (The PISA is an assessment on math, reading, and science given to 15-year-old students worldwide.) However, the most critical distinction between Finland and the U.S. is how they fund their schools. Tung (2012) puts it best:

While U.S. public schools are locally funded, usually from property taxes, and rewarded based on high performance through programs such as the U.S. Department of Education's Race to the Top grants, Finnish schools are nationally funded based on the number of students. Schools are provided additional funding if they have a higher proportion of immigrants or students whose parents are uneducated or unemployed. (para. 4)

Equity is the norm in Finland schools, which shows in their performance on the PISA. In a free, democratic society where all students are guaranteed free public education, all students should receive an equitable amount of overall funding. Equitable funding is essential when, as a society

(in the U.S.), we have dictated that all students should receive a similar education (i.e. Common Core) and perform well on standardized assessments.

More than just equitable funding, the U.S. public school system should try to emulate how Finnish schools treat their teachers. Tung (2012) describes how teachers in Finnish schools are treated more as professionals (in line with doctors or lawyers) than in the United States. Finnish leaders claim it is harder to get into an education program in Finland than it is to become a medical doctor. This treatment is a big step in creating a better education system in the United States. If we believed in our teachers, we might rely less on a sanitized “one-size-fits-all” approach in education. In my experience, teachers are much happier when they have classroom autonomy. I am much more comfortable when I can teach not based on what a standardized assessment wants but on what I think is best for my students. Of course, there needs to be some oversight, but most teachers I know do what is best for their students when not constricted and confined by a teaching system reliant on mass oversight tailored toward standardized assessments. Teachers in Finland are free to do what they think is best because they are respected for having the expertise to do what is best.

Additionally, in a free, democratic society, teaching and learning should revolve around what Freire (2000) calls the “problem-posing” education model. Freire (2000) states that this problem-posing education model is when students and educators work together to answer inquiry-type questions. In this model, teachers are not the ultimate knowledge holder who bestows this knowledge on ignorant students. Instead, teachers and students work collaboratively to solve the world’s problems. Both parties have power and a stake in the process. Finland is using something much more in line with Freire’s model, allowing students and teachers more autonomy in the classroom. According to Northern (2018): “Finnish students receive periods of

phenomenon-based learning (PhenoBL), a type of inquiry-based learning... With PhenoBL, students interact around real-world issues to investigate a problem or explore a curiosity from multiple vantage points” (para.1).

This Finish model sounds very similar to Freire's problem-posing model and an inquiry-based approach in classrooms like mine. An inquiry-based approach will benefit students the most in any class, especially in a social studies classroom.

According to a study conducted by Feyzioğlu and Demirci (2021), “Results showed that the inquiry-based learning caused students to move from participatory roles towards constructive ones, whereas the regular science curriculum did not alter participatory roles” (p. 1). I would argue an inquiry-based approach also creates more engaged students in the classroom. In my personal experience, in a social studies classroom, students are much more involved and willing to learn if they answer questions with the teacher.

For example, in my classroom, I have students complete inquiry-based assignments I call “investigations.” In these investigations, students are given a social studies question such as “Was dropping the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki the right decision?” They are given a variety of primary and secondary sources and are asked to answer the question using evidence from said sources. The best part of this type of inquiry-based learning in my classroom is that there is no correct answer to that question. These investigations have students look at multiple documents from multiple points of view. While some may argue that there is a correct answer, it would be irresponsible of me to frame that question as having the correct answer. I respect my students enough and give them the tools and the agency to come to what they think is the right answer. Due to this, students become much more engaged. They have a stake in the outcome of the question, which is not just something they must memorize but come to a logical conclusion

based on evidence and facts. This skill can transfer to any content area in school or any question outside of school.

Using an inquiry-based approach in my classroom also means that I do not assess students in a traditional standardized way. Much like the teachers in Finland, I do not see the benefit in testing my students in conventional methods, especially in a traditional social studies way (i.e., memorizing dates and facts from the past to regurgitate). For example, if I framed the bomb question above as having the correct answer they must learn for a test, I guarantee they will forget it weeks (if not days) after the test. However, if students are forced to come up with what they perceive as the correct answer, I guarantee they will remember the information for much longer. Plus, they have the skills to go back and find the information if they need to remember! These skills are why an inquiry-based approach is the better system to use in a classroom.

All if this then boils down to the most essential yet most specific idea in my philosophy of education: understanding your students and building rapport and relationships with them is the most critical part of any educational setting. According to a study by Munir (2021), when students and teachers at the college level have positive relationships and build rapport with each other, student academic achievement is significantly increased. This approach applies to K-12 education as well because I see in my classroom the benefits of building relationships with students. I can easily see a correlation between the students I have the best rapport with and the positive results in their grades. Students who believe a teacher cares for and understands them are much more likely to learn, continue seeking knowledge and have a positive mindset with your content. In my experience as a student, the teachers I remember the most fondly had very little to do with the subject they taught. My favorite teacher of all time taught my least favorite

subject. Yet, I achieved academically in that class even though my fondness for this subject was minimal. Munir (2021) also echoes these sentiments when they say that a teacher's most powerful tool is their ability to build relationships because those relationships translate to academic success.

In summary, the more broad-scale ideas in my philosophy of education include equitable funding across the board for all public schools, less reliance on standardized assessments, and increased respect and autonomy for teachers. The more classroom-level ideas of my philosophy of education include using an inquiry-based approach and building relationships and rapport with your students. How each of these is related is simply; more equitable funding means less reliance on standardized assessments. In addition, standardized assessments need to align with respect and autonomy for teachers, which means less inquiry-based curriculums and less time and effort spent on student-teacher relationships because the only relationship that matters is the relationship between the student and their standardized test scores.

Looking Ahead

Chapter 3 will begin with the history of my concern. We start by analyzing the origins of textbooks in schools in the colonial USA and tracing history textbooks' evolution to the present. We will then examine the consequences of using history textbooks, including; trauma and deficit thinking. Finally, Chapter 3 wraps up with solutions to history textbooks that include multiple viewpoints, critical consciousness, dialogue, and inquiry.

Chapter 3

Narrative

The History of My Concern: Introduction

Concerns about how we teach history, what history is taught - or perhaps more accurately stated, “whose” history is taught - and the consequences of teaching history in particular ways are not new. You will see throughout this section that historical and educational texts and their roles in education have been a part of American history longer than even the United States has existed as a nation. According to Malott (2021): “Histories are not simply mirror images of the past. Rather, histories are narratives or stories written from particular points of view or orientations” (p. 2). Throughout our nation’s history, particular points of view and orientations have ebbed and flowed depending on current and past events. From the colonial period to the present, I will chart how educational texts have influenced social studies education and its societal impacts. Especially in our recent history, history textbooks have been the primary driver and source of the historical information used in schools. According to Bohan (2021): “Textbooks...have dominated education for more than a hundred years, providing a road map for the school curriculum. So they have a tremendous influence on what Americans learn and as a result, they’ve been heavily policed by interest groups from all sides” (para. 10). Throughout this section, we will determine how we got to this point, what has changed from the Colonial Period to Now, and the impacts of history textbooks throughout these periods.

Colonial Period/Birth of the USA: The New England Primer

In the Colonial Period of American history, the Christian God played an important role in education (especially in the New England colonies.) Puritans and their beliefs dominated the New England colonies. Puritans were born out of the Protestant Reformation in England and fled to the British Colonies of North America because their radical religious views were not tolerated in England. Fear was inherent in being a Puritan because they believed certain people were predestined for heaven at birth, but you did not know your fate until you died. As a result, Puritans were constantly looking for signs from the divine and living a strict life devoted to God.

Due to this strict, fear-based religion, Puritans created an educational book called the *New England Primer*. This academic book combined a religious text and teaching students language. According to Watters (1995):“...Puritan parents wanted children to memorize phrases with religious content as the earliest possible age” (p. 195). The *Primer* taught children that they are inherently flawed because the original children (Adam and Eve) went against God and angered him. The result was that the *Primer* used fear to motivate and educate the children of the New England colonies.

Along with fear, they promoted memorization, which they called “echoes” (as one would echo what they have learned.) Cotton Mather and John Cotten (two prominent Puritan preachers and leaders) distrusted “uncontrolled speech” and used the *Primer* as a tool to both control and teach young Puritans (Watters, 1985, pp. 194-196). One of the first educational texts used by Europeans in what would become the United States used fear to promote compliance along with using memorization or “echoes,” a theme that will and has continued in our modern-day history textbooks.

Benjamin Rush and Noah Webster

After the Revolutionary War, the idea of American history was born. Young children would have the opportunity to learn about the events of the war and the people involved.

Benjamin Rush and Noah Webster were instrumental in setting up early educational texts in this brand-new nation. From the very beginning of our country, these men wanted to make heroes out of our “founding fathers.” For example, as argued by Malott (2021),

Rush and Webster insisted on creating history narratives that glorified so-called founding fathers such as George Washington. By ignoring essential information like the fact that he was one of the wealthiest slavers of his time, and by claiming he was humble and wise, narratives portrayed (and portray) Washington as a saintly hero of the people. (p. 56)

From the beginning, this laid the groundwork to view our founders as larger-than-life figures, focusing solely on creating heroes out of these men. According to Lindley (n.d.), the very first American history textbook: *Early American History*, was written by Noah Webster and continues to sell copies.

The country at this time was comprised of many people who were, by definition, rebels, and revolutionaries as they had just gone through a revolution. As a result, Rush and Webster were keen on creating educational materials that “suppressed the rebellious spirit” of these citizens (Malott, 2021, p. 72). This suppression was especially prevalent when this country threw out the Articles of Confederation in exchange for the Constitution. The United States eliminated the Articles of Confederation because of how little power it gave the federal government, leaving the individual states all of the power. A big reason for this shift was an event like Shay’s Rebellion. Shay’s Rebellion was an uprising by farmers (yeomen) over unfair taxation (sound familiar?) While these farmers' grievances were warranted based simply on the revolution that

was fought ten years earlier, Rush and Webster used this opportunity to push educational materials to undermine the grievances of these farmers. In describing the conditions preceding the Shay's Rebellion, Malott (2021) states, "...by the late eighteenth century merchants believed they could convince yeomen to limit their consumption, they could undermine the very reason for their rebellion...Noah Webster developed educational materials from this orientation encouraging frugality..." (p. 64). Webster pushed the idea through educational materials that these farmers' grievances resulted from bad financial decisions and ignorance. This idea would help to promote a push to approve this new Constitution that intensely concentrates governmental power and the nation's economy to permanently prevent uprisings such as Shays' from ever happening again. Rush proposed the creation of a federal university and postal system to send educational materials to the people to teach the "principles of commerce" (Malott, 2021, p. 73). According to Malott (2021), probably the critical note regarding Rush's view on the purpose of public education was a goal to "render the mass of people more homogeneous, and thereby fit them more easily for uniform and peaceful government" (p. 76). Rush wanted to use education and educational materials to make people believe the same information, to make them easier to govern. This idea is foundational because we have evidence of educational materials attempting to manipulate people's perceptions of events from this point in our nation's history. Farmers had the same grievances as our "founding fathers" only a decade later. Still, we see educational materials making no connections between these two events but using these materials to manipulate events and therefore manipulate the truth.

Civil War Era

The Civil War Era was rife with conflict. The North/Union won the war on the battlefield, but the South/Confederacy won over how we remember it. When the war ended in

1865, the fighting on the battlefield stopped, but as the Reconstruction period began, the war was beginning. At first, the North was using textbooks, according to Giesberg (2006), that would “establish an emancipationist legacy of the war by describing a long history of antislavery sentiment in the North and celebrating Lincoln as an abolitionist hero” (p. 292). For example, Giesberg (2006) explains schoolchildren read about freedmen's actions to help the Union win the war in *A Child's History of the United States*, published in 1866. Giesberg (2006) continues by explaining another book used by schoolchildren: *Pictorial History of the United States* describes the slave trade with an abolitionist mindset and explains slavery's central role in American history. *A Pictorial History of the United States* wanted young children to remember the heroes before them that worked to abolish slavery.

Alternatively, as early as 1859 (during the war), the South was worried about Northern writers influencing young Southern children. As a result, Southern nationalism was cultivated, which would ultimately influence and bleed into Northern textbooks by the end of the century. Confederate schoolchildren were taught that slavery was shared by both Northern and Southern states and defended the South's right to succeed. They rationalized the North's antislavery stance as purely economic, claiming jealous Northern businesspeople no longer saw slavery as profitable. Northern antislavery claims were an attack on the South's ways of life. Additionally, they take no accountability for the slave trade, blaming foreign countries like Spain and Portugal (Giesberg, 2006)

After the war, many sought to move past the conflict and bring the country back together. Unfortunately, that meant rewriting the past. For example, Giesberg (2006) tells us in a later edition of *Pictorial*, published in 1877, “...all images of slaves and slavery were gone, and Goodrich (the author) applauded national reconciliation efforts, because ‘the time had come to

bury the past [for] both North and South were ready to forget and forgive” (p. 283). It had only been 12 years since the end of the war and the abolition of slavery, but this book was ready to erase slavery from our nation’s history.

The 1880s elimination of slavery from textbooks coincided with school segregation, allowing a whole generation of white schoolchildren to be taught that the Civil War had nothing to do with slavery (Giesberg, 2006). It even saw a shift in how school children were taught to view freedmen. Instead of viewing them as citizens, they were taught to view them as workers. They read about how freedmen were producers of cotton and other materials to help the nation’s new industrialized economy. Giesberg (2006) continues by giving an example from “*United States: Its History and Constitution* (1889) by Alexander Johnson: In the last 18 years of slave labor, freedmen produced 51 million bales of cotton vs. 75 million bales produced in the 18 years of “free-labor crops” (p. 285). Instead of viewing freemen as citizens (and ultimately fellow human beings), we have textbooks telling them how much better the nation is now because freemen are more productive post-slavery than during it. In addition, Giesberg (2006) wrote that national textbook authors pushed the ideals of obedience and industrial productivity “...following the lead of Southern educators who designed a public school curriculum that would reproduce the obedience and docility of slave labor in the new industrial postwar context” (p. 286). Not only did they erase slavery, but they also wanted to make sure they crafted obedient workers to contribute to the rapid rise of industrialization during this post-war period. According to Giesberg (2006): “In late nineteenth-century history texts, citizenship was defined in economic rather than in moral terms—and progress was measured in dollar amounts” (p. 296). It did not matter if a person were white or black. Your worth was measured by what you contributed to this exploding capitalist system. In the South, there was a push for free public education because

capitalists wanted an educated, obedient labor force. The South only saw freedmen as an economic commodity. Giesberg (2006) explains that the black man needed to be taught “industry, order, and docility” (p. 296).

Another aspect worth mentioning was the effects of these changes to history texts on African Americans. We should start with education for the enslaved before emancipation at the end of the Civil War. It was illegal for the enslaved to learn to read or write during enslavement. The goal was to keep the enslaved ignorant, shifting all power to the enslavers (Malott, 2021). Additionally, according to Malott (2021), during Jim Crow, “...the laws became more punitive and far-reaching in the nineteenth century: from outlawing just the enslaved from literacy to all Black people enslaved or free; from fining teachers for teaching the enslaved, to jail time and whippings in addition to fines for teaching any Black person, enslaved or free” (p. 96). Even though the former enslaved were “free” in the South, they still were not granted access to education and knowledge that can come with it. Even the freedmen who had access to education during the late 19th century continued to see the erasure of black history. According to Ginsberg (2006), textbooks in the 1880s and 1890s removed Black agency and experience from histories of the Civil War to try to mend a country together based on industry. “Texts are potent tools in the construction of national memory” (p. 290). If historical texts downplay, deny, or manipulate slavery, that is how the nation’s schoolchildren will remember this period. Additionally, because of the literacy laws placed on the enslaved, we have very few primary sources from that era from Black voices. Not only was history being erased during this period in favor of industrialization, but we also have a whole history of people that were never written down and will never be remembered.

Early Twentieth Century: The Red Scare(s)

The context of the Red Scare(s) from the 1920s through the 1950s is crucial to understanding the following sections. The Red Scare(s) can be described as paranoia revolving around the rise of communism and socialism worldwide and in the United States. The establishment in the United States viewed the rise of communism and socialism as a threat to the American system of capitalism. The first Red Scare occurred following WWI and the Russian/Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. This Revolution saw the birth of the communist party in Russia and the end of the Czar.

Additionally, due to post-WWI economic struggles, labor unions in the USA pushed for more fair labor practices, pay, etc. Many of these unions adopted socialist and communist ideals. In 1920 the United States government arrested thousands of suspected “radicals” (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, n.d.). Later, in the early 1950s, a second Red Scare took place in the United States. Similar to the first, the second Red Scare was concerned with “subversive” communist ideas from everyday people, up to those working in government and the White House (University of Virginia, n.d.).

Harold Rugg

During WWII, progressive writer Harold Rugg came under fire over the content of his history textbooks. From 1929 to 1939, over 1.3 million copies of his textbooks were used in 5,000 school districts nationwide. According to Dorn (2008), conservative opponents of Rugg’s work claimed his textbook was “subversive and un-American,” they tried to get his book banned from multiple school districts. This argument over Rugg’s books gained national attention with Time Magazine, The New York Times, and local newspapers (pp. 457-458).

What made Harold Rugg a “progressive” textbook author included these opinions from Dorn (2008) “...Harold Rugg believed that the social, political, and economic arrangements developing in the USA to serve an expanding system of laissez-faire industrial capitalism threatened American democracy...” (p. 461). He was critical of capitalism's role in American society and reflected that in the history of this country. Rugg included in his teacher guide for his textbook that teachers should be conscious that students might conclude that the industrial, capitalist system has benefited everyone in the United States. Rugg states that his books may even conclude a more rosy picture of American capitalism and industrialization than is accurate. He even included: “...there are at least one-half million men without jobs, – the great army of the unemployed, – and that labor conditions in many of the cotton mills and other factories of the country are far from ideal” (Dorn, 2008, p. 466).

Another example is in how he viewed the “founding fathers.” He reports the traditional facts, such as they were “intelligent, even brilliant, Americans.” However, he also notes how these men were “exceedingly conservative,” and they were “... lawyers, businessmen, owners of great plantations, merchants, and manufacturers” (Dorn, 2008, p. 466). As one can imagine, being critical of capitalism and including the totality of who the “founding fathers” indeed were would be progressive even by modern standards but incredibly progressive for the early 20th century. Lastly, according to Dorn (2008):

Rugg committed himself to theorizing a “problem-based curriculum and implementing a “reconstructed” social studies program. “Not the learning of texts”, Rugg urged, “but the solving of problems is what we need. Our materials must be organized around issues, problems – unanswered questions which the pupil recognizes as important and which he really strives to unravel. (p. 461)

Rugg clearly emphasizes what could be described as a modern, inquiry-based curriculum. Instead of having students memorize facts, Rugg encourages the solving of problems. Another example of a progressive ideal Rugg is pushing back in the early 20th century.

Who were the opponents of Rugg's work, and what were their criticisms? As early as 1935, a Washington, DC, group labeled his work "communistic" and demanded it is banned from all public schools (Dorn, 2008, p. 463). Later in 1939, the American Federation of Advertising (AFA), objected to Rugg's criticism of corporations and capitalism. The AFA wrote an article titled: "Facts You Should Know about Anti-Advertising Propaganda in School Textbooks" (Dorn, 2008, p. 463). Being critical of corporations and capitalism put Rugg in the sights of groups traditionally that had nothing to say about textbooks. Here we have this group going as far as calling Rugg's work "propaganda."

Additionally, Dorn (2008) explains that criticism and attacks started coming from the American Legion. The American Legion published an article titled "Treason in the Textbooks" and named "...Harold Rugg one of the leaders of a movement designed to undermine American society" (p. 465). From the mid-1930s to the middle of WWII, conservative and corporate interest groups attacked Rugg for promoting communism, being treasonous, anti-American, and even "socialistic" (Dorn, 2008, p. 468). It is worth noting that calling someone a "communist" during this period was an effort to discredit someone going against the dominant ideology of the time that America was #1. Rugg was not a communist, but calling him one was an attack that his opponents would use to discredit his views.

Due to the attacks from these groups, school board meetings started turning into places of controversy surrounding Rugg's textbooks. According to Dorn (2008), one school board member was quoted as saying:

... I mean to battle against such poisoning of the youth of America. I plan to insist that this anti-American educator's textbooks be cast out. Moreover, I find this same fellow's outpourings included in a list recommended for inclusion in a school library. I am protesting. I would not want my own children contaminated by conversion to Communism. Therefore, I consider it my duty to protect the children of others against such insidious contamination... (p. 463)

However, many came to Rugg's defense during these school board meetings. It seemed as if most people supported Rugg and his viewpoints. Dorn (2008) writes: "Throughout the war years, parents, school officials, veterans, members of the clergy, and many others came to Rugg's defense. Summarising their refusal to bow to the demands of reactionary textbook censors..." (p. 460). Supporters would show up to these meetings angry about the attacks on Rugg, for example, as Dorn (2008) stated:

The New York Times reported that "parents, led by the Rev. James A. Mitchell ... aided Dr. Rugg in replying to his accusers" and that "the prosecution" was met by "prolonged boos" when it characterized as "un-American" and "false" Rugg's claim that the USA was not a land of opportunity for all people. "Were you ever in the South?", Reverend Mitchell demanded. "Have you ever seen the sharecroppers? If you have, do you still contend this is the land of opportunity for all the people? (p. 467)

People who were the unfortunate "beneficiaries" of the dark sides of American industrialization and capitalism came to Rugg's defense because they had lived experiences with what Rugg would describe in his textbooks. While the critics of Rugg were often loud and had some power and influence, it seemed the everyday person showed up to these school board meetings in support of Rugg.

Whether or not the majority supported Rugg, there were negative consequences for all the bad publicity and attacks his textbooks received. His textbooks were very popular in schools until 1940, but later, his sales declined by over 90% throughout WWII (Dorn, 2008, p. 463). As a result, Rugg would begin to try and “self-censor.” Dorn (2008) describes how Rugg himself began to censor himself in his work:

Claiming that he had learned over time to self-censor, Rugg admitted that there were simply things he “could not say” in the books if he wished for them to be adopted for use in the nation’s classrooms. “One can describe the Founding Fathers as ‘brilliant and devout patriots,’ Rugg observed, “but not as the ‘Founding Fathers, brilliant and devout patriots, men of property who made the Constitution difficult to change”. He also noted that, “One can teach ‘America – a land of opportunity” but not “America – a land of opportunity for many but not a land of equal opportunity for all. (p. 465)

Rugg realized it was okay to include half the truth (the patriotic truth), such as the “founding fathers” were “brilliant and devout patriots” but not wealthy, conservative, and slave-owning. It was more trouble than it was worth to point out that opportunity for some in America was not as easy as for others. Similarly, other progressive authors during this period saw what was happening to Rugg and did everything they could to keep their work free of similar attacks. These other authors would exchange letters to determine what words and phrases to avoid (Dorn, 2008).

Mid/Late-Twentieth Century: Janice Law Trecker

In 1973, Janice Law Trecker researched and wrote an article about the coverage women were getting in high school history textbooks. In her work, she discovered that even though

women had made meaningful contributions to American society throughout history, we would hardly know that by reading a high school history textbook. According to Trecker (1973):

Unfortunately, instead of trying to find out what women have contributed to America, most historians and students have been content to answer...by saying, "But women haven't done anything". The fact of the matter is not that women haven't made important contributions, but that their history has not been recorded. (p. 133)

Her argument insists that while women have done historically significant work, it does not correspond to significant coverage in history textbooks.

Trecker (1973) argues that a male perspective is used whenever possible, and men are quoted even when it comes to issues involving primarily women. She summarizes women's history according to history textbooks in the 1970s as follows:

Based on the information in these commonly-used high school texts, one might summarize the history and contributions of the American woman as follows: Women arrived in America in 1619 (an inaccurate choice of date if meant to be their first acquaintance with the new world.) They held the Seneca Falls Convention on Women's Rights in 1848. For the rest of the nineteenth century, they participated in reform movements, chiefly temperance, and were exploited in factories. In 1923 they were given the vote. They joined the armed forces for the first time during the Second World War and thereafter have enjoyed the good life in America. Add the names of the women who are invariably mentioned, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Jane Addams, Dorothea Dix, and Frances Perkins, with perhaps Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and, almost as frequently, Carry Nation, and you have the basic text. (p. 134)

As you can see, this is a fundamental outline of women's history and practically ignores modern hardships or struggles still faced by women. After the suffrage movement ended and women could finally vote, their issues in American society vanished.

Trecker (1973) continues her critiques of women's coverage in American society by breaking down the significant periods of American history, starting with the colonial period. She gives an example of how "masculine" tools like an ax, six-shooter, and the prairie-breaker plow get more coverage than actual human women during this period. "One textbook (Kownlar & Frizzle, 1964) is so enthralled with these instruments that five pages are devoted to the story of the six-shooter. Scarcely five lines are spent on the life of the frontier woman in this text, and most other works are also reticent about the pioneer women" (pp. 134-135). She rightly calls out the absurdity of guns getting more than 5 pages of coverage while women get barely 5 lines. Trecker (1973) continues by discussing the post-colonial period and how it is "...rare for more than one paragraph to be devoted to the entire development of education for women" (pp.135-136). There is no discussion of early women educators and little discussion about the struggle for women to access higher education.

Trecker (1973) continues to the Civil War era and how women had a variety of roles both on and off the battlefields, yet the impact of the war on women is barely mentioned. Trecker emphasizes how Black women barely get more than one line, and the struggle for Black women to set up schools for Black children is often left out of history textbooks. She even goes as far as to say that "black history follows the white pattern and minimizes or omits the achievements of the black woman" (Trecker, 1973, p. 134). Throughout history, texts in this period, while White women get some coverage, Black women get practically zero.

Next, Trecker (1973) jumps to the early 20th century and the women's suffrage movement. Trecker states that in most textbooks, women's rights and suffrage are the two topics that get the most attention and coverage regarding women in American history. However, according to Trecker (1973): "...a full page on suffrage and women's rights is a rarity and most texts give the whole movement approximately three paragraphs" (p. 136). Once textbooks inadequately discuss the suffrage movement, these textbooks often view the passage of the 19th Amendment as the end of the struggle for women in the United States. According to Trecker (1973): "The history texts give the impression that the passage of the nineteenth amendment solved all the problems created by the traditional social, legal, and political question of women" (p. 137). This mindset then creates the illusion that more modern problems for women are not real problems because the passage of the 19th Amendment ended problems for women.

Finally, Trecker (1973) concludes through her research that history textbooks reflect that male achievements and activities are considered more important than female achievements and activities. "The treatment of women in U.S. history texts simply reflects the attitudes and prejudices of society" (p. 138). Textbooks reinforce the stereotype of male superiority. Trecker (1973) leaves her readers with this final plea:

What is needed, besides more information, is a new attitude: one which breaks away from the bias of traditional views of women and their "place" and attempts to treat both women and men as partners in their society; one which does not automatically value activities by the sex performing them; and one which does not relate history from the viewpoint of only half of the human family. (p. 139)

Frances FitzGerald

Another woman's work that is very influential during this period is Frances FitzGerald. FitzGerald wrote the book *America Revised*. *America Revised* discusses history textbooks and their influence in the mid-twentieth century. According to Lindley (n.d.):

FitzGerald criticized most history school texts as dull and simplistic. She contended that U.S. history texts were written in flaccid and vacuous "textbook prose" by editors and educational specialists who excised any ideas likely to prove offensive to community prejudices almost anywhere. (para. 26)

FitzGerald (1979) writes that textbooks do not take sides or stand on any topic to ensure no group is offended. To make matters worse, she concludes that textbooks are American history. What is written in them is taken as the "truth or the whole truth," and they have the "trappings of authority" (p. 8). Due to this, children are never asked to criticize or analyze the point of view of the textbook. This mindset is a double-edged sword because if students believe textbooks are the "Ministries of Truth," textbook editors begin to see themselves in this role (FitzGerald, 1979, p. 27). Tied to textbooks, history education is even described as strictly the "American system" of education by Europeans. FitzGerald describes how history in textbooks is presented as a collection of events and issues with no clear direction or connection made from one event or time to the next.

FitzGerald (1979) later in her book goes on to describe the textbook writing, editing, and adoption process. Textbooks are constantly being updated and edited, and substantial changes happen almost every 3-4 years. In theory, the system is reasonable, but what children learn from their textbooks is that their particular version of America is forever. Even if they are being theoretically updated with more accurate information often, what a student learns sticks with

them. Regarding the actual writing of textbooks, many famous historians whose names adorned textbooks were either dead at the time of publishing or before many of the events being described.

Additionally, many statements in history textbooks directly contradict these famous historians' established points of view. This contradiction means that the authors listed in a history textbook have no weight and do not reflect the thoughts or viewpoints of those authors. Many people have a hand in writing them, and they are tailored to please a public that extends beyond the vast educational establishment (FitzGerald, 1979). FitzGerald (1979) continues by claiming that textbooks are no longer “written” but rather “developed.” Many people and hands are involved, and many compromises are made. Not since the 1920s did textbooks come from a single author. “The costs are too great, the risks too high, and the demands from the schools too exacting” (p. 22).

What happens when someone or something pushes back and attempts to publish something more truthful and progressive? FitzGerald (1979) describes the following example from Mississippi; Robert Bernstein, the president of Random House, runs a sizeable book-publishing company. Tougaloo and Millsaps College students and faculty wrote a manuscript of Mississippi history in which racial conflict was discussed “frankly” along with black Mississippian's contributions to the state. Multiple textbook houses initially turned down the manuscript until Bernstein backed it. The textbook was called: *Mississippi: Conflict and Change*. Most books never made it out of the warehouse because the Mississippi State Textbook Purchasing Board (the sole customer for textbook purchases in Mississippi) refused to purchase them. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund sued the Purchasing Board for “promoting white supremacy,” but Random House did not join the suit, and the case went nowhere (p. 29).

Ultimately, textbook writing, editing, and adoption are business decisions. Controversy is terrible for business, even if the “controversy” (accurate depictions of history) is warranted or needs to be explored.

Finally, FitzGerald (1979) briefly discusses the alternatives to traditional textbooks: “...“discovery,” or “inquiry,” texts, which deal with a limited number of specific issues in American history. These texts do not pretend to cover the past; they focus on particular topics...and illustrate them with documents from primary and secondary sources” (p. 12). This alternative described is a very modern (as in 2023 modern) view of history education. We will see later how inquiry is the gold standard in our modern world. It is encouraging to see a book from 1979 calling for inquiry-style history education. However, it is also depressing how we are still reaching for that style of education 40 years later.

Violence in West Virginia

In 1974, violence broke out in West Virginia over adopting new school-related reading materials. While this violence did not specifically involve history textbooks, it involved texts used in school that include diverse voices and viewpoints. These diverse voices and viewpoints make it relevant in this conversation. While this event was the most extreme in this period, it was not a significant outlier.

In 1974, there were new state mandates in West Virginia to include books in schools that portray the contributions of minorities to overall American culture and society. Authors ranged from James Baldwin to George Orwell. There was an immediate backlash against these mandates and the inclusion of these diverse authors. According to Dorn (2017), the backlash claimed these books were “anti-American,” “...contained obscene material, put down Jesus Christ, and upheld communism.” There was also the belief that these books “...would expose white children to black

vernacular and teach them “to speak in ghetto dialect.” The Ku Klux Klan even appeared shouting, “Get the Nigger Books Out!” (para, 11).

Things began to turn violent. According to Day (2017):

Two men were shot and injured on a picket line outside a coal mine. One elementary school was firebombed, another dynamited. The school superintendent was sprayed with mace and received death threats. A group of extremist fundamentalists led by Reverend Marvin Horan gathered to discuss the possibility of bombing buses full of children headed to school during the boycott (Horan later did jail time for the conspiracy). That didn’t happen, but school buses were shot at and stoned, as were the residences of families who chose to continue sending their children to school. (para. 12)

Ultimately, the violence subsided, and the books remained a part of the curriculum. However, this event served as a blueprint for conservative-leaning communities on how to come together to fight progressive advances made in public schools. This battle is ongoing; examples will be explored later in modern history.

Late Twentieth Century: A Nation At Risk

During the height of the Cold War, the US saw a much more aggressive push for standardized testing because of fears that U.S. students would not be able to compete in a global economy. These fears all came to a head when a report called *A Nation At Risk* was published in 1983. According to Ansary (2007):

When the report was released in April 1983, it claimed that American students were plummeting academically, that schools suffered from uneven standards, and that teachers

were not prepared. The report noted that our economy and national security would crumble if something weren't done. (para. 12)

Ansary (2007) states that while the report caught on like wildfire, none was based on reality. Test scores steadily rose in reading and writing from the '70s to 1988, and America had the most 22-year-olds in the world with bachelor's degrees in 1988. This reality starkly contrasts what *A Nation At Risk* claimed; however, the damage had been done. The U.S. has steadily been pushing more and more standardized testing ever since. Due to the increase in reliance on and overall prominence of standardized assessments, schools started relying on more scripted curricula and reliance on textbooks.

Howard Zinn

In 1980 historian Howard Zinn wrote a groundbreaking book: *A People's History of the United States*. In this book, Zinn describes United States history through the lens of the poor/working class, women, and people of color. He provides a view of American history that goes against the typical white, ethnocentric view of American history. Zinn (2015) argues that American history is taught from the elite, white, male, and ruling-class perspective.

Providing some additional context: Zinn (2015) mentions a book written by Samuel Eliot Morison that details Columbus's life. He accuses him of not outright lying or manipulating the truth but something much more sinister.

...he mentions the truth quickly and goes on to other things more important to him.

Outright lying or quiet omission takes the risk of discovery, which, when made, might arouse the reader to rebel against the writer. To state the facts, however, and then to bury them in a mass of other information is to say to the reader with a certain infectious calm:

yes, mass murder took place, but it's not that important-it should weigh very little in our final judgments; it should affect very little what we do in the world. (p. 10)

History textbooks may include mentions or address the darkest parts of American history. However, Zinn (2015) mentions that they are buried among the information I consider more positive or “patriotic.” We will mention racism, homophobia, sexism, and violence against oppressed groups but surround them with the “more important stuff.”

According to Zinn (2015): “Too much history, he contends, is written ‘from the point of view of governments, conquerors, diplomats, leaders’” (p. 7). Throughout our history as a country, our governments, conquerors, diplomats, and leaders have been overwhelmingly white and overwhelmingly male. So, when we write about the past in our history textbooks, it is through the lens of those white men. What happens is that oppressed groups in our society are forgotten, brushed over, or we pretend the problems of the past remain in the past.

National History Standards

In 1994, Lynne Cheney (the future second lady of the United States) wrote an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal criticizing the federal government's new National History Standards. She criticized them for their “political correctness” (Nash, 2004). According to Nash (2004), teacher task forces in LA and Washington developed the National History Standards. Over 32 months, academic historians, school administrators, and history educators came together to craft history standards that better reflected American society in 1994. The Standards were approved by a national council and endorsed by 30 major professional and public interest organizations.

Specific issues Cheney held with the National History Standards include the attention (or lack thereof) to specific groups and topics while leaving others out. According to Nash (2004), “She pronounced the standards project a disaster for giving insufficient attention to Robert E.

Lee and the Wright brothers and far too much to obscure figures (such as Harriet Tubman) or patriotically embarrassing episodes (such as the Ku Klux Klan and McCarthyism).” Ironically, Cheney (1994) also discusses how the National Standards spend too much time focusing on the positive aspects of Aztec culture (architecture, skills, labor systems, and agriculture) and not enough time on the practice of human sacrifice. To recap, Cheney (1994) argues that the Standards spend too much on some negative aspects of American history and the positive aspects of the history and culture of other civilizations. She even goes one step further by counting the number of times specific people or events are mentioned. According to Cheney (1994):

One of the most often mentioned subjects, with 19 references, is McCarthy and McCarthyism. The Ku Klux Klan gets its fair share, too, with 17. As for individuals, Harriet Tubman, an African American who helped rescue slaves by way of the underground railroad, is mentioned six times. Two white males who were contemporaries of Tubman, Ulysses S. Grant, and Robert E. Lee, get one and zero mentions, respectively. Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Jonas Salk, and the Wright brothers make no appearance at all. (para. 8)

Cheney has an issue with the lack of “white male” representation in the Standards versus the representation of other groups.

Cheney and others used this point to use the phrase “political correctness” to attack history education they did not like. What is probably most telling is Cheney (1994) uses this phrasing about supporters of the Standards: “...no longer bothered to conceal their “great hatred for traditional history” (para. 14). As if she and others are less concerned with teaching accurate history and more concerned with teaching “traditional history.” “Traditional history,” in this sense, seems to be a focus on the white male perspective while also being infallibly patriotic.

Anything that falls outside of this is considered “politically correct.” It does not matter if “politically correct” is the truth because that is not the goal of Cheney and her allies.

Unfortunately, this movement continued for well over a decade (well into Cheney’s time as first lady of the United States), and this fight has morphed slightly today, changing from the phrase “political correctness” to “wokeness.”

James Loewen

In 1995, James Loewen wrote a book I consider one of the most critical works on this topic. Loewen’s book *Lies My Teacher Told Me* describes how in American history, many of the everyday things we are taught in history classes (often through textbooks) are untrue. His book *Lies My Teacher Told Me* is often referenced and cited whenever this topic arises in education. Loewen (1995) starts his book by explaining how much students (of all ethnicities) hate history class. Loewen’s (1995) main argument is that it is not the content that is the problem but the way it is being taught:

What has gone wrong? We begin to get a handle on this question by noting that the teaching of history, more than any other discipline, is dominated by textbooks. And the students are right: the books are boring. The stories that history textbooks tell are predictable; every problem has already been solved or is about to be solved. Textbooks exclude conflict or real suspense. They leave out anything that might reflect badly upon our national character. When they try for drama, they achieve only melodrama, because readers know that everything will turn out fine in the end. (p. 13)

Textbooks are problematic simply from an engagement standpoint, but Loewen’s main point throughout the book is that history textbooks routinely lie, mislead, or twist the truth. In his book, Loewen discusses Columbus through the Vietnam War and illuminates the reader how

often we were taught complete falsehoods. He also describes how textbooks often never make connections between events in history. According to Loewen (1995): "...textbooks seldom use the past to illuminate the present" (p. 13). Events are never connected, leading readers to believe that history is given and not the result of the consequences of past events.

One great example from Loewen's *Lies My Teacher Told Me* is the discussion of Christopher Columbus. In *Lies*, Loewen (1995) discusses how history textbooks describe Columbus as "America's first great hero" (p. 38). Loewen (1995) later goes on the offensive against this idea:

Unfortunately, almost everything...is either wrong or unverifiable. The authors of history textbooks have taken us on a trip of their own, away from the facts of history, into the realm of myth. They and we have been duped by an outrageous concoction of lies, half-truths, and omissions... (p. 39)

He explains how people had already inhabited the lands Columbus "discovered" he did not discover the world was round, and Columbus enslaved/oppressed the people and places he "discovered."

Finally, in 2010, Loewen published another book: *Teaching what really happened: How to avoid the tyranny of textbooks and get students excited about doing history*. This book is aimed more toward history educators on how to look for alternatives to history textbooks. In *Teaching*, Loewen (2010) describes skills students should be able to use as a result of more effective social studies education. We used this book in my history education courses of my collegiate teacher preparation program. In the next section, you will see that the ideas in this book overlap with more modern social studies techniques. According to Loewen (2010), students should be able to: "read critically, assessing whether those ideas are supported by evidence..."

“understand the difference between primary and secondary sources...”, and “cause change in society” (p. 28). Loewen, overall, has been a prominent figure (perhaps the most prominent) in the anti-textbook movement in social studies education.

Textbook Adoption

Modern history textbook adoption is worth investigating because the adoption process dictates the publishing and distribution of history textbooks. Of the 50 states, 31 of those select their textbooks on the local level via school districts. The remaining 19 use a combination of state and local adoption. However, of these 50 states and the thousands of school districts, only 3 states dictate the history textbooks adopted by the other 47. According to Schmidt (2022):

Historically, California and Texas have driven the K-12 publishing industry, and now Florida is also influencing the market. According to the Association of American Publishers, from March 2020 to March 2021, California, Florida, and Texas bought \$3.9 million, \$8.5 million, and \$2.3 million worth of pedagogical materials, respectively. The total expenditure of these states accounted for about one-quarter of pre-K-12 resource revenue for publishers that year. (para. 8)

Due to these facts, publishers aim to appease these three states the most regarding the content of their textbooks. Since California, Texas, and Florida are diverse states versus each other and diverse within themselves, publishers take zero risks of offending anyone.

Inquiry-Based Classroom

Today, modern, progressive social studies curriculums and social studies teacher preparation programs have entirely moved away from textbooks. In my own educational experience, I was taught textbooks were not “best-practice,” and James Loewen had a heavy influence on my professor’s social studies pedagogy. As a result, inquiry-based social studies

classrooms have become the most modern and progressive forms of social studies education. The basic premise is that teachers and students ask questions of the past, and together, they use primary and secondary sources to try and solve those problems. The focus is on primary sources (sources from the past, written by those involved with the event.) Students read these primary sources and must come to their own conclusions, versus having a textbook tell students how they should view specific events.

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) is one of the leading institutions for promoting and fostering modern social studies education. According to their vision statement on their website, their goal is to create: “A world in which all students are educated and inspired for lifelong inquiry and informed civic action” (About..., n.d. para, 3). The goal is for students to use inquiry and act on their discoveries to improve the world. C3 Teachers is another organization where I have had plenty of professional development concerning social studies. They created the Inquiry Design Model (IDM). According to their website: “The Inquiry Design Model (IDM) is a distinctive approach to creating curriculum and instructional materials that honors teachers’ knowledge and expertise, avoids overprescription, and focuses on the main elements of the instructional design process as envisioned in the Inquiry Arc of the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for State Social Studies Standards” (Home Page..., n.d. para. 1). Inquiry is having students question the past, to make a better future. This idea is the purpose of a modern progressive social studies curriculum.

Connections and Conclusion

This section went chronologically from the Colonial Period to Now. Connections can be made about the various ideas, themes, and events we examined. First, the idea that textbooks present the truth can be traced back to the *New England Primer*. The *Primer* was presented as the

word of the Christian God. This early relationship with God could explain why, during the Civil War Era, the North and South fought so hard to control the narrative of what students learned in their classrooms. We then see this theme again with FitzGerald's work in the 1970s, referring to textbooks as the "Ministries of Truth."

The following prevalent idea was this male, ethnocentric, and anti-minority bias. Starting during the Civil War Era, the South referred to freedmen as mere workers and a part of this new industrial system versus human beings. We then continue to see this with Trecker's work and how (according to textbooks) women played no significant role in American history, and their problems ended after the passage of the 19th Amendment. Moving on to the 1970s, we see violence in West Virginia from the KKK and others about including diverse voices in the school curriculum. Then we have Howard Zinn in 1980 promoting and including the history of women, people of color, and people with low incomes. Today, people are attempting to include accurate history concerning these marginalized groups. However, detractors of this decry all of this as "critical race theory" and claim it is teaching white students to hate themselves.

Another idea we can connect with is emphasizing patriotism versus the truth. This idea started with Rush and Webster starting the hero worship of George Washington. We then have citizens in WWII accusing Rugg of promoting communism with his critiques of America. These same attacks continued with the violence in West Virginia with similar cries of promoting communism. The attacks then slightly warp with Cheney and her attacks on the National History Standards for promoting "political correctness" and not focusing on the white males of American history. We can now see similar attacks today, with some attacking with the word "woke" to attach to anything these groups do not approve of. It is the same people with the same attacks but slight variations of the words used (communism to political correctness to wokeness).

Lastly, inquiry in social studies is the modern-day gold standard. However, as we saw in the Wartime section, Henry Rugg called for and promoted an inquiry-based approach as far back as WWII. It is disappointing that it has taken us so long to take his message to heart. With all the problems with textbooks throughout history, we must move away from their use and continue promoting inquiry-based learning where students ask questions versus reading from these highly flawed textbooks.

Consequences of Using History Textbooks

This next section will examine two severe consequences of using textbooks in a social studies classroom: trauma and deficit thinking. These consequences occur by themselves and intersect as a result of textbook use. This section will dissect these two consequences and why they are severe.

Trauma

To start, let us first discuss trauma-informed education, and then we will connect trauma-informed education with history textbooks. According to Venet (2021):

Trauma-informed educational practices respond to the impacts of trauma on the entire school community and prevent future trauma from occurring. Equity and social justice are key concerns of trauma-informed educators as we make changes in our practice, in classrooms, in schools, and in district-wide and state-wide systems. (p. 20)

Trauma-informed education aims to “prevent future trauma from occurring,” which is particularly hard to do with history textbooks when they reinforce the historical trauma of marginalized groups. Imagine you have indigenous ancestry, you walk into history class and your teacher exclaims, “Happy Columbus Day!” and proceeds to introduce a lesson that portrays Columbus as a brave explorer and hero for all Americans to look up to and admire. This lesson

will undoubtedly cause trauma to an indigenous person, especially if they are already aware of the genocide that Columbus committed against indigenous populations of the Caribbean. However, let us say they are unaware and go through the next 3, 5, or 10 years not knowing the truth about Columbus. The day they realize their teacher and school had lied to them or twisted the truth that will cause lasting trauma for that person. Venet (2021) provides additional context:

Consider Christopher Columbus: Many Americans were taught in elementary school that Columbus was a brave explorer who discovered America. For Indigenous people, Columbus represents one of many Europeans who murdered their ancestors, forced their expulsion from their homes, and contributed to a collective trauma, actions whose consequences still resonate... (p. 161)

Additionally, what happens when the lie is never revealed? What happens to future generations? This lie may also have even more significant consequences for everyone who is not indigenous or has indigenous ancestry. If you are an indigenous person, all the White, Black, Asian, Indian, etc. people around you believe the lies about Columbus, and it can also become traumatic when you hear those lies repeated and reinforced repeatedly. Venet (2021) describes their experience with one of their students: “One student summarized their learning: “If you do not know the truth, you will repeat the lie. When you tell someone the lie, they will tell the lie, and eventually, the truth will fade away” (p. 161). If the truth fades away, then the trauma is forever. The trauma will continue to be reinforced until history class only traumatizes students of color.

Scholars describe the phenomenon of students of color continually being traumatized by learning about their history as “historical trauma.” According to Kirmayer, Gone, and Moses (2014), historical trauma can have lasting consequences that negatively affect communities for

generations. Kirmayer, Gone, and Moses (2014) provide a table of the consequences of historical trauma on page 309:

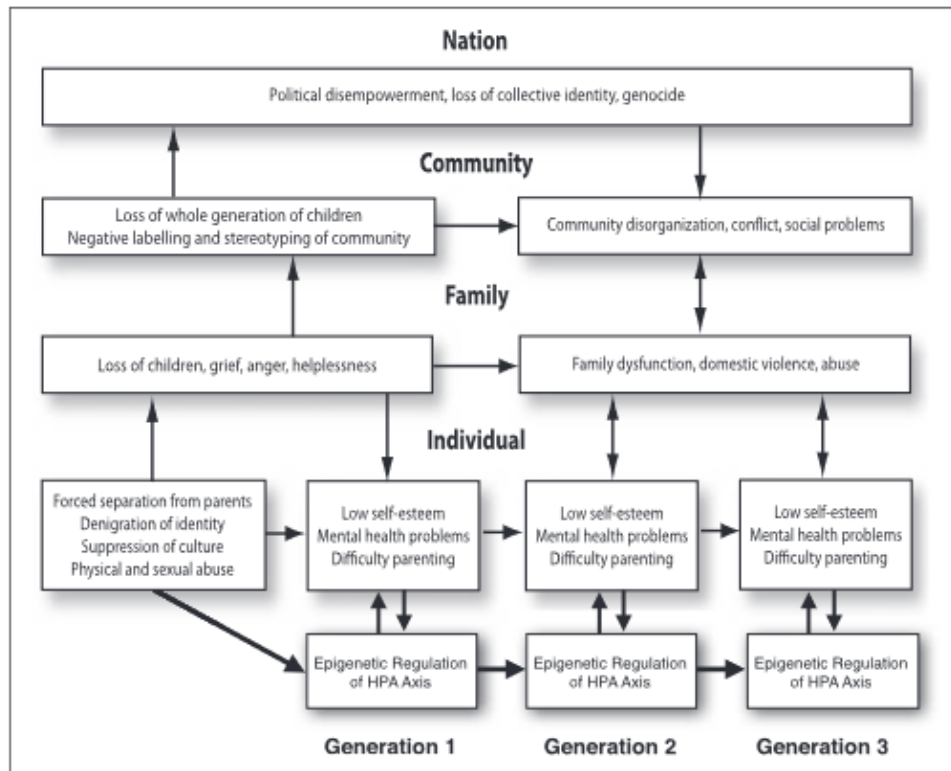


Figure 1. Transgenerational Transmission of Historical Trauma
 The diagram depicts some of the hypothetical pathways through which the effects of trauma and loss may be transmitted across generations through processes at multiple levels, including: epigenetic alterations of stress response; changes in individuals' psychological well-being, self-esteem, and self-efficacy; family functioning; community integrity and cultural identity; and the continuity of identity and collective efficacy of whole nations or peoples. (Adapted from Kirmayer et al., 2007).

Whether you start at Nation and work your way down the chart or start at Generation 1 and move up the chart, you can see the consequences of historical trauma. This chart shows how low self-esteem, mental health problems, and difficulty parenting can spiral into family dysfunction, domestic violence, and abuse. Those problems can lead to generalized stereotypes and, ultimately, we can look at the genocide of culture and people. History textbooks that reinforce and perpetuate historical trauma can lead to genocide. That may sound extreme, but the destruction of peoples and cultures has to begin somewhere.

Trauma can also occur when history is taught as a series of extraordinary people doing extraordinary things. Alridge (2006) refers to the concept as “master narratives:”

A messianic master narrative highlights one exceptional individual as the progenitor of a movement, a leader who rose to lead a people. The idea of messianism has long been a part of American culture and religion. Rooted in Judeo-Christian tradition and beliefs, the concept of a deliverer coming to Earth to free the masses from evil or oppression has been very appealing to Americans because of the predominance of Judeo-Christian beliefs and traditions in the United States. (p. 665)

Alridge (2006) describes how textbooks and curricula often use “master narratives” when describing people such as Martin Luther King Jr. He is portrayed as the savior who single-handedly made black people and white people equal in society. My question is, what happens when my African American students learn this from our textbook, and then watch the news and see unarmed black people being killed by police regularly? Does this not create tension between what they are learning and what they know to be true? I agree that teaching these “master narratives” traumatizes students because it directly contradicts what students see with their own eyes. Martin Luther King Jr.’s life's work should be included in textbooks. However, he should be taught authentically and not through a white lens. The real world is messy, and nothing is simple or easy. Explaining history as a series of heroes who defied the odds to bring change or do something extraordinary does not align with a student's lived reality. Alridge (2006) echoes this sentiment: “When master narratives dominate history textbooks, students find history boring, predictable, or irrelevant” (p. 663). Students can see right past this farce, which is why many students often complain that history is “boring.”

Deficit Thinking

According to Kennedy (2021):

Deficit thinking is the belief that there is a prescribed “correct” way of being — also known as the norm — and anyone who operates outside of that norm is operating at a deficit. They are perceived to be lacking something and therefore need to be “fixed” and brought into the norm to be successful. Unfortunately, the burden of the prescribed “fix” usually falls entirely on the individual by suggesting that they “try harder” and ultimately conform to the practices of the dominant culture. Historically, if there is support available, it is entirely focused on bringing others into the norm, rather than changing the norm to accommodate others. This can be a painful, even violent experience. (para. 7)

Deficit thinking does not come from anywhere; it is learned in school. More specifically, it is taught in our textbooks. Suppose students of color and white students constantly see portrayals of people of color as “other” (slaves, immigrants, aliens, etc.); that has a lasting impact on how society will continue to see that population in modern society. It contributes to the idea that people of color do not succeed to the same degree as White people because something is wrong with them. Patton, Davis, and Museus (2019) echo this:

In general, deficit thinking holds students from historically oppressed populations responsible for the challenges and inequalities that they face (Bruton & Robles-Piña, 2009; Haggis, 2006; McKay & Devlin, 2016; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Valencia, 1997, 2010; Weiner, 2003). Overall, these perspectives serve as tools that maintain hegemonic systems and, in doing so, fail to place accountability on oppressive structures, policies, and practices within educational settings. (para. 1)

Those “hegemonic systems” are white supremacy and the idea that if students of color do not conform to the “white norm,” it is because there is something wrong with them.

Now, let us look at a specific study that shows how textbooks can directly contribute to deficit thinking in both societies and schools. This study was done by Lucy, Demszky, Bromley, and Jurafsky (2020) in which they looked at 15 textbooks used in Texas and found some of the most damning evidence I have ever seen on deficit thinking:

We apply techniques from natural language processing (lexicons, word embeddings, topic models) to 15 U.S. history textbooks widely used in Texas between 2015 and 2017, studying their depiction of historically marginalized groups. We find that Latinx people are rarely discussed, and the most common famous figures are nearly all White men. Lexicon-based approaches show that Black people are described as performing actions associated with low agency and power. Word embeddings reveal that women tend to be discussed in the contexts of work and the home. Topic modeling highlights the higher prominence of political topics compared with social ones. We also find that more conservative counties tend to purchase textbooks with less representation of women and Black people. (p.1)

Women, Latinx, and black people are all described as having some deficits. If you fall into any of those categories as a student, you will see yourself portrayed as less than human. More than 50% of students will be in one of those categories! It becomes significantly more alarming when you dive deeper into this study. In Appendix A, the 15 textbooks used in this study found that of all the ways that black people are referred to in the textbooks, far and away, the leading word was “slave” used 9,339 times. The second most used word to describe black people is “black” (5,673 times.)

Meanwhile, the word used most to describe Latinx people was “Mexican” (523 times.) For context, white people were referred to the most as “white” (6,350 times.) Additionally, other marginalized groups not categorized as “black” or “Latinx” fell into the “other minorities” category. The phrase used most often to refer to someone who is not white, black, or Latinx was “immigrant” (3,993 times). Lastly, to drive home the point, Latinx people are only referred to by any name a total of 961 times white people are referred to as “Spanish” and “French,” respectively 856 times and 818 times...(Lucy, Demszky, Bromley, & Jurafsky, 2020.)

If you are a black student and over 9,000 times your heritage, culture, and identity are categorized as having something to do with slavery. At the same time, you are only referred to as black 5,673 times; what will you internalize? Not only that but what are their white counterparts going to internalize? They will internalize that something is wrong with that particular group of people, which is how deficit thinking is born. Perhaps more alarmingly in this study was the complete lack of representation by Latinx people. They are only mentioned in those 15 textbooks (by ANY name) 961 times.

Additionally, Lucy, Demszky, Bromley, and Jurafsky's (2020) work also showed the invisibility of Latinx people in American history in Figure 2. The table below shows the demographics of student ethnicity in Texas concerning how often they are mentioned in those 15 textbooks. The table shows that Latinx students comprise over 50% of all Texas students. However, they make up less than 5% of all the mentions in those textbooks (p. 8). Now imagine you are a Latinx student in an American History class, and the textbooks barely mention anything to do with your people, identity, or culture. What would you internalize from that? Am I invisible? Do people see me? Do I even have a place in this country? I cannot imagine those feelings. Deficit thinking is a plague in our history textbooks.

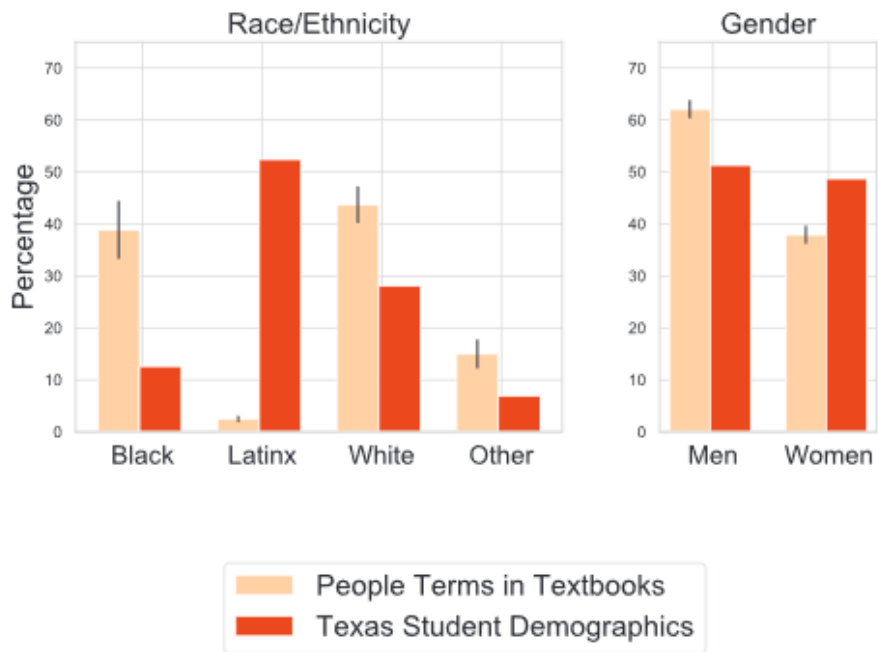


FIGURE 2. *Percentage of people of different demographics in Texas textbooks and schools.*
 Note. Error lines for nonnamed people terms show 95% confidence intervals across textbooks. There are no error lines on the bars for Texas students, which is an aggregate of all schools' student demographics drawn from National Center for Education Statistics.

Now, there are consequences of deficit thinking when we discuss systems in education. It is not individual people's opinions; it becomes more prominent when it affects institutions such as the school systems in this country. García and Guerra (2004) describe attitudes that many teachers demonstrate as a result of deficit thinking:

- America is a white, middle-class society and children need to learn those rules in order to be successful.
- Education is not valued in all homes, therefore, we as educators must “set the stage” to get students involved and motivated. (p. 163)

Additionally, teachers did push back against deficit thinking in Garica and Guerra's (2004) work:

...student behavior were not solely the result of individual attributes or personality but a more complex interaction between an individual and his or her learning environment.

Two teachers' insights toward the end of the staff development represent this growing realization, as indicated by the following:

- There are so many things I think schools do that are mainstreamed and so white culture. . . . The textbooks that we teach are mainly white history. . . . Things like that, I mean just everything. (p. 162)

It is either one of two options, teachers view the students of color who struggle as not working hard enough, or they or their parents/environment do not care about education. Garica and Guerra (2004) describe how many teachers do not question the effectiveness of schools in being culturally responsive because they view their struggling students as lazy or blame their parents (p.162). That is deficit thinking summed up. The other option is for teachers to see that school promotes and reinforces white supremacy (especially in history class), and we need to do everything we can to dismantle deficit thinking, which will help dismantle white supremacy.

Deficit thinking is exceptionally destructive to students in school and society at large. Valencia (1997) elaborates in their work that deficit thinking is the most viable explanation for the poor school achievement of some groups of children. If teachers, schools, society, or all of the above see you as “less than” or at some sort of deficit...that can be one explanation for why the lowest-performing schools in the United States typically have high percentages of students of color. Of course, other factors are at play. However, we cannot expect meaningful progress in making schools more equitable for everyone until we can address deficit thinking and the harm it produces (along with textbooks that contribute to and exacerbate that harm).

Intersectionality

Now, there is a clear connection between trauma and deficit thinking. The most evident connection is historical trauma. Brave Heart (1998) defines historical trauma: “HT asserts that massive group-level trauma, inflicted through intentional genocide, exploitation, and purposeful cultural disruption of a people for the benefit of another racial/ethnic group, causes harm intergenerationally through a historical trauma response” (p. 287). Many different groups in America can fall into this category of experiencing historical trauma. A group, for example, experiencing historical trauma in America today is Native Americans. Earlier, I used the work of Kirmayer, Gone, and Moses (2014) to describe the impacts of historical trauma on historically marginalized people (specifically Native Americans). The table from their work clearly shows how small things like self-esteem can snowball into significant issues like genocide and the erasing of cultures. I argue that deficit thinking is the result of historical trauma. If both the marginalized group and white people are being fed history that promotes white supremacy and reinforces and creates stereotypes (like black people are slaves) that creates historical trauma for the marginalized group and establishes deficit thinking for the white majority. Garcia (2020) describes how Native Americans have been some of the most resilient marginalized groups by surviving genocide by Europeans and the forceful ending of their culture with: “kill the Indian, save the man.” However, with that resiliency has come lasting historical trauma. Native Americans have the highest rates of fetal alcohol syndrome and the highest rate of drug and alcohol addiction. They are 4 to 10 times more likely to be arrested than their white counterparts (pp. 42-43). These statistics then contribute to deficit thinking in schools when teachers assume that the reasons their Native students are struggling are because they do not work hard enough when in reality, their historical trauma creates PTSD, even if those specific students never

experience the trauma of their ancestors. That PTSD manifests itself, which explains those statistics above when it comes to Native Americans compared to other populations of Americans.

Solutions and Alternatives

This section will begin with larger-scale mindset changes that social studies teachers can make to their teaching practices and the classroom that combat the trauma and deficit thinking caused by textbooks. Firstly, using multiple viewpoints and voices in history is a larger-scale change you or I can make, along with Freirean ideas of critical consciousness and dialogue. This section will end with more specific solutions, including what we should be using instead of history textbooks and how inquiry-based approaches in the classroom can offer the solution to this textbook problem.

Multiple Viewpoints, Critical Consciousness, and Dialogue

I would like to make clear my ontological view of American history. I talked much about the “bad” aspects of American history. However, with anything, “bad” would logically include the existence of the “good” side of American history. However, depending on the perspective of the person you ask, there may be no “good” aspects of American history. An epistemological view of American history I am arguing is that nothing specific in American history is “good.” Depending on the point of view of the specific person/people during a specific period, one could always find some group or people struggling or being taken advantage of in some way. Howard Zinn tried to accomplish that in *A People’s History of the United States*. Throughout the book, Zinn (2015) argues that plenty of other perspectives in American history are typically ignored. Those ignored are often exploited and experience American history's “bad” aspects. For example, while Americans were gaining their independence from Britain (what textbooks frame as “good”), black people continued to be enslaved, women were continually still disfranchised

from voting, owning property, etc., and Native Americans were slaughtered out west. If rich white people were prospering, and that constitutes “good” history, then what about everyone else?

Now, with all that said, the question is, how do we create a social studies curriculum that does not traumatize students nor create deficit thinking while also teaching accurate, authentic history? The first action is to stop using textbooks that promote white supremacy and reinforce negative stereotypes about people of color. In my own experiences in the classroom, using primary sources and having a dialogue with students about questions about the past creates an environment where students feel heard and seen. Gillen (2014) calls this critical teaching: “...critical teaching employs a discussion-oriented inquiry-based pedagogy that directly examines issues of race, class, power, gender, sex, and resistance and works at growing students’ sense of critical agency” (pp. 103-4). Critical teaching is closely related to Freire’s critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is when oppressed/marginalized students become aware of their social station and work to improve it (Freire, 2005). When students become critically conscious, they are much more likely to have a dialogue with their fellow students and teachers about their conditions, which is why inquiry-based learning is so powerful. Shields (2004) addresses the power of using dialogue:

Dialogue is therefore central to the task of educational leadership—not a weak concept of dialogue interpreted as strategies for communicating but a strong concept of dialogue as a way of being. Dialogue and relationships are not elements that can be selected and discarded at will; rather, they are ways of life—recognitions of the fundamental differences among human beings and of the need to enter into contact, into relational dialogue and sense-making (participating with our whole being) with one another. Thus

conceived as an ontology, dialogue opens each individual educator to differing realities and worldviews. (pp.115-116)

Dialogue, along with critical consciousness, are ideas addressed by Paulo Freire. In Chapter 4 of Freire's work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (2000) discusses the idea of cultural action as a way for oppressed people to achieve liberation. He argues that dialogue is a critical way for oppressed people to achieve liberation. Freire argues that oppression is "anti-dialogic" in that oppressors do not want the oppressed to have a critical dialogue about anything. They want oppressed people to be happy in their ignorance. I argue that textbooks do precisely that: they keep the "oppressed" from having any critical dialogue to reach critical consciousness. That, in turn, creates trauma and deficit thinking. How we solve this is through the dialogue that Freire explains.

How can we promote dialogue for some of the specific examples of trauma explained earlier (specifically Columbus)? Some ways in my classroom include doing inquiry-based assignments called "investigations." In my specific investigation about Columbus; I ask my students "Should Columbus be remembered as a hero or a villain?" Students are then tasked with looking at primary and secondary source documents to have a dialogue to answer those questions. What makes this dialogue is that I do not present this question as having the correct answer. Both my students and I have a dialogue about the man and come to conclusions based on the provided evidence. Venet (2021) echoes my thoughts: "...primary sources documents, such as Columbus's personal logs, along with teaching resources from the Zinn Education Project, which supports teachers to help students develop a more accurate and nuanced understanding of American history" (p. 161). It is also important to point out that the "Zinn Education Project" is a

website that provides teachers with materials to teach history more dialogically (and it is based on Howard Zinn's work, which is referenced.)

Inquiry

How can we avoid what Loewen (2010) calls the “Tyranny of Textbooks?” I use an inquiry-based approach to every topic and assignment in my classroom. However, if you are not taught implicitly that textbooks are problematic, you may default your teaching career to those books. Loewen (1995) explains:

If they have a lot of time, light domestic responsibilities, sufficient resources, and a flexible principal, some teachers respond by abandoning the overstuffed textbooks and reinventing their American history courses... Gradually they end up going through the motions, staying ahead of their students in the textbook, covering only material that will appear on the next test. (p. 12)

It is important to remember that Lowen released this book in 1995, before the internet as we know it today. Today, there are fewer excuses to go through the motions because better teaching methods are simply a click away. I do not necessarily blame teachers in 1995 for defaulting to the textbook because resources (primary and secondary sources) required much more effort to find. If a teacher defaults to the textbook today, it is because they do not know any better, or it is what they have always done.

So, what are these resources that I keep mentioning? The first, and my favorite, is Stanford History Education Group, or SHEG. Stanford University runs SHEG, and their “Reading like a Historian” assignments are often my go-to in my classroom.

Today, the Reading Like a Historian curriculum has passed 10 million downloads. It is used in all 50 states and in 127 countries. SHEG has expanded beyond the U.S. to World

history, ventured into the area of formative assessment, and begun to explore how a document-based curriculum can be taught to middle school students. Working with districts from coast to coast, and as far away as Sweden, Singapore, and Chile, our eyes remain fixed on our original goal: providing teachers with high-quality resources to enrich students' intellectual experience in the history classroom. (Stanford University, n.d. para. 6)

When the website mentions a “document-based curriculum,” they mean an inquiry-based curriculum. An inquiry-based curriculum is a method of teaching where the teacher and students try to answer a complex question with evidence. If you re-read that sentence, you will notice that nothing in that sentence is unique to a social studies classroom. Any content can use this practice. My personal experience and methods with an inquiry-based curriculum are as follows: First, I ask my students a question (the question should be something that does not have an obvious answer.) Second, I provide multiple primary and secondary sources that pertain to that question. Third, students must answer that question using as much evidence from the provided documents.

Now you may be thinking, that seems like much work, and it would be if SHEG did not do all the work for you! SHEG has 110 inquiry-based assignments on American history and another 51 related to world history. SHEG provides the question, the documents, and all the background information the teacher and students need to know to succeed with their lesson. They provide a PDF of everything you need for free! I often adapt and modify these lessons to meet my, and my student's needs, but all the heavy lifting is done for me. What makes these assignments so much more engaging (and accurate) than a traditional history textbook are the

questions and the sources. For example, SHEG includes an assignment titled “The Atomic Bomb.” Here is the synopsis of the assignment according to SHEG:

For decades historians have debated the morality and necessity of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In this lesson plan, students read four different accounts of the bombings and must decide for themselves how we should remember the dropping of the atomic bombs. (Stanford University, n.d, para. 1)

This is one of my favorite inquiry-based assignments from SHEG because there truly is no right or wrong answer to my question: Was dropping the Atomic Bomb the right or wrong decision? This assignment provides many primary and secondary sources of information related to this question, including Excerpts from “Three Narratives of our Humanity” by John W. Dower, 1996/American History Textbook, American Vision, pg. 615/: Paul Fussell, a World War II Soldier, Thank God for the Atom Bomb, 1990/James Byrnes (one of Truman's advisors on the atomic bomb)/: Yoshitaka Kawamoto (13-year-old survivor of Hiroshima), a document which includes the numbers of Hiroshima and Nagasaki casualties, and a variety of pictures including the bombing of Pearl Harbor, American Propaganda during the war, American POWs, the destruction of Hiroshima after the bombing, and victims of the bombs. As you can see, these are wide-ranging sources from various perspectives. The goal of my students is to look at all of these sources, pull evidence from them, and use that evidence to answer the question: Was dropping the Atomic Bomb the right or wrong decision? What makes this particular assignment one of my favorites is the variety of answers you can get to that question simply because there is no “right answer.” The best inquiry-type assignments include questions that even the most knowledgeable could debate for hours.

Another resource that teachers should know about is something called C3 Teachers. C3 Teachers is a product of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). According to the NCSS website:

Founded in 1921, National Council for the Social Studies is the largest professional association in the country devoted solely to social studies education. NCSS engages and supports educators in strengthening and advocating social studies. With members in all the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 35 countries, NCSS serves as an umbrella organization for elementary, secondary, and college teachers of history, civics, geography, economics, political science, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and law-related education. The NCSS membership represents K-12 classroom teachers, college and university faculty members, curriculum designers and specialists, social studies supervisors, and leaders in the various disciplines that constitute the social studies.

(About National Council for the Social Studies, n.d. para 1)

The vision of this organization, according to its website, is: “A world in which all students are educated and inspired for lifelong inquiry and informed civic action” (*About National Council for the Social Studies, n.d. para. 3*). The magic word “inquiry” shows up again! So, what do C3 Teachers have to do with NCSS? The “C3” of C3 Teachers comes from NCSS. According to the NCSS website:

The result of a three year state-led collaborative effort, the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards was developed to serve two audiences: for states to upgrade their state social studies standards and for practitioners — local school districts, schools, teachers and curriculum writers — to strengthen their

social studies programs. (*College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) framework for Social Studies State Standards*, n.d. para 1)

According to C3's guiding principles, the second bullet is: "Inquiry is at the heart of social studies" (*College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) framework for Social Studies State Standards*, n.d. para 4). There that word is again!

So, now that you know where C3 Teachers come from, what exactly can they do to help you teach authentic social studies? C3 Teachers use the "C3 Inquiry Arc" to provide inquiry-based lessons for social studies teachers. Like SHEG, C3 Teachers has many different inquiry-based assignments available and ready for teachers to use. What makes C3 different from SHEG is how some inquiry assignments on C3 are more specific and topical/modern. For example, an assignment titled "2020 Protest" asks students to compare the protests of 2020 with previous protests in history. That is modern and topical when relating history to relatable events our students have experienced. An example of a particular inquiry assignment from C3 is "Anna: One Woman's Quest for Freedom." In this assignment, students examine one story of a single enslaved person. C3 is hyper-specific when compared to SHEG, which has an assignment titled: "Slavery Narratives," which is a more broad view of the lives of enslaved people. Another significant difference between C3 and SHEG is that C3 breaks down their inquiry assignments by grade level bands. SHEG is more broadly targeted toward secondary students.

The final inquiry-based resource available to teachers is the Zinn Education Project (named for and created with the ideals of Howard Zinn in mind!) According to their website:

The Zinn Education Project promotes and supports the teaching of people's history in classrooms across the country. Since 2008, the Zinn Education Project has introduced students to a more accurate, complex, and engaging understanding of history than is

found in traditional textbooks and curricula. With more than 140,000 people registered, and growing by more than 15,000 new registrants every year, the Zinn Education Project has become a leading resource for teachers and teacher educators.

(Zinn Education Project, n.d. para. 1)

As you can see, their goal is to be “more accurate, complex, and engaging” than textbooks. Like C3 and SHEG, the Zinn Education Project provides inquiry-based assignments for teachers to use in their classrooms. However, what makes the Zinn Education Project different is the variety of resources they guide educators to for their classrooms. For example, this site will provide many resources, including books, outside websites, role-playing activities, movies, and more. The downside, however, is that many of these resources are suggested, and you have to pay to access them (especially the books.) With that said, there are plenty of free and unique resources that you cannot find on SHEG or C3 Teachers.

Recap

This chapter started with the history of my concern. We looked back to the colonial USA and traced history textbooks' history to the present. Then, we dove into the consequences of using history textbooks, including; trauma and deficit thinking. I wrapped up Chapter 3 with a look at solutions to history textbooks that included multiple viewpoints, critical consciousness, dialogue, and inquiry. In the following chapters, we will look at how we can take all of this information and make a curriculum that ditches the textbooks and helps promote the solutions proposed at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 4

Design

Purpose

My curriculum aims to expose students to sources, viewpoints, and ideas outside of the white-male ethnocentric bias perpetuated by textbooks. We must also move social studies education away from what Paulo Freire called the “banking model.” In a world where mundane facts about history can be looked up in seconds, why would we have students memorize just for memorizing? Another purpose of this curriculum is to foster a classroom environment that evokes the ↔learner↔teacher↔ mindset. When we, as social studies teachers, ask questions about the past, we need to do it from a place of shared understanding. We need to understand that we, as the social studies teacher, do not have all the answers. We need to foster a culture of dialogue where everyone's thoughts and experiences matter. The student's points of view matter just as much as that of the teachers.

This curriculum's societal goals ultimately encourage students and people to expose themselves to multiple viewpoints. It is to build skills using inquiry, allowing us to investigate and answer tough questions about the past. We have failed when students accept that the first explanation they hear about an event from the past is the only point of view that matters. Once students have been exposed to multiple perspectives, the educational goal is to teach them how to dialogue with and about that information. Students need to learn to express their thoughts about these historical events and ideas constructively. The idea of answering questions about the past using evidence from various sources is a skill that can transfer beyond the social studies classroom and the school itself. It is a life skill that will serve any person well.

The target audience for this curriculum is secondary social studies educators. My experience in the classroom is at the secondary level (6th-12th grade), but I'm sure younger grades can adapt these concepts to their classrooms as well. The goal would be for social studies educators that want to use my curriculum can then take these ideas to the powers that be in their districts and help convince them that these ideas of multiple viewpoints, ↔learner↔teacher↔, inquiry-based, etc. are best practice in a social studies classroom. The audience for these ideas could be broader in theory, but if they come from the social studies educators in the school, they will hold more weight.

Finally, the attributes a person would have after being exposed to this curriculum are what I consider a well-rounded, empathetic, and understanding human being. Nobody can express their ideas and thoughts productively if we look at the political landscape and the dialogue around the United States. This curriculum will help students build those skills using evidence from multiple sources to prove a point. But, more importantly, it will teach students how to explain their thoughts, ideas, and viewpoints from a place of compassion and understanding and not from a place of anger and fear. A place that understands that we need the point of view of all stakeholders and not a select few. Especially when the dominant point of view is often the white-male ethnocentric perspective, we need more compassionate, educated voices regarding the past, and we hope this curriculum will produce that.

Content and Methods

When discussing the essential topics this curriculum should include, we have some options. Suppose you are a social studies educator like myself. In that case, you know the events often taught in an American History class: Revolutionary War, Slavery, Civil War, Imperialism, WWI, WWII, Civil Rights Movement, etc. There are more, but you need help finding American

History classes that do not discuss these topics. The topics you pick are optional; how you teach these topics is essential. Or if you were to look at your curriculum not by historical topic but by themes: racism, sexism, poverty, etc., you teach these things, but once again, it's not the themes themselves, but how you teach these themes. Ultimately, the essential topics of this curriculum are not as important as how the topics are taught. As the social studies teacher, you will make the ultimate decision, and hopefully, my examples will help inspire you to think about your own curriculum.

I will preface that what students should do to achieve these curriculum goals is not a “one-size-fits-all” approach. You know your students, what works best for them, and your teaching style. I will explain what I do, and you can adapt as necessary. In my classroom, I do assignments called “Investigations” (I will even preface that by saying another teacher taught this strategy to me, and I adapted it! I encourage you to do the same!) In these investigations, I present a topic through a question. We then answer that question using various primary and secondary sources that I provide the students. Students can then show their findings in a variety of ways. It can be a more standard paragraph with students stating their claims and evidence from those documents to support their claims. Or, you have students create either student or teacher-picked projects (iMovies, Infographics, presentations, debates, etc.) The ultimate goal is to be able to support a claim with evidence. The method that students show their thoughts does not matter, and you should use your judgment as a professional.

The primary method of instruction that I use is the gradual release model. At the beginning of the year, I walk my students through investigations. I will help them analyze each source, discuss guiding questions, and ultimately help them with the paragraph at the end (or a project.) Finally, the goal is to have students be able to analyze sources, pull evidence, have a

dialogue about content, and produce a creative, knowledgeable project with minimal help from the teacher. This model works best because the more help and guidance you give students, the more likely they will produce what they think is the answer you are looking for rather than what they believe is right. I have discussed how history should not be presented as “this is the right answer.” This mindset produces and amplifies the dominant narratives in our history textbooks. Students are much more willing to take “risks” and explore the past with an open mind when you are not always holding their hand.

Organization

How this curriculum should be organized will again be up to the specific educator. Due to the subject being American history, it usually makes the most sense to go through it chronologically. The example lessons you will see are taught chronologically in a linear model, but there are many ways to go about these topics. Suppose you would instead teach overarching themes like racism. It may make sense to go chronologically for that subject but then jump back when discussing a new theme like imperialism or colonialism.

This curriculum is unique because it can be presented discretely and linearly. It is discrete because each investigation or overarching question you ask, and the corresponding assignment(s) that go with it should be able to stand alone. What makes it linear is that you can teach those individual assignments chronologically. Someone could teach Investigation #1 and Investigation #2 entirely independently of each other, but #1 chronologically should come before Investigation #2. For example, in my classroom, I teach an investigation of the Puritans before I teach an investigation of the Salem Witch Trials. Both of those assignments can be taught entirely separately from each other. However, the Salem Witch Trials are better analyzed with a better

understanding a person has of the Puritans. Only some investigations line up together, as well as these two, so you should take a linear and discrete approach to this curriculum.

The previous paragraph was a more macro approach to this type of curriculum. Let's now look at an investigation from a more micro-level organizational perspective. I will preface that you can change what I present here to fit your students and classroom better. When looking at an individual investigation, it always starts with a question. Suppose you remember the “Atomic Bomb” inquiry example from Chapter 3. In that case, the question I used for that assignment was: “Was dropping the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki the right or wrong decision?” Everything in this investigation will serve to help students answer that question. Once you have the question, the next step is getting the resources students can use to answer that question. As mentioned, plenty of websites and free resources provide multitudes of excellent primary and secondary sources. Most of the resources I use for this assignment are from Stanford History Education Group (SHEG.)

The first resource you present to students should provide historical context. Historical context is (more or less) the background knowledge that would be useful before getting into more specific primary and secondary sources. Historical context is almost always a secondary source. After the historical context, this is the step where you present students with those primary and secondary sources. SHEG provides the primary and secondary sources for this investigation. Depending on the topic, I have used other websites or “Frankensteined” sources. Do whatever is best based on the subject and question you want students to answer.

The final step in organizing your investigation is determining what you wish the “assessment” to be. At the beginning of the gradual release model/beginning of the year, I tend to do more simple paragraphs where I have students explain their thoughts using evidence from the

documents. Projects are my go-to as the year progresses and students get more comfortable with this format. As I stated earlier, the projects can be absolutely anything that allows students to show their answers to the investigation question.

Detailed Program

Example One

Christopher Columbus Investigation

How should the world remember Christopher Columbus?

Columbus Day is a U.S. holiday that commemorates the landing of Christopher Columbus in the Americas in 1492, and Columbus Day 2021 is on Monday, October 11th. It was unofficially celebrated in many cities and states as early as the 18th century but did not become a federal holiday until 1937. For many, the holiday is a way of both honoring Columbus' achievements and celebrating Italian-American heritage. But throughout its history, Columbus Day and the man who inspired it have generated controversy, and many alternatives to the holiday have been proposed since the 1970s including Indigenous Peoples' Day.



Part 1: Introduction Readings	Questions
<p><u>Was Christopher Columbus a Hero or Villain?</u></p>	<p>List at least 3 reasons why Columbus was a Hero:</p> <p>List at least 3 reasons why Columbus was a Villain:</p>

Part 2: Source Documents	<i>Claim: Hero or Villain?</i>	<i>Questions/Evidence</i>
<i>Document A: Letter to Queen Isabella of Spain</i>	<i>Hero Or Villain?</i>	<p>Why do you think Columbus wrote this letter?</p> <p>How does he describe the Native People?</p> <p>How does this source prove he is a hero or villain?</p>
<i>Document B: Search for Gold</i>	<i>Hero Or Villain?</i>	<p>How did Columbus treat Native people according to this source?</p> <p>Do you think that this source somehow justifies how Columbus treated the Natives? Why or why not?</p> <p>How does this source prove he is a hero or villain?</p>
<i>Document C: Past Presidents</i>	<i>Hero Or Villain?</i>	<p>Why did these past presidents celebrate Columbus? How did they view him?</p> <p>How does this source prove he is a hero or villain?</p>
<i>Document D: Adam Ruins Everything (Will watch in class)</i>	<i>Hero Or Villain?</i>	<p>What evidence can you use from this video to prove Columbus was a hero or a villain?</p>

Part 3: CER

CLAIM: Christopher Columbus should be remembered as a hero...

OR

CLAIM: Christopher Columbus should be remembered as a villain...

EVIDENCE: Facts that prove your claim is true

Reasoning: Why those facts make your claim true.

Directions: Please write a CER below that answers the question: How should the world remember Christopher Columbus? Please use at least 3 pieces of evidence from the sources above!

Claim:

Evidence/Fact 1:

Evidence/Fact 2:

Evidence/Fact 3:

Reasoning/Why:

Part 1: Introduction Readings

Was Christopher Columbus a Hero or a villain? Article from biography.com

Part 2: Source Documents

Document A: Letter to Queen Isabella of Spain

...your Highnesses may believe that this island (Hispaniola), and all the others, are as much yours as Castile. Here there is only wanting a settlement and the order to the people to do what is required. For I, with the force I have under me, which is not large, could march over all these islands without opposition. I have seen only three sailors land, without wishing to do harm, and a multitude of Indians fled before them. They have no arms, and are without warlike instincts; they all go naked, and are so timid that a thousand would not stand before three of our men. So that they are good to be ordered about, to work and sow, and do all that may be necessary, and to build towns, and they should be taught to go about clothed and to adopt our customs.

SOURCE: Columbus, Christopher. Letter to Queen Isabella of Spain. December 16, 1492.

Document B: Search for Gold

The first day he encounters the Indians he talks about what good slaves they would make. He takes the Indians who come to him to trade and he captures them and he keeps them. Columbus was a man of his time. Like the settlers, Columbus was there to make money. He was not too particular about the ways he chose to make money because that's the way that people behaved. There was a flourishing slave trade in Europe in the Middle Ages. Slavery was a customary product of European society. It didn't seem in any way unnatural for Columbus and the other settlers to do this.

SOURCE: Dr. G. Symcox. Professor of History at UCLA in "Columbus' Search for Gold" video. History Channel. 2013.

Document C: Past Presidents

The voyage of Christopher Columbus and his diminutive fleet toward the unknown west was not only a prelude to a new historical era. For the brave navigator it was the culmination of years of bold speculation, careful preparation, and struggle against opponents who had belittled his great plan and thwarted its execution...The promise which Columbus's discovery gave to the world, of a new beginning in the march of human progress, has been in process of fulfillment for four centuries. Our task is now to make strong our conviction that in spite of setbacks that process will go on toward fulfillment.

SOURCE: Franklin Roosevelt (President of the United States). "Statement on Columbus Day." October 12, 1940.

"On that day let the people, so far as possible, cease from toil and devote themselves to such exercises as may best express honor to the discoverer and their appreciation of the great achievements of the four completed centuries of American life."

SOURCE: Benjamin Harrison (President of the United States). 1892

Document D: Adam Ruins Everything

Clip from the TruTV show: Adam Ruin's Everything Season 2 Episode 6

Example Two

Philippines-American War: Cartoon Creation

How do images hold power?

BETRAYAL: During the Spanish-American War, the United States made a deal with the Filipino rebel: Emilio Aguinaldo to help fight the Spanish in the Philippines. In return, the United States would grant the Philippines independence from Spain after the conclusion of the war. However, when the war ended...the United States felt the Filipinos were incapable of governing themselves. This betrayal



sparked a war between the Philippines and America. During the war, More than *4,200 American* and *20,000 Filipino* soldiers died in the bloody, atrocity-plagued war, while as many as **200,000 Filipino civilians died from violence, famine, and disease.** In this assignment, you will analyze political cartoons released during the time period of the war. *Your goal, in the end, will be to create your own political cartoon that accurately represents the events of this war.*

Part 1: Background	Questions
Spanish-American War Video	What was the primary reason for US imperialism? What is one thing that stood out to you in the video? What killed most Americans during the Spanish-American War?

<p><i>Philippine-American War: Causes and Consequences</i></p>	<p>Summarize each of the following sections in at least 1 sentence/bullet:</p> <p>Causes of the War</p> <p>How the War Was Waged</p> <p>Casualties and Atrocities</p> <p>Philippine Independence</p>
<p><i>Part 2: Political Cartoons</i></p>	<p>Questions</p>
<p><i>Cartoon 1: Uncle Sam Watches over Cuba and the Philippines</i></p>	<p>The largest figure in the cartoon is:</p> <p>Which figure is drawn in the foreground, or front, of the cartoon?</p> <p>Which figure is drawn in the background of the cartoon?</p> <p>What does the age difference between the different characters represent?</p> <p>What are the similarities and differences between the portrayals of Cuba and the Philippines?</p> <p>Uncle Sam is offering his hand to the figure representing the Philippines, and in the caption he says, referring to Cuba, “See what I do for a good little boy?” What is the meaning of these words and actions?</p>

	<p>What do you think was the cartoonist's purpose in drawing this cartoon?</p>
<p>Cartoon 2: Uncle Sam Finds "Something Lacking" In New Possessions</p>	<p>List objects and people you see in the cartoon</p> <p>List 3 words or phrases that appear in the cartoon</p> <p>Describe what you see in the foreground and background, and the relative size of objects and people, etc.</p> <p>Describe any actions depicted in the cartoon</p> <p>How does the cartoonist portray the United States?</p> <p>How does the cartoonist portray other countries or people?</p> <p>What message or ideas about U.S. imperialism does the cartoon convey?</p>
<p>Cartoon 3: "The New Temptation on the Mount"</p>	<p>List objects and people you see in the cartoon</p>

	<p>List 3 words or phrases that appear in the cartoon</p> <p>Describe what you see in the foreground and background, and the relative size of objects and people, etc.</p> <p>Describe any actions depicted in the cartoon</p> <p>How does the cartoonist portray the United States?</p> <p>How does the cartoonist portray other countries or people?</p> <p>What is written on the pointing finger's chest? <u>Look up what that means:</u></p> <p>What message or ideas about U.S. imperialism does the cartoon convey?</p>
<p>Cartoon 4: "Showing the Light to the Filipinos"</p>	<p>In the cartoon, who or what represents the United States?</p> <p>In the cartoon, what words and images represent "civilization"?</p> <p>What is the cartoonist's point of view about Filipinos? Use details from the cartoon to support your answer.</p>

	<p>According to this cartoon, why is it right for the United States to go to war in the Philippines?</p>
<p>Part 3: Create Your Own Cartoon</p>	
<p>GOAL: Create a political cartoon that <u>accurately</u> comments on the Philippines-American War</p>	
<p>Requirments</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>The cartoon should have a background</i> 2. <i>The cartoon should include both a representation of America and the Philippines</i> 3. <i>The cartoon should have a title/caption</i> 4. <i>The cartoon should be commenting on the war that is both historically and factually accurate</i>
<p>Options:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Google Docs</i> ● <i>Political Cartoon Creation Website</i> ● <i>Paper</i> ● <i>Google Slides</i> ● <i>Anything else that fulfills the requirements of the assignment</i>

Part 1: Background

Spanish-American War Video

Youtube Video: Spanish American War from the Channel: Animated History

Philippine-American War: Causes and Consequences

Online article from Thought.Com

Part 2: Political Cartoons

Cartoon 1: Uncle Sam Watches over Cuba and the Philippines

The Spanish-American War ended in December, 1898, when Spain surrendered to the U.S. and negotiated a peace treaty that sold Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines to the U.S. Cuba remained independent, but firmly under the influence of the United States. The Philippine Republic went to war against the U.S. to defend its independence. The brutal war lasted three years, and was followed by a half-century of U.S. occupation of the Philippines. This political cartoon appeared in the conservative Judge magazine in 1902.



Cartoon 2: Uncle Sam Finds "Something Lacking" In New Possessions

The outcome of the Spanish-American War had far-reaching consequences for several of Spain's former colonies. The United States annexed Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam, while Cuba became independent but subject to American influence. This political cartoon from shortly before the conclusion of the war in 1898 reflects the pro-expansionist view, contrasting the benefits derived from American involvement by Puerto Rico (in a shiny new outfit marked "Annexation Suit from Your Uncle Sam") and Cuba (clutching bread and waving the flag of independence), with the uncertain status of the Philippines, depicted as mired in a primitive, "savage" condition. Typically, all three nations are depicted as children, dependent on a kindly and benevolent Uncle Sam.



Cartoon 3: "The New Temptation on the Mount"

In 1898 the United States won the Spanish-Cuban-American war and took control of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. That same year, it also annexed the Hawaiian islands. This 1899 cartoon reflects the belief held by many anti-imperialists that this expansion of U.S. power did not fit the nation's democratic ideals.



Cartoon 4: "Showing the Light to the Filipinos"

From 1898 to 1902, the United States waged a bloody war in the Philippines. Filipinos wanted independence from centuries of Spanish colonial rule. U.S. leaders, however, saw the opportunity to control the Philippines and gain access to markets in Asia. President McKinley argued that the Filipinos could not govern themselves or defend themselves against other countries. Many supporters of the Philippine-American war also believed in the "civilizing mission"—the idea that European nations and the United States had a moral duty to civilize "backwards" peoples in other parts of the world by introducing Western culture and technology.



Example Three

Prohibition Investigation

How did Prohibition impact society?

The 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution—which banned the manufacture, transportation, and sale of intoxicating liquors—ushered in a period in American history known as Prohibition. Prohibition was ratified by the states on January 16, 1919, and officially went into effect on January 17, 1920, with the passage of the Volstead Act. Despite the new legislation, Prohibition was difficult to enforce. The increase in the illegal production and sale of liquor (known as “bootlegging”), the proliferation of speakeasies (illegal drinking spots), and the accompanying rise in gang violence and other crimes led to waning support for Prohibition by the end of the 1920s. In early 1933, Congress adopted a resolution proposing a 21st Amendment to the Constitution that would repeal the 18th. The 21st Amendment was ratified on December 5, 1933, ending Prohibition.



Part 1: Introduction Readings	Questions
Numerous reform movements changed the U.S. during the 1800s	What is an abolitionist? What were the education reforms? What were the prison reforms? What were the labor reforms? What is temperance? What is women's suffrage?

<p><i>Prohibition Overview</i></p>	<p>Summarize the effect prohibition had in society in at least 5 sentences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
<p>Part 2: Source Documents</p>	<p><i>Questions/Evidence</i></p>
<p><i>Document A: 18th Amendment</i></p>	<p>What limitations does this amendment place on liquor? Does it include consumption?</p> <p>Who is in charge of enforcing this amendment?</p>
<p><i>Document B: Rumrunners</i></p>	<p>Who was prohibition a failure for? Why?</p> <p>Who was prohibition successful for? Why?</p> <p>What is the significance of the word “monster” used in the last sentence of this document?</p>
<p><i>Document C: Poem</i></p>	<p>Does this family support prohibition?</p>

	<p>What evidence in the poem led you to the above answer?</p> <p>What is the significance of Johnny sitting on the porch looking for the cops?</p>
<p><i>Document D: Graph</i></p>	<p>What is the per capita consumption of alcohol in 1921?</p> <p>What is the per capita consumption of alcohol in 1929?</p> <p>Describe the trend of alcohol consumption between 1921 and 1929 as shown on the chart above?</p>
<p><i>Document E: Homicide</i></p>	<p>What is the Homicide Rate in 1920?</p> <p>What is the Homicide Rate in 1933?</p> <p>Overall, what trend is occurring in the Homicide Rate from 1920 to 1933?</p> <p>What conclusions can be made about social morals from the years 1920 to 1933 based on the graph above?</p>

Prohibition Project

Is there something in our society that deserves to be banned? If so, what?

Your goal is to create a product that convinces people that banning this thing would benefit society



Requirments:

1. You clearly state what "thing" deserves to be banned
2. You included **5 pieces** of **FACTUAL** evidence that what you want to ban makes sense
 - a. Your evidence should be cited (where did it come from?)
 - i. **OPINION is NOT evidence**
 - b. **If working in a group, 5 facts/evidence per PERSON**
 - i. **2 people = 10 facts**
 - ii. **3 people = 15 facts**
3. You create something for people to look at/watch
 - a. Slides
 - b. Poster
 - c. Video
 - d. Anything that fulfills the requirements of this project

Part 1: Introduction Readings

Numerous reform movements changed the U.S. during the 1800s

Online article from NewsELA

Prohibition Overview

Online article from Khan Academy

Part 2: Source Documents

Document A: 18th Amendment

PRIMARY SOURCE

Document A: The 18th amendment of the United States Constitution that started National Prohibition in 1920. Retrieved from National Archives, June 19, 2008.

AMENDMENT XVIII

Passed by Congress December 18, 1917. Ratified January 16, 1919. Repealed by amendment 21.

Section 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2. The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

Document B: Rumrunners

PRIMARY SOURCE

Document B: An excerpt from "The Rumrunners, a prohibition scrapbook" by C.H. (Marty) Gervais, published 1980, Firefly Books Ltd., Scarborough, Ontario

"Prohibition failed. At least, it fell short for the temperance societies, churches and fanatic evangelists who authored the legislation. But for the owners of blind pigs, the bootleggers, the rumrunners and gangsters, the roadhouse proprietors, the police, the magistrates, the spotters, the boaters and armies of others, it was a roaring success. It meant work. Employment. Easy money. Cash in the pocket. Good times. Shiny new cars. New suits.

... Little did enemies of moonshine and saloons realize that upon creating prohibition and putting liquor out of the reach of the general population, they had in effect created a monster."

Document C: Poem

PRIMARY SOURCE

Document C:

The following poem from prohibition reveals family life for some families during the time:

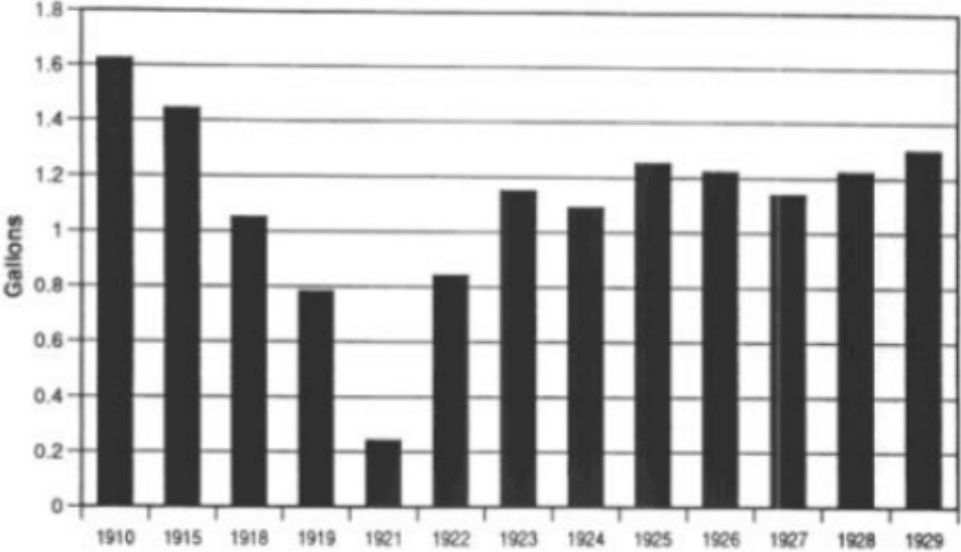
Mother's in the kitchen
Washing out the jugs;
Sister's in the pantry
Bottling the suds;
Father's in the cellar
Mixing up the hops;
Johnny's on the front porch
Watching for the cops.

Source: "Life For the Average American During Prohibition ." University of Albany. 19 Jun 2008 <http://www.albany.edu/~wm731882/life_for_the_average_american_final.html>.

Document D: Graph

SECONDARY SOURCE

Document D: Per Capita Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages (Gallons of Pure Alcohol) 1910-1929.



Source: Clark Warburton, *The Economic Results of Prohibition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), pp. 23-26, 72.

Document E: Homicide

Secondary Source

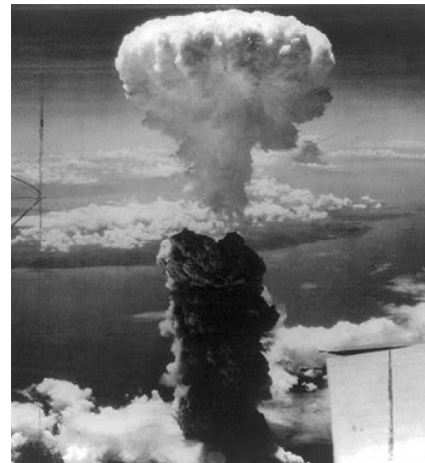
Document F: The number of violations of Prohibition laws and violent crimes against persons and property continued to increase throughout Prohibition. The chart below shows an undeniable relationship between Prohibition and an increase in the homicide rate.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1975), part 1, p. 414.

Example 4

Atomic Bomb Investigation



On August 6, 1945, during World War II (1939-45), an American B-29 bomber dropped the world’s first deployed atomic bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. The explosion immediately killed an estimated 80,000 people; tens of thousands more would later die of radiation exposure. Three days later, a second B-29 dropped another A-bomb on Nagasaki, killing an estimated 40,000 people. Japan’s Emperor Hirohito announced his country’s unconditional surrender in World War II in a radio address on August 15, citing the devastating power of “a new and most cruel bomb.” **In this investigation you will determine: Was the US right for dropping the atomic bombs on Japan?**

Part 1: Background	Questions
Bataan Death March	Summarize the following article in at least 5 bullet points: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
Background	Summarize the following paragraphs of this article: Manhattan Project: The First Atomic Bomb: Deciding to Drop the Bomb:

Part 2: Documents	Questions
Document Intro: Two Historical Narratives	<p>In 1-2 sentences each, explain the two narratives (stories) about Hiroshima</p> <p>Victimization:</p> <p>Triumph:</p> <p>Which narrative do you agree with more? Why?</p>
Document A: Textbook	<p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the RIGHT thing to do?</p> <p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the WRONG thing to do?</p>
Document B: Thank God for the Atomic Bomb	<p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the RIGHT thing to do?</p> <p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the WRONG thing to do?</p>
Document C: Stopping Russia	<p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the RIGHT thing to do?</p> <p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the WRONG thing to do?</p>
Document D: Survivor	<p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the RIGHT thing to do?</p> <p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the WRONG thing to do?</p>
Document E: Hiroshima and Nagasaki	<p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the RIGHT thing to do?</p>

Casualties	What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the WRONG thing to do?
Document F: Pictures (Warning GRAPHIC)	<p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the RIGHT thing to do?</p> <p>What evidence is provided by this document to prove that dropping the bombs was the WRONG thing to do?</p>

Part 3: CER

Answer the question: Was the US right for dropping the atomic bombs on Japan?

Use at least 3 pieces of evidence from the documents above!

Part 1: Background

Bataan Death March

Online article from Ducksters.com

Background

World War II- The Atomic Bomb

Online article from Ducksters.com

Part 2: Documents

Document Intro: Two Historical Narratives

STANFORD HISTORY EDUCATION GROUP
READING LIKE A HISTORIAN

Two Historical Narratives

Name _____

Source: Excerpts from “Three Narratives of our Humanity” by John W. Dower, 1996. The following is from a book written by a historian about how people remember wars. John W. Dower explains the two different ways that the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is remembered.

Hiroshima as Victimization

Japanese still recall the war experience primarily in terms of their own victimization. For them, World War II calls to mind the deaths of family and acquaintances on distant battlefields, and, more vividly, the prolonged, systematic bombings of their cities.

If it is argued that the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima was necessary to shock the Japanese to surrender, how does one justify the hasty bombing of Nagasaki only three days later, before the Japanese had time to investigate Hiroshima and formulate a response?

Hiroshima as Triumph

To most Americans, Hiroshima—the shattered, atomized, irradiated city – remains largely a symbol of triumph – marking the end of a horrendous global conflict and the effective demonstration of a weapon that has prevented another world war.

It is hard to imagine that the Japanese would have surrendered without the atomic bomb. Japanese battle plans that were in place when the bombs were dropped called for a massive, suicidal defense of the home islands, in which the imperial government would mobilize not only several million fighting men but also millions of ordinary citizens who had been trained and indoctrinated to resist to the end with primitive makeshift weapons. For Japanese to even discuss capitulation (surrender) was seditious (against the law).

Document A: Textbook



Document A: Textbook

Even before the bomb was tested, American officials began to debate how to use it. Admiral William Leahy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, opposed using the bomb because it killed civilians indiscriminately. He believed that an economic blockade and conventional bombing would convince Japan to surrender.

Secretary of War Henry Stimson wanted to warn the Japanese about the bomb while at the same time telling them that they could keep the emperor if they surrendered. Secretary of State James Byrnes, however, wanted to drop the bomb without any warning to shock Japan into surrendering.

President Truman later wrote that he "regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubts that it should be used." His advisers had warned him to expect massive casualties if the United States invaded Japan. Truman believed it was his duty as president to use every weapon available to save American lives.

Source: American History Textbook, American Vision, pg. 615.

Document B: Thank God for the Atomic Bomb

Document B: *Thank God for the Atomic Bomb*

My division, like most of the ones transferred from Europe was going to take part in the invasion at Honshu (an island of Japan). The people who preferred invasion to A-bombing seemed to have no intention of proceeding to the Japanese front themselves. I have already noted what a few more days would mean to the luckless troops and sailors on the spot.... On Okinawa, only a few weeks before Hiroshima, 123,000 Japanese and Americans killed each other. War is immoral. War is cruel.

Source: Paul Fussell, a World War II Soldier, Thank God for the Atom Bomb, 1990.

Document C: Stopping Russia

STANFORD HISTORY EDUCATION GROUP
READING LIKE A HISTORIAN

Document C: Stopping Russia

"[Byrnes] was concerned about Russia's postwar behavior. Russian troops had moved into Hungary and Romania, and Byrnes thought it would be very difficult to persuade Russia to withdraw her troops from these countries, that Russia might be more manageable if impressed by American military might, and that a demonstration of the bomb might impress Russia."

Source: James Byrnes was one of Truman's advisors on the atomic bomb. In addition to defeating Japan, he wanted to keep the Soviet Union from expanding its influence in Asia and to limit its influence in Europe. Manhattan Project scientist Leo Szilard met with Byrnes on May 28, 1945. Leo Szilard wrote about his meeting with Byrnes in 1980.

Document D: Survivor

Document D: Survivor

One of my classmates, I think his name is Fujimoto, he muttered something and pointed outside the window, saying, "A B-29 is coming." He pointed outside with his finger. So I began to get up from my chair and asked him, "Where is it?" Looking in the direction that he was pointing towards, I got up on my feet, but I was not yet in an upright position when it happened. All I can remember was a pale lightening flash for two or three seconds. Then, I collapsed. I don't know much time passed before I came to. It was awful, awful. The smoke was coming in from somewhere above the debris. Sandy dust was flying around. . .

I crawled over the debris, trying to find someone who were still alive. Then, I found one of my classmates lying alive. I held him up in my arms. It is hard to tell, his skull was cracked open, his flesh was dangling out from his head. He had only one eye left, and it was looking right at me. . . . he told me to go away.

I, so, was running, hands were trying to grab my ankles, they were asking me to take them along. I was only a child then. And I was horrified at so many hands trying to grab me. I was in pain, too. So all I could do was to get rid of them, it s terrible to say, but I kicked their hands away. I still feel bad about that. I went to Miyuki Bridge to get some water. At the river bank, I saw so many people collapsed there. . . I was small, so I pushed on the river along the small steps. The water was dead people. I had to push the bodies aside to drink the muddy water. We didn't know anything about radioactivity that time. I stood up in the water and so many bodies were floating away along the stream.

Source: Yoshitaka Kawamoto was thirteen years old. He was in the classroom at Zakoba-cho, 0.8 kilometers away from the hypocenter. He is now working as the director of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, telling visitors from all over the world what the atomic bomb did to the people of Hiroshima.

Document E: Hiroshima and Nagasaki Casualties

STANFORD HISTORY EDUCATION GROUP
READING LIKE A HISTORIAN

Document E: Hiroshima and Nagasaki Casualties

TABLE A: Estimates of Casualties

	Hiroshima	Nagasaki
Pre-raid population	255,000	195,000
Dead	66,000	39,000
Injured	69,000	25,000
Total Casualties	135,000	64,000

TABLE B: Cause of Immediate Deaths

Hiroshima	
Cause of Death	Percent of Total
Burns	60%
Falling debris	30
Other	10

Nagasaki

Cause of Death	Percent of Total
Burns	95%
Falling debris	9
Flying glass	7
Other	7

Document F: Pictures (Warning GRAPHIC)



Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. December 7, 1941.

OURS...to fight for



FREEDOM FROM FEAR

U.S. War Aim



American Survivors of the Bataan Death March



General Paul Tibbets and the Enola Gay



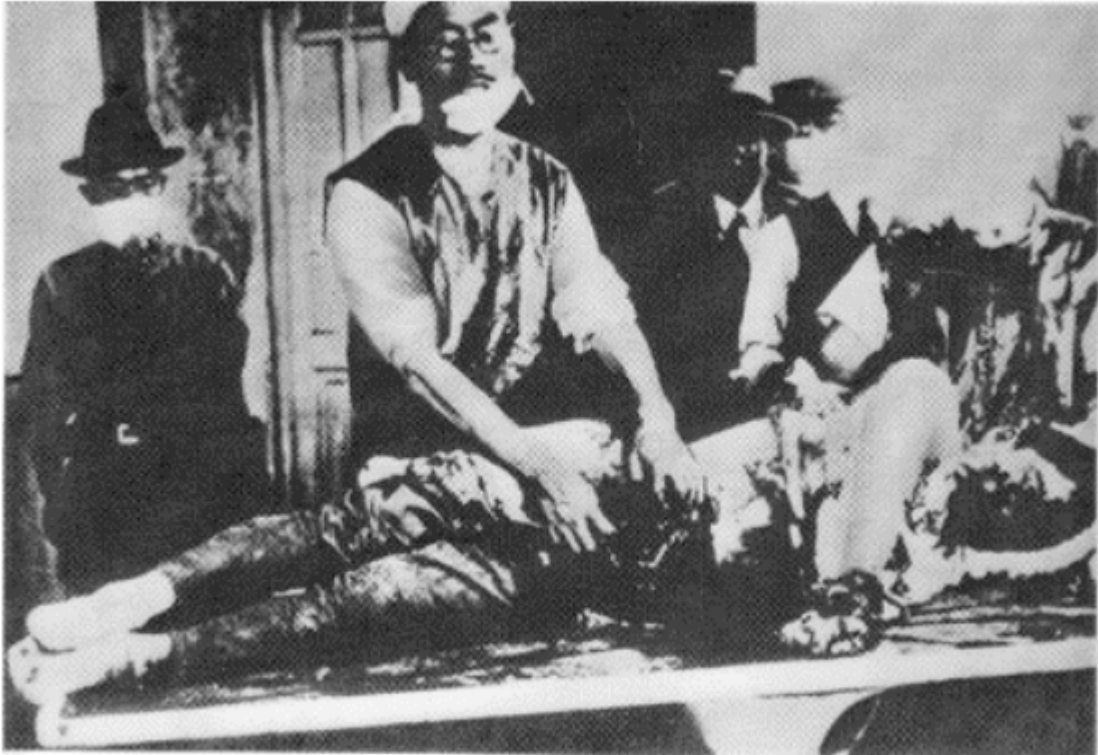
Hiroshima City after the Atomic Bombing



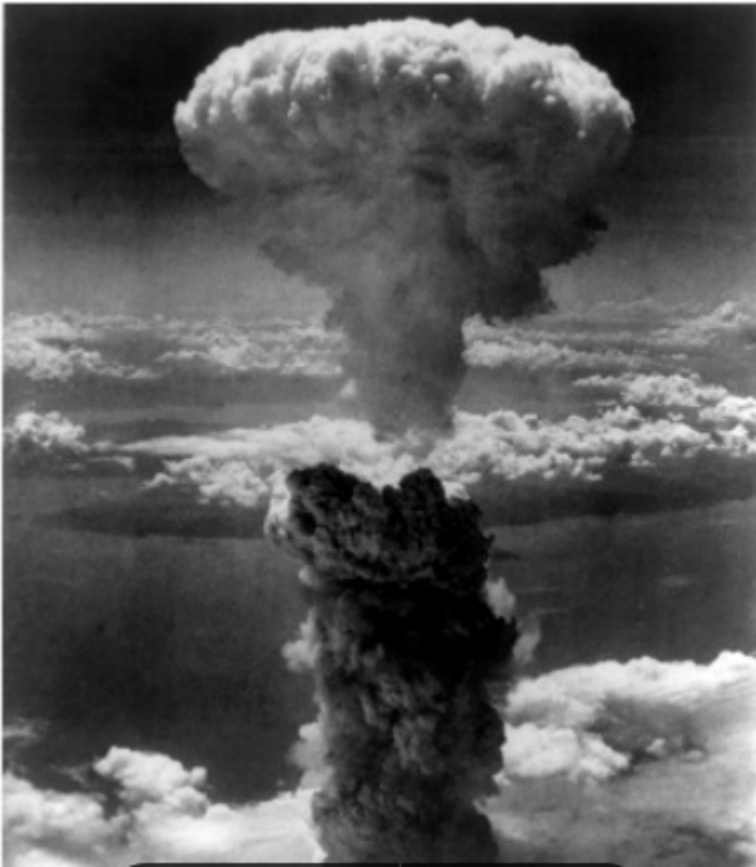
A boy's burned flesh after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima



A girl with her skin hanging in strips after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima



Japanese Unit 731 performs medical experiments, including vivisections, on POWs and colonial subjects.



Implementation

The examples above are implemented in my middle school classroom. Instead of having students read about these concepts in a textbook and get the one dominant, white-male point-of-view, they get multiple perspectives. These investigations are how students primarily learn the material in my classroom but can be added and subtracted as needed from any curriculum. With this type of curriculum, there is an acceptance on my part that students will only learn some of the details about every single topic I am supposed to cover. When implementing this curriculum, you go from the traditional “birds-eye view” of history and take a microscope to individual events and themes in American history. The dominant narrative thrives in the “birds-eye view” because if you don’t look at anything too closely, your students won’t question their learning. This mindset is why ditching textbooks and exploring history with a more inquiry-based approach is essential.

One (if not the biggest) change you need to make as an educator when using this curriculum is relinquishing control. Students may conclude that they disagree with the teacher, which is okay! As long as they cite factual information, you must accept that some people may view that past differently. I would argue that if you correctly conduct investigations and an inquiry-based curriculum, students should come to various conclusions. Social studies is not like math with one correct answer. We need to be able to accept that once we give students these sources, they may come to a conclusion that is different from ours. Every year I assign these investigations, I see things differently. My opinion might not change much (or at all), but we must extend that same grace and understanding to our students. They may look at something one way now but differently later. Our goal here is to encourage diversity of voices and diversity of

thought. You should never go into an inquiry-based assignment to ensure you get the same answer from everyone. That's the antithesis of this curriculum.

Frame Factors

According to Posner (1995), many factors need to be considered when creating a curriculum. These factors include “physical, cultural, temporal, economic, organizational, political-legal, and personal. “Frame factors function as limitations or constraints on teaching, and thus curriculum implementation” (pp. 182-183). The question is, what issues or factors may play a role in preventing you from using this curriculum? The first factor revolves around the expectations surrounding textbooks. Textbooks are expensive, and your school district may require that you use them. Schools do not generally let them sit on shelves unused. One way around this is to use your textbook as another source. I have even done this in the past because it also gives students a glimpse of why they are so problematic. So, if you are forced to use your textbooks, use them in these investigations as just another point of view for students to compare to the others.

The second factor is our current political landscape. There has been an increasing resentment growing in our country towards the ideas of Critical Race Theory and teaching anything considered “diverse.”. Suppose you are using these investigations to take a hard look at race and start questioning the dominant narratives surrounding it. In that case, you may be labeled as teaching “CRT.” If you have an investigation involving Stonewall in Florida, you may be violating the laws surrounding “don't say gay.” These inquiry-based assignments are built on questioning the dominant narratives. Increasingly, some do not want the dominant narratives challenged. You need to use your best judgment as a professional in your specific classroom to know what you can and cannot get away with.

Chapter 5

Assessment and Evaluation

In this chapter, I will provide a model for assessing the inquiry-based assignments from Chapter 4. These are more general guidelines and checkpoints to ensure you use inquiry authentically. Use these assessments as you see fit for you and your students.

Assessment Rationale and Plan

Success and failure of the curriculum explained in Chapter 4 are subjective. However, I aim to guide you to use an inquiry-based approach as authentically and effectively as possible. That may look different in your classroom than mine, but I hope I can provide some guidance. How we can determine if using an inquiry-based approach is successful goes back to the highlights from Chapter 4: are students being exposed to different perspectives? Are students coming to different conclusions based on the available information? Can they explain their viewpoints using factual evidence? Are students able to have an authentic dialogue about the topic? If you can answer these questions with a resounding yes, then that is a successful inquiry-based assignment. Failure would look like the opposite of success. Suppose students are only being exposed to a single viewpoint. In that case, most come to the same conclusions, can't explain their position using factual evidence, and can't have a dialogue about the content. That would be considered a failure in using an inquiry-based approach.

Teacher Perspective

From the perspective of you, the teacher, the goal is to create and implement an authentic inquiry-based assignment with your students. The checklist below will help guide you in achieving that. This checklist is basic, but if you follow the checklist, you will be one step closer

to creating that authentic experience for your students. You should use the left side of the checklist first. The left side of the “creation checklist” will aid you in creating your inquiry-based assignment. You should use this as you create your inquiry-based assignment. During the process, if you answer no to any of those questions, you should reevaluate. If you can respond “yes” to every question on the left side, you are one step closer to creating an authentic assignment. The post-checklist side will be used after completing your assignment with students. Hopefully, the first, second, and fourth questions should all be answered “yes.” The third question should be answered “no” because if all the students responded to the question in the same/similar manner, you probably did not create an authentic or complex inquiry-based assignment. Using this checklist to guide you before you use this assignment with students will help guide you. Still, using it as an assessment for yourself afterwards will help ensure that future versions of your lesson are the most authentic.

Teacher Inquiry Checklist			
Creation Checklist		Post-Checklist	
Is the question you are asking complex and can be answered in a variety of ways?	Y or N	Did students pull evidence from <i>multiple</i> different sources to support their point of view?	Y or N
Are there multiple different sources from multiple different points of view?	Y or N	Did students cite <i>factual</i> information to support their point of view?	Y or N
Do you have a combination of primary and secondary sources?	Y or N	Did most students come to the same or similar conclusion?	Y or N
Do you believe this inquiry will promote dialogue between yourself and students?	Y or N	Were students able to dialogue and communicate their position effectively?	Y or N
Are students being asked to explain their position on the topic authentically?	Y or N		Y or N

Student Perspective

I have included a student rubric and the teacher inquiry checklist. You could use the student rubric to “assess” that students achieved the goals of this inquiry-based assignment. Once again, these are very broad and can hopefully be applied to various assignments, and you can always edit this to be more specific. Ultimately, the goal of the student rubric is to ensure students achieve the overarching goal of any inquiry-based assignment: concluding/answering a question using multiple facts from multiple sources to prove that conclusion/answer. There is also the dialogue section of the rubric if you were to “grade” students on their ability to dialogue or have a conversation about the topic and their specific views. When using this with students, students should be aware of this rubric and always have access to it. Because this rubric is vague, it should not influence the conclusions of the inquiry but rather the quality of the conclusions. This rubric would be used as a summative assessment with your students, but a type of formative assessment could be informal questions you ask along the way. Those informal questions could be students' conclusions about each of the specific documents and how their views change in real time. This is the perfect time to play “devils-advocate,” as you can constantly encourage your students to acknowledge other points of view. Suppose they can do that with individual documents and informal questions from the teacher. In that case, they are one step closer to effectively defending their position at the end of the assignment.

Student Rubric					
	0	1	2	3	4
Answer to the Inquiry Question	Student lacks any conclusion/claim/answer to the inquiry question	Student barely includes a conclusion/claim/answer to the inquiry question	Student somewhat includes a conclusion/claim/answer to the inquiry question	Student includes a conclusion/claim/answer to the inquiry question	Student includes a clear and articulate conclusion/claim/answer to the inquiry question
Factual Information	Student lacks any factual information to support their answer to the inquiry question	Student barely has any factual information to support their answer to the inquiry question	Student somewhat has factual information to support their answer to the inquiry question	Student includes multiple pieces of factual information to support their answer to the inquiry question	Student includes multiple pieces of factual information from multiple sources to support their answer to the inquiry question
Multiple Sources	Student includes factual information, but it is all from one source	Student includes factual information from two sources	Student includes factual information from three sources	Student includes factual information from 4+ sources	Student includes factual information from 4+ sources in a cohesive and well-developed manner
Dialogue	Student can not accurately or articulately convey their views on the topic	Student can either somewhat accurately or articulately convey their views on the topic	Student can either accurately or articulately convey their views on the topic	Student can both accurately and articulately convey their views on the topic	Student can both accurately and articulately convey their views on the topic in a manner that can be clearly understood by others

Administrator Perspective

As we all know, curriculums and their validity are typically up to the the administrators in our districts and in our buildings. We must remember them if we use this curriculum type in our classroom. Fortunately, there is plenty in this curriculum that should appease these

administrators. As we know, standardized tests are always at the forefront of the administration's mind (especially the PSSA or Keystones here in PA.) From a PSSA perspective, an inquiry-based curriculum aligns nicely with what that assessment asks students to do in the ELA sections. In the ELA sections, emphasis is placed on TDAs or “text-dependent analysis.” This is where students are asked to read something and analyze it by answering questions in paragraph form. This should sound familiar, as this is the basic premise of any inquiry-based instruction.

Having students pull evidence from a passage to support their answer. I would call this a “transferable skill” because if students do this in your social studies classroom, it will only improve their competency when performing a TDA on the PSSA. The student rubric would be a great piece of evidence for you to give to administrators to show them what you are doing in your classroom should help students increase their scores on the ELA portion of the PSSA. While we all know the purpose of this curriculum is not to increase test scores on standardized assessments, if that’s one of the many positive consequences, you should use that to support this type of curriculum with your administration.

General Conclusions

Throughout these chapters, I have discussed more significant educational issues, including history textbooks' problems. I’ve concluded that they are problematic at best, actively harming society at worst. We have seen how history textbooks have changed and adapted over the years to include the dominant narratives and continue to exclude the voices and experiences of marginalized groups. Trauma and deficit thinking are simply the tip of the iceberg. As a society, we need to avoid relying on history textbooks in the social studies classroom. We are doing a disservice to our students and society when children are only exposed to the dominant narratives of history. Students need to be exposed to the viewpoints and voices of everyone.

Inquiry-based learning and inquiry-based assignments are the best way to do that. When students are required to see multiple perspectives and use those perspectives to answer history's extensive and challenging questions, we will create a more inclusive classroom and, hopefully, a more inclusive society.

Recommendations for Future Research

One idea one could explore is the creation of history textbooks. Most of my thoughts included either completely removing them from the social studies classroom or using them as one of many sources as it is. However, there may be room for discussion about how we can make these textbooks better. Textbooks are a huge industry that makes these companies a lot of money. They are not going away anytime soon. An idea worth exploring is how we get people involved in the textbook creation process who want to make these texts more representative of our society. Who simply don't push the dominant narrative because it's "safe." Many barriers prevent us from doing that, but this process is worth exploring.

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