

Online Primary Sources in the American History Classroom

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Course Summary:

This course will explore multiple ways of integrating primary source material into American historical education in high schools. This course has three broad goals: to introduce teachers to the use of primary sources in history education; to build a collective electronic library of sources for classroom use; and to help educators become comfortable and competent with the latest classroom technology. To accomplish these goals, the course moves chronologically through American history and explores categories of primary documents that can uniquely illuminate their respective periods. Each session will begin with an organized discussion by the course instructors of the category of sources for the week, including the introduction of representative examples and contextual and critical commentary. This discussion will offer teachers guidance on how to productively and properly use particular types of sources in a classroom setting. Next, participants will workshop lesson plans. Each session several participants will be responsible for drafting model lesson plans for the chronological period of that week, based on online primary sources and the Massachusetts Social Science Curriculum Framework. The class will offer constructive criticism and discussion on the model lesson plans. Each session will conclude with a guided online search and exchange of further primary sources.

Evaluation and Assignments:

Course participants will be responsible for drafting three model lesson plans over the course of the semester based on online primary sources and the Massachusetts Social Science Curriculum Framework and presenting those lesson plans to the class. Participants will also be responsible for active involvement in course discussions and engaged exploration of assigned readings and recommended online resources. At the conclusion of the semester, participants will be asked to give an annotated bibliography which will be shared with other members of the course.

Grading:

30% Lesson Plans
15% Presentations
25% Final Annotated Bibliography
30% Class Participation

Preliminary Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction: Using Classroom Technology and Online Resources

David Kobrin, *Beyond the Textbook: Teaching History Using Documents and Primary Sources*, (Heinemann, 1996).

“Primary Sources: Magical Moments of Insight,” “Strategies for Teaching History,” and “Focus on the Questions in High School” in Susan Veccia, *Uncovering Our History: Teaching with Primary Sources*, (American Library Association, 2003) pp. 1-13, 57-72, 101-112.

Suggested Websites:

Week 2: Pre-Colonial America and Its First Contact with Europe (15,000 B.C.E.–1650 C.E.)

Physical Artifacts; Maps; Exploratory Journals; Native Perspectives; and Woodcuttings

“Landscape and Patchwork,” “Seasons of Want and Plenty,” and “Bounding the Land” in William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonist and the Ecology of New England*, (Hill & Wang, 1983), pp. 19-81.

Suggested Websites:

Week 3: Colonial and Revolutionary America (1650 C.E.–1781 C.E.)

Pamphlets and Early Newspapers; Colonial Legal Documents

“Popular Uprisings and Civil Authority,” “The Stamp Act Riots and Ordered Resistance, 1765,” “The Making of an American Revolution, 1772-1776” in Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765-1776*, (Norton, 1992), pp. 3-26, 51-76, 228-270.

Suggested Websites:

Week 4: The Making of the American Constitution (1781 C.E. – 1800 C.E.)

Treatises on the Constitution; Constitutional Documents

“The Perils of Originalism,” “Debating the Constitution,” and “Federalism” in Jack Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Makings of the Constitution*, (Vintage, 1997), pp 3-23, 131-202.

Suggested Websites:

Week 5: The Early Republic and the Rise of Jacksonian Democracy (1800 C.E. - 1830 C.E.)

Memoirs; Domestic Material Sources

“Introduction,” “Vernacular Gentility in Rural Delaware,” and “The Comforts of Home” in Richard Lyman Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*, (Vintage, 1993), pp. xi-xix, 207-279.

Suggested Websites:

Week 6: Antebellum Slave Culture (1830 C.E.-1860 C.E.)

Slave Narratives and Folk History

C. Vann Woodward, “History from Slave Sources,” *American Historical Review*, vol. 79 no. 2, (April 1974), pp. 470-481.

“The Sacred World of Black Slaves” in Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture, Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom*, (Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 3-80.

Suggested Websites:

Week 7: Civil War (1860 C.E. – 1865 C.E.)

Letters; Photographs

Selections from the documentary film “The Civil War.”

“Ken Burns and the Romance of Reunion,” “Telling the Story: The Historian, the Filmmaker, and the Civil War,” and “Four O’Clock in the Morning Courage” in Richard Toplin, ed., *Ken Burns’ the Civil War: Historians Respond*, (Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 101-140, 153-184.

Suggested Websites:

Week 8: Reconstruction (1865 C.E. – 1877 C.E.)

Diaries; Federal Documents

“The Meaning of Freedom” in Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*, (Harper, 1992), 77-123.

Suggested Websites:

Week 9: Gilded Age and the Rise of Industrial America (1877 C.E. – 1898 C.E.)

Literature and Dime Novels; and Expositions

“Introduction: Mud in Our French Heels,” “Cheap Dresses and Dime Novels: The First Commodities for Working Women,” and “Ladies of Labor: Fashion, Fiction, and Working Women’s Culture in Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure*, (Columbia University Press, 1999) pp.1-83.

Suggested Websites:

Week 10: The American Empire in the Age of Reform (1898 C.E. – 1919 C.E.)

Newspapers and Magazines; Women’s Social Welfare Documents

“Introduction” and “Parables of Progress: Travelogues, Ghetto Sketches, and Fictions of the Foreigner” in Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, (Hill and Wang, 2001), pp. 3-15, 105-139.

Suggested Websites:

Week 11: Boom and Bust (1918 C.E. – 1942 C.E.)

Films; Dance and Music;

“‘My Ancestors Did Not Come Over on the Mayflower’: Will Rogers and the Radicalism of Tradition” in Larry May, *The Big Tomorrow: Hollywood and the Politics of the American Way*, (University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp 11-55.

Suggested Websites:

Week 12: America at War, Hot and Cold (1942 C.E. -1955 C.E.)

Cartoons; Comics; Advertisements; Congressional Hearings

“Youth Crisis: Comic Books and Controversy, 1947-1950” and “Reds, Romance, and Renegades: Comic Books and the Culture of the Cold War, 1947-1954,” in Bradford W. Wright, *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America*, (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), pp. 86-154.

Suggested Websites:

Week 13: Civil Rights and Vietnam (1955 C.E. -1973 C.E.)

Speeches; Television; Campaign Paraphernalia

David Halberstam, *The Fifties*, (Villard, 1993).

Suggested Websites:

Week 14: **Countdown to the Millennium (1973 C.E. – 2000 C.E.)**

The Internet; Cable Television; Video

TBA

Suggested Websites: