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social studies JOURNAL

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Guidelines for Manuscripts

Aims and Scope

The Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies seeks to publish manuscripts in the *Journal* that focus on any of the following:

- Creative ways of teaching social studies at the elementary, secondary, & higher education levels
- Research articles
- Explanations of new types of materials and/or equipment that directly relate to social studies teaching, particularly those developed and/or implemented by teachers
- Explanations of teacher developed projects that help social studies students and teachers work with community groups
- Reviews of books and other media that are relevant to the teaching of social studies
- Analysis of how other academic disciplines relate to the teaching of social studies

Instructions for Authors

All manuscripts must adhere to the following formatting guidelines. Manuscripts that do not meet the guidelines will be returned to the author without going out for peer review. The editors of *Social Studies Journal* accept submissions on a rolling basis. However, calls for manuscripts are issued for both regular and special issues.

- Type and double-space submissions using 12-point font and one-inch margins
- Include any figures and/or images at the end of the article
- Authors are responsible for obtaining copyright permission for all images
- Average manuscript length is between five and fifteen pages, though exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis
- Follow guidelines of the current APA Publication Manual
- Do not include author name(s) or other identifying information in the text or references of the paper
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- With submission email, authors must attest that the manuscript is original, not under review elsewhere, and not published previously
- Papers must be submitted as Word documents to the editors at editors.ssj@gmail.com

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Social Studies Journal is a biannual publication of the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies. The *Journal* seeks to provide space for the exchange of ideas among social studies educators and scholars in Pennsylvania and beyond. The editors encourage authors both in and out of Pennsylvania to submit to the *Journal*.

All manuscripts go through a blinded peer-review process. In order to encourage and assist writers, the reviewers make suggestions and notations for revisions that are shared with the author before papers are accepted for final publication. The editors encourage authors in both K-12 and higher education settings to consider submitting to *Social Studies Journal*.

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Editor's Note

Jessica B. Schocker, *SSJ* Editor

I am so excited to introduce our readers to the Spring 2024 issue of *SSJ*. This issue is bookended by pieces that describe relationships between colleagues and friends, old and new. Given our goal at *SSJ* to center stories, first-person voice in academic work, and diversity in perspectives and experiences, we couldn't be happier to have these two special contributions to open and close the issue.

Tianna Dowie-Chin and Sacha Gitten, friends of 25 years, wrote a SS Story about their experiences growing up as Black Canadian women of Caribbean descent. In their introductory narratives, their stories are incredibly personal (references to snuggling family members to sleep after a long celebration and balls of dough raising on the counter on Christmas morning), they are also universal. The more personal our stories, the more we can connect with one another. In sharing their experiences, Tianna and Sacha invite us social studies educators to question how we teach experiences across the Black Diaspora, and as such expand student understanding of Blackness.

Closing the issue, Sara Demoiny and Christine Woyshner walk us through their introduction to one other, an email inquiry from Sara to Christine about a conference paper. What resulted was a meaningful collaboration about civics and civic education, and how their shared insights from different research perspectives (a historian scholar and a contemporary issues scholar) could strengthen their social studies methods classes and inspire new research directions in the field of social studies education. In an academic field that some view as siloed and exclusive, it is a refreshing read with strategies for those looking to expand their meaningful professional connections.

Between the bookends of this issue, we present three SS Stories and three articles. Kat Hoffman and Paul McCormick, write about how a critical parent Facebook post invited them to humbly reimagine how they teach their Indigenous Literature and History class. In doing so, they became more robust teachers and grew in admiration for each other as co-teachers. In the next story, Jack Port also describes a transformative experience for his identity and practice as a teacher, attending the Supreme Court Summer Institute for Teachers. He recollects his learning experiences and describes the ways he has experimented with implementation thus far.

Ally Durney, a sixteen-year veteran teacher details her harrowing account of living through a swatting incident at her school. Ally sets the scene such that any one of us could picture ourselves in her classroom, listening to Billy Joel one moment, spotting an armed school resource officer the next, gun drawn, in a crouch and run. In sharing her story, she invites us social studies educators to consider what the uptick in school violence and swatting means for our work, our curriculum, and our communities.

Scott Metzger's two contributions to this issue serve as the bridge between stories and articles. First, Scott tells the story of how he came to write about what he calls "history's most intractable conflict," Israel and Palestine. Positioning himself as an educator, a husband, and a human whose childhood experiences resulted in a life-long fascination with Islamic history. Then, in his article, Scott uses the technique of Alternate Framing to present for secondary teachers and their students an accessible history of the contested land. At the end of each history section, Scott provides two perspectives: a dominant perspective of supporters of Israel and a dominant perspective of supporters of Palestine. While some suggest the conflict is too sensitive to engage with at all, others assert it is morally obligatory. Regardless of one's perspective, many teachers are wholly unprepared and under intense pressure to remain "unbiased." Scott's article aims to empower teachers with content knowledge and ideas for teaching.

Eric Groce, Margaret Gregor, and Robin Groce wrote a historical comparison of the inequities surrounding the 1793 Yellow Fever Epidemic and the COVID-19 Pandemic. From the opening, where they set the scene in Philadelphia post-Revolutionary War to the conclusion, where they share a C3 style lesson for teachers to juxtapose past and present with examples such fraudulent medical claims, heroes and heroines, and travel restrictions, Eric, Margaret, and Robin give teachers substantial content to work with in a post-COVID era of unpacking our collective social trauma that (again) highlighted structured inequalities.

As Artificial Intelligence continues to seep into nearly all aspects of our lives, social studies teachers must begin thinking about its implications and uses. Brian Stevens has been a teacher in Pennsylvania for twenty years, earning his doctorate in Educational Technology along the way, and in his article, he reviews some of the available AI resources particularly useful for social studies teachers. He also provides insight on the challenges and potential "guardrails" for teachers as they dabble in using AI as a tool and consider the ethical implications.

I am so proud of the authors in this issue, which spans a wide variety of social studies content and personal stories. As you read, we encourage you to give us feedback either by emailing the editors at editors.ssj@gmail.com or by visiting our new website and contacting us there. Soon, we will launch our new *SSJ* Instagram page, which will highlight SS Stories and authors.

It is an exciting time for *SSJ* as we welcome Abigail Stebbins in her promotion from Copyeditor to Associate Editor. Mark, Abigail, and I thank Stephanie Schroeder for her contributions to the journal as she cycles off the editorial team.

It is my great pleasure to read submissions from authors. The longer I serve as editor, the more I appreciate what a gift it is to read unpublished work and support authors as they bring their work to its best form. Finally, every issue of *SSJ* is made possible by our incredible peer-reviewers, and this issue is no exception. I found myself especially grateful for the quiet, often unrecognized work of meaningful and supportive peer-review as we assembled this issue. Reviewers, you know who you are, and we know and appreciate how hard you worked to turn around reviews quickly and thoughtfully.

Sincerely,

Jessica B. Schocker, Editor

Teaching Across the Diasporas: Making Room for Blackness

Tianna Dowie-Chin and Sacha Gittens

"Every year Toronto putting on a big show
Carnival they call Caribana
Jigging to a sweet tune, sweating in dey costume
Playing dey mas' in Canada"
—Mighty Sparrow, "Toronto Mas" 1972

Our Stories

Tianna's Story

Some of my sweetest memories as a child are centered around music and family. I recall my large Jamaican family, of 40 or so people, squeezing into my great-grandmother's two-bedroom apartment for celebrations. From down the hall you could hear the sweet sounds of reggae and calypso blasting from the speaker boxes or almost be knocked over by me or one of my cousins as we raced down the hall trying to prove that we were the fastest person alive. At times, it felt like my cousins, and I were in our own world. Though there were more adults than kids, we were allowed to roam the halls freely and play all night.

On nights like this, after hours of dancing and eating to my *belly full,* I would fall asleep on a bed covered with my family member's winter jackets. Though the party would go on until the wee hours of the morning, the kids, like me, would often find rest where we could; on sofas, in the arms of loved ones, or on a bed, being used as a closet. These memories and others like them are a part of my culture as a Black first-generation Canadian of Jamaican parentage. The Caribbean music, Jamaican food, and the government-funded housing where my great-grandmother lived are a part of my story as a Black Caribbean Canadian.

Sacha's Story

Christmas time is the most nostalgic time of year that reminds me of my Caribbean heritage. From as early as I can remember, Christmas was the meeting of my Trinidadian and Guyanese

heritages combining to give my parents a feeling of home away from home. Christmas Eve was a busy day as mom would hang all the new curtains, changing the color schemes in all the bedrooms, living room and dining room and bathrooms. Mom also insisted on changing all the bathroom mats and laying crisp new bedding on everyone's bed. She made all these changes while telling us the story, yet another year, that when she was a girl, everyone engaged in these practices, but in the dark so that the neighbors would not see the colors and patterns in the house until Christmas morning when the sun came up.

As much as we looked forward to the new linens around the house, the food was always the highlight. Balls of dough rising on the counter, the smell of a ham slow baking, hearing the pressure cooker sounding as though it was a rocket ship ready for take-off, and the sight of a big pot boiling a ruby red delight. All these preparations happened for Christmas morning when the pressure cooked meat turned into a Guyanese Christmas morning dish called *pepper* pot, eaten with the balls of dough from the counter that baked into fresh homemade bread, the ruby red potion now sweetened and spiced into *sorrel*, a drink only made for Christmas, and getting to finally taste that baked ham with a side of *chow-chow*, a pickled relish that transformed the taste of the warm, juicy ham. Our family would sit around the dining room table with the sounds of *parang* playing in the background, raising our spirits, and bringing us even more Christmas cheer.

Our Recollections

We begin our piece with recollections of our lives to capture the complexity and diversity of our experiences as Black Canadian women of Caribbean descent growing up in the greater Toronto area (GTA). Sacha and I (Tianna) have been friends for over 25 years and have connected and shared countless memories. One way that we have bonded is through music and our Caribbean culture, particularly through our participation in various Afro-Carnivals around the world. From Trinidad to Toronto, we have reveled in our Carnival costumes celebrating our freedom and cultures. Now we both work as educators, Sacha, a French-Immersion elementary school teacher in the GTA, and me, a teacher educator in Georgia, USA, who previously worked as a high school History and English teacher in the GTA. Reflecting on our years attending K-12 schools in the GTA, including the period that we attended the same schools from the 6th grade through high school, we recall learning about the underground railroad, enslavement of Black people in the USA and Black Loyalists in Canada but, nothing about Black people from Latin America and the Caribbean (Busey, 2023). Instead, we were offered essentialized and limited accounts of Black life that centered around trauma (King, L., 2020).

Limiting Blackness

In a recent publication centering Black joy, Education scholar Michelle Grace-Williams (2022) asked "What information and freedoms are being withheld from Black children in our schools? What are they told about who they are; what Black people have accomplished; and the beauty and brilliance of our people, our languages, and our communities?" As Black Canadian educators of Caribbean heritage, we consider how our experiences and histories and that of other Black people are brought into the classroom. Despite Toronto's racially and ethnically diverse population, Blackness and the experience of Black people are often treated as a monolith (Busey, 2023; Dowie-Chin, 2023; King, L., 2020). For instance, Canadian curriculum often forefronts the experiences of Black Americans while limiting the lived experiences of Black migrants to Canada, including Black Caribbeans. This positioning of the Black experience limits understanding around Blackness, the Black Diaspora and colonialism. Rather than expanded conversations around the impact and legacy of colonialism and antiblackness, school curricula, particular in Canada, posits antiblack racism as a largely American problem. Instead of attempting to present limited Black history in schools, "Black histories are…[the] goal instead of Black history" (King, L., 2020, p. 337). In 2019, Statistics Canada noted that more than half of the Black population in Canada were immigrants or first-generation Canadians, noting that a significant number of immigrants came from the Caribbean. Despite, these data and our own lived reality, we cannot recall being formally taught about Afro-Caribbean history prior to undergrad (Grace-Williams, 2016).

Bringing Ourselves into the Classroom

Over the last few years, Sacha has brought voices and stories of Afro-Caribbean people into her elementary school classroom. One of the lessons centers around Toronto's Caribbean Carnival, formerly known as Caribana. Through this lesson, students are taught about the history of Afro-Carnival, learning of the origin, and how it was celebrated during African enslavement and European rule in the Caribbean. The students then learned about the changes of Carnival from its origin to present day, and how it has expanded not only out of Trinidad and Tobago to other Caribbean islands, but also to other countries around the world including Canada. Students then had the opportunity to create their own mas (Carnival costumes) and parade them around the school to the sounds of sweet *soca* music to experience the transition from secret masked balls, to parades of history through the streets. Through such lessons, students were able to learn a part of Black diasporic history that is not traditionally included in school curricula.

Making Room for Black Joy

Dismantling and addressing anti-blackness requires both the addressing of systemic racism and the sharing of Black Joy. Grace-Williams (2022) noted that Black joy "should be defined by self-love and loving [Black] people and their brilliance, artistry, resistance, and contributions. It is not blind euphoria. It is not a denial or dismissal of Black struggles but a refusal to be defined and limited by them" (p. 372). Through teaching about Afro-Carnival and its origins, Sacha was able to teach students Black counter-narratives that displayed Black joy and resistance. As noted by several Black scholars, while it is imperative for students to understand the systemic nature of antiblackness, teachers much make space for Black joy (Dunn & Love, 2020; Grace-Williams, 2022; King, L., 2020).

Teaching Across the Diaspora

Building on the concept of "diaspora literacy," Black scholars have long expressed the importance of studyin' across the Black diaspora to truly apprehend Black life (Busey, 2023; King, J., 2006). Social studies teachers can assist in challenging the status quo by teaching Black histories, focusing on both the local voices and voices across the diaspora. Teaching across the Black Diaspora can allow students to have more deeper understanding of Blackness and its complexity. We are excited about the possibility of seeing fuller Black stories included in classrooms.

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About the Authors: Tianna Dowie-Chin is an Assistant Professor of Social Studies Education at the University of Georgia and Sacha Gittens is an elementary teacher in the greater Toronto area. The authors can be reached via Tianna at tdowiechin@uga.edu.

Avoiding the Single Story: Attempting to Teach Indigenous Literature and History

Kat Hoffman and Paul McCormick

In the Fall of 2023, we shared in this publication about our plans for a co-taught Indigenous Literature and History course at our small democratic magnet program in Central Pennsylvania, located close to Penn State's University Park campus. This article is a follow-up of how the course went and what we learned.

In the first week of the course, we decided to show Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's (2009) TED talk "The Danger of a Single Story." Kat had used this in the past to give students a framework for delicate conversations about race and identity and thought it would be useful for students to have language to talk about what Indigenous peoples experience. The result was that the language of "the single story" became a thread throughout the entire course. Adiche explains that a single story is a narrative that presents only one perspective–a "single" perspective. The danger of the "single story" is that it can result in perspectives based on stereotypes and then become the ONLY story about a group of people. With this as our framework, we started to unpack some single stories of American History, World History, and of Literature.

Soon after we watched Adiche's TED talk, we took a field trip to a local building (a former school) that allowed us to examine artwork depicting local native communities and some of the embedded lore here in central Pennsylvania. We were amazed by students' ability to examine the visual art created in the 1950s about Native communities and how our small university town formed. They unpacked the visual media and articulated problems and assumptions implicit in the mural. They also used the language of the single story to think about what single stories the mural showed and what stories it left out. The students pointed out the pre-"civilization" portion had Indigenous people (see Figure 1), and the second portion, when the university was founded, had no Indigenous people and few women (see Figure 2). They also noted the stereotypes portrayed of the Indigenous people communing with nature.

Figure 1. Photograph of pre-"civilization" portion of the mural

Figure 2. Photograph of post-"civilization" portion of the mural

In light of this course, we asked our class to plan our annual all-school Feast Day in November, where they shared a land acknowledgement, and read the Thanksgiving Address from Robin Kimmerer Wall's *Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults*. We centered the research our students did in our class, sharing trivia about the three sisters and other Indigenous peoples and history. However, when we posted about the event on our school's social media accounts, we experienced some pushback due to the careless way we worded the post. One parent wrote:

> Hi Paul,
> I just saw a Facebook post that stated the Delta Feast was called Thanksgiving. It stated it started with a land acknowledgement followed by Thanksgiving Trivia and the Thanksgiving Meal. Can you please explain how this was planned as doing a land acknowledgement is great but I'm confused how it goes from that into a celebration of Indigenous genocide.
> Thanks,
> **Parent's Name Redacted**

This email provided us with immediate feedback and learning–and also some degree of embarrassment. Needless to say, we changed the wording. Paul responded:

> Hi **Parent**,
> Thanks for catching this. We didn't think through the language of the post carefully enough. It should read like this:
>
> > Yesterday, Delta Faculty, Staff, Students, Alumni, Board Members and Administration came together for our Annual Feast. It began with a land acknowledgement, continued with a Thanksgiving Address from the book Braiding Sweetgrass (written by Robin Wall Kimmerer, a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation) and live entertainment, and ended with all of us coming together to enjoy a family-style meal.
> >
> > A special thanks and shoutout to Kat and Paul's Indigenous Lit & History class for organizing and running the feast; and to our amazing Kitchen Services staff for providing a wonderful meal!
>
> To answer your specific question, we centered our "thanksgiving address" based on what current Indigenous author Robin Wall Kimmerer wrote in her book *Braiding Sweetgrass* on page 48 which is a reflection of the Haudenosaunee giving of thanks for the harvest and environment around us.
>
> Hopefully you'll see the new accurate post soon on FB.
> Thanks for bringing it to our attention. We're learning and we are helped when people like you correct us.
>
> Warmly,
> Paul

We realize that when writing the original social media post we made the mistake of doing the very thing we were trying to counteract with this class–creating a single story. We wanted to decenter dominant narratives, and yet we used language that disregarded Indigenous experiences. Or, at least we did not pause to consider how the word "Thanksgiving" might evoke a person's

thoughts about a single story. We needed to educate ourselves and our school community better on the reclamation of the word "Thanksgiving" by some native communities and writers, including Robin Wall Kimmerer. Thankfully, a parent in our school felt comfortable enough to reach out to us and ask for clarification on what we meant in the original post. The fact that we teach in a small democratic magnet-style school encourages parents to participate in dialogues that, in other schools, might not happen.

This experience was representative of how co-teaching this class has changed the way we look at the world and how we approach it. We are both more aware of the lack of representation and single stories in our lives and in our classrooms. And I think we are both more careful with language. For example, in the writing of this article, we have examined the use of noncommittal language versus admitting where we made mistakes.

Paul Reflects

I didn't anticipate how much I would be learning personally, and how much I would learn from my colleague, Kat. I now have a much better lens through which to teach social studies and history– the notion of the single story as introduced by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's talk. In many ways, I have been teaching single stories constantly. In this class with Kat, students were invited to point out where they saw single story teaching with either of us. Moving forward, I not only plan to use this lens, but I also plan to invite students to notice single stories in social studies' texts (which are ubiquitous), and I plan to present multiple stories in my presentation of historical events. I also learned from Kat more effective ways of teaching and annotating complicated pieces of writing, as Kat helped us work through fairly dense and historically-important poetry. My personal journey of examining more historically accurate Indigenous stories made me aware of how absent Indigenous experiences are from my teaching, in general. For example, while I teach a class on Civil War and Reconstruction, where am I centering Indigenous experiences while the United States is having a rebirth of democracy following the Civil War? How can I convey the hope of Reconstruction amidst the ongoing absence of Native American participation in that phase of American History?

Kat Reflects

I learned so much from Paul in terms of how to run a middle school classroom discussion and sustain it by centering student voices. I also learned that I should have reached out to our larger community earlier. At one of the screenings at a local film festival with an Indigenous strand to it, a conversation with Sarah Hamilton, Education Program Manager at WPSU, allowed us to watch a documentary about the Penn State Powwow, and Zoom with John Sanchez, Associate Professor of Journalism and the director of the Penn State Powwow since its inception. John Sanchez offered to

Zoom with our class to do a lecture follow-up after our initial Zoom on the powwow documentary, but our semester class had already ended. I regret that it took me so long to reach out to the local Indigenous community–I think I was worried about contacting people to an extent because I feared that we were doing this wrong, or that I wasn't qualified, as a white woman, to be teaching about Indigenous lit, even as we centered Native voices and attempted to be transparent about our privilege. I still held a lot of insecurity about my position as a teacher without personal ties to Indigenous peoples. But John was lovely and generous, and I should have checked my ego earlier in the semester for the good of the students and our learning.

Our Final Thoughts On This Course

What will stay with us from this course comes from a video linked in *Time Magazine's* "The True History of Custer's Last Stand" by Professor Lindsay Stallone Marshall, in which she states: "history textbooks are not history books" (Waxman, 2023). This observation, while seemingly simple, rattled us. The meaning of this statement is that textbook stories about history are often biased, problematic, single stories that create embedded lore and can create a mythos of American History. We unpacked this concept with our students and had in-depth discussion about who gets to tell stories, and whose stories are privileged. This discussion at the end of the term was a reminder that we should teach outside of the dominant narrative and continue to challenge our own single stories and those our systems present us with.

And, as one of our students noted: "I think this class gave as much voice to Indigenous stories as it could with limited records and single stories everywhere. It did an amazing job with the little info given and enlightened me quite a bit." Another student reflected on why they took the course, "I want to get exposed to more Indigenous literature. It's one thing to read or learn about general history, and that is good (especially in this class), but I especially like, and think it's important to read literature about, the personal stories from Indigenous people. It's more of a first-hand source in my mind, and I think it's important for individual Native peoples to have a voice, especially in schools."

While we would love to end the article with these two lovely, thoughtful reflections, we wanted to share another student's voice, who let us know they did not care for this course: "I didn't want to take this course it was the only option; I hate this class ngl (not gonna lie)." Did this student not care for the class because we challenged their existing knowledge? Did this student just not like school? We don't know. But we appreciated the honesty. We recognize not all the students who took our course had the same story. Nor would we want them to.

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About the Authors: Kat Hoffman and Paul McCormick are teachers in the Delta Middle Program in the State College Area School District in Central Pennsylvania. They can be reached via Kat at kaw45@scasd.org.

Appendix

Image 1. Books in our library with student-written shelf talkers

INDIGENOUS LIT AND HISTORY

Why is teaching a class about the true history of America so revolutionary? Delta starts an Indigenous History class, combining a literary arts class with a social studies class. A student writes about how much she didn't know about the beginnings of her country.

BEGINNINGS OF THE CLASS

At the beginning of the semester, each teacher from Delta goes around, giving a spiel about each of their classes. This year, Kat Hoffman and Paul McCormick had a joint class. After the teachers had gone to every classroom, it was evident there was a lot of interest in one of their new classes, Indigenous Literature and History. I was one of the kids who was interested. I knew next to nothing about my country.

history of the United States in schools. As a student, I take it as a slight that we don't learn about Native America in our standard curriculum. I want to know as much as I can. As an elementary schooler, I can be taught about our history. Start young, because there is a lot to teach. By accepting and teaching, we can start to patch the holes made in our count

WE NEED CHANGE

In this class, we learned a lot. We learned about thanksgiving, about racism and single stories. We talked about important figures in Indigenous culture. We learned about so many battles I lost count. Still, I have so many questions. After an entire semester, I don't even know the half of it. So why, then, is this a special course? Why are the beginnings of the country we seem to love so much plainly not taught, save for a mini lesson in elementary school here and there?
Of course, I know why. The United States has a terrible habit of trying to cover up it's wrongdoings, then falling on its face in the process. Acknowledging, teaching, and repaying our mistakes is a simpler, more effective and beneficial way of relating to our past. Yes, our ancestors were not always right. Yes, we acknowledge and apologize for our wrongdoings. **Yes, we will teach the**y.

Native Americans from southeast Idaho, in a photo by Benedicte Wrensted, c. 1897

Image 2. A student-created magazine had this article in it about our class (shared with permission).

Incorporating Moot Courts into the Social Studies Classroom

Jack T. Port

I still remember the end of my first-year teaching, when my principal informed me I would be teaching Civics and Government the next school year. I had a personal interest in government from growing up in a military family. My parents made it a point to emphasize the importance of democratic values, citizenship, and civic participation. I was excited to have an opportunity to teach these ideals to my students, but I was also nervous about teaching a whole new course.

My initial nervousness quickly turned to excitement when I thought about the pedagogical opportunities in a Civics classroom, such as mock trials, congressional simulations, and other experiential activities. I have taught sophomore-level Civics and Government every year since then. In my fifth year at Susquehanna Township High School, I added AP Government and Politics to my teaching load, and I had that same nervous feeling taking on a new class. My desire to gain more insight on the inner workings of U.S. Government led me to apply for the Supreme Court Summer Institute for Teachers last year. This annual week-long seminar is an immersive professional development experience where teachers from all over the country gather to learn how to enhance and strengthen classroom instruction on the Supreme Court from some of the top legal experts in Washington D.C. It is co-sponsored by Street Law Inc. and the Supreme Court Historical Society.

I applied for the seminar for a few different reasons. I wanted to gain more insight and knowledge of the Judicial Branch and its processes and procedures. I also wanted to learn how to better use the classroom resources that Street Law provides from the people who created them. Lastly, I hoped to connect and learn from social studies teachers around the country to bring some new ideas and strategies back into my own classroom. I found the experience fulfilled all those objectives and more. We spent five days in sessions with former Supreme Court clerks, experienced appellate litigators, and even got to witness the Supreme Court hand down some decisions at the end of their term. We learned more about the resources Street Law offers and discussed how we could facilitate more effective and engaging lessons inside a high school classroom. One experience

from the institute that I particularly enjoy incorporating into my classroom is the Moot Court activity.

I teach in a diverse high school in a district that sits just outside the city limits of the state capital, Harrisburg. I currently teach all three levels of Civics and Government classes that are offered including Civics and Government, Academic Civics and Government, and AP Government and Politics. This is considered a sophomore-level course at my high school, and I need to consider learning needs ranging from students with IEP's and 504 Plans, English language learners, and gifted students all in the same classroom. The Moot Court activity reinforces using critical thinking skills, developing clear arguments that can be backed with evidence, and working together as a team. The activity is a creative yet structured pedagogical strategy that engages students in landmark Supreme Court cases and helps them gain a better understanding of the appellate court process.

During the summer Street Law Seminar, we, as teachers, gained practical classroom experience by engaging in the moot court process ourselves. The experience was bolstered by working with some top-level D.C. lawyers and using an actual Moot Court practice room at a D.C. Law Firm. We debriefed the experience afterwards and discussed different strategies to bring a moot court to life in the classroom in a way that engages every student. This helped me to reflect and design the process that I used in my classroom this year.

The first step for a successful classroom Moot Court is choosing the case or cases that should be used. The Street Law Inc. website is a valuable resource for a wide variety of landmark Supreme Court case files. The online library houses all the required AP Government Supreme Court cases and other cases that generate student interest (e.g., public school and social media cases). Please note that while these materials are free, you will need to register online with Street Law Inc. to access these materials.

The case files from the Street Law online resource library provide a background of each case, an explanation of the constitutional questions associated with the case, relevant precedent cases, and a summary of arguments for each side. This format is especially helpful to students as they prepare their own arguments. In my classroom, I start the process by organizing students into groups of two or three. One group is assigned the role of the petitioner and another group the respondent for a case. There are approximately four to six total students arguing each case. So, in a class of twenty-four students, I will use four or five different landmark cases to ensure everyone is involved in one of the moot courts as either the petitioner or the respondent.

I prepare a folder for each group that includes copies of the case files along with a "guided brief." The brief is a packet that helps guide students in their preparation for oral arguments. The packet asks them to summarize the overall case, list their main arguments and the opposition's

main arguments, and identify precedent cases that relate to the case (this information can generally all be found in the Street Law case file packets, available on the Street Law website). Students also need to write down a few potential questions they might expect to be asked by the justices. They really enjoy thinking up the hypothetical questions that justices tend to ask in real life.

I remember a student anticipating a question in the case Mahanoy School District v. B.L., which dealt with the question of whether a school could punish a student for her speech on social media outside of school hours. They wrote, "Are you insinuating that a school is powerless to stop cyber-bullying if it is taking place off school property?" showing their understanding of the potential implications for a precedent to be set in this case. Another student applied the precedent-setting "Tinker Test" to their question by asking if the speech on social media had created a substantial disruption to the school environment so as to warrant punishment. As a teacher, it is rewarding to see students make connections between different cases that relate to each other and grasp the concept of precedent in judicial proceedings.

The Moot Court is an activity that students may find intimidating when they start. I had taken for granted how challenging it can be to stand in front of your peers and argue a case you are learning while also anticipating and preparing for questions from the justices. My experience at the Summer Institute reminded me of that when I had to step up in front of my own peers to complete the same task. To help them get more comfortable, I tell them about my own experiences and show them a picture from the institute when I was speaking at the podium. Beyond personal anecdotes, I also provide a sample packet and script as an exemplar for students to reference as they prepare their projects. I have also found that an effective learning tool is to play audio recordings of recent oral arguments using SCOTUS Toons on YouTube (e.g., Meeks, 2021). These tools guide students as they work on structuring their own arguments and presenting their oral arguments.

The students collaborate and work with their partners to determine who will speak first and which arguments each student will be responsible for during the oral arguments. I float around to each group to check in as they prepare. This is a great time to work 1:1 with students and answer their questions that are specific to their case or get them on the right track to developing a successful argument. I have found that I spend a lot of this time reassuring students they are on the right path as they are nervous or unsure about engaging in a new activity. Providing that reassurance and confidence boost pays dividends when it comes time for them to present their arguments in front of the rest of the class.

I typically provide students with two to four class periods to prepare their cases. Then, it is showtime. Each student is assigned to serve as a Supreme Court Justice for at least one case they are not involved in arguing themselves. Students are typically enthusiastic to volunteer for this opportunity because they get to ask the questions and help determine the outcome of another

case. My role as the teacher is to serve as the "clerk" of the court. I explain the background of the case and the legal question(s) the Supreme Court is tasked with deciding. This gives the justices and the spectating students the background they need to interpret the case for themselves.

The classroom is set up with five desks at the front of the room facing the back, then four desks sit on each side facing the front for the petitioner and respondent's group. A podium sits in the middle of the room, facing the justices' desks. Behind the podium are a few rows of desks for the remaining students who are spectating, until they take their turn as a justice or attorney. To provide a feeling of authenticity, the justices are provided an old graduation robe to wear, and they exit the room until I bang the classroom gavel and open the Supreme Court hearing with the traditional "Oyez, Oyez, Oyez." I instruct all students to rise as the Justices enter the classroom and are seated, following the official Supreme Court procedures which can be found in the Moot Court Guide by Street Law or on the Supreme Court's official government website.

I structure the procedure and rules for oral arguments to reflect the real-world process, but the timing is adjusted for the classroom. Whereas the petitioner and respondent are typically provided thirty minutes each to argue their case in the Supreme Court, in the classroom I provide up to six minutes for each side to argue their case. The petitioner presents their arguments first and the respondent follows. Both sides are provided with thirty seconds to start their presentation without interruption. The student justices can interrupt and ask questions after those thirty seconds have passed. However, I have observed that student justices are hesitant to interrupt and ask questions, so this can always be modified to have a separate question and answer period at the end of the presentation.

Once both sides have finished their arguments, I ask the student justices to briefly confer and decide the outcome. The justices are given a chance to explain their reasoning for the decision, which generates classroom discussion about the case and the merits of each side's arguments. Students who are not involved in presenting the arguments or serving as justices can submit a written spectator reflection where they make their own interpretation of the case. I remember incredible discussion in the case of Kennedy v. Bremerton School District which involved a football coach leading a voluntary prayer after games. Students thought deeply about the facts and arguments, including the question of when the official job duties end for a high school football coach, what is considered a voluntary prayer or coerced, and other factors that all helped them determine the outcome. Students were able to compare their personal thoughts on the issue with the official court decision that was made.

The Moot Court activity engages all students and provides opportunities for critical thinking and a deeper understanding of landmark cases. We repeat the process and continue until all cases

are complete. A student will participate in oral arguments for one case and take on the role of a justice in another case, so they get the full experience from both sides of the bench.

This is the process that has worked best in my classroom for both efficiency and effectiveness, but it can be modified for any class. For example, an English language learner may not be comfortable speaking and answering questions in front of the class, but they can take on the role of a court reporter and take note of key words/sentences they hear. Street Law's Moot Court Guide is a great starting point for planning an engaging student-centered moot court. Beyond Supreme Court hearings, the Moot Court structure and procedure offers opportunities for an organized class debate on other topics. For example, I envision this format could be adapted to debate historical figures or events in a history classroom.

In conclusion, I highly encourage anyone who teaches civics, law, or other government-related courses to review the Street Law Inc. website for its Moot Court resources. Supreme Court decisions have a substantial impact on our society, and it is critical that students gain a full understanding of the court and the process it uses to decide major constitutional questions and issues facing the country. My hope is that students gain an appreciation for the rule of law, a respect for the process, the knowledge, and confidence to become impactful and influential citizens. All are critical elements of a healthy democracy.

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About the Author: Jack Port is a social studies teacher at Susquehanna Township High School. He can be reached at jport@hannasd.org.

Appendix

Image 1. Mr. Jack Port and Chief Justice John Marshall Statue

Image 2. Mr. Jack Port speaking for the Respondents during the Moot Court activity at the Supreme Court Summer Institute.

Image 3. The Justices on the bench listen to and consider the arguments during the Moot Court activity at the Supreme Court Summer Institute.

Note: Photos taken during Supreme Court Summer Institute in Washington D.C., hosted by Street Law Inc. and the Supreme Court Historical Society.

They Didn't Teach Me About This in College

Ally Durney

I am a 16-year veteran social studies teacher and am about to be tested in something that has never happened at my school before: a swatting incident. I don't know what is actually happening; I'm experiencing the uncertainty at the same time as my students. This is my story.

March 29, 2023: It's 9:20 A.M. *Students in my U.S. Government class had just finished an assessment and we were watching a video clip of "We Didn't Start the Fire" together as a hook for the next unit on modern U.S. history. A voice comes over the intercom but it's muffled because of the classroom speakers. I hear "teachers ... email" but can't make anything else out. It's not out of the ordinary to hear something like this in school over the course of a day, so I'm really not worried.*

But sitting at my desk, I casually glance through the window beside the classroom door. I see the School Resource Officer (SRO) doing a combination crouch and run with a weapon drawn. I almost do a comedic double-take; I can't believe what I see. I quickly check my email on my phone and see that while we don't have much information, the only thing we really know is this is not a drill.

I (try to) calmly tell my students that we are going to barricade. There is a noticeable alarm among the students—some are listening intently, some are becoming very emotional, some are just staring at the door. Almost all of them are on their phones, reaching out to their parents or to friends in other parts of the building, trying to gain some intel.

Several students help me construct the barricade out of a table and several desks and chairs at the door and the rest are crouching on the floor, out of view of the classroom windows by the door. We hear a yell—"Get down! Get down on the floor!"—come from down the hall. I'm worried now.

I reassure my students that we will be OK. I think the reassurance is both for them and for me. Some students start crying. Others reassure their parents who are calling. I text with my friends throughout the building, trying to glean any information that I can. We sit and we wait. One of our Vice Principals texts me back and assures me that we are safe and officers are evacuating the building.

It's 9:55 A.M. *There's a pounding on my door and officers yell, "Police! We are opening the door." Several armed officers unlock the door and do a sweep of the classroom. They instruct us to walk in a*

single file line, with an arm on the person in front, down the hallway. We are met by another armed officer instructing us to walk to yet another armed officer.

It's 10:05 A.M. *We are finally outside, heading to a predetermined evacuation spot: the football stadium. Everyone is evacuated behind the high school in straight lines, past rows of police cars with flashing lights. It seems like a scene from a movie or TV show; it certainly does not seem like it's part of my day. When we arrive at the stadium, it's organized chaos. Teachers are trying to account for all students in their assigned areas. Students are trying to find each other. Parents are calling and texting to figure out when they can get their students. Teachers are trying to account for each other. Counselors, specialists, administration, law enforcement are all at the helm, leading with calm, assured voices. There are so many flashing red and blue lights. My colleague turns to me and says "Wait. What just happened? Did that just happen?!"*

I'm not sure why but there's a weird feeling of guilt for writing about something that didn't really have any lasting, perilous results. Yes, it was traumatizing, but we were, ultimately, safe. The Active Shooter Response (ALICE) training and drills that we had done for years *had worked*. Yes, we absolutely found some holes in communication and execution of evacuation that we couldn't have discovered had it not been for this unfortunate event. Our administration shared with us that every decision everyone made that day was the correct decision. We worked off of the information that we had, whether it was through brief email, texting with others, or even students sharing what information other students had, because that's what we had to do. Drill scenarios were excellent practice, but nothing can match learning from real experience.

Writing about this event still feels odd; enough time has passed that I don't feel guided by fear and anxiety, but I cannot stress how much it doesn't feel like it is part of my story. It felt scary, unnerving, and *huge* on that morning. Teaching has its share of sour moments, but I generally choose to try to focus on the positive. This event *did* happen, but I don't want to let it define a particular part of my career.

Our administration and law enforcement were exceptional, and they helped us feel that whatever we were feeling was the correct feeling. I remember feeling an insane rush of adrenaline later that day as several colleagues and I met at a restaurant outside of our town. We needed to debrief and share and be together. I don't think I could have gone home and thought about *what could have been* right away. My own children go to school within the district and the thought of this happening to them was simply too much for me.

Talking with students about their experiences the next day was also incredibly cathartic and helpful. We bonded together over a less-than-desirable experience, but we bonded nonetheless. The fact that so many students just wanted to talk was incredible to me; to know that they felt safe

to open up is a true gift. One of my students said to me something along the lines of, “I'm mad that when I think of high school, I will think of this. But I am also OK with what came about because of it.” That was such a powerful statement for me.

In the end, our first responders were amazing; our students were amazing; our staff were amazing. We were lucky that this was “just” a swatting event, and our day didn’t end differently. The swatting event happened to multiple schools across the country, so there is some solace in realizing that others experienced the same feelings. There is no solace, however, in seeing that there are active shooter events in all parts of life, including schools. It’s really challenging to continue to provide support to students in larger environments where teachers don’t always feel heard or supported. My district has done a good job of “hearing” us and showing us that our opinions matter and are valid. Conversations that continue to exist on the state and national level, where decisions are being made without the consultation of teachers, are mind-boggling to me. This experience was such a powerful reminder that painful subjects need to be addressed at all levels and all our opinions and voices on these topics do matter.

About the Author: Ally Durney is a social studies teacher at Bellefonte Area High School and can be reached at adurney@basd.net.

How I Ended up Writing about History's Most Intractable Conflict

Scott Alan Metzger

The impetus for this article came from conversations with my wife and with my undergraduate students. Like so many people, I was shocked and horrified by the events of October 7, 2023, and the human suffering of Israel's military response that I knew inevitably would follow–but I can't say I was completely surprised. I knew the conflict had deep roots. I grew up in Michigan, which has one of the larger Muslim populations in the US. I discovered an abiding interest in Islamic history early in college. As a "Cold War kid" of the 1980s, I remember Middle East politics frequently in the news (perhaps the earliest being the Iran Hostage Crisis of 1979-81). Throughout my lifetime, the Israel/Palestine dispute simmered until periodically exploding into mass violence.

My wife is Jewish, and she received the news of October 7 much more personally. She had been worried by the resurgence in antisemitism in recent years. I always tried to comfort her: Don't worry, it's not happening here and isn't as widespread as it appears in the media. Now I felt like I hadn't listened to her or taken her fears seriously enough. She fumed over the public response, or lack thereof in her view, to October 7. Why did it seem so few people wanted to talk about it openly and honestly? Why was it that institutions previously so eager to issue political statements now were hesitant to speak against the violence or promise to protect Jewish students? I work with the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Initiative at Penn State. Shouldn't educators like me know better or say something?

At the same time, my undergraduate student-teachers expressed their own worries. Would they be expected to discuss this incredibly complicated issue with students? How could they navigate the cultural tensions involving antisemitism, decades of US foreign policy, and protests for Palestine? I tried to give my students some answers, but I was unsatisfied with what I came up with spur of the moment. So I sat down and wrote a more carefully thought-out description of perspectives on the long history of the Israel/Palestine conflict to give to them as a teaching resource. When my wife saw what I was doing, she responded very positively. This was the kind of

honest dialogue beyond political factions and slogans that she wanted to hear. She pressed me: Why don't you take the next step and publish it to share with more teachers?

In the article that follows, you can read the result. I won't pretend that I don't have personal beliefs on this issue, but I wanted to try demonstrating how it is possible to comprehend and have empathy for the conflicting perspectives. My approach accepts that readers will be pulled toward agreement with the parts that represent their beliefs and values and then pushed into sharp disagreement in the parts that represent another perspective's beliefs and values. Experiencing this kind of back-and-forth mental and emotional dissonance, I suggest, is a necessary step in developing an educationally healthy stance on a divisive, intractable issue. I hope you find the article useful, at least for raising attention to perspectives that you might not have fully considered about what makes the Israel/Palestine conflict so difficult and contentious.

About the Author: Scott Metzger is an Associate Professor of Social Studies Education at The Pennsylvania State University and can be reached at sam59@psu.edu.

Teaching the Israel/Palestine Conflict through Alternate Framing

Scott Alan Metzger

The long conflict over Israel/Palestine is always hard to teach. It is an example of *difficult knowledge* that can be socially or psychologically uncomfortable, even painful for individual learners (Pitt & Britzman, 2003). Tensions between Jews of Israel and Muslim Arabs have simmered for the past century, periodically exploding into mass violence and several times open war drawing attention, and sometimes involvement, from countries around the world. Classrooms in the US commonly have Jewish students with family connections to Israel or the Holocaust. Globalization since the 1990s brought many more Muslim young people to US schools, including Palestinians. Support for Israel is increasingly divisive in the US public. Perhaps it shouldn't be surprising if teachers tend to shy away from intentionally engaging with contentious "flashpoints" such as this in the classroom (Alongi, Heddy, & Sinatra, 2016).

The 2023 October 7 attacks on Israel and the subsequent war in Gaza make this contentious topic even harder to discuss. More protests for the Palestinian cause and against Israel have taken place in cities and college campuses across the US than ever before, many including behavior considered antisemitic. While these current events were an impetus for this writing, it is not meant as commentary just on teaching the immediate, ongoing conflict. My purpose is to position the contemporary situation in the complexity of its longer history. Heated arguments over Israel/Palestine extend decades and centuries into the past. They embody *difficult history*–periods in the past "that reverberate in the present and surface fundamental disagreements over who we are and what values we hold" (Gross & Terra, 2018, p. 52). Classroom interactions involving such conflicting values implicate personal historical identities and experiences (Hostetler and Neel, 2018), which in turn influence the closeness or distance with which teachers approach difficult topics (Klein, 2017).

As if teachers didn't have it hard enough, history can be difficult not only affectively (psychologically) but also cognitively (intellectually), and both at the same time (Walsh, Hicks, & van Hover, 2017). The Israel/Palestine dispute, with claims and counterclaims involving modern-day politics yet reaching back to ancient times, certainly qualifies for both. Research in social studies (Ho, McAvoy, Hess, & Gibbs, 2017) and history education (Goldberg & Savenije, 2018) indicates that controversial issues in schools are taught through widely varying approaches with mixed results.

Simply advocating for teachers to do more isn't sufficient. Teacher hesitancy isn't moral failing but reasonable wariness of complications involved. As Gross and Terra (2018) point out, educators want "young people to engage difficult histories without reinforcing ethnic, religious, and cultural divisions on the one hand, or undermining social cohesion on the other" (p. 52).

Multi-Perspectivity and Alternate Framing

What can schoolteachers do to help young learners make sense of the difficult history of Israel/Palestine and the conflict today? Let's begin with *multi-perspectivity*—the concept that people interpret historical experiences through multiple possible narratives (Wansink, Akkerman, Zuiker, & Wubbels, 2018). A "narrative" can be thought of as a sense-making perspective involving a person's social identities. People encounter, and often adopt in whole or part, narratives through their collective identities, which can include religion, race or ethnicity, generational subcultures, political affiliations, or nationality. Narratives give a person the mental schema of values for what seems "normal" or "right" in historical or social issues.

Young people receive and construct many narratives from a variety of sources as they grow up. Some narratives are shared across similar identities, while narratives from different backgrounds exist in tension. This can lead young people to feel that particular historical claims are morally right or wrong without necessarily critiquing them or understanding why. As Levy (2017) observes, "students may have access to specific narratives, or parts of narratives…" but "not have the mastery to make sense of and use those narratives to create a larger sense of meaning from an understanding about the past" (p. 159).

Narrative complexity is magnified for difficult history involving national and cultural identities. All countries and people have parts of their past that are painful, traumatic, or otherwise uncomfortable. Social narratives criticize or defend contentious aspects of the past, and not all are equally influential. In Gross and Terra's (2018) words, part of what makes history difficult is "the degree to which it challenges or undermines the dominant social narrative" (p. 55). Young people can have sharply different experiences with, and tolerance for deviation from, dominant narratives. If unexamined, nuanced understanding of differences can suffer from what van Kessel and Crowley (2017) call "villainification"—one-dimensional portrayal of evil as the whim of hyperindividualized actors or diffusing blame onto an amorphous entity. In other words, dismissing experiences that can be comfortably seen as "bad" in accepted narratives.

Teachers can be apply these ideas to teaching difficult history through *alternate framing*—a technique for examining a recognized issue and shared evidence through differing perspectives (in our case, opposing interpretations of the difficult history). This approach starts with description of

information that is as dispassionate, impartial, and concise as possible. The purpose is not a comprehensive account of all possible information but to have a baseline of factual information that isn't disputed or can be commonly verified. The approach then requires generalizations that interpret the information from the alternate perspectives. The goal is to support discussion for better understanding of the issue rather than trying to "win" a debate. The teacher's challenge is to provide students with structured, safe opportunities to examine narratives about contentious topics held by themselves and by others.

Now let's demonstrate what this approach can look like applied to the Israel/Palestine conflict. The description of events below aims to be relatively concise and approachable for secondary grades. Alternate frames are generalized as "Israel supporters" (viewpoints acceptable to the state of Israel and most of its supporters) and "Palestine supporters" (viewpoints acceptable to most supporters of a Palestinian state). Inflammatory rhetoric and fringe extremism are avoided here, as they tend to shed more heat than light (though they may need to be confronted in discussions). Also, disputed details and arguable claims are avoided. Everything can be verified by looking up the **keywords** (bolded), in most cases even in Wikipedia.

Alternate Framing of the Israel/Palestine Conflict

Historical Origins

The lands around **Israel** were home to Jewish people's Hebrew ancestors since at least 1000 BCE. After 130 CE, large numbers of Jews were forcibly expelled by the Roman Empire. Smaller numbers were allowed to remain in this province, which the Romans renamed **Palestine**. In 637 CE, Muslim **Arabs** conquered Palestine from the Christian Eastern Roman (a.k.a. Byzantine) Empire. This "Holy Land" and its "holy city" of **Jerusalem** were considered sacred by Jews, Christians, and now also Muslims. Later, the region came under the rule of Muslim Turks. After taking over in the 1500s, the Turkish **Ottoman Empire** allowed Jews and Christians to remain, while Muslim Arabs grew into Palestine's majority population.

Virtually everywhere Jews settled in the medieval world, they faced legal discrimination and often violence by Christians and Muslims. Jews found better treatment in Eastern Europe. After much of the region was seized by the Russian Empire in the 1700s, Jewish settlements were restricted and suffered periodic violent attacks (pogroms). In the 1800s, nation-building (nationalism) became the dominant ideology in Europe. Jews embraced their own nationalist movement known as **Zionism**, which sought a Jewish homeland where Israel once existed.

In the late 1800s-early 1900s, when pogroms were most frequent, thousands of Jews migrated from Europe to Palestine. Ottoman rulers were eager to increase Palestine's population and sold

these Jews land to settle on. At first, Jewish immigration didn't have much effect on Arabs of Palestine. Many were Bedouin pastoralists who migrated with their herds. Conflict began when Jewish villages and farms spread and impeded land access. Arabs from across the region migrated into Palestine and competed with Jewish settlers for land. Ottoman rulers allowed this to continue until World War I, during which the Turks fought the British Empire. The Ottoman Empire was defeated in 1918 and broken up in the treaties that end the war.

- Israel supporters: Jews always have been present in this land since ancient times; in modern times Jewish immigrants were allowed in by Palestine's rulers and sold land to settle on
- Palestine supporters: Arabs have been Palestine's majority population for hundreds of years; Turkish rulers let Zionists settle in Palestine to weaken Arab control over the land

The World Wars and Creation of Modern Israel

British victory over the Ottoman Empire was aided by an Arab revolt in the region. In return, the British had promised that an independent Arab nation would be formed after the war. Instead, **Britain** and its ally **France** divided between them the former Ottoman provinces in the Middle East, as what were supposed to be temporary "mandate" territories authorized by the new League of Nations international body. Many of these territories were assigned an Arab leader as its king, and in the 1920s-1940s they became the new countries of **Egypt**, **Saudi Arabia**, **Jordan**, and **Iraq**. **Syria** and **Lebanon** were French mandates until they achieved independence at the end of World War II. The **Palestine Mandate** was held by Britain.

To appeal to Jewish populations in the Europe and the US, and to British and American Christians who believed in Zionism for religious reasons, Britain's government during World War I issued the **Balfour Declaration** supporting the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Angered by the British failure to deliver the promised Arab nation, Palestinian Arabs protested British policies favorable to Jewish settlement. By the late 1930s, conflict between Arabs and Jews was making the Palestine Mandate impossible to govern peacefully. British officials sent to Palestine to find a solution (Peel Commission) reported that the land needed to be divided into separate Jewish and Arab territories, but their plan wasn't implemented.

- Israel supporters: Jews were promised a homeland by Britain, which had legal authority over Palestine
- Palestine supporters: Arabs had no part in the Balfour Declaration or creating the Palestine Mandate

Many Arabs felt cheated by the proposed partition and went into violent revolt against British rule at the same time Britain was facing the rise of Nazi Germany. In World War II some Palestinian Arabs sided with the Germans, who promised to make Palestine an independent Arab nation if they won the war. By 1945, Nazi Germany was destroyed and the Arab revolt defeated. Badly weakened by the war and facing a worse crisis in India, the British tried to keep the peace in Palestine by resisting further Jewish immigration and land settlements.

Jewish survivors of the **Holocaust** under Nazi rule were homeless displaced persons. Though many of them hoped to be sent to live in Canada or the United States (which had legal limits on the number of immigrants allowed), Jewish Zionists lobbied the US and Soviet governments to send thousands of surviving Jews to Palestine. When the British government in Palestine interfered, some extreme Zionists conducted terrorist attacks against British personnel and Arab targets. Britain decided to give up their Mandate and turn the problem of Palestine over to the new United Nations (UN) global organization.

In 1947, the UN voted to **partition** Palestine into a separate Jewish state and Arab state. The Jews supported partition and received a greater proportion of land to accommodate more displaced survivors of the Holocaust, though much of this territory was the least fertile. Arabs across the Middle East opposed the partition, which gave Palestinian Arabs more land but in less proportion to the size of their population. The next year Jewish leaders declared the independence of the **state of Israel**, justified in part as a sanctuary where the world's Jews could go for refuge from oppression. With British opposition removed and the support of both Soviet and US governments, the majority of the UN voted to recognize Israel as a new member.

- Israel supporters: Israel had UN-recognized independence and needed to take in Holocaust survivors
- Palestine supporters: Arabs were not responsible for the Holocaust and never agreed to the partition

Arab-Israeli Conflicts in the Cold War Era

Arab militias in Palestine immediately launched attacks, and the Arab League nations (including Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq) declared war on Israel. Israelis expected this would happen and had purchased military equipment left over from World War II, much of it through communist countries and allowed by the Soviet Union which hoped that Israel would become another communist ally. In the **1948 War**, the Arab League was defeated by Israel and abandoned the Palestinian militias. Hundreds of thousands of Arabs now known as **Palestinians** fled their homes–most to escape the fighting and others following the orders of Arab leaders, but

some were forcibly driven out by Israeli forces. At the same time, **Jewish communities** (Sephardic/Mizrahi) were expelled by Arab countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa, where they had existed for centuries, and fled to Israel.

Palestinian Arabs who stayed inside Israel's borders became legal citizens of the new country. Those who fled became refugees in, or on territory administered by, surrounding Arab countries, including Egypt and Jordan. Over the decades, Palestinian **refugee camps** grew into impoverished settlements. Palestinians claimed a "right of return" to lands in Israel that were formerly their families' homes. Israel refused to accept the return of what would be a very large, and it believed, hostile population.

Arab nations went to war with Israel three more times in the 20th century and were defeated. Most decisive was the **1967 (Six Days) War**, in which the Israeli military swiftly destroyed the Arab forces and seized border territories including **Gaza** from Egypt, the **West Bank** from Jordan, and control over all of **Jerusalem** (previously divided between Israel and Jordan). Palestinian resistance groups, with support from Arab nations, have fought for the liberation of these **occupied territories** taken by Israel during the war. Arab governments and Palestinian factions demanded all of Palestine and the end of the Jewish state of Israel, and the most militant among them continue to.

- Israel supporters: Israel was defending itself against aggression and took over territory out of military necessity; Arab countries should accept Palestinians in their borders as citizens
- Palestine supporters: Palestinians were fighting for their homeland; they are victims of ethnic cleansing forced into permanent refugee camps by Israel

Palestinian Resistance and Peace Talks in Late 20th Century

The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and affiliated groups initially were a secular political movement, often seeking support from the Soviet bloc. As Soviet power collapsed at the end of the Cold War, militant religious (Islamist) identity became more important in Palestinian resistance. Pro-Palestine insurgents employed terrorist tactics against Jewish targets in Israel and around the world. They hijacked airplanes, bombed buildings, and seized hostages, sometimes targeting Americans and citizens of other Western countries in retaliation for Western support of Israel. Global public opinion turned against Palestinian groups associated with terrorism. Egypt was the first Arab nation to break with the PLO and negotiate peace with Israel, in return for the Sinai Peninsula lost in the 1967 war.

Palestinians in the occupied territories turned to massive street protests, known as the ***intifada*** (1987-1991). As Israeli forces cracked down on Palestinian protestors (which sometimes led to shooting rock-throwing Palestinian youths), Israel suffered in global public opinion. In the 1990s,

Israel accepted peace talks with the PLO (Oslo Accords) and secured a peace treaty with Jordan. Israeli hardliners opposed negotiations, and one of them assassinated Israel's Prime Minister (Yitzhak Rabin). Nonetheless, Israel proceeded to withdraw some of its forces from the Gaza Strip and West Bank and recognized in them an autonomous government called the **Palestinian Authority** (PA).

Failure of talks to secure a permanent peace agreement, compounded by expansion of Jewish settlements on Palestinian-claimed land and conflicts over holy sites in Jerusalem, sparked a second *intifada* (2000-2005). In the end, Israel dismantled Jewish settlements and withdrew occupying forces in Gaza, but not in much of the West Bank. Israel's government may have hoped to use Palestinian factions against each other. **Fatah**, the largest faction in the PLO, dominated the new PA. They were opposed by a newer Islamist group known as **Hamas**. After street battles over disputed elections, Hamas took control of Gaza in 2007. Elections haven't been held in Gaza since.

The dismantling of Jewish settlements angered ultraconservative Jews. When ultraconservative leaders controlled Israel's government, they reversed policy. Fatah leaders stayed in power in the West Bank but were not able to prevent the Israelis from expanding Jewish settlements onto more land claimed by Palestinians. To make room for new Jewish settlements, some Palestinians were evicted from land they had traditionally lived on. Resistance in the West Bank was met with force by Israeli police and soldiers. Increasing numbers of Palestinian civilians were killed. Over years of clashes, Israeli forces have been accused of human-rights violations that include unjustified killings of civilians.

- Israel supporters: Israel negotiated peace and accepted Palestinian autonomy in Gaza and West Bank
- Palestine supporters: After Palestinian resistance let up, Israel still allowed Jewish settlement to expand

The Conflict in the 21st Century

Hamas continued to call for the end of Israel and to use terrorist tactics against civilians. Jewish buildings and transportation in Israel were attacked by bombs and gunmen. Indiscriminate rocket attacks were launched from inside Gaza. These attacks were enabled by a vast network of **tunnels** built beneath Gaza to move fighters and smuggled weapons. Between 2008 and 2021, Israel responded with airstrikes and limited ground assaults against suspected Hamas targets in Gaza. Thousands of Palestinian civilians died in the crossfire.

In the West Bank, where Fatah held onto power by delaying elections, Palestinian resistance groups fought Israeli police and Jewish settlers. Conservative governments in Israel protected Jewish settlers, who sometimes were accused of violently harassing nearby Palestinian homes. Jews and

Muslims fought with each other around the sacred sites in Jerusalem. The Israelis built massive **border barriers** to close off Gaza and much of the West Bank. Israel also worked with Egypt to control what supplies could enter Gaza from the south and the seacoast. The people of Gaza became economically dependent on Israel. Over a hundred thousand of Gaza's Palestinians crossed the border to work jobs in Israel to bring money back home.

Israeli leaders believed that Gaza's economy benefited too much from Israel for Hamas to risk larger-scale attacks. With its government preoccupied with threats from Islamist militants in Lebanon and from Iran, Israel was completely unprepared for the **October 7 attacks** (2023) by Hamas and allied Palestinian insurgents. Thousands of rockets indiscriminately rained down on Israeli neighborhoods. Israel's **"Iron Dome"** anti-missile system, funded partly by the US, was not fully active and proved ineffective. The insurgents smashed through the Gaza border, overran Israeli military bases by surprise, massacred well over a thousand civilians, and took more than 200 Israeli and international hostages back into Gaza.

After warning Palestinian civilians to evacuate, Israel quickly responded with military operations against Hamas in northern Gaza. More than a million civilians fled to undersupplied and overpopulated refugee camps in the south. Hamas positioned fighters and rockets in and around buildings in urban residential centers, including hospitals. Many thousands of Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks (exact numbers cannot be given at time of writing, since totals of civilian and combatant deaths changed quickly). While many world governments denounced Hamas, large crowds in countries across the world protested against the war in support of Palestine. Israel also has faced limited attacks from Shi'a Islamist militants in Lebanon (Hezbollah) and in Yemen (the Houthis) armed by **Iran**, which also gave support to Hamas. As of early 2024, threats by Iran and its Hezbollah and Houthi proxy forces risked expanding the conflict around the region.

- Israel supporters: Israelis must eliminate Hamas, even though civilians sadly are killed in the crossfire
- Palestine supporters: Palestinians are collectively punished by Israeli retaliation, not just Hamas

Multi-Perspectivity on Israel/Palestine, Past to Present

Using the above descriptive information and alternate framing as common baseline, it is possible to guide informed discussions about this long conflict. This is where the multiplicity of sense-making narratives comes into play, used in the arguments and claims advanced by the different perspectives. Below are commonly articulated narratives about Israel and Palestine that teachers could expect to hear or want to ensure students consider.

Narratives of Israel and its supporters:

- Since independence, Israel hasn't started any wars and was the target of aggression by Arab nations
- Israel is the only Jewish state on the planet and must take in Jews who escape persecution elsewhere
- Hamas explicitly demands the destruction of Israel and death for Jews, and teaches this to children
- Palestine's supporters blame Israel for all civilian deaths that are regrettably unavoidable in war
- Israeli forces fight in self-defense and don't intentionally target or take hostage Palestinian civilians
- When Israel agreed to Palestinian autonomy, many Palestinians voted for Hamas as their government
- Israel is justified in sealing off Gaza to prevent Hamas from carrying out more terrorist attacks

Narratives of Palestine and its supporters:

- Israel claims borders beyond the UN partition and conquered land from Arab nations during wars
- Palestinians have an inherent right to live in Gaza and West Bank, not to be forced into other countries
- Israel won't allow Palestinian refugees to return and never completely stopped new Jewish settlements
- When Israeli forces cause disproportionate destruction or commit war crimes, they aren't punished
- Palestinians have to use insurgent tactics because the US-armed Israeli military is more powerful
- Israel was never seriously willing to implement the UN two-state solution for Palestine
- Gaza is an open-air prison dependent on Israel for water supply, electricity, and economic activity

It is crucial to recognize the importance of nuance. Alternate frames and narratives are all generalizations. Though widely inclusive of similar broad views, they are not total packages that exclude being able to believe some parts but not others. Individuals, even who share broad agreement, often differ on specific positions. There are supporters of Palestinian statehood who oppose Hamas as a terrorist organization. Likewise, there are Israelis who believe that war against Hamas is necessary but oppose Israel's government and its policies. A person can believe Israel has a right to fight Hamas but oppose Israel's military strategy. People removed by distance from the conflict may have the luxury of being more monolithic in what they believe than people caught living in the nuance.

There are many more possible narratives on the conflict than just those offered above. Not all are starkly oppositional. By bringing nuance into the discussion, it is possible to find positions on which different sides may agree. Few people around the world would want to have the quality of life of a typical Palestinian in Gaza, the West Bank, or refugee settlements. They are dependent on Israel or other countries for most economic resources, and it is difficult for most to leave even if they wanted to. Likewise, no other country capable of defending itself that suffered terrorist attacks like Israel did on October 7 would be expected not wage war in response. What would the US or China do if (proportionate to Israel's population) more than 40,000 Americans or 170,000 Chinese

had been massacred? Such acknowledgements don't resolve the dispute, but they can help people on different sides better understand each other.

An Invitation for Teachers

The purpose of this alternate framing exercise is to give teachers more confidence to teach difficult history such as the Israel/Palestine conflict. This isn't a lesson plan, though teachers are welcome to draw from the text for their lessons and classroom materials. It is meant as guidance for how to do this with young learners in an accessible and sensitive way. That's why it operates at a relatively general level, to avoid getting lost in depths of complexities or pulled into narrow, irresolvable disputes. Given the diversity of students in many schools, it is important to practice sensitivity in discussing events that may be personal or traumatic for some people. This is facilitated by civil discourse that prioritizes understanding over confrontational discourse trying to change values or beliefs.

I invite you, fellow educators of all viewpoints, to trust that you can navigate this difficult content and responsibly engage with it in your classroom. My hope is that this article has given you tools to accept the challenge. As a first step, consider these planning prompts:

- What additional supports and resources would you need to confidently teach this topic?
- What personal connections might you or your students have to this difficult content?
- What would successful student learning about this topic look like in your classroom?

Just remember that accessibility and sensitivity don't mean backing away from difficulty or giving up on informed use of evidence. When claims that aren't verifiably evidenced are made, they can be identified as such while still acknowledging they may be part of a narrative that is deeply personal to the student. After all, the point isn't that everybody will agree. The goal is to improve understanding through structured consideration of multiple perspectives and foster productive discussion across disagreement. As Crocco, Halvorsen, Jacobsen, and Segall (2018) point out, actually listening across intense disagreement is important to civil discourse in a democracy. There is little hope for finding workable responses to difficult issues if future citizens aren't willing (or don't know how) to engage in it. And if teachers don't engage with the Israel/Palestine conflict in the classroom, we risk leaving young people to be propagandized by social media or to check out from the polarization by disengaging entirely. The one surrenders to extremism, the other to apathy. Neither helps the world's Palestinian or Jewish people.

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About the Author: Scott Metzger is an Associate Professor of Social Studies Education at The Pennsylvania State University and can be reached at sam59@psu.edu.

The 1793 Yellow Fever Epidemic and the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Historical Comparison of Inequality and Injustice

Eric Groce, Margaret Gregor, and Robin Groce

"Yet from among these, the poorest, most despised of the city,
came some of the most heroic figures of the plague year" (Powell, 1949, p. 96)

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic and our lives were subsequently impacted in unpredictable and compelling ways. Medical vocabulary terms such as quarantine, vector, contact-tracing, and epidemiology entered the popular lexicon. People were expected to wear masks, wash their hands, use copious amounts of hand sanitizer, and practice social distancing in public spaces. Skyscrapers and schools were empty as business deals were conducted from home offices and educators quickly learned to teach classes on Zoom.

Public life without plexiglass dividers, one-way grocery store aisles, and daily updates from health officials has resumed, providing an opportune moment to synthesize and contextualize the lived experience during the height of the pandemic. Social studies researchers have seized the chance to investigate the ways COVID-19 has altered our lives by juxtaposing it against historical epidemics. Claravall (2021) noted..." studying epidemics and pandemics as social phenomena provides a context for seeing connections between civic virtue, economic decision-making, geopolitical concepts, and historical change/continuity" (p. 11). Schug (2021) detailed the benefits of comparing two pandemics with emphasis on the economic ramifications and Swan et.al. (2020) urged "If there is ever a time to hold an inquiry mindset it is in the midst of a pandemic" (p. 159).

As educators we sought to compare and analyze experiences of marginalized populations from a prior epidemic for themes consistent with the contemporary societal responses to COVID-19. We were aware of how some disadvantaged populations struggled during the pandemic. Their difficulties reflected some of the current inequities in our society. We believed that looking at the parallels between the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793, the racism of that time, the current pandemic, and the status of present-day discrimination would help educators and students reflect upon the state of society today and in the past.

In this paper, we begin by sharing an historical narrative establishing Philadelphia's prominence in early America and its place as a haven for Black communities. That is followed by a discussion of how yellow fever decimated Philadelphia politically and economically in the summer and autumn of 1793 and the courageous response from the city's Black constituents. Next, we investigated how the Black caretakers were targets of racially motivated slanderous claims by a prominent White citizen and reviewed in detail the swift and calculated public rebuttal by two Black ministers. The paper concludes with a pair of classroom activities teachers may use when teaching this often-overlooked episode from American history and its place in juxtaposition with the most recent pandemic. We used elements of comparative historical research (Bernhard and O'Neill, 2021) and qualitative content analysis when analyzing historical primary and secondary resources as well as contemporary documents related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, we identified and compared variables related to inequitable treatment among population subsets (e.g. community status, race, financial security) from documents and accounts from the 1793 epidemic and the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

Content and Context for Teaching and Learning

Post Revolution Philadelphia

Philadelphia was the preeminent urban center of commercial, governmental, and cultural importance during the Early National Period, earning the nickname "Athens of America" (Sivitz & Smith, 2012). The city, founded by William Penn in 1682, was listed as the second most populated in the initial 1790 census, eclipsed only by New York City. The inclusion of Northern Liberties District and Southwark, two neighborhoods of the city, easily made Philadelphia the largest urban area in the burgeoning republic (US Bureau of the Census, June 15, 1998). Even as a new nation, Philadelphia enjoyed a rich history of distinction and importance. The Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall) hosted the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the adoption of the Articles of Confederation, the Constitutional Convention, and the signing of the Constitution. The city was home to the nation's first library, hospital, public bank, stock exchange, medical and law schools, and theater house. In addition to being a leader in commerce, scholarship, and the arts, Philadelphia had a long and continued support of abolition of slavery. The 1688 Germantown Protest was the first organized protest against slavery in the United States (*Quaker Protest Against Slavery in the New World, Germantown PA 1688*), and the city was the destination for the famous Henry "Box" Brown when he shipped himself in a crate from Richmond to freedom in 1749 (Virginia Museum of History and Culture, n.d.). The Pennsylvania Abolition Society was founded in 1775 at Philadelphia's Rising Sun Tavern and five years later the state passed *An Act for the Gradual Abolition*

of Slavery (The Avalon Project, n.d.). The dawn of the Second Great Awakening featured Protestant pulpits sharing the message of manumission and abolition.

Due to its welcoming free Black people, Philadelphia served as an inviting home for manumitted enslaved persons from the nearby region as well as the southern states. According to the 1790 census, of the 28,522 people who resided in the city, 1420 were listed as "all other free persons" and 210 were enslaved persons (*Schedule of the whole number of persons within the several districts of the United States, 1790)*. By 1800, the total population had grown to 41,220 and "all other free persons except Indians, not taxed" had increased to 4210 while the number of enslaved persons had dropped to 55, a clear indication of the city's commitment to abolition (*Return of the Whole Number of Persons Within the Several Districts of the United States 1800, p. 37)*.

Many Black residents had earned their freedom by purchasing it from their enslaver, like notable ministers Richard Allen and Absolom Jones, or by serving in the Continental Navy or Army during the Revolutionary War. Others simply ran away from their enslavers and sought refuge within Philadelphia's borders (Sivitz & Smith, 2012). After settling in the city, free Black inhabitants competed for low paying jobs against immigrants from European countries including domestic housekeeping, day laborers, assisting in a trades shop (e.g. cooper or blacksmith) or as mariners. Women often served as cooks or laundresses (Powell, 1949). Additionally, many free
Black residents chose to live in a White household as indentured servants (Miller, 2005). Most of these lived without reserves of money and supplies and were in dire circumstances if their meager pay stream was interrupted (Finger, 2012).

Yellow Fever Returns to Philadelphia

Dr. Benjamin Rush was a leading citizen in the city; a respected physician, civic leader, and educator. He had signed the Declaration of Independence, served as the Surgeon General for the Continental Army, and was an outspoken critic of slavery in spite of being an owner of enslaved persons (Dickinson College, n.d.). On August 19th Dr. Rush left his house to provide medical consultation on a patient near the wharf on Water Street. Over the previous few weeks, he had treated and lost a few patients with similar symptoms: fever, nausea, bloodshot eyes, and a yellowing of the skin. When he arrived at the home of Catherine LaMaigre, he found her suffering from the same circumstances and a "great heat burning in her stomach" and constant vomiting of black bile (Powell, 1949, p.11). Dr. Rush conferred with the attending doctors and identified the sickness growing in the city as "the bilious remitting yellow fever" and its origin as the rotting coffee in Balls' Wharf that emitted a pungent odor that hung in the sultry summer air (Powell, 1949, p. 12). He was mistaken about the cause of the malady but correct in his diagnosis; yellow fever had returned to Philadelphia for the first time since 1762.

Dr. Rush knew the fever and its deadly consequences from previous experience. He immediately advised his friends to leave the city and newspapers began to warn of the dreaded disease. Panic and uncertainty spread throughout the city and the numbers of sick escalated at alarming rates. By the middle of September, the government was in disarray. Officials and clerks with financial means had fled the area and many of those who stayed had contracted the fever. The Treasury Department and Customs Service were crippled by the disease and the Post Office Department had to close (Powell, 1949). Recognizing the severity of the situation many governmental leaders also left the city, including George Washington, John Adams, and Alexander Hamilton, who was stricken with the fever in early September, Governor Thomas Mifflin, and the state legislature (Powell, 1949; Smith, 1996). Following the exodus of twenty thousand citizens those that remained included the poor, infirmed, many within the Black community, the sick, and the valiant. As the disease spread across the city, desperation rose with each passing day and

> By early September the social fabric of the city was disintegrating. The work of tending the sick and burying the dead exceeded the capacity of the doctors and city authorities because most nurses, carters, and gravediggers, regarding the disease as contagious, refused to go near the sick, dying, and dead. (Nash, 1988, p. 122)

Husbands deserted sick wives, children were abandoned, and faithful servants were pushed into the street.

Matthew Clarkson was mayor of Philadelphia and his dedication to the city never wavered throughout the course of the epidemic. Following the massive evacuation, Clarkson organized and led the Committee to Attend to and Alleviate the Sufferings of the Afflicted with the Malignant Fever that was comprised of similarly civic-minded and courageous citizens. The committee was filled with volunteers, many of them simple nondescript citizens, including Samuel Benge. Upon reading the call for volunteers, Benge, a recent emigrant from London, walked across Chestnut Street to offer his services to the mayor. In England, he was an umbrella maker, but during the fever outbreak, he cared for the sick and buried the dead and never missed any of the forty-six committee meetings (Powell, 1949).

In addition to nursing the ill, the committee also cared for the growing population of orphans, organized and ran the temporary hospital outside the city, Bush Hill, distributed food and other types of aid, and removed the dead from the streets. In order to continue their monumental task of saving the city they needed two things, money and additional help. Several committee members acquired an initial loan of $1500 from the Bank of North America and subsequently took another loan of $5000 as expenses mounted. With finances temporarily stable, the focus turned to expanding the labor force (Powell, 1949).

Benjamin Rush recalled a letter from an earlier yellow fever epidemic in Charles Town (Charleston) South Carolina written by Dr. John Lining about the 1748 epidemic:

> There is something very singular in the constitution of the Negroes which renders them not liable to this fever; for though many of these were as much exposed as the nurses to the infection, yet I never knew one instance of this fever amongst them. (Lining, 1753, p. 7)

Rush, believing he had located a work force immune to the disease, put an advertisement in the *Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser* quoting Dr. Lining's claim, and asked for help. This belief of immunity was based upon a grave error; one based upon circular logic

> that governed the ways that many whites understood racial difference in the colonial and early national period. This logic held that black and white bodies were inherently distinct because of the way each race experienced disease, and the reason why each race suffered differently from disease had to do with their different racial constitutions. (Hogarth, 2017, p. 19)

The initial claim came from physicians who had witnessed immunity, which they erroneously claimed was innate in Black people, while serving in Western Africa and the West Indies (Hogarth, 2017).

Although several scholars have debated the degree to which African Americans may have experienced immunity towards yellow fever (Espinosa, 2014; Patterson, 1992; O'Malley, 2020; Kiple & Kiple, 1977; Watts, 2001; Blake, 1968; & Hogarth, 2017) the early claims by doctors appear to stem from previous exposure, possibly in their native country. Patterson suggested "It is reasonable to assume that over hundreds of years of exposure in Africa, Africans and their descendants in the New World underwent natural selection for resistance to yellow fever and that they have genetic defenses which whites lack" (Patterson, 1992, p. 862). Hogarth added:

> It is likely that black populations observed to be immune to the fever may very well have acquired that immunity, particularly if they acquired it as children and then arrived in the Americas as adult "saltwater" slaves from western Africa. (Hogarth, 2017, pp. 21, 45)

Response from the Free African Society

Absolom Jones and Richard Allen, two prominent members of Philadelphia's Black community, saw the plea for help in the newspaper. Both men were formerly enslaved and had purchased their freedom, become literate, and were religious leaders in their community. Recognizing the need in the Black community for support and resources, they jointly founded the Free African Society in 1787, a "…non-sectarian society designed to give mutual aid to members in sickness and to care for widows and fatherless children" (Powell, 1949, p. 97). The organization, created by and for the

Black community, was the first of its kind in America. The Free African Society met on September 5th to decide whether to aid their fellow Philadelphians.

There were multiple reasons to resist Rush's plea for relief. During the fall of 1792, a large contingent of Black churchgoers attended services at St. George's Methodist Church, a biracial community. Recognizing the pews were at capacity, a decision was made to expand. The Black parishioners contributed labor and money to the project and on the first Sunday following the expansion, Black worshipers were informed they now had to sit in a segregated gallery. Absolom Jones knelt in prayer in his former seats and was interrupted by a church elder who informed him "You must get up, you must not kneel here." Jones replied, "wait until prayer is over, and I will get up and trouble you no more." When the prayer was concluded, the Black congregation rose in unison and left the sanctuary (Nash, 1988, p. 118).

Shortly thereafter, Richard Allen disrupted the earth with his spade on an empty Fifth Street lot to begin construction on The African Church of Philadelphia. Many sympathetic White citizens pledged money to complete the building but later reneged on their promise by directing their money toward another cause. Hundreds of French planters, fleeing the Afro-French rebellion in Saint Domingue (Haiti), began arriving in the city accompanied by their enslaved persons. By the end of summer, a fleet of ships had unloaded over two thousand refugees in the city (Powell, 1949). Philadelphians who were eager to provide refuge to the newly arrived planters diverted their pledged funds, a total of $12,000, for the African Church to aid the refugees; an affront and disdainful act in the eyes of the free Black community (Nash, 1988).

Allen and Jones chose virtue over anger and resentment thinking that, "Perhaps they could dissolve white racism by demonstrating that in their capabilities, civic virtue, and Christian humanitarianism they were not inferior, but in fact superior, to those who regarded former slaves as a degraded, hopelessly backward people" (Nash, 1988, p. 123). On September 6th, Jones and Allen contacted mayor Matthew Clarkson and offered their services to the city. A few days later, a letter appeared in one of the city newspapers, the *Mail:*

> Sir, It is with peculiar satisfaction that I communicate to the public, through your paper, that the AFRICAN SOCIETY, touched with the distresses which arise from the present dangerous disorder, have voluntarily undertaken to furnish nurses to attend the afflicted: and that by applying to ABSALOM JONES and WILLIAM GRAY, both members of that society, they may be supplied. (Rush, 1794, p. 97)

So it was that "…former slaves, whom white men had insulted in a house of God, … were the first to show that fear could be conquered by the spirit of Christian love" (Powell, 1949, p. vii). Jones and Allen set the example for the rest of the Society, entering houses where no one else dared go, nursing the sick and dying, carrying away the deceased, and caring for orphans. Members of the

Society joined them in these acts as well as cleaning houses, building coffins, and attending at the temporary hospital set up at the vacant Bush Hill mansion. They did what was desperately needed, assuming "…the most onerous, the most disgusting burdens of demoralized whites" (Nash, 1988, p. 98).

The members of the Society went about their business daily but were quickly overwhelmed by the number of people that needed help, so they resorted to hiring five additional men to build coffins, drive the death cart, and bury the dead. Benjamin Rush realized the grave error he made in regard to Black residents' immunity within a matter of days, noting

> It was not long after these worthy Africans undertook the execution of their humane offer of services to the sick, before I was convinced I had been mistaken. They took the disease, in common with the white people, and many of them died with it. (Rush, 1794, p. 97)

Even though many of the Black caregivers became ill with the fever, including Richard Allen, they persisted in their commitment to their fellow Philadelphians. Rush added a postscript to a letter to his wife explaining his admiration for their effort has grown because of their lack of immunity, "The merit of the blacks in their attendance upon the sick is enhanced by their not being exempted from the disorder" (Rush, 1794, p. 731). After many of the physicians had fled the city Rush trained Allen and Jones to treat patients; measuring and dispensing medicine and even bleeding the afflicted, his prescribed treatment for the fever. Rush recalled that their efforts saved between two hundred to three hundred people (Rush, 1794).

In spite of their enormous sacrifice and outpouring of love and kindness for others, Black nurses and other members of the Society were accused of malicious acts and introducing the fever to the city (Powell, 1949). Paul Preston, writing his memories from the epidemic noted

> there was once a great Alarm rais'd that the Negroes had put Poison in the Pumps, and it was said that Somebody was found that would say he had seen some of them in the Act; I easily saw on the first Hearing of that that it was too weak to stand the Test long; because it could hardly be thought that would create a Distemper that would be infectious and spread from one to another from one Place of Beginning, and besides if that was the Case Horses and other Creatures that drink'd the Water would feel the Effects as well as the People… (Preston, 1914, pp. 236-237)

After dismissing the claim as fictitious, he suggests that the epidemic crippling the city could be a sentence for tolerating slavery and injustice towards the Black community

> And though I am far from presuming to form any Judgment, yet I think it would do Nobody any Harm to consider how much it looks like a Scourge in Vindication of the Cause of the poor Africans so long and inhumanely kept under unnatural Bondage. (Preston, 1914, p. 237)

Mayor Clarkson, recognizing how the Black caregivers were being regarded, intervened and "…publicly proclaimed that the insults, interruptions, and threats the blacks suffered would have to stop, or the offenders would be punished" (Powell, 1949, p. 193). Despite the unbearable conditions and the unwarranted public scrutiny, Jones, Allen, and the members of the Society fulfilled their pledge and dutifully served the public until the first frost arrived in November and the fever abated.

A "Short" Account of the Malignant Fever

Mathew Carey, a native of Ireland and a publisher by trade, emigrated to Philadelphia in 1784. He was known for printing the first atlases in America and for working under Benjamin Franklin prior to establishing his own shop but it was neither of those things that seized the attention of Richard Allen and Absolom Jones in November 1793. Carey, a member of the mayor's committee and a prominent member of the business community in Philadelphia, sensed that the multitudes of Philadelphians who fled the city and returned with the cooler November temperatures, were desperate to know the story of how their city struggled with the dreaded fever. His instinct was correct; his report of the epidemic went through four printings between November 14th and December 20th.

Carey's "short" account, totaling 164 pages, contained chapters on the perceived causes and consequences of the epidemic, treatments, the despondent mood within the city, benevolent acts, the use of Bush Hill as a hospital, and proceedings of the mayor's committee. He also included weather readings and a large number of short narratives detailing how everyone dealt with the fever, which he entitled "A Collection of Scraps." Within his report he found numerous times to praise Stephen Girard and others who organized and ran the Bush Hill hospital but the work of the "…black Philadelphians who drove the death carts, buried the dead, and nursed the sick in the back streets and alleys of the city" (Nash, 1988, pp. 124-125) were conspicuously minimized or absent from his writings. When they were mentioned, it appeared to be a nod to how grave the situation had become that families had to employ Black nurses and attendants. He noted:

> The corpses of the most respectable citizens, even of those who did not die of the epidemic, were carried to the grave, on the shafts of a chair, the horse driven by a negro, unattended by a friend or relation, and without any sort of ceremony. (Carey, 1793, p. 22)

It appears his focus was not upon the shameful act of shunning sick family members, but instead the perceived woeful circumstance that a member of Philadelphia's elite would be cared for by a Black caregiver.

> Many men of affluent fortunes, who have given daily employment and sustenance to hundreds, have been abandoned to the care of a negro, after their wives, children, friends, clerks, and servants, had fled away, and left them to their fate. (Carey, 1793, p. 23)

Carey offered little commendation that the Black community persevered upon finding out the false claim of immunity.

> The error that prevailed on this subject had a very salutary effect; for at an early period of the disorder, hardly any white nurses could be procured, and, had the negroes been equally terrified, the sufferings of the sick, great as they actually were, would have been exceedingly aggravated. (Carey, 1793, p. 63)

Next, Carey issued a libelous charge against the Black workers:

> The great demand for nurses afforded an opportunity for imposition, which was eagerly seized by some of the vilest of the blacks. They extorted two, three, four, and even five dollars a night for such attendance, as would have been well paid by a single dollar. Some of them were even detected in plundering the houses of the sick. (Carey, 1793, p. 63)

His assertion of price gouging runs counter to other comments he made on the subject within his report. When nurses were in short supply he offered, "High wages were offered for nurses for these poor people—but none could be procured" (Carey, 1793, p. 19) and in the minutes of the mayor's committee meeting on September 16th, it is recorded that "Generous wages will be given to persons capable and willing to perform the services of Nurses at the Hospital at Bush-Hill" (*Minutes of the proceedings*, 1794, p. 20). Later in his report, Carey recognized that the circumstances of the epidemic had brought an influx of business for some; "Several classes of people were highly benefited by the public distress. Coffin makers had full employment, and in general high prices for their work" as well as "Those who had carriages to hire, to transport families to the country, received whatever they pleased to require" (Carey, 1794, p. 74). Carey observed market forces of supply and demand at work but failed to levy charges of profiteering or price gouging as he did toward the Black nurses.

As if to attempt to balance his attack, he addresses public perception of some toward the Black caregivers and cites the Society for their work,

> But it is unjust to cast a censure on the whole for this sort of conduct, as many people have done. The services of Jones, Allen, and Gray, and others of their colour, have been very great, and demand public gratitude. (Carey, 1794, p. 63)

This is a rare instance where he commends the effort by the Free African Society. Even at the conclusion of his report, he lists the members of the mayor's committee but absent is the roll of the Free African Society, hardly an oversight or publishing limitation for a document over 160 pages long.

One question left for historians to ponder is "Why would Carey write that?" Committee meeting notes reveal his absence from September 16th-October 7th, a period of roughly three weeks he was out of the city, a small amount of time relative to the entire epidemic. Clearly, he must have

had many chances to witness the Black workers going about their business in the nearly abandoned and quarantined city. In the event he was somewhat oblivious to the work of the Society members, he received a letter from Benjamin Rush dated October 29th that clearly articulated his appraisal of their effort:

> The only information which I am capable of giving you relates to the conduct of the Africans of our city. In procuring nurses for the sick, Wm. Grey and Absalom Jones were indefatigable, often sacrificing for that purpose whole nights of sleep without the least compensation. Richard Allen was extremely useful in performing the mournful duties which were connected with burying the dead. (Rush, 1794, p. 731; letter attributed to be addressed to Carey by historians)

With such overwhelming evidence available through daily observation and correspondence from an esteemed physician and community leader, Carey must have had a compelling reason to slander Society members. One scholar suggests "his general racist sentiments" coupled with "…his Irish roots and his ensuing desire to support Hibernian immigrants competing with former slaves for jobs" spurred him to defame the courageous effort of the black community (Miller, 2005, p. 164). Regardless of motive, Carey's charges against the Black nurses and other caregivers were dangerous and reckless. In a time when "…white Philadelphians were anxious about the increasing free African American population in the city, Carey's accusations could deepen already existing prejudices and fuel efforts to further restrict African Americans" (Bacon, 2001, p. 68).

A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People

Upon reading Carey's flawed and biased report, Jones and Allen knew they must respond quickly. By January 1794, they had written their retort in order "…to step forward and declare facts as they really were" (Jones & Allen, 1794, p.3). One scholar noted "Much was at stake in penning this pamphlet; indeed, the reputation of the city's Black inhabitants depended on it." (Hogarth, 2019, p. 1338)

They began their narrative with a chronological accounting of how they became involved in the process and then began to address the charge of financial impropriety levied by Carey. When beginning their services to the city, they noted the unique and unexpected situation, declaring "no one knew how to make a proposal to any one they wanted to assist them." They answered, "At first we made no charge, but left it to those who served in removing the dead, to give what they thought fit-we set no price, until the reward was fixed by those we had served" (Jones & Allen,1794, pp. 5-6). In another instance, they repeated their focus on the work at hand instead of financial gain, declaring they "sought not fee nor reward" to carry away a corpse, even when they could have stipulated a great reward" (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 4).

Even after receiving remuneration for the harrowing work, they wanted to attest that any monies received went toward the cause and it was not sufficient to cover their expenses. Before sharing their ledger sheet, they pronounced

> We do assure the public, that *all* the money we have received, for burying, and for coffins which we ourselves purchased and procured, has not defrayed the expence of wages which we had to pay to those whom we employed to assist us. (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 6)

Jones and Allen reiterate their mission to Philadelphia, especially those in greatest financial need saying, "We have buried several hundreds of poor persons and strangers, for which service we have never received, nor never asked any compensation" (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 7). They continued by addressing Carey's report where he "asperses the blacks alone, for having taken the advantage of the distressed situation of the people" (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 7). They concurred with Carey that some exorbitant wages were paid but the reasoning was basic economics, "they had been allured away by others who offered greater wages" (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 7). Another source concurs, offering the "high prices did not result from African Americans charging unreasonable fees, Instead, families outbid each other for the available caregivers" (O'Malley, 2020, p. 10). At the beginning of November, it is recorded in the minutes of the mayor's committee meeting that nurses at the temporary Bush Hill hospital will be paid $3 a day, a price Carey had reported earlier as exorbitant (*Minutes of the proceedings*, 1794). Although multiple accounts of private correspondence revealed a steep increase in the price for goods and services within the city by white merchants including housekeeping, firewood, grocery staples such as butter and apples, and coffins, not one white author accused a white merchant, artisan, or farmer, of price gouging. It suggests that what these white citizens "seemed to have resented more than economic impropriety per se was the potential social mobility of free blacks" (Miller, 2005, pp. 186-187).

In related financial matters, the public committee headed by Mayor Clarkson received two loans totaling $6500 from the Bank of North America to complete their work, while the Free African Society spent their own money to fulfill their commitment but were only reimbursed for 61% of their expenses (*Minutes of the proceedings*, 1794; Smith, 1996). Also, Matthew Carey and others on the Committee, were forwarded a sum of fifty dollars each to go towards personal expenses they may accrue in the course of their service and were given the opportunity to continue forwarding receipts to the treasurer for reimbursement; a sum they could easily afford based on the total of $37,000 received from individuals and cities to aid Philadelphia (*Minutes of the proceedings*, 1794).

Their account becomes more personal when they chastise Carey for abandoning the city during the height of the epidemic and then profiting from the "sale of his 'scraps'" which they predicted far exceeded any extortion carried out by Black nurses. They also accepted that some plundering took place by some of their Society, but noted that when only they were publicly

admonished for the misdeed, it appears racially motivated adding, "Is it a greater crime for a black to pilfer, than for a white to privateer?" (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 8). They next shared several stories of unsavory behavior by white citizens during the sickness, "We can with certainty assure the public that we have seen more humanity, more real sensibility from the poor blacks, than from the poor whites" (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 10). They then juxtaposed those misdeeds with narratives of Black heroes and heroines who worked across the city as selfless and kind caregivers who often received deceit and disdain in return for their acts of love. One man, Sampson, described as "A poor black man" who "went constantly from house to house where distress was, and no assistance without fee or reward; he was smote with the disorder, and died, and after his death his family were neglected by those he had served" (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 11).

Jones and Allen reasoned that the need for such a detailed and direct response to Carey's attack was to preserve the reputation they had built, "…for we conceive, and experience proves it, that an ill name is easier given than taken away" (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 13). Although Carey made alterations to later additions, Jones and Allen counter the damage was likely done

> Mr. Carey's first, second, and third editions, are gone forth into the world, and in all probability, have been read by thousands that will never read his fourth-consequently, any alteration he may hereafter make, in the paragraphs alluded to, cannot have the desired effect, or atone for the past (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 13).

Thankfully, many white citizens rejected the racist rhetoric of Carey and others and offered public approbation for the meritorious work of the Free African Society. Isaac Heston, in a letter to his brother dated September 19th, countered Carey's charges with his own observations

> Scarsely anybody to be seen in many parts of the town, and those who are seen are principally French, and Negroes. amongst whom it dose not seem to be so prevalent, especially among the negroes. indeed i dont know what the people would do, if it was not for the Negroes, as they are the Principal nurses (Bronner, 1962, p. 205).

He proceeded to say how many are dying daily but his belief is "…the disorder has rather abated since the Cold weather" (Bronner, 1962, p. 207). Isaac was mistaken as the fever took many more victims over the next five weeks, including him, ten days later. John Feeno wrote to his friend Joseph Ward on November 14th and recalled the integral part the Black community served during the epidemic

> …and the houses daily shutting up–meantime every person was seen with a spunge or a bottle at their Nose–no shaking of hands, but every one stood aloof–business of every kind became suspended, and universal stillness prevailed night & day. I have repeatedly been in the Street when scarcely an individual was to be seen as far as the eye could extend, except a

> Negro leading a Herse, or a Chair Carriage, or a Horse Cart with a Corpse–sometimes two in a Cart. (Hench, n.d., p. 184).

Finally, Mayor Clarkson, a man who exemplified steadfast leadership throughout the epidemic, was grateful for the help of Richard Allen and Absolom Jones and the Free African Society and expressed it publicly on January 23, 1794

> Having, during the prevalence of the late malignant disorder, had almost daily opportunities of seeing the conduct of Absolom Jones and Richard Allen, and the people employed by them, to bury the dead - I with cheerfulness give this testimony of my approbation of their proceedings, as far as the same came under my notice. Their diligence, attention and decency of deportment, afforded me, at the time, much satisfaction (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 23).

Having made their rebuttal to Carey and others who may have questioned their resolve and their motives, Richard Allen and Absolom Jones concluded their report with an old proverb they "…think applicable to those of our colour who exposed their lives in the late assisting dispensation -

> God and a soldier, all men do adore
> In time of war, and not before;
> When the war is over, and all things righted,
> God is forgotten, and the soldier slighted. (Jones & Allen, 1794, p. 26)

Teaching about the 1793 Yellow Fever and the Covid-19 Pandemic

Multiple dimensions within the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards are applicable for study of this topic, including those listed in the box below. In this section, we have included two classroom applications (grades 5-8) utilizing some of the standards as a model for implementing primary sources when conducting historical inquiry activities.

- **D1.5.6-8.** Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.
- **D2.His.16.6-8.** Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.
- **D2.His.2.3-5.** Compare life in specific historical time periods to life today.
- **D2.His.2.6-8.** Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

- **D2.His.13.3-5.** Use information about a historical source, including the maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose to judge the extent to which the source is useful for studying a particular topic.
- **D2.His.13.6-8.** Evaluate the relevance and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.
- **D2.Eco.4.6-8.** Describe the role of competition in the determination of prices and wages in a market economy.
- **D2.Eco.6.6-8.** Explain how changes in supply and demand cause changes in prices and quantities of goods and services, labor, credit, and foreign currencies.
- **D2.His.16.6-8.** Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

Grant (2013) suggested that teachers use the Inquiry Arc to teach research-based and engaging social studies units. When applying the instructional framework of the Inquiry Arc, teachers develop questions and inquiries, apply disciplinary concepts and tools, evaluate sources and evidence, communicate conclusions, and take informed action (Grant, 2013, p.322) He later noted that the "Key to the Inquiry Arc" lies in the use of questions to guide the process for learners (Grant, 2013, p.322). Specifically, teachers will create overarching questions to guide the research that address interdisciplinary problems and issues relevant to the social studies curriculum. These questions are provocative, engaging, intellectually complex, but student friendly, and center around an enduring social studies topic. After establishing a compelling question or questions to guide the unit of study, teachers create supporting questions which are integral to individual lesson plans and provide the necessary knowledge and insights required to address compelling questions. In an attempt to model the Inquiry Arc with the topic of the Black community experience during the 1793 Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia as well as contrasting it with the experiences of marginalized populations during the recent COVID-19 pandemic, we have created a compelling question and a few additional supporting questions below.

Compelling Question: Why did varying subsets of the population have different levels of access to quality medical care in the midst of a national/global health crisis?
Supporting Questions: Who departed from Philadelphia as yellow fever began spreading, and who chose to stay? How did social status and income influence the decision to flee the city or remain to confront the disease and care for the remaining population? What distinctions can be observed in the portrayal of Black caretakers between the two published accounts (Carey vs. Jones & Allen)? Note: If teachers choose to extend the unit to incorporate the inclusion of the COVID-19 pandemic, the questions can be modified to include the contemporary event (e.g. Who managed to remotely work, purchase groceries online, and facilitate at-home learning for students when the COVID-19 outbreak commenced in the United States in March 2020?

Steps two and three of the Inquiry Arc require learners to apply disciplinary concepts and tools and then evaluate sources and use the evidence to prepare their response (Grant, 2013, p.322). In the following pair of activities, students have the opportunity to investigate and analyze two primary source documents with vastly different interpretations of the Black residents' experience during the 1793 epidemic, as well as to compare treatment of marginalized populations between the two medical crises situated over two hundred years apart.

Activity #1

D1.5.6-8. Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

Allow students time to explore and analyze elements of the report of the epidemic made by Absolom Jones and Richard Allen. Next, direct them to begin assessing the quality and veracity of the arguments made in the report as well as determine the purpose (to refute Carey's libelous claims and clear their names) and intended audience (citizens of Philadelphia) of the document. Specific instances might include:

- pp. 5-7 – refutation of allegations against overcharging for services
- p. 10 – examples of Black nurses and caregivers exhibiting compassion and mercy without regard for profit
- pp. 15-16 – dispelling the inaccurate claim by Dr. Benjamin Rush that Black resident were immune to Yellow Fever, rendering them risk-free nurses
- p. 18 – multiple instances of their humanity and how deeply they were affected by the hurt and loss they encountered daily

A Short Account of the Malignant Fever, Lately Prevalent in Philadelphia: With a Statement of the Proceedings That Took Place on the Subject in Different Parts of the United States (4th ed.) Philadelphia. (Mathew Carey) https://archive.org/details/b30794390

A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People, During the Late Awful Calamity of Philadelphia, in the Year 1793: And a Refutation of Some Censures, Thrown upon Them in Some Late Publications. (Absolom Jones and Richard Allen) https://www.loc.gov/item/02013737/

Note to teachers: You may want to find a transcribed copy or share some insights from a source on 17th century handwriting (e.g. https://www.archives.gov/citizen-archivist/transcribe/tips) to ease student frustration in accessing the document.

Activity #2

D2.His.2.3-5. Compare life in specific historical time periods to life today. and D2.His.2.6-8. Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

In an effort to contextualize the 1793 Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia and provide learners an opportunity to compare and analyze significant variables from it with the recent COVID pandemic, a list of prominent topics is provided below where students can identify and compare responses, treatments, and other variables to both historical events. Teachers may choose to organize information in a "T" chart, Venn diagram, or other graphic organizer and should include other topics to compare and contrast based on their unit of study. The first topic has been completed as an example.

1793 Yellow Fever	COVID-19 (2019-2023)
Fraudulent/False Medical Claims and Treatments • bloodletting • purging • Black community was immune • cover mouth with cloth dipped in vinegar • chewing garlic • use of gunpowder to cleanse the air; firing gun or cannon • ingesting large amounts of quinine ("Peruvian bark") • wearing an amulet of dried frogs	**Fraudulent/False Medical Claims and Treatments** • drinking/inhaling bleach • gargling with salt water • colloidal silver solution • various herbal home remedies • ingesting quercetin, zinc, or vitamin D • use of CBD products • hydroxychloroquine • ivermectin • misinformation about vaccines/boosters
Travel Restrictions (e.g. stage coaches from Philadelphia denied entry to other towns, boats/ship from Philadelphia refused port entry; other stories of quarantined goods, travel blockades, etc. (pp. 220-224 Powell)	**Travel Restrictions** (e.g. entry/exit bans, border closures, visa restrictions, proof of vaccination and/or negative COVID-19 test results prior to departure)
Heroes/Heroines (e.g. Absolom Jones/Richard Allen and members of the Free African Society; Matthew Clarkson, Stephen Girard/ Peter Helm/Dr. Jean Deveze and workers at Bush Hill hospital)	**Heroes/Heroines** (e.g. health care providers, grocery workers, scientists/vaccine developers, Birma Kunwar - https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/unsung-heroes-pandemic)
Economics (e.g. farmers fearful of coming into city/prices soar; prices paid to serve as nurse/caregiver often dependent on free market; Free African Society nursed and buried many poor citizens without asking for compensation)	**Economics** (e.g. price spike of hand sanitizer and N95 masks, supply chain disruptions; frontline workers vs workers who could pivot to work from home)

After completing the activities, students can use their responses to supporting questions, comparison notes between the two primary sources, and the results from their T chart to address their compelling question, construct a written report, and prepare a response to share with civic and medical community leaders to address the historical and contemporary inequities experienced by marginalized populations during medical crises. Finally, two developmentally appropriate trade books addressing the 1793 Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia are available (*Fever 1793*, an historical fiction novel and *An American Plague*, a nonfiction account) to provide teacher content knowledge, an interdisciplinary resource, or another source for completing work on the Inquiry Arc or other related content on the topic.

Conclusion

There are many similarities between the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 and the COVID-19 pandemic. An (2022), writing about discrimination against Asian-Americans during past public health crises, noted, "Epidemics come and go, but the way our country responds has rarely changed. When epidemics occur, many people look for someone to blame, and marginalized groups are easy targets" (p. 127) and later suggested "Teaching students about this history can contribute to ending the historical pattern" (p. 128). Exploring the 1793 Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia, especially the perspectives of Black inhabitants, provides an opportunity to compare the intersection of political, medical, financial, and racial tensions from two-hundred thirty years ago with our contemporary circumstances and to reflect upon how societies respond to crises.

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About the Authors: Eric Groce is a Professor of Elementary Education at Appalachian State University, Margaret Gregor is a Professor at the University Libraries at Appalachian State University, and Robin Groce is an Associate Professor of Literacy Education at Appalachian State University. The authors can be reached via Eric at groceec@appstate.edu.

The Future of Social Studies Education: AI and the Human Touch

Brian Stevens

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a branch of computer science that deals with computers that are trained to put information together in a way that makes it appear that they can think and act like humans with the ability to achieve goals (Hwang, 2022). This poses a number of challenges to education, not the least of which is students having computers do the work for them. However, AI also offers an unprecedented opportunity to improve human intelligence (HI), with the proper guardrails in place to address individuals who may try to abuse the system.

I have been teaching in Pennsylvania public schools for over 20 years. During that time, I also earned my doctorate in Educational Technology. Since then, I have also started working with teacher preparation programs and keeping up to date on what technology skills teachers can use to add even more value for their students, especially when it comes to often neglected areas like social studies education. One way I have done this is by volunteering my time with organizations like Khan Academy and getting to beta test some of their newest developments.

In this article, I intend to provide an overview for teachers of the factors to consider when using AI in the classroom. The first section addresses some of the more well-known AI platforms available to teachers. The second section describes the potential benefits of using AI in the classroom. The final section discusses what guardrails may need to be in place to mitigate the challenges inherent in such a disruptive technology as AI.

AIs for Teachers and Students

OpenAI's ChatGPT is usually the first name that comes to mind when discussing AI. However, there are a number of other viable options to consider, some especially designed especially for teachers and students. This section will provide a brief overview of four other well-known AI platforms that teachers can use: Google's Gemini, Khan Academy's Khanmigo, Magic School's Raina, and Curipod.

Google's AI platform was originally called Bard, but has recently been rebranded as Gemini. It is a free general purpose AI, so I often start with it when I have a task that may not be teacher-specific. However, many schools, like mine, are also Google Schools, which means, among other

things, our email is run by Google. The students all have ChromeBooks, which they use to log into their Google Classrooms, to complete their assignments on Google Docs, Forms, Sheets, or Slides. That compatibility makes it more convenient for us to use than ChatGPT. The only major drawback is that more people have already adopted ChatGPT than Gemini, so Google has to play catch-up, which it is doing by incorporating AI into its email, Docs, Forms, Sheets, Slides, etc.

The second major option is Khan Academy's Khanmigo. Khan Academy's mission is to provide a free, world-class education for anyone, anywhere. Khanmigo is a play on both the Spanish words *conmigo*, which means "with me," and *amigo*, which means "friend." Khanmigo was designed to complement what teachers and students are doing by helping students do the work, but not doing the work for them. In other words, it will help you write a paper by providing prompts and feedback, but it won't write a paper for you. It also doesn't have to play catch-up with ChatGPT because it is run using the same database from OpenAI. The drawback to that is that OpenAI charges Khan Academy every time someone uses Khanmigo, so Khan Academy asks for a monthly donation to offset those immediate costs, while they investigate ways to make it free like the rest of their resources, which I have been using for years.

The third major option is Magic School's Raina. It has a free limited version or an unlimited-use version for $12/mo or $100/yr ($8.33/mo). It can adapt and translate texts like Gemini. It also provides suggestions to create AI-resistant assignments like Khanmigo. Its templates for student feedback appear user-friendly. One of the drawbacks that has stopped me from going further with it is that its database currently stops at 2021, so current events are an issue that doesn't arise with Gemini or Khanmigo.

The fourth major option for teachers is Curipod, which also has a limited free version or an expanded paid version for $9/mo or $90/yr ($7.50/mo). Curipod's niche seems to be slides for presenting and interacting. Student interaction can be collected to provide teacher-friendly reports on individual students. A drawback is reflective of its strength: with the depth of focus on high quality slides for student engagement, there is not the breadth of features that the other AI platforms offer.

Potential Benefits

The potential benefits of teachers using an AI platform include personalized instruction, adaptive assessments, and efficient task completion. These may benefit the students directly with personalized instruction and assessments. Students may also benefit indirectly by AI helping teachers complete certain tasks to give teachers more direct time with students.

One of the most promising applications of AI in education is personalized instruction (Marr, 2021). Teachers already adapt lesson plans and assessments for their students, but the extent is

more limited than AI can provide. In the past, teachers typically taught to the middle and adapted the core lesson plan in two ways, providing an extra challenge for early finishers, and providing additional support for students who were struggling. However, not every early finisher needs the same challenge, nor does every student who is struggling need the same support. AI can adjust on the fly to create a customized learning path for each student. This may seem similar to support programs that are already available (Chen & Lu, 2007), but the feedback that AI provides is much more specific and personal. For example, students have asked Khanmigo the same questions and received slightly different feedback based on earlier prompts or responses from each respective student. This helps students learn more effectively and efficiently, and is based on their interests to better motivate and engage them.

I sometimes use Khanmigo on my Promethean Board when providing whole-class instruction for students in grades K-12. One of our favorite activities is talking with AI-simulations of historical figures. I make a point of emphasizing–especially with elementary students–that it is just an AI-simulation, which I explain is a computer acting like the real person, but not the real person. The AI-simulation also does a good job of referring to itself as, for example, "an AI-simulation of Amelia Earhart"–and not just as "Amelia Earhart"–even though I may refer to the simulations by name in this article just to make it easier to read. I also use gendered pronouns instead of "it" when referring to a simulation for the same reason.

I tend to learn something new from each AI-simulation conversation, especially the earliest conversations, which helps me ask better leading questions in later classes. I was surprised one time, though, when talking with Harriet Tubman because she had given me the number of trips she made and the number of enslaved people she rescued in one of the earlier classes, but gave me different numbers in a later class. Normally, I solicit the questions to ask from the students, but I interjected one of my own at this point, asking why she had given me different numbers before. She explained that she relies on all of the sources about Tubman's life and there is a range of numbers depending on the source in question, but she then added what is considered the most commonly accepted estimates: 19 trips and 300 people.

AI platforms can also create adaptive assessments to maximize student learning (Hwang & Tu, 2021). Adaptive assessments are tailored to each student's abilities. It can give immediate feedback, make questions simpler or more complex depending on the accuracy of the responses, and track progress over time. One of Khanmigo's features is one click for 10 problems on whatever topic the student is working on. For schools that have multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) time built into the schedule, this is an easy feature to implement with students of all ability levels that does not come with any stigmas. Without this, students can be quick to figure out which students are getting the enrichment packets and which students are getting reteaching worksheets. Sending every

student to AI eliminates (or at least lessens) this one potentially negative dynamic in the classroom. Of course, it also helps students to track their own progress over time and work on specific areas of need.

AI platforms are also being used to automate the grading of student work and other teacher tasks like FAQs, announcements, and reminders (University of San Diego, 2021). This frees up teachers' time to focus on other tasks like analyzing data, planning lessons, and providing additional instruction to students. It also improves student outcomes by increasing the efficiency of grading and giving feedback more quickly. In practice, the "grading" seems to be used more for formative assessments, rather than summative assessments. This is an area where teachers are being judicious in their use of AI platforms because certain types of assessment still require human touch. In schools that provide after-school tutoring or homework help, this is a convenient feature to implement. Often, students just need confirmation that they are doing their homework problems correctly, and this is something that AI can certainly do, allowing the teacher to reteach concepts that students are getting wrong. Nevertheless, the more immediate the feedback, the more meaningful that feedback is, and the more effectively student outcomes improve.

AI platforms can also help teachers complete many of these tasks more effectively, if not automatically (Berson & Berson, 2023). Most of my examples come from K-12 classrooms, where I spend most of my time. However, I also work as an adjunct in higher education and occasionally assist in writing curriculum or courses for a teacher education program. One of our tasks was to combine standards from two different organizations where appropriate, so that the list of objectives for the new course did not seem so unwieldy. After discussing for a few minutes how we could combine two standards that seemed similar, a colleague suggested that we just throw it into ChatGPT and see what it gives us. It was not just interesting to see what ChatGPT provided, but also to see how others prompt ChatGPT. Another collaborator and I expected our moderator to just ask ChatGPT to combine these two standards into a single objective, but our moderator set the stage for ChatGPT by explaining that a group of curriculum specialists were designing a course for a teacher education program and would like to combine these two standards into a single objective for that course. He believed this provided better results faster. The first attempt didn't seem to eliminate anything from either standard though, so then the moderator asked for a more concise objective. We got a more concise statement, but the language felt too technical and unnatural compared to the other objectives we had already written. Nevertheless, we took what ChatGPT gave us and edited it to fit our specific needs, which seemed faster than trying to do it all ourselves when we felt we had hit a writing block. This is similar to what I find when I ask Gemini to write an abstract and/or keywords for an article that I may be writing for a journal that requires such things. It's usually pretty good, but I may make a few minor changes so that it sounds right to me.

Creating the right prompts is a skill that can be developed to use AI in new and engaging ways (Abram, 2023). As I mentioned before, Khanmigo lets students converse with select historical figures. One thing that I appreciate about these conversations is that the AI-simulation still uses the Socratic method, asking questions to get the student to arrive at the answer where appropriate. For example, even a question as simple as "How long ago did that happen?" may have the AI-simulation suggest how to set a subtraction problem up to figure it out given the dates involved.

One of the drawbacks with these Khanmigo conversations is they are limited to the list of 68 historical figures currently. Once, for example, when discussing Booker T. Washington, I intended to lead a discussion with Booker T. Washington about himself. However, George Washington Carver came up before that and the students really wanted to talk to him instead because he had been featured on the "Who Was" show. Unfortunately, Carver was not an option on Khanmigo, but his time at the Tuskegee Institute overlapped with Washington's, so we were able to talk to Washington about Carver, which the students thought was pretty cool.

I had tried something similar before when I wanted to learn more about George Westinghouse. I am from Pittsburgh and my dad worked for the Westinghouse company for years. I knew Westinghouse wasn't an option, but Nikola Tesla was, so I talked with him about George Westinghouse because I knew they had a positive relationship. I chose Tesla over Edison because I knew Edison and Westinghouse did not have a pleasant relationship—more on this later in the article.

Another person I wanted to talk with was Paul Newman because I had worked at one of his summer camps for chronically ill children. No one on the list had any personal interactions with him, so I went to Gemini to see if Gemini had enough information on Newman to simulate responses reflective of him—and it could. I was hesitant because I had brought up the popular Pittsburgh baseball player Andrew McCutcheon earlier, who seems bigger than Paul Newman in the eyes of students from Pittsburgh, but Gemini said it didn't have enough information on McCutcheon to simulate responses from him.

A more practical application of AI platforms is transcribing and translating texts. For example, my high school daughter was doing her AP European History homework, which was to read and respond to each chapter of Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Though she read all of the chapters, she had trouble understanding some of them and then responding to related homework questions. Gemini had access to each chapter, so there was no typing or copying/pasting necessary, in asking for a summary of each chapter. You could also ask for each summary to be modified in one of five ways: shorter, longer, simpler, more casual, or more professional. This was just what she needed.

Likewise, teachers in one of the ESL programs that I work with take advantage of various AI translating programs. The translations naturally help the students in their content area classes.

However, the students often speak English better than their families at home. The greater benefit in many of their opinions is the ability to translate school documents for the families at home. Although it may take longer than many students (and some teachers) have the patience for, AI programs can also translate short words or phrases that are typed in real time, so students can "talk" better with other students and teachers when there are unfamiliar words that are spoken.

In any case, the use of AI platforms in education is still in its early stages, but it has the potential to revolutionize learning. By personalizing learning, creating adaptive assessments, and automating or streamlining teacher tasks, students may learn more effectively and efficiently. It may also free up teachers' time so that they can focus on determining the kind of support students need to succeed.

Potential Challenges & Guardrails

AI offers an unprecedented opportunity to improve human intelligence (HI), but only with the proper guardrails in place to address the potential challenges inherent with this early stage (Lynch, 2018). Ethics is one of the greatest challenges for AI developers, AI itself, as well as AI users. Computer developers have always had an inherent responsibility to develop programs ethically because the computer could not think for itself. Unfortunately, some companies competing for market share are prioritizing speed over safety.

The ethics of the AI itself is also a concern. The problem is that AI lacks a moral compass (Hoes, 2019). The way I explain how AI works to students is that it reads as much information as quickly as it can, so it knows how to talk and act like a regular person—or certain famous people—and give answers to questions if those answers are out there somewhere. It considers to be true what is repeated the most or what it finds the most often (Darics & van Poppel, 2023). That's why earlier versions of AI, like Microsoft's Tay chatbot in 2016, for example, took less than 24 hours to deny the Holocaust and tweet that feminists should "all die and burn in hell." I don't share those details with students, especially elementary students, but I paraphrase it: "an AI chatbot read some mean websites and learned how to be mean 8 years ago, so now AI simulations like the ones we use are more careful about what information they read, so it doesn't learn to be mean again." Behind the scenes, credibility and transparency are the two key issues that need to be addressed in terms of the ethics of AI itself. The information needs to be credible, which depends in great part on the process being transparent. Users need to see and understand how AI platforms arrive at their outputs.

All of my initial conversations with AI-simulations had been respectful. Out of curiosity, I tried to bait an AI-simulation of Thomas Edison into acting less than respectful because I knew the real Edison was less than respectful when it came to George Westinghouse. Fortunately or

unfortunately, depending on what one was hoping for, this Thomas Edison was nothing but respectful of me as the user and of George Westinghouse himself. Edison acknowledged differences of opinion but still referred to Westinghouse as nothing less than a worthy rival.

Some may feel that a moral compass is not relevant to a subject like social studies, but that depends on how the social studies are applied and used (Berson & Berson, 2023). The safeguards that are now in place seem to be working, so no matter what platform students are on, these models use inclusive language and should not become sexist, racist, homophobic, or prejudiced in any of the ways we are aware of. Nevertheless, questions persist like: Even though it may not become racist, can it talk about examples of racism by those in power? Can it accurately capture deeply intimate stories and reasonably address violent accounts? How nuanced can it get? I posed those questions to an AI-simulation of Martin Luther King, Jr., who responded that he could indeed give students those accounts of racism to provide education and understanding, but not to incite or distress. Likewise, violence can be discussed in a factual and historical context, so students can learn the lessons such events have to teach, but not to sensationalize or stir discontent.

Another concern is not just what is said, but what is not said. For example, if asked about *Roe v. Wade* or its reversal, what would it say and what would it leave out? From experience, I know it does try to present "both sides" of controversial issues, even if you are only asking about one side. It can also suggest sources that it used that teachers and students can access to learn more. Philosophically speaking though, we may be unaware that we are acting in ways that are prejudiced towards a currently undefined group, which is then reflected in the large language models AI is trained on, that would need to be addressed in the future. Developers may introduce such unintentional bias by the algorithms they create. Potential solutions include consciously incorporating diverse datasets and, of course, human oversight.

Ultimately, the most difficult ethical issue may lie with AI users themselves. Students cheating is one thing that seems to come to mind first by having AI write papers for students (TED, 2023). Ironically, that makes it easier for teachers to use AI to detect a paper written by AI, plus more traditional forms of plagiarism (University of San Diego, 2021). In the social studies classroom, it is more important to have students use education-specific chatbots that will not give the answer, but that know the answer and can help the student find the answers by asking the student questions or giving prompts to take them in the right direction. Schools that provide one-to-one devices can allow education chatbots while blocking more general purpose chatbots that are designed to give the answers to whatever questions a user may request. Admittedly, this does not prevent a student from using a personal device at home—or a Virtual Personal Network (VPN) at school—but it is a step in the right direction that makes it easier for teachers to monitor.

Besides cheating, lying is another ethical issue concerning AI users. Deepfakes are realistic but false images and videos created with AI to intentionally harass people or spread misinformation. In 2020, CNN created a lesson to teach students how to better identify misinformation like deepfakes when fake news was trending in the headlines (CNN, 2020). This would likely have been a perfect lesson for my 7th-8th graders when I was teaching a unit on digital citizenship. However, I was teaching American History at the high school when it was released, so I never got to implement it myself.

Using AI to cheat and lie points to the responsibility that all AI users have not just to act ethically themselves, but also to be able to verify whether information found online is credible or not. For example, Bard—before it was renamed Gemini—delivered some misinformation about the Webb Space Telescope early after its release, tanking Alphabet's stock price at the time. Fortunately, a number of organizations like Common Sense Media (2019) have resources to help parents and teachers to bring this kind of information to students.

With the ability that AI has to do seemingly impossible things, it may be easy to overlook its current limitations. It does seem good at writing answers to prompts. For example, ChatGPT got a B on an MBA exam because of how well it answered the questions (McDade, 2023). Its limitations seemed to concern questionable mathematics.

ChatGPT went from answering 98% of math problems correctly in March 2023 to only 2% in June 2023 (Confino, 2023). The Stanford study that reported this finding is ongoing, so the reasons are unknown, but several possibilities have been suggested. First, the data that ChatGPT was trained on may have been biased in terms of being weighted more heavily on certain types of question than others, like more algebra than geometry. Another reason may be due to a phenomenon called drift, where the performance of a machine learning model changes over time, not due to new training data, but due to how the model is being used over time. A final explanation may simply be that ChatGPT is a large language model, designed to address language prompts, not mathematical equations.

However, this only reflects ChatGPT's limitations specifically, not AI in general. For example, one of Khanmigo's strengths is mathematics because it was trained on Khan Academy's vast mathematical resources (TED, 2023). An AI can only be as good as the data it is trained on, and the Internet may not be the best training material for an AI. Recall that Khanmigo also takes advantage of the same large language model from OpenAI that ChatGPT does, so students get the best of both worlds.

Finally, although AI can improve student performance, results vary with grade level (Hwang, 2022). Older students tend to improve more using AI than younger students. The difference was not even statistically significant between first graders using AI and those not using AI. One possible

explanation may be because it is a large language model that is text dependent. Younger students may not read as well as older students, so the feedback students receive may not have as great an impact on younger students still learning to read compared to the more accomplished readers in older grades.

The Human Touch Has the Last Say

The use of AI in education is still in its early stages, but it has the potential to revolutionize the way we all learn. By personalizing learning, creating adaptive assessments, and automating or streamlining teacher tasks, AI platforms may help students to learn more effectively and efficiently. They may also help to free up teachers' time so that they can focus on providing students with the human support they need to succeed. In these ways, AI may help students to reach their full potential.

One way AI platforms should not be used is to replace a teacher. Khan Academy would be among the first to support that statement. Khanmigo is a tool for teachers to use with students. It provides an additional resource that can address the academics, but not the human touch. People respond better to feedback from other people than from a machine. No matter how personally the AI may express itself, it is still an “it.”

Keep in mind that not all AI chatbots are created equal and the landscape is changing at a fast clip. I changed this article significantly from its first draft during the revision process because there was already even better information to consider and include each time I was given the opportunity to go back and make a revision. The focus of the education chatbots, and others like them that may follow, is clearly on student learning. Gemini, on the other hand, is more useful for teachers in a Google-based school to complete certain tasks, like deciding on an appropriate title for an article like this one. ChatGPT may be a better option to accomplish the same teacher tasks in a non-Google-based school.

As AI develops, expect to see even more innovative and effective ways to use AI in education. For example, AI could be used to create more sophisticated virtual and augmented reality experiences that allow students to explore models in a more immersive way than was possible before. AI could also be used to develop new educational tools and resources to help students with their studies. The use of AI in education has the potential to make a real difference in all of our lives today and tomorrow.

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About the Author: Brian Stevens is an Adjunct Professor of Education at Grand Canyon University and can be reached at brian.stevens@my.gcu.edu.

Dialogue to Practice: Incorporating Civil Society in Elementary Social Studies Methods Courses

Sara B. Demoiny & Christine A. Woyshner

This contribution explores the question: What can two social studies scholars–who draw on different disciplines and methods–learn from each other about civics and civic education, and how can they use their shared insights to strengthen their research and methods courses in elementary education? In particular, these two scholars explore the meanings and uses of civil society in social studies research in the past and today. Building upon work of political scientists (Putnam, 2001; Skocpol, 2003) and social studies education scholars (Barton & Ho, 2022; Duncan, 2023), in this essay, we focus on ways we can learn from one another to incorporate historic and present-day civil society engagement into our elementary social studies methods course curriculum and outline needed research in this area within the field.

We write the article as a conversation because that is how it originated. It evolved from an email that Sara sent to Christine about a conference paper that Christine had presented at AERA in April 2023. The paper was titled, "Black associationalism and the counterpublic sphere: Civic organizations in the history of African American education." In this paper, Christine investigated the role played by various Black voluntary associations, such as women's clubs, civil rights organizations, and Black power groups, in education and schooling. Her central argument is that voluntary associations allowed Black citizens to carry out public, educational, and political work during a time they were barred from the franchise and excluded from formal political participation throughout the United States. Christine's research more broadly examines the roles played by civic voluntary organizations in the history of education, and she also has written about how those voluntary groups, such as women's clubs, shaped social studies in the early twentieth century (e.g., Woyshner, 2002; Woyshner, 2012; Woyshner, 2023). Additionally, she has written extensively about the need to diversify the social studies curriculum in terms of who is represented and how they are portrayed (Schocker & Woyshner, 2013; Woyshner & Schocker, 2015). A central theme in Christine's work is civil society, or the networks of organizations which reside in the space between individuals or families and the government and business entities.

The idea of civil society and where it might appear in the social studies curriculum resonated with Sara, who wrote, "I was intrigued by your talk and have been thinking a lot about civic education and the lack of civil society as being a main component within the curriculum. I was curious if you have published any work on this topic. I would love to read more about your research in this area" (email correspondence, 8/8/23). Sara is an elementary social studies teacher educator. In her work with pre-service teachers (PSTs), she aims to broaden their ideas of civic engagement and to encourage PSTs to use their voices for issues they care about. During the 2020 election cycle, Sara collaborated with Dr. Natasha Murray-Everett to conduct a study examining the use of election news groups within elementary social studies methods courses (Murray-Everett & Demoiny, 2022). They found the PSTs grew in their confidence to participate in political discussions because they were informed of candidates' policy stances. Most PSTs considered the perspectives of people with social identities other than their own, yet they left the project describing themselves as "active citizens" while still viewing and enacting a type of civic engagement through an individualistic lens.

Initially, Sara's reflection on this project focused on how to incorporate more examples of justice-oriented citizenship (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) and collective action from historic social movements. Then, she was challenged to think about civil society as a space often neglected in civic education—a potential avenue to explore with PSTs in identifying varied ways to engage in collective work towards social justice and common good (Ho & Barton, 2020; Payne, 2018). Sara began to wonder about connections between the collective work in civil society and critical citizenship theories, such as cultural citizenship (Rosaldo & Flores, 1987) and Black feminist approaches to citizenship (Patterson et. al, 2023; Vickery, 2021); therefore, when Sara attended Christine's AERA presentation about Black associationalism, she was intrigued to consider how Christine's history research may help her connect the dots she has been pondering.

Responding to Sara's initial inquiry, Christine replied, "I've thought a lot about this topic, the lack of civil society being in the social studies curriculum, largely because of my historical scholarship. For the past six years I have been researching the role of Black civic associations in the history of education . . . I'd love to talk further about Black associationalism if you'd like. It would be fruitful to ponder my historical take on the subject with a scholar who is interested in contemporary applications and issues" (email correspondence, 8/9/23). Shortly thereafter, we met online, and we talked about our interest in civic engagement and civic education as two teacher educators who want our PSTs to think beyond formal political processes as they enter the classroom.

During our Zoom meeting, Christine reflected on her historical research on Black civic voluntary organizations and the lessons this research potentially holds for social studies teacher educators. Christine described the long history of Black associations across the country that created

counterpublics for education, social and political networking, and community uplift (Woyshner, 2023). These counterpublics provided autonomous spaces that were under the control and direction of Black citizens. Drawing on the work of political scientists (Skocpol & Fiorina, 1999), she stressed her interest in federated, nation-spanning organizations that provided opportunities for members to learn new skill repertoires and ideas through these national networks.

Although these networked civic organizations were the foundation of mobilization in larger social movements, they are rarely a focus within civic education. In the past couple decades, a plethora of studies has highlighted how in-service and pre-service teachers view civic education through an individualistic, personally responsible lens (e.g., Frye & O'Brien, 2015; Martin, 2008; Patterson et. al, 2012), and some scholars have called for a more justice-focused citizenship that highlights collective action (e.g., Castro, 2014; Vickery, 2016). When justice-focused citizenship appears in social studies curriculum, it is often through examples of grand collective actions requiring great risk and effort, such as the Selma to Montgomery March, Great Strike of 1909, or the Delano Grape Strike and Boycott. Although examples like these are important for K-12 students to know, they also need to understand the everyday networking, organizing, and mobilizing necessary across communities in civil society for social actions and movements to take place.

Christine's historical research provides some direction in this regard. In her book on the desegregation of the National Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) (Woyshner, 2009), she contrasted the development of the White PTA with that of the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers, or Black PTA. While both segments of the organization had robust local and state-level units, the history of the development of the Black PTA from the ground-up in the early twentieth century is a lesson in revealing how local actors mobilized community members around the idea that schools needed their support. African American communities benefited by having strong leaders who were widely networked and who developed leadership skills to work for the rights of Black citizens at home and in Washington, D.C. In other research on mixed-race and Black organizations, Woyshner has noted the strength of these loose ties (Granovetter, 1973) around ideas of civil liberties, civil rights, and equality.

Currently, there are calls for K-12 social studies curriculum to include examples of critical civic engagement in civil society. For example, Busey and Walker (2017) highlighted the lack of Black critical patriotism within state standards and showcased ways in which "Black physical resistance, Black political thought, and Black intellectualism" should be part of civic education curriculum (p. 461). Particularly, Black political thought illuminates how Black people used counterpublics to engage in social movements and political activism throughout the United States. Further, scholars recognized the need for K-12 students to see how individuals engage in counterpublics and civil society for justice in their *local* communities. Wilson et. al (2023) poignantly asked, "What would it

mean for local stories that surround school buildings to be a standard part of the curriculum and pedagogies in P-20 schools?" (p. 67). When and how do (can) educators teach about the local histories and current efforts of civic organizations working toward just causes in their communities?

As Sara reflected on the ongoing conversation with Christine and the current literature, she posed the following questions to Christine, "What can social studies teacher educators learn from historians who research civil society, and particularly Black associationalism? How may these historical examples and perspectives inform how we teach civic education today?" Christine responded with helpful reminders for educators and a historic example illustrating the point. First, every community has members who have made change through the vehicle of local civic associations, such as parent-teacher groups, fraternal societies, and social clubs. Many of them are linked to state, regional, and national offices, such as the NAACP, National Urban League, and Rotary International. According to political scientists, the heyday of nation-spanning associations has passed (Putnam, 2001), and today's civic organizations operate as advocacy groups in which members do not usually meet face-to-face (Skocpol, 1999), yet still wield influence. Moreover, the lessons of history can provide direction to today's social studies researchers and teacher educators by showing examples of what was possible in the past. For example, in a recent article, Christine used the example of one of the largest Black fraternal societies in the United States, the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World, to show how the organization shaped learning and educational opportunities for African American youth and adults through scholarship contests to send Black youth to college and in convening night classes on literacy for adults (Woyshner, 2023).

Considering Christine's response, Sara reflected on the semester-long dialogue they had shared. In addition to the new historic content knowledge about Black associationalism through civic organizations, Sara contemplated her personal and professional narratives in relation to civic engagement. When Christine highlighted Putman's (2000) scholarship discussing the decline of individuals involved in civic groups in the later third of the twentieth century, she considered how this timeline mirrored her family's experience. Sara, who is 43, recalled her grandfather's involvement in fraternal organizations, yet her parents solely volunteered in the community through their church. Similarly, for the majority of Sara's life, she has engaged with her community through a religious lens. It has not been until the past decade, that Sara has expanded her views of being a "good" citizen. Since living in Alabama, Sara has engaged with secular civic organizations, including the Lee County Remembrance Project (n.d.), a community organization within the Equal Justice Initiative network.

Christine grew up in a steel mill city on the shores of Lake Erie which had robust civic networks. Her parents were members of several civic organizations, including the PTA, the Knights

of Columbus, and the American Legion. When she went to graduate school to earn her doctorate, she was drawn to the history of women's voluntary associations. While conducting an oral history of her grandmother for one of her courses, her research collided with her life when her Polish Immigrant grandmother told her of some ladies in the community who invited her when she was a teenager to go to the local community center to learn to knit and sew. At the time, Christine was studying women's clubs of the turn of the twentieth century and their efforts to direct immigrant girls into trades and handicrafts. Her grandmother, she realized, was one of those girls who was targeted by the *noblesse oblige* of the ladies' club members. Shaped by her upbringing in a diverse, segregated northern city, Sara's scholarship has focused on civic voluntary organizations in the history of education.

Shifting from dialogic reflection to praxis and drawing from Christine's encouragement to "show examples of what was possible in the past" through civic organizations, Sara and Christine share ways they plan to teach justice-focused civil society participation in their elementary social studies methods courses. As Sara recalled from her previous work with the election news group project (Murray-Everett & Demoiny, 2022), the elementary PSTs were able to identify grand justice-focused collective action in the past, such as the 1920 Oahu Japanese and Filippino sugar plantation strikes in Hawaii (Takaki, 2012), yet they struggled to recognize civic collective action in present-day and how that may impact the future. Further, as noted, participation in civil society is rarely included within social studies curriculum; therefore, Sara plans to develop a project where historic and present-day examples of civic organizations' efforts are researched within her course. In the project, PSTs will work in small groups to choose a political issue prominent in our society today and important to them personally. They will research civic organizations that have organized efforts around a similar issue in the past, and they will research present-day local and/or national networked organizations addressing the issue. Finally, they will write a reflection on how the civic organizations they researched align with any elementary social studies state or national standard, identify children's literature and/or modified primary sources they could use to teach the topic, and discuss what personal civic informed action they may take after the project.

Christine infuses her early childhood and elementary social studies methods courses with examples from African American history to cover such topics as teaching with art, teaching history with primary sources, and teaching with children's literature. For example, in a lesson on teaching geography with art, Christine uses Jacob Lawrence's *The Migration Series* to demonstrate how to use images in an inquiry-based lesson. This topic necessarily draws on networks of Black churches who aided migrants' travels north. Also, in a lesson on teaching history with primary sources, Christine walks the students through the history of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott by centering the activities of the NAACP in carrying out the boycott. Additionally, in her elementary social

studies methods courses, they spend a fair amount of time working with state and national standards, such as the C3 Framework and NCSS Strands. PSTs could critique the standards and suggest opportunities for rewriting them to include examples from civil society.

From the beginning of our conversations, Christine and Sara knew of the need for civil society to be more integral within civic education curriculum. They are committed to more intentionally addressing civil society within their elementary social studies methods courses. As teacher educators contemplate explicit inclusion of civil society as part of justice-focused citizenship, we offer the following questions for reflection and planning:

- In what ways has your family engaged in civil society? In what ways have you engaged in civil society? How did this engagement impact you/your family/your community?
- What local nationally networked organizations exist in your community? What current issues are they organizing around?
- How can you learn about the history of local civic organizations in your community? Is there a local museum? Could members visit your methods course?
- What civic organizations are included in the elementary social studies state standards? How can you research this organization's history and civic efforts to improve the community?
- In what ways can you learn from (and with) history and political science scholars who have researched civic organizations?

In considering the last question, we urge teachers, scholars, and community organization leaders to reach out to one another. Where do you start? One starts by simply sending the email or making the phone call. We are quick to assume that someone is too busy, or that we are not knowledgeable enough to contact an expert, but scholars, educators, and community leaders are doing work that they want others to benefit from. So, if you read an article or hear someone present and your interest is piqued, then try to find something else they have published or shared, jot down some questions, and then reach out! As a current example, Sara is interested in learning more about local historic collective civic action within the Auburn-Opelika community. She heard about the Lee County NAACP's work to gather oral histories from residents involved in the modern civil rights movement, so she emailed the History & Heritage Committee chair. Following the email exchange, Sara and the committee chair met for coffee, and the chair shared a document with her summarizing the Lee County NAACP Branch #5038's history (which Sara hopes to use with her elementary methods course PSTs in the fall). Another suggestion for networking is to move beyond your comfort zone at national conferences. If you are a teacher educator, select a presentation in a social science discipline strand to attend. This is what jumpstarted the dialogue between Sara and Christine. Finally, if both these suggestions seem out of reach right now, we recommend following

social media accounts of local civic organizations. Through posts, one can often see how organizations are networking and organizing together around specific issues–and maybe you can join in their work!

As Christine and Sara envision ways teacher educators can address civil society within their own settings–personally and within their teaching, they also see potential for the field of social studies education to explore this area in research. We propose three next steps for research. First, scholars should explore if and/or how civic organizations, and civil society in general, have been included within social studies curriculum historically. Second, scholars should systematically examine the current landscape of civil society within social studies state standards and textbooks. Finally, we need to explore how the inclusion of civil society within social studies courses for PSTs and K-12 learners impacts their understanding of civic engagement and their role as a citizen.

By studying civic voluntary organizations, PSTs can learn that average people changed their lives and conditions through collective effort that involved cultivating leaders and leadership skills, sharing ideas through face-to-face meetings, circulating literature, and attending occasional state and national conferences. So, sharing the histories of the efforts of civic voluntary associations, such as the turn of the twentieth century women's clubs or the NAACP's youth groups in the 1960s, can enlighten PSTs about the range and diversity of initiatives successfully carried out. These projects often shaped local communities, such as the building of playgrounds in urban areas for children, and also influenced national legislation, such as that of the PTA and Black Panther Party on successfully getting school lunch instituted nationwide. Ideally, in a methods course, students would learn how to integrate the history of civil society into social studies lessons, as a way to expand children's understanding of meaningful, and necessary, justice-focused civic engagement.

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About the Authors: Sara Demoiny is an Associate Professor of Elementary Education at Auburn University and Christine Woyshner is a Professor of Education at Temple University. The authors can be reached via Sara at sbd0026@auburn.edu.