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## ABSTRACT

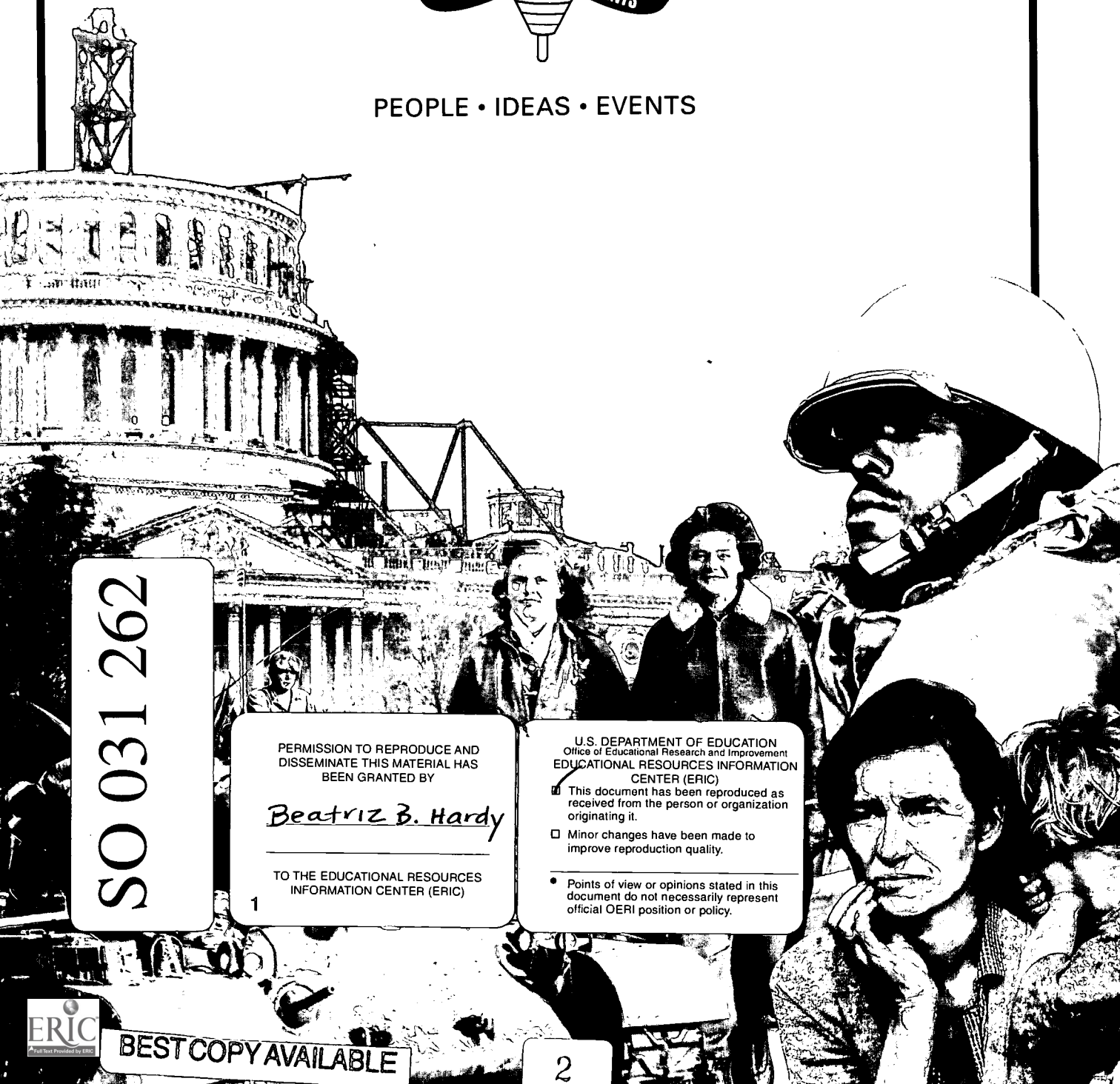
The materials in this curriculum book provide examples of strategies and resources that can be used to initiate or enhance existing lessons and units in history and social studies. All the material can be adapted or modified by the teacher. The lessons are designed to encourage students to think critically about turning points in history, conduct research, interpret primary sources, and explore the larger historical significance of topics that interest them. Unit titles include: (1) "Theme, Resources, and Skills"; (2) "The Civil War"; (3) "World War II"; (4) "Korean War"; and (5) "Teaching about Other Turning Points." The lessons in the unit are based on primary sources taken from documents, artifacts, journals, diaries, newspapers, and literature of the period under study. Throughout the book are lessons and articles that promote local and family history. (BT)

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# TURNING POINTS IN HISTORY



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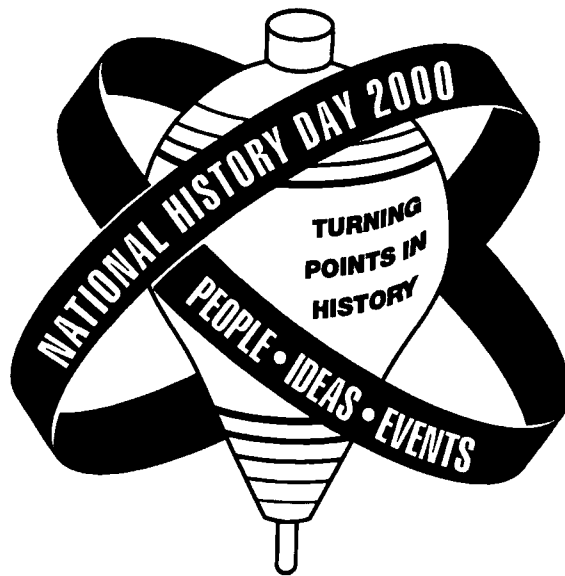
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# TURNING POINTS IN HISTORY



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# Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events

## *National History Day Curriculum Book 2000*

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PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

The American Historical Association, the American

Association for State and Local History, the

Organization of American Historians, the Federation of

State Humanities Councils, and the National Council for the

Social Studies endorse National History Day. The National

Association of Secondary School Principals has placed

National History Day on the NASSP National Advisory List of

Contests and Activities for 1999-2000.

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# What is National History Day?

National History Day is an exciting way for students to study and learn about historical issues, ideas, people and events. This year-long educational program fosters academic achievement and intellectual growth. In addition to acquiring useful historical knowledge and perspective while developing entries and competing in a series of district, state and national contests, students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills that will help them manage and use information now and in the future.

The program begins at the start of the school year. Curriculum and contest materials are distributed to History Day coordinators and teachers throughout the country. The theme for 2000 is "Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events." In many states and districts, teachers are invited to workshops where they share ideas about how the year's theme can be most effectively addressed and also receive bibliographies and a list of possible topics. Teachers then introduce the program to their students who, in turn, choose topics and begin their research.

Students are encouraged to choose any topic in local, national or world history and investigate its

historical significance and relationship to the theme by conducting extensive primary and secondary research. After analyzing and interpreting their information, students present their findings in papers, exhibits, performances, and documentaries that are evaluated by historians and educators.

National History Day has two divisions: the junior division (grades 6-8) and the senior division (grades 9-12). Some states also sponsor a History Day contest for students in grades 4 and 5.

Students can enter one of the following seven categories: individual paper, individual or group exhibit (similar to a museum exhibit), individual or group performance (a dramatic portrayal of the topic), individual or group documentary (usually a slide show, a video, or a non-interactive computer program). Groups can consist of two to five students.

District History Day contests are usually held in February or March. District winners then prepare for and compete at the state contests, usually held in late April or early May. The top two finishers in each category at the state contest become eligible to advance to the national contest held in June at the University of Maryland at College Park.



# Teaching About Turning Points in History

What is a turning point in history? The dictionary defines it as “the point at which a very significant change occurs; a decisive moment.” Sometimes a turning point has immediate repercussions, making its significance obvious to people at the time; sometimes, however, the impact of an event or decision or person is clear only in retrospect. A turning point can be a personal decision in the life of one person, or a political choice affecting millions; it can be an event or idea with global or local consequences; it can be the life of a single person who inspires or affects other people.

The materials in this curriculum book provide examples of strategies and resources that can be used to initiate or enhance existing lessons and units in history and social studies. All the material can be adapted or modified by the teacher. The lessons are designed to encourage students to think critically about turning points in history and to conduct research, interpret primary sources, and explore the larger historical significance of topics that interest them.

Those of you who are familiar with earlier editions of the NHD curriculum book will immediately note some changes. This book has many more lessons than in the past, organized into several units. Most of the lessons are relatively short and could be used in the classroom in 1-2 days. The enrichment and extension sections suggest additional ways of approaching the same or similar topics. Many of the lessons use primary sources found in print or on the Internet. The web version will include several additional lessons.

The first unit introduces the theme, suggests some resources, and provides ideas on how to teach students some of the skills needed to succeed in NHD. “Picking a Topic: The Great History Day Dilemma” gives tips for finding the right topic. “A Research Roadmap: Primary and Secondary Sources,” available in the web version of the book,

updates an article from an earlier edition of the curriculum book, taking students through the research process step-by-step. Oral history and the use of newspapers are the focus of articles designed to teach research skills; “A Teacher’s Guide to Using Museums as a Resource” will appear in the web version of the book.

From local clashes limited to one nation to huge conflicts involving many countries, wars are among the most significant turning points in history. Much more than simply a collection of battles, a war can transform a nation or a community socially, politically, economically, and culturally. Consequently, the bulk of this book is devoted to war, with units focusing on the Civil War, World War II, and the Korean War.

The Civil War unit begins with a lesson on *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, a publication which played a pivotal role in increasing Northern hostility to slavery. Excerpts from primary sources provide the basis for a lesson on changing attitudes toward secession. Another lesson uses a painting to study one of the key events of the 19th century, the Emancipation Proclamation. A web lesson examines one of the consequences of the Proclamation: the enlistment of African-Americans in the U.S. military. Finally, the political consequences of battles are the subject of a lesson on the election of 1864.

Senator Robert Dole opens the World War II unit by discussing the effects the war had on his own life and explaining why he thinks it is important to study this monumental event. An article on the Holocaust suggests possible topics and resources for studying the experience of Jews under the Nazi government. The story of a survivor of the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor demonstrates how to use oral history to study the war; the web version will link to a National Park Service lesson, “Teaching with Historic Places: Remembering Pearl Harbor.” The experiences of Helen Thomas, who started her distinguished career as a reporter during World War

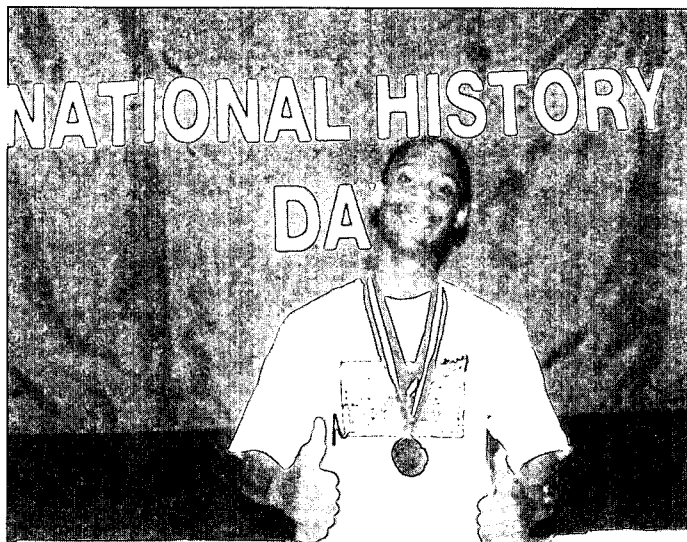


II, provide insight into how the war was a turning point for women; the article suggests ways to study women's experiences. In the web version, "While the Boys Were Away" uses oral history as the starting point for a case study in how to do family history;

the consequences of this devastating epidemic and suggests where to find primary sources for the study of world history. Architectural drawings illustrate a lesson on turning points in the history of our nation's capital from the White House Historical. Finally, a lesson on Sputnik explores the opportunities and limitations of Internet research.

Throughout the book you will find lessons and articles which promote family and local history. The best History Day entries make extensive use of primary sources. Students pursuing topics related to their families or their communities can take advantage of the many resources available locally. The lessons on how to do oral history, use newspapers, and get the most out of museum visits are meant to provide some of the research skills needed, while the World War II unit features case studies on doing family and community history. You will also find additional resources for studying the history of your state on the links page of the NHD web site, which includes links to museums, historical societies, and historic sites as well as libraries in each state.

The lessons in this book are designed to encourage students to come up with additional ideas about turning points in history in a variety of time periods and places. They also demonstrate how to choose small, manageable topics within larger events such as the Civil War. The topic suggestions and resources are simply a starting place for students and teachers interested in this broad theme. Students who want to research topics for participation in National History Day should develop additional ideas. They may start their research by examining some of the sources listed, but should continue their investigation for more resources at libraries, archives, museums, historical societies, and other places around their communities to discover the significance of turning points in history.



Larry Rivers, 1999 Case Western Reserve scholarship winner.

like Helen Thomas, the woman in this lesson gained employment in a previously "male" job during the war. A lesson on the D-Day invasion uses a diary to study an individual soldier's experiences during this pivotal event of the war. Finally, how to study the war's effects on communities is the subject of a lesson on using census records.

The third war-related unit focuses on the understudied Korean War. One lesson examines the integration of the US military by President Truman's order. Another lesson explores how the Korean War marked a turning point in the treatment of prisoners, with the development of the Geneva Convention. A third article suggests potential topics on other turning points related to the Korean War and shares information on available resources.

Students looking for topics should not limit their search to wars. The Turning Points theme allows for a vast array of possibilities, and the final unit of the book provides ideas on how to study a variety of turning points. A lesson on the Black Death of the 1300s uses a survivor's account to grasp

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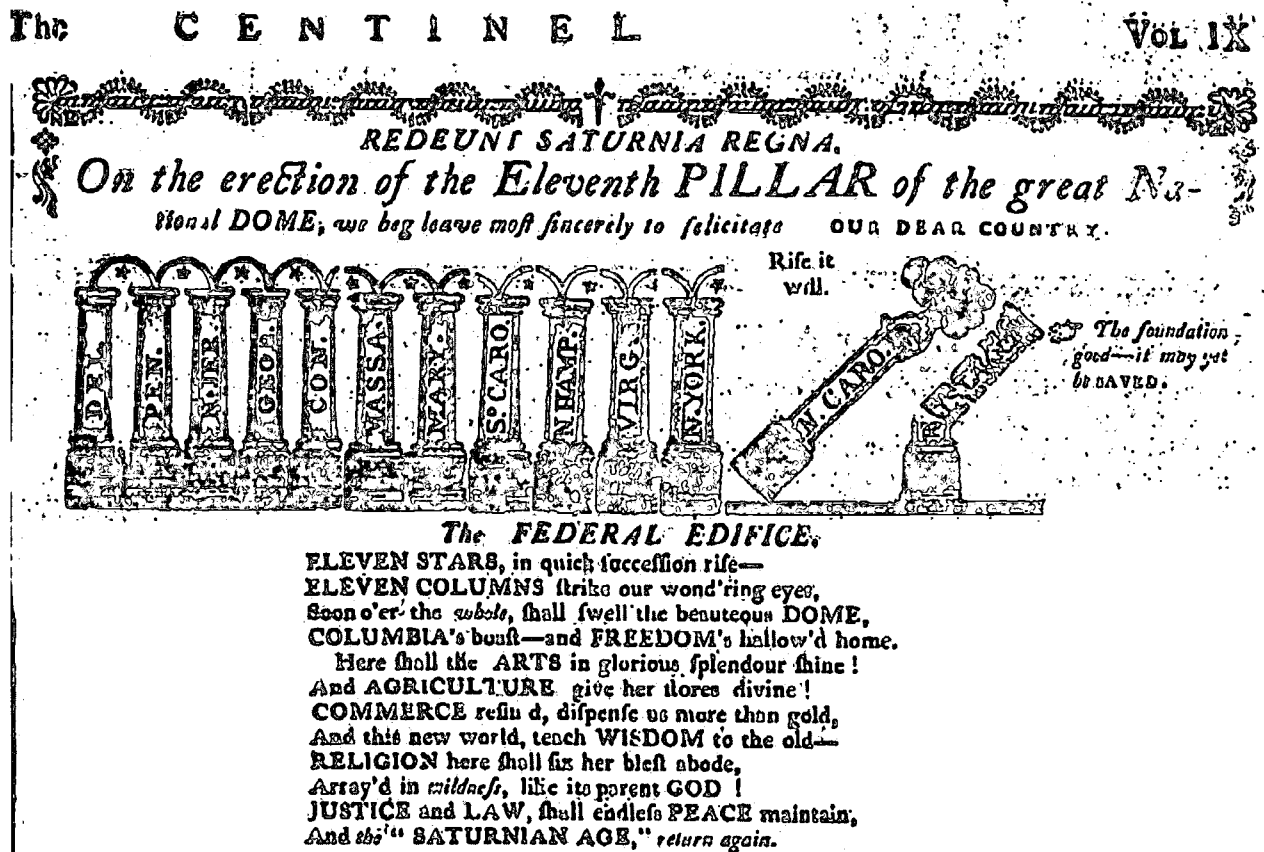
# Theme Narrative and Topic Ideas

## Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events

During the 1999-2000 school year, National History Day invites students to research topics related to the theme, "Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events." The theme is broad enough in scope to encourage investigation of topics ranging from local to world history. To understand the historical importance of their topics, students must ask questions of time and place, cause and effect, change over time, and impact and significance. They must ask not only when events happened but also why they happened and what impact they had. What

factors contributed to their development? Regardless of the topic selected, students must not only present a description of it, but also draw conclusions about how their topic affected individuals, communities, nations, or the world.

A thousand years ago, no one could have foreseen the great changes which the next millennium would bring to the world. The peoples of different continents had very little awareness of each other. Western Europe was mired in feudalism, while the Byzantine empire controlled much of



Ratification of the U.S. Constitution, woodcut from the Massachusetts Centinel, August 2, 1788, Library of Congress.

eastern Europe. Sung T'ai Tsu had unified much of China but was at war with barbarian invaders from the north. Islamic culture dominated the Mediterranean basin and was just spreading into western Africa, where the kingdom of Ghana held sway. In Central and South America, the classic Mayan and Andean cultures were in decline. In North America, the Mississippian center of Cahokia flourished, but most of the continent's residents lived in small villages, hunting and farming. Everywhere, everyday life revolved around the struggle for survival. Government, religion, the economy, and family life were quite different from our own, and material culture was primitive by our standards. Over the course of the next thousand years, people invented new technologies and discovered the world around them, thought of new ideas and challenged old traditions, created new religions and rebelled against old governments, migrated to new places and established new societies, and fought wars and negotiated with each other. In other words, they created and reacted to the turning points — the people, ideas, and events — that produced the world in which we now live.

Students investigating this year's theme may choose to explore events with international repercussions, such as wars, or they may focus on events which affected fewer people, such as natural disasters, the establishment of new institutions, or the move of a family from one place to another. They may examine new ideas — political, religious, social, economic, philosophical — and how those ideas helped to transform some aspect of human life. Or they may choose instead to look at individuals whose ideas or actions have made a difference to those around them or to the world at large.

One of the most significant and recurrent turning points in human history is war. Wars, whether foreign or civil, are among the most complex historical events. Wars may have both international and local consequences and may affect people and institutions far beyond the battlefields. For example, the global and domestic impact of World War II makes it the key turning point of the 20th century. The war profoundly changed life for most people throughout the world. A significant portion of the world map was redrawn, as borders

shifted and governments and empires collapsed. New superpowers emerged to guide international politics throughout the latter half of the century. For the soldiers who fought its battles as well as for the millions of civilians caught up in this global conflict, WWII represented a huge turning point.

If WWII was the most significant turning point of the 20th century, the American Civil War ranks as the most significant turning point for the United States in the 19th century and arguably is the most important turning point in American history, socially, politically, economically, and culturally. The Civil War confirmed the "American experiment" in republicanism and ended slavery, radically altering the economy and society. Like WWII, the Civil War had momentous consequences for both civilians and soldiers. Freed from bondage, four million Americans started life anew. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of families struggled to cope with the loss of loved ones or the destruction of their homes, while the experience of fighting scarred many survivors for life.

Students who are interested in studying these or other wars should choose their topics carefully. They may find it tempting to pick well-known wars such as the Civil War or World War II as the subject of their research, but it would be virtually impossible to adequately explain the significance of such massive events within the limited confines of a History Day entry. Instead, students should narrow their focus to specific aspects of the war, whether they choose a turning point within the war or the war as a turning point in a particular geographic area, a specific aspect of life, or the history of an individual or community.

Students may elect to focus on military history. The inspirational qualities or brilliant tactics of such leaders as Alexander the Great, George Washington, or Napoleon could be demonstrated in performances. An exhibit might explain how an individual battle affected the outcome of a war. The battle of Saratoga in 1777, for example, brought the French into the American War for Independence, turning the tide in favor of the upstart Americans; and the battles of Gettysburg and Vicksburg helped spell the end for the Confederacy during the Civil War. The invasion of Inchon in the fall of 1950 by United Nations troops, mostly U.S. Marines, stopped



Paul Revere engraving, Library of Congress.

North Korea's advance into South Korea during the Korean War.

How did the introduction of new weaponry create turning points on the battlefield? Gunpowder, first invented by the Chinese, transformed warfare in 15th-century Europe, contributing to the French victory in the Hundred Years War. In the 1600s, native Americans considered European guns an extremely desirable trade good, realizing that possession of such weapons could give them an advantage over tribes using traditional weapons. The machine gun allowed Europeans to overwhelm much of Africa in the late 19th century. What weapons have revolutionized warfare in the 20th century?

Looking at wars only as military events, however, is to miss their greater significance: for the victors and the vanquished alike, wars have been tremendous catalysts for change. A paper might discuss how Julius Caesar, by crossing the Rubicon in 49 BC, unleashed years of civil war which the Roman Republic could not survive. A documentary

could analyze the ways in which the American Civil War greatly accelerated the Industrial Revolution in the north, while ending the reign of King Cotton in the South. What economic consequences did the war have on these regions? The Korean War, though it ended in a stalemate, greatly affected both North and South Korea and changed the course of the Cold War.

Losing often meant annihilation or the imposition of changes by the winners. A paper could focus on the Incas' practice of uprooting and resettling the people they conquered in the 1400s. A History Day performance might dramatize the reaction of Germans after World War I to the vengeful victors who demanded massive reparations and disarmed the defeated nation. Or an exhibit might explore World War II as a turning point for Japan: how did the experience of defeat cause that country to remake itself?

War has sometimes led nations to reexamine their values. In the 6th century BC, captivity in

Babylon led the people of Judah to renew their religious commitment. Fighting for their own liberty in the American Revolution forced some Americans to question the morality of enslaving others, an experience shared by 19th-century Cuban slave owners when they fought for independence against Spain. The territories won by the United States in the Spanish-American War prompted national soul-searching in the late 1800s about whether or not the country should have colonies. In what ways did this war also spark a debate about the role of the United States in world politics? Similarly, the Allied rhetoric of self-determination in World War II made many Britons doubt the righteousness of maintaining a far-flung empire.

Migration, the deaths of loved ones, the loss of homes, the destruction of entire communities, forced labor for the enemy, or captivity are among the many wartime events which were turning points in individual lives. But war may also provide opportunities: the ancient Romans extended citizenship and other advantages to many of the people they conquered; Venetian and Genoese merchants profited from outfitting the Crusaders in the 1100s and 1200s; some American slaves gained freedom by running away or serving in the military during the American Revolution; and millions of American veterans took advantage of the GI Bill to go to college after World War II.

Students might investigate and interpret the role that women have played in war and the consequences of war for women's lives. In agricultural societies, women have traditionally farmed when their husbands marched off to fight. The demands of total warfare in the 20th century led millions of women in Europe and the United States into factory jobs and other occupations once reserved for men. What effect did this experience have on women's lives after the war's end? Women also have joined in the fighting. In what ways was the introduction of the WAVEs and WACs of World War II an important turning point for female soldiers in the military today?

War as a turning point in the history of individuals or communities provides plenty of possible topics. Oral history interviews, photographs, and films can supply the materials for documentaries

about the effects of 20th-century wars on individuals. Students could, for example, interview survivors of the Holocaust or focus on how World War II affected their own families. The devastation wrought by World War II on Berlin or Stalingrad or the prosperity it created in Washington, D.C. and many California cities might be explained in exhibits. Or students might interview individuals who immigrated from war-torn countries, often to escape repressive governments, and draw conclusions about the impact of war on individual lives.

Politics can cause significant turning points in a nation's history. How did the ideals of liberty and equality inspire revolutionaries to overturn the political and social order of 18th-century France? How did the communist revolutions in the Soviet Union, China, and elsewhere lead to convulsive changes in those societies in the 20th century? Even internal rebellions which fail can have significant consequences: the Taiping Rebellion in China in the mid-1800s led to a massive loss of life and permanently weakened Manchu rule, while Shays' Rebellion in 1786 contributed to the writing of a new U.S. constitution.

Laws and court cases, though less dramatic, can also be turning points. The English Toleration Act of 1689 recognized the rights of Protestant dissenters to worship; the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887 forced major changes in Indian life; the Voting Rights Act of 1965 transformed American politics. In what ways did the Supreme Court ruling in *McCulloch v. Maryland* in 1819 expand the power of the federal government? How was the *Dred Scott v. Sandford* decision of 1857 a critical step on the road to civil war? Why can it be considered a turning point?

Students interested in the impact of individuals might look at how great leaders or average citizens have changed a nation's destiny. A paper might examine the creation of the first multiethnic empire in history by King Sargon of Akkad in the 24th century BC, the efforts of Peter the Great to bring 18th-century Russia into the modern world, the unification of Germany by Bismarck in 1871, or Franklin Roosevelt's leadership of the United States through economic crisis and world war. Politicians are not the only ones who can effect change, and excellent entries could be built around the stories of

“ordinary” people who made extraordinary contributions. A performance could focus on Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, who were so disgusted at their treatment at the World Anti-Slavery convention that they founded the American women’s rights movement in the 1840s. Documentaries could look at nonviolent resistance movements, such as India’s 20th-century independence movement, the American civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s, and the Filipino People’s Power movement of the 1980s, which provide many dramatic confrontations between protesters and authorities. An exhibit might explore the impact of muckraking Progressive journalists, who exposed abuses such as child labor and food contamination, forcing Congress to pass reforms in the early 1900s.

Economic turning points can prove just as critical as political ones. By the late Middle Ages, Italian merchants had created such tools of modern business as double-entry bookkeeping, limited-liability partnerships, and commercial insurance. How were these developments turning points? The search for new trade routes to India and China spurred Europeans to explore the world in the 1400s and 1500s, creating a turning point for people around the globe. The desire for raw materials and markets contributed to the establishment of American colonies by the European powers; indeed, trade fueled the rise of the British and Dutch empires, and it has long affected international diplomacy. What turning points were caused by or resulted from trade? The 19th-century Industrial Revolution introduced new modes of production, placed new demands on workers, and enriched factory owners. A documentary might focus on the Homestead Strike of 1892 as an example of the conflict which resulted. How was this a turning point for the labor movement? The volatility of the market economy created booms and busts in the past two hundred years, the most notable being the Great Depression of the 1930s, which affected most parts of the world. Students might create an exhibit explaining the Depression’s impact on their community or a performance demonstrating its effects on their family.

Human inventiveness has changed not only

business but human life in ways great and small. Plows, mechanical reapers, the use of fertilizers, and countless other innovations in agricultural technology have changed farming, allowing much greater productivity and freeing society to devote resources to other areas. During the past 200 years, inventions such as the steam engine, interchangeable parts, assembly lines, and computers have transformed manufacturing, while household items such as refrigerators and washing machines changed the perception and activity of domestic work. From the development of cuneiform writing in ancient Sumer to the printing press in 15th-century Europe to radios and televisions in the 20th century, improvements in communication have changed the way people receive information and interact with others. Advances in medicine such as vaccines, antibiotics, X-ray machines, and other modern devices have revolutionized modern health care.

For all their successes, humans cannot always overcome nature. The weather and natural events have been significant factors in history and often have been the catalysts for major turning points. The eruption of Mount Vesuvius destroyed Pompeii in 79, and an earthquake in 1692 caused the Jamaican city of Port Royal, at the time the largest city in English America, to slide into the sea. A typhoon in 1281 destroyed a Mongol fleet as it prepared to invade Japan, while winds blew many of the ships in the Spanish Armada off course in 1588. How was this a turning point for England? For Spain? Drought contributed to the failure of the Lost Colony of Roanoke and turned the Great Plains into a dust bowl in the 1870s and 1930s. Between 1347 and 1352, the Black Death killed nearly half of Europe’s population, with manifold consequences. Some Native American tribes virtually disappeared due to diseases brought by European settlers to the New World.

In the face of disasters and struggles, humans have looked to the spiritual world. Religion is a powerful force in human history, inspiring acts of brutality as well as nobility. A performance might demonstrate how the apostle Paul’s ministry spread Christianity beyond the Jewish community in the 1st century or explore the consequences of Martin Luther nailing his ninety-five theses to the door of



The Great Depression forced this woman and her children to leave home, Library of Congress.

Wittenberg Castle in 1517. An exhibit could trace the expansion of Islam throughout the Near East and beyond in the century after the death of the prophet Muhammad in 632. A documentary might assess the impact of a religious order such as the Jesuits, who played a pivotal role in the Counter-Reformation. A performance could examine religious persecution by looking at Anne Hutchinson's 1637 trial and its consequences or the experiences of Mormons in the decades after the founding of their church by Joseph Smith in 1830.

Many of the topics mentioned above lend themselves to family history. Exploring the impact of national or international events on their families puts a personal, intimate face on the past. The Civil War, for example, touched nearly every family in America in one way or another. How did the Great Depression, World War II, or the Cold War influence a particular family's history? Students may want to look at turning points in their own family history and explore how their experiences were representative of larger historical phenomena. For example, they might examine the migration of the first member of their family to come to America as a turning point in the family's history. It is important to understand, however, that migrants, whether they were Africans forced into bondage in the 1700s or refugees from totalitarian governments in the 1900s, usually came as part of a mass movement of people. What other turning points might there be in a family's history? Was that family's experience similar to those of other families at the time? Why is it significant in history?

Another possibility would be for students to examine turning points in local or state history. When did human settlement in their area begin? When and why did Europeans or their descendants first begin moving to that region? How did the native Americans react? What happened to the native Americans? How did the coming of the first white settlers change the area? Since that time, what other groups have migrated to the area, and what consequences did their arrival have? Have any notable events, such as local rebellions or major strikes, occurred? What were their consequences? The Great Johnstown Flood of 1889 was a major turning point in that Pennsylvania town's history.

The Regulator movement inspired change in the Carolinas in the late colonial period. River and canal towns prospered in the Midwest in the 1820s and 1830s, only to be left on the verge of ruin as railroads directed business elsewhere. Streetcar lines and later highways spurred the development of suburbs outside most cities. In the late 19th century, the discovery of gold or silver created many boom towns in the West, which became ghost towns when the ore ran out. The opening of the steel mills in the 1890s drew many to Youngstown, Ohio, just as their closing forced many to leave in the 1980s.

Students may wish to explore turning points in other areas, such as culture and sports. An exhibit could examine developments in art or architecture. In what ways did the massive effort required to build pyramids in ancient Egypt transform the economy and government? How did the impressionists revolutionize art in the early 20th century? A performance might focus on how Elvis Presley helped create rock-and-roll music in the 1950s. How did he and this new music influence young people and have an impact historically? An exhibit could assess the impact of such pivotal written works as Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, which galvanized the women's movement of the 1960s. A sports fan might create a documentary on Jack Johnson, who in 1908 became the first African American boxer to win the heavyweight title, or Babe Didrikson Zaharias, the incredibly versatile athlete who blazed a path for women in sports in the first half of the 20th century.

The theme is a broad one, so topics should be carefully selected and developed in ways that best use students' talents and abilities. Whether a topic is a well-known event in world history or focuses on a little-known individual from a small community, students should be careful to place their topics into historical perspective, examine the significance of their topics in history, and show development over time. Studies should include an investigation into available primary and secondary sources, analysis of the evidence, and a clear explanation of the relationship of the topic to the theme, "Turning Points in History." Then, students may develop papers, performances, documentaries, and exhibits for entry into National History Day competitions.



## TOPIC IDEAS

Note: The following is a list of possible topics for investigation and interpretation for National History Day 2000. The list is not inclusive; rather, it provides a starting point for teachers and students to begin brainstorming to come up with ideas for National History Day entries. The list includes both narrow topics and broad themes, which students will need to narrow in order to develop manageable research projects. Students should keep in mind that many excellent research topics can be found by investigating local history in their area.

- Reign of Terror: radicalization of the French Revolution
- The Treaty of Versailles in 1918 and its consequences
- *The Communist Manifesto* and European revolutions
- Valley Forge's role in the development of the Continental Army
- The Continental Association and the coming of the American Revolution
- John Maynard Keynes and the influence of Keynesian economics
- *Brown v. Board of Education* and the integration of American schools
- Lasting legacy of Kagubi, Nehanda, and Zimbabwe's Chimurenga Revolt
- Effects of *Roe v. Wade*
- Korea and limited warfare: the firing of Douglas MacArthur
- Federal power and the case of *McCulloch v. Maryland*
- Opium War and the rise of European power in China
- *Plessy v. Ferguson* and the growth of Jim Crow
- Eleanor of Aquitaine's pivotal role in the High Middle Ages
- Ronald Reagan and the resurgence of conservatism in America
- The effects of the fall of Constantinople
- William the Conqueror and the course of English history
- The Interstate Highway Act of 1956 and the growth of suburban America
- Martin Luther's 95 theses and the coming of the Protestant Reformation
- Turning Points of the Korean War: China's entry
- The International Women's Day strike in Petrograd: spark of the Russian Revolution
- St. Augustine and a new understanding of the individual, society, and God
- The impact of Buddha's teaching on India
- Ptolemy's conquest of Egypt and the growth of Kushite civilization
- Consequences of the recapture of Jerusalem by Salah al-Din
- Television in the 1950s and the transformation of American entertainment
- Genghis Khan and the Pax Mongolia
- Battle of Sekigahara and the rise of the Tokugawas
- Invention of the spinning jenny and the expansion of the textile industry
- The great migration of African-Americans to the north and its consequences
- The Russo-Japanese War: introduction of Japan as a world power
- First victory of the women's suffrage movement: Norwegian women gain the right to vote
- The fall of the Berlin Wall and the decline of the Soviet empire
- The transforming impact of the printing press
- Bacon's Rebellion and the transformation of Virginia
- Effects of the Crusades on medieval Europe
- King Philip's War and the decline of Indians and Puritans in New England
- *Ms.* magazine and the growth of the feminist movement
- 1492: A new world for America and Europe

- The Third Punic War and the end of Carthage
- Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the Huguenot migration
- Publication of the *Koran* and the expansion of Islam
- Emperor Constantine and the toleration of Christianity
- Mary Wollstonecraft and the early women's rights movement
- Prince Henry the Navigator and Portugal's exploration of Africa
- The reign of Isabella of Castile: Reconquista and empire
- Impact of the African slave trade on Africa and America
- Irish potato famine and the Irish diaspora
- Clovis and the unification of France
- Midway: turning the tide in the Pacific war
- Walter Reed and the conquest of yellow fever
- The Civilian Conservation Corps: savior of young men
- The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the coming of the Civil War
- The impact of the Erie Canal
- Changing Middle Eastern politics: the rise of OPEC
- The sinking of the USS Maine and the beginning of the Spanish-American War
- The Great Railroad Strike of 1877 and the American labor movement
- Walt Disney and Mickey Mouse: a cultural revolution
- The Beatles and the British invasion
- The Ayatollah Khomeini and the Islamic revolution in Iran
- Roger Williams and the separation of church and state
- Watergate and the weakening of the presidency
- Breaking the barrier: Jackie Robinson
- The Keating-Owen Act and child labor
- Birth of a sugar-planting colony: the Dutch occupation of Brazil
- The Great Fire of London and its aftermath
- Harvard: first college of the colonies
- Brigham Young and the Mormon migration to Utah
- Samuel Gompers and the founding of the American Federation of Labor
- The Marshall Plan and the reconstruction of postwar Europe
- The Homestead Act and the settlement of the West
- 1848: year of revolution
- Ho Chi Minh, revolutionary leader
- Henry Ford, driving force behind the automobile revolution in America
- The Tet offensive and American public opinion
- The Sears Roebuck catalogue and the rise of mass consumption
- Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* and the growth of the environmental movement
- The impact of Sigmund Freud on psychiatric practice
- Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand: trigger for war
- The beginning of the end for the Soviet Union: Gorbachev, glasnost, and perestroika
- Lech Walesa and the Gdansk shipyard strike: the rise of Solidarity
- Curt Flood and free agency in baseball
- Harry Truman's momentous decision: dropping the bomb

# Picking a Topic: The Great History Day Dilemma

Picking a good topic is absolutely essential if you are going to create a successful History Day project

THEME  
+ EXPECTATIONS  
+ APPEAL  
+ SOURCES  
= GREAT TOPIC

AND enjoy yourself in the process. Many people find it hard to think of topics. Don't despair! There is a simple formula you can follow to find the perfect topic for you.

THEME: Find out what the theme is. Read

the theme narrative in this book, and check the list of suggested topics. That will help you think about the types of topics which will be suitable. Think about how you might adapt one of those topics to suit your interests or choose another topic.

EXPECTATIONS: Make sure that you understand what your teacher expects. If your class is studying medieval European history, your teacher may not be too pleased if you want to research an event of the 1960s! Or maybe she/he won't care!

APPEAL: Pick a topic that appeals to you! Otherwise, your heart isn't going to be in it, and doing this project is going to be a burden, not a wonderful adventure. Think about activities you enjoy and events or subjects which have piqued your curiosity. Can you adapt any of the suggested topics in this book to suit your interests? On the following page, you will find some ideas to help you find a topic.

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## Resources from the National Archives and Records Administration

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is the federal agency responsible for preserving and making available the permanently valuable records of the U.S. government. The holdings include: billions of pages of textual documents; almost 14 million still pictures and posters; about 300,000 reels of motion picture film; more than 200,000 sound recordings; at least fifteen million maps, charts, aerial photographs, and satellite images; and 7,600 computer data sets. Although the largest National Archives facilities are in the Washington, DC, area, there are regional facilities and Presidential libraries throughout the country that also welcome National History Day researchers. The National Archives web site provides information about all of the NARA facilities, research guidance for National History Day students, and thousands of digitized images of primary source documents related to "Turning Points in History."

**NOTE:** NAIL is a searchable database that contains information about a wide variety of NARA's holdings across the country. You can use NAIL to search descriptions for key words or topics, and then to retrieve digital copies of selected textual documents, photographs, maps, and sound recordings. NAIL contains more than 100,000 images of documents including Civil War photographs, posters from World Wars I and II, speeches of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Lewis Hine's child labor photographs, territorial maps, treaties, handwritten notes by Dwight D. Eisenhower, petitions of women suffragists, political cartoons, and documents related to the Spanish American War.

### PLEASE VISIT

The National Archives  
<http://www.nara.gov>

The Digital Classroom  
<http://www.nara.gov/education>

The Online Exhibit Hall  
<http://www.nara.gov/exhall/exhibits.html>

The Regional Records Services Facilities  
<http://www.nara.gov/regional/nrmenu.html>

The Presidential Libraries  
<http://www.nara.gov/nara/president/address.html>

Project Whistlestop  
<http://www.whistlestop.org>

The NARA Archival Information  
Locator (NAIL) Database  
<http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html>

- **Talents, Interests, and Activities:** Do you have any talents, hobbies, or interests which you could relate to the theme? For example, if you write for the school newspaper, why not examine the John Peter Zenger case in New York in the 1730s, which established truth as a defense for libel? Or there are many First Amendment cases you could pick. If you think you might want to become a teacher, you might study Horace Mann's educational reforms in the 1830s and 1840s, which set the tone for American public education for years to come. Someone interested in the sciences may choose one of many scientific turning points, such as Mendel's work on genetics, as a focus for a History Day entry.
- **History Courses:** Don't overlook what you've learned in class! Did anyone intrigue you? You may have sympathized with a reformer such as Jane Addams, who tried to improve the lives of immigrants, or a labor organizer such as Cesar Chavez, who organized farm workers. A scientist such as Galileo or a leader such as Shaka Zulu may have earned your admiration. You may have found the international struggle for women's rights inspiring or the Supreme Court's decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* surprising. All of these could provide suitable topics for History Day projects.
- **Ethnic and Religious Heritage:** Good topics abound in ethnic and religious history. You could examine the migration of members of your ethnic group to or within America, for example, or some of the obstacles they've overcome in the U.S. or before migrating. Or you could focus on a leader of the group, or someone of your ethnicity who has achieved great success. You could explore the founding of your religion or key events in your church's history, such as enduring persecution or facing division.
- **Popular Culture:** Have you read any historical books (including novels) or seen anything historical on television or at the theater which caught your imagination? If you loved the *Little House on the Prairie* books, you could do a topic on the westward migration. If you thought Mel Gibson was cool in "Braveheart," you could study Scotland's struggles against England.
- **Ancestry:** Is there some way you can relate the theme to the history of your family? Whether or not your family was in the US or in another part of the world, major events of the past century such as the Great Depression or one of the world wars may have affected your grandparents and great-grandparents. Ask older family members if they can think of ways your family's history might relate to the theme and ask if they have or know of any family records which might help you in your research!
- **State and Local History:** Look around your neighborhood, your city, your region, your state. What historic sites have been preserved? Is there a local historical society or museum which has exhibits on area history that might inspire you? Is there a national or international event which affected your locality? For example, could you use your community as a case study of the effects of the end of slavery or of a particular war? Are there any people or events in local or state history which might suit the theme? Did your community experience any transforming events, such as a natural disaster, the opening of a major transportation project, or a massive migration of people?
- **Talk with people** if you're still at a loss for ideas. Sit around and brainstorm about topics with your friends or family. This can be a great way to get you thinking about a topic when you're having trouble coming up with anything on your own. They may know about some events or people you haven't heard of, or they may be able to suggest a different angle or approach.

## Library of Congress On-Line Resources

### Library of Congress Web Site

<http://www.loc.gov>

The Library of Congress web site offers a gateway to many history resources and primary materials. Important History Day support materials on "Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events" can be found here, including:

### THOMAS: Legislative Information

<http://thomas.loc.gov>

Here students will find federal legislation that may affect many aspects of their own lives. THOMAS provides bill summaries, status, and full-text along with the full-text of the Congressional Record and Congressional Committee Reports; some of these collections go back nearly 30 years. In addition, there is access to Congressional documents from 1774 to 1813.

### EXHIBITIONS

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits>

The Library of Congress assembles exhibits on various topics for visitors to the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Portions of these exhibits are digitized and presented on the Web. For example, visit the "Treasures of the Library of Congress" exhibit to see Francis Scott Key's hand-written text of the Star-Spangled Banner. If students are researching the role of women in the workplace, consider the on-line exhibit, "Women Come to the Front: Journalists, Photographers, and Broadcasters During WW II."

### American Memory

<http://memory.loc.gov>

Use this Web address to go to the "front door" of American Memory. Click on "Enter" to proceed to this on-line archive of primary sources that relates to the history and culture of America. As of this writing, there are 44 on-line collections available. Collection formats include digitized documents, manuscripts, films, photographs, sound recordings, and maps. In most cases, no special viewers are required to access these on-line collections.

From American Revolutionary broadsides to anti-slavery and woman's suffrage pamphlets to photographs of the Civil War and World War II, the 44 American Memory collections are rich and varied, providing unique and personal insights into "turning points" in American history and culture. Use the Collection Finder to locate resources by broad categories or by format: <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/finder.html>>. Or, choose the List All Collections option to see a brief list of all collections currently available. (Note: you will need to use your "scroll bar" after you have chosen this option to see this list.)

### Learning Page

<http://learning.loc.gov/learn>

The Learning Page is a companion web site to American Memory. It is designed to help educators and students become more familiar with the American Memory collections and their relevance to the K-12 school curriculum strands. In addition, it provides lesson ideas for exploring primary sources.

If you have a general idea about what you want to research but need help narrowing it down, look at your textbook or an encyclopedia or a book on the general subject you're considering. See if there is any mention of specific events which were turning points, or if any individuals are singled out as influential or important. For example, if you're interested in agriculture, you could look up agriculture in the index of your textbook, read an encyclopedia article about the topic, or skim a book on agricultural history. You might find such events as: the development of farming, the domestication of animals, the invention of plows, scientific farming, Eli Whitney's cotton gin, McCormick's mechanical reaper, and the rise of agribusiness. Any of these could be considered turning points in agricultural history.

**SOURCES:** Having a topic which appeals to you won't do you any good if you can't find enough primary and secondary sources. Before committing to a topic, you need to do a little research. Keep in mind, at this point you're not necessarily doing your actual research, just a brief check to make sure your topic will work.

- Go to your school or public library, and see what they have available; their holdings will probably include more secondary sources than primary, but will provide a good starting point.
- You can also check the National History Day web site, which has links to the major libraries, historical societies, and museums in each state (from the NHD home page, click on "Related links & resources"). Check the catalogue of one of the major university libraries in your state and see what materials it has on the topic; again, these will probably be mostly secondary sources, but may include more primary sources than your school or public library. If you're doing a local history topic, you might want to see if your state or local historical society or state archives has an on-line catalogue or list of its holdings. You may find a treasure trove of primary sources on your topic at one of these institutions. Also, if appropriate, take a look at some of the national resources for which there are links on the

NHD web site, such as the Library of Congress's American Memory Project, which provides digitized files of a huge variety of primary sources.

- Finding primary sources will normally require more perseverance than finding secondary sources. In addition to the hints above, look at the citations or bibliographies in books or encyclopedia articles on your topic and see what primary sources the authors used; some of these may be available in printed editions or on microfilm which you can borrow or use at a nearby library or archives. Don't forget that newspapers and magazines from the time

period of your topic are primary sources and are often readily accessible. If the topic you're considering occurred within the past 60 years, you may be able to find someone who could give you an oral history interview. You may also be able to find some primary sources on the Internet, but remember that you must evaluate the usefulness and accuracy of Internet sites just as you would any source.

There you have it: know what the theme is, understand your teacher's expectations, consider what appeals to you, make sure there are enough sources, and you have found the perfect History Day topic for you!

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## On Your Mark, Get Set, Research: Effective Use of Encyclopedias

by Lee Ann Potter, National Archives and Records Administration

In emphasizing the value of primary sources in historical research, I am afraid that we give students the impression that they should avoid encyclopedias entirely. On the contrary, we must teach students to use encyclopedias and other secondary sources properly, that is, as a **STARTING POINT** for their research, not as the main sources or only sources.

Recently, I received a letter from a student doing research for a National History Day project on Marie Curie. She requested copies of related primary source documents in the National Archives of the United States. My first thought was to send the student a standard letter informing her that the National Archives holds the records of the U.S. federal government and that because her subject lived and worked in Europe, it is unlikely that any records related to the scientist would be here, and, as a result, it would be better to continue her search for records elsewhere. All along, I thought that the student would have difficulty because most related documents would be located so far away and exist only in foreign languages. My second thought was to find out a bit more about Marie Curie and determine whether there was any

connection between her and the U.S. government which might have led to the creation of federal records.

I searched first in an encyclopedia under "C" for Curie. In addition to providing me the dates of her birth and death, the entry offered a detailed chronology of her life. I learned that in 1921 she came to the United States and was presented with a gram of radium by President Warren Harding. This seemingly small bit of information suggested a number of exciting research possibilities:

- Newspapers and magazines would have carried a story about her visit. Although the National Archives does not hold volumes of past periodicals, many libraries do have drawers filled with reels of easily accessible microfilm which preserve the pages of newspapers and magazines.
- The papers of President Harding should contain information about the meeting. Unfortunately, the National Archives does not hold those records, either. I wondered who did, so I checked another book on the reference shelf called *Records of the Presidency and Presidential Papers and Libraries from Washington to Reagan*. I discovered

that the Ohio Historical Society houses the Harding papers.

- The Immigration and Naturalization Service kept records on people who entered the country, so records related to Madame Curie's arrival in the U.S. may also exist. The National Archives does have passenger arrival lists on microfilm. If only I knew the date that Madame Curie traveled to the United States, the name of the ship on which she sailed, and at which U.S. port she disembarked, then maybe I could find her in these records.

I wrote back to the student and described my research experience for her and suggested she search a local library's microfilm newspaper collection, write to the Ohio Historical Society, and refer to a biography on Madame Curie for the details needed to find her in the National Archives's records. I suggested a few biographies to her, since several were mentioned at the bottom of the Marie Curie entry in the encyclopedia.

Let us teach our students to use the encyclopedia and other secondary sources wisely: to put their topics in historical context and to guide their quest for primary sources.

# Using Oral History for National History Day Projects

Oral history may immeasurably enrich your students' National History Day projects. Interviewing participants in historical events is an experience which they will never forget, and the interviews will provide them with unique information and perspectives as well as quotations for use in all types of entries. The following includes suggestions for preparing your students to do oral history, tips for conducting interviews, and ideas for using the interviews in NHD projects. It is adapted and excerpted from Barry A. Lanman and George L. Mehaffy, *Oral History in the Secondary School Classroom* (Oral History Association, 1988), pp. 14-16, 20-22, and 25-31. Our thanks to the Oral History Association for permission to use this material.

## PREPARING YOUR STUDENTS FOR ORAL HISTORY

Before your students go out to interview people, you should prepare them by providing some training. If you don't have much background in oral history, you might contact a nearby historical society or museum and ask if they have someone who might come to your school and share techniques with your students. Nearby universities or colleges also may have an oral historian on staff.

Teachers have found the following topics important to cover:

### 1.

#### Explain what oral history is.

If your students have ever asked an older relative or neighbor about the past and sat enthralled listening to their stories, then they are already experienced oral historians. The main differences between what they've done in the past and what they'll be doing for their History Day research are that

- they may not be well-acquainted with the people they interview;
- the interviews should be recorded;
- the interviews should be focused on specific topics;

- they need to do some research beforehand, so they can ask good questions.

### 2.

#### Explain where oral history fits into their research and what its limitations are.

- a. Oral history should not be the starting point for your students' research. Before they can find a person to interview or develop appropriate questions, they need to already know quite a bit about the topic. They should conduct their initial research using traditional primary and secondary sources. Only after they have a solid base of information should they interview anyone.
- b. As with any other source, evidence gathered in an oral history interview needs to be corroborated. People's memories are not always completely reliable, or they may not have had complete knowledge of an event. For example, soldiers know what's going on in their part of a battle, but they do not have firsthand knowledge of the complete battle; years later, one veteran may remember a particular battle as not too intense, while a veteran who fought in a different part of the battle may recall it as quite

intense. To make sure it's reliable, information from an interview should be compared to information from other sources. Inconsistencies can often be explained, but they should not be ignored.

- c. Also make sure your students understand that if they base their projects solely on oral history interviews, they probably will not meet the research requirements for History Day entries. The judging criteria include:
- putting the topic into historical context. This means explaining what the causes and consequences of their topics were and how they relate to larger trends or events. Secondary sources are often helpful in this regard.
  - balanced research. This means taking into consideration different points of view, not just one person's or one side's. Interviewing people from different sides or different backgrounds can help achieve this.
  - use of available primary sources. Usually, there are other primary sources available to supplement oral history interviews, including newspapers or magazines as well as whatever documents or artifacts the interviewee might be able to contribute.

### 3.

#### Make suggestions about whom to interview and how to find them.

Only interviews with people who have **FIRST-HAND** knowledge of an event, such as eyewitnesses or participants, count as **PRIMARY SOURCES**. Scholars or descendants may be helpful to your students: they may provide different perspectives or insights, information or secondhand stories not readily available elsewhere, or access to unique artifacts. However, these people did not personally experience the event, so interviews with them are not oral history and should be included in the bibliographies as **SECONDARY SOURCES**.

Share with your students suggestions on how to find people to interview:

- If their experiences are appropriate for the topic, older family members, neighbors, or family friends could make suitable interviewees.
- For specialized topics, your students could check with special-interest organizations. Local historical societies or museums are often good places to go for referrals; their staffs usually have extensive local connections and a good idea of who would be willing to help. Other possibilities abound. For military-related topics, for example, students could ask the local American Legion or Veterans of Foreign Wars posts if any of their members would be willing to be interviewed.
- To find specific people, your students should ask for help from the reference librarian of their local public or school library.
- Encourage your students to ask the people they meet in the course of their research for suggestions about whom to interview.
- To find historians to interview as secondary sources, students could check with nearby universities or colleges. Many have web sites which list the faculty by department, along with their special interests.

If a student does not already know the person he or she would like to interview, the first contact should probably be by mail rather than telephone, simply because it is less intrusive and allows the potential interviewee more time to consider how to respond to the request. The student should follow up with a phone call to determine if the person is interested and, if appropriate, to schedule an interview.



#### 4.

**Make sure your students know how to operate the necessary equipment.**

Help your students become familiar with how to operate a tape recorder. To minimize potential problems, use high-quality, brand name tapes. A 60-minute tape will provide better quality sound than a 120-minute tape.

#### 5.

**Teach the students to write appropriate questions and have them prepare an outline of what questions they would like to ask.**

- a. Close-ended questions usually ask for specific information and can be answered with a yes or no or just a few words. Examples: "Where were you born?" or "Did you go to high school?" These questions are easy to answer and can help the interviewee relax. They make good questions for opening an interview, because the interviewee can easily handle them and begin feeling comfortable.
- b. Open-ended questions are broader and usually require longer answers. These are questions such as "Why did your family move to America?"; "How did you react when you heard that Pearl Harbor had been bombed?"; or "What was your first job like?" These questions are likelier to get the interviewee to tell stories.
- c. Each question should be short and to the point.
- d. In a series of questions about one specific topic, easy and non-threatening questions should be asked first. Then work up to the sensitive or difficult questions (emotionally or factually) toward the end of the series of questions. If possible, reserve the most difficult questions for the end of the interview so that additional rapport will establish a sense of trust to handle such discussions.

#### 6.

**Review the "Tips for Oral History Interviewing."**

Also review the Interviewee Background Information Questionnaire, the Receipt for Borrowed Historical Documents/Artifacts, and the Release Agreement found at the end of this article. The Release Agreement is particularly important. The interviewee's words are his or her property, and U.S. copyright law applies to oral history interviews. To use tapes or transcripts publicly, your students must obtain a release from the interviewee. The Release Agreement grants student interviewers the right to use the words from the interview in their projects.

#### 7.

**Have the students practice!**

Writing good questions, listening well, and being a flexible interviewer take practice. Here are two activities to help prepare your students for interviewing.

- a. Stage a mock interview. Have the students, individually or in small groups, write questions to ask a famous person. Play the role of that person yourself. Have several students conduct the interview, using the questions the class prepared and asking appropriate follow-up questions. During the interview, you should act the way an interviewee would, occasionally wandering away from the topic or not answering a question clearly. After the interview, have the class brainstorm about:
  - which questions worked well and which did not; how to handle an interviewee who digresses or is unclear;
  - what other information they would need and what other sources they might consult if they were going to use this interview as part of a History Day project.
- b. Divide the class into pairs. Their assignment will be to write a brief paper explaining a major turning point in their partner's life. Have them write questions and then interview each other,

basing their papers on the interviews. Ask them to list what other sources they might be able to find about this topic (interviews with other people, family letters, diaries, photographs, church or school records, newspaper stories, etc.).

## TIPS FOR ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWING

### 1.

Ask the interviewee to fill out the Interviewee Background Information Questionnaire.

Either send a copy by mail, or, if possible, schedule a preliminary meeting with the interviewee where you can deliver it in person. Having a preliminary meeting is optional, and you may not have time to do it. If you do have such a meeting, don't bring a tape recorder. Introduce yourself and explain the purpose of the interview and the topics to be discussed. Be friendly and try to get the interviewee to feel comfortable around you.

### 2.

Schedule the interview several days or weeks in advance.

The interview should take place somewhere quiet and convenient for the interviewee.

### 3.

When you go to the interview, be sure to take:

- your tape recorder;
- blank tape (at least two 60-minute tapes);
- a microphone;
- an extension cord;
- a note pad and pencil;
- your questions;
- necessary forms.

### 4.

At the interview:

- a. Discuss the Release Agreement with the interviewee and explain what the agreement does. Ask the interviewee about any conditions he or she may wish to put on the release before signing it.
- b. Position the tape recorder and microphone between the interviewee and yourself. Test the equipment for sound quality and voice levels. (Record the interviewee for approximately thirty seconds to ensure that the equipment is functioning properly). Tape an introduction to the interview. Include the following:
  - Name of the interviewee;
  - Name of the interviewer;
  - The date of the interview;
  - The location of the interview;
  - The topic of the interview.
- c. Try to establish a rapport with the interviewee. Chat informally with the interviewee while setting up the equipment and continue to build a positive relationship throughout the interview.
- d. Ask one question at a time!
- e. Keep a moderate pace geared to the interviewee. Allow the interviewee to completely finish answering a question before you ask another one. Don't rush! Don't be afraid of silence, since the person may be thinking of an answer. Listen to the answers.
- f. Ask follow-up questions. If you do not understand a statement made by the interviewee, ask another question to clarify the point, e.g., "I think I heard you say ... Is that what you meant? Would you please explain in more detail?" Also ask for clarification if you don't understand a word, are unfamiliar with a name, or are unsure where or when an event took place.
- g. Remember, your outline of questions is just a guide. Be flexible! If your interviewee mentions an important topic not on the outline, you may

wish to let the individual continue. If the interview is wandering in a non-productive manner, return to the subject at an appropriate pause.

- h. Try not to express an opinion. Remain as neutral and unbiased as possible.
- i. If any are available, use documents and pictures to jog the memory of the interviewee.
- j. To keep everyone from getting too tired, the total session should not extend beyond 90 minutes. If additional information is needed and the interviewee is willing, stop at a logical point and reschedule another interview session within a few days.
- k. Conclude the interview by asking if the interviewee has any additional comments to make concerning the topic.

## 5.

### Before leaving:

- a. If necessary, complete a word/name list, getting the correct spelling of proper names and words. Also clarify any facts or information given during the recording.
- b. Inquire about any additional diaries, photographs or other historic materials which the interviewee might have and might allow you to borrow for your project. If necessary, fill out a receipt for borrowed materials.
- c. Complete the Release Agreement, if you haven't already done so.
- d. If necessary, establish a date for a second interview session.
- e. Thank the person for his or her participation.
- f. Punch out the tabs on the cassette to prevent the tape from being erased accidentally. Label the tape(s) with your name and the interviewee's name, the date, and the topic.

## 6.

Write a thank-you note to the interviewee.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR USING ORAL HISTORY

### A.

#### All Categories

In all categories, transcripts of oral history interviews should NOT be included with the project. Oral history interviews which students have conducted should be cited in bibliographies as follows:

#### TURABIAN-STYLE:

Clinton, Bill. Interview by author, 29 March 1999, Washington, DC. Tape recording.

Clinton, Bill. Telephone conversation with author, 29 March 1999.

#### MLA-STYLE:

Clinton, Bill. Personal interview. 29 March 1999.

Clinton, Bill. Telephone interview. 29 March 1999.

### B.

#### The Use of Oral History In Performance

Oral history interviews are especially helpful in developing performances because the oral testimony not only provides factual information but also shares the emotions, inflections, style and general character of an individual. This personalized information may assist the student in producing a more realistic and historically accurate performance. Oral testimony may be integrated into the script of a performance by including actual word-for-word accounts and/or summaries of the interviews. It may be used to:

- Present a biographical sketch
- Establish the character of an individual
- Establish the role an individual played in an event
- Present various attitudes about a person or event
- Present a unique insight on an event
- Present a rationale for a person's actions or participation in an event
- Recreate an event

## C.

### The Use of Oral History in a Documentary

Oral testimony may be excerpted as part of a documentary's sound track or summarized and recorded by the student in the narration. Short quotes and captions, shown visually, are effective in slide-tape shows. Videotape is an excellent medium to capture the sound and visual aspects of an interview. Oral history may be used in a documentary to:

- Give support and validity to other sources
- Provide a major portion of the documentary evidence
- Explain and interpret various pictures and documents
- Present both facts and opinions
- Present various points of view
- Explore conflicts
- Document change
- Document disasters
- Document unique crafts or techniques

## D.

### The Use of Oral History in an Exhibit

Oral testimony obtained from an interview may be used to:

- Construct a time line of events.
- Develop a time line to illustrate and document life spans in relation to major events.
- Construct captions which explain other primary source material.
- Construct captions or quotes which explain photographs and other visual aids.

## E.

### The Use of Oral History in a Paper

Oral testimony may be quoted, summarized, and/or analyzed by the student in a research paper. When quoting or summarizing oral testimony, notes and bibliographical references are essential to the credibility of the paper. Interviews must be

documented in the same way as any other primary or secondary source. Oral testimony can be analyzed and used in a research paper to demonstrate:

- Cause and effect.
- Fact versus opinion.
- Attitudes then and now.
- How different experiences and situations affected perceptions, attitudes and opinions.
- How the interviewee's political, economic and social status affected his point of view or interpretation of an event.

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**To find out more about oral history, consult the following:**

Ives, Edward D. *The Tape-recorded Interview: A Manual for Field Workers in Folklore and Oral History*. 2nd ed. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1995.

Lanman, Barry A., and George L. Mehaffy. *Oral History in the Secondary School Classroom*. Provo, UT: Oral History Association, 1988.

Mercier, Laurie, and Madeline Buckendorf. *Using Oral History in Community History Projects*. Rock Springs, WY: Oral History Association, 1992.

Oral History Association.  
<http://www.baylor.edu/~OHA>

Ritchie, Donald A. *Doing Oral History*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995.

Siler, Carl D. *Oral History in the Social Studies*. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, Indiana University, [1995].

## Interviewee Background Information Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  Male  Female

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate age or date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Places lived and when: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Education: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Business, political and social memberships (past and present): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Present occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Former occupations: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Skills: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Major Accomplishments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

National Events in which interviewee has participated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Local Events in which interviewee has participated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Native-born U.S. citizen? Yes No Naturalized Citizen? Yes No Country from which he/she emigrated: \_\_\_\_\_

Documents, photographs, and artifacts which are in the possession of the interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Individuals recommended by the interviewee who might be candidates for an oral history interview: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Receipt for Borrowed Historical Documents/Artifacts

Lender: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Borrower: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials borrowed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Conditions for use: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

.....

Date when materials should be returned: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Sign at the time of loan)

Lender \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Borrower \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date materials were returned: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Sign at the time of return)

Lender \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Borrower \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Make a copy for each party involved.

## Release Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_,  
name of donor address

City of \_\_\_\_\_, County of \_\_\_\_\_,

State of \_\_\_\_\_, hereby give, \_\_\_\_\_

convey, and assign to \_\_\_\_\_ who is currently in possession of my oral memoir  
interviewer's name or organization

consisting of \_\_\_\_\_ to have and to hold the same absolutely and

forever. I understand that \_\_\_\_\_ will use my oral memoir for such historical  
interviewer's name or organization

and scholarly purposes as they see fit and that by this conveyance I relinquish:

- 1) All legal title and literary property rights which I have or may be deemed to have in said work.
- 2) All my right, title and interest in copyright which I have or may be deemed to have in said work and more particularly the exclusive rights of reproduction, distribution, preparation of derivative works, public performance and display.

I herein warrant that I have not assigned or in any manner encumbered or impaired any of the aforementioned rights in my oral memoir. The only conditions which I place on this unrestricted gift are:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, accept the oral memoirs of \_\_\_\_\_  
interviewer's name

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Interviewee \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

# History! History! Read all about it!

## Using Newspapers for Research

by Tim Hoogland, Minnesota Historical Society

Newspapers are one of the most accessible and fascinating sources for historical research. They are a record of history “as it happened” and can be important primary sources for students. This lesson presents a series of newspaper articles related to America’s entry into World War I and how this was a turning point for German-Americans. Three different newspapers are used to demonstrate how national, regional, and local papers cover similar topics in different ways. Using several newspapers allows researchers to understand their topics from multiple perspectives.

Several factors affect how newspapers cover stories. Some newspapers are more liberal or conservative than others, and this viewpoint can sometimes affect the coverage of stories. The size and location of a newspaper also shape the way it reports the news. A national newspaper such as *The New York Times* provides detailed coverage of national and world events. The audience for this type of paper goes far beyond the city where it is published. Regional newspapers such as *The Minneapolis Tribune* still cover national and international news, but in less detail. They focus more on state and regional issues. Small-town newspapers such as *The New Ulm Review* focus on stories of local interest and often are published on a weekly basis. Each of these papers brings a different perspective to the entrance of the United States into World War I.

### OBJECTIVES

- To understand how to analyze newspaper articles.
- To understand that the size, location, and philosophy of a newspaper shape the content of its stories and editorials.

### PREPARATION

Discuss with students the role of newspapers in society and why they are useful for historians. Ask them to make a list of all the different newspapers that they or their family members have read and how they cover events from different perspectives. Explore how newspapers are organized and what kind of information is available. Bring in several copies of

your local newspaper and ask the class to come up with a list of ten different topics which a historian 50 years from now might study, using that newspaper (this might include sports history, material culture using advertisements, and similar topics in addition to political or other news). Ask them to think about how the historian’s understanding of those topics would be different if he or she looked at a different newspaper, such as *The New York Times*.

### ACTIVITY

The following activity may be conducted by dividing the class into groups, assigning a different task to each group, and asking the groups to report to the class. Or, the activities may be conducted as an entire class activity over several days.

Make copies of the newspaper articles reproduced in this lesson and pass them out to the groups or the entire class. Ask the students to:

- Summarize the main points of each article.
- Answer the following questions: What is the purpose of the article? Who wrote it? How did the author find out the information included in the article? How reliable is the author as a primary source? From what perspective is the article written?
- Describe how each of the articles is shaped by the location of the newspaper.
- Explain how the articles relate to the topic of WW I as a turning point for German-Americans.
- List three questions about the articles that need further research to clarify. What types of sources might provide the information needed? Where could this information be found?

### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

Find a newspaper article about a significant turning point in history. Some examples might include the ratification of the 19th amendment which gave women the right to vote, prohibition, the stock market crash of 1929, or an event from the civil rights movement. Assign students the task of finding and summarizing newspaper articles that examine these events from local and national perspectives.



## Article 1. Wilson's War Message

### Excerpts from "President Wilson's War Message,"

from *The New York Times*, April 3, 1917, found by using *The New York Times Index*.

"I have called the congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making.

...The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind....

...The challenge is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it....

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves... I advise that the congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent...and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

What this will involve is clear...It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country to supply the materials of war.... It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States...of least five hundred thousand men, who should, in my opinion, be chosen upon the principle of universal liability to service....

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling towards them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war....

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because...there can be no assured security for the democratic Governments of the World... The World must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty.

...We are, let me say again, the sincere friends of the German people, and shall desire nothing so much as the early re-establishment of intimate relations of mutual advantage between us, — ...We shall, happily, still have an opportunity to prove that friendship in our daily attitude and actions towards the millions of men and women of German birth...who live amongst us and share our life....

They are, most of them, as true and loyal Americans as if they had never known any other fealty or allegiance. They will be prompt to stand with us in rebuking and restraining the few who may be of a different mind and purpose. If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with a firm hand of stern repression....

...It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance.... To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes..."

— Woodrow Wilson

### Excerpts from "President Calls for War Declaration, Stronger Navy, New Army of 500,000 Men, Full Co-Operation with Germany's Foes," from *The New York Times*, April 3, 1917, found by using *The New York Times Index*.

MUST EXERT ALL OUR POWER

To Bring a "Government That is Running Amuck to Terms."

WANTS LIBERAL CREDITS

And Universal Service, for "the World Must Be Made Safe for Democracy."

A TUMULTUOUS GREETING

Congress Adjourns After "State of War" Resolution is Introduced — Acts Today

*Special to the New York Times*

WASHINGTON, April 2 — At 8:35 o'clock tonight the United States virtually made its entrance into the war. At that hour President Wilson appeared before a joint session of the Senate and House and invited it to consider the fact that Germany had been making war upon us and to take action in recognition of that fact in accordance with his recommendations, which included universal military service, the raising of an army of 500,000 men and co-operation with the Allies in all ways that will help most effectively to defeat Germany.

**Unreservedly With the Allies.**

Before an audience that cheered him as he has never been cheered in the Capitol in his life the President cast in the lot of America unreservedly with the Allies and declared for a war that must not end until the issue between autocracy and democracy has been fought out. He recited our injuries at Germany's hands...[and] he showed that peace was impossible for the democracies of the world while this power remained on earth. "The world," he said, "must be made safe for democracy..."

The objects for which we fight, he said, are democracy, the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own government, the right and liberties of small nations, ... and to make the world free. These have always been our ideals; and to accomplish them, we accept the war Germany has made upon us. In fighting it we must not only raise an army and increase the navy, but must aid the Allies in all ways, financial and other,....

**Trouble-making Pacifists Barred.**

The President delivered this speech before an audience that had been carefully sifted. All day Washington had been in the hands of belligerent pacifists, truculent in manner, and determined to break into the Capitol... [By nightfall] it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a disturber to get within pistol shot of the Capitol, an even those who could not get into the building itself could not get into the galleries without special tickets.

**President Greeted with Cheers.**

...As he walked in and ascended the Speaker's platform he got such a reception as congress had never given him before in any of his visits to it. The Supreme Court Justices rose from their chairs, facing the place where he stood, and led the applause, while Representatives and Senators not only cheered, but yelled. It was two minutes before he could begin his address.

...Congress listened intently and without any sort of interruption while he recited the German crimes against humanity, his own and his country's effort to

believe that the German rulers had no wholly cut themselves off from the path which civilized nations follow, and the way in which the truth was forced upon unwilling minds....

**A Roar Answers No "Submission."**

He had told congress at the outset that the condition which now confronted us was one which he neither the right nor the duty to cope with alone, and that he had come to ask it to make its choice of ways to deal with it; and now he said:

"There is one choice we cannot make, we are incapable of making. We will not choose the path of submission —" ...[what] followed [was] a roar like a storm. It was a cheer so deep and so intense and so much from the heart that it sounded like a shouted prayer.

The President completed his sentence, "And suffer the most sacred rights of our people to be ignored," and Congress relapsed into its intent and watchful silence. But when he asked for the declaration of war, when he urged them to "declare the course of the Imperial German Government to be in effect nothing less than war," the scene was even more striking.

"We have no quarrel with the German people," he said amid applause, [but the German Government]... "has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of Government with spies and set criminal intrigue everywhere afoot."

**A World Safe for Democracy.**

...But these charges he made only incidentally, and for purposes of illustration. They were all designed to show that "the autocratic German Government can never be a friend," and now he said:

"The world must be made safe for Democracy."

This sentence might have passed without applause, but Senator John Sharp Williams was one man who instantly seized the full and immense meaning of it. Alone he began to applaud, and he did it gravely, emphatically — and in a moment the fact that this was the keyword of our war against Germany dawned on the others, and one after another followed his lead until the whole host broke forth in great uproar of applause.

When he touched on our relations with the German-Americans there was applause for his promises to those German-Americans who "are in fact loyal to their neighbors and the Government in the hour of test; but it was altogether overshadowed by the volume of that which broke out for the antithetical sentence, "If there should be disloyalty it will be dealt with a stern hand and firm repression."

**An Ovation Follows Closing Words.**

The President ended at 9:11, having spoken thirty-six minutes. Then the great scene which had been enacted at his entrance was repeated.

...Senator Robert Marion La Follette, however, stood motionless with his arms folded tight and high on his chest, so that nobody could have any excuse for mistaking his attitude; and there he stood, chewing gum with a sardonic smile. The President walked rapidly out of the hall, and when he had gone, the Senators and the Supreme Court and the diplomats went their ways... and the first day's session of the Sixty-fifth Congress was at an end.

**For the first three years of World War I, President Wilson proclaimed the U.S. to be a neutral country. He did not want to get involved in a European war. What reason did Wilson give in his war message for changing his mind, thereby creating this turning point in American policy? How did he propose to get the men needed to create a large army? What does he say about the loyalty of German Americans?**

## Article 2. The President Institutes a Draft

### Excerpts from "President Wilson's Proclamation of a Draft," from *The New York Times*, May 19, 1917, found by using *The New York Times Index*.

Whereas, Congress has enacted and the President has on the 18th day of May, one thousand nine hundred and seventeen, approved a law which contains the following provisions:

SECTION 6 — That all male persons between the ages of 21 and 30, both inclusive, shall be subject to registration in accordance with regulations to be prescribed by the President: And upon proclamation by the President or other public notice given by him or by his direction stating the time and place of such registration, it shall be the duty of all persons of the designated ages, except officers and enlisted men of the regular army, the navy, and the National Guard and Naval Militia while in the service of the United States to present themselves for and submit to registration under the provisions of this act...

Now, therefore, I Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, do call upon the Governor of each of the several States and Territories, the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia...to perform certain duties in the execution of the foregoing law...

The significance of this cannot be overstated. It is a new thing in our history and a landmark in our progress. It is a new manner of accepting and vitalizing our duty to give ourselves with thoughtful devotion to the common purpose of us all. It is in no sense a conscription of the unwilling; it is, rather, selection from a nation which has volunteered in mass. It is no more a choosing of those who shall march with the colors than it is a selection of those who shall serve an equally necessary and devoted purpose in the industries that lie behind the battle line....

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the City of Washington this 18th day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seventeen, and of the independence of the United States of America the one hundred and forty-first. — *Woodrow Wilson*

### Excerpts from "President Calls the Nation to Arms; Draft Bill Signed; Registration on June 5; Regulars under Pershing to Go to France," from *The New York Times*, May 19, 1917, found by using *The New York Times Index*.

#### PLANS FOR NATIONAL ARMY

First Draft of 500,000 Men to be Divided Into Sixteen Divisions

#### MILITIA SIMILARLY PLACED

Arrangement of Concentration Camps Will Be  
Near Home Regions of Units

#### CALLS OUT NATIONAL GUARD

Entire Force to Mobilize and Recruit to  
War Strength Beginning on July 15.

be announced. The draft army will be officially known as the National Army, in contradistinction to the regular army and the National Guard Army. These National Army divisions will be numbered consecutively from one to sixteen.

New York and Pennsylvania will furnish enough men in the draft to form three National Army divisions, exclusive of what they will furnish for the regular army and the National Guard army. New York and Pennsylvania will each furnish about a division and a half for the National Army. The only other State to furnish as much as division for the National Army will be Illinois. Seven Pacific Coast States where the population is not so dense will furnish the sixteenth National Army division...

#### *Special to the New York Times*

WASHINGTON, May 18 — President Wilson tonight at 10 o'clock issued his proclamation fixing June 5 as the day on which registration is to take place for the national army of 500,000 men to be drafted under authority of the Draft Bill, which he signed tonight. On this date all men in the country between the ages of 21 and 30 years, inclusive, will be required to present themselves for registration. Those away from home will register by mail, according to the terms of the proclamation. The registration date for Hawaii, Alaska, and Porto Rico will be announced later.

The President's proclamation sets forth in detail the plans for registration and was telegraphed tonight by the War Department to all parts of the country so as to have the widest publicity by official posting and publication. It is expected that the registration will occupy about five days. After that those entitled to exemption will be excluded from the draft. About 10,000,000 between 21 and 30, inclusive, are expected to be registered. After the registration and exemptions have been completed, those declared to be eligible for drafting will have their names placed in jury wheels and 500,000 will be drafted for Federal service in the formation of the new national army.

Plans for the formation of the new army have been completed. It will be divided into sixteen divisions, each to consist of 28,000 men. They will be mobilized in sixteen concentration camps, the names of which soon will

#### CALLS OUT THE GUARD

PRESIDENT Wilson also orders today for the mobilization of the entire National Guard of the country. Instructions were sent to the Adjutant General of the States to the effect that the National Guard not now in federal service and enlisted men of the National Guard Reserve would be drafted on July 15...

There are now 60,000 national Guardsmen in Federal service. There are more than 100,000 not yet in Federal service. These are to be called into Federal service under the orders issued today. New national Guard units will also be formed and all the guard units will be expanded until 400,000 men have been obtained. This will be designated the National Guard Army, and it will consist of sixteen divisions to be designated as the fifth to the twentieth, inclusive.

All National Guard organizations," said an official War Department announcement tonight, "both in and out of Federal Service, will be recruited at once to full war strength. The necessary arms, equipment, and clothing for recruits is not at present on hand, but it is hoped all supplies will be available by the time the troops are sent to their concentration camps.

---

**President Wilson's war message in April supported the idea of "universal" military service — better known as the draft. Six weeks later the *New York Times* printed Wilson's presidential proclamation starting the draft along with an article describing plans for a mass army. Who is eligible for the draft? How does the president defend this action? How many men will be affected?**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Article 3. Minnesota Legislature Creates Public Safety Commission  
From *The Minneapolis Tribune*, found by using citations in Carl H. Chrislock,  
*Watchdogs of Loyalty: The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety During World War I* (St. Paul: 1991).

## The Minneapolis Tribune

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., APRIL 13, 1917

### House in Spurt Shoots Through Four "War" Bills

The Minnesota House of Representatives focused its attentions on war measures yesterday and in less than one hour's time passed four important bills, products of the present war situation. These are the bills passed in quick succession:

The George H. Sullivan public safety commission bill, carrying \$1,000,000 appropriation, already passed by the senate. It was amended on several particulars and will have to go into conference for ironing out differences existing between House and Senate.

The bill aimed in particular at I.W.W.'s and other person's of that type, defining as a felony the teaching of criminal syndicalism, sabotage, and terrorism. The Senate has already passed this bill.

A measure to prevent further interference with enlistments.

A bill to prohibit aliens from having in their possession firearms or explosives...

#### Power for Governor

The other amendment of importance gives the Governor the power to approve or veto all acts of the public safety commission. That this amendment will meet with strenuous objection by the Senators is the prediction made by many. The Governor is ex-officio member and chairman of the commission of seven members. If the Governor must approve all of the commission's acts, it is thought that the body will become simply an advisory body.

Representative Albert F. Pratt of Anoka was responsible for the amendment...

The bill was rushed to the Senate immediately upon passage in the House. On motion of Senator G.H. Sullivan, the upper body refused to concur and the appointment of conferees on the bill was held today.

Representative Ernest Strand of Two Harbors, Socialist, was the only man in the House to vote against the public safety bill and the bill aimed at the I.W.W. Hisses and cries of "put him out" greeted his negative votes. While he was not in the chamber when the roll was called on the other two bills related to the interference with enlistments and the prohibition of aliens' possession of firearms and

explosives, Strand afterward explained that he wanted to be on record against those measures.

#### Asks Immediate Passage

W.I. Nolan of Minneapolis asked for the passage of the bill aimed at I.W.W.'s immediately after the passage of the public safety commission bill. The House of Representatives, having freshly in mind the I.W.W. inquiry during the early days of the sessions, passed it on the grounds that it was really a "war Measure." Since the bill has been passed by both houses, it is now ready for the Governor's signature...

President Wilson stated in his war message that disloyalty by German-Americans would be "dealt with a firm hand of stern repression." State governments responded to this call by creating special commissions to insure loyalty. This article in the *Minneapolis Tribune* describes several "War" bills passed by the Minnesota legislature. What was the purpose of these bills?

### Article 4. Anti-draft Rally in New Ulm

From *The Minneapolis Tribune*, found by using citations in *Watchdogs of Loyalty*.

## The Minneapolis Tribune

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., JULY 25, 1917

### WAR PROTEST MEETING IN NEW ULM TONIGHT; MAYOR ON PROGRAM

Some of the citizens of New Ulm, Brown County, tonight will stage a protest of sending the young men of their county to foreign soil to fight for the United States. The meeting has been widely heralded throughout the county and the list of speakers announced includes mayor L.A. Fritchie of New Ulm, who recently went to Washington D.C. on a peace mission; Albert Pfander, a former member of the state legislature and a one time major in the second Minnesota infantry; Albert

Stienhauser, Spanish-American war veteran; A. Ackerman, president of the Martin Luther college; and T.A. Tetzlaff.

Other New Ulm citizens, not in sympathy with the expressed plans of the meeting, are said to be chagrined over the session and the actions of those who are the sponsors for it. They are reported to have announced that they are planning no action with reference to the gathering, but, nevertheless, do not like the idea of their city being branded with the

stigma that they feel will follow such a meeting as is planned.

The New Ulm meeting follows closely upon the heels of a similar mass meeting held Monday night at Cologne. First reports of the meeting were that it had been of the nature of an anti-conscription gathering, attended largely by agriculturalists of Carver County. These same reports credited A.F. Teigen, state legislator, with having been one of the chief speakers at the Cologne meeting. Later reports did not substantiate those

circulated earlier in the day.

Other anti-conscription activities in the Northwest yesterday included allegedly Socialist activities at Bowman, N.D., which have turned the limelight of an investigation by the post office department on Mrs. E.B. Totten, postmistress there and wife of Judge Totten, a district court jurist. She is alleged to have participated in planning a meeting at which Miss Kate O'Hare, Socialist, is said to have uttered unpatriotic language.

The use of a military draft traditionally has caused controversy in the U.S. News of an anti-draft rally by German-Americans in the small town of New Ulm reached Minneapolis 80 miles away.

Article 5: Big City Newspaper Covers Small-town Draft Meeting.  
From the *Minneapolis Tribune*, found by looking for a follow-up article the day after the meeting was announced in the paper.

# The Minneapolis Tribune

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

## New Ulm Anti-War Meeting Protests Selective Draft

NEW ULM, MINN., July 26. — Five thousand persons gathered last evening in the grounds of Turner Hall to hear Dr. L.A. Fritsche, mayor of New Ulm city; attorney Albert Pfaender, former major of the national guard on the Mexican border, and other speakers voice objections to America sending her soldiers to fight on a foreign soil. News of the meeting had been spread broadcast throughout Brown County and beyond and the audience assembled from farms and villages for many miles around, some having come by train and automobile for 100 miles or more.

### CITY DIDN'T APPROVE.

The origin of the meeting is shrouded in mystery. None of the speakers would accept any responsibility, each saying merely that he had been asked to speak. The city of New Ulm as a whole did not approve of the gathering. Businessmen along Minnesota Street expressed themselves as regretting it... "Its only results," said one, "can be to give New Ulm negative publicity, hurt our personal and collective credit, cast a shadow of doubt upon our loyalty, and confuse our boys and all the boys in this part of the state on the issues of the war."

G.A. Ottomeyer, president of the commercial club, was outspoken in his disapproval of the gathering. "I am very sorry," he said, "That nothing could be done to call the meeting off but with the mayor of the city acting as the

presiding officer we are helpless. I was born in Germany and still love my native country, but I love America more..."

### THREE-FOLD PURPOSE

The apparent purpose of the meeting was three-fold, first to define defense of country as an action which must necessarily take place on the soil of no other country; second to petition Congress not to send American soldiers on to European battlefields; third to ask everybody to join the people's council of America in bringing about a constitutional amendment requiring that a declaration of war hereafter be submitted to the people in referendum. The meeting was preceded by a parade along Minnesota Street and Broadway in which 2,000 took part with two bands. The parade was made up chiefly of men along the crowded streets who fell behind in bands to march to the meetings. Many of them were young men, drafted men, who it was rumored were the real originators of this demonstration against the government...

### MAYOR FRITSCHÉ PRESIDED, CALLING THE ASSEMBLAGE TO ORDER WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT.

"Ladies and Gentlemen: Two days ago I was approached by men whom I

consider representatives of the citizens of this city with the request that I act as chairman of this meeting. Its object was explained to me to be a peaceable gathering of American citizens to petition Congress not to send into the war in Europe any American soldiers except those that would go voluntarily..."

The mayor then introduced City Attorney Pfaender, who ... in the course of what was the best speech of the evening, from an oratorical viewpoint, said he had seen enough of the methods of American war on the boundary to be glad he was out of it. The following salient utterances are taken from Mr. Pfaender's address: "...As one of the measures for carrying on this war Congress has passed the so-called draft law. Under which those liable to military duty shall respond to the call. It is the consequences of this call which have brought about a spirit of inquiry and uneasiness among the people reflected in the meeting of tonight..."

### CALLS PRESS SUBSIDIZED

The second speaker was Albert Steinhauser, attorney and one of the peace delegates sent by New Ulm to Washington early in April. Mr. Steinhauser though echoing the sentiments of Mr. Pfaender spoke chiefly on press censorship implying that the newspapers which had been suppressed by the government were those that had the courage of their

convictions so that only a subsidized press remained...

### NONPARTISAN LEAGUE SEEN

The fine, Italian hand of the Nonpartisan League was seen in Mr. Steinhauser's speech as he pointed out this organization as a possible means of enforcing the rights of the common people against a plutocratic government. He also said something about the Declaration of Independence which was drowned by the cheering of the common people.

At the close of this very unusual evening, the audience rose and led by two hands appropriately sang "My Country 'Tis of Thee" with a volume of united sound that nearly shook down the Sons of Hermann statue on the green crest of the valley, a half mile away. Then the audience dispersed, a few hundred of the total remaining to sign the petition which was circulated among them by the gentlemanly agents.

After announcing that a draft rally was going to be held in New Ulm the *Minneapolis Tribune* sent a reporter to cover the event. How does this article portray the meeting and its participants? Do you think the reporter is supportive of the meeting?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Article 6: Local Coverage of Draft Rally.  
 From the *New Ulm Review*, found by using the date for the anti-draft rally from the *Minneapolis Tribune*.

# New Ulm Review

NEW ULM, BROWN COUNTY, MINNESOTA, AUG. 1, 1917

## BIG CROWD HEARS DRAFT DISCUSSION

MANY THOUSANDS GATHER FROM FAR AND WIDE TO HEAR ABLE SPEECHES

MEETING IS PRECEDED BY A PARADE OF TWO THOUSAND YOUNG MEN.

Nearly 8,000 people coming from every part of Brown, Nicollet and other near-by counties, gathered in New Ulm Wednesday evening, to hear a peaceful discussion of the draft situation and other issues pertaining to the war. If any came expecting to hear the government unjustly or severely criticised, they were doomed to disappointment. The audience at Turner Park was probably the largest that had ever gathered in Brown county and one of the largest in Southern Minnesota.

### TWO THOUSAND IN PARADE.

Just before the meeting opened a procession of about 2,000 men, mostly young men who had been drafted, formed near the Armory and, headed by Hofroester's and the New Ulm concert bands, marched along Minnesota Street and Broadway and then to the Park where most of the crowd had already congregated.

A platform had been erected adjoining the band stand, for the speakers, which was profusely decorated with bunting and American flags.

### MAYOR FRITSCHÉ PRESIDES.

The meeting was opened by Mayor L. A. Fritsche, who presided, with the following remarks:

"Ladies and gentlemen: Two days ago I was approached by men whom I consider representative of the citizenship of this city, with the request that I act as chairman of this meeting. Its object was explained to me to be a peaceable gathering of American citizens to petition Congress not to send into the war in Europe any American soldiers except those that would go voluntarily..."

### WELCOMES VISITORS.

"As the chief executive of this city I bid welcome to those who have evidently come from outside to attend this meeting and ... I would not have them fear, however, to express their opinions on so serious a question so long as they confine the means to gain their end to honorable proper measures..."

### MAJOR PFAENDER SPEAKS.

Major Pfaender began his remarks by attributing the presence of the great crowd to the fact that the subject of the draft had touched the heartstrings of the people as nothing ever had before. He said he thought the publicity given it by a Minneapolis paper had helped to swell the crowd. He complimented the newspapers of the Twin Cities for sending representatives to attend the meeting, that they might hear at first hand just what was said by the various speakers...

"This nation by the judgment of its Congress duly elected by the people is at war with a foreign country. This gathering of American citizens realizes that fact possibly more than those who are instrumental in brining about this condition. For the brunt of the burden of war falls upon the average common citizen and not in the whitewalled palaces of the national capitol.

### SPIRIT OF INQUIRY.

As one of the measures for carrying on this war Congress has passed the so-called draft law under which the drawing had just taken place to determine the order in which those liable to military duty shall respond to the call. It is the consequences of this call which have brought about a spirit of inquiry and uneasiness among the people reflected in the meeting tonight..."

"The Chief Executive of this country has said that we have no quarrel with the German people, that they have had no hand in the making of the war, and that

we aim to spread in the world the gospel of Democracy and of the brotherhood of man, and that militarism must forever be laid low. Have we in this country had any more right than the people of Germany in the making of this war? If we have no quarrel with them, if they are our brothers, why then should we be commanded to kill them?"

### URGES LAW OBEYANCE

Major Pfaender urged the young men who had been drafted to obey the law, saying that Congress had the undoubted right to call every able bodied man into the service of the country at this time. He declared it to be the duty of these young men to respond promptly when called. Nothing can be gained, he said by resisting the draft. At the same time, he said it is up to those who remain at home to use every honorable means in their power to bring about a constitutional amendment providing for a referendum on the question of war...

### NEW ULM IS LOYAL.

For some time past citizens of New Ulm have been subjected to criticism that they have not been loyal on account of their German ancestry. This community had always been loyal...our ancestors then hardly naturalized citizens, donned the Union blue to suppress the Rebellion and support the Union. Again in the Spanish American war this community furnished more than its quota of men...

Declaring that there is no more loyal city in the country than New Ulm, F. H. Retzlaff, denied that Mayor Fritsche, Major Pfaender and himself were responsible for the agitation which had resulted in this great meeting.

"The boys of this city and vicinity have come to me for guidance and advice in this time of trouble," he said, "and I would not be doing my duty, if I did not stand by the boys."

...Mr. Retzlaff explained that a number of petitions had been prepared, petitioning Congress and the President, that the draft law might be changed, exempting those who objected from going to Europe to fight in the trenches.

### BELIEVE IN DEMOCRACY.

"This great assemblage proves that we are democratic," said Prof. M. J. Wagner, instructor in the Dr. Martin Luther College, who followed Mr. Retzlaff on the program, and who is among the drafted men.

"The draft law is undemocratic because it forces people to fight against their desires," continued the speaker. "If our boys are forced to fight, then we are not fighting for democracy, but for autocracy. We say that if the government repeals the draft law and clearly defines the aims of the war and we must fight for democracy we need no draft for everybody would be willing to enlist. If we fight this war in an autocratic manner for democratic ideals we are not consistent..."

The following petition was signed by several thousand of those present at the meeting and the copies now in circulation are being freely signed: "Avowing our loyalty to this country and pledging in its defense the highest sacrifices to the extent of life itself if need be, and with full realization of the difficulties that beset a government in times of war, we respectfully petition the President and Congress of this nation not to transport or force across the ocean to the battlefields of Europe any men outside of the regular army, contrary to their desires, but that such matter be left to voluntary enlistments."

Hofroester's Band, which occupied that band stand, played patriotic airs after each one of the speeches. At the close of the program the band played "America" while the audience sang the words.

This local reporter covered the same event as the *Minneapolis Tribune* reporter. Compare articles 5 and 6. List some similarities and differences. Why did this article appear on Aug. 1 when the meeting took place on July 26? Why is it a good idea to look at more than one report of an event?

## Article 7: Governor Removes New Ulm Officials.

From the *New Ulm Review*, found by using citations from *Watchdogs of Loyalty*.

# New Ulm Review

NEW ULM, BROWN COUNTY, MINNESOTA, DEC. 5 1917.

## BURNQUIST DECIDES AGAINST NEW ULM

RULES THAT MAYOR FRITSCHÉ AND MAJOR PFAENDER BE REMOVED.

COUNTY AUDITOR VOGEL GETS REINSTATEMENT IN THE SAME ORDER.

By an order issued by Governor Burnquist, Saturday, Dr. L. A. Fritsche is removed from the office of Mayor and Major Albert Pfaender is removed from the office of City Attorney of the city of New Ulm for malfeasance in office on account of their connection with and participation in the meeting held in the city of New Ulm

July 25th. By the same order Capt. Louis G. Vogel, auditor of Brown County, who was under suspension for the same offenses reinstated, Gov. Burnquist finding that the charges against him were insufficient to justify his removal....

Last Monday the suspended officials appeared before the Governor to give their reasons why they should not be removed. Mayor Fritsche and City Attorney Pfaender argued their own cases and set forth the reasons which in their opinion, were sufficient for reinstatement....

Governor Burnquist's findings are set forth at length in the order. He characterizes the

widely advertised New Ulm meeting, which was attended by between 8,000 and 10,000 persons, as unpatriotic and un-American and on this finding and their connection with it is the basis of the order ousting Fritsche and Pfaender.

"This mass meeting was reported by the newspapers over the state of Minnesota's an anti-draft meeting and as being in effect pro-German and disloyal to America," says the order, "and did tend to create among the drafted men who attended it a feeling that the draft law as enacted by congress was unjust and illegal..."

...Mayor Fritsche's removal from office is

based on a finding that he acted as chairman of the New Ulm meeting after aiding in its organization and advertising, and introduced speakers who "criticized the war as unworthy of popular support and stated that the draft law was unconstitutional and undemocratic."

...The conduct of Albert Pfaender in participating in and promoting the meetings, "designed and calculated to discourage the success of the United States in its war with its enemy," is the reason assigned for his permanent removal from office.

After an investigation conducted by the Commission on Public Safety, the governor removed from office two of the New Ulm officials who participated in the rally. How does the local paper describe the actions taken by the governor?

# Using Newspapers for Research

Newspapers can be excellent primary sources to use in your research. The key for all newspaper research is knowing a date and then finding the best newspaper(s) to look at. Different types of newspapers exist, and which ones you need will depend on your topic.

## GUIDE TO NEWSPAPERS

Type of Newspaper	Frequency of Publication	Distribution Area	Coverage	Where to Find Copies
National, such as <i>The New York Times</i>	daily	all over the country	national and world news	many university and major public libraries around the country
State or regional, such as <i>The Houston Chronicle</i>	daily	mostly within home state or metropolitan area	some national and world news; lots of in-state news	university and public libraries in home state, state historical society
Local, such as <i>The Columbia Flyer</i>	weekly or biweekly	county or town	local news	public and university libraries in home town, state and county historical societies

## HOW TO FIND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

1. Use indexes. Many university and major public libraries have copies of both *The New York Times Index* and the microfilm edition of *The New York Times*. *The Times* began publishing in 1851, so it can be useful in studying many topics in American and world history. The index is organized by year, so before you use it, you need to know what year the event you are researching took place. Once you have the year, you can look up the articles you want by name or subject. Several other newspapers also have indexes.
2. Scan the newspaper for the relevant period. To do this, you need to find out the exact date your topic occurred. Then you can look at issues of the newspaper in the days following that date. If you are looking at newspapers published before the 1840s, allow extra time for slow communications.
3. Use citations in secondary sources. You may find citations to or excerpts from specific newspaper articles in books or other works written by historians. You can then use those citations to find the complete articles.
4. Visit a local historical society or library. If your topic is of local interest, a local historical institution may have the newspaper or maintain a vertical file of clippings from newspapers. These typically are organized by topic, with each topic assigned a separate folder.

# Uncle Tom's Cabin: A Publication as a Turning Point

When Abraham Lincoln met Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1862, after the beginning of the Civil War, he supposedly said to her, "So you're the little lady whose book started this great war." Lincoln was referring to Stowe's authorship of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a novel recounting the struggles of several African American slaves to preserve their families and survive the experience of slavery.

## OBJECTIVES

- To understand how people reacted to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.
- To understand the impact of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* on public opinion and how its publication was a turning point which helped bring on the Civil War.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act as part of the Compromise of 1850. Southern slaveowners had complained that some of their slaves ran away to freedom in the North, often with assistance from the antislavery movement. The Act made it easier for slaveowners to recapture their escaped slaves and required citizens in Northern states to assist in the recapture if asked. Soon, Northern newspapers began carrying accounts of various African Americans forced back into slavery. Abolitionists denounced the Fugitive Slave Act.

Harriet Beecher Stowe was a member of a prominent Northern abolitionist family. By 1850, she was living in Brunswick, Maine. However, she had spent many years in Cincinnati, Ohio, where she had witnessed the plight of slaves fleeing from the



The flight of Eliza from the 1852 version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, courtesy of the Civil War Trust.

slave state of Kentucky. In the last chapter of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, she explains that she was moved to write the book when she heard good, religious people in the North debating whether or not it was their duty to return fugitive slaves. She thought to herself, "These men and Christians cannot know what slavery is; if they did, such a question could never be open for discussion. And from this arose a desire to exhibit it in a living dramatic reality." Stowe began working on a fictional account of slavery, which was published in 1851 in weekly installments in an antislavery newspaper. It was primarily a morality tale meant to point out those evils of slavery that would be most likely to sway public opinion in the North. Stowe's main argument had little to do with racial equality. Her arguments centered around religion and the sanctity of motherhood and family.

Due to popular demand, Stowe's work was published in book form as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* on March 20, 1852. It was not the first anti-slavery novel, but it was by far the most successful. The novel sold 10,000 copies in the first week and 300,000 by the end of the first year. Within two years *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had sold 2,000,000 copies worldwide. Performances of a play based on the novel drew audiences numbering in the hundreds of thousands. For many Northerners who had no personal experience with slavery, the novel personalized the evils of slavery. Some Northerners, however, criticized the book, some because they believed it exaggerated slavery's cruelty and others because they thought it downplayed slavery's cruelty. Most white Southerners denounced the book as an inaccurate and unfair portrayal of their "peculiar institution." Northern and Southern authors wrote at least 25 proslavery and "Anti-Tom" novels between 1852 and the beginning of the Civil War in 1861.

#### PREPARATION

Take a look at the Internet site, "Uncle Tom's Cabin & American Culture: A Multi-Media Archive," at <<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/utc/>>. Have your students read several chapters of the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* or discuss the plot with them. If you do not have printed copies of the book available, the

entire text, divided into chapters, is available at the "UTC & AC" web site, as are several children's editions of the book, which were published during the 1850s. Alternatively, you may want to have them act out several scenes from the play, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the text of which is available at the "UTC & AC" web site.

#### ACTIVITY 1: REACTIONS TO *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN*

Print copies of the reviews of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* found in the "Responses (1852-1930)" section of the "UTC & AC" web site. These reviews represent a spectrum of responses to the novel. Divide the students into small groups and give each group a different review. Ask each group to prepare a brief summary of its review, to be shared orally with the rest of the class. The summary should include whatever information can be gleaned about the reviewer (Northerner or Southerner, race, active abolitionist or pro-slavery, etc.), what the reviewer liked about the novel and why, and what the reviewer criticized about it and why. As the students make their reports, write two lists on the board: one listing what the reviewers praised and one listing what the reviewers criticized.

As either a homework assignment or as an in-class assignment the next day, ask students to write their own review. You may want to have them write a review taking the opposite position of the one their group had read: e.g., if they read a review that was largely critical, they should write a review which is mostly favorable and vice versa.

#### ACTIVITY 2: IMPACT OF *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN*

Print copies of some of the newspaper stories and notices about *Uncle Tom's Cabin* included in the "Responses (1852-1930)" section of the "UTC & AC" web site. Also print out the introduction to the 1878 edition of the book, which can be found in the "Stowe's Uncle Toms" section of the web site. Divide the students into small groups and give each a different story or notice. Ask them to summarize their article orally for the rest of the class. You might want to summarize the 1878 introduction yourself, since it is quite long (it includes the text of several letters written to Stowe).





A slave auction from the 1852 version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, courtesy of the Civil War Trust.

As either an in-class or homework assignment, ask each student to assume the role of a newspaper editor assigned to write an editorial at the time of Harriet Beecher Stowe's death in 1896. Using the information from the newspaper stories and notices and the 1878 introduction, they should write editorials assessing the impact of Stowe's life, especially of her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

#### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

1. For a long-term reading/writing assignment, have students compare one of the "Anti-Tom" novels to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The texts of several are available at the "UTC & AC" web site.
2. Have students compare slavery as portrayed in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to a real-life autobiography or memoir written by a former slave. The texts of many such books are available at "Documenting the American South: North American Slave Narratives, Beginnings to 1920," <<http://metalab.unc.edu/docsouth/neh/neh.html>>. For shorter narratives, try the WPA slave narratives. The entire set is available at many college libraries; look for George P. Rawick's multi-volume series *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography* or similar titles. Another
3. possibility would be to use the selected WPA narratives found in Ira Berlin, Marc Favreau, and Steven F. Miller, eds., *Remembering Slavery: African Americans Talk About Their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Freedom* (New York: New Press, distributed by Norton, 1998), which comes with two audiotapes of the narratives.

4. Have students explore some of the other publications which have had a significant impact on American history, such as Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, Jacob Riis' *How the Other Half Lives*, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, or Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*. All of these books had political consequences, whether by forcing Congress into action or stimulating reform movements. The records of Congressional debates and bills can help evaluate the impact of these books; these can be found at most college libraries. In addition, book reviews for twentieth-century books may be found using the *Book Review Digest* or similar publications, available in the reference section of college and some public libraries. Magazine articles may be found using the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* or, for the nineteenth century, *Poole's Index*.



## THE CIVIL WAR TRUST™

*Enriching Our Future By Preserving Our Past.*

The Civil War Trust is the nation's largest battlefield preservation organization with more than 30,000 members across the country. A private, non-profit organization, The Civil War Trust has a dual mission. First, the Trust is dedicated to the preservation of Civil War battlefields. To date, The Civil War Trust has committed more than \$5.2 million to assist in protecting more than 6,500 acres at 27 of the most important battlefield sites in 13 states. These include such sites as Perryville in Kentucky, Corinth in Mississippi, and Gettysburg in Pennsylvania.

The second part of the Trust's mission is to promote educational and heritage tourism programs to inform the public about the war and the fundamental conflicts that sparked it. The Trust has created the Civil War Explorer, an interactive computer exhibit for Civil War sites that uses video, music, animation, period maps, letters, and diaries to generate interest and enthusiasm about the topic. The Trust's web site, <http://www.CivilWar.org>, includes history articles, current preservation news, and travel and tourism information. The Civil War Trust's Civil War Discovery Trail, a heritage tourism initiative, has expanded to include more than 500 Civil War sites and has already resulted in three editions of the popular Frommer's Guide, The Civil War Trust's Official Guide to the Civil War Discovery Trail. Through these and other education and tourism initiatives, the Trust reaches out to the American public to generate support for battlefield preservation. For more information, call 1-800-CW-TRUST.

## Teaching with Historic Places

First Manassas. Gettysburg. Andersonville. These Civil War sites annually draw thousands of visitors, beckoning them into the past. For your students, however, they may just be names in a textbook, mere items for memorization. One way to make these sites come alive for your students is to take advantage of an educational program called Teaching with Historic Places (TwHP).

In 1991, the National Park Service and the National Trust for Historic Preservation jointly created TwHP, which uses properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places to examine developments throughout American history and across the country. Studying historic sites as evidence from the past requires active involvement, imparts a sense of discovery, and makes learning exciting. TwHP has created a variety of products and activities that guide teachers through this process. These include ready-to-use lesson plans, multifaceted education kits, and

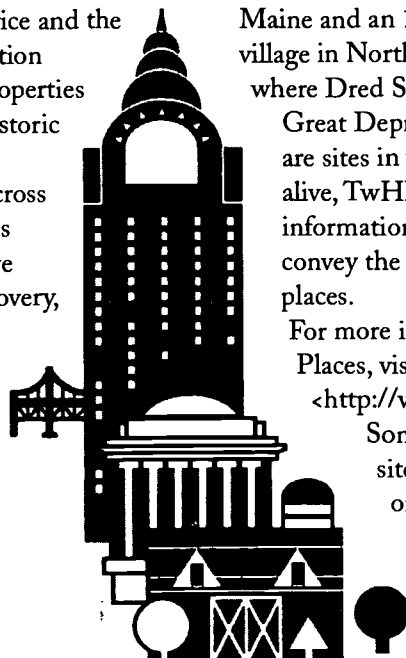
professional development materials and workshops.

TwHP has produced lessons for sites all over the country, from a family home associated with the women's rights movement in upstate New York to an island in Alaska which was the site of a World War II battle to an immigrant neighborhood in Tampa, Florida. In addition, TwHP covers the spectrum of American history from an early settlement in frontier Maine and an 18th-century Mandan and Hidatsa village in North Dakota to a Missouri courthouse where Dred Scott tried to win his freedom to a Great Depression-era camp in Maryland. If there are sites in your area which can bring history alive, TwHP can provide you with a packet of information on how to create lesson plans to convey the meaning and importance of these places.

For more information on Teaching with Historic Places, visit the TwHP web site at

<<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/home.html>>.

Some lessons are available on-line. The site also provides information on how to order TwHP materials.



# Turning Points on the Road to War: Secession and Its Causes

by Jo Ann Williford, North Carolina Division of Archives and History

## OBJECTIVES

- To use documentary sources to analyze contemporary attitudes toward secession.
- To understand the motives of those who supported and those who opposed secession.

## INTRODUCTION

The final rift between North and South was many years in the making. Historically, while the two sections sometimes differed on other issues, such as tariffs, the major dividing point was slavery, the South's "peculiar institution."

Congress had constructed numerous compromises in the decades before 1860 to try to diffuse the conflict.

In 1860, however, the divisiveness came to a head.

Four candidates competed in the presidential election that November.

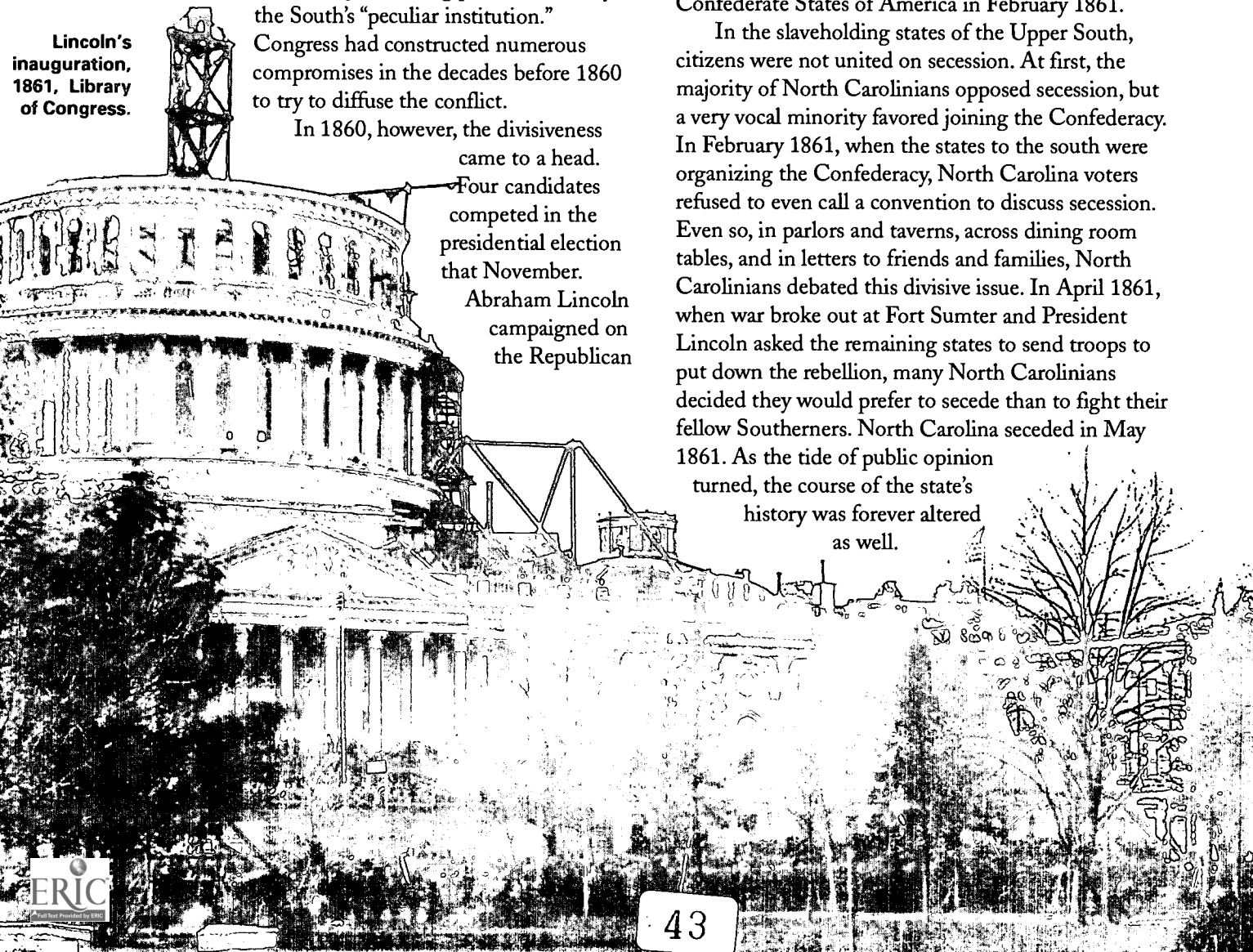
Abraham Lincoln campaigned on the Republican

ticket. Lincoln opposed the expansion of slavery, but many Southerners believed he wanted to go further and abolish the institution throughout the country. Without a single electoral vote from the South, Abraham Lincoln — the man suspected by fearful Southerners of being an abolitionist — was elected president of the United States.

The reaction from the Deep South was immediate. On December 20, 1860, South Carolina seceded from the United States. Other states of the Deep South quickly followed, establishing the Confederate States of America in February 1861.

In the slaveholding states of the Upper South, citizens were not united on secession. At first, the majority of North Carolinians opposed secession, but a very vocal minority favored joining the Confederacy. In February 1861, when the states to the south were organizing the Confederacy, North Carolina voters refused to even call a convention to discuss secession. Even so, in parlors and taverns, across dining room tables, and in letters to friends and families, North Carolinians debated this divisive issue. In April 1861, when war broke out at Fort Sumter and President Lincoln asked the remaining states to send troops to put down the rebellion, many North Carolinians decided they would prefer to secede than to fight their fellow Southerners. North Carolina seceded in May 1861. As the tide of public opinion turned, the course of the state's history was forever altered as well.

Lincoln's inauguration, 1861, Library of Congress.



## PREPARATION

Have students read the section of their textbook about the election of 1860 and the South's reaction to it.

## ACTIVITY

Have students read the following excerpts from the diary of a North Carolina woman and the correspondence of two men.

### EXCERPT 1: CATHERINE EDMONSTON

Catherine Anne Devereux Edmonston was the daughter of a wealthy eastern North Carolina planter. In 1846, she married Patrick Muir Edmonston, a South Carolinian, and they eventually settled on a plantation in Halifax County, North Carolina, where they were living in 1860. In June of that year, Mrs. Edmonston began a journal in which she recorded her thoughts and observations of current events. The following entries are from Beth G. Crabtree and James W. Patton, eds., *Journal of a Secesh Lady: The Diary of Catherine Ann Devereux Edmonston* (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1979).

*November 25, 1860*

"Mr. Miller [Mrs. Edmonston's brother-in-law] seems to have an especial spite against Slave holders; asks in a tone of acrimony and bitterness if 'we expect the West and the white population who have none, to fight for our negroes?' 'Certainly I do.'"

*February 10, 1861*

"Sister Frances is a terrible Unionist! Right or wrong, this 'Glorious Union' is every thing. Now it is no longer glorious — when it ceases to be voluntary, it degenerates into a hideous oppression. Regret it heartily, mourn over it as for a lost friend, but do not seek to enforce it; it is like galvanizing a dead body."

*February 18, 1861*

"It gets almost painful to go to Father's we differ so widely. He it is true says nothing personal or unhandsome, but he censures so sweepingly every thing that S[outh] C[arolina] does. Mama & Susan do go on so about the 'Flag.' Who cares for the old striped rag now that the principle it represented is gone? It is but an emblem of a past glory. How can it be upheld when the spirit — nay even the body — that gave it value is lost? ... Today was inaugurated at

Montgomery [Alabama] Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America, consisting of the states of South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana & Texas. O that North Carolina would join with her Southern sisters—sisters in blood, in soil, in climate & in institution."

### Questions:

- How did the members of Mrs. Edmonston's family view secession?
- What was Mrs. Edmonston's personal view of secession?
- What reasons did she give for her opinion on this issue?

### EXCERPT 2: ZEBULON B. VANCE

Zebulon Vance was from a politically prominent family in western North Carolina, a mountainous region with relatively few slaves. He served as a Democrat in the U.S. Congress from 1858 to 1861. He enlisted in the Confederate Army, reaching the rank of colonel, and served as governor of North Carolina from 1862 to 1866. This letter is printed in Frontis W. Johnston, ed., *The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1963).

*Letter to William Dickson, December 11, 1860*

"The Whole Southern mind is inflamed to the highest pitch and the leaders in the disunion move are scorning every suggestion of compromise and rushing everything with ruinous and indecent haste that would seem to imply that they were absolute fools — Yet they are acting wisely for their ends — they are 'precipitating' the people into a revolution without giving them time to think — They fear lest the people shall think; ... But the people must think, and when they do begin to think and hear the matter properly discussed they will consider long and soberly before they tear down this noble fabric and invite anarchy and confusion, carnage, civil war, and financial ruin with the breathless hurry of men flying from pestilence ... If we go out now we cant take the army and navy with us, and Lincoln could easily employ them to force us back and he could to prevent our going out ... We have everything to gain and nothing to lose by delay, but by too hasty action we may take a fatal step that we never can retrace — may lose a heritage that we can never recover 'though we

**A PROCLAMATION,**  
BY JOHN W. ELLIS,  
**GOVERNOR OF NORTH CAROLINA**

seek it earnestly and with tears.”

**Questions:**

- What did Congressman Vance think of secession?
- Did he think the time was right for secession? Why or why not?

**EXCERPT 3 JONATHAN WORTH**

Jonathan Worth was serving as a state senator in 1861. His letters are printed in J.G. de Roulhac Hamilton, ed., *The Correspondence of Jonathan Worth*, Vol. 1 (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Co., 1909).

*Letter to Springs, Oak & Co., May 13, 1861*

“I have been the most persevering and determined public man in my State to preserve the Union — the last to abandon the hope, that the good sense of the Nation would prevent a collision between the extremes, each of which I viewed with equal abhorrence. I am left no other alternative but to fight for or against my section. I can not hesitate. Lincoln has made us a unit to resist until we repel our invaders or die.”

*Letter to D. G. Worth, May 15, 1861*

“I think the South is committing suicide, but my lot is cast with the South and being unable to manage the ship, I intend to face the breakers manfully and go down with my companions.”

**Questions:**

- What significant events happened in April prior to these letters being written?
- Had Senator Worth strongly supported secession since the time of Lincoln’s election?
- Why did he choose in the end to side with the secessionists?
- How successful did he think secession would be?
- Compare and contrast the views of Mrs. Edmonston, Congressman Vance, and Senator Worth. Why did they disagree on secession?

**ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION**

1. The diary and letters in this lesson are by residents of North Carolina, but you may want to use excerpts from the writings of other Southerners. You can find published diaries and letters dating from this period for the residents of almost any Southern state and many Northern

**WHEREAS:** By Proclamation of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, followed by a requisition of Simon Cameron, Secretary of War, I am informed that the said Abraham Lincoln has made a call for 75,000 men to be employed for the invasion of the peaceful homes of the South, and for the violent subversion of the liberties of a free people, constituting a large part of the whole population of the late United States: And, whereas, this high-handed act of tyrannical outrage is not only in violation of all constitutional law, in utter disregard of every sentiment of humanity and Christian civilization, and conceived in a spirit of aggression unparalleled by any act of recorded history, but is a direct step towards the subjugation of the whole South, and the conversion of a free Republic, inherited from our fathers, into a military despotism, to be established by worse than foreign enemies on the ruins of our once glorious Constitution of Equal Rights.

Now, therefore, I, JOHN W. ELLIS, Governor of the State of North-Carolina, for these extraordinary causes, do hereby issue this, my Proclamation, notifying and requesting the Senators and Members of the House of Commons of the General Assembly of North-Carolina, to meet in Special Session at the Capitol, in the City of Raleigh, on Wednesday the first day of May next. And I furthermore exhort all good citizens throughout the State to be mindful that their first allegiance is due to the Sovereignty which protects their homes and dearest interests, as their first service is due for the sacred defence of their hearths, and of the soil which holds the graves of our glorious dead.

United action in defence of the sovereignty of North-Carolina, and of the rights of the South, becomes now the duty of all.

Given under my hand, and attested by the Great Seal of the State. Done at the City of Raleigh, the 17th day of April, A. D., 1861, and in the eighty-fifth year of our Independence.

JOHN W. ELLIS.

By the Governor  
GRAHAM DAVIS, Private Secretary

states in university and public libraries and bookstores. The most widely available diary may be that of Mary Boykin Chesnut, *Diary from Dixie*, which has been published in several versions. The Chesnut diary and many others are also available on the Internet from Documenting the American South <<http://metalab.unc.edu/docsouth>>.

If you choose excerpts from several different states, you could ask students to break into groups and give each group excerpts from a different state. Ask the groups to:

- a. Summarize the reactions to secession in their excerpts.

b. If your students have Internet access, ask them to create a brief profile of the state they've been assigned. They could include population characteristics such as the size of the white, free black, and slave populations; economic characteristics such as the type of agricultural and industrial activity; and which political party dominated the governor's office or presidential elections in the state. The US Historical Census Data Browser <<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/census>> has population by state and county for the 1860 census. Political information may be found at Furman University's *1850s Statistical Almanac* <<http://www.furman.edu/benson/docs/#Statistics>>.

Ask the groups to present their summaries and state profiles to the class, either orally or on a poster. This will help students to understand the differing reactions to secession.

2. Another way to get a broader view of the secession crisis and the opinions held by people in different areas is to look at newspaper editorials from the time period. The American Historical Association many years ago sponsored a project to print collections of editorials on secession. These books are:

Dwight L. Dumond, ed., *Southern Editorials on Secession* (New York: 1931)

Howard C. Perkins, ed., *Northern Editorials on Secession* (New York: 1942)

These are widely available at university libraries. Photocopy some of the more extremist anti- and pro-secession editorials. Have the students break into small groups. Give each group an anti-secession and a pro-secession editorial and ask the group members to summarize the arguments each editorial makes. If you can't find the books, see if a university library nearby has the CD-ROM collection called *The Civil War: A Newspaper Perspective* (Malvern, PA: Accessible Archives, 1994). This has the full text of more than 11,000 articles from the *Charleston Mercury*, the *New York Herald*, and the *Richmond Enquirer* from November 1, 1860 to April 30, 1865. The text is keyword searchable, so you can easily find

editorials on secession from these three newspapers.

As a writing assignment, ask students to write a letter to the editor of one of the newspapers whose editorial they read; in the letter, they should refute the arguments made in the editorial.

As an alternative writing assignment, ask the students to pretend that they are living in the Upper South in early 1861 (whether before or after the firing on Fort Sumter is up to you). Have them write a letter to a close friend or family member, trying to persuade that person to support (or oppose) secession by using some of the arguments found in the editorials.

3. A whole series of events occurred during the 1850s which poisoned the relationship between North and South. One way of getting your students to understand the issues dividing the two sections is to have them debate the issues as people did at the time, arguing from either an extremist Southern view or an extremist Northern view. The Secession Era Editorials Project at Furman University <<http://www.furman.edu/~benson/docs/editorial>> has placed on-line dozens of editorials relating to four different events of the 1850s (the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Bleeding Sumner, the Dred Scott decision, and John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry).

Have your students break into eight groups. Assign the first group to defend the extremist Southern view on Kansas-Nebraska, the next the extremist Northern view on the same act, the third to defend the extremist Southern view on Bleeding Sumner, and so on. If your students have Internet access, have them look at the editorials themselves; otherwise, print copies for them. Give the groups one or two class periods to develop their arguments, using their textbooks and the editorials, then devote another class period to the actual debate. Allot each issue 1/4th of the class time. If you have a fifty-minute class, for example, you could assign each issue 12.5 minutes. Give each group four minutes to present its argument, then two minutes each for rebuttal. Each group should assign one or two people to present the initial argument, while the others take notes during the other group's argument and then present the rebuttal.



"First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation," by Francis Carpenter, courtesy of the U.S. Senate Collection.

# Abraham Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation: Using Art to Study the Past

by John Riley, White House Historical Association

When studying events that occurred before the widespread use of photography, historians have used artwork to supplement resources such as documents, diaries, and artifacts. While an artist's view of an event is less accurate than first-hand written accounts, many paintings and engravings can tell us what events were found important enough to document in this way. Artists, after all, were in the business of selling their works, and would often offer popular images that were attractive to buyers. Using

symbols, an artist can tell a story beyond the actual event that a photographer cannot. The painting used in this lesson, "First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation before Lincoln's Cabinet," is one of the best-known historical paintings in American history, along with John Trumbull's paintings of the Battle of Bunker Hill and the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

## OBJECTIVES

- To analyze artwork as historical artifact. By observing the composition of the artwork, students will develop questions about the historical event depicted, the use of symbols, and the artist's role in documenting events.
- To recognize that the Emancipation Proclamation was a major turning point in the Civil War, that it turned the war into a fight for freedom, and weakened the Confederate cause by providing freed slaves the opportunity to fight in the Union forces against their former owners. They will also understand that the Proclamation was not universally supported in the north, or even within Lincoln's own cabinet.

## INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the Civil War, the U.S. Congress had passed a resolution stating that it had no interest in destroying slavery, simply in preserving the Union. The more radical members of the Republican Party, however, saw the war in moral terms and insisted that slaves should be emancipated. As the number of casualties rose and it became clear that victory would not come easily, more and more Northerners began to favor freeing the slaves, some for moral reasons, but others wanted to punish Southern slaveowners or simply thought freeing the slaves would be a good way of disrupting the Southern war effort.

President Abraham Lincoln drafted a proclamation freeing the slaves, which he first read to his Cabinet on July 22, an event captured on canvas by Francis Carpenter. Secretary of State William Seward suggested that the proclamation should not be issued until after a Union victory, so that it would not seem to be a desperate measure. In September 1862, after Union troops won the battle of Antietam, President Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, announcing that he would officially sign the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, unless the Southern states ended the war. On the first day of 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. It expanded the aim of the war: to the preservation of the union was added a battle for freedom. Lincoln stated that "all persons held as slaves" within the rebellious states "shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free." Those slaves held in

any Union state were not affected, nor were those slaves in the South who lived in territory that had already come under Union control. The Proclamation also invited people of color to join the U.S. Army and Navy.

Some northerners felt Lincoln did not go far enough, that he did not speak in strong moral terms and should not have allowed slavery to remain in such places as the Union border states. Other northerners opposed emancipation: some owned slaves and feared that eventually their own slaves would be liberated by the order, and some northerners thought that they might lose their jobs when freed slaves flooded to their cities and towns looking for work. Lincoln himself believed the Emancipation Proclamation was "the central act of my administration, and the great event of the nineteenth century."

## ACTIVITY

Artists in the 19th century often painted or engraved historical scenes, and they can be used to better understand dramatic events of the American past. When evaluating artwork as a historical document, one should consider the artist's knowledge of the event he or she is depicting. Did the artist know the subjects? Did he have access to those who were present at the event so he could faithfully record it? The artist's point of view, or his attempt to symbolize larger ideas in a painting, must be considered when studying the historical artwork. Did the artist want to make a statement?

From February through July 1864, artist Francis Bicknell Carpenter (1830-1900) worked at the White House creating a painting entitled, "First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation before Lincoln's Cabinet." Carpenter was a strong opponent of slavery and had already gained some fame for his portraits of political leaders. This painting shows President Lincoln in his White House office reading a draft of the proclamation, an event that occurred on July 22, 1862. While Carpenter was not present for the actual signing, he spoke extensively with the president and others about the occasion and wrote about his experiences in *The Inner Life of Abraham Lincoln: Six Months at the White House* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

In the painting, the president is testing his Cabinet's reactions to the idea of proclaiming freedom



for slaves. From left to right, the men in the portrait are: Secretary of War Edwin Stanton (seated), Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, President Lincoln, Secretary of the Navy Gideon Wells, Secretary of the Interior Caleb B. Smith, Secretary of State William Seward, Postmaster General Montgomery Blair and Attorney General Edward Bates.

A parchment copy of the U.S. Constitution lies on the cabinet table, and a portrait of Andrew Jackson can be seen through the chandelier. Jackson, who served as president thirty years before Lincoln, was known for his strong union stance.

Examine the painting. Answer the questions using information you already know, added to knowledge you gain from studying the picture.

1. Carpenter was very careful about where he placed the various people in the painting; his purpose, he said, "was to give that prominence to the different individuals which belonged to them respectively in the Administration." Based on that intention, who were the most prominent people? Who were the least prominent? Based on where people were in relation to Lincoln (nearer, farther), who were the people likeliest to support his program?
2. Study each cabinet member. Look at their facial expressions and body language. How do you think each cabinet member reacted to the Proclamation based on your observations?
3. There are two documents in the picture, the Emancipation Proclamation and the U.S. Constitution. Where are they located and why are they in the picture?
4. The painting hanging on the wall behind the chandelier is a portrait of Andrew Jackson. Why is it in the picture?
5. Lighting can also be used symbolically. What parts of the painting are well-lit? What parts are dark? What might Carpenter be trying to convey by this lighting?
6. What kind of overall impression does the painting give? How would you describe in words the event which Carpenter painted?

#### AFTERWORD

According to Carpenter, Postmaster General Blair opposed the Emancipation Proclamation,

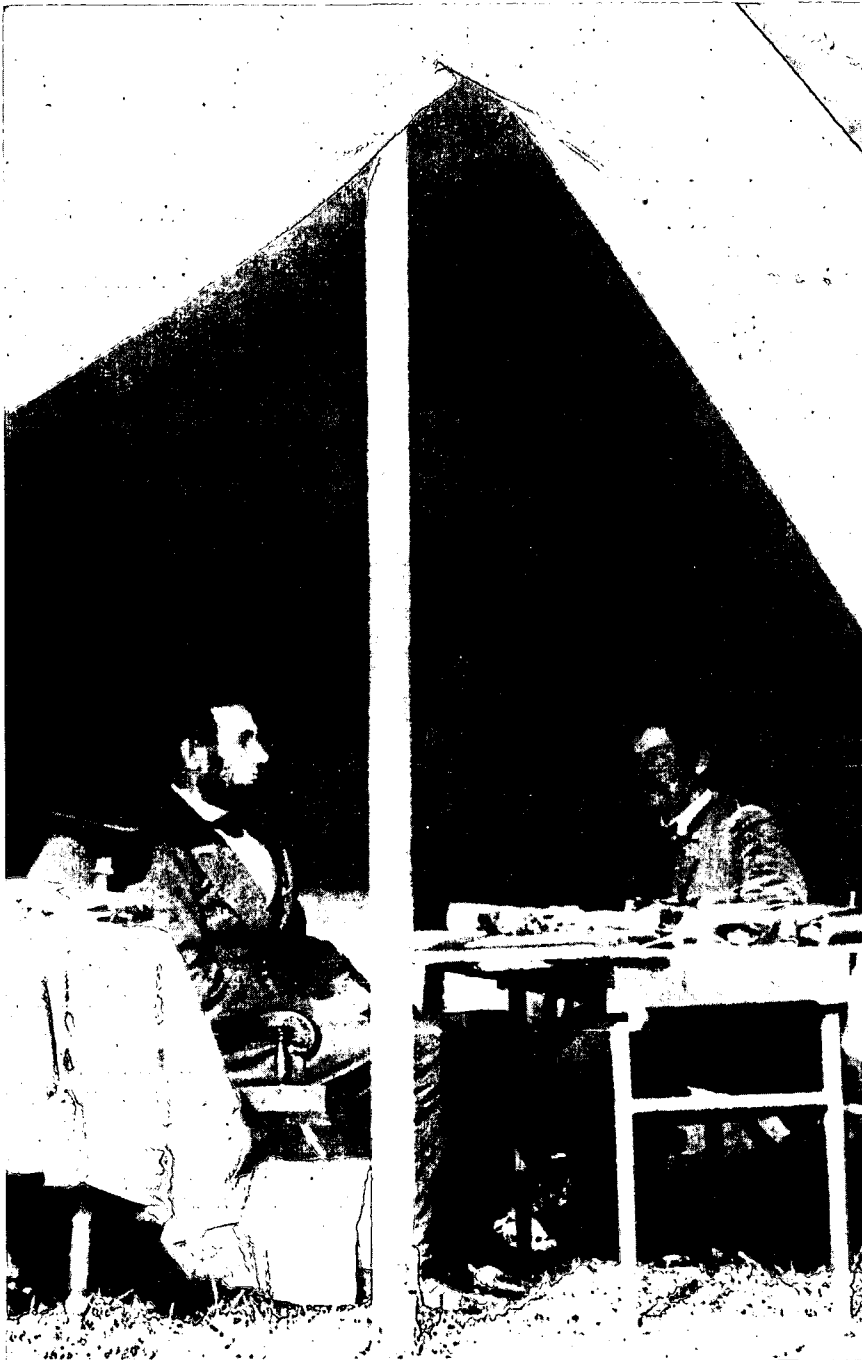
because he believed it would prove costly to the Republican Party in the fall congressional elections that year. Secretary of the Interior Smith was similarly concerned about the voters' reaction, while Attorney General Bates doubted that the Proclamation was constitutional. Secretary of the Treasury Chase was a longtime opponent of slavery, as was Secretary of State Seward, and strongly supported the Emancipation Proclamation. Secretary of War Stanton had long advocated using African-American troops. Secretary of the Navy Wells also supported the Proclamation.

#### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

1. Have students find a photograph that captured a famous historical event (John Kennedy's funeral, Charles Lindbergh landing in Paris, etc.) and do some background research so they understand the figures and setting. Have them imagine that the photograph is their memory of being at the event, and then have students put the photograph away and draw or paint the scene. Compare the photo with their artwork. How accurate were they? Did certain figures become more or less prominent? How important did the subjects vs. the setting become in their artwork? Did some figures become "larger than life?" Did their artwork have a message?
2. The use of symbols in art to represent larger ideas is as old as art itself. Books on the table in a portrait represent an educated gentleman. The lion stands for courage in a coat of arms. An olive branch indicates a striving for peace. Today, symbols take many forms: a flag represents a nation, a logo represents a company or product, the elephant and donkey represent the Republican and Democratic political parties. From looking around the classroom, students should be able to locate symbols. Ask students to go further and search through magazines and newspapers and collect symbols. Cut and paste the symbols, display them to classmates and quiz them on the meaning of the symbols. Are some symbols more easily recognized than others? Is there room for disagreement on what a symbol represents, or should it be universally understood? Have each student research the origins of one symbol that they collected.

# Battles as Turning Points: Atlanta and the Election of 1864

by Julie Fix, Civil War Trust



It is obvious how individual battles can be turning points in the military history of a war, but battles are often just as pivotal in a nation's political or diplomatic history. Lincoln, for example, issued the Emancipation Proclamation after the Union victory at Antietam. The same battle helped convince England that it would not be wise to extend full diplomatic recognition to the Confederate States. Battlefield success helped launch the national political careers of Julius Caesar, George Washington, and many others. Success or failure on the battlefield can also affect wartime elections. The Tet offensive in 1968, for example, increased popular opposition to the Vietnam War, a major factor in Lyndon Johnson's decision not to seek re-election that year. This lesson focuses on the presidential election of 1864, by which time the Northern public had grown weary of civil war, especially when victory seemed distant.

**Lincoln visiting  
McClellan after  
Antietam, Library  
of Congress.**

## OBJECTIVES

- To learn what the basic issues and who the candidates were in the presidential election of 1864.
- To understand how and why the battle of Atlanta was a turning point in the 1864 election.

## ACTIVITY 1

Tell your students that you are taking a poll for an upcoming presidential election (don't mention the Civil War to them yet). Give them the following two candidate profiles and let them vote for the candidate they think is most likely to win.

### *Candidate 1*

This candidate is the incumbent. He is a lawyer and former Congressman. His election four years ago brought on a war that the country has been fighting ever since. The war is not going well but he is determined to keep fighting until one side or the other has won. If your country wins, he has no plans to punish your enemy, but instead wants to help them recover economic stability as soon as possible. He is strongly in favor of civil rights.

### *Candidate 2*

This candidate was the general commanding your forces in this war until Candidate 1 dismissed him. He was very popular with your troops and many people say that if he were still in command the war would not be going so badly. Still, he is campaigning on a peace platform. If he wins, he will negotiate a

truce with your enemy and stop the war. He is not against civil rights, but he is not as strongly in favor of them as Candidate 1.

Now tell your students that you just heard some important news. Your country has just won a big battle and it looks like you could win this war after all. Ask them if they would consider changing their vote.

Candidate 1 is Abraham Lincoln as many people saw him in the summer of 1864. More radical members of his own party thought that he was not prosecuting the war vigorously enough. The summer of 1864 was one of the darkest seasons of Lincoln's presidency. During a three-month span that summer, Union casualties totaled 110,000, double the number during any comparable period of the war. Lincoln was heavily criticized by newspaper editors, members of Congress, and others for his insistence that the Confederacy must end slavery as a condition of peace. Some of his other policies were equally unpopular. In August, Lincoln gloomily predicted to a friend that he was "going to be beaten, and unless some great change takes place, badly beaten."

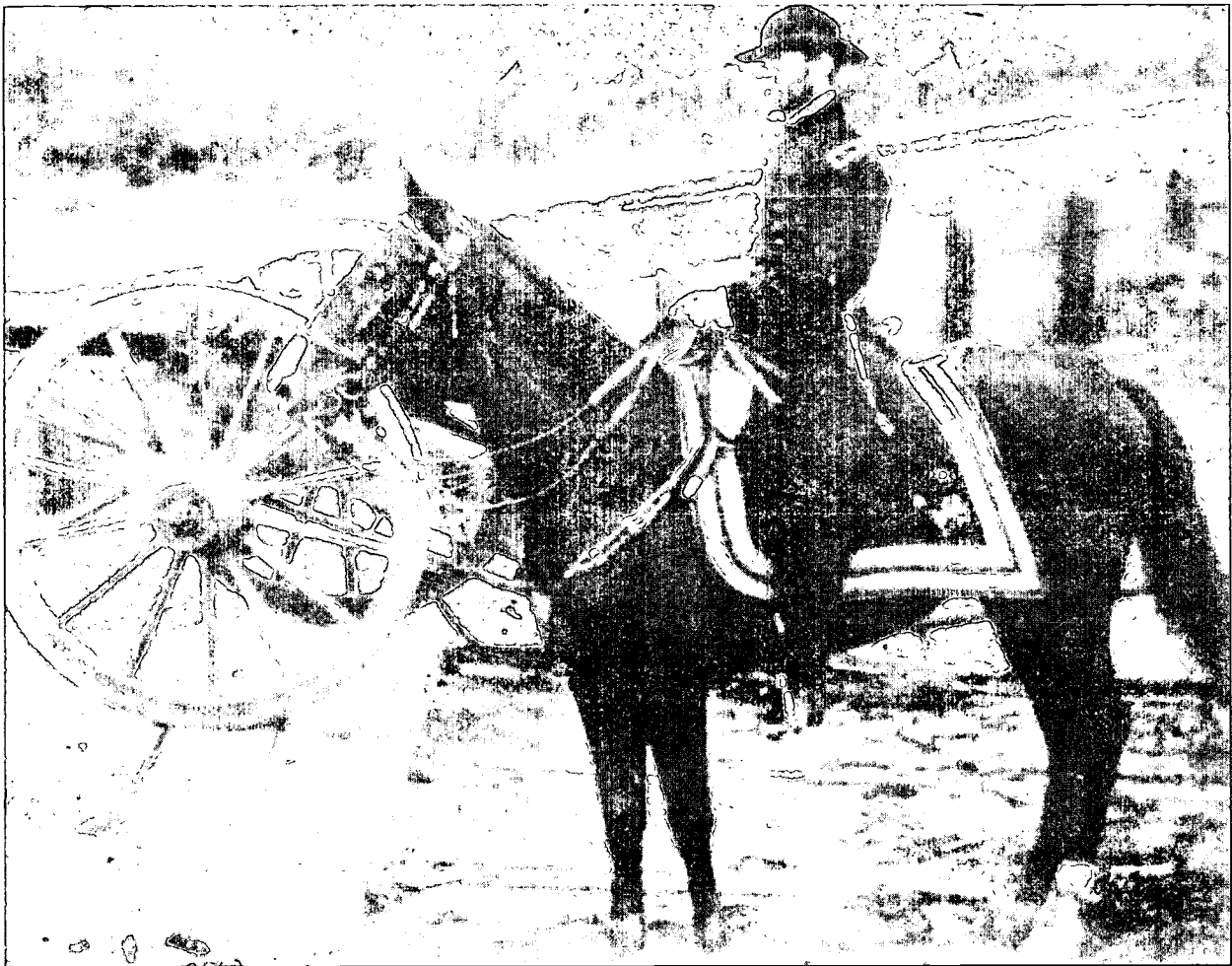
Lincoln's opponent in the 1864 presidential race was Peace Democrat George McClellan. The Democratic Party platform, adopted at the party's convention at the end of August, demanded an immediate end to the war. Southerners rejoiced. *The Charleston Mercury* exulted that a Democratic victory in November — just two months away at that

point — "must lead to peace and our independence ... if ... we hold our own and prevent military success by our foes."

Southern hopes for McClellan's election were quickly dashed. On September 2, just a few days after the Democratic convention, Union troops captured Atlanta. The political picture changed overnight. Headlines blazoned the news across the North. Dissidents within the Republican party abandoned plans to nominate an alternate Republican candidate and threw their political clout into the effort to defeat McClellan. When the election was held only two months later, Lincoln won with 212 electoral votes, beating McClellan by more than 500,000 popular votes. His support was especially strong among Union soldiers.

## ACTIVITY 2

Ask your students to pretend they are in a parallel universe where Lincoln lost the election of 1864 and McClellan negotiated a peace with the Confederacy. Have them write a brief encyclopedia-style article about the Confederate States of America as it might exist today. (They might take a current article about the U.S.A. and alter it to fit — for example, the country was founded in 1861, its first President was Jefferson Davis, its capital is Richmond, Virginia ...).



General Sherman after the fall of Atlanta, Library of Congress.

#### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

1. If your local university library has the CD-ROM collection, *The Civil War: A Newspaper Perspective* (Malvern, PA: Accessible Archives, 1994), print out the editorials and news stories from all 3 newspapers (*Charleston Mercury*, *New York Herald*, *Richmond Enquirer*) covering the Democratic convention and nomination of McClellan in late August 1864. Also print out stories and editorials about the fall of Atlanta and its political consequences from early September.

If you don't have access to the CD-ROM collection, you will probably be able to find some

newspapers on microfilm at the local university or public library. Many libraries have copies of the *New York Times* on microfilm; the *Times* began publication in 1851 and is indexed back to that time, so it should be easy to find the right pages. Many university libraries will also have copies of the *Times of London*, which is also indexed and which covered the American Civil War with keen interest. Finally, the libraries may also have microfilm of a newspaper from your state for that period; most of these newspapers are not indexed, but you can easily find the appropriate issues by looking at the dates.

Give each student or group of students copies of the pre- and

post-fall of Atlanta stories and editorials from one newspaper. Ask them to assume the role of a political consultant to either Lincoln or McClellan. Have them write a report for their candidate summarizing the stories and evaluating the battle's potential effect on the upcoming presidential election. If they can come up with ideas, if they are advising Lincoln, ask them to suggest ways he can gain the greatest political advantage possible from the victory. If they're advising McClellan, ask them to suggest ways to handle the fact that his major campaign theme (making immediate peace with the Confederacy) is now discredited.

# Senator Robert Dole, World War II, and National History Day

*Senator Robert Dole, co-chair of the World War II Memorial fundraising campaign, graciously agreed to be interviewed by Cathy Gorn, executive director of National History Day. The interview focused on how World War II transformed his life and why he believes it is important for young people to study the past, including the war.*

In 1943, more than a year after the United States entered World War II, a Kansas college student named Robert Dole enlisted in the U.S. Army. Military service would completely change his life.

Second

Lieutenant Robert Dole joined the Tenth Mountain Infantry Division which was fighting in northern Italy. On April 14, 1945, just three weeks before Germany surrendered, the young officer was leading his platoon in an assault when shrapnel ripped up his right shoulder and back, nearly killing him and paralyzing his arms and legs. His ordeal had begun.

Over the next four years, Bob Dole spent 39 months in hospitals, coming near death several times. With iron determination and

the help of medical personnel, family, and neighbors, he eventually regained the use of all his limbs, although his right arm never fully recovered.

Bob Dole's wounds and his struggle to

overcome them changed his life. They transformed his character, his career goals, and his outlook. In adversity, he found strength. He admits that before joining the army, he had not been "very focused on education, hard work, and discipline and all the things you need to do in college or high school." But he "came back with a much different attitude. I had to get with the program." The GI Bill — which Dole calls "one little law that changed America for the better" — helped him return to college. With his hopes of becoming a



Senator Robert Dole, 1999, courtesy of Senator Dole.

doctor dashed by his injuries, he majored in history, then went on to law school and began a career in politics, rising to become a U.S. senator from Kansas and eventually Senate Majority Leader.

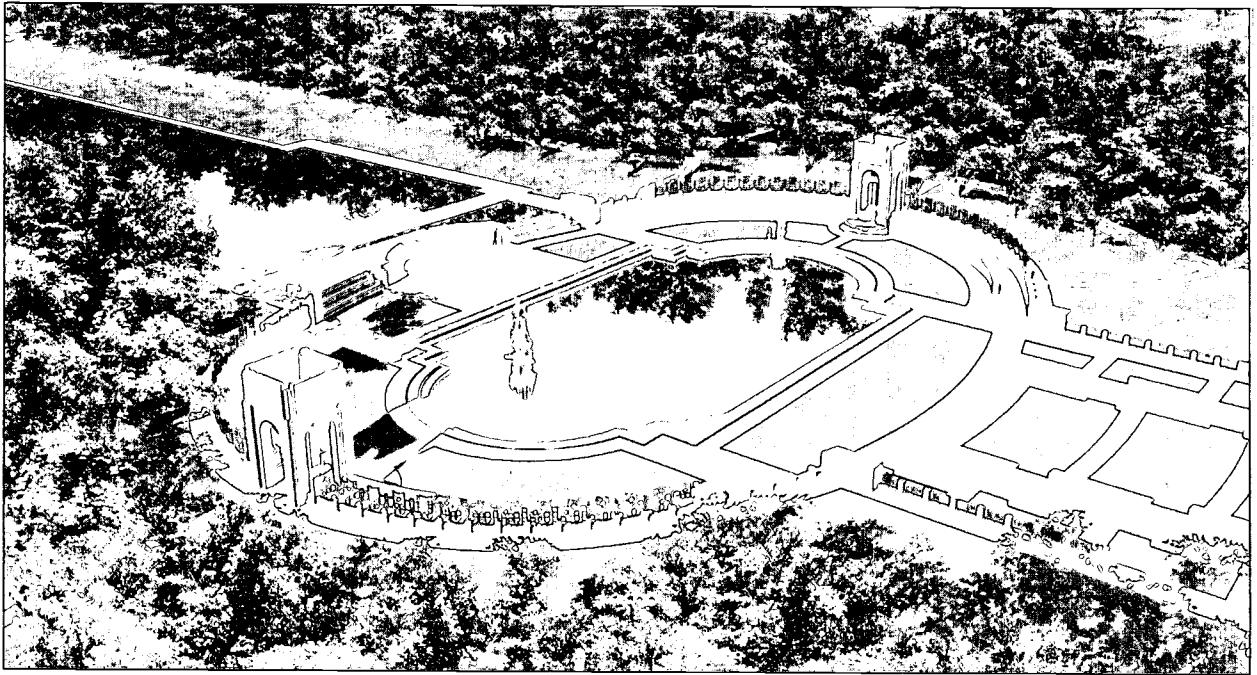
In 1994, Senator Dole participated in the 50th anniversary commemoration of the D-Day invasion of France. Many of the veterans attending brought their children and grandchildren with them. The senator remembers thinking during the observances that, "if every young person in America could be here today we would live in a much better country. They'd understand sacrifice; they would be proud of their grandfathers or great-grandfathers, not because they were shooting at people, but because they were preserving freedom and democracy for the whole world."

Now, after retiring from politics, Senator Dole is co-chairing the National World War II Memorial Campaign. This memorial will honor all Americans who participated in the war effort. The war, he believes, was a turning point not just for him and those of his generation, but for the world. "Had we failed," he notes, "I don't think young people observing National History Day would be living in a free country with outstanding teachers and role models. And others [around the world] would be dictated to by some successor to Hitler." Consequently, he believes the Allied victory in the war was "the greatest achievement ... of this century."

Having majored in history, Senator Dole appreciates the importance of studying it. "If you can't appreciate the past and the sacrifices that were made," he believes, "I don't think you can have a vision for the future." Throughout history, the great turning points — revolutions, wars, protest movements, migrations, inventions, and so on — are the result of many individuals who sacrificed, who endured great trials and overcame obstacles, who unselfishly gave of themselves. In Senator Dole's opinion, there are "literally hundreds of thousands" of heroes in our history. The challenge for National History Day students is to find out about the heroes — in their own backyards, in their families, or in national and world history — and tell their stories as they study "Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events."



Lieutenant Robert Dole, 1943, courtesy of the National World War II Memorial.



The National World War II Memorial, rendering by Christopher Stack.

## The National World War II Memorial

While World War II is probably the greatest turning point of the 20th century, it was not until 1993 that the U.S. government began planning a national memorial to honor those who participated in it. In that year, Congress authorized the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), an independent agency of the executive branch, to build a National World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. The site chosen is on the National Mall, between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. President Clinton dedicated the site on Veterans Day 1995. The ABMC hopes to break ground by Veterans Day 2000.

The Memorial will honor the more than 400,000 Americans who died in the conflict, the 16 million who served in the military, and the millions more who contributed on the home front. It will pay tribute to the spirit, sacrifice, and commitment of the American people to the common defense of the nation and to the broader causes of peace and freedom from tyranny throughout the world. Above all, the memorial will stand as an important symbol

of American national unity, a timeless reminder of the moral strength and awesome power that can flow when a free people are at once united and bonded together in a common and just cause.

Spearheading the National World War II Campaign are Senator Robert Dole, a World War II veteran, and Frederick W. Smith, a former U.S. Marine and chairman, president, and chief executive officer of FDX Corporation. The National World War II Memorial Campaign is partnering with National History Day to promote the study of World War II in the nation's schools during the 1999 - 2000 school year. According to Bob Lewis, Director of Education for the Campaign, "Through their research, we expect students to gain a more personal understanding of what the World War II generation accomplished for all of us."

Information about the Memorial can be obtained by calling 1-800-639-4ww2 or visiting the World War II Memorial web site at <<http://wwiimemorial.com>>.

# The Holocaust: Turning Point in History

by Paul Wieser, Pendergast School District, Arizona



Germans pass by windows of a Jewish-owned business destroyed during Kristallnacht, National Archives, courtesy of the USHMM Photo Archives.

Perhaps the defining event of the 20th century occurred just over fifty years ago in the heart of civilized Europe. Few would guess that the Germany of Goethe, Mendelssohn, Schiller and Beethoven would be responsible for the deaths of 11 million innocent people, 6 million of whom were Jewish. None could imagine that Germany's legacy to the century would be the infamous labor, concentration and death camps that were constructed across the breadth of the European continent. The utter depravity of

the process of destruction leaves us with images of mass graves, mountains of corpses, survivors not more than skeletons, and the cold machinery of death - the gas chambers and crematoria.

Despite the horrific reality that was the Holocaust, students searching for topics for their History Day entries will find a wealth of ideas and materials to choose from that relate well to the theme, "Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events." Considered by many the greatest crime of the century, the Holocaust is also one of the most

well-documented. Due to the thoroughness of German record keeping, historians and researchers today are provided with what amounts to a mountain of primary documentation, including photographs, that capture the gruesome handiwork of the Nazis. For students who realize the importance of utilizing primary sources in their research, this is most beneficial. Successful entries reflect a particular clarity of thought, preciseness of fact and richness of detail that can only result from an extensive use



of original documentation. What follows will provide “food for thought” and encouragement for both teachers and students to seriously consider research based on the Holocaust.

### The Rise of the Nazis and the Ideology of Race

The assumption of power by the Nazis in 1933 certainly must be considered a key turning point in history. The loss of the war, the humiliation of Versailles, the political instability of the Weimar Government; and economic dislocation created an atmosphere of despair in post-World War I Germany. It provided fertile ground for the growth of political parties, on the right and the left, and for ideas that in more stable times would have been dismissed as nonsense or at best impractical. In this troubled environment a small radical group which called itself the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nazi) grew in numbers and influence under the leadership of Adolf Hitler. Promising to restore Germany to its rightful place among nations, providing hope to the unemployed of some day being able to support their families, espousing a bitter racial strain of anti-Semitism, and embodying the frustrations of a generation, Hitler led the party to great heights. By 1932, when nearly 14 million Germans voted 230 Nazi delegates into the German parliament (Reichstag), the Nazis had become the most powerful



An SA picket stands in front of a Jewish-owned store by a sign that reads, "Germans, defend yourselves, don't buy from Jews," National Archives, courtesy of the USHMM Photo Archives.

political party in Germany. The next year Hitler was appointed chancellor. Within months the lawlessness, terror, and control that was to characterize each of the twelve years of the Third Reich's existence was firmly established. These formative years of the Nazi dictatorship

could provide some of the most compelling material that students may want to consider as they go through the process of topic selection.

Nazi thinking was greatly influenced by the then popular socio-biological theory known as eugenics. German scientists,

embracing eugenics, legitimized the racial ideology of the Nazi movement, and thus provided the “scientific” basis for radical policies of exclusion and mass murder. Eugenists believed the human race could be improved by controlled breeding. They argued that all of society’s problems could be solved by ridding it of “inferior racial traits through artificial selection.” This thinking was not confined to German soil. Eugenics was widely adopted in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s. (The U.S. became the first nation in the world to permit sterilization as part of an effort to “purify the race.”)

Students, no doubt, would become thoroughly engaged in creating an exhibit that focused on this ideology of race. Photos of the Race Hygiene Shops in Germany and the paraphernalia sold to measure skull size and to determine the color of eyes, hair and skin — all to prove one’s ‘superiority’ — would contribute to a most impressive display of student research.

A compelling topic for an historical paper might be an examination of the Nazi theory of human inequality seen as the basis, if not justification, for the genocide that was to follow. The Nazis had pledged to preserve the “purity of German blood.” They were determined to cleanse the German gene pool. To accomplish this, the regime introduced radical social engineering, designed to create a

society racially homogeneous, physically hardy, and mentally healthy. At the center of this thinking stood a policy of exclusion, i.e., emigration, incarceration, sterilization, and murder. During the 1930s it became the official policy of the German government. The policy of exclusion institutionalized the whole idea of human inequality. It was applied to entire groups of human beings — Jews and others — who simply did not fit into the Nazi concept of community.

### The Beginning of the Attack on the Jews

Shortly after the Nazis came to power, the onslaught against Germany’s Jewish population began. Tracing the evolution and escalation of this discrimination from 1933 - 1938 would be a worthy topic for a student exhibit. Beginning with the boycott of April 1, 1933 and continuing with the numerous laws and decrees that targeted Jews in specific occupations (e.g., Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service, Law Regarding Admission to the Legal Profession), their situation progressively worsened. The infamous Nuremberg Laws (September 1935) defined their status as subjects of the state (Staatsangehörige) rather than as citizens.

With Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) on November 9-10, 1938, most historians would agree the curtain went up on the first act of the Holocaust.

In a single night’s work, more than 1000 synagogues were burned or destroyed all over Germany and Austria. Hundreds of homes and shops were broken into or demolished. Schools, hospitals, and cemeteries were vandalized or destroyed. Nearly 100 Jews lost their lives. The cost of damaged window glass alone was two million dollars (thus the derivation of the name). Damage to Jewish property totaled several hundred million Reichmarks. More than 30,000 Jewish males (almost the entire Jewish male population between 18 and 65) were sent to concentration camps.

Although meant to appear spontaneous, this carefully planned government operation was in response to the murder of a German embassy official in Paris by a seventeen-year-old Polish Jew, Herschel Grynszpan. As flames consumed Jewish property, German police and firemen stood by to make sure the fires did not spread “to German life and property.” To make matters worse, the Jews were not only forced to clean up after the pogrom, but fined (“Atonement Fine”) one billion Reichmarks (\$400 million) and not allowed to collect on their insurance policies. (Payments were confiscated by the government.)

The night’s bloody events led to a turning point in the German government’s policy towards the Jews, which now became more violent and vicious. By the end of

the month, perhaps as many as 1000 Jews had been killed in the concentration camps. The only hope for a quick release was if they had proof that they planned to emigrate in the immediate future and/or promised to sell their businesses for minute sums. Also, following Kristallnacht, several nations changed their policies towards Jews by agreeing to allow them to immigrate. The issue of emigration and immigration offers students a wide range of research possibilities.

With the availability of so much photographic evidence related to Kristallnacht, History Day students could certainly put together some rather impressive exhibits as well as documentaries. The real possibility of including vintage motion picture footage of the actual event can only enhance what could prove to be a most compelling and moving video presentation.

Within the context of the initial Nazi assault on German Jewry, students might find an examination of how these discriminatory measures may have affected Jewish students their own age particularly appealing. How might they react if they could not own a radio or have a phone or pets? How would they feel if they knew they no longer could attend school with their non-Jewish friends, or that a strictly enforced curfew forbade them to be outside during certain hours? In 1939 Jewish parents had to choose

from an approved list of “recognizably Jewish” first names for their children. Beginning in September 1942, all Jews at least six years old had to wear a yellow star of David as an identification badge. A dramatic performance reenacting particular situations Jewish youngsters found themselves confronting would certainly make for a powerful entry.

### The Ghettos

When Germany invaded Poland in 1939 and then the Soviet Union in 1941, millions of Jews came under the direct control of the Nazi government. The communal life of European Jewry was about to reach a tragic turning point. The Nazis were about to bring to an end forever the creative wellspring, the very heart and soul of all Judaism.

In order to manage the large numbers of Jews under their control, the Germans decided to concentrate them in cities and towns primarily located within the occupied portion of Poland known as the General Government (Generalgouvernement). Uprooted from the homes where their families had lived for generations and carrying what possessions they could on their backs or in carts and wagons, the Jews of Eastern Europe were herded into what became known as the ghetto. Always located in the oldest and most run-down section of town, the 400 ghettos established by the Germans

eventually accommodated Jews from all over Nazi-controlled Europe. Most ghettos were enclosed by a barbed wire fence or brick wall. (In Krakow the wall was made from gravestones from the Jewish cemetery.) Provided with little food and crowded into filthy, dilapidated buildings where several families might share a single room, ghetto residents quickly fell prey to disease, starvation, and cold. By 1944 the ghettos had already taken a toll of half a million lives.

The Nazis ordered that each ghetto have a Jewish council (Judenrat, pl., Judenrate). This council, usually twelve in number and made up of the elders of the Jewish community, was in charge of the day-to-day running of the ghetto. It made all of the housing arrangements and saw to the distribution of food. In the larger ghettos, such as Lodz, the Judenrate established “factories,” where production of essential war materials was seen as a means of guaranteeing the ghetto’s survival. They ran hospitals and soup kitchens and even chose individuals to serve as ghetto policemen. These men were also put in the unenviable position of having to carry out all of the orders handed down to them by the Germans. By 1942 that including drawing up lists of individuals for transport and “resettlement” to the east. In effect they were deciding who should live and who should die.

This entire field of study surrounding the ghetto



**View of the entrance to the main camp of Auschwitz, Main Commission for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes, courtesy of the USHMM Photo Archives.**

experience is ripe with possibilities for History Day entries. The day in the life of a ghetto could make for an exemplary historical paper or exhibit by focusing on the adaptations the inhabitants had to make from settled communal life to the “other” world of the ghetto. Daily decisions affected their very existence. Should they stand in line for bread and risk being picked up by the Germans? Should they volunteer for a work detail that promised more soup? Did they dare try and smuggle food into the ghetto from the “Aryan” side of town? With promises of a better life in the east, did they voluntarily agree to

be “resettled?” Given the conditions in the ghetto, how could things possibly be any worse? Desperation and uncertainty forced decisions like these upon all inhabitants of the ghetto. A particular course of action that proved to be perfectly safe one day could be the cause of one’s death the next. Each day in the ghetto was a potential turning point for those condemned to live there.

One of the most controversial issues surrounding the Holocaust was the role played by the Judenrate in Jewish public life. Did they have a debilitating effect on the inner strength of the Jewish

communities, or did they reinforce the Jews’ power of endurance in their struggle for survival? Agonizing and bitter discussions over how best to respond to German demands characterized the terrible predicament in which members of the Judenrate found themselves. This was especially true in those instances when they were forced to prepare lists of those to be “resettled.” As suspicions grew over the true meaning of the term, Judenrate members endlessly debated the degree of cooperation they should afford the Germans. These decisions were perhaps most trying for the chairmen of

the Judenrate — men such as Dr. Elchanan Elkes (Kovno), Mordechai Rumkowski (Lodz), Jacob Gens (Vilna), and Adam Czerniakow (Warsaw). A dramatic performance, reenacting a critical meeting of one such Judenrat, where the members discuss a German order to have so many thousands ready to be transported, not only is a way to highlight the theme, but to portray the highly emotional and gut-wrenching nature of these decisions that had to be made. Research into the roles played by individual chairmen provides further opportunities for student projects.

### The Euthanasia Program

For most, the term Holocaust immediately calls to mind images of piles of decaying corpses, the concentration and death camps, and undoubtedly the six million Jews who perished. Almost forgotten in the enormity of this catastrophic event are the first victims of Nazi genocide — the handicapped, a group which at first included the physically malformed, the mentally disturbed, and the intellectually retarded. (This category was later expanded to include individuals considered antisocial or criminal as well as anyone whose behavior was “alien to the community.”) The intent of this so-called “euthanasia” program was to exterminate these groups, thus “cleansing” the Aryan race of persons considered genetically defective and a

### WEB SITES

**United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

<http://www.ushmm.org>

**Yad Vashem**

<http://www.yad-vashem.org.il>

**Ghetto Fighters' House**

<http://www.gfh.org.il>

**Simon Wiesenthal Center**

<http://www.wiesenthal.com>

**Holocaust Education Foundation**

<http://www.holocaust-trc.org>

Students should avail themselves of the opportunity to interview Holocaust survivors and/or access the many oral histories that have been taped. The Association of Holocaust Organizations, which can be reached through the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum web site, provides a thorough listing of groups on the local, state, and national levels that can assist students in their search for such sources. Students should also inquire of their local university libraries, which often house collections of these oral testimonies.

financial burden to society. This opening act of genocide was Nazi Germany's first organized mass murder and led the Germans to develop the methods and techniques of killing they would later use in the death camps of Poland.

As early as 1935 Hitler had told Gerhard Wagner, the Reich physician leader, that once war began he would implement euthanasia. He kept his word. By October 1939 the first victims, German children, were already dead. Carried out in secrecy, the children were murdered in 22 “killing wards” located in hospitals across Germany. An overdose of medication was the preferred method used by physicians who viewed their

patients as “worthless eaters” or “life unworthy of life.”

Code-named “T4” because its headquarters were located at 4 Tiergarten Street, the euthanasia program soon expanded to include adults. The doomed were sent to six killing centers (mostly former psychiatric hospitals) where they were killed by lethal injection. But by 1940 a crucial decision had been reached that would prove to be a true turning point on the road to mass murder. In that year the use of carbon monoxide gas was first employed in gas chambers that had been disguised as showers. So effective was this method of killing that when the Nazis were ready to fully address the “final solution to the Jewish question,”

some of these very gas chambers were dismantled and shipped to the extermination camps in Poland along with many members of the euthanasia killing centers' staff. Through repetition the killers had learned their trade and had honed it to a fine edge. Perhaps as many as a quarter of a million mentally and physically handicapped persons were murdered under the euthanasia program. Few realized that this was just the beginning.

Certainly one of the turning points in this story that students could focus upon was the decision by Hitler to suspend the T4 program (children's euthanasia was never halted) in August 1941 due to pressures brought to bear as the secrecy around the program broke down. Mistakes were made, people talked and the sheer enormity of what was being attempted made it almost inevitable that eventually people would become more than suspicious. Even though the program would resume in a different form (becoming known as "14f13") shortly after the order to halt was given, the change in plans allowed for men and equipment to be shipped east, thus facilitating the gruesome work of Treblinka, Belzec, Sobibor, and the other infamous concentration camps.

As is clear from this discussion, the history of the Holocaust involves much more than Hitler and the concentration camps. It is about

Jewish resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto, about non-Jews such as Oscar Schindler saving lives, and about non-Jews (Gypsies, Poles, Soviet POWs, et al.) losing theirs. It is about forced labor, death marches, medical experimentation, and men such as Himmler, Heydrich, and Eichmann, who from their desks orchestrated mass murder. But mostly it is about man's inhumanity towards his fellow man; about individuals, organizations and governments who made decisions which allowed mass murder to occur. It is an extremely complex subject that involves questions regarding humanity and God. The Holocaust impacts on many issues, historical, legal, ethical, and political. It is perhaps ironic that this tragedy of history that touched so many people's lives

now can offer such a varied and rich collection of ideas for scholarly inquiry. For those students who enter this world, the journey will not be an easy one. Tread lightly for you deal with fragile and precious memories. Pause, and you may hear the still small voices of millions crying out from the ground demanding that you do no less.

About the author: Paul Wieser is a Mandel Fellow of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. He is the state coordinator for National History Day in Arizona and serves on the Executive Committee of State Coordinators. Paul is Director of Social Studies for the Pendergast School District in Phoenix, AZ.

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# Individual Turning Points: David Minter Tells His Story

by Jo Ann Williford, North Carolina Division of Archives and History

Within every community in America are people who experienced first-hand one of the major turning points of history. World War II was the catalyst for great change in a number of areas. It pulled America from the Great Depression; exposed Americans to new places, experiences, and ideas; introduced large numbers of women into the workplace; provided the impetus for the civil rights movement; transformed warfare; and drastically changed international politics. Many of its battles and decisions altered the course of history. Those who lived through this period are invaluable primary sources waiting to be researched. Most of their experiences will not be found in libraries or archives. But with a simple interview guide and a tape recorder, every student of history can take advantage of this wealth of information.

## OBJECTIVES

- To learn to use oral history as a way to study turning points
- To understand how to supplement oral history with other research

## ACTIVITY

Jo Ann Williford, North Carolina History Day coordinator, conducted an interview with David K. Minter, Jr., a World War II veteran, on March 24, 1999. The audiotape of the interview is part of the Military Collection Project, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Have two students read the following summary aloud to the class, with one student reading the interviewer's part and the other the quotations (in italics) from Mr. Minter. As they listen, ask students to compile a list of the following:

- the major turning points in Mr. Minter's life;
- the major turning points in US history and World

War II which affected Mr. Minter;

- what other information and sources they would need to turn this into a History Day project and where they might find more information about the individual and national turning points discussed in this summary.

## SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW WITH DAVID MINTER

When Mr. Minter graduated from high school in Wisner, Louisiana, America was in the midst of the Great Depression. Having been raised on a farm, he knew that picking cotton was not what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. College tuition money was not available. He liked the bookkeeping course he had in high school, but even a business course was beyond his financial reach. Instead, he got a job and went to work. He recalls,

*I was working in an ice house from six in the evening to six in the morning. Seven days a week for \$12 a week. So, I decided it would be easier in the CC camps.*

The "CC" camps were the Civilian Conservation Corps camps set up during the Roosevelt administration to fight widespread unemployment. Young men between the ages of 18 and 25 were eligible for the program, which employed them to work on reforestation, road construction, flood control, and soil conservation projects. David Minter was assigned to work in northern California, far from his Louisiana home.

*I think that was good experience for me, because it taught me how to deal with things being away from home. Whereas, if I had waited until I was drafted into the military and then go away for three years, which happened, it was easier to cope with.*

While he was in California, he received his draft notice, another positive turning point in his life. Rather than being drafted into the army, he traveled back home and enlisted in the navy.

*I've often wondered where I would have ended up or what I would have done. As I said, I had nothing but a high school education and no possibility of going to college. It had to be a turning point for good for me in a way, because I certainly didn't want to continue to live on a farm and pick cotton.*

Mr. Minter entered the navy on March 29, 1941. After sixteen weeks of training at radio school, he boarded an oil tanker to travel to his new duty station in Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, Hawaii. He arrived at the Receiving Station on a Saturday afternoon. The date was December 6, 1941. One day later he would witness an event that changed not only the course of a war, but the course of many individual lives.

*Sunday morning I was up, excited about going on liberty in Honolulu, and I was in the washroom or the head washing some white hats. And I heard all this noise. That was on the second floor, and I heard all this noise booming and going on. I ran to the window to see what was going on and all these planes [were] flying over. And all the noises — bombs, torpedoes going off. I could see the torpedoes drop from the planes flying right over the building I was in, going in to the ships. And I thought 'well these guys are pretty good,' you know. I thought they were just practicing. I think everybody else in Pearl Harbor for the moment thought that's what was happening. Then one of the ships was firing back and blew up the Japanese plane about 150 yards from where I was, and I said, 'Dave, this is not play. This is the real thing.' I could see those torpedoes hitting the battleships out there where they were lined up on battleship row ...*

His vantage point from the second-floor window gave him an excellent view of the harbor. The *Oklahoma* was the first ship in line. He continues,

*I saw these torpedoes hit it, and by the time I got downstairs and looked out there, all I could see was, in place of the superstructure of the battleship, was the bottom of it. It had capsized within eight minutes.*

Mr. Minter spent most of December 7 pitching in where he was needed. That evening he worked all night with a crew trying to keep the *California* afloat. Unfortunately, their long hours of work could not prevent it from sinking. He returned to the



David Minter, 1946, courtesy of the North Carolina State Archives.

Receiving Station, ate breakfast, and was assigned to the grim task of manning a burial party. He was sent to work in a cemetery, the name of which is unknown to him.

*We buried 247 bodies that day. They would come in on a truck wrapped in canvas ... They just dug a big trench with a caterpillar ... We didn't have a name. We just had numbers on tags for each body or the package. They were buried with numbers that way and then a stake with the same number was put on beside it.*

When the *Bosun's Mate* called for the same party to serve as burial detail the next day, Mr. Minter asked to be excused. His request was granted. Even after fifty-seven years it is obvious that the memory of that day is very vivid for him. He still wonders about the ultimate disposition of those bodies that he helped bury on that Monday in 1941. Were they eventually moved to Punchbowl National



Cemetery and given stones bearing names, or do they remain anonymous numbers in a mass grave?

While Dave Minter was already in the military on December 8, 1941, many millions of other young men and women would soon join him as America declared war on Japan and Germany. For Mr. Minter, those days marked the beginning of what would be a long career in the navy.

His first official assignment was to work in communications at Commander, Hawaiian Sea Frontier in Honolulu, a job he held until 1944. Being stationed at naval headquarters had its advantages. The food was good and plentiful, and he was comfortable. But the one thing he remembers that he wanted but could not get was to go home.

In 1944 he volunteered for duty on the *Indianapolis*. It was during his time there that the ship was involved in the campaign to take back the Mariana Islands, which included the “Mariana Turkey Shoot” operation. Life aboard ship was different.

*It was so hot on that ship that during about a four-month time, I slept below deck two nights. The rest of the time was out on the deck somewhere or wherever I could find a place to be still. The ship was constantly zig-zagging when we were under way. Or if we were in port, if you found a shady spot to lay down during the day, pretty soon here'd come somebody washing the decks down or the ship would swing around and you'd be in the sun. That was a miserable tour on the Indianapolis.*

Following his four-month tour of duty, Mr. Minter traveled stateside, getting to see his family for the first time in three years, after which he was assigned to a tug boat in the Philippines. V-E Day, the day on which Germany surrendered in May 1945, was a joyous occasion for many as well as an important turning point in the war, but it had little effect on those in the Pacific.

*When you were at sea you never knew what was going on. Very little did we know what was going on in the Atlantic area or Europe. Being in the Pacific, we didn't know what was going on with the other part of the fleet.*

For those in the Pacific, the war would last for three more months. Of that other significant turning point, V-J Day, when Japan surrendered in August 1945, he recalls,

*Everybody was real excited about that — firing a few rounds here and there.*

Unlike many veterans, Mr. Minter did not leave the service at the end of the war. He chose to make the navy his career, serving twenty years, until 1961. At that time he went to work with the Federal Aviation Administration, which transferred him and his family to Raleigh, North Carolina in 1964. He retired after thirty-eight years of government service.

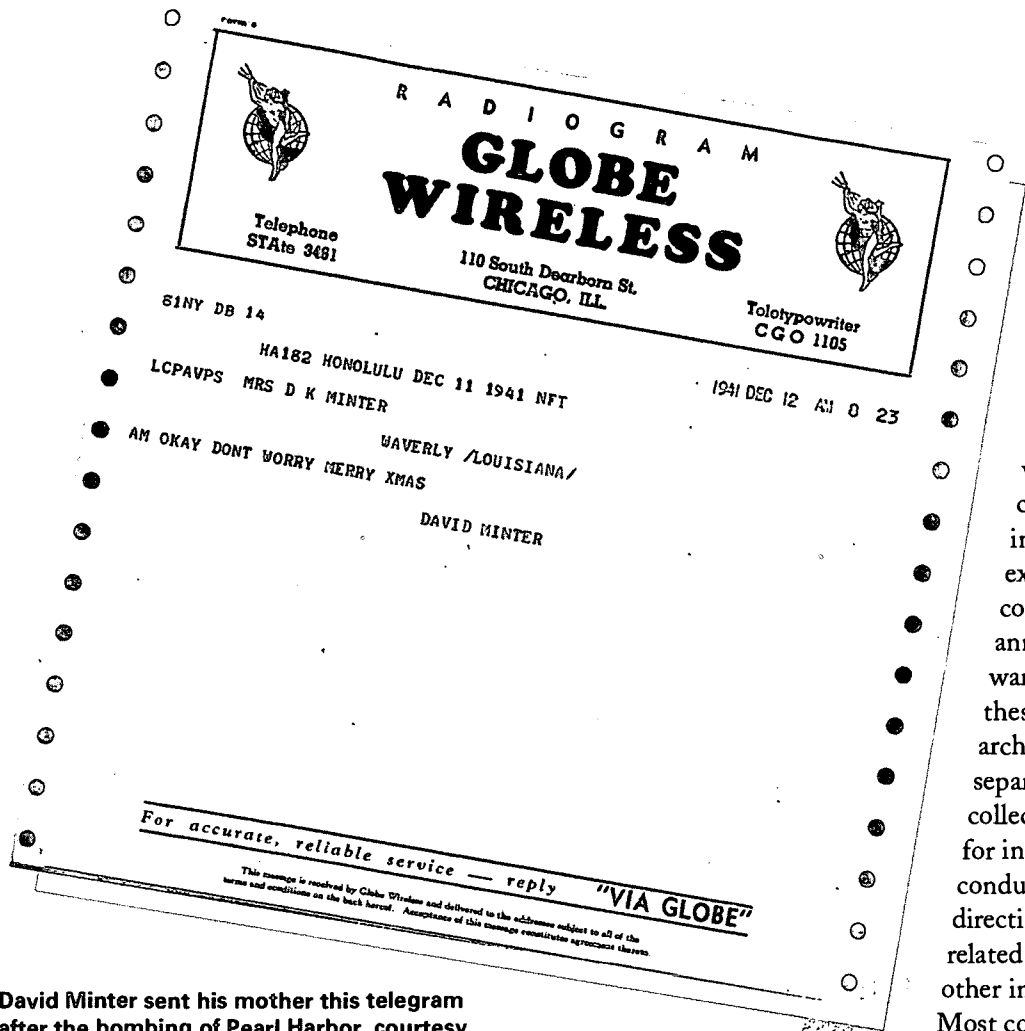
World War II was a turning point in many ways in personal lives and in the history of nations. Each person who lived through it, whether military or civilian, was affected by it. For David Minter the war was at times terrifying, lonely, and miserable; but at the same time it afforded him opportunities that he would not have had otherwise. He says of that period, *I think it had to have some effect on every person in the world and especially in this country. It let people in this country know that they could come together, work together, and do things, and accomplish things.*

. . . . .

Have the students share their lists of turning points and other information and sources needed, while you write the lists on the board. Then have students brainstorm about where they could find the sources. The following may help:

Stories such as Mr. Minter's can be used as an important supplement to research and can provide colorful stories and insight into individual perspectives. But as invaluable as interviews are, they should be used in conjunction with many other types of sources. Every successful project will incorporate a variety of materials. Before conducting interviews, students should determine what specific turning point they will research within the larger topic of World War II.

**Secondary sources:** Many hundreds of books have been written on the subject. Some of them will be general histories of the war, while others will deal with specific aspects, such as a particular military campaign or the homefront. Doing research in secondary sources will help students formulate the types of questions they want to ask in their oral interviews, as well as give basic background information on the topic. Secondary sources also provide leads to relevant primary sources.



David Minter sent his mother this telegram after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, courtesy of the North Carolina State Archives.

**Historical repositories:** Local archives, libraries, and historical societies can be good sources of information. Agencies within your area might have conducted their own oral interview projects or created exhibits, particularly in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war in 1995. Do not overlook these possibilities. Some major archives and libraries have separate World War II collections. In North Carolina, for instance, there was a program conducted during the war directing counties to collect war-related articles, pamphlets, and other information in their areas. Most counties participated in the program, and there are boxes of scrapbooks containing these

materials located within the Military Collection of the North Carolina State Archives. Other states probably had similar programs.

**Internet sites:** Internet sites will have documents, images, and audio clips that students may find useful. Keep in mind that you should evaluate sources you find via the Internet just as rigorously as any other sources. Only use reputable sites. The National Archives and Records Administration has World War II posters on line <<http://www.nara.gov/exhall/powers/powers.html>>. In addition, NARA has digitized thousands of World War II photographs and documents, which can be found by doing searches via the National Archives Information Locator <<http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html>>. The Library of Congress' American Memory Project <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/>> includes numerous documents and photographs related to the war. Typing "World War II" into any search engine will produce numerous choices.

**Multiple interviews:** When doing interviews, it is always useful to talk to more than one person in order to compare personal experiences. Published primary sources, such as first-person accounts of the war, will also be useful for this. Two examples of recently published books that include oral interviews are Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation* (New York: Random House, 1998) and Studs Terkel's *"The Good War": An Oral History of World War Two* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

**Periodicals:** Contemporary newspapers and magazines will be another valuable source about World War II. Many libraries and archives will have newspapers from this period on microfilm. Students can look for stories specifically related to their topics by looking at the newspapers for key dates in the war; some newspapers, such as *The New York Times*, are indexed. *The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* for 1939-1945 indexes popular magazines of the war period.

**Personal materials:** When students conduct interviews, they should ask the interviewee if he or she has documents or photographs that might be useful for their project. Because Mr. Minter was in communications, he saved copies of a number of important messages that he received or sent during the war. He also had photographs of himself in uniform. Others may have saved letters from home or kept a journal. These kinds of personal memorabilia can provide helpful information or images that can be copied to incorporate into projects.

Historical materials from World War II are abundant and varied. Students should research the information contained in many of these sources to create an informative, interesting, and balanced History Day project.

#### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

1. Have students do their own oral history interviews with World War II veterans. Alternatively, you could have a veteran come to your class and be interviewed. The local chapters of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars should be able to help you find veterans to interview. Have students follow up on the interviews by doing additional research as suggested above, to create papers or projects about specific turning points in World War II or the experiences of individuals during the war. If your students do numerous interviews, you could collect the tapes and present them to a local library or archives to be shared with others; you might also be able to create an exhibit to be displayed locally documenting these personal stories.
2. Your students may also be able to take advantage of pre-existing oral history collections. Check with historical societies, archives, and universities in your state to see if they have any oral history collections which you might use. If not, Rutgers University has placed interviews with many alumni on-line as part of its Rutgers Oral History Archives of World War II <<http://history.rutgers.edu/oralhistory/>

<<http://www.sperry-marine.com/pearl/Congress.htm>>. The interviews are very extensive, covering a person's whole life, although there is a great deal of material on World War II. You might assign each student a different interviewee, with the task of writing a magazine article or creating a poster about the turning points in that person's life.

3. Since the attack on Pearl Harbor was a key point in World War II, it lends itself to further study. The U.S. suffered an enormous defeat at Pearl Harbor, sparking a congressional investigation. Congress laid much of the blame on two men: Rear Admiral Husband Kimmel, the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet, and Lieutenant General Walter Short, Commanding General of the Hawaiian Department of the Army. According to the report of the Joint Congressional Committee <<http://www.sperry-marine.com/pearl/Congress.htm>>, Kimmel and Short conducted "operations in a state of joint oblivion." Then and now, many people believe they were unfairly blamed for the fiasco. One way to get at the issues relating to the attack is to stage a mock trial of the two officers. Assign 2-3 students to be the prosecution and 2-3 others to be the defense team, with others assigned to serve as the defendants, witnesses, and the jury. The congressional report and various other reports with supporting evidence are available via the Internet from Purdue University at the Pearl Harbor Archive <<http://www.sperry-marine.com/pearl/pearlh.htm>>. Many of these documents have summaries and take strong positions criticizing or defending the two officers.



Women Air Force Service Pilots, United States Air Force and Smithsonian Institution.

## New Opportunities for Women: Helen Thomas's Experiences

In January 1944, Eleanor Roosevelt began a column in *Reader's Digest* by observing that, "Our women are serving actively in many ways in this war, and they are doing a grand job on both the fighting front and the home front." She detailed women's contributions to the war effort. Some 12,000 were military nurses overseas and many more served in civilian hospitals. Many women volunteered for military service, although due to "false chivalry," relatively few were stationed abroad. Millions went to work in war industries. Those who

continued to work at home also played an important role: "The woman who meets war difficulties with a smile, who does her best with rationing and other curtailments, who writes her man overseas the kind of letters he must have to carry him through successfully, is making a great contribution to this difficult period. If, in addition to this work at home, a woman is giving her services to any of the volunteer organizations, our hats must be off to her." The First Lady concluded, "For the vast majority of women in this country, life has changed."

One way of exploring what World War II meant for women is to look at individual life stories using oral history, memoirs, personal reminiscences, and other sources. The following is an example of one such life story. It is based on an interview of Helen Thomas by Cathy Gorn on May 5, 1999, and also her memoirs, *Front Row at the White House: My Life and Times* (New York: Scribner, 1999). The enrichment and extension activities at the end provide suggestions for how to help your students to study women's experiences during the war.

Helen Thomas, courtesy of the National World War II Memorial.



### Helen Thomas: From Detroit's East Side to the White House

Helen Thomas is now a well-known reporter, the senior correspondent at the White House, famous for asking the first question at presidential press conferences. This daughter of illiterate immigrants has risen to the top of her profession by her no-nonsense reporting. As for so many people around the world, World War II was a major turning point in her life, providing her with her first career break.

George and Mary Thomas migrated from Syria to Kentucky soon after the birth of the first of their ten children. The eighth child, Helen, was born in 1920. Four years later, the Thomas family moved to the east side of Detroit, where Mr. Thomas opened a grocery store.

Though neither of the

Thomas parents could read, they kept many books and newspapers in the house for their children and stressed education. Indeed, Ms. Thomas recalls that education "was the Holy Grail" for her family. Despite the financial challenges posed by the Great Depression, her parents insisted that all of their children go to college.

Even before entering college, young Helen Thomas had already decided on a career. The school newspaper published one of the themes she wrote for an English class during her sophomore year at Eastern High School. As soon as she saw her first byline, she was "hooked for life" and joined the staff of the newspaper. Her ego swelled, and her "abiding curiosity," previously a subject of teasing, became an asset.

For many women of that era, "having a career was considered something to do until marriage came along." The usual careers were teaching or nursing. For Ms. Thomas, marriage did not seem so attractive, since one of her older sisters had 14 children. In any case, "Boys weren't exactly pounding on my door." Even if they had been, she had a "one-track mind" when it came to pursuing a career, not as a nurse or a teacher, but as a reporter. When she enrolled at Wayne University in Detroit, she again wrote for the

newspaper. With no journalism major available, she chose to major in English.

By the time Ms. Thomas graduated from college in the spring of 1942, the United States had joined World War II. The Detroit newspapers employed several female reporters, but the young graduate decided she "didn't want to chase fire engines in Detroit." Washington, DC, pulsing with life as the government geared up for the war effort, "was the place to be," and that's where she headed. She pursued her dream, applying for job after job with newspapers, while supporting herself by working in a restaurant.

Editors and publishers, Ms. Thomas discovered, preferred to hire young men, thinking that "women would want to get married and have children." She recalls, "It didn't even occur to me that I couldn't be what I wanted to be — that's how dumb I was." World War II made a difference. With so many men being drafted into the military, the newspapers had little choice but to hire women. In 1943, Helen Thomas got the big break she'd been hoping for: the *Washington Daily News* hired her as a copy girl. Paid \$17.50/week, she remembers, "I thought I had arrived." She was finally working in newspapers.

When Ms. Thomas won a promotion to cub reporter at the *Daily News*, she immediately joined the Newspaper Guild. "You can't be from Detroit," she notes, "and not be a union girl." Soon thereafter, the Guild went out on strike against the *Daily News*,

which fired the strikers, bringing the cub reporter's career to an abrupt halt.

Forced to look for another job, Ms. Thomas again began knocking on doors at the National Press Building. United Press, the wire service, had just lost two young male reporters to the draft. UP hired Ms. Thomas to work for its City News Service, WCNS, writing radio news and filing wire reports. The war, of course, was the predominant subject covered.

Looking back, Ms. Thomas sees World War II as a turning point in her life, although she "hates to say that when you think it was such an unfortunate horror that gave you a break." Indeed, the worst part of her job during the war was contacting the families of Washington-area soldiers who appeared on the casualty lists. She

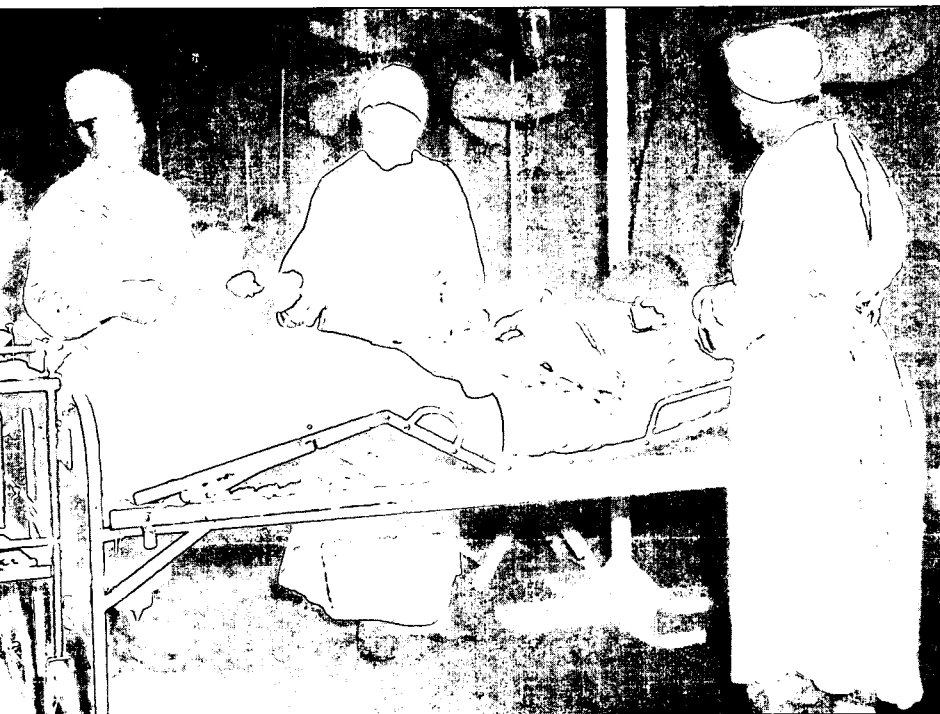
dreaded that task, which "was made even more painful if the military had not notified them by the time the list was published."

When the war ended, many of the millions of women who had taken jobs during the war voluntarily quit. Others lost their jobs to veterans. Among reporters, many women "who got their break into journalism during the war got their pink slips immediately afterward to make room for the men returning home." Eight women at UP lost their jobs, but Ms. Thomas believes that her job was saved by "working the dawn patrol and being low on the totem pole." She continued to work for the City News Service until 1955, when she became a beat reporter. In 1961, she became the now-UPI's White House correspondent, a position she

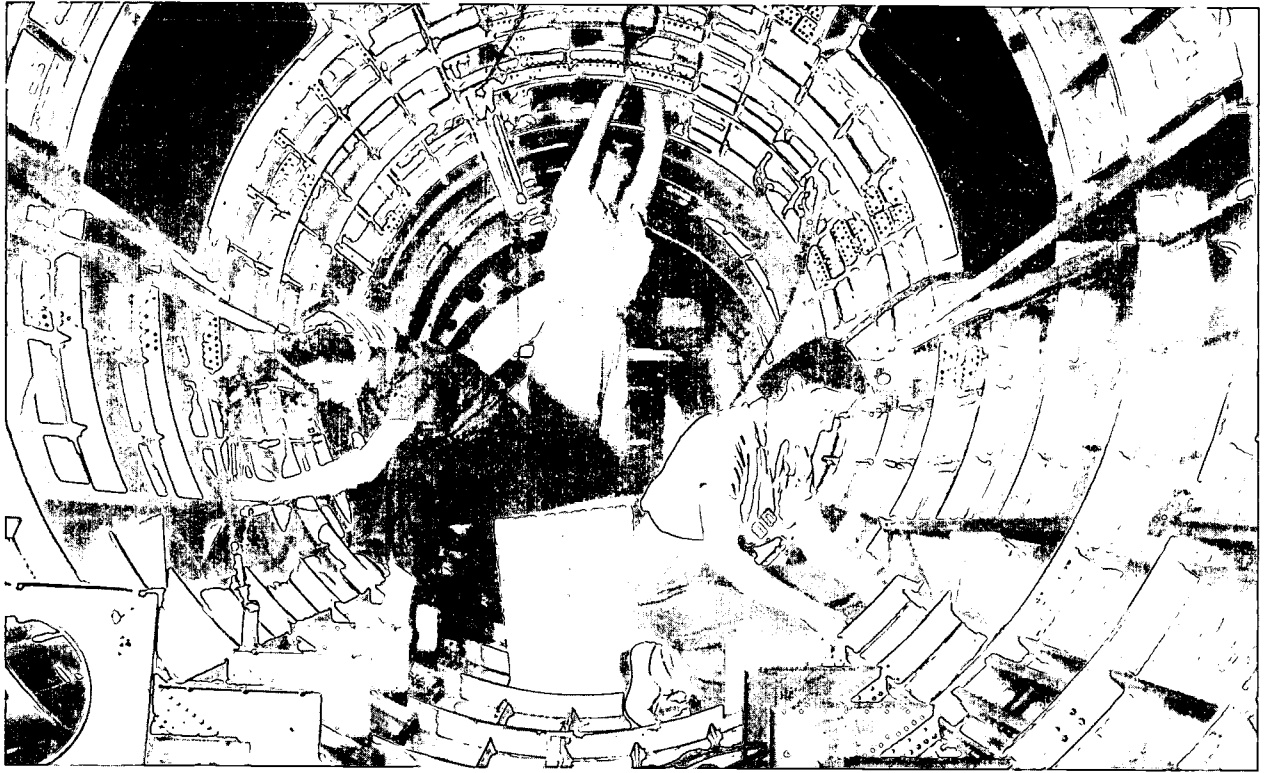
holds to this day.

Since World War II Newspaper Guild days, Ms. Thomas has been active in press organizations and has been a trailblazer for women reporters. When she started in journalism, "You could be an equal in the newsroom, but you couldn't be an equal to go to the National Press Club." The major organizations, such as the NPC and the Gridiron Club, excluded women not only from membership but even from attending events. Ms. Thomas was among the leaders of the effort to force the NPC to accept women, and she was the first female member of the Gridiron Club. She does not look back at these struggles with bitterness, observing, "I realize how outrageous it was, but there are too many mountains to climb still .... There's no equality in the workplace. We have to keep struggling, keep doing better jobs, and fight whenever there is such blatant discrimination."

Having fought for women's rights, Ms. Thomas wants the girls who participate in National History Day to know that, "They can do anything they want to do in life, or at least they should always try and never be discouraged." Studying history is important for both males and females, she believes, because "if you don't know the genesis of this country, you will not cherish it, you will not be able to put the halo around it," which she believes it deserves. In addition, "it enhances the quality of life to be educated and to understand the things that have happened" in the past.



Army nurses, New Guinea, 1944, National Archives.



Women riveters, Long Beach, California, 1942, National Archives.

#### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

1. Several years ago students at South Kingstown High School in Rhode Island created an oral history project called, "What Did You Do in the War, Grandma?" They interviewed 36 women whose experiences in the war were quite varied. Transcripts of 26 of the interviews are available on the Internet at <[http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/WWII\\_Women/tocCS.html](http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/WWII_Women/tocCS.html)>. You may want to imitate them by having your own students interview older women in your community. Alternatively, you could construct an assignment using the on-line transcripts. One possibility would be to have students create a special issue of a women's magazine,

published in 1944 or early 1945. The theme of the issue could be something like, "How the War Has Changed Our Lives." The magazine could have sections devoted to the following topics:

- women in different types of military service;
- women working in war industries or other jobs;
- women's education during the war;
- housekeeping and childrearing;
- social life/dating/leisure time.

Each section could be assigned to a different small group. The group would be responsible for combing the interviews and finding relevant materials, then writing several

articles based on the interviews for that section of the magazine. Students certainly could do additional research as well, if you want to make it a bigger project. If your school has the necessary computer facilities, you might even download or scan images and use a desktop publishing program to create an actual physical magazine.

# The Turning Point of WWII: Evaluating a D-Day Diary

by Kenneth Hoffman, National D-Day Museum

The most famous diary to come out of World War II was written by Anne Frank, a young Jewish girl who hid with her family from the Nazis in an Amsterdam attic. But Anne Frank was not the only person during that great global conflict to keep a daily record of her thoughts and actions. Many men and women kept private diaries as they experienced the thrills, horrors, uncertainties, novelties and boredom of a soldier or civilian's life.

## OBJECTIVES

- To learn how to use a diary as a primary source.
- To understand the importance of D-Day as a key turning point in World War II.

## USING A DIARY AS A PRIMARY SOURCE

For the historical researcher, a diary can be a wonderful source for personal insights and first-person accounts of people and events — two types of information often missing from more formal writings or official documents. A diary is generally written very close in time to when events occur, so personal memories may be more reliable than they would be in a memoir or oral interview created years later. Furthermore, a

person often writes a diary only for himself or herself — with no thought of it becoming a public record. By not writing for an audience, the diarist's entries may be more honest and forthright.

But is a diary a completely reliable primary source? Even if a diary entry is written close to the time of an event, the diarist can still be mistaken about his or her facts and recollections. The diarist has a very limited viewpoint and may witness things or interpret events from a narrow perspective. He or she may unintentionally alter the facts to fit some emotional need. Or he or she may purposely misrepresent the facts for a variety of reasons. A diary, like any other primary source, must be evaluated and used cautiously by the careful researcher.

## D-Day: A Brief History

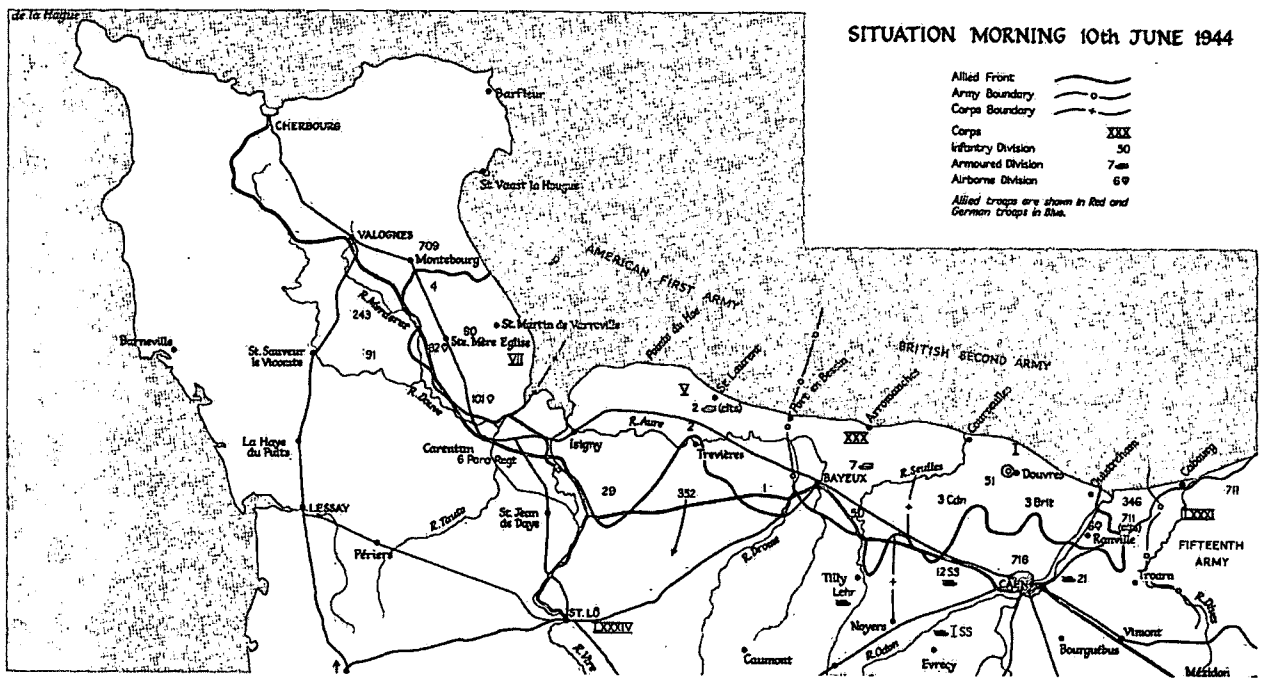
Since the spring of 1940, when Nazi Germany completed its conquest of much of continental Europe, the Allies had been planning a cross-Channel assault to retake the continent and defeat Adolf Hitler's Third Reich. By the spring of 1944 an elaborate plan — code-named Operation *Overlord* — was secretly in place to launch the attack. The Allies, led by General Dwight Eisenhower, faced an enemy determined to keep them from

landing successfully anywhere along the western European coastline. To ensure against such a landing, Hitler ordered Field Marshal Erwin Rommel to complete the Atlantic Wall — a 2,400-mile fortification made up of concrete bunkers, barbed wire, tank ditches, landmines, fixed gun emplacements, and beach and underwater obstacles specially designed to rip out the bottoms of landing craft or blow them up before they reached the shore.

On the eve of June 5, 1944, 175,000 men, an armada of 5,333 ships and landing craft, 50,000 vehicles, and 11,000 planes sat in southern England, poised to attack secretly across the English Channel along a 50-mile stretch of the Normandy coast of France. This force was the largest amphibious assault in history and represented years of rigorous training, planning, and supplying. It also represented a previously unknown level of cooperation between nations — all struggling for a common goal. Because of highly intricate deception plans, Hitler and his staff believed that the Allies would be attacking at the Pas-de-Calais, the narrowest point between Great Britain and France. But the Atlantic Wall was strong at Normandy, too.

In the early morning hours of June 6, thousands of Allied





Map of Utah Beach, June 10, 1944, courtesy of the National D-Day Museum.

paratroopers and glider troops landed silently behind enemy lines, securing key points on the flanks of the invasion area. As the dawn lit the Normandy coastline the Allies began their landings, traveling to the beaches in small landing craft lowered from the decks of larger ships waiting in the Channel. The plan called for landings at five beaches code-named *Utah*, *Omaha*, *Gold*, *Juno*, and *Sword*. By nightfall nearly all 175,000 men were ashore at a cost of 4,900 Allied casualties. Hitler's vaunted Atlantic Wall had fallen in less than one day. The beaches were secure, but it took many weeks before the Allies could fight their way out of the heavily defended Normandy countryside and almost a full year to reach and defeat Germany in the spring of 1945.

Operation Overlord was not just another great battle, but the true turning point of WWII in Europe. While the US and Great Britain had earlier engaged the Axis powers on the periphery of the continent (North Africa,

Sicily, Italy), it was not until the invasion at Normandy that they struck the blow that would signal the beginning of the end for Hitler and his Nazis. Had the invasion failed, Hitler would have been able to pull troops from his now-secure Western Front to strengthen his Eastern Front against the Soviet Union. A second Allied invasion into France would have taken years to plan, supply, and assemble. Meanwhile Hitler would have further strengthened his Atlantic Wall, his newly developed V-1 flying bombs would have continued to rain down on England from launching pads across the Channel, and the Nazis' *Final Solution* against European Jews might well have succeeded completely.

**The Diary of Sidney J. Montz**  
 Sidney J. Montz was a lieutenant in Co. D, 8th Regiment, of the 4th Infantry Division, US Army. The 4th Division was one of five US divisions that assaulted Utah and Omaha Beaches on June 6,

1944 — D-Day. Sidney was born in Louisiana in 1914, served as a ROTC corporal at Louisiana State University, and became a lieutenant in the United States Army when he enlisted in August 1942. On D-Day he was 29 years old. It would be his first combat.

Sidney kept a diary on a small pad of paper between the dates of May 15, 1944 and July 31, 1944. He may have kept diaries during other periods of the war, but this small pad was the only diary found in a trunk of personal possessions donated by his son to the Eisenhower Center, the research arm of The National D-Day Museum in New Orleans. This diary is one story of 175,000 that could be told about D-Day. But from a total of 59 short entries (only 25 are shown here), an alert researcher can discover a lot of information about D-Day, a soldier's life in the European Theater, and Montz's feelings about this turning point in the war and in his life.

## ACTIVITY

Have your students read the following edited diary entries carefully and then answer the questions at the end. Underlined words are defined at the side. Most syntax and spelling are Montz's; slight changes have been made for clarity.

May 16 – June 1

*Took things easy, drew equipment, time off to Torquay, took a few short marches to keep in shape (6 + 4 miles). A few days before June 1st we were briefed, shown maps + sand table of where we were going. Everything in good shape. I was executive officer, but will take 81mm. Wittenberger does not know mortar. Officers in Co.: Buckles, Woodruff, Wittenberger, Levy, Buckalew, Olson, Exec. Montz, CO Samson.*

June 2

*Left Camp at 1020 for Torquay, got on LCVP to go to ship (the S.S. Dickman). On ship life was OK.*

June 4 – Sun

*Too busy to go to church — Making final preparation — Heard we sail today for landing tomorrow — weather very bad so thing's called off. Spent most the night in lounge, drinking coffee + listening to radio. Heard the fall of Rome, in bed by 0200.*

June 5 – Mon

*Heard we sail at 1300, Gen. Ike message read over the loud speaker after we sailed. Told D-Day June 6 — H-Hour 0630. We anchor at 0200 June 6 + get in LCVP. Checked all equipment that was already in LVCP. Men in good shape + ready to go. Told that 10,500 planes would be in operation, 6000 bombers. Did not know anything except we land on Utah Beach Red + Green with 12,000 paratroopers landing H-4 inland. Messed around shooting bull + kidding each other. Channel pretty rough. Men will be fed at 2200, officers at 2400.*

June 6 – D-Day

*2400 — Eating a good meal, may be the last one, went down to compartment with my boat team. Sea very rough. Started loading about 0230, went over side down net + it was really tough. Took off to rendezvous area, had a tough time finding it, made it o.k. Started circling, finally the other boats came in. Planes lit up the beaches, AA fire starting, flares dropping, beautiful sight but it scares the hell out of you. All hell broke loose from the beach, some boats hit by 88. We are near beach + 88 opened up on the boat on our right + almost hit us. Some boats hit land mines, lucky we landed because much more we would have sunk — water still rough. Jumped out in waist deep water, about 500 or 600 yds from seawall, the longest I have ever seen in my life. M.G., mortar, + artillery fire around us. Finally in shallow water + able to run, had to miss all types of obstacles in + out the water. Picked up six rounds of 81mm ammo on the way, it seemed as though we would never reach the seawall. Men being*

**Torquay** — an English seaside resort town on the Southern coast of England

**sand table** — a three-dimensional map of a battle site

**81mm mortar** — a shot-barreled field cannon with a high trajectory used by the US Army

**1020** — 10:20 A.M. Army time; Army time runs on a 24 hour cycle: 1200=12:00 P.M., 1300=1:00 P.M., 2300=11:00 P.M., 2400=12:00 A.M.

**LCVP** — Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel, the most used landing craft during the Normandy invasion; it could carry 36 men or vehicle from ship to shore

**fall of Rome** — The US Army entered Rome on June 4, 1944 after more than 5 months of fighting the Italians and Germans in Italy

**Gen. Ike** — General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force

**D-Day** — the military designation for the day of any major military assault

**H-Hour** — the military designation for the time of any major military assault

**Utah Beach Red and Green** — two sections of the western-most beach of the Normandy Invasion; United States forces landed at Utah and Omaha Beaches, the British landed at Gold and Sword Beaches, and the Canadians landed at Juno Beach

**H-4** — stated as "H minus four," meaning 4 hours before H-Hour

**Channel** — the English Channel; the 100 miles of water separating the south coast of England from the Normandy coast of France

**down net** — LCVPs were lowered from larger ships into the water then fully loaded soldiers climbed down cargo nets into the waiting craft

**AA fire** — anti-aircraft fire from the ground

**88** — the German 88mm anti-aircraft gun, a long-range, anti-tank gun most feared by the Allies

**M.G. fire** — machine gun fire

**obstacles** — the Germans placed a variety of steel and wood obstacles in the water and on the beaches to stop landing craft, vehicles, and soldiers trying to come ashore. Many of these obstacles were topped with mines

**Gen. Roosevelt** — General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., son of President Teddy Roosevelt, was assistant division commander for the 4th Division and one of the highest-ranking soldiers on the beaches D-Day morning

**smokeless powder** — this type of powder does not release a puff of smoke when a gun is fired.

**LCM** — Landing Craft Mechanized, a British landing craft that could carry an 18-ton tank from ship to shore. Many landing craft were used to ferry injured soldiers back to hospital ships

**"E" boats** — fast German attack boats

**S.O.S. troops** — Service of Supply troops; these men were in charge of war supplies and loading and unloading material on the docks

*blown up and hit all around me, you could hear them scream, it was horrible. Finally hit seawall, stopped to get a blow and bearing, Gen. Roosevelt walking around telling everyone to clear the beach or they would get killed. Rockets hit the third section — injured: Lts. Levy, Arps, Singer, Cole, Sgt. Hasting — Killed: Cpls. Herr, Brandt, Wadja.*

*Time to move or they will kill us all. Gen. Roosevelt gave me lots of courage. Under small arms + artillery fire. Navy left us 1000 yds. too far left, the left outfit caught hell. Moved in very fast, every house + tree loaded with men, they fire at you from all directions, very hard to see them as they use smokeless powder. Will get on to them soon then they will catch hell.*

June 10 – Saturday

*1400 — Hit by sniper as taking a squad to Co. A right flank, 100 yds. from road west of Monteburg. We were catching hell but know we will hold them, had 400yds to get to objective. On west to aid station, hit in neck + right leg. Bandaged up + put in ambulance to be taken to beach, then sent to England. Spent night in field tent, caught in air raid.*

June 11 – Sunday

*Put on LCM + sent to hosp. ship, impossible to sail due to "E" boats in Channel.*

June 12 – Monday

*Sailed for England, destination Naval Hospital at Southampton. Got in pretty late, was fed, a good bath, clean clothes, a bed with sheets. Doctors looked at us.*

June 23 – Friday

*Up early. Back to town, date with Sharon — had a few drinks, decided to go bicycling. Watched sunset + planes going over to Germany. Malvern is very nice, never been bombed + set on hillside. Spent a very fine evening, she is off this weekend so will see her tomorrow. Took bike back to camp.*

June 24 – Saturday

*Slept all morning, met Sharon at 1400, went to Worcester. Like her very much, the best for a long time. Date Sun. to go horseback riding. Back to camp by six.*

June 25 – Sunday

*Sharon, Bill, Shirley, Joe + I went to a tea dance. Ate at hotel. Met Larry + Freddie (Americans) good to speak to them. The more I stay in England the less I like the English, their ways + manners.*

June 28 – Wednesday

*Will be glad to get to France, these S.O.S. troops are getting the best of me — they are all trying to get to the States. They should send some to the front + let them get an idea of what's going on. Saw a show.*

June 30 – Friday

*Woke up at 0600 by the bugler, first one I heard for a long time. Nice sunny*

*day so camp doesn't look too bad, food very good, jaw + neck healed but scab still on leg. Went to Yeovil and saw a show, had a few beers, back early.*

July 1 – Saturday

*Nothing to do in camps except eat + sleep, new replacements waiting to be sent out, men belonging to outfits waiting to be sent back.*

July 2 – Sunday

*Sharon + I took a long walk in the rain. Reminded me very much of the States. These English are getting more + more on my nerves.*

July 4 – Tuesday

*Small celebration on post, band played the usual 4th stuff + a little jazz. Expect to leave this place soon.*

July 5 – Wednesday

*Taking things easy today, wrote home + to Sharon. We seem to be giving the Germans "Hell" from all sides, hope to be in the thick of things soon.*

July 6 – Thursday

*May leave to-morrow, was told to hang around camp. Having a very good time here but still like to be with the outfit. These SOS troops should be sent to the front for a few days then they will have an idea what things are.*

July 8 – Saturday

*Went to Salisbury for the trip, very nice place, saw a very old cathedral, messed around, back to Chard for supper. Had ice cream and fresh eggs to-day in Salisbury — first for a long time.*

July 17 – Monday

*Ankle (left) giving me hell, swollen + can hardly walk — man in infantry with both legs bad. Ha! Ha!*

July 19 – Wednesday

*Censored mail for 3 hrs.*

July 24 – Monday

*I am on the alert to leave for France soon. I have charge of 250 men.*

July 26 – Wednesday

*On train for Southampton, arr. 1100, sailed on the Louth at 1700, a limey tub built in 1906, made troop commander + now have 500 men. Quiet trip.*

July 27 – Thursday

*Anchored at Omaha Beach, walked about two miles to holding station, put in 233 Rep. Co. 69 Repl. Bn. A.P.O. 739. Jerry bombed the beaches all night, can hear big guns in the distance, going to front tomorrow.*

July 28 – Friday

*Went to aid station to change bandage, sent to 7th Field Hospital to be sent back to England, leg not healed yet. Another night of bombing.*

#### D-Day Related Web Sites

The National D-Day Museum  
in New Orleans

<http://www.ddaymuseum.org>

The National D-Day  
Memorial Foundation

<http://www.dday.org>

Britannica Online

Normandy site

<http://normandy.eb.com>

The Drop Zone

Virtual Museum

<http://www.thedropzone.org>

A D-Day Bibliography

<http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/eisenhower/ddaybio.htm>

U.S. Army Center for Military  
History's Omaha Beachhead

<http://www.army.mil/cmhp/100-11.htm>

**Censored mail** — all mail sent from soldiers was read and censored for sensitive information by the military. Injured soldiers often assisted in this task.

**Jerry** — the nickname the Allies gave to the Germans during the war

Answer the following questions, supporting your answers with quotes from the diary:

1. What was Montz's life like in camp? Give both details and more general analysis.
2. What details about D-Day can you discover from the June 6 entry?
3. What information about the invasion as a whole is not included in the diary?
4. What information about Montz's experiences is not included in the diary?
5. How bad were Montz's injuries suffered on D-Day+4?
6. What were Montz's opinions of England — positive and negative?
7. Are you able to describe Montz's personality from these diary entries?
8. What can we learn about wartime conditions in England from this diary?
9. Was D-Day a turning point in Montz's life? What other information would be helpful in answering this question?
10. Is this diary only helpful in researching Sidney Montz or can it be used to research broader subjects?

Now answer these questions about using a diary as a primary source:

1. How does the proximity of the writing about an event to the event itself affect the value of the source to a researcher?
2. As a primary source, what are the strengths and weaknesses of a personal diary?

3. What other primary sources could a researcher use to substantiate or further develop information from a diary?
4. How can a researcher distinguish between fact and opinion in a diary? How can opinion be a useful research tool?
5. Are there any ethical questions involved with using someone's private diary for research?

A Postscript: July 29, 1944 to December 21, 1945

*What happened to Sidney Montz after his return to England?* With his leg finally healed, he was sent back into the fighting in Europe. His citation to award the Bronze Star Medal reads, "...for heroic service in connection with military operations against an enemy of the United States in France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany, 6 June to 10 June 1944; 17 November 1944 to 24 January 1945; 12 February to 18 February 1945. Lieut. Montz rendered conspicuous service in his assignment as leader of a mortar platoon. He landed on D-Day in Normandy and capably and courageously led his men until he sustained a wound four days later and was evacuated. He returned to duty at the beginning of the bitter Hurtgen Forest operation and proved exceptionally adept in selecting feasible mortar positions in the densely wooded terrain." In all Montz saw combat at Normandy, Northern France, the Ardennes, the Rhineland, and in Western Germany. For service in those operations he had an oak leaf

cluster added to his Bronze Star, two clusters added to the Purple Heart he was awarded on D+4, and he was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation and a European Theater Ribbon with five battle stars and bronze arrow head. On December 2, 1945, Montz was discharged from the army. *If you want to know what happened to him after the war — you'll have to come to The National D-Day Museum in New Orleans.*

#### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

1. To help students understand the limitations and advantages of using diaries, ask them to write their own diary entries for several days. At the end of the designated period, ask students to assume the role of scholars in the year 2100 conducting research on American schools at the turn of the 21st century. One of the first sources the scholars found was the diaries kept by your class. Either in small groups or in a general class discussion, have students make two lists, one of what the scholars could learn and the other of what the scholars could not learn about schools from the diaries. If they need some help, you might ask them some of the following questions:
  - What did the diarists (i.e., your students) mostly write about in their entries? How good a source are the diaries for finding out about students' academic experiences? Extracurricular activities? Social life? Attitudes?

- How many classrooms are in your school? How much can you learn about what was going on in other classrooms from the diaries?
  - What can you learn about the experiences of teachers from the diaries? About administrators? About librarians or media service personnel? About other support personnel, such as cafeteria workers and custodians? About the role of parents?
  - What can you learn about the organization of the school? The curriculum? School finances?
2. There are many sources describing the Allied landings on D-Day. How does Montz's diary description of June 6, 1944 compare to other written descriptions? Have students compare and contrast Montz's

story with a textbook version of the D-Day landings. Tell them to list the pros and cons of both versions of the history.

3. The World War I Document Archive <<http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi>> includes some diaries by soldiers in World War I; click on Memoirs/Reminiscences to go to the list which includes the diaries. To help students grasp the differences in the two wars, give them excerpts from one of these diaries and ask them to either write a paper or have a discussion comparing and contrasting Montz's experiences with those of a soldier in the earlier conflict.
4. There are many published diaries available from all periods of American history, not just wars. Reference books which can help you find suitable diaries are:

Arksey, Laura, Nancy Pries, and Marcia Reed, comps. *American Diaries: An Annotated Bibliography of Published American Diaries and Journals*. Detroit: Gale Research, 1983.

Goodfriend, Joyce, comp. *The Published Diaries and Letters of American Women: An Annotated Bibliography*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1987.

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# A Case Study of War and the Transformation of Communities: Richmond, California

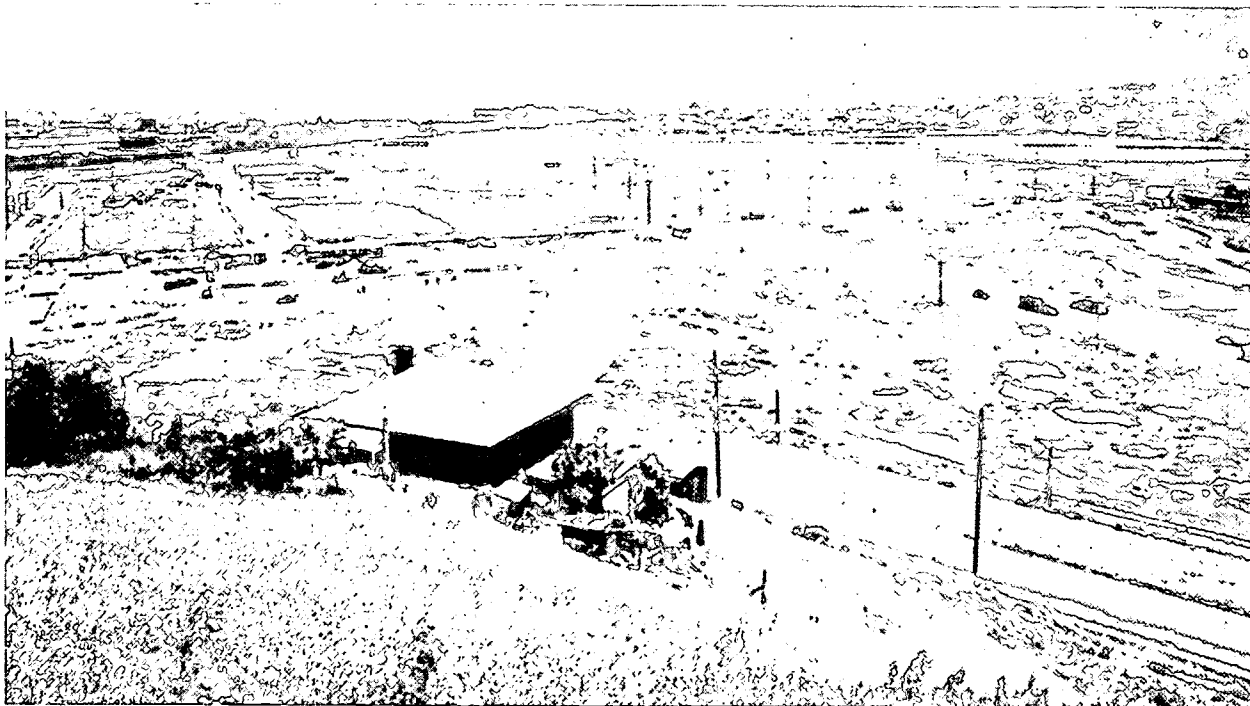
While most of the United States did not suffer the physical devastation during World War II that European and Asian countries did, the war did spark major changes in many communities, causing the construction of new factories, military bases, and housing as well as the migration of millions of Americans. These changes in turn affected politics, education, and social relations. This lesson will use census records to study the war's effects on Richmond, California.

## OBJECTIVES

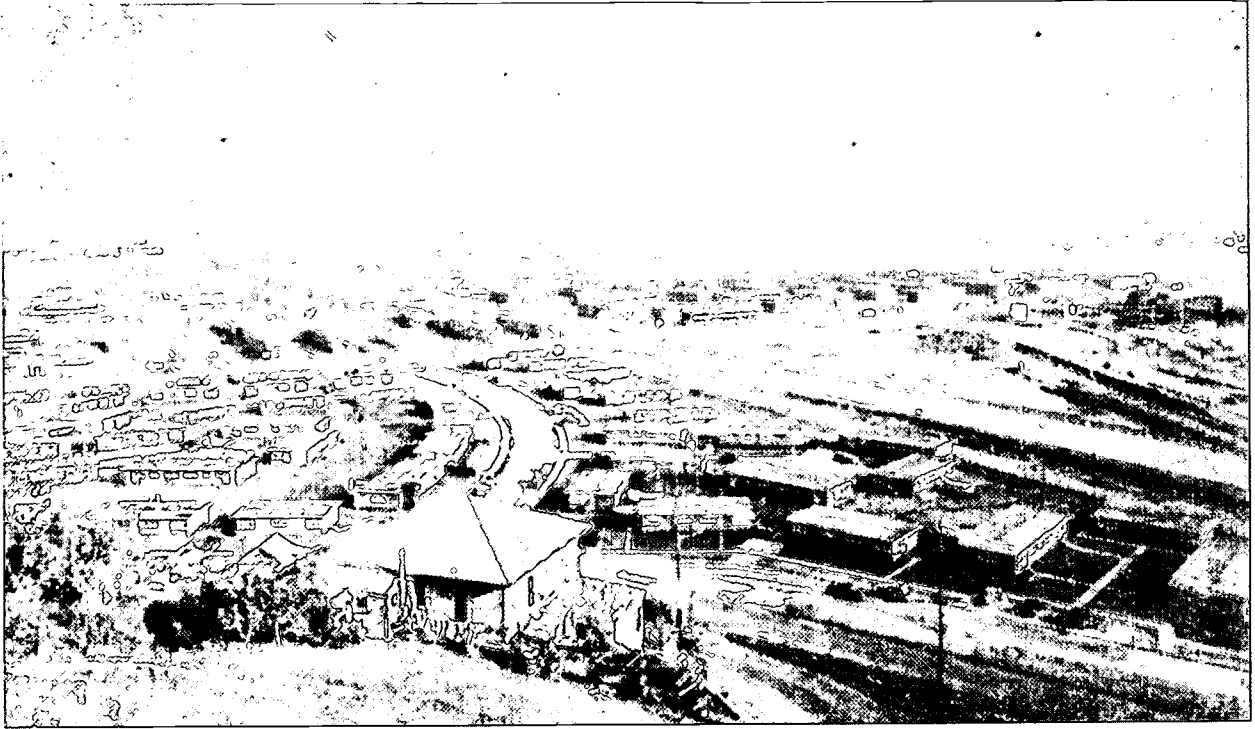
- To learn how to use a census to study local history.
- To discover what other sources are available for local history research.

## Before the War

Before World War II, Richmond was a small industrial city in Contra Costa County, California. On the East Bay near Oakland, the city was incorporated in 1905, after being chosen as the terminus of the Santa Fe Railroad. The excellent transportation facilities spawned an industrial boom, with Standard Oil building a refinery and other companies constructing factories. According to two journalists who visited Richmond, it “was not a pretty place,” prior to World War II, “but it was law-abiding, financially sound, with good schools, and a good government.” It had a small-town feel, with a compact downtown and plenty of open space.



Richmond in June, 1942, Richmond Museum Chamber of Commerce Collection, courtesy of Richmond Museum of History.



Same area of Richmond in January, 1943, Richmond Museum Chamber of Commerce Collection, courtesy of Richmond Museum of History.

### Census records

One way to describe a community is to use statistics. Fortunately, numbers are readily available. Since 1790, the U.S. government has conducted a census every 10 years. Each census has slightly different information, but it usually includes various characteristics of the population as well as information about agriculture, manufacturing, and housing. You can construct a good profile of a community based on census data.

These census records have been published and should be readily available at many universities and colleges as well as major government-owned libraries in your state. In addition, the county-level data for 1790 to 1970 can be accessed online via the United States Historical Census Data Browser <<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/census/>>. If you are studying a city, such as Richmond, you will need to consult the printed census; you could find out about Contra Costa County on-line, but not specifically about Richmond.

In addition to the regular decennial census, the Census Bureau publishes special data compilations which you might find useful. During World War II,

for example, the Census Bureau compiled information about population changes, migration, manufacturing, housing shortages, and other wartime trends. The best guides to Census Bureau publications are:

Cook, Kevin L., comp. *Dubester's U.S. Census Bibliography with SuDocs Class Numbers and Indexes*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1996.

United States. Bureau of the Census. *Bureau of the Census Catalog of Publications, 1790-1972*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, Social and Economic Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census, 1974.

### ACTIVITY

Give your students the tables which accompany this lesson. As an in-class or homework assignment, ask them each to write two paragraphs, one describing how the population of Richmond and Contra Costa County changed from 1940 to 1950 and another describing economic changes over the same period.

When the students have completed their assignment, have them discuss the changes they



discovered as you write a summary on the board. Then ask them why those changes occurred. Census records provide a tremendous amount of information, but as your students think about the reasons for changes, they should realize the limitations of these records. If they want to know why something happened, they'll have to look elsewhere. Have the students brainstorm about possible sources. You should also point out that the records cover 1940-1950, but the war ended in 1945; some of the changes in Richmond might be related to other developments.

### World War II and its Consequences in Richmond

The war brought huge changes to Richmond. The Kaiser and Permanente corporations built four massive shipyards along the city shoreline. These shipyards accounted for one-fifth of all Liberty cargo ships produced in the nation during the war. At their peak, the shipyards employed more than 90,000 people, while other defense plants attracted 30,000 additional workers. The influx of people completely overwhelmed Richmond, causing massive housing shortages, overcrowding schools, and overtaxing city services. Older residents and newcomers fought for control of the government and labor unions; the thousands of African Americans who came to work in Richmond faced discrimination and resentment, as did some of the women who took traditionally male factory jobs.

Many oldtimers in Richmond hoped that the changes to their community would not be permanent, but the war had enduring consequences for the city. While some defense-related factories closed, thousands of the wartime newcomers remained and the population actually grew slightly in the immediate post-war years. The housing developments which had been hurriedly constructed permanently reshaped Richmond, and the wartime migrants continued to make their mark in the unions and local politics.

### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

1. Compile tables with the same sort of information, using either the Historical Census Data Browser or printed census materials, for



Sign in the window of a Japanese-American-owned store, December 8, 1941, Richmond, Library of Congress.

your home county. If your school has Internet access, you might ask students to compile the tables. If you're interested in studying the effects of World War II, use the 1940 census and either the 1950 census or the special wartime census publications as a starting point. As an in-class or homework writing assignment, ask them to compare your community's experience during the war with Richmond's.

2. For a study of how your community changed over a longer period of time, you could assign students to small groups and assign each group to create a poster-size table of information on your county from a different census (for example, choosing the 1860, 1880, 1900, 1920, 1940, and 1960 censuses would give your class a sweeping view of the changes in your



community). Since each census is slightly different, you'll need to decide what information you want from each census for comparative purposes. Post the tables in the classroom and in discussion ask students to identify the key changes or turning points in your community's demographic (population) and economic history, judging from the census materials. If you want to take the assignment further, have your students follow up by trying to find out what caused these turning points by reading local history books, visiting a nearby museum or historical society, and doing additional research. They could turn their research into an exhibit, documentary, or even a book.

Where to find more information about local history  
Public libraries will have books and periodicals published about your area's history. The main public library may even have a local history room, which may include such items as school yearbooks, business directories, vertical files with newspaper clippings or other information, local newspapers on microfilm, and possibly additional information.

Local and state historical societies will have most of the local history items found at the public library, plus manuscript collections (collections of documents of private individuals, businesses, and other organizations). Some also have original or microfilm copies of local church records. Most historical societies have some photographic and print collections, and some have oral history collections.

University libraries will typically have local newspapers on microfilm, local history books, historical magazines, and federal government documents, including census records. Some university libraries also have special collection divisions, which often include manuscript collections for local individuals and organizations as well as possibly oral history collections.

State archives house land records, court records, state legislative records, governor's correspondence, petitions, tax lists, probate records, and other records. In a few states, some of these records are found at county courthouses instead of at the state archives. Many state archives have information about their collections available online, so you can check to see what they have before you plan a visit (there are links from the NHD links page on our web site).

Local history museums or historic sites may have exhibits on state and local history. In addition, the curators can be founts of information and may be willing to share with you information from their research collections.

**Table 1: Population Characteristics, Richmond, California, 1940-1950.**

Category/Year	1940			1950		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Population	23,642	12,354	11,288	99,545	49,732	49,813
Native-born whites	19,766	N/A	N/A	85,329	40,212	40,104
Foreign-born whites	3,468	N/A	N/A	5,013	2,560	2,453
Blacks	270	N/A	N/A	13,374	6,519	6,855
Japanese-Americans	87	N/A	N/A	265	134	131

\* N/A = Not available

**Table 2: Types Of Workers, Richmond, California, 1940-1950.**

Category/Year	1940			1950		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Professional workers	497	272	225	2,761	1,772	989
Proprietors, managers, and officials, non-farm	718	589	129	2,424	2,037	387
Clerical and sales	1,296	717	579	5,719	1,622	3,097
Craftsmen and foremen	1,788	1,773	15	6,522	6,399	123
Operatives	2,170	2,001	169	6,911	5,790	1,121
Domestic service workers	109	5	104	647	18	629
Service workers, except domestic	704	469	235	2,886	1,667	1,219
Laborers, except farm	1,126	1,100	26	2,902	2,790	112

**Table 3: Various Characteristics, Contra Costa County, 1940-1950**

Category/Year	1940	1950
Total population	100,450	298,984
Total black population	582	22,023
No. of manufacturing establishments	(1939) 126	(1947) 168
Total value of crops	(1939) 4,670,000	12,117,084
No. of farms	1,936	(1945) 1,765
Cropland harvested	98,097	(1945) 110,884

## My History Is America's History: An NEH Initiative

Americans feel a profound personal connection to the past through family history. Illuminating the pathways that lead from family stories to community, regional, and national history is the purpose of "My History is America's History," a multi-year initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

"15 Things You Can Do to Save America's Stories" is part of the My History project. By gathering and sharing family stories through these steps, students preserve treasures just as valuable as snapshots, jewelry, or any other heirlooms. But the stories are also important educational tools that help students learn how their family history is woven into the nation's past. The stories become treasures for families and communities. They can also form the basis for excellent National History Day projects, tying family history to national and international events.

Look for the My History kit and web site in the fall of 1999. Both will contain tips for interviewing grandparents, protecting family photographs, tracing genealogies, writing family stories, and much more, as well as references to materials and institutions where parents, teachers, and students can learn more about each activity. The web site will be a place to post family stories and find where those stories fit into the broader history of our nation. Visit <http://www.myhistory.org>.

"Turning Points in History," the theme for the 1999-2000 National History Day year, provides abundant opportunities for creating entries on family and community history topics. The oral histories, documents, photographs, and other artifacts collected for the "My History is America's History" initiative may be used very effectively in National History Day projects.

The National Endowment for the Humanities is a small independent federal agency charged with supporting research, education, and public programs in areas such as history, literature, philosophy, and religion.

### 15 Things You Can Do To Save America's Stories

*Assign or encourage students to:*

1. Keep a journal, and describe how their own stories connect to events in the community or nation.
2. Invite older family members to write down their memories, or interview them.
3. Get it on tape — use a tape recorder or video camera to save family stories.
4. Gather, organize, and preserve family photographs, and find the answers to basic questions about them: who's in the picture, when was it taken, where, and why?
5. Read and preserve family letters, diaries, bibles, and other papers.
6. Learn about family heirlooms, write down their history, and protect them.
7. Explore the history of their home — trace its past through deeds, maps, other public records, and interviews with neighbors.
8. Create a family tree and follow it back as far as they can, through birth and marriage records, genealogy sites on the Web, family stories, and other resources.
9. Research where their family fits in the big picture — find the connections between their family's stories and national movements and events.
10. Write a short family history, or create a family history exhibit.
11. Encourage students to exchange family stories with classmates and friends.
12. Work with other teachers to bring family history into the classroom.
13. Use the stories your students gather to explore their community's history.
14. Urge students to contribute family stories to the public record on the World Wide Web or at the local library or historical society.
15. Visit the local historical society and develop cooperative projects between the historical society and the school.

# Turning Points in American History: The Korean War, 1950-1953



U.S. tank crosses Kumho River, courtesy of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration.

In the years following World War II the traditional world order underwent fundamental changes. The United States abandoned its customary isolationism and helped rebuild a war-torn world. Around the globe, colonies gained their independence. The United Nations (U.N.) was established to help stabilize international relations and to help find solutions to international problems or disputes. Despite the high hopes which greeted its founding, the United Nations was unable to achieve international harmony. For more than 40 years after World War II, the United States and its allies in the democratic world were pitted against the Soviet Union and its satellites in the communist

world. Most of the time, the conflict stopped short of open warfare.

In 1950, however, on a peninsula in eastern Asia, the first military battles of the Cold War took place. A few years earlier, in the closing stages of World War II, the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union had led to the division of the Korean Peninsula at the 38th Parallel, with the Soviet Union occupying the area to the north and the United States the area to the south. North Korea became a Soviet satellite, while South Korea aligned with the U.S. In June 1950, North Korea attempted to reunify the country by invading South Korea.

The United States was committed to containment, a policy of preventing communism from spreading beyond the nations where it already existed. U.S. President Harry Truman quickly took action to protect America's ally from this communist attack. He ordered U.S. troops to South Korea and asked the U.N. to intervene. Normally, the Soviet Union would have used its veto power on the U.N. Security Council to prevent action against its North Korean satellite, but the Soviet ambassador was boycotting the U.N. that day. As a result, the U.N. Security Council authorized the organization of a U.N. force, comprised of troops from 22 nations, to maintain an independent South Korea. The bulk of the troops and the U.N.'s commanding officers were Americans.

The initial North Korean invasion penetrated deeply into South Korea, but U.N. forces were able to turn the tide, pushing far into North Korea. During this time, one of the major American concerns was to keep the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China, another communist nation, from entering the war on North Korea's side. When it appeared that North Korea was going to lose, Chinese troops crossed the Chinese-North Korean border and attacked U.N. troops. In July 1953, after three years of destructive warfare, representatives of the two sides agreed on an armistice. However, no permanent peace agreement was ever reached. The Korean Peninsula remains divided between North Korea and South Korea.

The war was obviously a major turning point in Korean history. As the first military expression of the containment policy and the first use of U.N. forces, the war also marked a turning point in international diplomatic history. Additionally, the war witnessed the development of many new policies and practices which changed the American military. The following lessons provide examples of such key events and the means by which to learn more about them.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate how events during the Korean War served as turning points in American history.
- Understand how the Korean War experience affected American society, government policies, and international relations and in turn how the American military reflected changes in American society.
- Understand the role the Korean War played in establishing American Cold War policy.
- Appreciate the unique sacrifice of Korean War veterans' efforts in helping preserve the freedom of a people they did not know and relate that idea to America's founding beliefs.

## PREPARATION

Have students read an overview of the Korean War in the following suggested sources:

Matloff, Maurice, ed. *American Military History*. Washington, DC: Center for Military History, 1989. Pp. 545-571. <<http://www2.army.mil/cmh-pg/books/amh/amh-25.htm>>.

Millett, Allan, and Peter Maslowski. *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America*. New York: Free Press, 1984. Pp. 471-507.

Visit the official 50th Anniversary of the Korean War web site at <<http://korea50.army.mil>>.

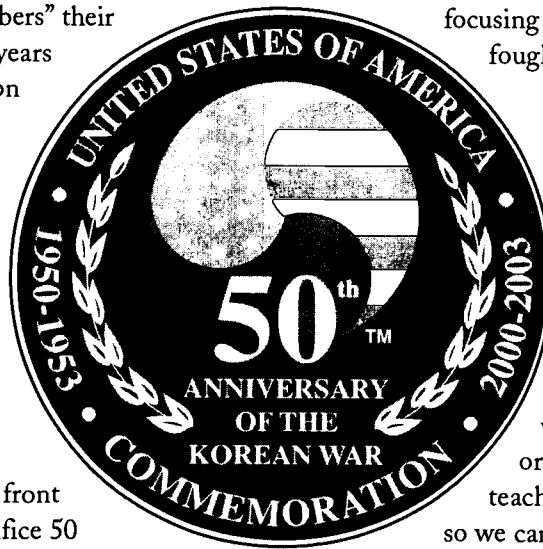
## 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration "Freedom Is Not Free"

Congress has authorized the Department of Defense to organize the United States' 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration, to ensure our Korean War Veterans and their families know "A Grateful Nation Remembers" their service and sacrifices 50 years ago. The Commemoration will run from June 25, 2000 to July 27, 2003 — the 50th Anniversary of the outbreak of the war and the signing of the Armistice ending the conflict.

To thank and honor Korean War Veterans, their families, and those who served on the home front for their service and sacrifice 50 years ago, we plan to:

- Identify, thank and honor the veterans of the Korean War, their families, especially those who lost loved ones.
- Recognize and remember the Prisoners of War and Missing in Action (POW/MIA).
- Recognize the contributions of women and minorities to their Nation during the Korean War.
- Provide the American public with a clearer understanding and appreciation of the lessons, history, and legacy of the Korean War and the military's contributions to the Nation in maintaining world peace and freedom through preparedness and engagement.

- Remember United Nations forces engaged in preserving the peace, freedom and prosperity of the Republic of Korea and strengthen the bonds of friendship and relationships throughout the world focusing on the 22 countries that fought as Allies.



Military and civilian communities can be designated commemorative communities when they agree to develop annual programs and host a minimum of 3 events each year that honor veterans and their families, or support school programs in teaching the history of this era so we can learn and ensure a safer, more peaceful and democratic world.

The Commemoration Committee has several resource materials available for distribution to all Department of Defense Agencies, Veterans Service Organizations, Schools and Commemorative Communities. These include commemorative flags, posters, bookmarks, historical factsheets, quarterly newsletters, certificates and other memorabilia.

Materials can be requested by sending a letter to:

The 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee,  
1213 Jefferson Davis Highway,  
Crystal Gateway 4, Suite 702  
Arlington, Virginia 22202.

State in your letter how you plan to use the commemorative items you request.



Sailors on the U.S.S. Wisconsin, courtesy of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration.

# Korea and the Integration of the Armed Forces

by Jean Mansavage, 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration

African-Americans have fought in every war in U.S. history. At times, up to one-fifth of George Washington's Continental Army was African-American, fighting alongside whites. But during the Civil War and World War I, the African-American soldiers who enlisted in the U.S. military served in segregated units. During World War II, many African-Americans lobbied hard for integration. They convinced President Franklin Roosevelt to issue an executive order requiring integrated work places in defense industries, but leading military officials resisted calls for integration of the armed forces, fearing that white resistance might hamper military readiness. The Navy did begin to integrate, but the other services were reluctant to risk turmoil in the ranks.

Despite this discrimination, African-Americans distinguished themselves in combat, earning numerous citations for bravery. Many of the black veterans came home determined to fight for their civil

rights and to end segregation in America. Their struggle bore fruit on July 26, 1948, when President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9981, calling on the armed forces to provide equal treatment and opportunity for black servicemen.

Historians praise this order as the capstone of Harry Truman's civil rights program. Whatever his concerns for justice, President Truman had many reasons to integrate the military. African-American leaders had threatened to lead a boycott of the armed forces if segregation did not end. Such a boycott could seriously damage military preparedness, since blacks represented 10 percent of the nation's population. Added to this was the fact that segregation had become a diplomatic liability. As the U.S. engaged in the Cold War with the Soviet Union, racial segregation in American society was a huge embarrassment for the country when it tried to appeal to developing nations whose populations were largely non-white. Finally, African-Americans had become



an important part of the Democratic coalition, and the president was campaigning for re-election in the summer of 1948, when he called for an end to segregation in the military.

Of all the armed services, the Navy was the most eager to cooperate with the order to integrate, building on its experience during World War II. The Air Force had also already made plans to end segregation at the time of the presidential order. The Marine Corps' small size made its resistance less noticeable. As the largest service, the Army's cooperation was vital to the success of Truman's integration plan, but the Army moved toward integration as slowly as it could.

The advent of the Korean War forced the Army to act quickly toward complete integration. A lack of white replacement troops forced General Matthew Ridgway, the U.S. commander in Korea, to send black soldiers to formerly all-white units as replacements for casualties. Battlefield necessity made integration a reality before the high command in Washington gave its approval.

## ACTIVITIES

For either of the activities below, you will need to take advantage of one or both of the following resources:

- The Truman Library's web site <<http://www.whistlestop.org>> has many documents relating to this issue online. Click on "Desegregation of the Armed Forces." That takes you to a very good summary and chronology. The original documents may be found by clicking on "Digital Archive Folders."
- Morris J. MacGregor and Bernard C. Nalty, eds., *Blacks in the United States Armed Forces: Basic Documents* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1977) is a 13-volume work which reprints facsimile copies of hundreds of documents. Vols. 8-12 deal with the struggle to integrate the armed forces in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

You may want to select some documents from either source to photocopy for your students.

### ACTIVITY 1

Divide students into four groups, representing

Navy leaders, Army leaders, civil rights groups, and President Truman's political advisors. Have them pretend that it is 1947, and President Truman has asked for their advice about whether or not to issue an order integrating the military. Using the above sources, each group should do some research to determine the arguments their real-life counterparts made during the struggle for integration. You may then ask the groups to do one or more of the following: write a position paper telling President Truman what they think he should do and why; create a poster explaining their position on integration of the military; or make an oral presentation to the class summarizing their position.

### ACTIVITY 2

That the president ordered the military to desegregate was not in and of itself a guarantee that the military would comply with great speed. Ask your students to do one of the following:

Identify and interview a minority Korean War veteran with the assistance of the National Association for Black Veterans, Inc., phone 1-800-842-4597 or e-mail <[nabvets@eexecpc.com](mailto:nabvets@eexecpc.com)>.

Read:

- The executive summary of William T. Bowers, et al., *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24th Infantry Regiment in Korea* (Washington, DC: Center for Military History, 1996). The summary can be found online at <<http://www2.army.mil/cmhp/24th.htm>>.
- Excerpts from Lyle Rishell, *With a Black Platoon in Combat: A Year in Korea* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1993).
- Excerpts from Wilbert L. Walker, *We Are Men: Memoirs of World War II and the Korean War* (Chicago: Adams Press, 1972).
- Excerpts from the more controversial Curtis Morrow, *What's a Commie Ever Done to Black People?: A Korean War Memoir of Fighting in the U.S. Army's Last All Negro Unit* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1997).

As either an in-class or homework writing assignment, ask students to write an affidavit (a legal document providing written testimony). They should assume the role of an African-American Korean War

veteran, asked in 1954 to summarize his experiences with integration during the just-ended war for the Senate Armed Services Committee, which is investigating how successful the integration of the military had been.

#### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

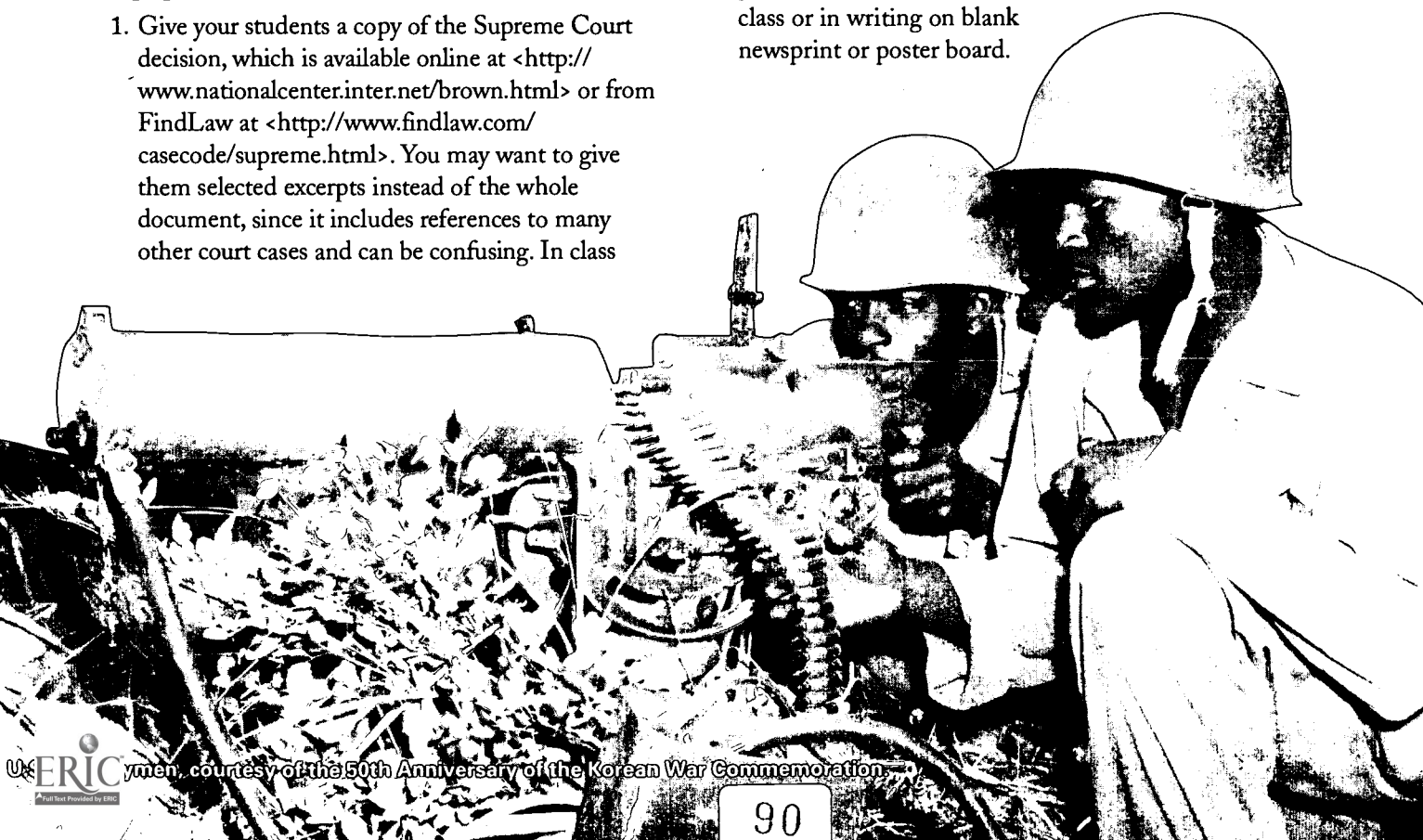
In addition to pursuing the integration of the military, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and other civil rights organizations sought to end segregation in other aspects of American society. Throughout the South, public schools were segregated. During the Korean War, lawsuits in several Southern states challenged the legality of these segregated schools. The Supreme Court heard these cases together. Many organizations filed amicus curiae (friend of the court) briefs, either in support or opposition to segregation. In May 1954, the Court handed down its decision in what came to be called *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka*. Segregated schools, ruled the highest court in the land, were inherently unequal and unconstitutional.

There are several ways in which you can help your students understand the arguments for and against segregation:

1. Give your students a copy of the Supreme Court decision, which is available online at <<http://www.nationalcenter.inter.net/brown.html>> or from FindLaw at <<http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/supreme.html>>. You may want to give them selected excerpts instead of the whole document, since it includes references to many other court cases and can be confusing. In class

discussion, ask them to identify what question or problem the Court addressed in its opinion, what the Court decided, and what reasons the Court gave for its decision. Alternatively, as a homework assignment, you could ask the students to write a newspaper article reporting on the Court's decision.

2. If you want to study this landmark case in more detail, you could have your students examine the arguments made for and against segregation. Excerpts from the amicus curiae briefs and other documents relating to the several court cases have been printed in Mark Whitman, ed., *Removing a Badge of Slavery: The Record of Brown v. Board of Education* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Pub., 1993). The briefs are actually written in relatively clear language, because the writers were trying to persuade the Court to support their position. If you can't find the book, you might instead look for newspaper editorials and letters to the editor published at the time of the decision in your state newspapers and in national newspapers such as *The New York Times*. Break your students into small groups and give each group a brief or a set of editorials and letters. Ask them to summarize the arguments in their documents, either in an oral presentation to the rest of the class or in writing on blank newsprint or poster board.



# The Geneva Convention and Prisoners of War in Korea

by Jean Mansavage, 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration

For prisoners of war, the Korean War was a turning point. Although the war was the first to take place after the writing of the Geneva Convention, American POWs suffered a new humiliation, being used as ideological pawns. The Chinese Communist Forces routinely sought to obtain propaganda material from American POWs for psychological warfare operations, attempted to undermine the prisoners' faith and trust in their democratic government and leaders, and tried to convert them to Communism. As a result of the POWs' wartime experiences, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued a presidential order creating a code of conduct for Americans taken captive.



Americans held by North Korea, courtesy of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration.

## BACKGROUND

Mistreatment of prisoners during World War II led to the creation of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War in 1949. None of the participants in the Korean War had ratified the Geneva Convention. Nonetheless, less than a month into the war, the United States, South Korea, and North Korea stated they would apply the Geneva Convention guidelines that provided for the protection, health, and welfare of POWs and other noncombatants pending repatriation. Still effective today, the Convention states that captors are required to treat POWs humanely and not allowed to coerce military information from them. Prisoners are only required to give the enemy their name, rank, identification number, and date of birth.

Regardless of the Geneva Convention, being a POW during the Korean War was dangerous for troops of all the nations. Neither side was prepared to properly deal with captives, and as a result, the death rate among them was high. The North Koreans had no organized prisoner of war system. During the summer, fall, and winter of 1950, the North Korean People's Army simply moved POWs to rear areas into primitive living conditions—if they survived the death marches. Later, from April 1951 through the end of the war, the Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) took control of almost all American POWs. Unfortunately, the CCF did not accept the Geneva Convention and physically abused American POWs. They subjected prisoners to brainwashing techniques that tested each prisoner's faith in democracy. Daily propaganda lectures and broadcasts attacked American values, and the CCF persuaded some POWs to sign peace petitions and make pro-communist statements. Most POWs who made any statement did not consider their words as harmful to the U.S., and few, if any, gave their interrogators any information of military value.

## ACTIVITY

Share with your students the provisions of the Geneva Convention regarding the treatment of prisoners. Ask students to assume the role of investigators for the International Red Cross,

seeking to determine if POWs in Korea were being treated as required by the Geneva Convention. They may investigate by:

- Reading excerpts from the memoirs of an American POW in Korea, such as Harry Spiller's *American POWs in Korea: sixteen personal accounts* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1998) or Clay Blair, *Beyond Courage* (New York: D. McKay, 1955).
- Interviewing a Korean War POW in class. To locate one who would be willing to come speak to your students, try contacting the American Ex-Prisoners of War organization at 817-649-2979. A list of state chapters with contact information can be found on the organization's web site at <<http://www.ax-pow.org>>.
- Interviewing a Korean War POW electronically. Another possibility is to have your students conduct interviews with former POWs through the Korean War Project electronic bulletin board. The address for the web site is <<http://www.koreanwar.org>>.

Once students have read about or interviewed a former POW, ask them to assume the role of investigators for the International Red Cross, reporting on whether or not POWs in Korea were being treated as required by the Geneva Convention.

## AFTERWORD

While the majority of American POWs behaved admirably, a few cooperated with their captors. Postwar investigations of over 500 reports of misconduct led to only a few convictions for collaboration with the enemy. However, 21 Americans had refused to return to their homeland. The perceived success of communist brainwashing techniques and the poor behavior of these few men prompted the appointment of an Advisory Committee on Prisoners of War. That committee ultimately created a uniform standard of conduct for all members of the armed forces. Although branches of the military had regulations on conduct, the American Armed Forces never had a clearly defined code of conduct before 1955. The Code of Conduct for Members of the Armed Forces of the United States, or Presidential Order 10631, which was



American POWs in Korea, courtesy of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration.

signed into effect on August 17, 1955 by President Dwight Eisenhower, provided military personnel with a standard of conduct to follow should they fall into enemy hands in wartime. The Code states that military personnel taken prisoner must resist interrogation and indoctrination, maintain loyalty with and assist fellow POWs, and make every attempt to escape or help. Finally, to the utmost of their ability, POWs must deny information to and

resist enemy interrogation, exploitation, and indoctrination.

In more recent times, the U.S. government has shown increasing concern for the treatment of Americans taken captive by various groups. This is in marked contrast to the experience of Korean War POWs who were gravely criticized by the American public for their perceived collaboration while captive.

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# The Korean War as a Turning Point in History



Marines line both sides of road during withdrawal, courtesy of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration.

Even as the United States and the Soviet Union triumphed over Germany in World War II, the Yalta Accords planted the seeds of the Cold War in Europe. During the first few years, the conflict between the communist world and the free world was an intense but largely peaceful struggle. The U.S.S.R. aggressively asserted control over central and eastern Europe, while supporting communist movements elsewhere. The U.S. was determined to

prevent Soviet expansion, investing billions in reconstructing Europe, supporting pro-American governments, and developing military alliances as part of its containment policy. When Communist North Korea invaded South Korea, President Harry Truman quickly committed U.S. troops to defend this American ally, creating a turning point in U.S. Cold War policy.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Summarize or have your students summarize the main points of U.S. containment policy, as outlined in George Kennan's 1946 "Long Telegram," which outlined the policy and is available on the Internet from the National Security Archive at <http://www.seas.gwu.edu/nsarchive/coldwar/documents/> under "Comrades."
2. Have your students read the section of their textbook devoted to the Cold War. As a class, create a timeline of the major events and changes in U.S. policy during the Cold War. Discuss where the Korean War fits in the overall scheme.

### THE KOREAN WAR AS A TURNING POINT IN KOREAN HISTORY

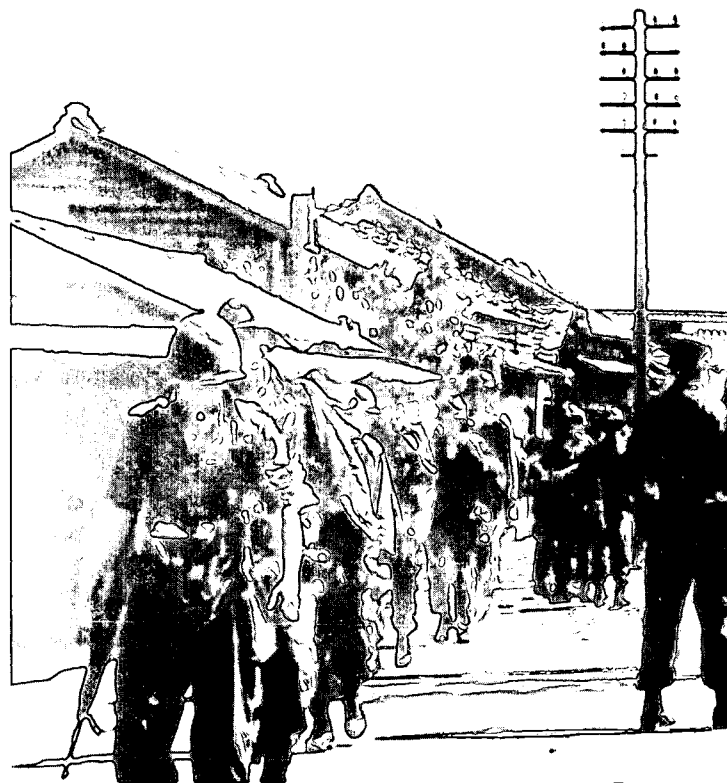
For much of the first half of the 20th century, Japan had occupied Korea. During World War II, the Soviet Union occupied the northern part of the Korean peninsula, while the U.S. occupied the southern part. After the war, the division continued, with a communist government ruling North Korea, and a democratic government ruling South Korea. North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950 to unify the country. An armistice ended the fighting, but the two countries remained divided, separated by a demilitarized zone. The division continues to this day, and both nations maintain large armies at great cost in case war breaks out again.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Create a chart comparing present-day North and South Korea. You can find information in the *CIA Factbook*, available in print at many libraries or on-line at <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>.
2. Explain to your students the difference between an armistice and a peace treaty. Ask them to discuss how the two nations might have developed differently if the war had ended with a peace treaty rather than an armistice.

### FIRST MILITARY USE OF UNITED NATIONS FORCES IN WARTIME

The United Nations was established at the end of World War II amid many hopes that it would be more effective than the failed League of Nations. While its charter allowed the UN to create a military force, the UN had not intervened militarily anywhere in the world when North Korea invaded South Korea. It seemed likely that the UN would not be able to do anything about this attack on a member nation, because the Soviet Union, which counted North Korea as a satellite, was expected to use its veto power on the UN Security Council to prevent any UN action. The Soviet ambassador,



however, boycotted the session, and the UN voted to create a multinational military force to fight under UN auspices in Korea.

#### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Break your students into groups and give each group copies of the charters of the UN and the League of Nations. Ask them to create a chart comparing the two organizations, including how the use of force fit into the organizations' charters. The UN charter may be found at the UN website <<http://www.un.org/aboutun/>>, while the League's charter is available at <[\[ti/www/league-covenant.html\]\(http://www/league-covenant.html\)>.](http://www.tufts.edu/departments/fletcher/mul</a></li></ol></div><div data-bbox=)

2. Give your students a list of the countries which contributed to the force that fought in the Korean War. Assign each student or group of students a different country, and ask them to find out why those countries joined the UN force and what they contributed. You might want to have available some resources such as the UN Department of Public Information's *United Nations: Yearbook of the United Nations (1950-1954)* or *The History of the United Nations Forces in the Korean War*, 6 vols., (1972-1977).

#### INNOVATIONS OF THE KOREAN WAR

Since the Cold War had started near the end of World War II, the U.S. military had not completely demobilized, as it did at the end of World War I. In the five years between the end of World War II and the beginning of the Korean War, the military had worked hard on improving its organization, and defense companies had continued to develop military technology. As a result, the Korean War witnessed the first wartime use by the U.S. military of such innovations as: Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) units, an air force separate from the army, the use of jet aircraft in combat, 1-year theater rotations for soldiers, and psychological warfare.

#### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:

Break students into small groups and assign them to research one of the innovations listed above. They should try to find out not only what the innovation was, but what it replaced, how it affected the military, and what impact it had on civilian society. Have them report their findings to the class in an oral presentation or a poster.



Banner greets U.S. troops, July 26, 1950, courtesy of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration.



# Epidemics as Turning Points: The Black Death of the 1300s

Few epidemics have had as devastating an impact and as significant consequences for a society as the Black Death. Arriving in Sicily in October 1347 on the caravans bringing trade goods from central Asia, the flea-borne plague quickly spread. During the next five years, the disease killed one-third to one-half of Europe's population. The Black Death changed the course of European history, affecting religion, economy, politics, social relations, and family life.

## OBJECTIVES

- To understand the Black Death and its consequences.
- To learn how to analyze a document.

## PREPARATION

Have your students read the section of their textbook devoted to the Black Death, or discuss it with them. Make enough copies of the document and the document analysis sheet for each student to have one.

## ACTIVITY

Give each student a copy of the document and the document analysis worksheet. Either in small groups or individually, have your students read the document and fill out the worksheet. If you think there are too many references in the account which your students would not understand, you might have a class discussion about the account, filling out the worksheet on a transparency or writing the answers on the board.

## ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

1. Have your students compare Jean de Venette's account of the Black Death with other accounts. You could divide the class into small groups and give each group a different document and have them report back to the class. Several accounts of the epidemic and its effects can be found on-line. The wonderful Internet Medieval Sourcebook has Giovanni Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, which describes the plague in Florence <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/boccacio2.html>>. "Plague and Public Health in Renaissance Europe" <<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/osheim/intro.html>> includes three documents describing the plague's effects in the Italian cities of Florence, Pistoia, and Lucca. Many sources about England's experience with the epidemic were printed in Rosemary Horrox, trans. and ed., *The Black Death* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994).
2. Another possibility would be to focus specifically on the experience of Jews during the Black Death, which Jean de Venette touches upon in his account. The Jewish History Sourcebook <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/1348-jewsblack death.html>> has three documents relating to Jews accused of causing the epidemic in Geneva and Strasbourg. Either as a written assignment or in class discussion, have the students compare the treatment of Jews in Germany and France during the Black Death.

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## The plague in France according to Jean de Venette

This text is reprinted with permission from Rosemary Horrox, trans. and ed., *The Black Death* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 54-57. Jean de Venette, a Carmelite friar, apparently wrote this piece around the year 1359-60, and died around 1369.

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*As a result of that pestilence a great many men and women died that year and the next in Paris and throughout the kingdom of France, as they also did in other parts of the world. The young were more likely to die than the elderly, and did so in such numbers that burials could hardly keep pace. Those who fell ill lasted little more than two or three days, but died suddenly, as if in the midst of health—for someone who was healthy one day could be dead and buried the next. Lumps suddenly erupted in their armpits or groin, and their appearance was an infallible sign of death. Doctors called this sickness or pestilence an epidemic. Such an enormous number of people died in 1348 and 1349 that nothing like it has been heard or seen or read about. And death and sickness came by imagination, or by contact with others and consequent contagion; for a healthy person who visited the sick hardly ever escaped death. In many towns and villages the result was that the cowardly priests took themselves off, leaving the performance of spiritual offices to the regular clergy, who tended to be more courageous. To be brief, in many places, not two men remained alive out of twenty. The mortality was so great that, for a considerable period, more than 500 bodies a day were being taken in carts from the Hotel-Dieu in Paris for burial in the cemetery of the Holy Innocents. The saintly sisters of the Hotel-Dieu, not fearing death, worked sweetly and with great humility, setting aside considerations of earthly dignity. A great*

*number of the sisters were called to a new life by death and now rest, it is piously believed, with Christ.*

*It is said that this mortality began among the infidel and then travelled to Italy. Afterwards it crossed the mountains and arrived in Avignon, where it attacked various cardinals and carried off their entire households. Then it gradually advanced through Gascony and Spain and into France, advancing town by town, street by street, and finally from house to house—or, rather, person to person. It then crossed into Germany, although it was less virulent there than with us. During the epidemic the Lord, of his goodness, deigned to confer such grace on those dying that, however suddenly they died, almost all of them faced death as joyfully as if they had been well prepared for it. Nor did anyone die without making confession and receiving the last sacrament. So that more of those dying would make a good end, Pope Clement mercifully gave the confessors in numerous cities and villages the power to absolve the sins of the dying, so that as a result they died the more happily, leaving much of their land and goods to churches or religious orders since their right heirs had predeceased them.*

*Men ascribed the pestilence to infected air or water, because there was no famine or lack of food at that time but, on the contrary, a great abundance. One result of this interpretation was that the infection, and the sudden death which it*

brought, were blamed on the Jews, who were said to have poisoned wells and rivers and corrupted the air. Accordingly the whole world brutally rose against them, and in Germany and in other countries which had Jewish communities many thousands were indiscriminately butchered, slaughtered and burnt alive by the Christians. The insane constancy shown by them and their wives was amazing. When Jews were being burnt mothers would throw their own children into the flames rather than risk them being baptised, and would then hurl themselves into the fire after them, to burn with their husbands and children.

It was claimed that many wicked Christians were discovered poisoning wells in a similar fashion. But in truth, such poisonings, even if they really happened, could not have been solely responsible for so great a plague or killed so many people. There must have been some other cause, such as, for instance, the will of God, or corrupt humors and the badness of air and earth; although perhaps such poisonings, where they did occur, were a contributory factor. The mortality continued in France for most of 1348 and 1349 and then stopped, leaving many villages and many town houses virtually empty, stripped of their inhabitants. Then many houses fell quickly into ruin, including numerous houses in Paris, although the damage there was less than in many places.

When the epidemic was over the men and women still alive married each other. Everywhere women conceived more readily than usual. None proved barren, on the contrary, there were pregnant women wherever you looked. Several gave birth to twins, and some to living triplets. But what is particularly surprising is that when the children born after

the plague started cutting their teeth they commonly turned out to have only 20 or 22, instead of the 32 usual before the plague. I am unsure what this means, unless it is, as some men say, a sign that the death of infinite numbers of people, and their replacement by those who survived, has somehow renewed the world and initiated a new age. But if so, the world, alas, has not been made any better by its renewal. For after the plague men became more miserly and grasping, although many owned more than they had before. They were also more greedy and quarrelsome, involving themselves in brawls, disputes and lawsuits. Nor did the dreadful plague inflicted by God bring about peace between kings and lords. On the contrary, the enemies of the king of France and of the Church were stronger and more evil than before and stirred up wars by land and sea. Evil spread like wildfire.

What was also amazing was that, in spite of there being plenty of everything, it was all twice as expensive: household equipment and foodstuffs, as well as merchandise, hired labour, farm workers and servants. The only exception was property and houses, of which there is a glut to this day. Also from that time charity began to grow cold, and wrongdoing flourished, along with sinfulness and ignorance—for few men could be found in houses, towns or castles who were able or willing to instruct boys in the rudiments of Latin.

## Document Analysis Worksheet

.....  
Title:  
Author:  
Type of document:

Read the document and answer the following, citing evidence from the document whenever possible:  
.....

### A. About the author

Printed documents may seem very authoritative. Many people think if it's in print, it must be true. As historians know, however, most documents have some sort of bias related to the author and the author's background and reasons for creating the document.

1. What do you know about the author? How do you think the author's background affected what was written?
2. Why do you think this document was created? Who was the intended audience?
3. Was the author in a position to know firsthand the information included in the document? If not, what source(s) did the author use?
4. How long after the event(s) described in the document did the author write? How do you think the account would have differed if the author had written it earlier? Later?

### B. About the content

Historians are usually concerned with three aspects of events: what happened, why did it happen, and what consequences did it have?

1. Briefly list the main topics covered.
2. What does the author believe caused the Black Death?
3. According to the author, which groups or individuals behaved well during the epidemic? Who behaved badly? Do you think that the author's membership in a religious order had any effect on how he portrayed different people?
4. How was the Black Death in France a turning point for:
  - a. the Jews?
  - b. the economy?
  - c. religious orders?
  - d. religion and morality?



# Designing the White House: Interpreting Buildings

by John Riley, White House Historical Association

Reminders of the past are all around us. The buildings that survive through the years are artifacts that can tell us a great deal about the values and aspirations of the people who built them. Architects use size, massing, ornamentation, symmetry or asymmetry, and other design features to project an overall image of a structure. This lesson will focus on one of the most famous buildings in America, the White House, to determine what image its builders meant to project.



Elevation, design by James Diamond, courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- To discover how a building can represent a people's values and symbolize ideas.
- To understand how the design and construction of the White House helped establish a sense of permanence and power for a young America and its republican form of government during the early, uncertain years of the United States.

**BACKGROUND**

After declaring independence from Britain in 1776, the Congress of the United States had wandered around the mid-Atlantic states, looking for a home. At various times, Philadelphia, Princeton, Trenton, Annapolis, and other cities had served as the nation's capital. European observers, used to having capitals hundreds of years old, ridiculed the new nation for lacking a permanent seat of government. More importantly, many Europeans—and some Americans—were

skeptical that a republican form of government would endure. History had seen many republics come and go; only the Roman Republic had endured for long, and it collapsed into dictatorship.

In 1789, after the ratification of the U.S. constitution created a stronger national government, President George Washington and a newly-chosen Congress assumed office in the temporary capital of New York City. Having decided to build a permanent capital, Congress authorized President Washington to choose a site for the city and pick a design and site for the President's House. The building would be the first

undertaken as the federal government prepared to move to its new home.

In 1792, at President Washington's request, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson announced an architectural competition to produce design drawings for the President's House to be built in the capital city of Washington. President

Washington insisted that the building should be made of stone, so that it would have a more substantial appearance, much like the most important buildings in Europe. The President's House would be the largest residence in the country until after the Civil War. The young nation had never seen anything like it, and that was what Washington liked about it. The building was to be more than the home and office of the president; it was to be a symbol of the presidency. A republic could not have a king's palace, but the building must command respect from citizens in the United States and, just as importantly, foreign visitors who came to visit America's leader.

President Washington also hoped that the public buildings in the new capital "in size, form, and elegance should look beyond the present day." The nation could not afford anything too extravagant at this time, but the design should allow for flexibility in the future, when the nation progressed. "For the Presidents House," wrote the nation's leader, "I would design a building which should also look forward, but execute no more of it at present than might suit the circumstances

#### INTERNET SITES:

**American Architectural Foundation**

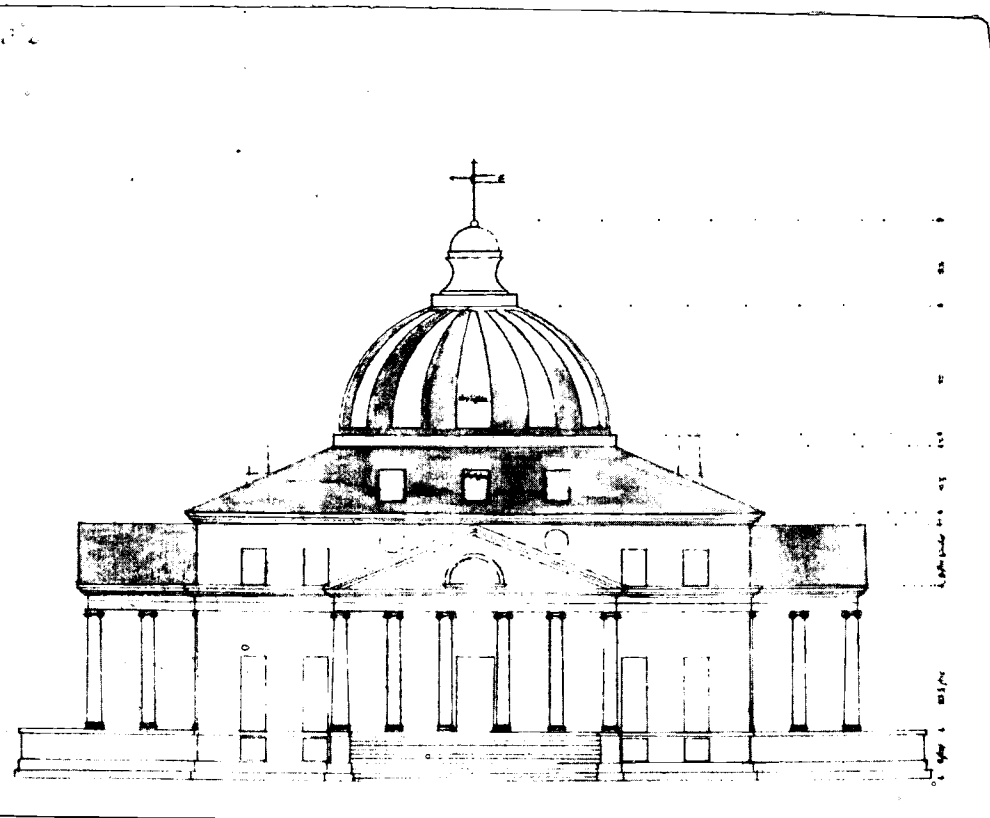
<http://www.aafpages.org>

**The White House**

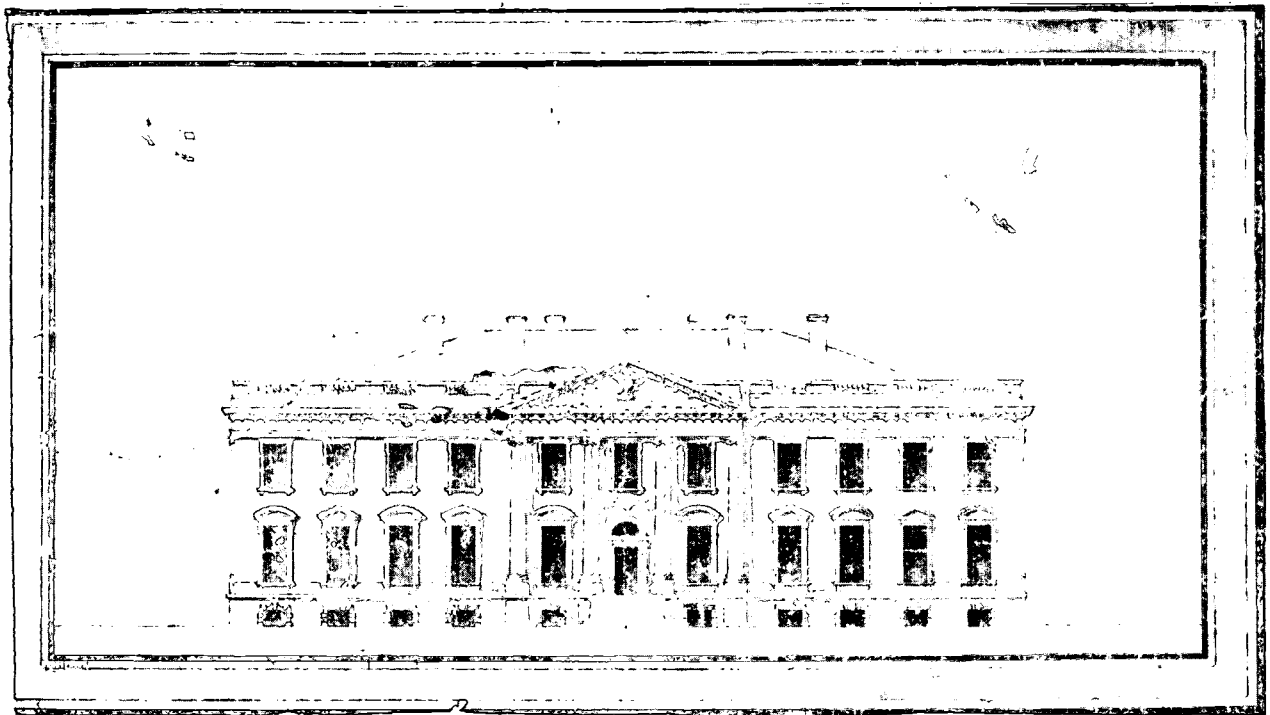
<http://www.whitehouse.gov>

**White House Historical Association:**

<http://www.whitehousehistory.org>



Elevation, A.Z.'s plan, courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.



Elevation, President's House, as designed by James Hoban, 1792, courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.

of this Country when it shall be first wanted. A plan comprehending more may be executed at a future period when the wealth, population, and importance of it shall stand upon much higher ground than they do at present."

#### PREPARATION

On July 16, 1792, President Washington examined at least six designs submitted in the President's House architectural competition. The plans were quite varied. Below are elevations of three of the plans, showing the front of the building, as if you were standing outside looking at it from across the street or lawn. One of the designs is by James Hoban, an Irishman whom the president had met a year earlier in Charleston. A second plan was

submitted by a mysterious man known only as "A.Z." Historians have speculated that Thomas Jefferson was the mystery designer, but records suggest that the architect likely was John Collins, a builder from Richmond, Virginia. The third design is by James Diamond, a Maryland inventor.

Have your students examine the three elevations.

#### ACTIVITY 1

Ask your students to assume the role of visitors from Britain or France in 1792, ancient countries with splendid castles, cathedrals, and public buildings. President Washington invited these visitors to tea, where he showed them the three designs. Have the students, as these foreign visitors, write entries in their journals

describing the three designs and offering an opinion as to which one President Washington should pick and why. For a contrast, you might also have the students go through the same assignment, but as American frontier settlers, farmers barely eking out an existence beyond the Appalachian mountains and living in ramshackle cabins.

#### ACTIVITY 2

On July 17, 1792, President Washington announced that the winner of the design competition was James Hoban. By 1792, political parties were beginning to develop in the new nation. Rather than attempting to be nonpartisan, most newspapers openly favored either the Federalists, who controlled the government, or their opponents,



who were gradually coming to be known as Democratic-Republicans. Have your students write newspaper editorials, either as Federalists extolling the President's design choice or as Democratic-Republicans criticizing his choice.

#### ENRICHMENT AND EXTENSION

1. Select a neighborhood in your town, or around your school, and have students make an inventory of the buildings. Categorize the buildings by use. Assign a group of students to each building type: churches, stores, apartment buildings, houses, offices, etc. Have each group report on their type,

- explaining how they share characteristics, and how they differ in design.
2. Have students research a favorite historic building that they have visited or admired, and write a brief essay on the origins of the structure. Who

commissioned the building, and why? What are the most interesting design elements? If they can find an image of the architect's drawings, have them compare it to a photograph of the building. Did the builders follow the architect's plans?

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- Poppeliers, John C., et al. *What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture*. Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1983.
- The White House: An Historic Guide*. Washington, DC: White House Historical Association, 1995 or earlier editions.

### The White House Historical Association

The year 2000 marks the 200th anniversary of the White House. In November 1800, John and Abigail Adams moved into the President's House in the nation's capital. This turning point in American history established a permanent residence for the nation's leader, and for the past two centuries, the White House has acted as a symbol of the nation's elected executive and commander-in-chief. Many of America's most dramatic and important historical events have emanated from the White House. Thomas Jefferson planned the Lewis and Clark expeditions, Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, Theodore Roosevelt spoke out from his "bully pulpit," Harry Truman authorized the use of the atomic bomb. The White House has played the role of war room and cultural stage, ceremonial setting for international visitors, and target of protesters.

The White House Historical Association invites educators and students to explore the history of the White House, the home of our first families and an enduring monument to democracy. For classroom materials, please visit us at our web site: <<http://www.whitehousehistory.org>>. Write: Director of Education Programs, White House Historical Association, 740 Jackson Place NW, Washington, DC 20503. E-mail: [edu@whha.org](mailto:edu@whha.org).

The White House Historical Association was founded in 1961 as a non-profit historical and educational organization for the purpose of enhancing the understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the White House. The Association plays a vital role in preserving the White House and recording its unique history. Through publications, videos, CDs, exhibits, and other educational materials, the Association makes available to the public the fascinating history of the White House and its occupants.

# Using the Internet for Research: Sputnik as a Case Study

If your students are like a lot of History Day students, they want to do all or much of their research on the Internet. The Internet is in many ways an excellent resource, and it can provide them with quite a bit of material. But—and this is a big BUT—there are problems they need to consider:

- 1 They need reliable, documented sources for their History Day projects. The Internet makes available enormous amounts of information, but it's not all reliable. Students need to question and evaluate Internet sources as they would any source they use.
2. There's a lot of wonderful material which ISN'T available on the Internet. If your students limit themselves to online research, they'll miss out on a great many sources which could make their History Day entries truly outstanding. However, they might be able to use the Internet to find some of this material.

This lesson will walk students through the process of doing research on the Internet. It will discuss different ways of finding sites on the Internet, how to evaluate the sites, and how to use the Internet to find sources which are not available online.

The focus of the research will be Sputnik, a major turning point in technological, political, and social history. Sputnik perfectly illustrates the main points of this lesson: While many Sputnik sites are not appropriate for History Day research, there are also some excellent Sputnik sites, including many primary sources. Despite the bounty of materials available, a student who uses only the Internet for research will miss out on some key sources.

## ACTIVITY

Make copies of the following worksheet and have students work either alone or in groups to fill it out. You may prefer to create your own worksheet using another topic.

## Worksheet: Using the Internet for Sputnik Research

### BACKGROUND

In October 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the first satellite, into space. Having assumed their nation was technologically far ahead of the U.S.S.R., Americans were shocked and fearful. Sputnik shattered American confidence and spurred the U.S. government to invest additional billions in the space race, reorganize its space program by establishing the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and devote far more attention to science and math education.

### ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment is to use the Internet to find the best sources possible for creating a History Day project about Sputnik.

### FIND SPUTNIK SITES ON THE INTERNET

**Step 1:** You need to consider what type of material you are hoping to find. Since this is for your History Day entry, you want good, well-documented **primary and secondary sources**. You are not interested in personal opinions or in materials which do not identify sources.

**Step 2:** There are several ways to find information on the Internet.

- a. Do a **keyword search**. Text-index search engines such as Excite <<http://www.excite.com/>> or HotBot <<http://www.hotbot.com/>> search the text of web pages to find matches for your keyword. Search directories such as Yahoo! <<http://www.yahoo.com>> organize web sites into categories and present the results of your search in a structured format, with category matches listed first and then web site matches. Like the text-index search engines, Yahoo! also searches individual web pages for your keyword, but it keeps these results separate from the category and site matches.

Do keyword searches for Sputnik using at least two search engines and record how many matches they find:

- b. Follow **links** from sites you've already found. Web sites often will provide links to related sites. These links will typically be less comprehensive than a keyword search, but the sites are likelier to be directly relevant to your topic.

**Step 3:** Decide which sites are the most promising to view. There are thousands of web pages which include the word "Sputnik." It seems like you will have no trouble finding plenty of information about this little satellite. But take a closer look at the web pages. Are they all relevant to your topic? In addition to the satellite, list at least three other uses of the name "Sputnik":

**Step 4.** One of the advantages of Yahoo! is that it organizes web sites into categories. The category match which Yahoo! provided for your keyword search is clearly relevant: "Science>Space>Satellites>Missions>Sputnik." Explore the following individual web sites listed:

Sputnik <<http://www.nytimes.com/partners/aol/special/sputnik/>>

Fill out the following chart:

	<b>Sputnik</b>	<b>Sputnik: The Fortieth Anniversary</b>	<b>Sputnik: 40 Years</b>	<b>Sven's Space Place</b>
Date of creation and/or revision				
Purpose of site				
Person or organization creating or sponsoring site				
Does this person or organization have good credentials for this subject?				
Type of information included on the site				
Are the sources for information listed on the site?				

Sputnik: The Fortieth Anniversary <<http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/pao/History/sputnik/>>

Sputnik: 40 Years <<http://www.foxnews.com/scitech/features/sputnik/>>

Sven's Space Place <<http://www.users.wineasy.se/svengrahn/>>

Step 5: Decide which sites you will include in your History Day bibliography for Sputnik. Based on the information you've collected, answer two questions:

1. Are these reliable sites?

University sites (which usually end with .edu) are normally relatively reliable, as are government sites (which usually have .gov endings). Sites sponsored by private organizations or individuals need to be considered carefully. Many are fine, but others are meant as propaganda. Sources of information should be identified. Also, ask yourself if the site seems to be promoting a particular viewpoint? Are there grammatical errors and misspelled words?

2. Are these useful sites? Do they have primary sources which relate to Sputnik? Secondary sources? Pictures?

Unless a site is both reliable and useful, **DON'T USE IT!**

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#### FINDING OTHER SOURCES BY USING THE INTERNET

Finding Sputnik-related web sites is only one part of using the Internet for your research. The NASA site in particular is wonderful, but if you only use that you will miss out on a lot of sources. You can also use the Internet to find references for sources in libraries and archives and elsewhere which are not available in full-text format on the Internet. To find information, you need to know a little about your subject. In this case, it's important to understand that Sputnik created a major national security crisis for President Dwight D. Eisenhower and his staff.

Step 1: Go to the NHD links page <<http://thehistorynet.com/NationalHistoryDay/links.htm>>. This is a gateway for finding the web sites of libraries and other institutions with online catalogs. Click on National Libraries and Archives.

Step 2: Since the government was involved in the response to Sputnik, look for government sources at the National Archives by clicking on "NARA Archival Information Locator (NAIL)." This is a searchable finding aid to many, though by no means all, of the materials in the National Archives. Click on "Search Archival Holdings," then on "Standard NAIL Search." Enter the keyword "Sputnik" and click on "Submit Search." When the search is complete, click on "Display Search Results." Look at the summaries to decide if any of the documents might be useful to you. Some of the documents are available online, but for many items in NAIL, you will have to contact the National Archives to obtain a copy. Return to the "National Libraries and Archives" section of the NHD links page.

Step 3: The Library of Congress has compiled a searchable guide to manuscript collections at institutions around the country. The guide does not include all collections for every possible institution, but it does include most major institutions. Go to the "National Union Catalog of Manuscript

Collections," which is also known as NUCMC. Scroll down to "RLIN AMC File Easy Search Form (word list)" and click on it. Enter "Sputnik" as the search term and hit "Submit Query." There is one match, the papers of James Killian at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Click on "More on this record." The entry describes Killian's career, which included being special assistant to the president for science and technology from 1957 to 1959.

- Step 4: Since Dwight D. Eisenhower was president at the time of the Sputnik launch, the Eisenhower Library may have some useful sources. Return to the "National Libraries and Archives" section of the NHD links page and click on "Presidential Libraries," then click on "Eisenhower Library" and then on <http://www.eisenhower.utexas.edu>. Click on "Enter," then on "Manuscript Archives." Click on the index to manuscript finding aids, and scroll down the list. Given the concern which Sputnik caused over our national security, the collection, "White House Office: National Security Staff: Papers, 1948-1961" seems likely to have relevant materials. Return to "Manuscript Archives" and click on the index to oral history transcripts. Scroll down the list; near the bottom of the page, click on "Oral History Transcripts." Scroll down the list and click on "Oral History Name List." Scroll down the page to find the information for the James Killian interview. At this point, you know that the Killian interview and the National Security papers exist, and you would need to contact the Eisenhower Library to find out how to get copies.
- Step 5: Finally, you should also check for secondary sources and printed primary sources at your state's major university library. Go back to the NHD links page and go to the section for your state. Click on the library catalog for one of the big universities in your state and do a keyword search for "Sputnik." You might also do keyword searches for Eisenhower, Killian, and John Foster Dulles, who was the Secretary of State during Sputnik; they all wrote memoirs.

#### OTHER SOURCES FOR SPUTNIK

Even with all the information available on the Internet, there are many other sources available for studying the effects of Sputnik on the United States. You might, for example, look at the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* to find articles in the popular magazines of the day. You may find material on Congress' reaction in the *Congressional Record*. You can measure some of the changes in education by looking at the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, an annual compendium published by the Census Bureau. You could do your own oral history interviews or write to some of the people involved.

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# Additional Teacher Resources Available from National History Day

**L**earn from your fellow teachers. Share your ideas and approaches. Join H-HistoryDay, a new e-mail discussion list for teachers, which will be available in fall 1999. You don't need any computer skills except the ability to send and receive e-mail. For more information, contact [hstryday@aol.com](mailto:hstryday@aol.com) or 301/314-9739.

In the summer of 2000, National History Day will hold a teachers' institute on the American West to prepare for the 2000-2001 theme, "Frontiers in History: People, Places, Idea." Contact the NHD office or your state coordinator in early spring for additional information and application deadlines.

Check out the National history Day web site at  
<<http://thehistorynet.com/NationalHistoryDay/>>.

Contact your state coordinator for information on the program in your state. A list of state coordinators is available at the NHD web site.

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The New York Times is used by students and educators nationwide – as a supplement to textbooks that sparks discussion and makes curriculum concepts more vivid. Teachers draw on all sections of The Times for prompts on relevant science, history and other topics to be considered as National History Day projects.

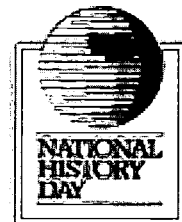
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