ED 268A: Teaching History/Social Science

3:00-5:50pm

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The Rationale

Education 268 A is the first part of a three-part course in the teaching and learning of history/social science. The summer quarter is a whirlwind introduction to the themes and issues we will explore until the end of our time together, nine months from now. Our course draws on the frameworks laid out in the California History-Social Science Standards (available as a pdf document, https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/hs/cf/documents/hssframeworkwhole.pdf) If you haven’t read the California Standards, you might have a look—at all 855 pages. (Do so sitting down . . .) We are also influenced by the new Common Core State Standards for History/Social Studies, which the State of California has adopted (see the pdf document, pp. 60-63, at http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA%20Standards.pdf).

Although the social studies curriculum is made up of many different disciplines, at the core of the California History/Social Science Standards is the discipline of history, and that will be the primary focus of our time together.

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

At the heart of historical work is learning how to listen to the voices of our predecessors, those who have given us the world we inhabit. One way that we hear those voices is by learning to read and interpret primary sources. Fortunately, we live at a time when sources abound on the Internet. Stanford is the West Coast partner of the Library of Congress’s “Teaching with Primary Sources” program, (http://www.loc.gov/teachers/). Throughout the year, we will devote time and attention to learning how to navigate this incredible digital resource.
In 1931, Carl Becker claimed in his presidential address to the American Historical Association that “every man is his own historian.” Becker neither meant that we are skilled in reading documentary evidence nor that we all possess the capacity for turning such evidence into compelling narrative. Instead, Becker argued, each of us is called upon to construct stories of our own past and, by extension, the broader past that produced who we are in the present. The past surrounds us. But we should not confuse “the past” with history. The past, as heritage, sentiment, nostalgia, or tradition, teaches us to revere and to sanctify. It aims to make us proud of our ancestors and to feel bonded with them in the present. It anchors us in time and gives us a shield against the eroding winds of modernity. The past teaches us to preserve and to respect, to recite and to follow. It cultivates reverence.

As a subject taught in public schools, however, history has different aims. Taught well, it forces us to raise questions and often unsettles us with the questions it raises. It teaches us how to function in a democracy by sharpening our skills to discern truth from falsehood. It teaches us to read what texts say and what they don’t say, and to appreciate that words often connote as much as they denote. History teaches us that to understand the past we must listen to multiple voices and come to reasoned conclusions about what to believe. It teaches us that the claims we make should be backed by evidence – primary sources, secondary sources, and sources that reflect different perspectives and different beliefs.

To engage in source work, students will have to engage with multiple texts. Yet, they often come to us expecting to do what has served them well in the past: reading the textbook and repeating its contents. Often these same students will be reading below grade level. Whether we like it or not, we must all become reading teachers. For without the ability to read -- and to think critically about that reading -- our students will always be on the outside looking in, watching others make decisions about matters that affect them. In STEP, our job is to help you become teachers of your subject matter, but also teachers who possess a repertoire of skills for developing students’ capacities as literate and effective citizens. These capacities also apply to how students navigate the digital world that surrounds them. In previous generations, the big question facing citizens was how to find information. Today, when we have mountains of information at our fingertips, the crucial question is whether, once found, this information should be believed. As we move into the second and third quarters of our sequence, we will continue to consider how historical thinking can be used to evaluate the digital information that floods us as citizens.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

- All other readings/materials on canvas: [http://canvas.stanford.edu](http://canvas.stanford.edu)

**OFFICE HOURS**

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1 The American Historical Association has placed this essay on its website, along with several other key essays on historical understanding, [http://www.historians.org/info/AHA_history/clbecker.htm](http://www.historians.org/info/AHA_history/clbecker.htm)
2 We will continue to use several of these books during Fall & Winter quarters as well.
3 Please print out readings (or have them on a tablet/iPad) and bring to class. Please note: We have a no laptop policy during class.
Office hours will be set on the first day of class. You can always see us by making an appointment during another time. If you want to make sure to see us, contact us by e-mail.

ASSIGNMENTS

**Snapshot Autobiography:** The “Snapshot Autobiography” is intended to be a short introduction to the themes of historical writing: issues of selection, significance, storytelling, truth, and felicity. Take an 8 ½ by 11 sheet of paper and fold it, accordion-style, so that it forms three panels—or, counting front and back, six panels. The first panel is the title page for your “Snapshot Autobiography”; the back page is reserved for an “About the Author” section. This leaves four panels. In each of the four panels select the four most important events that have shaped you as a person (everyone should begin, in Panel 2, with “My Birth”). Fill two-thirds of each panel with your narrative and use the bottom third as a place to illustrate your narrative with a small (hand-drawn) picture. Don’t spend a lot of time on the pictures or the narrative. Give your Autobiography a title that captures its essence. Have fun! (Note: sometimes this assignment has already been done with your middle school students, and you might have already prepared a Snapshot for 7th-graders. Please do a different one with an audience of your peers in mind.) **Due: Tomorrow!**

**Reading Guides:** Five Reading Guides will be posted on Canvas. Reading Guides are brief, informal writing assignments due at the beginning of class that help us prepare for discussions and/or class activities. Reading guides are also a chance for us to see your thinking in a way that differs from class discussion— if you have done the reading, you should be able to complete a Reading Guide in less than a half hour (please type them, rather than handwrite). They are not intended to be burdensome and we evaluate them credit/no credit basis. Because of the compressed schedule of summer quarter, late reading guides unfortunately cannot be accepted.

**Seeing Student Thinking:** This assignment asks you to think critically about how students make sense of historical sources. You will be given sources to use and then you will conduct a “think-aloud” exercise with an adolescent (ideally with a student at the middle school). You will write up your findings in a two-page (single-spaced) analysis. This assignment is due next **Thursday, July 13**, so you might want to start thinking about the students you will recruit.

**“Opening Up the Textbook” (OUT):** For this assignment, the culmination of our time together, you will create a one-day lesson that challenges students’ notions that history is a finished story, a dry compilation of names and dates. Because textbooks are a ubiquitous feature in the classroom, you need to build your lesson around—or in response to—a conventional textbook narrative. In your lesson, you should find some way to complicate the book’s narrative—by challenging it, expanding it, articulating its silences, questioning its assumptions, pointing out its narrowness, and so on. You should bring two to four additional primary or secondary sources

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4 Hand-drawn, really. This is a clipart-free zone!
5 Five reading guides are required to earn full credit for this assignment, a 4.0. (Four acceptable guides earn a 3.0; less than four guides receive no credit).
that shed light on the textbook. Remember, however, that this is a single 50-minute lesson and therefore, it has to stand by itself.

Choosing a Topic. So as not to become overwhelmed, choose a topic of moderate grain size—do not choose World War II or the Renaissance, but something more self-contained, e.g., the Allies’ refusal to bomb railroad lines to Auschwitz, the passage of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, the antecedents to the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Mussolini’s invasion of Ethiopia, the events leading up to sending US troops to Vietnam, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and so on. It is advisable to choose a topic you already know something about—it will make this assignment much easier. (General Guideline: If the textbook devotes more than one page to your topic then you’ve bitten off a chunk that is too large.) By next TUESDAY, July 10, you should have a topic identified and bring in a copy of the one-page textbook excerpt you will use for your lesson; we will schedule individual meetings on that day. (The Cubberley Library has a collection of recent US and World History textbooks; for that matter, you can even use one of your old textbooks. Also, James Loewen’s book is a great source of inspiration for topics – if you are stumped, look at his Index for all the possibilities contained therein.)

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

Part 1: State the historical question your lesson will address. (e.g., Why did Constantine convert to Christianity? What happened when Attila the Hun met with Pope Leo? Why was the Montgomery Bus Boycott successful? Did President Johnson lie to the American people with his Gulf of Tonkin declaration?). In two pages (double-spaced), analyze the textbook selection you choose. How does the textbook present this topic? What is the problem with the textbook narrative? What does the book over-emphasize or ignore? Whose voices are heard or silenced? What factual errors does the book make, if any? To engage in this analysis you will have to know more about the topic than what is contained in the brief textbook account, so, once again, please choose a topic you know something about.

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

Part 3: Write an accompanying essay of two to three pages (double-spaced) that explains how this lesson opens up history and challenges students’ belief that history is a finished

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6 Please seek our approval if you feel you must use more than four sources. Rarely can students read, analyze, and digest more than four sources, primary or otherwise, in a single 50-minute lesson.

7 See the back of this syllabus for a list.
story inscribed in a textbook. Aim for specificity, connecting your ideas to readings and discussions from class.

Part 4: In the Appendix to your paper, include a legible photocopy of the textbook selection (no more than two pages) you will use. Highlight the section of the textbook narrative that you will focus on in the lesson. Include any supplementary materials and format documents to be ready for classroom use (e.g., large type font, lots of white space, and no more than 300 words per document). Include full references of all the works you consulted, including the textbook. [Please note: there are many examples of OUTS on the “Reading Like a Historian” website, http://sheg.stanford.edu. You can certainly take a look at these. Your OUT, however, should address a different topic from those on the Stanford History Education Group website]

Due: Monday, July 16, by 9 pm, to be submitted electronically, via upload to Canvas.

Curriculum Broker: Being a professional means having knowledge of the tools of the trade. Among teachers, knowledge of available curriculum is crucial. On the last day of class, you and several group members will be responsible for sharing a digital curriculum resource with your colleagues.

A note about written work: Your written work should reflect professionalism. Twelve-point type (Times or Courier; this is Times New Roman) is required. Papers in small 10-point type will be returned (because old people, which means me, start to loose their eyesight!). A few other issues:

(1) Please don’t circumvent page limits by eliminating margins (the default on both sides is at least one inch);
(2) Late work must be cleared with us via email at least two days prior to the due date. Otherwise, the assignment will not be accepted except in dire cases of medical or family emergencies.

SCHEDULE OF SUMMER READINGS/CLASSES

Class 1: Mon., July 2 Introduction

Read for today:
• Please learn a bit about Prof. Holt at his webpage, https://history.uchicago.edu/directory/thomas-c-holt

Class 2: Tues. July 3

*Read for today:*

**Scaffolding & Reading**

§ Assignment Due: *Snapshot Autobiography and Reading Guide #1*

--4th of July Holiday--

Class 3: Thursday, July 5

*Seeing Student Thinking & the Challenge of the Web*

*Read for today:*

§ Assignment Due: *Reading Guide #2*

Class 4: Friday, July

*Frameworks of the Mind*

*Read for today:*
- Wineburg, S. (2018). *Why Learn History (When It’s Already on Your Phone)* (excerpt)
- Breakstone et. al. (in press). Troubling trends in student thinking about online sources. *Social Education*

§ Assignment Due: *Reading Guide #3*
Class 5: Monday, July 9

**Context**

*Read for today:*


**§ Assignment Due:**

Reading Guide #4

Class 6: Tue., July 10

**Using Textbooks Strategically**

*Read for today:*

- Wineburg, S. (2007, June 6). Opening up the textbook. *Education Week*
- Kramer, The Water Cure, *New Yorker*

**§ Assignment Due:**

Reading Guide #5 [Note: Reading Guide #5 is 1-page sketch of plans for “Opening up the Textbook,” including copy of textbook excerpt.]

Class 7: Wed., July 11

**Perspective**

**For Jigsaw**

*Everyone reads:*


**Jigsaw Readings** (read the particular selection for the group you were assigned):

- *(Japanese Survivor)* examples of Japanese perspectives, (Keiji and Radiation Effects)

§ Assignment Due: *SEEING STUDENT THINKING assignment, due in class*

Class 8: Thur., July 12      Final Class

*Read for today:*

- Katherine Schultz, Citizen Khan, *New Yorker*

§ OPENING UP THE TEXTBOOK      Due: Monday, July 16, by 9 PM (uploaded to Canvas)

**ASSESSMENT SCHEME**

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<tr>
<td>Snapshot Autobiography</td>
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<td>Reading Guides (all five)</td>
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<td>Curriculum Broker</td>
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<td>Opening Up Textbook</td>
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**The Web**

Learning about resources available on the Web is an absolutely indispensable part of this course. No one today can claim excellence as a history/social science teacher without a deep familiarity with digitized on-line source materials.

As the West Coast partner for the Library of Congress’s Teaching with Primary Source program [http://www.loc.gov/teachers/](http://www.loc.gov/teachers/), we will engage in exercises and training related to navigating this site. In addition to the *Library of Congress*’s extensive resources (which we will explore in class), here are five top “go-to” resources for finding sources and teaching materials on the Web.

**Professional Organizations You Might Consider Joining**

*National Council for the Social Studies* [http://www.ncss.org](http://www.ncss.org)
[The major organization for social studies teachers; membership provides a subscription to Social Education, a monthly magazine of teaching ideas]

Organization of American Historians http://www.oah.org/
[Discounted rates for teachers]

National Council of History Education http://www.nche.net
[By joining NCHE, you automatically receive Historically Speaking, one of the best general history periodicals today]

American Historical Association http://www.historians.org/
[Discounted rates for teacher membership]

World History Association http://www.thewha.org/
[The place where important developments in World History are happening]

Historical Association (UK) http://www.history.org.uk/
[The Historical Association in Great Britain has many good resources]

Historynewsnetwork.org http://historynewsnetwork.org is a great website that combines contemporary issues with their historical precedents. Sign up for the daily email and you will find a lot of great stuff.

**LIST OF TEXTBOOKS ON RESERVE IN CUBBERLEY LIBRARY**


