NATIONAL HISTORY DAY 2024

Turning Points In History

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What Is National History Day®?

National History Day® (NHD) is an educational nonprofit organization that engages teachers and students in historical research. The mission of NHD is to improve the teaching and learning of history in middle and high school through an innovative framework of historical inquiry and research. Students learn history by selecting topics of interest, launching into year-long research projects, and presenting their findings through creative approaches and media. The most visible vehicle of NHD is the National Contest.

When studying history through historical research, students and teachers practice critical inquiry, asking questions of significance, time, and place. History students become immersed in a detective story. Beginning in the fall, students choose a topic related to the annual theme and conduct extensive primary and secondary research. After analyzing and interpreting their sources and drawing conclusions about their topics' significance in history, students present their work in original papers, exhibits, performances, websites, or documentaries. These projects are entered into showcases and competitions in the spring at local, affiliate (U.S. states, territories, and participating countries), and national levels, where historians and educators evaluate them. The program culminates at the National Contest held each June at the University of Maryland at College Park.

Each year, National History Day selects a theme to provide a lens through which students can examine history. The annual theme frames the research for students and teachers alike. It is intentionally broad enough to allow students to select topics from any place (local, national, or global) and any period in history. Once students choose their topics, they investigate historical context and significance and develop the topic's relationship to the theme by researching in libraries, archives, and museums and by visiting historic sites.

NHD benefits students and teachers alike. It enables students to control their learning by selecting topics and modes of expression that match their interests and strengths. NHD provides program expectations and guidelines for students, but the research journey is unique to each project. Throughout the year, students develop essential skills by fostering intellectual curiosity and thinking critically and creatively. Through this process, they hone their skills to manage and use information now and in the future, including critical thinking, problem-solving, argumentation, writing and revising, and properly crediting sources.

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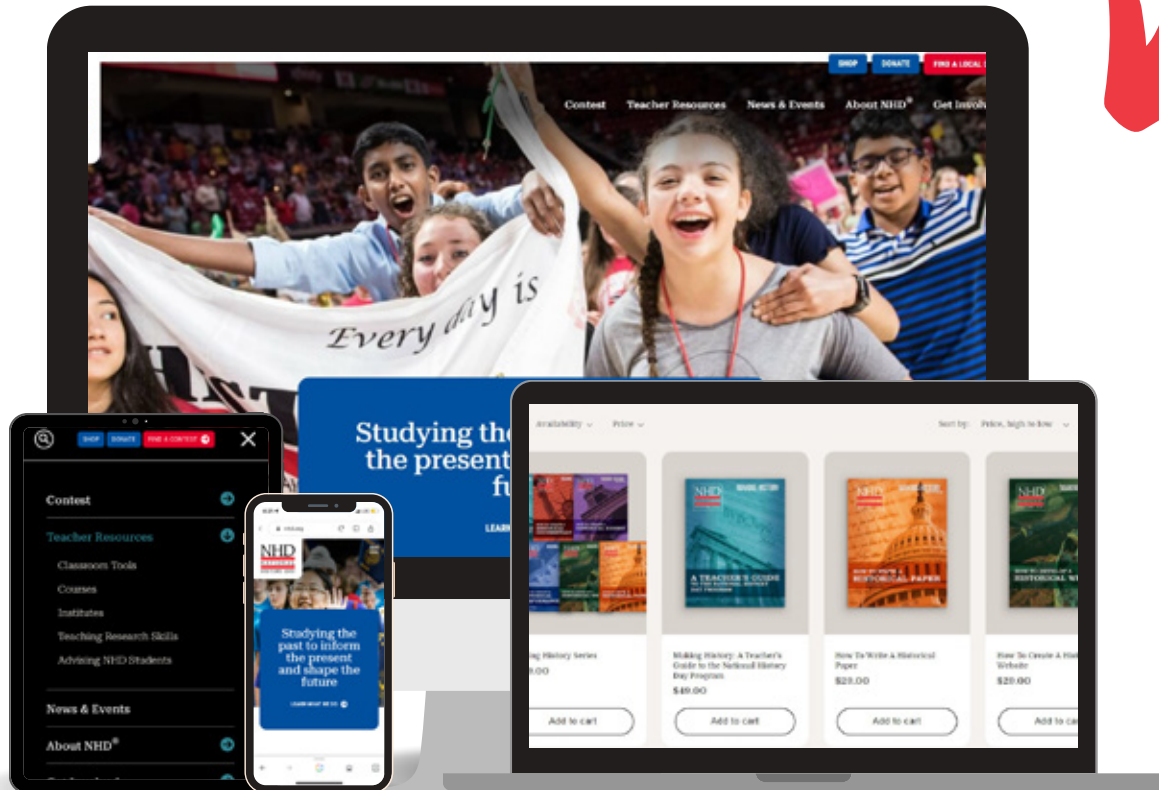
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2024 Theme Narrative:
Turning Points in History

CATHY GORN, Ph.D., Executive Director, National History Day®

The National History Day® (NHD) theme for 2024 is *Turning Points in History*. It is especially appropriate because National History Day is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. What better way to celebrate than for students to choose turning points in the past that interest them the most? As always, the theme is broad, so topics should be carefully selected and developed in ways that best use students' talents and abilities. Students should be careful to place their topics into historical context, examine the significance of their topics in history, and show development and change over time. Students should investigate available primary and secondary sources, analyze the evidence, and clearly explain the relationship of the topic to the theme, *Turning Points in History*.

But first, what's the point?

The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines a point as "an individual or distinguishing detail." For example, the point of a debate or a joke. A point might be the "end or object to be achieved: the purpose."

But what, exactly, is a turning point?

Merriam-Webster defines a turning point as "the point at which a significant change occurs," in other words, a decisive moment.

So, what is a turning point in history?

Well, a turning point in history is more than just an important event that happened a long time ago. It is more than a new idea or a particular action taken by an individual. A turning point is an idea, event, or action that directly, or sometimes indirectly, causes change. 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, or it can be the life of a single person whose actions inspire or affect others. The effect of a turning point in history might be social, political, economic, or cultural. It might be a combination. History is often complicated.

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. **Simply put, what was it like before the turning point? What was the turning point? What was it like after the turning point?**

To understand the historical importance of their topics, students, like historians, must ask questions of time and place, cause and effect, change over time, and impact and significance:

› What factors contributed to the turning point?

› Why did the turning point develop? How did it create change?

› What were the immediate and long-term consequences?

› What impact did the turning point have on the people who experienced it? How did they, in turn, affect it?

Now, how does this apply to an NHD project?

Let's look at a topic that immediately comes to mind: war. From clashes limited to one nation to huge conflicts involving many countries, wars are among the most significant and obvious turning points in history. And there are so many to choose from: the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE), the Crusades (1096–1291), the American Revolution (1775–1783), the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864), the Guatemalan Civil War (1960–1996), and many more. Much more than simply a collection of battles, a war can transform the world, a nation, or a local community socially, politically, culturally, and economically.

A painting of a scene from the Taiping Rebellion by artist Wu Youru, 1886. Wikimedia Commons.

However, choosing a particular war as a topic would not be wise for an NHD student, as it would be impossible to explain the significance of such a massive event within the limited confines of an NHD entry. Remember, NHD projects are limited in size and, therefore, must be limited in scope. For example, an NHD documentary is limited to ten minutes, and a paper is limited to 2,500 words. To research, collect evidence, and present an entire war's significance in history would take years and hundreds of pages. So, NHD students must choose a topic narrow enough to be presented within NHD project limits.

Still interested in war? A certain battle would be an obvious choice, but how about considering investigating the impact of World War II on a small village in Eastern Europe? What effects did it have on the people living there? What were the immediate and long-term consequences for that village or for a particular individual? Or, how did a political decision serve as a catalyst for war? How did the Bosnian people's decision to declare independence from Yugoslavia in 1992 lead to war? What were the consequences of the voters' decision? In what way can a vote on a single issue serve as a turning point and lead to immediate and long-term change?

Enough about war. Politics, laws, and court cases have served as turning points in history. How did the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (1917) or the Chinese Communist Revolution (1949) lead to some of the most convulsive changes the world has ever seen? How did laws like the Selective Service Act (1917), the Trade Expansion Act (1962), or the Voting Rights Act (1965) create turning points? In what ways did the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *McCullough v. Maryland* (1819) change the relationship between the U.S. federal government and the state governments?

Human inventiveness has changed business and human life in ways great and small. How were innovations such as the plow, reaper, or fertilizer turning points in farming?

Interested in social media?

STOP right there! That is a little too recent for an NHD study. What about earlier forms of communication, such as the development of cuneiform writing in ancient Sumer, the printing press in fifteenth-century Europe, or the invention of radio or television in the twentieth century? What were the consequences of such turning points?

The COVID-19 Pandemic is another event that has certainly had a great impact on human society. But, again, as with social media, it is too recent for students of NHD to focus on this year. Why not choose a fast-spreading disease of the more distant past, such as the Influenza Pandemic of 1918? Or, students might research the consequences of losing half of Europe's population to the Black Death between 1347 and 1352.

An emergency outdoor hospital in Brookline, Massachusetts, set up to care for influenza patients, October 1918. National Archives and Records Administration (NAID 45499327).

For all their successes, humans cannot overcome nature. Weather and natural events have been significant factors in history and are often the catalysts for major turning points. The eruption of Mount Vesuvius destroyed Pompeii in 79. A typhoon in 1281 destroyed a Mongol fleet as it prepared to invade Japan. Winds blew the Spanish Armada off course in 1588. In 1692, an earthquake caused the Jamaican city of Port Royal to slide into the sea. How were these turning points?

Sometimes turning points have symbolic as well as tangible impacts. In 1961, a wall was built in Berlin separating East and West Germany and remained in place until 1989. Why was it built and by whom? How was its construction a turning point in history, politically and socially? How was it a symbolic turning point for those outside of Germany? Why did it fall? What were the immediate and tangible consequences? What were the symbolic and long-term consequences?

A crowd of people from East and West Germany celebrating the fall of the Berlin Wall at the Brandenberg Gate, November 9, 1989. Wikimedia Commons.

Students should think broadly and consider the various ways in which a topic influenced the course of events. The launch of the satellite Sputnik by the Soviet Union in 1957 was a catalyst for the Space Race. But in what ways did it have an impact on American education? What was the National Defense Education Act (1958) and how did it influence changes in the American school curriculum?

Thinking about turning points in technology, the television, radio, and computer come to mind. But what about refrigeration or frozen food technology? What impact did these have for families, restaurants, grocery stores?

These are only a few examples of the millions of historical turning points.

Regardless of the topic chosen, students must be sure to analyze and draw conclusions about their topic's significance as a turning point in history. How do historians determine historical impact—change and consequences? They do so by placing their topics into historical context, which is exactly what NHD students must do after choosing their topics. Historical context is the larger setting in which a topic took place. Students should consider the relevant economic, social, intellectual, religious, cultural, and political conditions of the place and time and pay attention to how their topic developed.

I could spend many more pages on topics and ideas for study related to all types of events, ideas, places, and people, from local to world history, but that would limit the fun of guiding students in discovering the past for themselves, which is, after all, the point.

To access more theme resources, go to nhd.org/theme.

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Take a Road Trip to New National History Day® Topics

DANI B. PFAFF, Indiana Historical Bureau, a Division of the Indiana State Library (Retired)

Researching and writing about U.S. history has changed over time. Until about 50 years ago, most historians focused on state, national, and international government activities, influential businessmen, important statesmen, and politicians.[1] Very little attention was paid to local history—the history that occurred in nearby communities involving ordinary people—and how those stories relate to our national historical narrative. More recently, historians have begun exploring "history from the ground up," realizing that understanding history involves examining social groups and movements such as civil rights, feminism, economic inequality, and immigration from the activities and points of view of ordinary people.[2]

Every year, many students select topics focusing on famous people and well-known events, social movements, and government actions when researching for their National History Day® (NHD) projects. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Jackie Robinson, Japanese Internment Camps, Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, and Navajo Code Talkers are examples of familiar topics frequently selected by students.

Students may read about these topics in their history textbooks or on social media platforms. They might also be drawn to the abundance of easily accessible primary and secondary sources for well-known topics, not being aware that there are disadvantages to vast amounts of sources. For example, Stefanie Cohen of *The Wall Street Journal* reported that 16,000 books have been written about Abraham Lincoln.[3] And the staff at the Lincoln Legal

Papers Project, in just 12 years, collected over 90,000 primary source documents relating to Abraham Lincoln's legal practice.[4] This extraordinary number of sources demonstrates an extreme example of the challenges NHD students face when they choose famous individuals and events. Research becomes overwhelming when there are so many resources to consider. In contrast, resources for local history topics are generally more manageable, with fewer primary and secondary resources that are easily available locally.

The topics previously listed and others like them are important pieces of our broad national story. However, there is another way to consider these topics. They can be stepping stones for a richer, more personal look at history. "History from the ground up" includes local histories of nearby communities, organizations, institutions, and individuals.[5] In every state and community, there are local topics that demonstrate the contributions of ordinary people and places to a national or even an international story. Researching local history provides opportunities to learn about and share the histories of individuals and groups whose stories have not yet been told. Students often find that many people made history, not just those recognized nationally.[6] Sometimes, students discover local stories that do not agree with the national story. Those local stories are significant *because* of their different narratives. Our national history is truly the sum of all the stories of nearby people, places, organizations, and institutions.

1   Sara Maza, *Thinking About History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 13.
2   David E. Kyvig and Myron A. Marty, *Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1982), 9. https://archive.org/details/nearbyhistoryexp0000kyvi_x7n4.
3   Stefanie Cohen, "Fourscore and 16,000 Books," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 12, 2012. https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10000872396390444024204578044403434070838.
4   Stacy Pratt McDermott, "The Search for Lincoln's Legal Papers: A Mutual Accomplishment of Archivists and Historians," *The Record*, May 1998. https://www.archives.gov/publications/record/1998/05/lincoln-legal-papers.html.
5   Kyvig and Marty, *Nearby History*, 9.
6   Coshandra Dillard, "Recovering and Teaching Local History," Learning for Justice, October 3, 2019. https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/recovering-and-teaching-local-history and Chuck Yarborough, "How Teaching Local Black History Can Empower Students," *EducationWeek*, February 2, 2022. https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/opinion-a-more-complete-american-history-starts-with-local-black-history/2022.02.

USING LOCAL HISTORICAL MARKERS TO TELL NATIONAL HISTORY

Often, people see local history topics on roadside historical markers as they travel along streets and highways. Historical markers can be found in every state and territory. As early as the 1920s, states, cities, and rural communities placed markers promoting local people, places, and events. Just as our written and published history has changed over time, so have the historical marker topics. Only in the last 50 years have markers provided local narratives about Indigenous peoples, slavery, and immigration.

Consider Indiana as an example, The Indiana Historical Bureau (IHB) (**in.gov/history/**) installed the first Indiana State markers in 1946. In the last 30 years, the IHB has worked with the public to install markers more representative of the state's peoples, including topics not always covered in history textbooks. These marker topics are as varied as slavery in Indiana[7] (a "free" state according to the Northwest Ordinance), Native Americans murdered by white settlers,[8] and Indiana eugenics laws.[9] The Indiana State Historical Marker topics that follow demonstrate how local topics contribute to a broader narrative about our national story.

Woman Suffrage

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony founded the National Women's Suffrage Association (NWSA) in 1869. In 1890, it merged with the American Women's Suffrage Association (AWSA) to form the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Stanton and Anthony led the charge to gain the right for women in the United States to vote. However, these two leaders did not accomplish their goal without the help of many other women around the country.

For example, Mary Garrett Hay from Charlestown, Indiana, actively promoted temperance and suffrage, becoming a leader in the state. Susan B. Anthony selected her to lead the suffrage campaign in the western states, and her activities "proved crucial to the 1920 ratification of the 19th Amendment."[10] She traveled thousands of miles to hundreds of towns where she knew no one. She called on postmasters, newspaper editors, and ministers for names of prominent local women to gather for her speeches promoting women's right to vote. And before she left town, she "usually had organized a suffrage club."[11] Mary Garrett Hay and the women she brought together provided the strength and numbers to demand their right to vote.

Portrait of Mary Garrett Hay, c. 1921. Library of Congress (99471841).

Mary Garrett Hay's historical marker from the Indiana Historical Bureau.

This Indiana Historical Marker, located in Charlestown, Indiana, highlights Mary Garrett Hay's significant contributions to the state and national women's suffrage movement. It can serve as a springboard for researching Hay and women in other communities who contributed to the success of the suffrage movement. Questions students might ask include:

› How was Hay's speaking tour a turning point in history?

› What other women contributed to the suffrage movement?

› How did they contribute?

› What was the significance of their work?

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7   "Polly Strong Slavery Case," Indiana Bureau (ID# 31.2016.1), accessed January 2, 2023. https://www.in.gov/history/state-historical-markers/find-a-marker/find-historical-markers-by-county/indiana-historical-markers-by-county/polly-strong-slavery-case/.

8   "Indians Murdered 1824," Indiana Historical Bureau (ID# 48.2017.1), accessed January 2, 2023. https://www.in.gov/history/state-historical-markers/find-a-marker/find-historical-markers-by-county/indiana-historical-markers-by-county/indians-murdered-1824/.

9   "1907 Indiana Eugenics Law," Indiana Historical Bureau (ID# 49.2007.1), accessed January 2, 2023. https://www.in.gov/history/state-historical-markers/find-a-marker/1907-indiana-eugenics-law/.

10 "Mary Garrett Hay, ca. 1857–1928," Indiana Historical Bureau (ID# 10.2021.1), accessed January 2, 2023. https://www.in.gov/history/state-historical-markers/find-a-marker/find-historical-markers-by-county/indiana-historical-markers-by-county/mary-garrett-hay/.

11 "Mary Garrett Hay, Organizer of Women's Associations," *The Wichita Daily Eagle* [Wichita, Kansas], June 28, 1903. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82014635/1903-06-28/ed-1/seq-22/.

Sports

Jackie Robinson was a gifted athlete. After playing one year in the Negro Leagues, he broke Major League Baseball's color barrier in 1947 when he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers. It was an act of courage that became a turning point in professional athletics in the United States. He was not the only person whose actions were turning points that contributed to the fight for equal rights in sports.

In 1947, though football was an integrated sport in the Big Ten Conference, an unwritten rule barred African American athletes from playing college basketball. William "Bill" Garrett, from Shelbyville, Indiana, was a star in the local high school's state championship in 1947. In an attempt to break the race barrier in basketball, prominent Indianapolis Black leaders traveled to Bloomington to persuade Indiana University (IU) president Herman B Wells to give Bill Garrett a chance.[12]

The Indianapolis Recorder, an African American-owned newspaper published in Indianapolis, reported on Bill Garrett's enrollment at Indiana University, October 4, 1947. Hoosier State Chronicles, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Library, by permission of The Indianapolis Recorder.[13]

President Wells convinced Indiana University coach Branch McCracken to allow Garrett to join the team, and in 1948, Garrett's debut on the varsity team "directly challenged the Big Ten ban." During Garrett's career at IU, he never played with or against any other Black Big Ten college players. Garrett's success in Big Ten basketball eventually led to more Black players in the Big Ten and to the opening of Indiana University facilities, such as dormitories and cafeterias, to Black students.[14]

The Integrating Basketball historical marker from the Indiana Historical Bureau.

This Indiana State Historical Marker at Indiana University Bloomington recognizes Bill Garrett's contributions to improved local and regional civil rights. Many more actions were necessary for integration in sports across the country. This historical marker can serve as a jumping-off point for researching Garrett and others whose actions helped force sports integration across the country. Questions students might ask include:

› How was Garrett's career at Indiana University a turning point?

› What other athletes faced similar situations?

› When were local high school sports integrated in my state or town?

› What about colleges and universities in my area?

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12   "Integrating Basketball," Indiana Historical Bureau (ID# 53.2016.1), accessed January 2, 2023. https://www.in.gov/history/state-historical-markers/find-a-marker/find-historical-markers-by-county/indiana-historical-markers-by-county/integrating-basketball/.

13   Charles S. Preston, "'Mr. Basketball' of 46−47 Bill Garrett, Enters I.U." The Indianapolis Recorder [Indianapolis, Indiana], October 4, 1947: 11. https://newspapers.library.in.gov/cgi-bin/imageserver.pl?oid=INR19471004-01&getpdf=true.

14   "Integrating Basketball."

World War I

Allied armies fighting in twentieth-century world wars clashed in many countries worldwide. At home, local communities and workers made significant contributions to winning the world wars. When the United States entered World War I, airplanes were a relatively new invention, and the U.S. Army's military aviation department was undeveloped. The United States had to buy airplanes from Great Britain and France, which were far ahead in the use of airplanes for military purposes.

In early 1918, the U.S. Army built one of its first aviation repair depots west of Indianapolis, Indiana, in the town of Speedway. The midwest location was near U.S. Army airfields and convenient to railroads and highways that brought pilots to the aviation repair depot. Damaged aircraft were shipped to the depot for repair. The Indianapolis Motor Speedway was converted to an airfield for testing pilot safety and aircraft structural integrity.[15] Before the depot was closed in 1920, the workers repaired 313 planes and 350 engines.[16]

Aviation Repair Depot Officers at the Flying Field, Speedway Motor Track, 1918. Indiana State Library.

According to an article in the air depot newsletter, the *Speedway Dope*, the depot was "that part of the game [of aviation] that must be done and done right, or the other parts would fail to accomplish anything . . . Not a man among the repair men chose to remain at home but still everyone [*sic*] of them can return to civil life when the time comes certain that he has done his best to win the war."[17]

The World War I Aviation Repair Depot historical marker from the Indiana Historical Bureau.

This Indiana State Historical Marker for the World War I aviation repair depot in Speedway demonstrates the contributions of workers in a small town in Indiana to the safe growth and development of aviation in the U.S. Army during World War I. This marker can serve as a stepping stone to researching the aviation repair depot in Speedway and similar work done in other small communities involved in the war effort. Questions students might ask include:

› How was the aviation repair depot a turning point?

› How did the workers contribute to the Allied victory or to the growth of commercial aviation?

› What kinds of aviation resources were located in other areas?

15   Casey Pfeiffer, "Speedway: An Aviation Hub During World War I," Indiana History Blog, Indiana Historical Bureau, April 30, 2018. https://blog.history.in.gov/speedway-an-aviation-hub-during-world-war-i/.

16   "WWI Aviation Repair Depot," Indiana Historical Bureau (ID# 49.2018.2), accessed January 2, 2023. https://www.in.gov/history/state-historical-markers/find-a-marker/find-historical-markers-by-county/indiana-historical-markers-by-county/wwi-aviation-repair-depot/.

17   "WWI Aviation Repair Depot."

World War II

By the time Adolf Hitler invaded Poland in 1939, Germany had been manufacturing and stockpiling war resources for nearly a decade. European Allied Powers needed considerable aid from the United States. Hoping to avoid entry into the European war, the United States began an extensive campaign to manufacture smokeless powder for bombs and ammunition for the Allies. One of the first manufacturing plants for these materials was constructed at Charlestown, Indiana, a small town of some 900 people located on the Ohio River near Louisville, Kentucky.[18]

The Indiana Ordnance Works Plant 1 began production of smokeless powder in the spring of 1941. Smokeless powder protected soldiers and airmen by not obscuring their vision or giving away their locations. Thousands of workers from northern Kentucky, southern Indiana, and elsewhere lived in trailer camps or commuted to the plant. The enormous influx of people spurred economic growth that overwhelmed the small town's sanitation and water systems, streets, highways, schools, and supply chain. State and local officials worked together to solve these issues.[19]

As American men went off to fight, plant managers sought women and African Americans to fill production lines. Awards presented numerous times to the workers for safety and production consisted "of a flag to be flown above your plant, and a lapel pin which each individual within your organization may wear as a sign of distinguished service to his country." By the end of the war, more than one billion pounds of smokeless powder had been produced at Charlestown. Manufacturing slowly decreased after the end of World War II, but limited production began again for both the Korean War in 1951 and the Vietnam War in 1961.[20]

The World War II Army Ammunition Plant historical marker from the Indiana Historical Bureau.

This Indiana State Historical Marker for the WWII Army Ammunition Plant informs the public about the necessities of war production and the contributions of workers to winning the war. This marker could interest students in researching the Charlestown, Indiana, plant and other manufacturing facilities located around the country. Questions students might ask include:

› How did these plants impact the local communities?

› What was manufactured in other areas? In my community?

› How did these industries serve as turning points in the progress of the war?

› How did production methods introduced during the war affect other manufacturing practices?

Women working on a conveyor line cutting black powder bags at the Indiana Ordnance Plant, March 1955. Indiana Memory Hosted Digital Collections, Indiana State Library.

18   Don Carlson, "Hoosier War Plants Turn Waste Into Gunpowder," *Indianapolis Times* [Indianapolis, Indiana], March 30, 1943. https://newspapers.library. in.gov/?a=d&d=IPT19430330.1.19&e=-------en-20--1--txt-txIN-------.

19   "WWII Army Ammunition Plant," Indiana Historical Bureau (ID# 10.2017.1), accessed January 2, 2023. https://www.in.gov/history/state-historical-markers/ find-a-marker/find-historical-markers-by-county/indiana-historical-markers-by-county/wwii-army-ammunition-plant/.

20   "WWII Army Ammunition Plant."

The Indiana Historical Bureau (**in.gov/history/**) manages the Indiana Historical Marker program (**in.gov/history/state-historical-markers/**) and provides a database of markers that can be searched and sorted by date, topic, and location. The entry for each historical marker begins with text and images of the marker. However, there is so much more information included that can spark or expand students' interest. By scrolling down on the page for any Indiana state historical marker, students will discover the Annotated Text section that offers additional details and links to sources used by IHB.

ACCESSIBLE LOCAL HISTORY IS EVERYWHERE

The topics presented in this article are only a small sampling of how students interested in a well-known topic can use historical markers to discover related local topics. There are local topics in cities, states, and territories just waiting for eager NHD students to find them, become experts, and share their knowledge with others.

Students interested in local, regional, or state topics can choose from subjects including:

› Untold or under-told stories of people living in their communities. When and why did they arrive in this area? To what extent were they integrated into the local community? What educational or economic opportunities did they receive? How did they establish social, political, or religious communities?

› How did national trends in technology and modernization affect local communities?

› How did changes in the environment affect local communities? How did natural disasters, storms, or man-made engineering feats change local communities?[21]

The key to a successful local history NHD project is for students to show how their particular topic fits into the larger national or international history. Does a student's work demonstrate how the topic agrees with the national story? Or does it show a different path or unique outcome? Does it show change over time?

Local history topics encourage students to interact with experts at local historical and cultural organizations in their communities or states and to practice their interview skills. Student historians can identify and travel to nearby historical societies, museums, libraries, preservation societies, and archives where local resources are accessible. As an added bonus, many local and state government primary and secondary sources have been digitized and are available online.

In addition to the resources available on the Indiana State Historical Marker site, online searches on the websites of other museums, historical societies, transportation departments, and other organizations may also provide data in other states and regions about historical markers, monuments, and sites. Some good places to check include:

› The Historical Marker Database (**hmdb.org/**) offers students and teachers a cumulative site to search for historical markers, monuments, and sites nationally and internationally. It provides numerous filters and search opportunities for thousands of local history stories.

› EDSITEment's (**edsitement.neh.gov/**) online database Clio (**theclio.com/**) opens with local history topics from across the country.

› EDISTEment's online Teacher's Guide: *Investigating Local History* (**edsitement.neh.gov/teachers-guides/investigating-local-history**) includes links to U.S. state and territory encyclopedias and resources.

Remind students that information they find on historical markers needs to be treated like any other historical source. Some historical markers and sites were researched and installed many years ago. The information they provide may not reflect the use of primary sources or modern interpretations of historical research. The digitization of new and old resources offers many more primary and secondary sources for selection.

To access more theme resources, go to nhd.org/theme.

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21   Kyvig and Marty, *Nearby History*, 217–223.

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Using Chronicling America to Tell a Fuller Story: How Historical Newspapers Represent Different Perspectives

STEPHEN WESSON, **Supervisory Educational Resources Specialist, Library of Congress**

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SAMANTHA GILMORE, **Pathways Intern, National Endowment for the Humanities**

Historical newspapers offer access to the past and allow researchers to trace the development of ideas and events. Newspapers can reveal not only turning points in history and the speed of those turns but also the debates and perspectives held by people in that historical moment. Newspapers may represent a national view or be highly localized, offering a glimpse into the opinions held in individual communities. As rich and layered resources, historical newspapers can play an important role in research for a National History Day® (NHD) project.

Created through a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Library of Congress, Chronicling America offers users the ability to search and view more than 20 million digitized newspaper pages from 1777 to 1963 and to find information about American newspapers using the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP). Currently, Chronicling America includes newspapers in 22 languages in addition to English and has contributions from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. With this temporal, linguistic, and geographic reach, Chronicling America encompasses a range of subject matters that is critical to U.S. history.

Teacher Resources for Using Chronicling America in the Classroom

Guide to Student Research and Historical Argumentation, Library of Congress and National History Day
nhd.org/library-congress-tps

Teacher's Guides and Analysis Tool: Primary Source Analysis Tool for Students, Library of Congress
loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides/

Teacher's Guide, *Chronicling America: History's First Draft*, EDSITEment
edsitement.neh.gov/teachers-guides/chronicling-and-picturing-america

Teacher's Guide, *Using Primary Sources in Digital and Live Archives*, EDSITEment
edsitement.neh.gov/teachers-guides/using-primary-sources-digital-and-live-archives

Searching a database of this size can seem impossible. To help, Chronicling America features basic and advanced search functions that allow search terms, or keywords, to be run through the texts of newspaper pages. This is an immensely efficient and effective way to search millions of content pages, yet keyword searches still do not always produce the results we want or need. Identifying the most useful keywords requires knowing what terms were used during the period being searched rather than using common, contemporary terms. This can be particularly challenging when searching for news about race and ethnicity since much of the language describing such communities has evolved throughout the centuries.

For example, searching the phrase "African American" in Chronicling America produces only 671 results, with the earliest result occurring in 1814. This search produces zero results from the eighteenth century,

so almost 40 years (1777–1814) of print are missed by using this phrase. However, if students search using the term "Negro," which was common at the time, 2,686,588 results from May 29, 1777, to December 31, 1963, are returned. The search will need to be further refined with date ranges or locations to reduce the results to a more manageable number.

It is also important to remember that the language used in historical newspapers, particularly language used to denote race or ethnicity, might be not only unfamiliar to today's students but also disturbing or painful to read. The value of using historical newspapers for research is the way they reflect the values and attitudes of their time. This also means that their pages often contain biased, offensive, and outdated words and images that are now understood to be harmful.

Check out the Race and Ethnicity Keyword Thesaurus for Chronicling America on EDSITEment, NEH's website for K–12 humanities teaching resources. It guides researchers in searching these topics on Chronicling America and provides strategies for navigating the database.

THE RED SUMMER: A TIME OF TURMOIL AND TRANSFORMATION

In 1919, racial hostility triggered violent attacks on African Americans in more than 20 cities and towns across the United States, damaging or destroying many Black communities and resulting in the deaths of hundreds of people. Writer and civil rights leader James Weldon Johnson called this wave of violence the Red Summer. Though 1919 clearly represented a low point for racial justice in the United States, this year of bloodshed can also be seen as a turning point, as it was followed by decades of organized activism that, in many ways, laid the groundwork for the civil rights victories of the mid-twentieth century.

Red Summer came at a time of tremendous social change in the United States. African Americans had recently begun leaving southern, more rural states in large numbers, seeking better opportunities away from the restrictions of Jim Crow segregation. This Great Migration, which continued for several decades, fueled a surge of growth in northern and eastern cities and spurred the expansion of existing Black neighborhoods and institutions as well as the creation of new ones.

At the same time, millions of military personnel were returning home from World War I. These included more than 350,000 African Americans who served in the armed forces, where they faced routine discrimination and were restricted to segregated units. Author and civil rights activist W. E. B. Du Bois said of these service members, many of whom had been deployed in Europe and fought under trying conditions, "Those men will never be the same again. You need not ask them not to go back to what they were before. They cannot, for they are not the same men any more."[1] This turning point in expectations was met with violence.

The violence of Red Summer began in the spring and built throughout the year in rural Georgia; the District of Columbia; Chicago, Illinois; Knoxville, Tennessee; Omaha, Nebraska; and many other cities and towns. Dozens of people died in lynchings, indiscriminate shootings, and the burning of African American homes, churches, and, in some cases, entire neighborhoods. On August 28, 1919, the editorial page of Madison's *The Wisconsin Weekly Blade* remarked, "We arise to inquire if the world has yet been made safe for democracy."[2]

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1   "Prof. W. E. B. Du Bois Addressed a Vast Crowd . . .," *The Broad Ax* [Salt Lake City, Utah], May 24, 1919. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1919-05-24/ed-1/seq-4/.
2   "If We Must Die," *The Wisconsin Weekly Blade* [Madison, Wisconsin], August 28, 1919. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025842/1919-08-28/ed-1/seq-4/.

Some of the bloodiest days of the year came in late September in what became known as the Elaine Massacre.[3] Late on the night of September 30, 1919, African American sharecroppers attended a union meeting in a church outside of Elaine, Arkansas. White law enforcement officers arrived in a car, and shots were exchanged. It is unclear who fired the first shot. A railroad security officer was killed, and a deputy sheriff was injured.

Soon after, hundreds of armed white people from neighboring counties flooded the area, some drawn by rumors of an African American insurrection. In the following days, dozens to hundreds—no reliable count was ever made—of African Americans were killed in and around Elaine.

U.S. Army Colonel Isaac C. Jenks and other unidentifed soldiers dispatched to Elaine, Arkansas, 1919. Library of Congress (2020638850).

The NAACP, which had been founded just over a decade before to advance the rights of African Americans, played an active and visible role in investigating and combating the injustices of the Elaine Massacre, as well as other atrocities in 1919. The years before and after the Red Summer saw a period of tremendous growth for the NAACP. These legal challenges and investigations presaged the role the NAACP would play in the civil rights battles of the coming decades.

Discovering Multiple Perspectives Using Chronicling America

The events of Red Summer were reported and debated in newspapers as they happened. More than a century later, those newspapers provide students working on NHD projects with the opportunity to explore these turning points in history in depth. By analyzing historical newspaper reports of tumultuous and contentious episodes, students can understand the immediate and often chaotic nature of emerging news reports and see how different newspapers provided different accounts of the same events. A link to an "About" page appears directly under every newspaper entry in Chronicling America. Examining that page provides students with valuable information about its owner, editors, and audiences, fueling their inferences about that newspaper's points of view.

Searches in Chronicling America reveal that, soon after violence broke out in Elaine, newspapers made claims about its causes. On October 3, 1919, *The North Mississippi Herald*, published about 100 miles from Elaine, advanced its version of the story: "1500 Armed Negroes Prepared to Battle, while Federal Troops with Machine Guns Are Rushed to Scene of Disturbance. Clash Precipitated When Deputy Sheriffs Attempted to Arrest a Notorious Negro Bootlegger—Negroes Fired Upon the Officers Without Warning, Then Whole Negro Section Took Up Fight."[4]

A different perspective appeared in a Kansas newspaper. The October 2, 1919, issue of *The Topeka State Journal* saw shadowy organizations behind the bloodshed and declared that "NEGROES ARE BEING INCITED," "Organized Propaganda To Stir Them Up, Charge," and "'We'll Battle for Our Race Till End, One Says.'"[5] On October 6, 1919, *The Prescott Daily News* in Arkansas ran a story headlined "GHASTLY PLOT BY BLACKS REVEALED," claiming that a secretive organization planned to "shoot down all whites in sight" and that its members had been gathering at the church outside Elaine when the sheriff and a railroad security officer were ambushed there.[6]

The Chicago Whip, whose front page bore the motto, "Make America and 'Democracy' Safe for the Negro," disputed that claim on October 8, 1919. "It is said that many white radicals had given the colored people inflammatory literature and urged them to rise against all whites. This report is confounded and the literature was merely an

3   Although the violence in and around Elaine is currently known as the Elaine Massacre, at the time it was generally described using different terms, including "race riot." Teachers should support their students in exploring the different language used to describe these violent events and in examining the implications of each term.

4   "Pitched Battle Whites-Negroes in Arkansas," *The North Mississippi Herald* [Water Valley, Mississippi], October 3, 1919. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87065497/1919-10-03/ed-1/seq-1/.

5   "Governor Shot At: 10 Die in Race War," *The Topeka State Journal* [Topeka, Kansas], October 2, 1919. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82016014/1919-10-02/ed-1/seq-1/.

6   "Ghastly Plot by Blacks Revealed," *The Prescott Daily News* [Prescott, Arkansas], October 6, 1919. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn90050307/1919-10-06/ed-1/seq-1/.

appeal to the colored people to protest to white leaders against further cruelty, injustice and lynching."[7] *The Monitor* in Omaha, Nebraska, conducted its own investigation and, on October 30, 1919, ran a headline declaring, "Associated Press, as Usual, Withholds Significant Facts—Vicious Whites Under Pretense of 'Suppressing Negro Uprising' Mob and Kill Scores of Negroes and Imprison Hundreds of Others." A lengthy article included sections titled "Summary of Half Truth Circulated by Press" and "The Motive Behind the Hullabaloo."[8]

Students can also use historical newspaper pages from Chronicling America to examine the other stories covered alongside the attacks of Red Summer, both to gain a sense of the events of the times and to examine the priorities of a newspaper's decision-making staff. In several newspapers in 1919, Red Summer violence shared front-page space with the aftermath of World War I and the illness of President Woodrow Wilson. In many issues of Omaha's *The Monitor,* stories about the Elaine Massacre were sidelined by coverage of a horrific lynching in Omaha and the burning of the city's county courthouse. In Virginia, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* ran a stacked headline in which the horrors in Arkansas were followed by another leading story of the day: "NINE PEOPLE ARE KILLED IN ARKANSAS RACE RIOTING" and "CINCINNATI DEFEATS CHICAGO IN FIRST GAME, 9 TO 1."[9]

After the massacre, 12 African American men faced an extended legal battle to clear their names. Six of the men, Ed Hicks, Frank Hicks, Frank Moore, J. C. Knox, Ed Coleman, and Paul Hall, are pictured with their lawyer, Scipio Africanus Jones, on the left, 1920s. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System.

7   "Bloody Race Riots in Arkansas. Many Whites and Blacks Killed," *The Chicago Whip* [Chicago, Illinois], October 11, 1919. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86056950/1919-10-11/ed-1/seq-8/.

8   "Withholding the Truth—Associated Press Abets Mob," *The Monitor* [Omaha, Nebraska], October 30, 1919. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/00225879/1919-10-30/ed-1/seq-1/.

9   "Nine People are Killed in Arkansas Race Rioting . . . ," *Richmond Times-Dispatch* [Richmond, Virginia], October 2, 1919. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045389/1919-10-02/ed-1/seq-1/.

HAWAIIAN ANNEXATION AND STATEHOOD

Hawai'i's journey from kingdom to U.S. territory to fiftieth state represents a turning point in the history of the Hawaiian Islands, the United States, and the central Pacific Ocean region. Each step on that journey was subject to many public perspectives.

Although the official name recorded on the 1959 Statehood Act identifies the name of the state as "Hawaii," we have elected to use the 'okina, the mark that resembles an upside-down apostrophe between the i's in Hawai'i, for consistency. The word Hawaiian does not have an 'okina. For more information on the written Hawaiian language, visit **iolanipalace.org/information/hawaiian-language/**.

Portrait of Queen Lili'uokalani, wearing a gown adorned with peacock feathers at Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, 1887. Hawai'i State Archives (PP-97-15-015).

The Hawaiian Kingdom was founded in 1795 when Kamehameha the Great of Hawai'i conquered and unified the islands of O'ahu, Maui, Moloka'i, and Lana'i under his government. By 1810, the entire archipelago had been brought under the control of the Kamehameha Dynasty. At the same time, the island nation was gaining more and more international interest. British explorer James Cook was the first Westerner to encounter the Polynesian islanders on January 18, 1778. American and European traders quickly followed.

Great Britain, the United States, Japan, and other globalizing nations began to take an interest in Hawai'i's natural exports, especially sugar. The islands' location in the Pacific was also strategically valuable for traders and navies as a resupply port. White Christian missionaries from the United States traveled to the islands seeking to convert the native populations, and in 1848 a land distribution act allowed non-Hawaiians to purchase land for the first time. By the 1850s, petitions for the United States to annex Hawai'i came from these missionaries, plantation owners, and even some native Hawaiians who joined together to establish the Reform Party. On January 17, 1893, the Committee of Safety, a pro-annexation group of American citizens and Hawaiian citizens of American descent, led a coup to overthrow Queen Lili'uokalani and established the Republic of Hawai'i.

Their goal of annexation did not come to fruition until nearly the close of the century, when William McKinley succeeded Grover Cleveland as president, bringing a renewed executive focus on Hawai'i into the White House. As the Spanish American War began, President McKinley and others around the country saw Hawai'i as a necessary base from which the United States could project its power into the Pacific, specifically against Spanish colonial holdings in the Philippines. In August 1898, President McKinley agreed to Hawaiian attorney Sanford Dole's request for annexation, and Hawai'i was officially incorporated as a territory of the United States with the passage of the Newlands Resolution.[10]

Although most landowners benefited economically from Hawai'i's new territorial status, many native Hawaiians and non-white residents wanted Congressional representation and all the rights enjoyed by residents of the 48 states. Almost immediately following annexation, many Hawaiians began working toward attaining statehood. The first official petition for statehood was filed on August 15, 1903, just five years after annexation. This petition was denied, along with several other requests over the next five decades. During this time, Hawai'i's governors and judges were all federally appointed, and the territory's one congressional delegate was a non-voting representative. This lack of local self-determination helped wealthy white plantation owners remain in power.

10   "Joint Resolution to Provide for Annexing the Hawaiian Islands to the United States (1898)," National Archives and Records Administration, updated February 8, 2022, accessed January 5, 2023. https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/joint-resolution-for-annexing-the-hawaiian-islands.

After the conclusion of World War II, efforts were redoubled by both Hawaiian and white citizens of the territory. Statehood would mean an end to taxation without representation, popularly elected state officials, and the guaranteed protection of rights that other U.S. citizens enjoyed. Many mainland politicians also recognized the strategic value of having an American presence in the Pacific and began to agitate for statehood as a result. In March 1959, Congress passed a bill admitting Hawai'i as the fiftieth state. A citizen's referendum held in Hawai'i in June confirmed that the majority of people living in the territory accepted it. Finally, on August 21, 1959, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the bill into law. Almost 60 years after annexation, Hawai'i was finally one of the United States.

Hawai'i's petition for statehood was large—500 feet long, and weighing 250 pounds—when presented to Vice President Richard Nixon on February 27, 1954. United States House of Representatives (PA2019.03.0019).

Discovering Multiple Perspectives Using Chronicling America

Many political factors influenced American sentiment regarding statehood for Hawai'i. In part, racial tensions kept many Americans from supporting full statehood for the island territory. Asian immigrants and their children made up a large portion of the Hawaiian population. Anti-Asian sentiment led many to believe that if Hawai'i was granted full citizenship rights and protections, they would betray American values and principles. These racist views grew with the entry of the United States into World War II following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Many of these debates can be traced through the historical newspapers found in Chronicling America.

These newspaper articles highlight the diversity of perspectives the national media had about events

occurring in Hawai'i. In many places in the continental United States, the conversation centered around how adding new territory to the union would affect domestic and foreign politics. The February 5, 1898, issue of *The Oasis* from Nogales, Arizona, had a brief article recognizing the patriotism the Illinois House of Representatives displayed by voting to annex Hawai'i.[11] This perspective, written for an audience living in a territory (Arizona became a state in 1912), puts the conversation in the context of what adding new territory will mean for the United States. Another article from the July 12, 1887, issue of the *Daily Independent* in Elko, Nevada, states this perspective even more succinctly, saying "[United States Naval vessels] are fully able to protect the interests of the United States."[12]

Local Hawaiian newspapers' coverage of annexation had an understandably different focus. Honolulu's *The Independent* September 13, 1897, issue includes two articles covering the coup and attempts to annex Hawai'i, both of which decry the actions of the provisional government under Sanford Dole and showcase their anti-annexation sentiment.[13] These articles illustrate how, to people living in the Hawaiian Islands, these issues were critical and raised questions about national sovereignty, self-determination, and the immediate consequences of these events. It is important to remember that even when reading these articles from Hawaiian newspapers, questions about whose perspective we are seeing must be asked. Fortunately, reports on the activities of groups such as the Women's Hawaiian Patriotic League show the actions being taken by people whose perspectives may not be fully present in other written primary sources.

Following World War II, agitation for statehood began once again. During the war, Hawai'i was extremely important for Allied efforts in the Pacific, and many leaders felt that Hawaiian statehood would benefit national security. At that time, Hawai'i was controlled by Republican politicians, which led many Republicans both on the islands and in the continental United States to advocate for its admission into the Union. In 1947, the first of several bills on the issue was debated by the U.S. House of Representatives before dying in the Senate. Democratic leaders feared that if Hawai'i was admitted as a full state, its Senate seats and electoral powers would give greater control to Republicans. Republicans, however, feared the same about potential Alaskan statehood. As a result, multiple bills were brought forward by both parties before being dropped in Senate committee meetings or voted down. These partisan debates were covered extensively in the *Evening Star*, a Washington, D.C., newspaper whose readers faced their own struggles with political self-determination. A March 6, 1950, article expressed anxiety about an upcoming House vote, referencing promises made to the people of Hawai'i.[14]

11   "The Illinois house . . . ," *The Oasis* [Arizola, Arizona], February 5, 1898. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85032933/1898-02-05/ed-1/seq-4/.
12   "The Hawaiian Rebellion," *Daily Indepdent* [Elko, Nevada], July 12, 1887. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020355/1887-07-12/ed-1/seq-3/.
13   "Forget Them Not" and "Anti-Annexation," *The Independent* [Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii], September 13, 1897. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85047097/1897-09-13/ed-1/seq-2/.
14   "Hawaiian Statehood Due for Vote in House Today or Tomorrow," *Evening Star* [Washington, D.C.], March 6, 1950. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1950-03-06/ed-1/seq-8/.

On May 20, 1954, the paper lamented another failed campaign with the headline "Alaskan-Hawaiian Statehood Appears Doomed This Year."[15]

Finally, a package deal for both Alaska and Hawai'i came under consideration. Both political parties felt that it would be politically advantageous to add a territory they believed they could count on, but it took until the end of the decade for joint statehood to become a popular platform. In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower voiced his support for both territories to become states. The following January, Alaska became the forty-ninth state and paved the way for Hawai'i's Congressional approval in March of the same year. This was soon followed by a June referendum in Hawai'i, with a vote of 132,773 to 7,971 in favor of statehood. The Alaskan newspaper, *The Nome Nugget*, announced to its readership, who had only recently marked that same achievement, that finally, Hawai'i would be proclaimed the fiftieth state to join the Union.[16]

CONCLUSION

Turning points in history are very much a matter of perspective. Events that seem transformational to those living through them might seem less so to people viewing them from a different time or place. Historical newspapers allow researchers today to immerse themselves in a particular historical moment, making it possible to identify turning points that a more remote point of view might not allow. In addition, these newspapers enable researchers to discover how those turning points were perceived and discussed at the time. This adds richness and complexity to our understanding of even well-known transformational events, thereby increasing students' awareness of the need to consider varied sources and perspectives, benefiting their work as historians and their role as citizens.

Hawaiian Statehood Resources

Lesson Plan, "Asian American & Pacific Islander Perspectives within Humanities Education," EDSITEment
edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/asian-american-pacific-islander-perspectives-within-humanities-education

Lesson Plan, "Hawai'i's Annexation and Statehood: How the Island Nation Became an American Frontier," EDSITEment
edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/hawaiis-annexation-and-statehood-how-island-nation-became-american-frontier

Primary Source Set, *Hawaii: Selected Library of Congress Primary Sources*, Library of Congress
loc.gov/classroom-materials/usa-hawaii/

Research Guide, *Annexation of Hawaii: Topics in Chronicling America*, Library of Congress
guides.loc.gov/chronicling-america-annexation-hawaii

Student Resources for Using Chronicling America

Finding, Analyzing, and Constructing History: A Research Guide for Students, Library of Congress and National History Day
nhd.org/library-congress-tps

Video, "Historical Newspapers for National History Day," Library of Congress
youtube.com/watch?v=hUrtdgiHwuM

Video, "NHD Quick Digital Research Tip: Using Chronicling America's Advanced Search," EDSITEment and National History Day
youtube.com/watch?v=NLyzZnHkOhg

Video, "NHD Quick Digital Research Tip: Using Chronicling America for NHD Research," EDSITEment and National History Day
youtube.com/watch?v=4cg96OXy2c4

To access more theme resources, go to nhd.org/theme.

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15   Robert K. Walsh, "Alaskan-Hawaiian Statehood Appears Doomed This Year," *Evening Star* [Washington, D.C.], May 20, 1954. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1954-05-20/ed-1/seq-9/.
16   "President Will Proclaim Hawaii Statehood Friday," *The Nome Nugget* [Nome, Alaska], August 19, 1959. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84020662/1959-08-19/ed-1/seq-2/.

GREAT WAR ENDS

EXTRA The Chicago Daily Tribune

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Winning Isn't Everything: Fifty Years of National History Day®

CATHY GORN, Ph.D., Executive Director, National History Day®

National History Day® (NHD) turns 50 in 2024! Fifty years ago, no one would have predicted the breadth and success of NHD. Starting from a tiny seed—a few Case Western Reserve University professors with an idea—NHD grew into an international program. The History Day experiment was a turning point in the teaching of history.

On May 11, 1974, 127 students from middle and high schools in the greater Cleveland area gathered on the campus of Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) to compete in a contest called History Day. Having turned their original research into papers, tabletop exhibits, or ten-minute performances, the students presented their work to historians and teachers. Judges, using criteria very similar to today's National Contest evaluation forms, rated the research, quality of presentation, relationship to theme, and adherence to the category rules. Winners in each category received cash prizes, and the day ended with a banquet honoring all participants. The contest was so successful that the organizers began planning a second one the following year.

Dr. David Van Tassell, the founder of National History Day. National History Day.

History Day was the brainchild of Dr. David Van Tassel, a civic-minded professor of history at CWRU. He began his career after obtaining a doctorate in intellectual history (the study of human thought and ideas) from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. What made him different from his academic colleagues was that he not only conceived great ideas, he put them into practice. David Van Tassel was a visionary. He was a keen observer of society and its historical antecedents and trends, and when he saw a practical or academic gap, he focused on filling it.

As stated in a promotional video for NHD in the mid-1990s, Van Tassell wanted "to counter the devaluation of history as a field of study in the aftermath of the cry for 'relevance' during the 1960s and the focus on vocationalism during the 1970s." He had witnessed a generation of young people in the 1960s caught up in events during one of the most turbulent decades in American history who felt that past events were irrelevant to their lives. He wanted to help students recognize the impact of past events on contemporary issues. Van Tassel was especially disturbed by the rote style of learning used in most history classrooms and "wanted to do something to reinvigorate the teaching and learning of history."

At that time, the nation was preparing for the upcoming bicentennial in 1976. Van Tassel and his colleagues saw the renewed interest in the nation's history as an opportunity to motivate young people to study the past and influence the way teachers were teaching history. Uninterested in a competition in which students memorize information and respond to questions, Van Tassel created a model in which students ask questions, conduct research, analyze information, and draw conclusions.

The first step was to reach out to teachers. In cooperation with the Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS) and the Greater Cleveland Bicentennial Commission, the CWRU Department of History hosted a workshop on November 14, 1973, to explain the program and advise teachers on research methods and primary source analysis. Van Tassel and his colleagues understood that many thought that "doing history" involved simply describing past events. Instead, they wanted teachers and students to analyze and

interpret history—to draw conclusions about how historical events influenced the course of human society. Van Tassel believed that asking students to relate their projects to a theme would force them to think about why their topic was important in history and why their contemporaries should learn the importance of historical perspective.

The theme for that first History Day contest in the spring of 1974 was *Ohio and the Promise of the American Revolution.* What made this different, said CWRU professor Daniel Weinberg, was that "the emphasis will be on getting the students out of the classroom and into the neighborhoods and libraries." Added Karen Grochau, Director of Education at WRHS, "We're trying to make history a reality . . . rather than an observance of smoldering records." The emphasis on local and state history in Ohio was one way to help make the past become more personal for the students.

The award ceremony at an early NHD Contest at Case Western Reserve University, 1970s. National History Day.

The enthusiasm for History Day was greater than anyone expected. From 1974 to 1975, student participation increased by 400 percent. With projects addressing the theme, *The Spirit of the American Revolution*, 540 students and 58 teachers from 35 schools descended on the CWRU campus for the competition the second year. Buoyed by this incredible response, Van Tassel secured support from the Ohio Humanities Council to take the program statewide in 1976. The theme was *Images of America: A Bicentennial Mirror of People, Places, Ideas or Events*, and the contest involved students in 11 regions around the state. In 1977, when the theme was *Turning Points in History*, more than 1,500 students participated.

Van Tassel saw the power of History Day and wanted to make it available to students and teachers everywhere. By the summer of 1976, he had started a conversation with officials at the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) about funding to expand the program throughout Ohio and into Indiana and Kentucky. NEH awarded the CWRU History Department a planning grant of $17,500, which allowed Van Tassel to bring in representatives from the junior historians program in Kentucky and the School of Education at Indiana University to observe the contest

in 1977. A year later, he received $160,000 from NEH to expand History Day contests into Kentucky, Indiana, and Iowa. Nearly 3,000 students from these states took part that year, which culminated in a regional contest in Cincinnati. Held in the midst of the energy crisis, the theme was *Energy: Its Impact on History.*

The success of History Day in Ohio and interest from historians and educators in neighboring states encouraged Van Tassel to dream big—to turn what started as a small, local program into a national venture. The meteoric rise of the program during those early years led Van Tassel to apply to the State of Ohio to incorporate the program as the not-for-profit "National History Day, Inc.," at the time a lofty name. Van Tassel recruited individuals from the Cleveland corporate community to serve on the new organization's Board of Trustees.

The organization needed a director, and Dr. Lois Scharf was in the right place at the right time. She had been Van Tassel's student and received her doctorate the year that NHD was incorporated. Scharf was tasked with developing the organization and program and turning it into a viable national endeavor. Within just two years, Scharf turned History Day into National History Day. In 1978, students from four states—Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, and Kentucky—participated in a regional contest. In 1979, the theme was *Migration in History*, and like the theme, History Day was moving across the country. By 1980, Scharf established contests in 19 states and held the first national contest at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., focusing on *The Individual in History.* The following year, the national contest was moved to the University of Maryland after Georgetown University proved too small to hold this rapidly growing national event.

Winners from the first NHD National Contest held at Georgetown University, 1980. National History Day.

In the fall of 1982, I entered graduate school at Case Western Reserve University. I was looking for a part-time job, and my museum studies professor told me to contact the Western Reserve Historical Society down the street. I was told, "They always hire a grad student to work on Ohio History Day." They were looking for someone to

stuff envelopes, and I willingly traded paper cuts for lunch money. That year, the theme for National History Day was *Turning Points in History*, and it was the most important turning point of my life.

I attended my first National History Day contest in 1983. To witness the students' enthusiasm for history was surreal; to see their research was inspiring. When I was their age, I thought history was boring. But these students had given up weeks of their free time to immerse themselves in a historical investigation—prowling through primary sources, interviewing eyewitnesses, and compiling bibliographies. I was stunned that sixth graders even knew what a bibliography was! On this particular spring Saturday, after putting all their research together into convincing presentations, they stood before panels of judges who critiqued their work.

I was blown away. More importantly, I knew that I had found my cause. Those Ohio History Day kids were proof that history was not dead. As the students demonstrated, history was more relevant than ever. I knew that this hands-on approach to teaching and learning about the past could produce critical thinkers, collaborative investigators, and, most importantly, informed citizens. After receiving my master's degree, I joined the national office full-time in January of 1984 as Assistant Director.

By then, students from 43 states and the District of Columbia were conducting research and creating projects. It was becoming clear, however, that to expand and grow participation, teachers needed training in order to help their students conduct historical research and analysis. A few state coordinators, particularly Pamela Bennett in Indiana and David DeBoe in Texas, were already offering teacher workshops. So, I took my cue and learned from them, and started doing the same. With the help of the NEH, we conducted our first national summer institute for teachers in 1990 and have been doing so ever since.

NHD was rapidly growing in numbers and expanding in programming, but our fundraising efforts lagged behind. Being headquartered in Cleveland did not help identify NHD as a national organization. Since we ran the national contest at the University of Maryland, it was the obvious choice for a new home. In August 1992, the office moved to College Park, Maryland. It did not solve our fundraising issues, but it helped us develop excellent partnerships with the Smithsonian Institution, the National Archives and Records Administration, the Library of Congress, and others. Along the way, NHD adapted to the changing times, especially with technology. In the 1990s, media presentation became documentary, and in the early 2000s, the website category was added.

Chef Guy Fieri with NHD national office staff members (from left to right) Kim Fortney, Erikka Washington, and Dr. Cathy Gorn in Washington, D.C., December 2017. National History Day.

One of NHD's earliest participants was a student in California. When Guy Fieri, famously known for his show, *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives*, was in middle school, he spent more time cooking than doing schoolwork, sometimes faking illness so he could stay home and cook. After a visit to a ski resort where he had a soft pretzel for the first time, Guy created a pretzel cart and his own business: *The Awesome Pretzel Company*. Fortunately for Guy, his social studies teacher suggested he use his interest in cooking to choose a topic for National History Day. As Guy explained,

> So I went to the big library in town to do this research about the history of the pretzel. And there were all these theories like it was a gift that monks gave to praying children, and that's how it got its cross [shape]. And there were all these different theories about how the pretzel came about. And so I did this history project about where pushcarts started.

> And I won. I'd never won anything academic in my life. I won for the state of California, and I came to Maryland, where they put on National History Day. I lost there, but the key was, I went, and I missed my eighth-grade graduation to go; I was so excited about going to this.

> It turned my life around. It's the idea of letting your kids flourish and bringing them to these events, and helping them. We gotta support them in their dreams. And it all started with National History Day. You guys are awesome!

Students setting up their media presentation at the NHD National Contest, 1986. National History Day.

turn on in a young person's head and the pride and accomplishment that comes with conducting exacting research, completing a year-long project, and presenting that work to a panel of judges.

Group performance about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, 1982. National History Day.

Today, NHD is an international, year-round educational experience that has changed how history is taught in thousands of classrooms and raised the historical consciousness of nearly three generations of students, teachers, parents, and administrators.

And 40 years later, I am still a crusader for National History Day. As I often say, it never gets old. It never gets old because no matter how many times I have looked at exhibits on the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, seen performances on Susan B. Anthony, viewed documentaries on the Navajo Code Talkers, reviewed websites on Buffalo Soldiers, and read papers on the invention of the printing press, there is always something new to learn. What thrills me year after year is to see the light bulb of knowledge

It never gets old because there is a reality behind the rhetoric. Students find that studying the past gives them an understanding of democracy and citizenship, unlike any other subject or class in school. It challenges them to make a difference themselves, just like three students from Chicago whose NHD research helped provide new evidence to re-open a 40-year-old case of three civil rights workers slain on a dirt road in Mississippi. The resulting "Mississippi Burning" trial finally brought the killer to justice.

In 1964, the brutal murder of three young civil rights workers in Mississippi sparked the controversial case the FBI named "Mississippi Burning." The state of Mississippi did not prosecute any of the suspects for murder, although the federal government prosecuted 18 people on lesser charges. For 40 years, the murderer remained free until three students chose to research the case for their NHD documentary. In 2004, NHD students Sarah Siegel, Allison Nichols, and Brittany Saltiel, from Adlai E. Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois, enlisted the aid of the U.S. Congress in re-opening the case and bringing the killer to justice.

The students' NHD documentary, titled *The CORE of the Solution*, explored the murder of civil rights workers James E. Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman in Neshoba County, Mississippi. The students studied more than 2,000 pages of court trial transcripts and interviewed the victims' family members, government officials, and Edgar Ray Killen, the FBI's prime suspect at the time of the murders. The students were convinced that there was evidence for justice to be served and began a campaign to re-open the case.

After attending the NHD National Contest, the students appeared on ABC's *World News Tonight*

to explain their research to a broader audience and educate the public about the murders. Several Mississippi newspapers reported on growing community support for the re-opening of the 1964 case and documented the impact of the students' work. Based on the NHD documentary and the students' research, Republican and Democratic representatives introduced resolution House Concurrent Resolution 457, entitled "Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the murders of James E. Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman," calling on federal prosecutors to re-open the case.

The students rode in a recreation of the 1964 Freedom Rides in the summer of 2004, arranged by Ben Chaney, the younger brother of one of the victims, and were the guests of honor at the official fortieth-anniversary ceremony commemorating the murders in Longdale, Mississippi.

In 2005, the "Mississippi Burning" case was reopened. Edgar Ray Killen was arrested, brought to trial, and convicted of the murder of Chaney, Schwerner, and Goodman. After 40 years, justice was finally served with the help of three NHD students who refused to accept defeat.

It never gets old because National History Day is a program for everyone, not just for honors students or the gifted and talented. NHD reaches thousands of young people everywhere, from the barrios of Los Angeles to inner-city Houston, small Midwestern rural towns, Native American reservations, and large suburban communities. NHD motivates students who are sometimes unfortunately categorized as underachievers, difficult, or impossible to teach.

It never gets old because each year, young historians teach me something new about the past, about scholarship, about doing one's best, and about the excitement of learning. NHD's history is filled with stories such as those of the Birkemeier brothers—Glenn, Kyle, and Alan—who interviewed the Dalai Lama, Bob Hope, and Carl Erskine; of Sharmistha Dev, Jajah Wu, and Debra Siegel, who held a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery for slain civil rights activist Medgar Evers; of Kathryn Holeywell whose exhibit on the *Lusitania* was requested for permanent display in Ireland at the Cobh Museum of Irish Culture; and of Hunter Scott whose research on the USS *Indianapolis* led him to Congress to exonerate the falsely court-martialed ship's captain.

There are countless other students who did not interview anyone famous, win a prize, or travel the world but who became heroes in their own right and in the eyes of their parents, teachers, and friends who witnessed their perseverance in the pursuit of historical truth. In the process, they honed reading, research, analytical writing, and communication skills that they can apply in college and in their future endeavors. Many are completely changed. David is a perfect example.

When David was in school, his principal told his mother that he should be placed in a school for students who could not learn. His mother disagreed and moved her son to a different school—one in which he could participate in NHD. At first, he was in almost all special education classes. However, he volunteered for NHD and produced a documentary that took him to the state contest. The next year he was in grade-level classes, and his participation in NHD took him to the National Contest. From then on, David was in all honors classes. He recently graduated with a master's degree. His mother and teachers were convinced that it was NHD that made all the difference.

NHD's incredible impact brought it to the White House's attention. In 2011, NHD was awarded the National Medal for the Humanities by President Barack Obama. This honor was made possible by one big senior group performance that included the staff, Board of Trustees, state and district coordinators, teachers, donors, and thousands of "walk-ons" such as families, judges, and volunteers.

Dr. Cathy Gorn, accepting the National Humanities Medal from President Barack Obama, 2011. National History Day.

History is about change—cause and effect and development over time. So is NHD. Both the program and the organization experienced remarkable growth since its inception 50 years ago. Today, NHD is a global, year-round educational experience that continues to change how history is taught in thousands of classrooms and raise the historical consciousness of generations of students, teachers, parents, and administrators. National History Day is a story of turning points, conflict and compromise, debate and diplomacy, innovation and discovery, triumph and tragedy, leadership and legacy.

National History Day: *It's Not Just a Day, It's an Experience.* Indeed.

To access more theme resources, go to nhd.org/theme.

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The Turning Points in the Struggle for Equal Access to Public Education Culminating in *Brown v. Board of Education*

LINDA ROSENBLUM, Education Program Manager, Office of Interpretation, Education, and Volunteers, National Park Service

The *Brown v. Board of Education* U.S. Supreme Court decision of 1954 is often viewed as a turning point in the struggle for civil rights in the United States, marking the beginning of the modern Civil Rights Movement. 2024 marks the 70th anniversary of this key Supreme Court case. National History Day® (NHD) students will find that the fight to provide equitable and just educational opportunities for all students is a topic that can be carried throughout U.S. history.

The *Brown v. Board* decision overturned over a half-century of legal precedent set in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) case, which codified the principle of "separate but equal." The *Plessy* decision allowed for any school, public accomodation, transportation, or restaurant to discriminate against people of color, provided that a "separate but equal" alternative was available. In reality, separate never was and never could be equal. This decision set the precedent for state and federal laws for the next 50 years.

Beginning in the 1930s, Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall, attorneys at the NAACP, led the legal challenge against the *Plessy* decision. They focused on higher education, demanding that medical and law schools admit people of color, knowing that states could not afford to create "separate but equal" specialized universities.

In the early 1950s, the NAACP changed its strategy and decided to attack "separate but equal" at the K–12 public school level. The first cases tried to prove that the schools for African American children were unequal by demonstrating the poor quality of school buildings or lack of bus transportation. This strategy proved unsatisfactory as judges could order school districts to improve buildings or provide equal transportation services and still allow racial segregation. Following Houston's death in 1950, Marshall led the NAACP's challenge to school segregation. He argued that segregated schools were inherently unequal and segregation caused harm to children of color. He used psychological and sociological studies as proof of harm to students segregated by race.[1]

Marshall's most important case, *Brown v. Board*, consisted of five separate cases originating in four states and the District of Columbia. All began as grassroots efforts to either enroll Black students in all-white schools or obtain improved facilities for Black students. By the fall of 1952, the U.S. Supreme Court had accepted the five cases independently on appeal and decided to hear arguments collectively.

On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court proclaimed that "in the field of public education 'separate but equal' has no place."[2] This historic ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* overturned the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, marking the culmination of a decades-long legal battle.

The following lesson plans demonstrate some of the early actions taken toward equalization and desegregation of public education and the beginning of the modern Civil Rights Movement.

The National Park Service (NPS) has over 420 units that preserve and protect the places and resources that tell America's stories. Nearly two-thirds of those units preserve and interpret historical or cultural resources and stories.

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1   To learn more about the most famous of these studies, see "Kenneth and Mamie Clark Doll," National Park Service, accessed January 12, 2023. https://www.nps.gov/brvb/learn/historyculture/clarkdoll.htm.

2   Opinion, *Brown v. Board of Education*, May 17, 1954, National Archives and Records Administration (NAID 1656510). https://catalog.archives.gov/id/1656510.

The following five lesson plans tell the story of the history of school segregation and integration, beginning with George Washington Carver (c. 1864–1943) and ending with the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER NATIONAL MONUMENT (MISSOURI)

nps.gov/gwca/index.htm

The George Washington Carver National Monument is the birthplace and childhood home of the famed scientist, educator, and humanitarian. Established in 1943, it is the first unit of the National Park Service dedicated to an African American.

Carver was an orphan who survived slavery, being kidnapped as an infant, and severe illness throughout childhood. He was born an enslaved person around 1864 in southwest Missouri. When he was an infant, he, his mother, Mary, and a sister were abducted by outlaws. Ransomed for a racehorse and returned alone, Carver never knew the fate of his mother or sister. George Washington Carver represented a turning point in American society where a man who was born into slavery overcame obstacles to achieve many advances in scientific and horticultural knowledge, becoming a respected educator and humanitarian.

Overcoming Obstacles: George Washington Carver's Pathway to Education

nps.gov/teachers/classrooms/overcoming-obstacles-george-washington-carver-s-pathway-to-education.htm

George Washington Carver stands in a field, likely at the Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama, where he was an agricultural researcher, teacher, and inventor. Library of Congress (95507555).

In this lesson, students will follow the path of George Washington Carver as he pursued educational opportunities that were limited or denied to him in the Missouri community where he was born. Students will gain an understanding of the challenges he faced due to pervasive racism and discrimination as he left the present location of the George Washington Carver National Monument to pursue an education and better opportunities. Carver's life represents how education and scientific achievement helped drive the modern Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

THE ROSENWALD SCHOOLS (ALABAMA, MARYLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA, TEXAS, VIRGINIA)

In the nineteenth century, before emancipation, it was illegal for enslaved people to read, write, or attend school. Enslavers believed education would create rebellion. When emancipation came, freed African Americans were eager to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. These skills were important to economic freedom, exercising of citizenship, employment, and business ownership.

During Reconstruction (1865–1877), early efforts were made to provide public education for both Black and white students who attended public schools together. However, funding was scarce when Reconstruction ended, and political leaders directed most public education funds toward schools restricted to white students. Many African American students in southern states attended school in churches, private homes, or even fields. Where schools existed, they often lacked electricity, running water, heat, or transportation services.

To address the disparities in access to education for African American children, private organizations such as churches, missionary groups, and philanthropic organizations worked to provide schools and higher education to African Americans. Booker T. Washington, a formerly enslaved man, was hired to lead the Tuskegee Institute, a school for teachers that opened in 1881.

In 1911, Washington met white businessman Julius Rosenwald, who was the president of the Sears, Roebuck and Company department store in Chicago, Illinois. The following year, Rosenwald provided funds to the Tuskegee Institute that were used to build schools for African American children across the South. Rosenwald later provided grants to communities to build schools and required the buildings to meet safety and health standards to promote learning. By the 1930s, thousands of Rosenwald schools for African Americans were spread across 15 southern states. Although attempts made by Rosenwald and others at advancing educational opportunities for African Americans did represent a turning point in the desegregation of public education, it would still require the Supreme Court's decision in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case in 1954 to legally mandate desegregation.

The Rosenwald Schools: Progressive Era Philanthropy in the Segregated South

nps.gov/articles/the-rosenwald-schools-progressive-era-philanthropy-in-the-segregated-south-teaching-with-historic-places.htm

This lesson plan, adaptable to grades 5–12, introduces several historical themes, including the Progressive Era, Jim Crow segregation, reform movements and reformers, and the history of education in the United States. Students will analyze primary documents—including maps, photographs, and historical building plans—to investigate the goals of the Rosenwald program and consider the successes and limitations of the reformers during the Progressive Era.

Howard Junior High School, a Rosenwald Fund school built 1924–1925 in Newberry County, South Carolina. National Park Service.

IRON HILL SCHOOL (DELAWARE)

Like other border and southern states, Delaware practiced racial segregation. Segregation restricted African Americans' access to railroad cars, hotels, theaters, and public buildings. African American children attended separate schools with inferior materials and equipment. In 1875, the Delaware state legislature first recognized the need to financially support schools for African Americans. This funding, provided by property taxes collected from African American males, proved inadequate, and the school facilities continued to deteriorate. In 1897, in response to *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the legislature began to require that state funds be distributed equally among schools for whites and African Americans. School districts still depended on property taxes, so African American schools continued to receive less funding.

With an elevation of only 334 feet, Iron Hill is the highest spot in Delaware. By the late 1870s, a school for the children of African American farmers and miners had been built at Iron Hill. Records show low attendance despite a

significant African American population. In 1904, a modest new school was constructed but fell into disrepair by the 1920s.

Concerned about the poor condition of Delaware's public schools, businessman and philanthropist Pierre Samuel du Pont established a $2 million trust to remodel existing school buildings and construct new ones. He designated a substantial amount of that money to build new schools for African American children. More than 80 African American schools were constructed with du Pont funding between 1919 and 1928, including the one in Iron Hill in 1923.

Like Rosenwald, Pierre Samuel du Pont worked toward improving educational opportunities for African Americans. The Rosenwald and du Pont schools still provided only segregated private schools and failed to address segregation in public education through legal challenges. The schools were a turning point for some African American students but did not provide equal opportunities for all students.

Iron Hill School: An African-American One-Room School

nps.gov/articles/iron-hill-school-an-african-american-one-room-school-teaching-with-historic-places.htm

This lesson plan examines how Progressive reformers such as du Pont used "progressive architecture" to improve classroom conditions and provide a better education for students. Students will consider how reformers' goals to improve education were met through building design, furniture and equipment selection, modern restrooms, central heat, playgrounds, hot lunches, and modern teaching methods. Students will also use first-hand accounts from former students at the Iron Hill School and assess whether du Pont's goals for improving education for African American students were met. Primary sources provided for analysis include photographs, school building floor plans, historical advertisements for school furniture and equipment, and oral history excerpts.

SUMMERTON HIGH SCHOOL, FLORENCE C. BENSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MARY H. WRIGHT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (SOUTH CAROLINA)

South Carolina's 1895 state constitution mandated racial segregation in public schools. In the late 1940s, the state spent $221 per white student versus $45 per Black student to build schools.[3] Many African American students living outside of South Carolina's cities and towns walked ten miles or more to get to school.

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3   South Carolina Education Survey Committee, *Public Schools of South Carolina* (Nashville: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1948), South Carolina State Library Digital Collections. https://dc.statelibrary.sc.gov/handle/10827/6730.

African American parents wanted their children to have the same services and schools as white children. In rural Clarendon County, South Carolina, Reverend Joseph A. DeLaine was a local pastor and a teacher at Liberty Hill Elementary School. In 1947, supported by the NAACP, a group of parents, led by DeLaine, sued Clarendon County School District #22 in state court and asked for a bus for Black students. The court dismissed the case on a technicality, but the parents did not give up.

DeLaine and the other parents sued again, this time filing *Briggs v. Elliot* (1949) in federal court. The case listed the differences between the white Summerton Graded School and the Black Scott's Branch School. For example, the Scott's Branch school had outdoor toilets, wells for drawing water, old books, and stoves for heating. Summerton Graded School had smaller class sizes, indoor plumbing, and new textbooks.

The case was heard by the U.S. District Court in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1951. Among the District Court judges was Judge J. Waites Waring, a white man who supported the Civil Rights Movement. He told the NAACP to sue for school desegregation instead of "separate but equal" schools. As a result, *Briggs v. Elliot* became one of the first desegregation cases in the United States. It was the turning point when the NAACP changed its legal strategy from testing "separate but equal" school facilities to addressing segregation as inherently unequal.

When the District Court ruled in favor of the school district, that decision was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. It was combined with four other cases and heard before the Court in 1954 under the lead case, *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Briggs v. Elliot forced the state to address the disparities, becoming a turning point in public education funding in South Carolina. As a result, the first statewide sales tax was passed. The tax revenue was used to build and improve schools across the state for African American and white students in rural and urban regions. Over 700 "equalization schools" were constructed, improved, or expanded under the program. Throughout the 1950s, sleek, distinctly modern schools of brick, glass block, and walls of windows dotted the state.

Separate But Equal? South Carolina's Fight Over School Segregation

nps.gov/articles/separate-but-equal-south-carolina-s-fight-over-school-segregation-teaching-with-historic-places.htm

This lesson plan examines the early NAACP legal strategies to improve access to education and quality of education for African Americans before the *Brown v. Board* decision. Students will study primary documents, including maps, legal filings, and photographs, to analyze the legal strategy of school equalization compared to school desegregation and explain why Judge Waring found that "segregation per se is inequality."
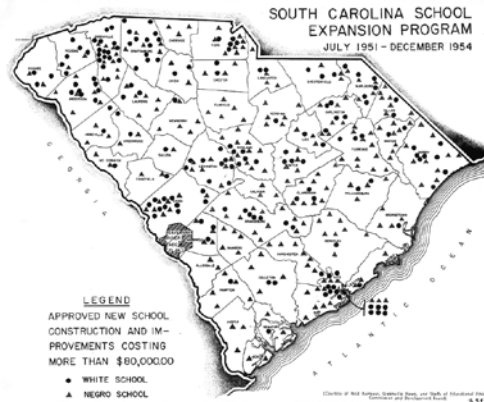
Map of South Carolina showing approved new school construction July 1951 to December 1954. South Carolina State Library.

BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE (KANSAS)

nps.gov/brvb/index.htm

Brown v. Board of Education was initiated by members of the Topeka, Kansas, chapter of the NAACP. In the summer of 1950, 13 parents took their children to all-white schools in their neighborhoods and attempted to enroll them for the upcoming school year. All were refused admission, and the children were forced to attend one of the four schools in the city for African Americans. For most, this involved traveling some distance from their homes. These parents filed suit against the Topeka Board of Education on behalf of their 20 children. Oliver Brown, a minister, was the first parent listed in the suit, so the case came to be named after him. Three local lawyers, Charles Bledsoe, Charles Scott, and John Scott, were assisted by Robert Carter and Jack Greenberg of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.

The case was filed in February 1951. The U.S. District Court ruled against the plaintiffs but placed in the record its acceptance of the psychological evidence that African American children were adversely affected by segregation. The case was then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, where it was combined with four other desegregation cases from South Carolina, Delaware, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Although arguments were heard in

December 1952, it took until May 17, 1954, for the Court to reach a unanimous decision declaring that segregation in public schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment. This decision is often cited by historians as the beginning of the modern Civil Rights Movement.

George E. C. Hayes, Thurgood Marshall, and James Nabrit, Jr. at the U.S. Supreme Court following the decision in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case, 1954. Wikimedia Commons.

Monroe Elementary School, in Topeka, Kansas, the location of the *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Park, was built in 1926 as a school for African American children. It was desegregated following the *Brown v. Board* decision and continued in operation until the 1970s. The building was acquired by the National Park Service and opened as a national historic site in 2004 on the 50th anniversary of the *Brown* decision.

Brown v. Board: Five Communities That Changed America

nps.gov/articles/brown-v-board-five-communities-that-changed-america-teaching-with-historic-places.htm

This lesson plan introduces the five communities across the U.S. whose cases composed the *Brown v. Board of Education* class action lawsuit. Students will analyze maps, legal documents, and photographs to understand the legal strategy used to end "separate but equal" in public education that marked the beginning of the modern Civil Rights Movement.

Students interested in learning more about topics related to school segregation might consider:

From Canterbury to Little Rock: The Struggle for Educational Equality for African Americans
nps.gov/articles/from-canterbury-to-little-rock-the-struggle-for-educational-equality-for-african-americans-teaching-with-historic-places.htm

› This lesson plan compares the experiences of integration at Prudence Crandall's school for girls in Canterbury, Connecticut, in the 1830s with those of nine African American students at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in the 1950s. It highlights these two places and the role each played in testing the prevailing assumptions of the time regarding racial integration of schools. It also tells the story of conflict between the rule of law and the rule of the mob and the importance of a free press in exposing social injustice.

"Great things happen in small places . . .": Government Authority and Civil Rights Activism in Arkansas, 1954-1959
nps.gov/teachers/classrooms/-great-things-happen-in-small-places.htm

› This lesson plan explores the various persons and organizations that were active in the Arkansas Civil Rights Movement following the *Brown* decision. Students will read quotations from people involved in the crisis at Little Rock Central High School in 1957 when African American students attempted to integrate the school. Comparisons will be made between those who supported and opposed integration as well as between state and federal authorities.

New Kent School and George W. Watkins School: From Freedom of Choice to Integration
nps.gov/articles/new-kent-school-and-the-george-w-watkins-school-from-freedom-of-choice-to-integration-teaching-with-historic-places.htm

› This lesson examines the schools in New Kent County, Virginia, which were still segregated ten years following the *Brown* decision. It highlights the actions taken by New Kent County NAACP president Dr. Calvin G. Green against the New Kent School Board in hopes of forcing the county to integrate its schools. Students will use maps, excerpts from legal proceedings, photographs, and quotations from persons involved in the desegregation of the New Kent and George W. Watkins schools to compare the arguments for and against the desegregation of public schools.

CONCLUSION

The *Brown v. Board* decision was a turning point that helped the modern Civil Rights Movement progress. Efforts to end segregation began in public transportation with the 1955–1956 bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. In 1957, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the first civil rights act since Reconstruction, which created an independent U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. President Eisenhower also sent federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce the desegregation of public schools. Mass demonstrations, marches, sit-ins, and massive resistance defined the movement through the early 1960s. Although the 1957 Civil Rights Act was limited in scope, it helped set the stage for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Lesson plans and other educational resources produced by the National Park Service and some of its partners are available through the NPS Educator's Portal at **nps.gov/teachers/index.htm**. A simple keyword or subject search can provide examples of lesson plans and activities that can serve as a starting place for a National History Day project.

To access more theme resources, go to nhd.org/theme.

Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library and Museum/NARA

Library of Congress

White House Historical Association

Courtesy Henry and Carole Haller Family, White House Historical Association

WWI

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Conducting Quality Research: Guiding Students to Strengthen Their Inquiry Skills

NATASHA HOLTMAN, National History Day®

National History Day® (NHD) affords students a unique opportunity to develop their research and analytical skills through a long-term project tailored to their interests. To derive the greatest benefit, it is crucial that teachers provide guidance to help students conduct research. The goal is to help students use reasonably available resources to identify a wide range of reputable, historically accurate primary and secondary sources. Quality research includes a combination of primary and secondary sources and a range of different sources (books, maps, photographs, newspaper articles, etc.) to tell a more complete version of the story, reflecting multiple perspectives. Quality research aims to help students access a range of primary and secondary sources, set the topic in historical context, and include multiple perspectives. In short, the range of sources should support the student's historical argument.

Many NHD participants believe the key to success is finding as many sources as possible. This is not the case. Adding multiple sources that repeat the same information does not improve the quality of the research. In addition, some topics simply have fewer sources. If a student's topic relates to ancient Chinese writings, they will have much less access to primary and secondary sources than a student researching the Orphan Trains. That does not mean that students should avoid topics with fewer sources. Indeed, they are often some of the most interesting projects!

Students should consider enough secondary material to gain a thorough understanding of the participants' differing perspectives (whether these are individuals or entire nations), relevant historical context (e.g., contemporaneous events, ideological debates, and other societal factors), and the topic's significance in history. Once they establish this base, the world of primary sources (the most exciting part of historical research) provides insights into the topic from the people who experienced it.

LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANS

School and public librarians are crucial partners in the NHD process. Teachers can facilitate that partnership by sharing information about NHD with the librarian and explaining their goals for engaging their students in the NHD process. If possible, teachers should introduce the process to the students in conjunction with the librarian. Librarians can:

› Teach students to use catalogs to find relevant books;

› Model how to find books on the library shelves;

› Suggest topics based on a student's interests;

› Help students narrow down topics to a reasonable size and scope;

› Demonstrate how to find databases that provide access to sources not available in the library;

› Teach students how to identify and search online institutions that can be helpful to a particular project (Library of Congress, National Archives and Records Administration, state or local historical societies, etc.); or

› Acquire research materials through inter-library loan.

Libraries, librarians, and the services and resources they provide remain crucial throughout the research process.

IDENTIFYING REPUTABLE SOURCES

When many students begin to research, they gather anything that might relate to their topic. Often, that leads them to basic, introductory articles containing repetitive information. Modeling quality research so students can understand what this entails is crucial. Teachers can do that by selecting a historical topic and conducting research alongside their students, using their own topic to model and teach the skills students need to learn.

Teachers should begin by helping students determine whether a source is historically accurate. Historical accuracy does not merely mean that sources are factually correct. It also requires:

› Awareness of a source's perspective;

› Sources from multiple perspectives (instead of relying on one source or one side of the story);

› Balance between primary and secondary sources; and

› Range of source types (print, digital, textual, visual, etc.).

Once students select their topics, the next step is to start gathering information. They cannot develop a historical argument until they understand their topics. Once students have gathered some information, ask them to bring one primary and one secondary source to class. Ask them to explain why their sources represent quality research. Remind them to consider the following when evaluating the sources they have found.

Secondary Sources:

› Historical Context: How does this source help to set the topic in historical context? How does it contribute to our understanding of the people or groups involved? What does it teach us about the movement or time period? If the source does not provide new and relevant information, carefully consider whether it is worth using.

› Sourcing: Who is this source's author or creator? What is that person's area of expertise, and is it relevant to the topic? What else have they published on this topic? What type of organization do they work for (e.g., a historical society, a museum, or a university), and what is the organization's specialty? If the author or creator has published other sources addressing the topic or works for an organization specializing in the topic, this is a sign that the source is a reliable one. If not, it is a signal that this may not be the best source.

› Editing: Who edited the source? Are there indications that the source might not have been edited (e.g., typos, grammatical errors, lack of citations, or factual conflicts with sources that are already determined to be reputable)? Who published the source, and is it a reputable publisher? If a source is clearly edited and published by a reputable publisher, it has likely been thoroughly fact-checked and can be relied on for accuracy. If not, be especially careful when deciding whether the source is relevant or useful.

Primary Sources:

› Historical Context: How does this source fit into the overall context of the story? Is it from the beginning, middle, or end?

› Sourcing: Who created this source? What was their relationship to the event (e.g., participant, witness, reporter)?

› Perspective: What is the source's point of view?

To help teach and reinforce research skills, NHD has created a series of short-form, classroom-ready videos with closed-captioning options. You can access these at the link below.

NHD Quick Digital Research Tips and
NHD Quick Tips
youtube.com/NationalHistoryDay/playlists

FINDING QUALITY RESEARCH SOURCES

The key to quality research is to find a range of sources. Below are examples of common sources NHD students will encounter in their research journey. Help students to analyze their sources to maximize the information they can gain.

Books

Books are key to the research process. Once students have a basic understanding of their topic, encourage them to head to the library shelves. Some tips to help students:

› Work with librarians to get students books appropriate for their reading level.

› Teach students how to use a book summary, table of contents, and index to determine whether a book is pertinent to their project and which section(s) would be most beneficial to read.

› Show students how to take notes in a way that helps them pull the most important information and be able to reference it (with page numbers) later in the research process.

› Remind students that good authors often write about a topic more than once. Encourage them to search for the author to see whether they have written other books or articles about the topic or have given talks that could be posted online.

Digital Sources

An ever-increasing number of websites and databases have made many previously inaccessible sources publicly available. Digital sources produced by reputable organizations (such as presidential libraries, state or local historical societies, national archives from different countries, or the Library of Congress) are great places for research. Many organizations are increasing their digital presence, scanning and often transcribing more and more resources for researchers to use.

At the same time, blogs, Wikipedia articles, and social media posts present new challenges for young researchers. Fortunately, students can use various strategies to navigate the online research process.

Teach students to begin by checking the website's URL. URLs ending in .org, .edu, and .gov tend to be more trustworthy than those ending in .com. However, a website ending in .com is not necessarily unreliable, nor is one ending in any of other extensions inherently trustworthy.

Remind students that while certain types of web sources are not reliable, they can still be used as idea springboards but generally do not appear in a bibliography.

Type of Online Source	Reliability Issue	How it Can Lead to Other Research
Personal blogs (not connected to reputable organizations)	Anyone can post anything. No editing or verification is required.	Is this person a recognized author or expert? What else have they written? Do they refer to a book, article, or documentary that sounds interesting?
Social media posts	Anyone can post anything. No editing or verification is required. Posts are often written quickly and in the moment.	Does this post link to or share a resource (e.g., newspaper article, photograph) that might be helpful?
Wikipedia or other sites that can be edited by the public	Anyone can edit, and edits are sometimes incorrect. Information is constantly changing or being updated.	Does the source link to references or other helpful sources? Check the footnotes and links listed at the bottom of the page.
Quote generators (Brainy Quote) or memes referencing historical figures	Quotes are often partial, taken out of context, and/or designed to elicit an emotional response.	What is the source of the quotation? Search for the complete source and context of what was said or written.
Lesson plans	Like blog posts, it is difficult to be completely certain whether or not a lesson plan has been edited or fact-checked. However, when lesson plans are published by reputable institutions (e.g., governmental agencies, academic institutions, or museums), the sources they contain or link to are often excellent. As with any source, they need to be vetted.	What primary or secondary sources are listed in the lesson plans? Are there links to access the original sources?

Newspapers and Magazines

Newspaper and magazine articles can pose challenges to student researchers. They are normally shorter and written for a specific audience, frequently with clear biases. They are often written at or near the time of the event by reporters lacking the complete picture. Nevertheless, they can be excellent sources. As primary sources, they show the different perceptions of an event at the time.

When analyzing these sources, help students consider:

› Who published the newspaper or magazine? When did it begin publishing? Who were the editors? What were their biases or perspectives?

› Was the event reported similarly or differently in publications with different perspectives?

› Was the event reported similarly or differently in other cities?

› How does this account compare with accounts in other sources?

Primary Source Databases

Primary source databases can be excellent research tools for students, allowing them to access photographs, documents, and letters from around the world. Remind students that they still need to consider the validity of the database. As they do with any other web-based source, students should check the URL, consider whether the information they find lines up with information from other sources, and determine who manages the database. Some particularly high-quality collections include:

› Digital Collections, Library of Congress (**loc.gov/collections/**)

› Digital Public Library of America (**dp.la/**)

› New York Public Library Digital Collections (**digitalcollections.nypl.org/**)

› Smithsonian Online Virtual Archives (**sova.si.edu/**)
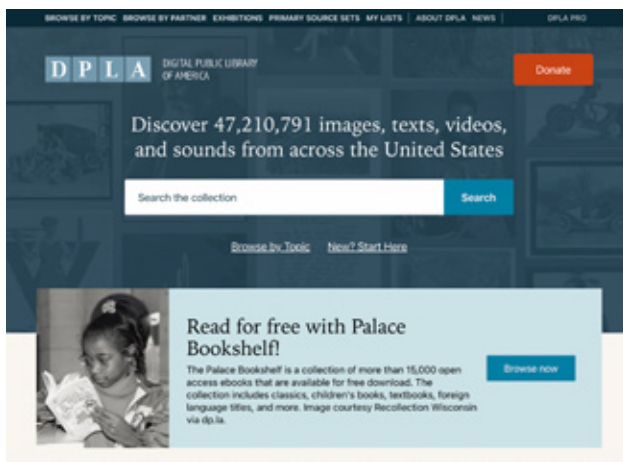
The Digitial Public Library of America is a resource for students researching United States and world history topics.

Videos

Videos can be a key part of the research process for some topics. They may provide primary source content if they show actual footage of an event in history. Some videos may actually contain footage from multiple sources edited together to produce compilations or documentaries. These secondary sources can be helpful tools in the research process. They often include primary sources, oral history interviews, and analysis from historians. When students find video content, ask them to consider the following:

› Is this video a primary or secondary source? How do they know?

› Is this a clip? Can they find the full-length version of this video? Remind students that historical context is crucial, and a full source (primary or secondary) provides more than a partial clip.

› Who posted (or created) the source? Posting by reputable organizations (such as PBS or the National Archives and Records Administration) is more reliable than any individual's YouTube channel.

Looking for more resources to help students find and analyze primary sources for NHD research? Access these two free, open-access resources, co-produced with the Library of Congress.

Teacher Guide: *Guide to Student Research and Historical Argumentation*

Student Guide: *Finding, Analyzing, and Constructing History: A Research Guide for Students*

Access both at **nhd.org/library-congress-tps**.

USING CITATIONS TO FIND OTHER SOURCES

Another way to locate high-quality sources that will build on—rather than repeat—what students have already read is through citations.

All reputable secondary sources (books, articles, or websites) include citations to indicate the source of facts. Citations are meant to give readers enough information to locate the source of that information. They may take the form of footnotes (citations at the bottom of a page), endnotes (citations at the end of a chapter or book), in-text citations, or hyperlinks (more common in websites).

Consider the example of a student researching the Orphan Trains (1854–1929), which took poor children from cities and transported them to work on farms. A Google search will lead students to the article, "'Orphan Trains' Brought Homeless NYC Children to Work On Farms Out West" (**history.com/news/orphan-trains-childrens-aid-society**) published by HISTORY®. The article provides a clear overview and is a good starting point where students can identify references, embedded primary sources, and experts.

For instance, the second paragraph of the article quotes a reporter from the *New York Daily Tribune* describing parents at their children's departure from New York City. This brief segment implies a lack of emotion on the part of the parents but does not provide further context or perspective. Clicking the hyperlink attached to the word "wrote" brings up the National Orphan Train Complex (Concordia, Kansas) website (**orphantraindepot.org/history/artifacts-of-the-orphan-trains/new-york-daily-tribune/**) and the article being referenced. The National Orphan Train Complex is a museum and research center "dedicated to the preservation of stories and artifacts of those who were part of the Orphan Train Movement."

Using the menu bar at the top of this website, students can learn more about the history of the Orphan Trains (**orphantraindepot.org/history/**), research resources (**orphantraindepot.org/research-and-registration/genealogical-research-resources/**), and a collection of primary source newspaper articles and documents (**orphantraindepot.org/history/artifacts-of-the-orphan-trains/**).

CONCLUSION

Remind students that in research, quality comes before quantity. Rather than requiring a set number of sources, ask students to determine whether their research includes reputable sources that show a range of perspectives. Ask whether these sources offer an understanding of the topic's historical context, the event, and the short- and

long-term effects of the event. Ask whether the sources help students make a clear connection to the NHD theme and whether the students have considered a range of available sources (e.g., books, newspaper articles, websites, and multimedia.) When students ask, "How many sources do we need?" respond with, "Do you have enough information to understand the context and provide evidence to support your argument?"
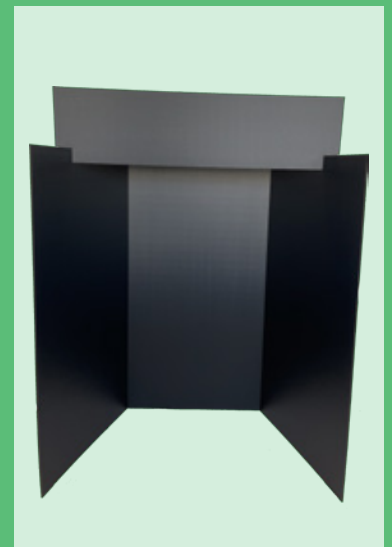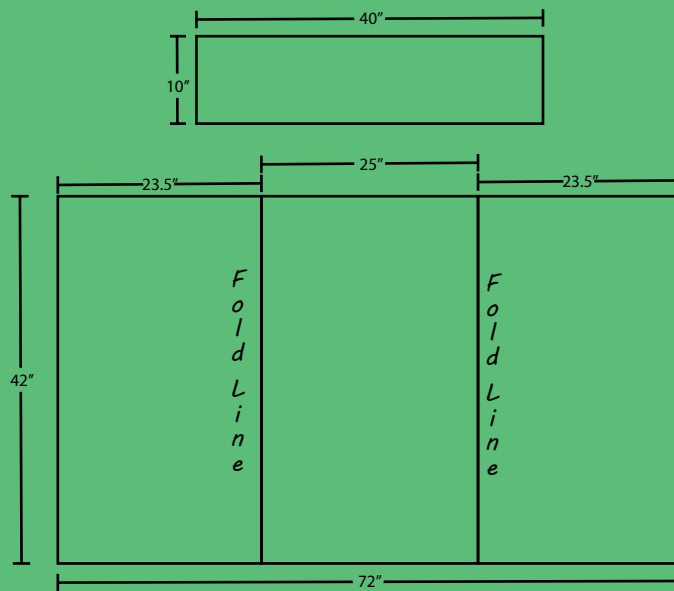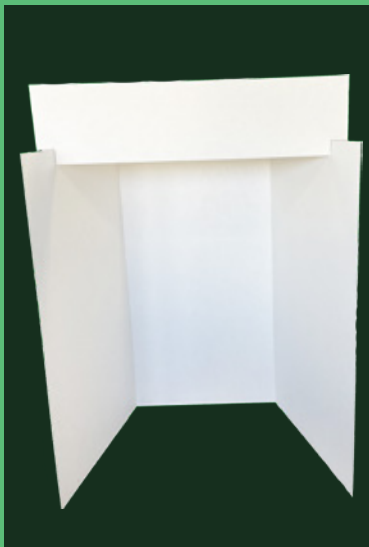
A major goal of an NHD project is to help students develop their historical research and critical thinking skills. Research is a skill that develops over time and is an ongoing process. Students are allowed (and encouraged) to make revisions to their projects between each contest level. That is intentional. Students might need to add more information about a particular perspective on their topic or

seek an oral history to learn more about it from someone who participated. In this way, research never really ends, and one research project often leads to another. Just like in history.

To access more theme resources, go to nhd.org/theme.

Turning Points in Latino/a/x History: Public History as National History Day® Model

ELENA GONZALES, Ph.D., Curator of Civic Engagement and Social Justice, Chicago History Museum

CRYSTAL JOHNSON, Manager, Chicago Metro History Day, Chicago History Museum

Public historians work in places such as museums, libraries, and archives. They also create films, radio programs, and other ways that the public can engage with history. National History Day® (NHD) alumnae Crystal Johnson and Elena Gonzales are public historians associated with the Chicago History Museum (CHM), which will open a new exhibition in the fall of 2025, *Aquí en Chicago*, about Latino/a/x resistance to white supremacy and colonialism in Chicago during the last century. In the following interview, Johnson and Gonzales discuss the ways professional historians find and construct meaning from the past and share that history with the public.

Latino/a/x

Identity terms change over time. The Latino/a/x communities, for example, have a history of identity words ranging from Brown to Hispanic to Latin, Latino, and now, the gender-neutral Latinx and Latine. However, there can be a generational divide around these terms. This is why we at CHM choose to use Latino/a/x. It retains the more traditional "Latino" form while welcoming those of all genders. Any NHD student who is researching a subject where racial or cultural terms may have changed over time may benefit from referring to EDSITEment's Race and Ethnicity Keyword Thesaurus for Chronicling America (**neh.gov/blog/race-and-ethnicity-keyword-thesaurus-chronicling-america-new-tool-edsitement**). It helps researchers identify research keywords that may work better for different time periods.

Crystal Johnson: The idea for *Aquí* came from high school students. Can you explain the student activism that led to this exhibition?

Elena Gonzales: A group of mostly Latino/a/x high school students from Instituto Justice and Leadership Academy (IJLA) visited CHM on a field trip in 2019. The students toured *Chicago: Crossroads of America* and were shocked to find the Latino/a/x one-third of Chicago absent from this 14,000-square-foot exhibition. They demanded change, wrote letters, protested at the museum, and amplified their cause on social and news media. They are the reason we are building connections between Latino/a/x communities and the museum today. Their work illustrates how much change motivated students can make.

The IJLA students' civic activism is a wonderful example of a turning point—in this case, in the history of the museum itself. The museum was moving toward more inclusivity, but the events of 2019 represented a tipping point beyond which the museum could no longer fall back on old habits.

IJLA students hold protest signs following the visit to the Chicago History Museum that sparked their activism, 2019. Photograph by Anton Miglietta. IJLA students/alumni and the Chicago History Museum.

Students from Instituto Justice and Leadership Academy (ILJA) collaborated with the Chicago History Museum (CHM) on the *Aquí en Chicago*. In their words, this exhibition was important because:

> **"Personally, not seeing anything about our history made me believe we don't exist, that we weren't part of the history."**
> *– Fernanda Gonzalez*

> **"Not knowing Latinx history does not just affect us Latinx people, but it affects white Americans and other cultures also. They might just see us in an inferior way since there is little to no history of us documented in a museum such as this."**
> *– David Cervantes*

CJ: One of the challenging parts of being a curator—or an NHD student—is making difficult decisions early in the process about how to approach history. Chicago's Latino/a/x history dates back more than a century. How did you decide which histories to include and what arguments to make in the exhibition?

EG: The first step in creating a manageable story is deciding on a focal point. The center of this exhibition is the IJLA students and their protest. I knew I could never create a satisfactory overview of the complete Latino/a/x history in Chicago. The students are able to do their work because leaders in their communities have been doing similar work for generations. I decided that illuminating that landscape would be the job of the exhibition.

NHD Connection

Current events can be catalysts for studying the past. Questions that students have about the world today can lead to great NHD topics. The key is to look at the history of a modern-day challenge, issue, or debate.

Just like public historians, students must also select a focal point for their project. Dr. Gonzales knew she could not cover all aspects of Latino/a/x history in Chicago, so she used the students' activism to pinpoint her focus. NHD students must resist the urge to cover too much ground in their projects. They must narrow their topic, create a historical argument, and let the thesis become the roadmap for their project, presenting clear boundaries for what will and will not be covered.

CJ: Even with that focal point, it must have been challenging to make sense of all that you wanted to cover. How did you approach organizing this information for the public?

EG: I had to decide whether the exhibition would be thematic (arranged according to particular themes) or chronological (arranged in the order the events occurred). Thematic storytelling allows me to group histories in a way that draws attention to resistance strategies. Early on, I learned that the use of the term "Latino" to bring groups together politically comes from Chicago. This brings me to the first turning point I want to mention: 1972.

In 1972, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago collaborated to protest the dominant telephone company at the time, Illinois Bell. They demanded that the company comply with the 1964 Civil Rights Act and hire more Latinos. Illinois Bell was not practicing affirmative action in keeping with federal law in employment. The Spanish Coalition for Jobs took on this fight and was eventually successful. 1972 became a turning point of ideas: groups leveraging "Latino" identity for empowerment and economic gain. Nevertheless, Latinos are not one community: witness the 20 different countries of heritage, diverse races, economic experiences, religious practices, legal status, and wildly divergent treatment by U.S. law and law enforcement. When Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago begin to use the term "Latino" in 1972, it shifted the conversation about identity and how identity can be used for political and economic purposes—starting an intellectual current that leads to the use of the term "Hispanic" in the 1980 census and then "Latino" in the 2000 census.

NHD Connection

Both thematic and chronological organization can work for History Day projects. Students must decide what framework makes the most sense for their topic. All students must connect their argument to NHD's annual theme—this year, *Turning Points in History*—and demonstrate their topic's significance in history.

CJ: What do you do when you hit dead ends in your research path?

EG: As important as the story of 1972 is, it is challenging to determine how to share this story in an engaging way. I decided to try a strategy I often use in special collections, especially when that research concerns marginalized populations. I try to search at a slant, to come into searching through words and phrases that have to do with other topics but can still guide me to my goal. So, for example, if the search terms "Hispanic," "Mexican," "Puerto Rican," and "Latino" have been exhausted, what if I search for "Illinois Bell" itself?

It turns out that CHM actually has archives for Illinois Bell. I was able to find traces of the story I was researching. This is an important concept because sometimes, especially when researching communities that have been historically sidelined, it takes reading between the lines, close reading, and triangulating different sources to find the

right information. So, for example, I noticed evidence of historical change: after these events, Illinois Bell featured Latina employees in its annual report more prominently and frequently.

My next step was to search the museum's image database for "Spanish Coalition for Jobs." In that search, I discovered photographs from 1972 of the Spanish Coalition for Jobs with another group: the Coalition for United Community Action (CUCA). The CUCA was formed with the goals of desegregating the construction industry and placing African Americans in trade jobs.[1] The two organizations disrupted meetings of the Chicago chapter of the National Urban League. The Chicago Urban League was both devoted to economic uplift and self-determination for African Americans and mired in class struggles. The photographs appear to show African American and Latino/a/x activists collaborating on these actions. This evidence of allyship shows the importance of finding missing narratives and integrating multiple perspectives.

The Image Collection at the Chicago History Museum (**images.chicagohistory.org**) is helpful for many different NHD topics. The collection includes the archives of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, often called "Chicago's picture newspaper." The *Sun-Times* collection is one of the largest held by any museum—more than five million images spanning 75 years.
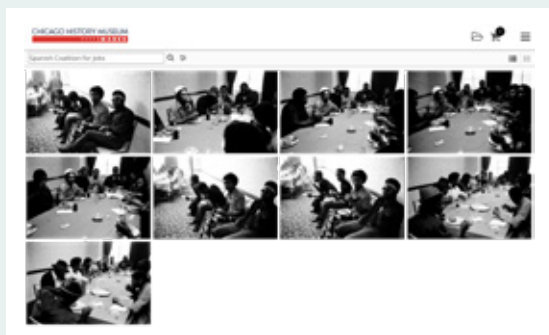
This screenshot shows a search from the CHM image database for "Spanish Coalition for jobs," showing community organizers from the Spanish Coalition for Jobs and the Coalition for United Community Action meeting at the Conrad Hilton Hotel in 1972. Chicago History Museum.

CJ: The 1972 Bell Strike did not just happen. What are some of the turning points that you think help us understand the path toward this complex Latino/a/x identity?

EG: 1898 is another important year that contains several turning points, all of which helped shape our contemporary experience. The United States entered the Spanish American War and took the Philippines, Cuba (ultimately unsuccessfully), and Puerto Rico. The United States has continued this pattern of military intervention for economic gain across Latin America up to the present. The diverse Latino/a/x communities in the United States are the result of people having to flee every country where the United States has intervened. 1898 started a flow of Latin American refugees to the United States and further complicated Latino/a/x identity by connecting it to Asia (the Philippines) and the Caribbean (Puerto Rico, Cuba). Remember, Latino identity, as opposed to Latin American, is particular to the United States. People in Mexico or Argentina are not Latinos.

Aquí will map these populations as they grew and moved across the city. Visitors will be able to see that new and different groups arrived in each decade as the United States intervened in different countries, tipping off civil wars (Guatemala), installing dictators (Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Argentina), supporting coups (El Salvador, Nicaragua), and creating economic disasters (Colombia and many of its neighbors). Each of these histories is a turning point in its own right.

NHD Connection

To understand why historical events happened, NHD students need to examine historical context and change over time. Dr. Gonzales explains that turning points in 1898 established the conditions that help us understand events in 1972 and today. What social, political, economic, cultural, or other factors help NHD students explain why their topic happened when, where, and how it did?

CJ: How do you make decisions about the text you write for exhibition labels? How do you decide which objects you will use?

EG: Text and objects are the bread and butter of curatorial work, but they are two different areas. People are more important than objects. But objects do help us tell the stories of people. Curators choose artifacts based on the stories they help us to tell. We might be looking for a particular instance of some type of object—the red cooler belonging to a particular *tamalero* (vendor of tamales) in Chicago, for instance—or we might look for an object that is representative of something prevalent in a certain time and place, such as a switchboard of the type Illinois Bell employees might have used in 1972. All of the different

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1   Erik S. Gellman, "'The Stone Wall Behind': The Chicago Coalition for United Community Action and Labor's Overseers, 1968–1973," in David Goldberg and Trevor Griffey, eds., *Black Power at Work: Community Control, Affirmative Action, and the Construciton Industry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010): 112–113.

elements of the object are relevant in these considerations: How and when was it made? How was it used (if at all), and by whom? What other stories can it connect us to?

Text can be challenging for curators. Different museums have different standards for how much text can go on a wall, but it is never as much as we want to share. An exhibition label might be restricted to 25, 50, 75, or occasionally as many as 250 words, much like a social media post. No one thinks it's much fun when an exhibition contains so much text that is feels like a book on the wall, but at the same time, words are important for sharing stories. The text we see in exhibitions is often the product of a lot of revisions by many different people.

NHD Connection

Certain types of evidence lend themselves to particular NHD categories. Students should consider this when making decisions about which category will best communicate their argument. The exhibit category requires captivating visuals and a limited number of words, similar to Dr. Gonzales's challenge in preparing a museum exhibition. Websites and documentaries also depend on engaging visuals. Papers rely on text to tell the story, and performances offer students a medium to integrate their subjects' own words with period-appropriate clothing, settings, and props.

CJ: What other historically significant stories will we see in *Aquí*?

EG: The school walkouts of the 1960s and 1970s are another set of stories in *Aquí* of great significance today. Latino/a/x students demanded changes in their schools—more Latino/a/x teachers and administrators, new curriculum, bilingual education, and decent facilities. Students and families caused the city to create new schools and trained a new generation of activists (creating more new schools). High school students are learning at these institutions today. In addition, the effort to create an equitable educational landscape resulted in new cultural institutions, such as the National Museum of Mexican Art. In 1982, several teachers were sick of their Mexican students finding nothing of relevance in their curriculum. They quit their jobs and founded the museum. I hope future generations will find that CHM has also shifted to become a trusted and inclusive storyteller.

Environmental justice is another thread in *Aquí*. Latino/a/x people have been working for decades to protect their communities from being used as sacrifice zones—places where the safety and health of residents are sacrificed for the benefit of industry. Community-based advocacy and organizing are ongoing efforts, linking the work of past generations with those in the present. We can see this historical significance in a recent example. From 2018

to 2021, community members on the Southeast Side of Chicago stood up to General Iron, a large company that was trying to place a metal shredding facility in the heart of this residential neighborhood. When separate groups of community members went on a hunger strike and filed a lawsuit, they eventually got the attention of the mayor, who stopped the permit. I hope this story will inspire visitors to see how significant their own activism can be.

NHD Connection

NHD students should consider historical significance when choosing their topics and framing their historical arguments. So what? Why should the viewer care? Why is the topic historically significant? How did the events being studied influence or change later events?

CJ: What lessons do you think NHD students can take from public history?

EG: As students uncover stories about the past, they can share their knowledge to encourage others to become better informed and more civically engaged community members. Whatever category they choose—paper, website, documentary, exhibit, or performance—they have the opportunity to connect with their audience. What would students like others to know, feel, think, and do? If students consider the things that feel urgent in their world—in their community—they may find a surprising road back in time that can inform their thinking about the future.

NHD Connection

Not all histories are represented equally in research collections, especially historically marginalized groups and more recent history. Many archives are working to improve their collections. If a topic is not well-represented already, an NHD student may be in a position to help preserve important stories for future researchers. For example, students' interest in someone's personal history may inspire that individual to donate their personal records to an archive or to consider offering a copy of an NHD interview for archival access.

To access more theme resources, go to nhd.org/theme.

turning points explained

National Council for the Social Studies magazines *Social Education* and *Social Studies and the Young Learner* help you explain to students how today's turning points will impact the future.

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Reconstruction: A Turning Point for American Democracy

CANDRA FLANAGAN, Director of Teaching and Learning, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institution

Liberty, equality, and justice have been words and beliefs that have guided the United States since its beginnings. The execution and protection of these beliefs were written into law in the nation's most important legal document, the Constitution of the United States. However, despite the strong belief in liberty, the foundational labor system of the United States was race-based chattel slavery, the institution that enslaved millions of people of African descent from the beginning of the country's origins.

For decades the notion of who belongs, who is protected, and who is allowed to pursue happiness was constrained to a narrow band of people, mostly land-holding white males. This article will explore how three amendments to the Constitution—the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth, collectively known as the Reconstruction Amendments—were instrumental in what noted historian Eric Foner calls "the Second Founding."[1] By understanding the environment and debates surrounding the turning points, we can understand more about the Black American experience in the post-Civil War years as the nation sought to become a better version of itself.

Even though the institution of slavery was connected to all parts of the country and touched almost every part of the economy, there were always forces and individuals working against slavery and fighting for its abolition, as well as for the expansion of rights for people of African descent. Black people who had been born outside of the institution of slavery, or who had become free through self-emancipation or manumission (freed by their enslavers), along with their white allies, spoke out against slavery. Frederick Douglass (1817 or 1818–1895), the most famous Black abolitionist, gave speeches and wrote books to bring attention to the abolitionist cause and end slavery. Douglass allied with white abolitionists, including Representative Thaddeus Stevens (1792–1868), to speak out against slavery and work for the freedom of their brethren still in bondage.

The tension between people who supported slavery and those who sought to abolish it waxed and waned throughout the 1800s. It reached a peak with the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which gave federal protection to slavery by requiring anyone to turn over any Black person suspected of being a runaway. As the end of that decade approached, the southern states—which held the majority of Black people in bondage—began to agitate to leave the union in order to protect what they saw as their right to enslave people. The American Civil War (1861–1865), a military conflict between the Union (the Northern states) and the Confederacy (the Southern states), brought the country to its knees.

Learning History Through Objects: Abolition and the Coming of War
learninglab.si.edu/collections/learning-history-through-objects-abolition-and-the-coming-of-war/L6UoK7s4ilcDEHrz

› This Smithsonian Learning Lab Collection helps students learn about abolitionists, the Abolition Movement, and the lead-up to the American Civil War.

Learning History Through Objects: The American Civil War
learninglab.si.edu/collections/learning-history-through-objects-the-american-civil-war/veD3aimqdUMSPyLG

› This Smithsonian Learning Lab Collection helps students learn about the experiences of enslaved and free African Americans during the American Civil War.

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1   Eric Foner, *The Second Founding: How the Civil War and Reconstruction Remade the Constitution* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019).

As the war continued, the question of slavery moved to the forefront of American consciousness. Enslaved people took the opportunity to make their own way to freedom in large numbers. The efforts of Black people who were free before the war, those enslaved who moved to secure their own freedom, and the military service of thousands of Black men led many politicians and social leaders to frame the war in terms of freedom and the abolition of slavery. The quest for freedom was moved forward with a key decision by President Abraham Lincoln to release the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, "that all persons held as slaves" within the rebellious states "are, and henceforward shall be free."[2] This was a limited move; it freed enslaved people in the Confederacy but not in the border states that remained loyal to the Union. Lincoln, along with other prominent Black and white abolitionists, knew that a constitutional amendment was needed to secure the abolition of slavery.

African American soldiers mustered out and returning to their families in Little Rock, Arkansas, 1866. Library of Congress (2004660198).

Formerly enslaved Black Americans entered freedom relieved, determined, and with questions. They sought to gather and reconnect families that had been broken under the yoke of slavery. As a community, they built organizations and institutions to support and sustain themselves, such as churches, banks, and fraternal organizations. They also desired to gain land and control their own labor, both of which would lead to economic security. Lastly, gaining a voice in national, state, and local political life was critical, and Black people agitated ceaselessly for the right to vote and participate. There were debates among African Americans about how to move forward, but one thing was certain—freedom was precious and worth the struggle to secure it.

In the years immediately following the Civil War, questions abounded. What is freedom? Who counts as a citizen? What are the rights of a citizen? Almost as soon as the war ended, the states formerly in rebellion began enacting laws, commonly called Black Codes, which limited opportunities for African Americans. The newly freed were left to the mercy of the communities that had previously held them in bondage. How could the United States government provide protection for Black Americans, newly and formerly free? The Constitution needed to be amended to reflect new definitions of freedom, who counts as a citizen, and what rights are protected for those citizens.

These questions and debates became the work of the era of Reconstruction. In a short period of time, the Constitution gained three new amendments designed to make slavery illegal, establish citizenship, and secure voting rights.

The newly freed worked to gather and reunite their families. This photograph shows George and Adaline Bryant with their four sons, c. 1898. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Jackie Bryant Smith (2010.66.150).

2   "The Emancipation Proclamation," National Archives and Records Administration, updated January 28, 2022, accessed March 14, 2023. https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation.

THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT (RATIFIED DECEMBER 1865)

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 1, Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America

When the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified in 1865, it completed what free and enslaved African Americans, abolitionists, and the Emancipation Proclamation set in motion. Even before the Civil War ended, key abolitionists and lawmakers were discussing amendments to the Constitution that would explicitly make slavery illegal. A brief amendment, the Thirteenth, codified the demise of slavery.

Even though the Thirteenth Amendment brought about a legal end to slavery, the community knew there was more to do to secure equality. The Thirteenth Amendment included a clause that allowed slavery and involuntary servitude to be used as punishment for a crime. Southern states used that clause to ill effect and created laws that made it easy to arrest African Americans for minor offenses. Men and women convicted of such crimes could then be leased out to railroads, mines, factories, plantations, and private homes as workers. This practice, known as convict leasing, was used to oppress and force labor from African Americans after slavery and still has legacies that resonate in today's society.

African American convict laborers working on a railroad line at Swannanoa Cut, North Carolina, c. 1885. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (2020.10.13).

The ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment was met with great excitement. *The New York Times* stated that the vote had made the United States "what it has never been

hitherto, thoroughly democratic—resting on human rights as its basis."[3] The turning point of the Thirteenth Amendment was critical but not the end of the fight for remaking America.

Defining Freedom: Securing the Promise of the 13th Amendment
nmaahc.si.edu/explore/exhibitions/reconstruction/defining-freedom

› This online exhibition from the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture traces the promises of the Thirteenth Amendment and its legacies.

FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT (RATIFIED JULY 1868)

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 1, Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America

From the nation's founding, African Americans regarded themselves as citizens. When the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1788, it did not restrict citizenship based on race. However, it counted enslaved people as only three-fifths of a person rather than as full citizens when determining state populations for representation in Congress.

For Black Americans, it was clear that freedom without political, civil, and social rights was not enough. African American leaders at local and national levels fought for a clear declaration of the citizenship they had claimed for themselves and, with it, the protection of the government and its laws. With the Fourteenth Amendment, the previously mentioned Black Codes were declared illegal. No person could be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process (fair treatment by the judicial system), and the law was to be equally applied to everyone.

The Fourteenth Amendment, the longest in the U.S. Constitution, redefined citizenship for the nation. The three-fifths clause was nullified, and each individual

3   Foner, *The Second Founding*, 36..

counted equally. The concept of birthright citizenship became a hallmark that expanded the understanding of citizenship for African Americans and other groups. The Fourteenth Amendment was another turning point for the country; civil rights were protected at the federal level and not left solely up to the states.

Resistance to the Fourteenth Amendment was strong from many white citizens both in the South and in the northern and western states. Many could not imagine equality for African Americans, even if they were against the system of enslavement. These beliefs were reflected in the many local laws enacted just after the Civil War to limit the civil, legal, and political rights of Black people. Along with these Black Codes and other oppressive social norms, there were episodes of terrible violence designed to destroy Black communities and sow fear. These episodes combined with the resulting testimony from Black people in the southern states cast light on the severity of the situation that African Americans were facing and spurred support for federal protections within the Fourteenth Amendment. The Amendment was strengthened by additional legislation, including the Civil Rights Act of 1875.[4]

Segment of a lithograph commemorating Congressman Robert B. Elliott's rousing speech in favor of the Civil Rights Act of 1875, which further enhanced the protections of the Fourteenth Amendment. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution (NPG.2008.30).

The Fourteenth Amendment has become one of the most referenced and important amendments addressing the understanding of who counts, what civil rights are to be protected, and how those rights are enforced. It has been at the center of decisions on access to public accommodations and education, citizenship, due process of the law, and the role of federal government with regard to state action and private citizens.

FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT (RATIFIED FEBRUARY 1870)

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude—

Section 1, Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America

A critical aspect of freedom is the ability to participate in the political culture. Voting is one of the hallmarks of political engagement in U.S. democracy. For most of the early life of the United States, the right to vote was held primarily by property-owning white men. Immediately after emancipation, the newly freed moved to exercise their political will at all levels of government.

Give us the suffrage and you may rely upon us to secure justice for ourselves.

Convention of Freedmen in Virginia, 1865

Through the political conventions, Black Americans demanded the right to vote and petitioned Congress. In 1867, Congress passed the Reconstruction Acts to offer federal protection to the Black community while the Fourteenth Amendment was being ratified. Under the Reconstruction Acts, many Black men in the southern states could vote and hold office for the first time. While only Black men could vote, they represented their families and communities as they cast their votes to help advance the Black community and improve the nation. With the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, Black American men in the southern, northern, and western states became eligible to vote and hold office. Because of this turning point, as federal laws removed racial barriers to the ballot box and political office between 1865 and 1867, over 1,500 African American men held public office in southern state and local governments.

4   The Civil Rights Act of 1875 guaranteed equal treatment in public transportation and accommodations. It also allowed African American men to serve on juries. The law was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1883.

African American men in Virginia casting their ballots in the state's first Reconstruction election in 1867. The illustration ran on the cover of the November 16, 1867, issue of *Harper's Weekly*. Library of Congress (00651117).

Although only Black males received the right to vote, Black women remained politically active, attending meetings, encouraging males in their communities to vote, and voicing their opinions. During the debate and discussion about the Fifteenth Amendment, the fight for universal suffrage splintered into factions between those who wanted the vote for women written into the amendment and those who believed that the addition of the 'women's question' would make gaining the vote harder for African American males. Subsequently, only Black male suffrage was written into the amendment. Women continued to agitate for suffrage and used their political voices. In 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment gave white women the vote, but Black women, along with Black males, continued to be hindered from exercising their vote due to oppressive tactics, state and local laws, and violence that was prevalent in the early twentieth century.

Black suffrage was hard-won and even more challenging to protect in the years following the Fifteenth Amendment. Democrats regained control of state governments in the South and reentered national government as the country began to turn its attention to other concerns and took up a cry for reconciliation. By 1877, federal government Reconstruction policies were ended as the U.S. military withdrew from the South, sacrificing the protection of Black Americans. Democrats passed laws designed to prevent African Americans from voting, using poll taxes and literacy tests to get around the Fifteenth Amendment's ban on race-based voting laws. Some white community members used intimidation tactics to prevent African American men from going to the polls or to try and sway their votes, sometimes even leading to loss of life. These methods of oppression, although known, would not be rendered illegal until the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Make Good the Promises: 150 Years and Counting
nmaahc.si.edu/explore/exhibitions/reconstruction/voting-rights

› This online exhibition from the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture explores the fight for voting rights in American history.

CONCLUSION

In 1876, at the Republican National Convention, the renowned abolitionist and civil rights activist Frederick Douglass became the first Black person to speak at a national political convention. He took to the podium at a time when the interest in the needs of African Americans was waning. A powerful orator, Douglass exhorted the assembled body and nation to fulfill its founding promises of liberty, equality and justice.

But what is your emancipation?—what is your enfranchisement? What does it all amount to, if the Black man, after having been made free by the letter of your law, is unable to exercise that freedom, and, after having been freed from the slaveholder's lash, he is to be subject to the slaveholder's shot-gun? The question now is, Do you mean to make good to us the promises in your constitution?[5]

The Reconstruction Amendments represented a turning point in American democracy. The nation grappled with the questions of who was a citizen, what rights belonged to whom, and who would be able to participate in government. Black Americans seized the freedom they had been denied and set out to secure their spaces in society while they gathered their families, laid the foundations for

5   Speech made by Frederick Douglass to the 1876 Republican National Convention. Transcribed in M. A. Clancy and William Nelson, *Proceedings of the Republican National Convention Held at Cincinniati, Ohio, June 14, 15, and 16, 1876* (Concord: Republican Press Association, 1876), 27.

economic self-sufficiency, and fought for their political and social rights. In the early twentieth century, the backlash of white supremacy attempted to roll back the gains of the Reconstruction Amendments through disenfranchisement, economic and social oppression, and physical violence. While the impact of the Reconstruction Amendments gave the United States a chance to "make good the promises," the nation would not fully embrace the spirit of these amendments.

The power and potential of the Reconstruction Amendments were reignited during the modern Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. They have continued to be used to broaden the reach of equality for African Americans and other marginalized groups. The questions of the Reconstruction Era remain with us today. They impact our present sense of justice and equality. Learning the lessons of Reconstruction and continued conversations of inclusion and justice will guide our future together.

Civil rights activist Bobby Simmons on the march from Selma to Montgomery in March 1965. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (2015.129.59). Gift of Monica Karales and the Estate of James Karales, Copyright by the Estate of James Karales.

Students interested in the Reconstruction Amendments might also want to consider one of these topics for an NHD project:

Thirteenth Amendment

› *Hodges v. United States* (1906)
› *Bailey v. Alabama* (1911)
› *Arver v. United States* (1918)
› *Jones v. Mayer* (1968)

Fourteenth Amendment

› The Civil Rights Act of 1866
› The Civil Rights Act of 1875
› *Slaughter-House Cases* (1873)
› *U.S. v. Wong Kim Ark* (1898)
› *Loving v. Virginia* (1967)
› *Regent of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978)

Fifteenth Amendment

› The Fight for Women's Suffrage
› *Breedlove v. Suttles* (1937)
› *Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections* (1966)
› Civil Rights Act of 1957

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Revolutionary Ideals: Three Views from the Colonial and Revolutionary Era

LINDA DEAN, Teacher Resource Developer, Museum of the American Revolution

MICHAEL HENSINGER, Manager of School Programs, Museum of the American Revolution

JOHN McNIFF, Park Ranger, National Park Service, Roger Williams National Memorial

National History Day® (NHD) is excited to be involved in preparations for America's semiquincentennial celebration. July 4, 2026, will mark the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

The United States was founded on a set of principles. These ideas were revolutionary in that they formed a government derived from the consent of the governed. They created leadership structures at the local, colonial (later state), and national levels that gave some citizens a remarkable voice in their government and the laws under which they would live. At the same time, these were ideals, and in many ways, the most radical revolutionaries of the time could not fathom the democracy we see today. The America of 1776 was imperfect.

In the summer of 2022, NHD kicked off its semiquincentennial programming with a live teacher institute in Providence, Rhode Island. Partnering with the Rhode Island Historical Society, NHD developed this week-long institute, *Revolutionary Ideals*, engaging 30 teachers from across the nation. The program focused on the concept of Revolutionary ideals, exploring the ideals of the time and considering how they were (or were not) practiced or applied fully. Working with scholars, repositories, museums, and historical societies, teachers studied the colonial and revolutionary eras through expert lectures, visits to museums, and research at various archives and libraries.

REVOLUTIONARY IDEALS

The teachers who participated in the 2022 summer teacher institute worked collaboratively to create lesson plans relating to the founding ideals of the revolutionary era. The result was the sourcebook *Revolutionary Ideals*, which also features introductory articles from Dr. C. Morgan Grefe, the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Historical Society, and Dr. Abby Chandler, Associate Professor, University of Massachusetts Lowell. The lessons cover topics including religious liberty, Metacom's War, the Triangular Trade, the Burning of the *Gaspee*, the Philadelphia Tea Party, the influence of Indigenous people on the U.S. federal government, and the concept of liberty, among others. Teachers can access the book and the individual lessons (including primary sources and classroom materials) at **nhd.org/RevIdeals**.

The next few years give NHD students many opportunities to explore the turning points of this time period. Rather than present one topic in this article, we have featured three authors with three different topics: the revolutionary ideas and practices of Roger Williams, the African American fight for freedom during the Revolutionary Era, and the way in which women gained (and then lost) the right to vote in the early republic. Consider how each of the examples offers students avenues to consider turning points from religious, political, or social history perspectives.

Teachers examined Revolutionary era artifacts from the Newport Historical Society, 2022. National History Day.

Roger Williams: A Dangerous Man with Dangerous Opinions Who Changed the Way Government Works

JOHN McNIFF

Roger Williams arrived in New England in 1631 as part of a large British migration to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Many settlers in this colony left Britain due to religious turmoil and persecution. They sought freedom from persecution for their own religious beliefs but did not apply that to beliefs of others.

Roger Williams was a Christian minister who refused to compromise his beliefs to fit into the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He was a dangerous man with dangerous opinions. At least, that was the viewpoint of the leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The danger came from his challenge to the established ideas of land ownership and governmental authority and because he refused to keep silent in challenging the status quo.

The British in Massachusetts Bay Colony saw the land as theirs because the King had granted them a charter. Williams believed that the Indigenous peoples who lived there owned the land, and the British who wished to live there should make a deal with them.

John Winthrop, Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, felt that the colony should be a beacon to the world, showing how a good religious government should be set up. Williams, however, believed the government had no role in religion, and the two should be entirely separate.

After being rejected and chased out of the Massachusetts Bay Colony for his dangerous ideas, Williams established the settlement of Rhode Island in 1636. He made agreements with the local Native leadership, Narragansett sachems (chiefs) Canonicus and Miantonomo, to establish his settlement. He had one major problem. While he made agreements to settle in Rhode Island, he had no legitimate British paperwork, and the surrounding British colonies of Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut wanted the land of Rhode Island for themselves.

Providence (the first town in Rhode Island) was set up to be a refuge for anyone persecuted because of their religious or political beliefs. But how does one organize and run such a settlement? In Providence, one of the first documents agreed upon by the inhabitants stated that they would make rules by the majority vote of the people, but only when deciding civil issues. The government would not make rules about religion.

Every other British establishment document invokes the name of God as a basis for the legitimacy of the settlement. In Providence, Williams made a dramatic break when he established the "hedge or wall of separation between the garden of the church and the wilderness of the world."[1]

That radical change, separating church and state, called into question the very source of the government's authority. This was a radical step, for the king was king "by the Grace of God." Separating church and state meant the government no longer received its authority from God. Stripped of this authority, kings and governments would answer to the people. This was a turning point in the very nature of governmental authority. Until this point, authority came from God. For the first time, Williams set up a government that derived its authority from the people.

In truth, Williams and the colony were in trouble because of their lack of paperwork from the British government that would secure their borders. In 1651, Williams took his fourth trip across the Atlantic Ocean. He was accompanied by Dr. John Clarke, a surgeon and leader from one of the other Rhode Island settlements, Newport. Williams and Clarke were experienced in the ways of governments, and both knew how to play the political game ahead of them. Their goal was to obtain paperwork from the British government to unify the fledgling colony of Rhode Island and protect it from its neighbors, Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut.

Williams returned early from the trip, leaving Clarke in Britain to act as representative for the Rhode Island Colony. In 1663, Dr. Clarke secured a Royal Charter that guaranteed religious freedom:

> ". . . hold forth a lively experiment, that a most flourishing civil state may stand and best be maintained, and that among our English subjects, with a full liberty in religious concernments; . . . That our royal will and pleasure is, that no person within the said colony, at any time hereafter, shall be anyway molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinion in matters of religion, and does not actually disturb the civil peace of our said colony; . . ."[2]

1   Roger Williams, The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution . . . (London: J. Hadden, 1848). https://www.gutenberg.org/files/65739/65739-h/65739-h.htm. Many of the original editions of this book, first published in 1644, were burned by order of the British Parliament.
2   "Rhode Island's Royal Charter." Rhode Island Department of State, accessed January 9, 2023. https://www.sos.ri.gov/divisions/civics-and-education/for-educators/themed-collections/rhode-island-charter.

Rhode Island's Charter of 1663. Rhode Island Department of State.

This charter also allowed Rhode Island to elect its own governor and government. Other colonies, up to that time, had royal governors appointed by the king. These royal governors had little interest in caring for the colonies and often exploited the situation to profit themselves and then returned to Britain. In contrast, the Rhode Island governor was a resident of the colony. Rhode Island's Royal Charter of 1663 quickly became a model for other charters. The Carolinas and New Jersey readily patterned their Charters after Rhode Island. Political and religious freedoms were spreading.

Just 100 years later, when the newly independent colonies needed a set of rules for their new country, they adapted many of the dangerous ideas of Williams in the wording of the Constitution of the United States of America. The Constitution does not start, as many of these Charters did, with the name of a king, who by the grace of God lets the people do something. The Constitution starts with three words, much larger than anything else in the document, boldly and proudly proclaiming to the world that "We, the People," are the authority for the United States government.

Roger Williams struggled against kings, religious leaders, magistrates, and others in authority to establish the first colony with complete religious freedom. Williams's ideas threatened leaders who were used to power that was absolute or given by God. In the Royal Charter of 1663, Rhode Island was given more freedoms, both religious and political, than any other place and was given the right to be in control of its own government. The people were the foundation of civil power. With these freedoms, the colony of Rhode Island thrived. A century later, when the colonies sought independence from Britain, Rhode Islanders such as Governor Stephen Hopkins (signer of the Declaration of Independence) and General Nathaniel Greene (George Washington's second-in-command) stepped forward to help lead the fight for independence. When a government

was created for the newly independent country, it was ideals laid out by Roger Williams that helped shape the very nature of that government.

To learn more about Roger Williams, visit:

Roger Williams, National Park Service
nps.gov/rowi/learn/historyculture/rogerslife.htm

Roger Williams and the Founding of Rhode Island,
Rhode Island Historical Society
library.providence.edu/encompass/roger-williams-and-the-founding-of-rhode-island/

Rhode Island's Royal Charter, Rhode Island Department of State
sos.ri.gov/divisions/civics-and-education/for-educators/themed-collections/rhode-island-charter

Turning the Tide of Equality for People of African Descent in Revolutionary America
### MICHAEL HENSINGER

At the conclusion of the French and Indian War in 1763, many British colonists were proud to be part of the British Empire and to be ruled by a monarch. Most believed Britain and King George III to be the greatest protectors of liberty in the world. Central to British liberties was the right to enjoy one's life and property in peace. British liberty also included the ability to consent to laws by electing representatives. However, as British Parliament began exercising more direct control over Britain's North American colonies, it created a turning point by leading many colonists to believe that their British liberties were under fire, igniting a change in how many colonists felt about their relationship with the British Empire.

The discussion surrounding colonists' liberties sparked ideas that went beyond British governance. One in five people living in North America during this time was of African descent. Many lived in slavery throughout Britain's North American colonies. Some colonists compared their increasingly fraught relationship with the Empire to one of an enslaved person and an enslaver. Such comparisons created an opportunity for those who opposed slavery to discuss with greater passion how the injustice of slavery was at odds with a movement to restore colonists' liberties.

Black colonists were among those seeking their liberty. Phillis Wheatley (c. 1753–1784), brought to the colonies as a child in 1761, was an enslaved woman who wrote poetry and other correspondence, drawing attention to

the need for the extension of liberty to all people. In 1774, she expressed this desire in a letter, "In every human Breast, God has implanted a Principle, which we call Love of Freedom; it is impatient of Oppression, and pants for Deliverance."[3] This letter and numerous poems about liberty, equality, and slavery were published, encouraging American colonists to consider the contradictions between their desire for liberty and the institution of slavery.
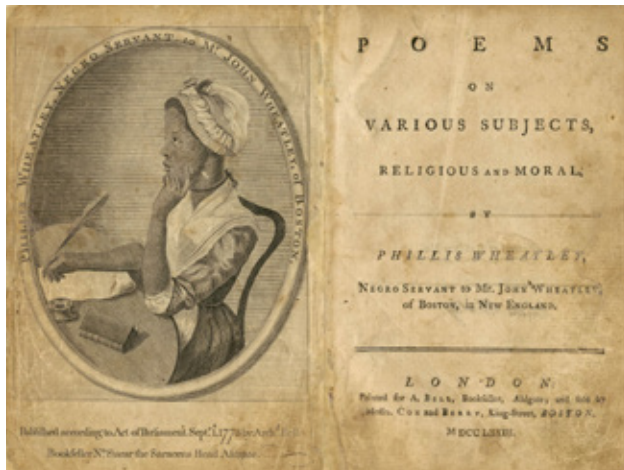
Book of poetry written by Phillis Wheatley and published in 1773. It was viewed by many colonists in British North America as evidence of artistic and intellectual equality of people of African descent. Museum of the American Revolution, Gift of Dr. Marion T. Lane (2019.03.01).

Other Black colonists brought formal petitions for change—based on the movement to restore political liberty and personal freedoms—to colonial governments. In Massachusetts, Peter Bestes, Sambo Freeman, Felix Holbrook, and Chester Joie petitioned the Massachusetts General Court for the right to buy their freedom. "We expect great things," the petitioners wrote, "from men who have made such a noble stand against the designs of their fellow men to enslave them."[4] This petition was part of a larger trend of people of African descent and others opposed to slavery expressing their views to the government through writing. This written form of protest was a turning point in the struggle for equality, as it helped shape public opinion and forced colonists to reconcile their actions with their aspirations for a society founded on liberty.

In 1775, the disagreements between Britain and its North American colonists exploded into war. The following year, members of the Second Continental Congress, a gathering of representatives from Britain's thirteen North American colonies, debated how best to reconcile with the British Empire while restoring their liberties. Ultimately, they decided that parting ways with Great Britain was the best course of action. Several members drafted a document to announce their separation from Britain and the thirteen colonies' formation of a new nation, the United States of America. The Declaration of Independence, adopted on July 4, 1776, enshrined the ideals of the United States and its commitment to liberty while also asserting that "all men are created equal." For people of African descent in the United States, this statement became a turning point in their struggle for freedom and equality, as it was emulated and quoted in arguments against slavery made by many Americans.

These ideas were reflected in national and local documents of the time. In 1773, the residents of Sheffield, Massachusetts, wrote the Sheffield Declaration, which stated that "mankind in a state of nature are equal, free, and independent of each other, and have a right to the undisturbed enjoyment of their lives, their liberty and property." Many of these ideas were later reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the Massachusetts State Constitution (1780). Overhearing these words, an enslaved woman named Mum Bett (c. 1744–1829), also known as Mumbet, challenged her enslavement in court. She found a lawyer who helped her argue that slavery could not exist alongside the principles of freedom and equality espoused by Massachusetts and the new nation. Mumbet won her case and chose a new name for herself, Elizabeth Freeman, celebrating her new status as a free person. As the first woman of African descent to sue for her freedom in the state of Massachusetts, she represented a turning point for how the law viewed slavery and equality. A precedent was set for others who followed her example, and the groundwork was laid for the abololition of slavery in Massachusetts.

As the Revolutionary War concluded, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island began the process of abolishing slavery. New York and New Jersey did so as well in the years following the adoption of the Constitution that governed the entire nation. Still, the debate over slavery's existence in the United States raged on at the Constitutional Convention and long afterward. Like many turning points, the impact of the Declaration of Independence did not mark the end of a struggle but instead the renewed beginning of one. Even today, Americans are still working to better realize the revolutionary ideal that "all men are created equal."

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3   Phillis Wheatley, Letter to Samson Occom, February 11, 1774, published in *The Connecticut Journal*, April 1, 1774, Museum of the American Revolution. Learn more at https://www.amrevmuseum.org/news/in-the-news-1774-newspaper-printing-of-phillis-wheatley-s-letter-rebuking-slavery.
4   "Boston, April 20th, 1773. Sir, The efforts made by the legislative [sic] of this province . . . ," Massachusetts Historical Society, accessed January 10, 2023. https://www.masshist.org/database/viewer.php?item_id=443.

When Women Gained and Then Lost the Vote: Forward and Backward Turning Points

LINDA DEAN

August 2020 marked 100 years since the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, which granted women the right to vote. When celebrating this anniversary, many looked back on the gathering of women's rights activists in Seneca Falls (1848) as the beginning of the women's suffrage movement. However, over a century earlier, women during the Revolutionary Era exercised their rights as the nation's first women voters. In 1776, a turning point in the advancement of rights for women and people of African descent occurred when the state of New Jersey extended the right to vote to property holders regardless of race or gender. However, in 1807, this turning point moved backward when New Jersey created a new law excluding these groups from the electorate.

In 1776, the Second Continental Congress called upon the states to write new constitutions that included laws addressing who had the right to vote in their states. Ten of the new state constitutions defined voters as "male" or "freemen." Two other constitutions defined voters as white men who paid a certain amount of taxes or held property.

The state of New Jersey was different. A revolutionary turning point occurred in 1776, when the New Jersey state constitution used racial and gender-neutral language in its election law. It referred to voters as "all inhabitants" who met property and residence requirements and used the unspecific pronoun "they" in its section on voter eligibility. Some historians think referring to voters as "they" was an oversight, while others believe that the state intentionally extended to women and free people of African descent the right to vote, expanding the meaning of the Declaration of Independence's promise of equality.[5]

The state clarified the ambiguity in 1790 when the New Jersey Constitution was amended to include the words "he or she" when referring to voters in certain counties. The law stated that a voter could only cast a ballot wherever "he or she" resided. By including a feminine pronoun in their description of voters, the new law made clear what the 1776 Constitution had only implied—that women could vote in New Jersey.

In 1797, the state amended its election law again. The new law changed the nature of the property requirement while referring to voters as "he or she" again, this time across the entire state. This deliberate and revolutionary "she" is believed to have been influenced by New Jersey Federalists, who may have been motivated to include women voters in their ranks to offset a growing Democratic-Republican population. As a result, women who owned property (mostly widows and single women) continued casting their votes.

Researchers from the Museum of the American Revolution have discovered 18 poll lists from four New Jersey townships between 1797 and 1807, with nine listing names of women who voted. These poll lists include the names of 163 ordinary women who cast a ballot, suggesting that political participation was not limited to activist writers and thinkers.

At least three women's names appear on a New Jersey poll list. Museum of the American Revolution.

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5   "1776 State Constitution," State of New Jersey Department of State, accessed January 10, 2023. https://www.state.nj.us/state/archives/docconst76.html.

Sometimes, turning points can turn backward. In 1807, the state of New Jersey took away the right to vote for all women and free people of African descent, 31 years after the state constitution granted that right. Changing opinions on access to voting rights occurred amid a bitter rivalry between political parties, including accusations of voter fraud. As partisan divisions grew, politicians from both parties became increasingly concerned over women and free people of African descent voting, especially when these votes were seen to benefit the other party. Partisan newspapers began to promote stereotypes about women such as their inability to understand politics as well as their manipulation of elections.

Accusations came to a head in 1807 after a local election in Essex County ended in disputes over suspected voting fraud. After the investigation, it was discovered that more votes were cast than there were eligible voters in the county. Some people claimed they witnessed men dressing as women in order to cast multiple votes or poll officials allowing women to vote without proof of property ownership. The New Jersey State Legislature decided to use this election as the reason to pass a new law that defined voters as "free, white male citizens . . . worth fifty pounds," effectively overturning the 1790 and 1797 acts. On November 16, 1807, property-owning women and free African Americans in New Jersey lost the right to vote.[6]

The 1807 law was a major turning point backward for women's political rights. However, even though they lost the right to vote, New Jersey women influenced the women's suffrage movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Women redirected their activism toward education (another turning point), paving the way for a future generation of suffragists who evoked the ideals of the Revolution and the nation's first women voters. The story of the nation's first women voters remains both a turning point and a cautionary tale, encouraging us to consider that progress is not necessarily linear and unending, and that rights and liberties require constant vigilance to preserve and protect.

To learn more, visit:

Virtual Exhibit, *When Women Lost the Vote: A Revolutionary Story, 1776–1807,* Museum of the American Revolution **amrevmuseum.org/virtualexhibits/when-women-lost-the-vote-a-revolutionary-story**

CONCLUSION

The revolutionary era provides multiple ways to explore the ideals of the founders and also the ways in which those ideas were applied (or not applied) in society. Historians are helping us see how a variety of people and groups helped to build the foundation for the American republic. This period offers the ability for students to explore the ways in which individuals influenced the world around them and how different groups of people interacted with each other. There are hundreds of potential NHD topics (and turning points) buried in the era for students to investigate.

We hope these segments offer you ideas for teaching the colonial and revolutionary eras as we build to the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2026. For lessons to inspire even more topics, go to **nhd. org/RevIdeals** to access *Revolutionary Ideals*, a teacher sourcebook complete with articles and lessons designed to re-invigorate the teaching of this era, with a focus on the ideals of the time.

To access more theme resources, go to nhd.org/theme.

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6   "How Did the Vote Expand?: New Jersey's Revolutionary Decade," Museum of the American Revolution, accessed January 10, 2023. **https://www. amrevmuseum.org/virtualexhibits/when-women-lost-the-vote-a-revolutionary-story/pages/how-did-the-vote-expand-new-jersey-s-revolutionary-decade**.

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