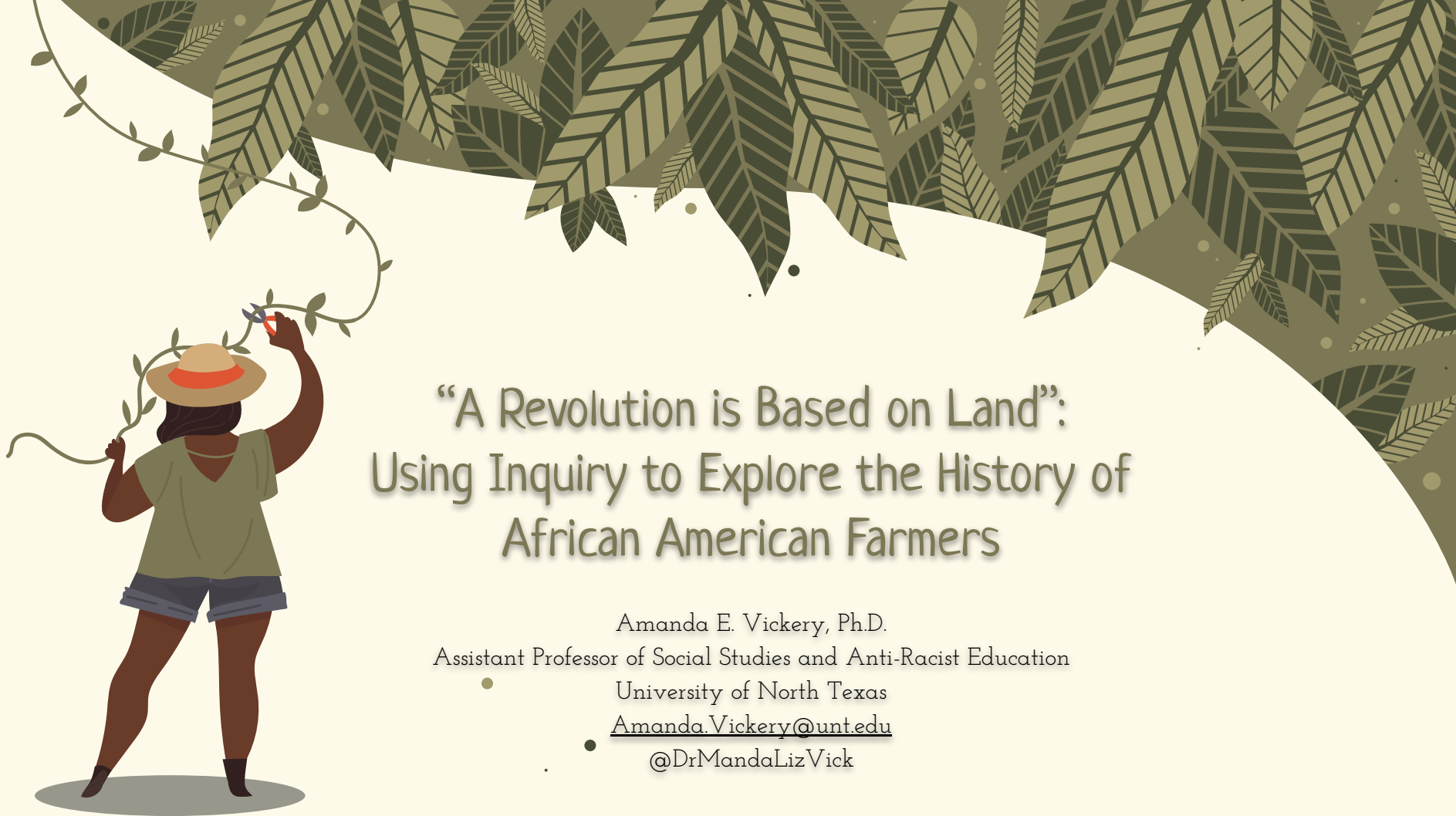


Inquiry and Teaching with Primary Sources

Teaching Inquiry About Race and Democracy Through Primary Sources





“A Revolution is Based on Land”: Using Inquiry to Explore the History of African American Farmers

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Agenda

01 Land

02 Critical Race Theory & teaching economics & geography

03

Using critical inquiry to explore the history of Black farmers using primary sources

04

Taking Informed Action




Land Acknowledgment

Land Acknowledgment

“The way we can best take care of ourselves **is to have land**, and turn it and till it by our labor—that is, by the labor of the women, and children, and old men—and we can soon maintain ourselves and have something to spare . . . **We want to be placed on land until we are able to buy it and make it our own.**”

(Garrison Frazier)

A historical black and white photograph of African American people in a cornfield. The image is overlaid with text. The text reads: "In 1875, African Americans owned **three million acres** of land. Five years later, they owned **eight million**, and by 1900, it was **twelve million**". The words "three million acres", "eight million", and "twelve million" are highlighted in yellow, orange, and green respectively. The background shows several people, including children, standing in a field of tall corn stalks.

“In 1875, African Americans owned **three million acres** of land. Five years later, they owned **eight million**, and by 1900, it was **twelve million**”

(White, 2018, p. 28).



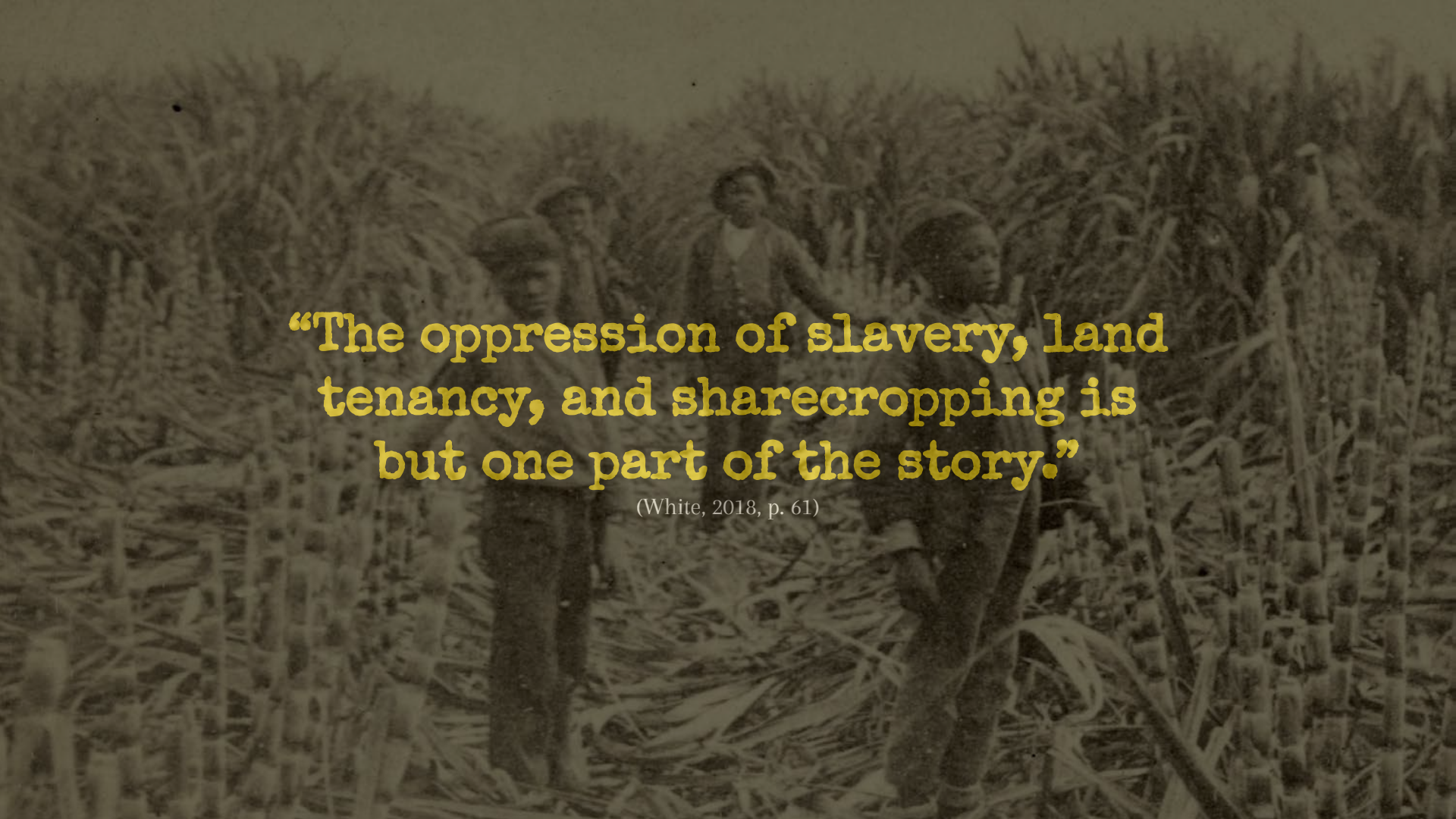
“By the 1920s, Black people owned about a million farms-14% of all of the farms in the country. In the decades that followed, that number dropped to below 2%.”

(New York Times, 2019)



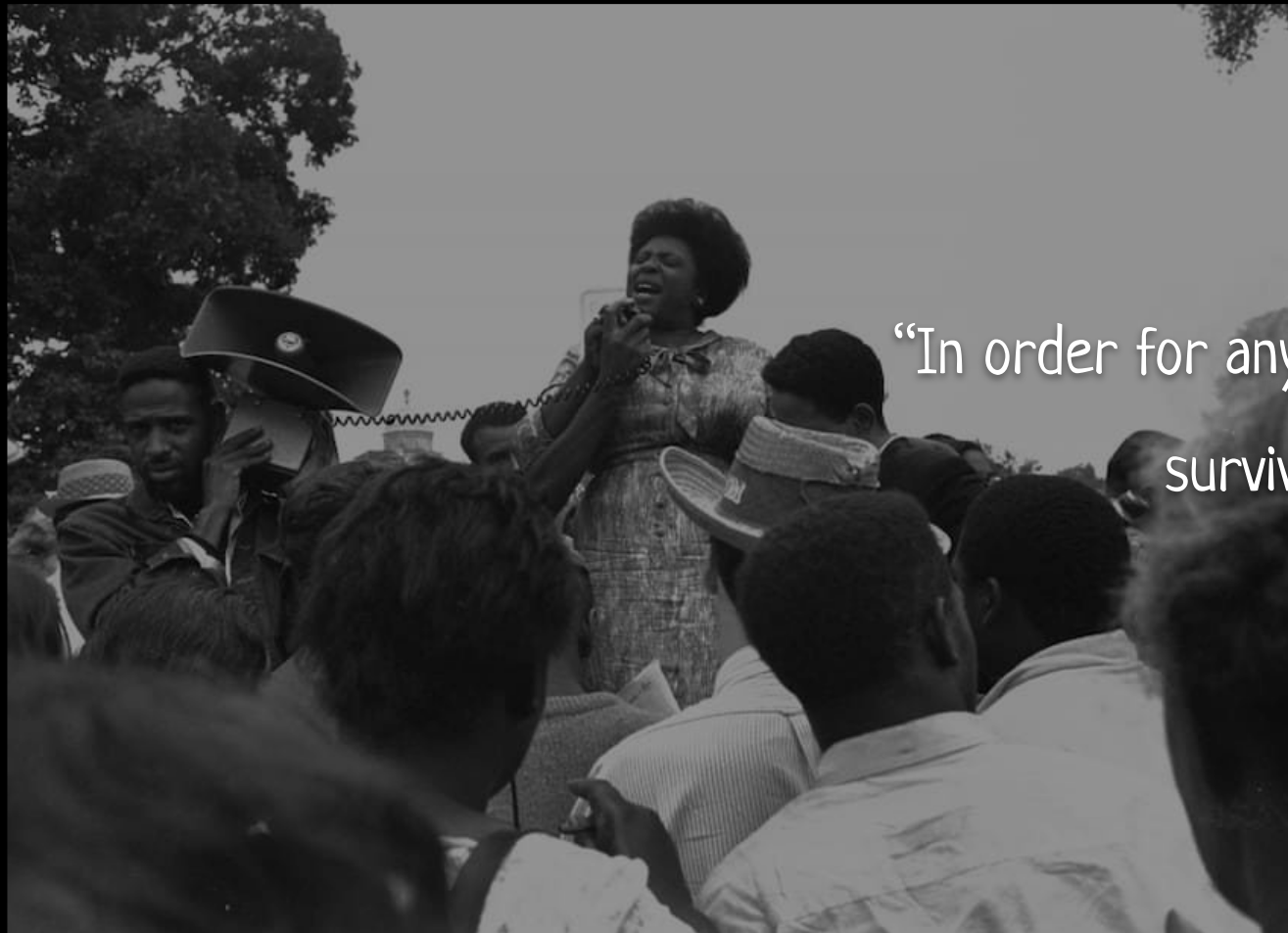
“The love you have for the land is unreal...
and I want this land back”.

June Provost



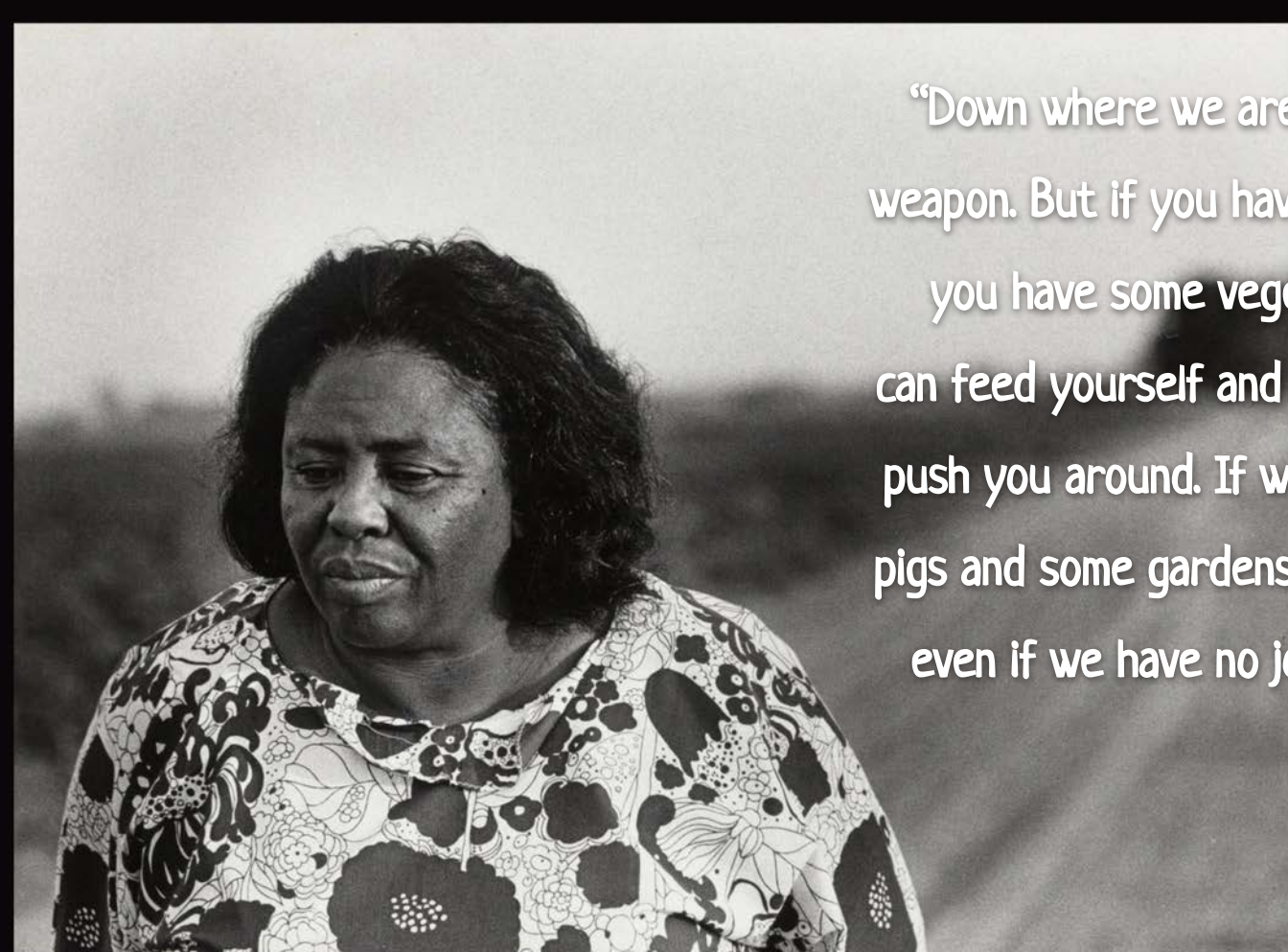
**“The oppression of slavery, land
tenancy, and sharecropping is
but one part of the story.”**

(White, 2018, p. 61)



“In order for any people or nation to survive, land is necessary”

-Fannie Lou Hamer



“Down where we are, food is used as a political weapon. But if you have a pig in your backyard, if you have some vegetables in your garden, you can feed yourself and your family, and nobody can push you around. If we have something like some pigs and some gardens and a few things like that, even if we have no jobs, we can eat and we can look after our families”.

-Fannie Lou Hamer

DIMENSION ONE:

Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries

IS FOOD A POLITICAL WEAPON?

Staging the Compelling Question

Begin with a class read aloud of the book *Every Human Has Rights: A Photographic Declaration for Kids* published by National Geographic. The teacher can start by discussing the cover of the text and ask students what they know about human rights. What are human rights? Why do we have them? Do kids have human rights? What happens if your rights are violated by your country? The inquiry unit should begin reading and pause on right #25 “you have the right to food, shelter, and health care”. The teacher should pause and discuss with students what it means that you have the right to food? Do they agree or disagree with that statement? What is the government's role in making sure that every person has enough to eat?

Supporting Question 1

What is the history of African Americans and the land?

Supporting Question 2

*What is a farm cooperative?
What impact did cooperatives have on Black farmers?*

Supporting Question 3

Who was Fannie Lou Hamer? How did she create change in her community?



Geography

“... Developing a sense of place lets children know that they belong in the physical world around them and in the social and cultural world they share with others”

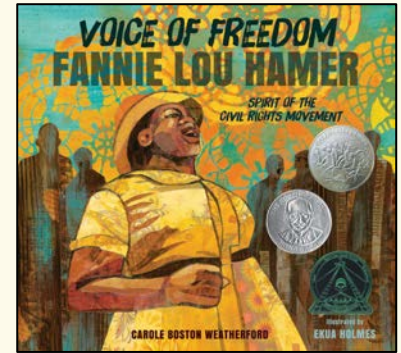
(Brilliante & Mankiw, 2015, p. 3)



Economics

“The discipline of economics is not primarily about memorizing items... it’s about empowering people to make thoughtful choices”

(Gallagher & Hodges, 2010, p. 15)



Critical Race Theory

(Bell, 1992; Delgado, 1989, Harris, 1994; Ladson-Billings & Tate. 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Tyson & Howard, 2004)

Counterstorytelling (Matsuda, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002)



A method of telling stories that aims to challenge the validity of the master narrative or myths held by the majority by centering the knowledge and experiences of communities of Color.

Critique of liberalism (Crenshaw, 1988)

Critique of notions such as color blindness, meritocracy, and neutrality of the law.



Whiteness as property (Harris, 1995)

Because of the history of race/racism in the U.S., the notion of whiteness can be considered a property interest.



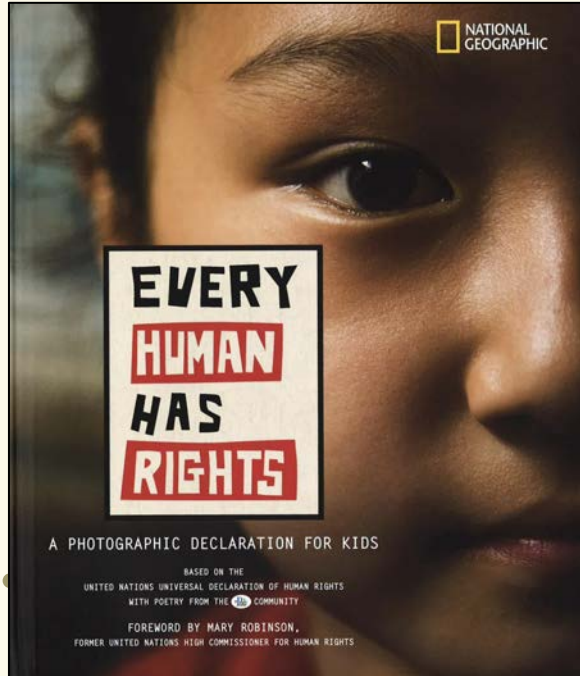
Critical Race Theory

(Bell, 1992; Delgado, 1989, Harris, 1994; Ladson-Billings & Tate. 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Tyson & Howard, 2004)

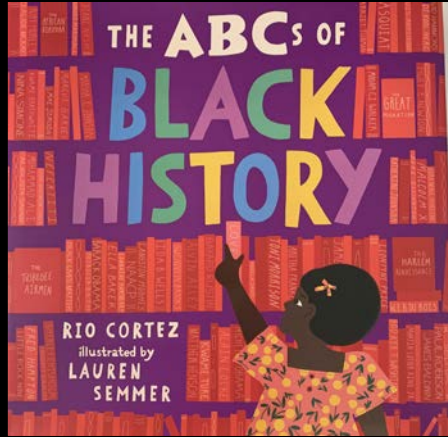
Economic Themes	NCSS- The College, Career, and Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies Standards
<p>Slavery and the Economy</p>	<p>Economic Decision Making D2.Eco.2.3-5. Identify positive and negative incentives that influence the decisions people make.</p> <p>Exchange and Markets D2.Eco.3.3-5. Identify examples of the variety of resources (human capital, physical capital, and natural resources) that are used to produce goods and services.</p>
<p>Sharecropping and Slavery in the context of wage earning</p>	<p>Economic Decision Making D2.Eco.2.K-2. Identify the benefits and costs of making various personal decisions.</p> <p>Economic Decision Making D2.Eco.1.3-5. Compare the benefits and costs of individual choices.</p> <p>Exchange and Markets D2.Eco.3.3-5. Identify examples of the variety of resources (human capital, physical capital, and natural resources) that are used to produce goods and services.</p>

Geography Themes	NCSS- The College, Career, and Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies Standards
<p>Blacks living in rural, urban and suburban contexts</p>	<p>Human-Environment Interaction: Place, Regions, and Culture D2.Geo.5.K-2. Describe how human activities affect the cultural and environmental characteristics of places or regions.</p> <p>Human-Environment Interaction: Place, Regions, and Culture D2.Geo.4.3-5. Explain how culture influences the way people modify and adapt to their environments.</p> <p>Human-Environment Interaction: Place, Regions, and Culture D2.Geo.5.3-5. Explain how the cultural and environmental characteristics of places change over time.</p> <p>Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movements D2.Geo.7.K-2. Explain why and how people, goods, and ideas move from place to place.</p> <p>Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movements D2.Geo.7.3-5. Explain how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the distribution and movement of people, goods, and ideas.</p>
<p>Black farmers, sharecroppers, and farm cooperatives</p>	<p>Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movements D2.Geo.7.K-2. Explain why and how people, goods, and move from place to place.</p>
<p>Segregation, integration, environmental justice movement</p>	<p>Human-Environment Interaction: Place, Regions, and Culture D2.Geo.5.K-2. Describe how human activities affect the cultural and environmental characteristics of places or regions.</p> <p>Human-Environment Interaction: Place, Regions, and Culture D2.Geo.4.3-5. Explain how culture influences the way people modify and adapt to their environments.</p> <p>Human-Environment Interaction: Place, Regions, and Culture D2.Geo.5.3-5. Explain how the cultural and environmental characteristics of places change over time.</p>

Staging the Compelling Question



- What are human rights? Why do we have them?
- Do kids have human rights?
- What happens if your rights are violated by your country?
- What does it mean that you have the right to food?
- What is the government's role in making sure that every person has enough to eat?



SQ1: What is the history of African Americans and the land?



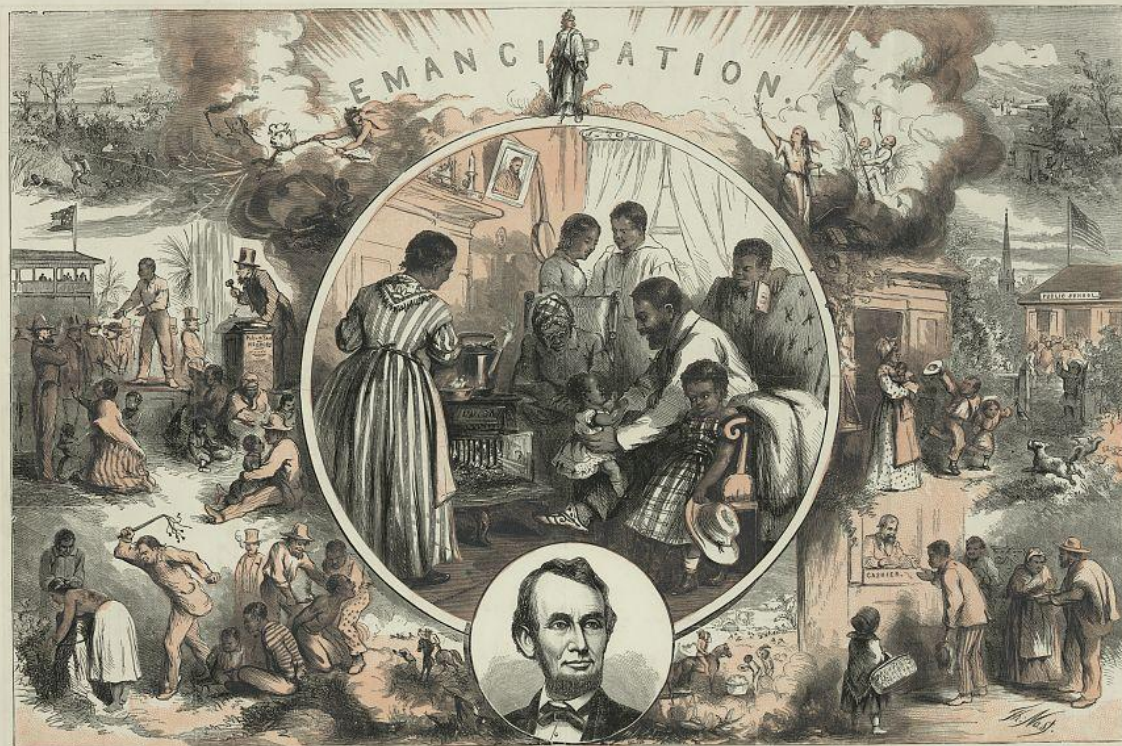
*Cotton field, Retreat Plantation, Port Royal
Island, S.C. / Photographed by Hubbard & Mix,
Beaufort, S.C
Library of Congress*



103701

The First cotton-gin / drawn
by William L. Sheppard.
1869 Dec. 18.
Library of Congress

THE FIRST COTTON-GIN.—DRAWN BY WILLIAM L. SHEPPARD.—[SEE PAGE 814.]



King & Baird, Printers, 607 Sansom Street, Philadelphia.

Engraved according to Act of Congress, in the year 1865, by J. W. CHESTNUT, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Published by S. BOTT, No. 43 South Third Street, Philadelphia, Penna.

Emancipation / Th. Nast ; King & Baird, printers, 607 Sansom Street, Philadelphia.

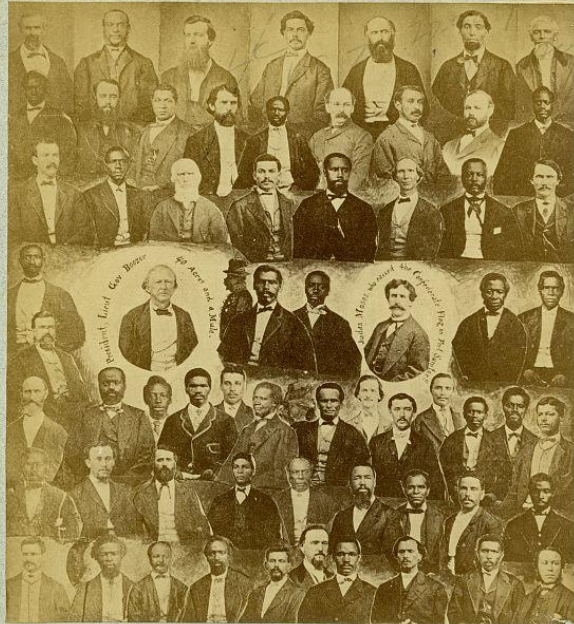
Published by S. Bott, no. 43 South Third Street, Philadelphia, Penna., c1865.

RADICAL MEMBERS

OF THE FIRST LEGISLATURE AFTER THE WAR

SOUTH

CAROLINA



- | | | | | | | |
|------------|-----------|---------|---------|------------|------------|----------|
| Dusenberry | Mayes | Demars | Rivers | Mitelord | Smith | Swails |
| McKibay | Jilson | Brodie | Duncan | White | Pottongill | Percin |
| Dickson | Lomax | Hayes | BOOZER | Barton | Hyde | James |
| Wilder | Jackson | Cain | Smythe | Boston | Lee | Johnston |
| Hoyt | Thomas | Maxwell | Wright | Shrowsbury | Simons | Wimbush |
| Randolph | Webb | Martin | MOSES | Mickey | Chesnut | Hayes |
| Harris | Bozenian | Cook | Sancho | Henderson | McDaniel | Farr |
| | Tomlinson | Miller | Sanders | Hovall | Williams | Meade |
| | Wright * | | Nuckles | Hayne | Gardner | Thompson |

* Afterwards associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the State



Radical members of the first legislature after the war, South Carolina 1876
Library of Congress



*The Union as it was The lost
cause, worse than slavery //
Th. Nast
1874
Library of Congress*

How easily wicked and treasonable organizations may gain the control over the peaceable and the industrious members of society has always been signally apparent at the South. A

Tennessee, venture even to denounce the murderers or the violators of the laws; or if any Northern journal, roused to a proper indignation by the wrongs inflicted upon peaceable settlers

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“The slave went free; stood for a brief moment
in the sun; and then moved again toward
slavery.”

- W. E. B. DUBOIS

“Borne down by ever-increasing debts, trapped by a legal system which severely restricted their every movement, weakened by malnutrition and disease, and violently denied access to legal relief, black tenant farmers labored under a weight of oppression which offered virtually no escape.”

(Hinson & Robinson, 2018, p. 288)



Lee, Russell, 1903-1986,
photographer
Created / Published
1940 Feb.
Library of Congress



Negro tenant farmer family.
Greene County, Georgia. June,
1941.
Library of Congress



Old Negro farmer and his grandson,
near Greensboro, Alabama
1941
Library of Congress

FROM THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA COMES A CHALLENGE TO ALL AMERICANS...

NSF brings help

In the Southeastern United States, the National Sharecroppers Fund focuses on the one-third of the population which makes up the "hard-core" rural poor. *With help, many of these people can live satisfying and useful lives on the land.*

- NSF's field staff brings information about available government aid programs, helps prepare individual applications, overcomes processing delays, secures review of unjustified denials.
- It helps to build truly representative local groups to seek federal aid for new small rural industry and area improvement projects.
- It aids in organizing cooperative groups for farm tool ownership and produce marketing.
- NSF's grass-roots conferences bring rural people together with government and private agency representatives to exchange information, spread knowledge of successful techniques, and encourage local planning. At these conferences the people with problems confront the people with power.
- NSF's representation to government agencies assists understanding and review of individual applications and local projects, supplies liaison between officials and newly-developing local leadership, and stimulates new approaches to meeting the problems of the rural neediest.
- NSF's cooperation with other organizations brings the experience, strength, and goodwill of church, labor, and civic groups to bear on these problems.
- NSF's public education service publishes pamphlets and reports, furnishes background material for writers, editors, and commentators, and supplies speakers for church, student, and other groups.



we must do more

The quickening pace of rural displacement and the resulting urban disorganization of uprooted families make it urgent that NSF do much more before it is too late. *Your support will make this possible.*

let's face this fact

From Southern voter registration drives and student sit-ins, the Negro march for human freedom has surged on to Northern picket lines and demonstrations for equality in jobs and housing. Now the whole country must face up to the responsibility it has ignored. *But the starting point remains the rural South.*

Mechanization, land concentration, and improved food processing are bringing our bountiful farm product to market from fewer farms with ever fewer farm workers. It is not enough to say these people are no longer needed to grow the food and fiber to feed and clothe the nation. *A more creative alternative must be found to forcing them off the land and out of the South.*

Many of these low-income farm workers, sharecroppers, and tenant farmers—with their families—would remain in the South if they had job opportunities and the training to fill the jobs, if they were given credit assistance to own and improve their houses on their own few acres, and if they were treated with human dignity. *Their plight should be first on the agenda of the unfinished American Revolution.*

Is the only answer from this . . .



to this?



NATIONAL SHARECROPPERS FUND

The National Sharecroppers Fund is a non-profit, voluntary organization which has worked for over twenty-five years to bring economic and social justice to sharecroppers, tenant farmers, migrant workers, and other low-income farm families throughout America.

It has initiated or financially supported pioneering projects in the fields of farm labor organization, migrant education, and cooperative rural housing and farm machinery ownership. It has pressed to end the exclusion of migrant and other seasonal farm workers from minimum wage, unemployment insurance, child labor, and other social legislation which protects most other American workers. It has assisted rural persons who have suffered because of their participation in the civil rights struggle. Through the National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor, it cooperates with 32 other national groups on problems affecting low-income farm families.

NSF, through its educational program, seeks to create an informed public opinion on the social and economic problems of America's rural people.

Your contribution will help to carry on this work.

NATIONAL SHARECROPPERS FUND

112 East 19th Street, New York 3, N. Y.

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SQ3: Who was Fannie Lou Hamer? How did she create change in her community?



sunflower county, mississippi

Minister Malcolm X once called me
the country's number one freedom-fighting woman.
But nothing about my beginnings would make you think
anyone beyond these parts would ever hear my name.
Mississippi. I was born here —
the youngest of twenty children.

My folks, James and Lou Ella Townsend,
was sharecroppers in Sunflower County in the Delta,
where the soil was as rich as black folks was poor,
where cotton was king and Jim Crow the law.

When I was born, on October 6, 1917, the plantation owner
paid my mother fifty dollars for producing a future field hand.
The money helped my family through the winter.
Chile, I am proof that the Delta birthed the blues.

SQ3: Who was Fannie Lou Hamer? How did she create change in her community?

Fair

School was open four months —
December through March — when children
were not needed to tend cotton.
I liked school even if black history was left out
and the textbooks made blacks seem like fools.
I recited poetry and won many a spelling bee.

Fair.

May I have a definition?

Free of bias, dishonest and injustice.

Fair. F-A-I-R. Fair.

I sang, too, up through sixth grade,
and then left to work full-time in the fields.

My family needed every hand if we were ever to break even.
At thirteen years old, I picked three hundred pounds a week.
But I missed my schoolbooks. I gathered newspaper scraps
along the roadside and magazines from the plantation's trash
just to have something, anything, to read. I was so hungry to learn.
My mother drilled this into me. *When you read*, she said,
you know — and you can help yourself and others.

Not much food and rarely meat on our table —
often greens with gravy or onions with bread or cornmeal.
Neighbors gave my mother chitlins, pigs' feet,
and hog heads for helping with the slaughter.
Our beds were cotton sacks stuffed with corn shucks and grass.
We had no electricity, heat, or plumbing, and no money
for a doctor to look after whatever
caused this limp or to save my mother's sight
when a wood chip hit her eye.

Once, my father managed to buy a wagon, plow, three mules —
Ella, Bird, and Henry — and two cows, Mullen and Della.
But a white neighbor poisoned the livestock.
Just couldn't stand to see black people getting ahead.
That knocked us right back down
to doggone, dirt-poor doing-without.
My parents never did get a chance to get up again.
I sure did miss Della's milk.



SQ3: Who was Fannie Lou Hamer? How did she create change in her community?



*Negro farmers at soil
conservation meeting at
Vernon, Oklahoma
Lee, Russell, 1903-1986,
photographer
1940 Feb.
Library of Congress*



Not Everyone could Move up North

Hardship after hardship
wore my father down.
By the time I was twenty-two,
we had buried him.
Most of my brothers and sisters
moved up north, hoping
for higher pay and a better life.
I can't blame them.
Jim Crow chokes every chance
a black man gets down here.
Who wouldn't long
for something better?

I might have gone, too,
but my mother needed care.
I couldn't bear the thought of her
in some nursing home.
She was in her eighties, nearly blind
and worn down by hard work,
when she moved in with me.
Sometimes I read to her.
Other times, I'd hear her singing.
*Songs that would really sink down in me,
powerful message songs.*
I never regretted staying behind.

Not a single minute, not a single note.



"...Very few people appreciate that the African Americans in those communities did not go there as immigrants looking for new economic opportunities,

THEY WENT THERE AS REFUGEES FROM TERROR"

—Bryan Stevenson

The Freedom Farm Cooperative

(White, 2018, p. 72)

1
Building affordable,
clean, and safe housing



2
Creating an entrepreneurial clearinghouse- a small business incubator that would provide resources for new business owners and retraining for those with limited educational skills but with agricultural knowledge and manual labor experience.

3
Developing an agricultural cooperative that would meet the food and nutritional needs of the county's most vulnerable.



NO RESI

Summer of 1968, I sat at the Democratic National Convention
in Chicago as part of the Loyalist delegation,
what was formed to crush the Freedom Democrats.
Still, I let my voice be heard — for aid to farmers
and against the war in Vietnam.
I was weary as an old soldier,
but I couldn't rest — no, I couldn't.
Not as long as blacks was poor,
schools was segregated,
and black teachers was discriminated against.
Not as long as laws be holding women back.
One day an old white man told me
he appreciated me doing what he was afraid to do.
Ain't no telling how long he'd wanted change.
He could not be free until I was free.

I had always believed:
We serve God by serving our fellow man.

And no child should know what hunger is.
So I started a Freedom Farm,
a pig bank, and a Head Start program,
and I help folks living in shacks
get 'hold of government housing loans.
I mind a lot of pots. I given my two cents
to the women's liberation movement.
I won a lawsuit against Sunflower County
to integrate the public schools.
And I lost a bid for state senate in 1971.
The outcome was rigged against me.
But fifty-five blacks was elected in Mississippi
that year — a record for a southern state.
And in 1976, the Congressional Black Caucus,
made up of black congresspeople,
given me a lifelong service award.

Maybe I had won after all.



“...have a stake in it; they are not relying on handouts; they are enhancing their own dignity and freedom by learning that they can feed themselves through their own efforts”

1968 REPORT BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR NEGRO WOMEN



Black Farmers protest outside the U.S. District Courthouse prior to a hearing on their class action lawsuit against the Department of Agriculture.

John Francis Ficara



Allen Gooden, cattle farmer

John Francis Ficara



Rosa Murphy, in her late '80s, continues to do light work in her fields.

John Francis Ficara

*"...reconnecting with the land as a strategy of self-determination and self-sufficiency"
(White, 2018).*

“A revolution is based on land. Land is the basis of all independence. Land is the basis of freedom, justice, and equality... A revolutionary wants land so he can set up his own nation, an independent nation.”

-MALCOLM X



A New Generation of Black Farmers Is Returning to the Land

📄 Why you can trust us

LEAH
BY PENNIMAN

🕒 6 MIN READ

NOV 19, 2019



Environmental Justice Movement

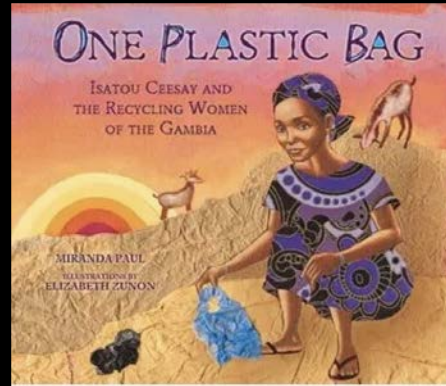
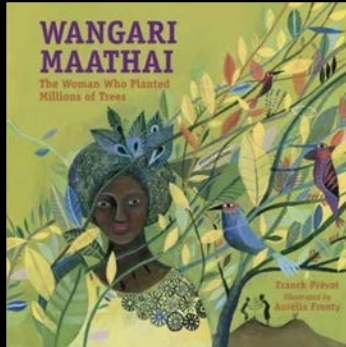
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT



Rep. Ihan Omar (D-MN) introduces her daughter, 16-year-old Hira, during the International Youth Climate Strike, on March 15, 2019. Hira is a co-organizer of the event. | J. Scott Applewhite/AP



Mari Copeny, 8, sits on her mother's lap as they wait outside a House Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing on the Flint water crisis, on March 17, 2016. | Andrew Hamik/AP



Thank you!

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 @DrMandaLizVick

