Chapter
10

How Should Teachers Teach Controversial History?

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Should Historical Thinking Become Everyday Thinking?		
C3 Disciplinary Focus History	**C3 Inquiry Focus** Evaluating sources and using evidence	**Content Topic** Controversial History

C3 Focus Indicators

D1: Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources. (D1.5.9-12.)

D2: Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts. (D2.His.1.9-12.)

D3: Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection. (D3.1.9-12.)

D4: Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary). (D4.3.9-12.)

Grade Level 9-12	**Resources** Resources cited in this chapter.	**Time Required** Approx. 2-4 days

> *We do not know who we are unless we have an understanding of our past.* (Ankersmit, 2001, p.1)

The adage that history is written by the winners can be seen in textbooks from around the world. Every generation has seen political motives written in the school curriculum, depending on which political spectrum oversees the state's education (Urist, 2015, pp. 2-8). This is the very reason why teachers must show all sides of history. It is imperative that we teach students to understand the idea of truth by using facts and evidence. This chapter will examine how this idea of truth can be confusing, depending on society's perception, using the idea that although Abraham Lincoln was one of the best presidents of our history, he did not want equality (Lincoln, 1858, n.p.). This is one of many tough lessons history students will question in history class. Students may not understand how the history of America is a progressive one, yet so repetitive. Controversial history includes the detrimental actions our American government took to advance its nation. This history is controversial because some believe it to be true, while others believe it to be necessary. These two different perceptions can clash in the classroom. Should students admire, despise, or feel sorrow when learning about controversial topics of history? Teachers may want to teach students how to look at history through the cultural and political perspectives of the times to help their students understand how history can become so controversial. By teaching students to think for themselves, they can decide how they want to view the history of the United States.

When trying to define *controversial history*, the Southern Poverty Law Center explains: "We the people…are uncomfortable with the implications [slavery] raises about the past as well as the present" (Jeffries, 2018, n.p.). Gross and Terra (2018) talk about difficult history in "What makes difficult history difficult?"

> All modern nation-states have periods of what we call difficult history, periods that reverberate in the present and surface fundamental disagreements over who we are and what values we hold… Educators are sometimes reluctant to tackle these difficult histories in the classroom—and when they do, their instruction may be inadequate. (n.p.)

Professor Peter Seixas, a retired professor from the University of British Columbia, explains the thought process that historians use when looking at controversial history, calling it the *ethical dimensions:*

> Part has to do with the ethical judgments we make about historical actions. This creates a difficult paradox. Taking historical perspective demands that we understand the differences between our ethical universe and those of bygone societies. We do not want to impose our own anachronistic standards

> on the past. At the same time, meaningful history does not treat brutal slaveholders, enthusiastic Nazis, and marauding conquistadors in a "neutral" manner. Historians attempt to hold back on explicit ethical judgments about actors in the midst of their accounts, but, when all is said and done, if the story is meaningful, then there is an ethical judgment involved. We should expect to learn something from the past that helps us to face the ethical issues of today. (The Historical Thinking Project, 2014, n.p.)

Teachers need to realize that the injustices of the past are often compared to the injustices of today. Teachers can help students understand the "ethical dimension of history" that Seixas mentions above. Are people today responsible for actions of the past? This is a great discussion to have with students before talking about controversial history topics. Further in the chapter the reader will discover resources that will help teachers to include this inquiry in their controversial history lessons.

Classroom Conversational Context

As teachers of secondary history, we must remind ourselves why teachers do this job in the first place. History teachers have a huge job ahead, especially when it comes to difficult narratives of history. A teacher's reaction to the student body can affect how the students react. Teachers need to leave their own bias at home and model open-mindedness in the classroom. It is important that your classroom has a respectable environment, where students feel safe and comfortable saying things that may not be popular. Respect should be heard and seen in the classroom by teachers coaching students on how to listen to and respect their peers. Many times, these tough topics can turn into heated debates in the classroom. If the teacher does not know how to guide students to a productive discussion, students may leave the class with a confused understanding of the tough topic. The climate of the classroom is important. The environment matters and needs to be conducive to discussions of these issues.

When students engage in a controversial history discussion or debates in the classroom, they need to know that their voice matters. History teachers have the passion to explore history and its impact on our world. This passion will motivate students to ask questions, helping the class dig deeper into the causes and effects, learning what is not immediately apparent. Teaching students to look at events through the eyes of the participants will help them understand what is happening in that environment, and this chapter will cover how to do this.

Supporting Student Inquiry of Controversial Issues

Assumptions about history can be guided by a student's or a teacher's background, their surroundings, and their personal beliefs. Classroom participants, including students and teachers, unconsciously judge what they learn. They, like most people, have made decisions using previous experiences. What classroom participants learn about the past not only comes from the classroom, but also from both family and friends. When participants arrive in the history classroom, they have many ideas that may be confirmed or challenged. "By understanding the rich but problematic visual knowledge, beliefs, and habits that students bring to the history classroom, we can develop new and more effective strategies to help students learn historical content and reasoning" (Coventry et al., 2006, p. 1386). Classroom participants' daily cultural practices could hinder them from understanding the impact of a controversial history topic. It is very important that teachers support their students in their decision making. One way to help students analyze pieces of history and support a narrative is by teaching students to practice historical thinking skills. When students use these skills, they will be more apt to make educated decisions about controversial history. Once students learn how to think historically, they can look for common ideas that will link one event with others. Skills such as historical thinking will be discussed later in this chapter.

Maxwell (2019) suggests the idea of the feedback loop in social studies learning, saying "knowledge and thinking form a positive feedback loop in which knowledge begets thinking that begets more knowledge that begets more thinking, and so on. In this way, both knowledge and thinking can advance over time" (p. 291). The more analysis students are encouraged to do regarding a historical event, the more this will lead them to knowledgeable avenues, hopefully helping them come up with viable conclusions about the event. Teachers need to encourage students to question what they have learned, leading them back to the original questions asked. This loop will cause students to dig deeper into the story's narrative, looking for clues to support the constant looping. "Regardless of your topic, whether you chose from local, national or world history, no matter what time period, do not forget to answer the most important question: SO WHAT?" (Gorn, 2020, p. 6). Historical narratives are sometimes hard for students to grasp. As seen later in this chapter, using reliable analysis tools such as the Library of Congress Teaching Tools or the Stanford History Education Group's Historical Thinking Chart, students will learn how to master this Maxwell's loop and use historical thinking skills to make educated decisions about history.

The history of the United States has bred both justice and injustice, from the removal of Native Americans to the Civil Rights Movement.

> When historians remember that every human has faults and makes mistakes, they are more likely to be compassionate in their study of historical actors, and this compassion translates into everyday life; actors in our own time are equally imperfect, and equally worthy of respect and dignity. (Almutawa, 2015, n.p.)

When teaching about justice, teachers and students need to understand that the definition may differ between communities, based on their own history. For example, a White woman may not have experienced any racial injustice, but she may have experienced injustice based on her sex. The last phrase in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, "to petition the Government for a redress of grievances" (U.S. Constitution, 1787), allows citizens of the United States the opportunity to challenge the meaning of justice.

How Should We Talk About Controversial Issues?

Students bring in pre-conceived notions about controversial topics of history (Saunders & Wong, 2020, n.p.). They need to learn to unpack these notions before controversial discussions in the classroom. Facing History and Ourselves has a publication for teachers on this topic called *Fostering Civil Discourse*. They encourage teachers to

1. Start with yourself
2. Build community and trust
3. Facilitate reflective conversations
4. Debrief as a class

> At the end of a discussion, take time to reflect with your students on their experience of discussing the topic and what new insights they gained from the conversation. Your students can use this time to process their emotional responses to the conversation and provide you with valuable feedback about what went well and what could be improved. (Facing History and Ourselves, n.d., p. 2)

All teachers should read *Fostering Civil Discourse* before teaching about controversial topics in the classroom. Teachers should also consider what topics from this reading they feel comfortable using in the classroom. For example, question one mentions "privilege." Depending on the school environment, teachers may need to change the wording to this question: "Is there anything that has happened in your life that helps you to understand another person's view?" Also, starting students off with the history of injustice in America before talking about controversial topics can help students understand America's history of justice and injustice and how this has changed drastically over time.

Historical Thinking With Early Injustice (Dimensions 2 & 3)

Teaching the history of injustice in the United States can be contentious, but it needs to be done so students understand the historical context. Demonstrating how to interpret historical documents is imperative when discussing the past and current controversial events. Students often look at historical events through the lens of today. While many injustices are still happening today, they happen in different ways. Hypothesizing why a historical event happened and why it occurred during that time period helps students use their critical thinking to learn about historical events.

Historical Thinking Activity With Early Injustices

After students read about an event in history, they need to look at the documents of that event. These documents can be primary and secondary sources created at the time of the event. Once the teacher has chosen what documents they want to use for their history lesson, they can look to the Stanford History Education Group's (SHEG) *Reading like a Historian* chart that shows students how to think like a historian. Teachers can use SHEG's *Historical Thinking Chart* (Figure 1) to help students ask questions about the documents they are looking at. The *Library of Congress Teacher's Guides and Analysis Tools* (e.g., Figure 2) also help to walk students through the historical thinking process when working with primary sources.

Figure 1. *Historical Thinking Chart*

HISTORICAL THINKING CHART

Historical Reading Skills	Questions	Students should be able to . . .	Prompts
Sourcing	• Who wrote this? • What is the author's perspective? • When was it written? • Where was it written? • Why was it written? • Is it reliable? Why? Why not?	• Identify the author's position on the historical event • Identify and evaluate the author's purpose in producing the document • Hypothesize what the author will say before reading the document • Evaluate the source's trustworthiness by considering genre, audience, and purpose	• The author probably believes . . . • I think the audience is . . . • Based on the source information, I think the author might . . . • I do/don't trust this document because . . .
Contextualization	• When and where was the document created? • What was different then? What was the same? • How might the circumstances in which the document was created affect its content?	• Understand how context/ background information influences the content of the document • Recognize that documents are products of particular points in time	• Based on the background information, I understand this document differently because . . . • The author might have been influenced by _____ (historical context) . . . • This document might not give me the whole picture because . . .
Corroboration	• What do other documents say? • Do the documents agree? If not, why? • What are other possible documents? • What documents are most reliable?	• Establish what is probable by comparing documents to each other • Recognize disparities between accounts	• The author agrees/disagrees with . . . • These documents all agree/ disagree about . . . • Another document to consider might be . . .
Close Reading	• What claims does the author make? • What evidence does the author use? • What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the author use to persuade the document's audience? • How does the document's language indicate the author's perspective?	• Identify the author's claims about an event • Evaluate the evidence and reasoning the author uses to support claims • Evaluate author's word choice; understand that language is used deliberately	• I think the author chose these words in order to . . . • The author is trying to convince me . . . • The author claims . . . • The evidence used to support the author's claims is . . .

STANFORD HISTORY EDUCATION GROUP SHEG.STANFORD.EDU

Note. From Stanford History Education Group. https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/historical-thinking-chart

Figure 2. ***Analyzing Primary Sources***

TEACHER'S GUIDE
ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

OBSERVE · REFLECT · QUESTION

Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. **Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.**

OBSERVE

Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

What do you notice first? · Find something small but interesting. · What do you notice that you didn't expect? · What do you notice that you can't explain? · What do you notice now that you didn't earlier?

REFLECT

Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

Where do you think this came from? · Why do you think somebody made this? · What do you think was happening when this was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this item? · What tool was used to create this? · Why do you think this item is important? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What can you learn from examining this?

QUESTION

Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...

who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

A few follow-up activity ideas:

Beginning
Have students compare two related primary source items.

Intermediate
Have students expand or alter textbook explanations of history based on primary sources they study.

Advanced
Ask students to consider how a series of primary sources support or challenge information and understanding on a particular topic. Have students refine or revise conclusions based on their study of each subsequent primary source.

For more tips on using primary sources, go to
http://www.loc.gov/teachers

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS | LOC.gov/teachers

Note. From Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides/

Using the analysis tools above, teachers may start by looking into the definition of *justice* as defined by the Founding Fathers, answering the essential question: "Did the founding fathers believe in justice for all?" For example, starting with the U.S. Constitution, teachers can help students dismantle the Preamble into their own meaning, leading students into a discussion contrasting justice and injustice. Students will bring in their own experiences, and the "ethical dimension of history" (The Historical Thinking Project, 2014, n.p.), as mentioned earlier in this chapter, will need to be addressed. It should be brought to the attention of the students that while they are trying to learn and understand history, they are at the same time making decisions based on their own personal experiences. Teachers may want to have students use the historical thinking skills mentioned above for each of the following primary sources before discussing the injustices found in controversial history. Below is an example lesson using the Preamble and the Library of Congress's Analysis Tool. This activity can be broken down into smaller activities depending on the time constraints of the teacher.

Step 1.

Give each student in the class a copy of the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution and a copy of the *Primary Source Analysis Tool* from the Library of Congress. If possible, supply a magnifying glass for each student to examine the source in detail.

Step 2.

Using the *Library of Congress Teacher's Guide: Analyzing Books & Other Printed Texts*, ask questions to start a discussion which can lead to a written inquiry. Ask students to first observe:

- Describe what you see.
- What do you notice first?
- Is there any text you can read? What does it say?
- Describe anything you see on the page besides words, such as images or decorations.
- How is the text and other information arranged on the page?
- Describe anything about this text that looks strange or unfamiliar.
- What other details can you see?

Have an in-depth discussion about the *observe* questions. Then move on to the *reflect* questions:

- What was the purpose of this text?
- Who created it?
- Who do you think was its audience?
- Can you tell anything about what was important at the time it was made?
- What tools and materials were used to create it?
- What is the larger story or context within which this was printed?
- What can you learn from examining this?
- If someone created this today, what would be different?

After another in-depth discussion about the document, move to the *question* phase of the inquiry:

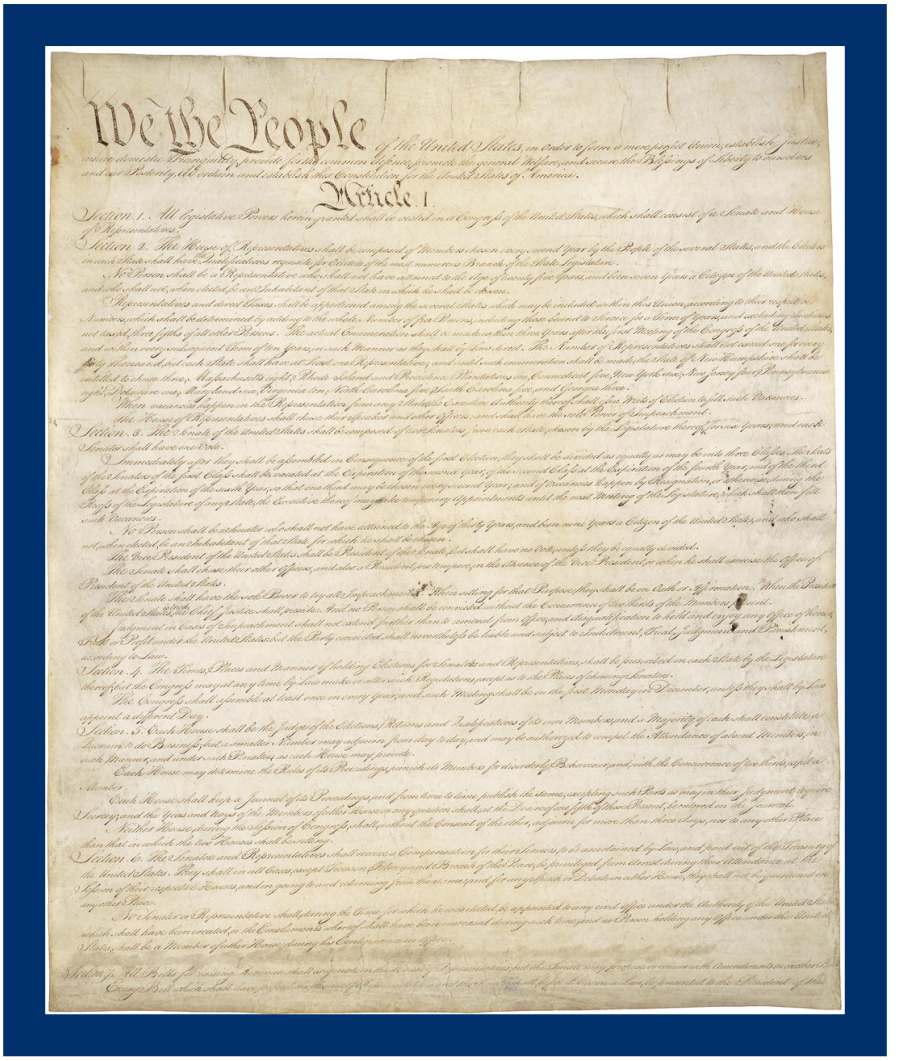
- What do you wonder about...who? what? when? where? why? how?

Finally, bring the document full circle by answering some of the questions that the students have.

Depending on the level of students, the teacher should choose the question(s) that they feel fit those students. When the discussion starts, other questions may arise to add to the list. Please note that depending on the level of students and the discussion that takes place, more time may need to be added to the discussion.

For developing learners, the teacher may want to modify the prompts provided on the historical thinking documents. The teacher can also modify (i.e., chunk) the source to only focus on a certain portion of the document, if they feel it is necessary for their students.

Figure 3. ***The Preamble of the Constitution***



Note. "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." Constitution of the United States. (1787). [Manuscript]. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/2021667573/

Reading the Preamble of the Constitution (Figure 3), the Founding Fathers seem to ensure individual rights, wanting to establish justice, tranquility, welfare, liberty, and posterity for American citizens. By looking at earlier documents from the Founding Fathers, one can infer that individual rights were important even before the Constitution was written. Early documents show that protecting individual rights was a form of justice in the colonies. When King George's Redcoats started violating colonists' individual rights, it was believed that justice needed to be served. Protecting these rights would lead the colonists to a Revolutionary War. In George Washington's letter to Congress, introducing the final draft of the U.S. Constitution, there is evidence showing Washington's beliefs regarding individual rights. He seems to insinuate that even though it might be very difficult to agree on what rights individuals should have, it is imperative that they exist. "It is at all times difficult to draw with precision the line between those rights…in which is involved our prosperity, felicity, safety—perhaps our national existence" (Washington, 1787). You can use this document with Step 2 of the inquiry, using just the Washington address or both documents to prove the concept of justice. These documents help lead us to examples of justice found in founding documents from United States.

Figure 4. ***The Boston Gazette, December 20, 1773***

BOSTON, *December* 20.

On Tuesday laſt the body of the people of this and all the adjacent towns, and others from the diſtance of twenty miles, aſſembled at the old ſouth meeting-houſe, to inquire the reaſon of the delay in ſending the ſhip Dartmouth, with the Eaſt-India Tea back to London; and having found that the owner had not taken the neceſſary ſteps for that purpoſe, they enjoin'd him at his peril to demand of the collector of the cuſtoms a clearance for the ſhip, and appointed a committee of ten to ſee it perform'd; after which they adjourn'd to the Thurſday following ten o'clock. They then met and being inform'd by Mr. Rotch, that a clearance was refus'd him, they enjoin'd him immediately to enter a proteſt and apply to the governor for a paſs port by the caſtle, and adjourn'd again till three o'clock for the ſame day. At which time they again met and after waiting till near ſunſet Mr. Rotch came in and inform'd them that he had accordingly enter'd his proteſt and waited on the governor for a paſs, but his excellency told him he could not conſiſtent with his duty grant it until his veſſel was qualified. The people finding all their efforts to preſerve the property of the Eaſt India company and return it ſafely to London, fruſtrated by the tea conſignees, the collector of the cuſtoms and the governor of the province, DISSOLVED their meeting.—BUT, BEHOLD what followed! A number of brave & reſolute men, determined to do all in their power to ſave their country from the ruin which their enemies had plotted, in leſs than four hours, emptied every cheſt of tea on board the three ſhips commanded by the captains Hall, Bruce, and Coffin, amounting to 342 cheſts, into the ſea!! without the leaſt damage done to the ſhips or any other property. The maſters and owners are well pleas'd that their ſhips are thus clear'd; and the people are almoſt univerſally congratulating each other on this happy event.

Note. *Boston, December 20*. (1773, December 20). [Broadside]. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.0370250a/

Teachers need to have students examine examples of injustices in early America, pointing out the dates of the documents. Students need to realize some of the documents mentioned here were created before the Constitution was even written. It is good for students to appreciate that the Declaration of Independence, The Revolutionary War, and the writing of the Constitution did not just happen overnight. Colonists felt injustice in the colonies for over a decade. Using the same methods mentioned in Step Two of the inquiry, students could look at other documents from the time. *The Boston Gazette* from December 20, 1773 (Figure 4) is a document that can be used in the classroom to demonstrate how citizens of the colonies reacted to what they felt was injustice, the taxing of their tea, which led to the Boston Tea Party. Teachers could have students read the newspaper article, looking for words or phrases that support the colonists' frustration with the tax.

This newspaper could be compared to the print *Destruction of tea at Boston Harbor* (Figure 5) dated 1846, created over 70 years later. Students could examine the print, looking for similarities or differences of the event at Boston Harbor, using SHEG's *Reading like a Historian* chart or the Library of Congress's Analysis Tool mentioned earlier.

Figure 5. ***Destruction of Tea at Boston Harbor***

Note. Currier, N. (1846). *Destruction of tea at Boston Harbor* [Lithograph]. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/91795889/

Step 3.

Now revisit the essential question: "Did the founding fathers believe in justice for all?" Have students research what happened during the Boston Tea party. Did the citizens revolt against the British? Were they confined by the British? This is a great segue into a lesson on the Founding Fathers and the start of the new United States.

The *Library of Congress Teacher's Guide: Analyzing Books & Other Printed Texts* helps students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation and to develop a research strategy for finding answers by asking: "What more do you want to know?" and "How can you find out?" Below are their suggested inquiry questions:

- *Beginning*: Have students choose a section of the text and put it in their own words.
- *Intermediate*: Look for clues to the point of view of the person, or people, who created this text. Discuss what someone with an opposing or differing point of view might say about the issues or events described in it. How would the information be presented differently?
- *Advanced:* Examine a section of the text. Think about what you already know about this period in history. How does the text support or contradict your current understanding of this period? Can you see any clues to the point of view of the person who created this text? (Library of Congress, n.d.-i)
- Whether students are *beginners*, *intermediate* or *advanced*, they can examine each documented participant at the Boston Tea Party. "The vast majority was of English descent, but men of Irish, Scottish, French, Portuguese, and African ancestry were documented to have also participated" (Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum, 2021, n.p.).

Teachers can use these types of inquiry questions for most of their history lessons. They are a good way to move to the high-order thinking level of a primary source. This activity, from step one to three, should take a few days; however, it can also be broken up to fit students' needs.

Throughout the history of America, individual rights have been very important. The events of injustice listed above would eventually lead these early Americans to include the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution. Students will learn about injustices throughout history class, but they also need to understand the concept of civil liberties, understanding the importance of individual rights and the limits on these rights. Civil liberties "ensure personal freedoms (individual rights) by putting limits on the governmental power while civil rights are when the government (ensures) protection of equal treatment" (OpenStax, 2016, n.p.).

Thinking Historically About Enslaved Americans (Dimensions 2 & 3)

One of the most important injustices in the early years of the United States is the enslavement of African Americans. Teachers can use the historical thinking skills above to help students understand the inhumane treatment of African Americans. Students need to empathize with enslaved peoples, trying to understand the horrors they faced in the United States.

Although there are many stories about injustice regarding enslaved peoples in America, the Middle Passage is one that will be discussed. Olaudah Equiano (1815), who was captured and enslaved as a boy in Africa and who later wrote an autobiography, recalled,

> When I looked round the ship too and saw a large furnace of copper boiling, and a multitude of black people of every description chained together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate and quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted…I asked if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces and long hair? (p. 51)

Students are able access to the entire book online, and it can be read as a class, or the teacher may feel that just reading parts of the gripping account will suffice.

Students should also study the abolitionists who worked to help free enslaved individuals, knowing however that some did not believe in equality of the two races.

> Although they often worked together, the relationship between black and white abolitionists was complex. Both groups hated slavery and fought for emancipation, but the struggle was much more personal for black abolitionists, who wanted not only their freedom but equal rights as well. Many white abolitionists, while decrying slavery, could not accept blacks as their equals (Public Broadcasting Service, n.d., n.p.).

The injustice of slavery prompted some abolitionists to act. A Quaker abolitionist, Isaac T. Hopper, helped organize a network that would help enslaved people on the run. During the time of the Underground Railroad, people known as "conductors" guided enslaved individuals escaping the Fugitive Slave Acts, which gave more power to apprehend and extradite freedom seekers even when they were in free states.

Levi Coffin, a 15-year-old from North Carolina led freedom seekers to hiding places while on their journey (A&E Television Networks, 2009). He continued to do this for most of his life. In 1836, Coffin wrote,

> I told them that I read in the Bible when I was a boy that it was right to take in the stranger and administer to those in distress, and that I thought it was always safe to do right. The Bible, in bidding us to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, said nothing about color, and I should try to follow out the teachings of that good book. I was willing to receive and aid as many fugitives as were disposed to come to my house….fugitives began to come to our house, and as it became more widely known on different routes that the slaves fleeing from bondage would find a welcome and shelter at our house, and be forwarded safely on their journey, the number increased. (pp. 107-108)

Teachers need to also bring in the African American perspective when teaching about the history of the abolition movement. "Through the use of narratives of people of color, teachers become aware of the existence and the harmful impact of racism—psychologically, emotionally, socially, professionally, academically, and fiscally" (Harmon, 2012, p. 16). African Americans like Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass helped bring light to the lives of enslaved peoples. Sojourner Truth's speech "Ain't I a Woman" (1851) reminds all that color should not matter:

> That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman? (n.p.)

Frederick Douglass also made a difference in the history of the abolition movement when he spoke on July 4 about the birth of freedom in the nation. In his speech, *What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?* Douglass (1852) reminds us that

> The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought life and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth [of] July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn. To drag a man in fetters into the grand illuminated temple of liberty, and call upon him to join you in joyous anthems, were inhuman mockery and sacrilegious irony. Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak today? (n.p.)

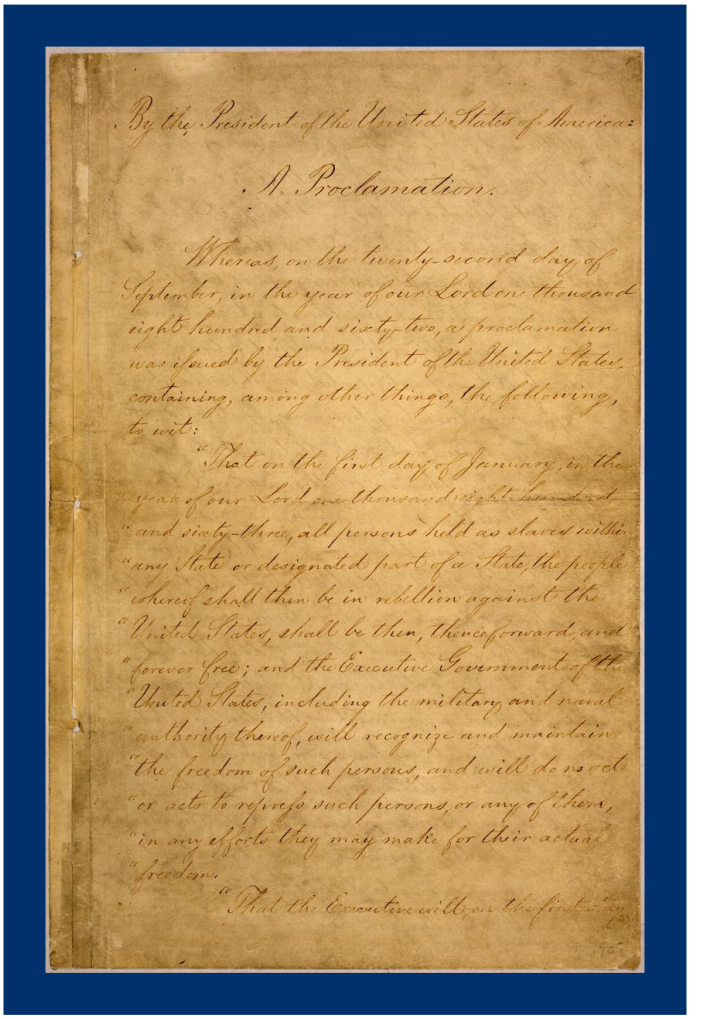
Simple quotations like those above can be wonderful discussion starters when it comes to speaking of the enslaved peoples of America. These people who spoke out against injustice need to be heard in the history classroom. Teachers can focus on these upstanders to encourage students to do the same in their own lives.

Another example of controversial history that may be seen as injustice is President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Students will discover that Lincoln's view on slavery would turn with the times. During his presidential bid in 1858, Lincoln debated with Stephen Douglas about the idea of enslaved people being equal:

> I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races [applause]—that I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people, and I will say in addition to this that there is physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will for ever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together, there must be the position of superior and inferior. I, as much as any other man, am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race. (n.p.)

Only five years later, Lincoln's ideas of enslaved people would change during the Civil War with his Emancipation Proclamation (Figure 6). Students need to investigate President Lincoln's motivation behind his Emancipation Proclamation. Having students investigate the events surrounding this historical document, they may discover that there is a different narrative to Lincoln's reasoning in writing this document. In the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln only freed the enslaved people in the states that had broken away from the Union.

Figure 6. ***The Emancipation Proclamation***



By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day

Note. "That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom." Lincoln, A. (1862). *Emancipation Proclamation* [Manuscript]. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/2021667576/

He was encouraged to free all the enslaved people by his party members who were abolitionists, but Lincoln's thoughts on this topic were much more strategic. Lincoln may have been focusing on the four border states: Missouri, Kentucky, Delaware, and Maryland. These states were "slave states" and had yet to break away from the South. If Lincoln freed all the enslaved people, these border states might also leave the Union (Elliott, n.d.). This implies that the Emancipation Proclamation was a strategy of war more than an abolitionist move. When students look at different narratives of the same event, they discover that

history is a complex account of the past that needs to be deeply analyzed, looking at all truths surrounding the event, in this case, emancipation.

Using historical thinking lessons provided by organizations like SHEG and LOC will help students analyze this time period and see that America's history was built on some injustice. Perhaps maybe the most important reason to have students learn about controversial history topics is that the meaningful conversations surrounding historical events can help create informed citizens. It is important for high school students to understand lessons from the past. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has some powerful words in their position statement: "Social studies teaching and learning are powerful when they are meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging, and active" (NCSS, 2016, pp. 180–182). Former NCSS president India Meissel (2018), wrote:

> It all begins with us…. We must be the leaders who build up our young people to be better, more active citizens within a global society. That may mean that we need to step out of our comfort zone and have purposeful discussions of controversial topics that consider all viewpoints, while listening to those viewpoints. We must make our classrooms a safe haven for all our young people. (n.p.)

What History is Controversial? (Dimensions 2 & 3)

> *History is not the past. It is the present. We carry our history with us. We are our history. (Baldwin, 1980, n.p.)*

Controversy is all around us. Living in a democratic republic gives us the opportunity to question things we do not fully understand. There is no better place to do this than in the history classroom. If a teacher can tap into what students are passionate about, students may want to move to that higher level of thinking about a topic or event in history. Students should be encouraged to question what they do not understand. Stirring this passion is key to getting them involved in their own learning. For example, students studying the photo of Silas Chandler (Figure 7), an enslaved Black man, may ask why an enslaved Black man would pose for a picture with a Confederate soldier. Students can try to answer the question using their own previous knowledge of history. Students may not understand the controversy of this story, which is that enslaved people often traveled with their enslaver to take care of their needs during the Civil War. The next question that will come up is why the enslaved person does not escape from their enslaver during this journey since, as shown in the photo, the enslaved person had weapons.

Figure 7. ***Sergeant A. M. Chandler and Silas Chandler***

Note. *[Sergeant A.M. Chandler of Co. F, 44th Mississippi Infantry Regiment, and Silas Chandler, family slave, with Bowie knives, revolvers, pepper-box, shotgun, and canteen].* (1861–1863). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2014647512/

Historical Thinking Activity With Controversy

There are many different types of respectable historical thinking inquiries. Readers of this book should not feel overwhelmed but should find the inquiry that fits their needs in the classroom.

In this activity, we will use *The 6 C's of Primary Source Analysis* with the essential question being "What is the history of the solider and the enslaved person?" Using *The 6 C's* analysis tool from the University of California, Irving, students can find a clear and easy way to understand a primary source, such as the photo in Figure 7.

Step 1.

Give each student in the class a copy of the photograph of Sergeant A. M. Chandler and Silas Chandler (Figure 7) and have a class discussion, allowing students to express what they think they see in the photo. If possible, supply a magnifying glass for each student to examine the photo in detail.

Step 2.

Write the topics found in the *6 C's* analysis tool on a smartboard and discuss with students:

- Developing Learners: Walk students through the discussion while answering the questions together. Modify the questions so they can be understood at a lower level.
  - *Content*, possible answer: photo of what looks like two Civil War soldiers, both holding weapons, however one is black.
  - *Citation*, possible answer: United States, between 1861 and 1863
  - *Context*, possible answer: enslaved people, Civil War, secession
  - *Connections*, possible answer: people were enslaved, country divided, farming, plantations
  - *Communication*, possible answer: non-bias, men look equal in photo, reliable from LOC
  - *Conclusions*, possible answer: The photo helps us understand the relationship between the white man and the enslaved person.

- Proficient Students: Have students give more detailed answers with evidence from the photo.
  - *Content*, possible answer: photo of what looks like two Civil War soldiers, both holding weapons, however one is black. They have uniforms from the time period and have weapons.
  - *Citation*, possible answer: United States, between 1861 and 1863. Photo has decayed, and the uniforms match the time period.
  - *Context*, possible answer: enslaved people, Civil War, secession. During this time there was a divide in the United States over states' rights.
  - *Connections*, possible answer: people were enslaved, country divided, farming, plantations. Looking back at what we learned earlier….
  - *Communication*, possible answer: non-bias, men look equal in photo, reliable from LOC. Men are not smiling, facial expressions the same.
  - *Conclusion*, possible answer: The photo helps us understand the relationship between the white man and the enslaved person. Because of their stance, student may wonder if they are related.

To help students answer some of the questions they may have, one can look at the Library of Congress's Photo & Reading Collection, *Glimpses of Soldiers' Lives: A.M. Chandler and Silas Chandler, Family Slave*, and find out about the relationship between these two men, leading

us closer to understanding the photograph and what it is showing. Hopefully, this story will push both the teacher and students into wanting more information about the relationship between these men. When students look at this photo through today's perception of what enslaved people were like, they may ask questions that are impossible to answer. However, with further review of the background, students can try to understand that while this is definitely an injustice to Silas Chandler, he may have not seen it as such. Asking students questions like "What would cause him not to leave his slaveholder?" can guide them to the path of understanding what life was like during the Civil War for enslaved people.

Step 3

Have students read *Glimpses of Soldiers' Lives: A.M. Chandler and Silas Chandler, Family Slave*.

Developing Learners. The teacher will walk student through the text having a discussion while answering the questions together. The teacher could print out text for students and they could take turns reading. Students could write a summary paragraph of what they have learned, answering the question "Why would an enslaved man pose for a picture with a Confederate soldier?"

Proficient Students. Along with the above, students could independently read the text and do more research on the photo at the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Collection Overview called *Soldiers' Lives*. Comparing this print with other prints depicting soldiers, students could write a report or show their findings to the class.

Other Controversial Topics for the Classroom

Below are some more examples of controversial topics, subjects that give rise to public debate, that can be difficult in the history classroom. These controversial history topics will help your students to discover the impact these topics have on the past and present.

Elections

Elections can be a topic of controversy, especially teaching during an election year. Using the Library of Congress, you can investigate many sources regarding elections. An online presentation, *Elections…the American Way*, can guide students to first understand the issues of the election process, voting rights, and campaigns. This is a great starting point for students to learn about political controversial topics. Digging deep into this presentation, students will discover the background of topics like political parties, political campaigns, and the Electoral College. Teachers can use these primary sources as a starting point and then have students expand their research elsewhere. Using the strategies used throughout this chapter, teachers can guide students to dive deeper into these topics. Below are some suggested websites from

the Library of Congress regarding elections:

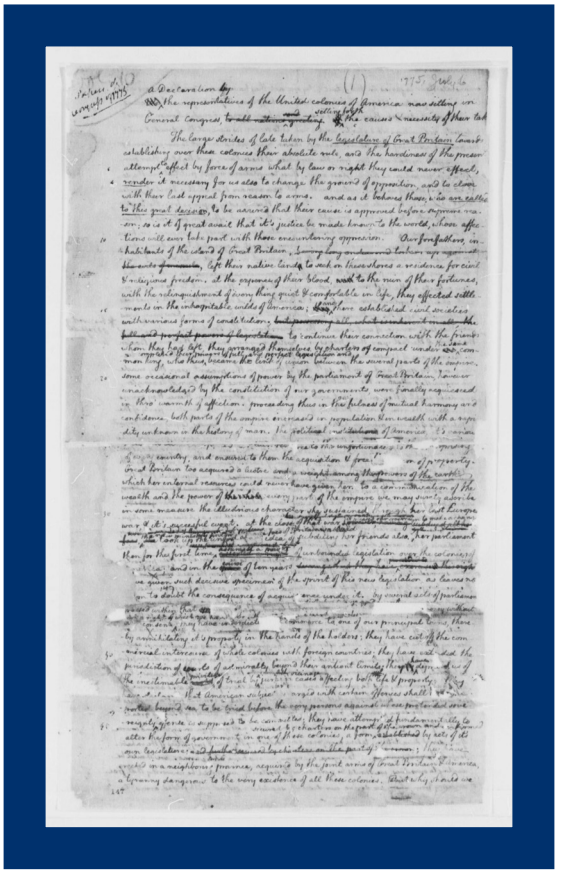
> The Electoral College—What Is It and How Does It Function?
>
> Presidential Elections and the Electoral College: the Proceedings of the Electoral Commission of 1877
>
> Elections: Classroom Materials

Gun Control

Once students have some background on the political process, they can look further into these controversial topics, debating subjects like the Electoral College, gun control, and the First Amendment. In the Library of Congress's lesson plan, *The Bill of Rights: Debating the Amendments*,

> Students will examine a copy of twelve possible amendments to the United States Constitution, as originally sent to the states for their ratification in September of 1789. Students will debate and vote on which of these amendments they would ratify and compare their resulting 'Bill of Rights' to the ten amendments ratified by ten states that have since been known by this name. (Library of Congress, n.d.-c)

Figure 8. ***Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Causes for Taking Up Arms***



Note. Jefferson, T. (1775, July 6). *Declaration of Causes for Taking Up Arms* [Manuscript]. Library of Congress. http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mtj.mtjbib000109. Transcript available at https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-01-02-0113-0002

Now that students have the information they need about the Bill of Rights, teachers may want to take them into the controversial topic of the Second Amendment. American school shootings have made this one of the most debated topics today. Guns have become a part of students' daily lives when it comes to their school environment. Teachers have the opportunity to encourage students to research the history of gun control. Teachers may want to start with the history of gun control all the way back to the 1700s when the colonists fought against British control. The Library of Congress offers a variety of primary sources that can help your students understand the history of gun control in the United States. "*The Declaration of the Causes for Taking Up Arms* was one of several addresses issued by Congress in the summer of 1775, with the object of justifying to the American people and to the world the necessity for armed resistance" (National Archives, 2020 n.p.). Thomas Jefferson's draft of the *Declaration of the Causes for Taking Up Arms* (Figure 8) is part of the Thomas Jefferson Papers found at the Library of Congress. This six-page handwritten draft by Jefferson could be divided between students for analysis, comparing it to what they have learned or know.

Teachers may need to pull out excerpts from the document, depending on the level of their students. For example:

> our forefathers, inhabitants of the island of Gr. Britn. <harrassed> having <vainly> <there> long endeavored to bear up against the evils of misrule, left their native land to seek on these shores a residence for civil & religious freedom. at the expence of their blood <with> to the <loss> ruin of their fortunes, with the relinquishment of every thing quiet & comfortable in life, they effected settlements in the inhospitable wilds of America; they there established civil societies <under> with various forms of constitution but possessing all, what is inherent in all, the full & perfect powers of legislation. (Jefferson, 1775, n.p.)

Once the students discuss the document for more understanding, they could compare and contrast to Jefferson's draft, using documents such as H. R. 47, a 2015 Congressional bill titled *To ensure secure gun storage and gun safety devices*. Students can study the introduction of the bill and investigate if the bill passed or failed. Once they have gathered information on both bills, discussion can start regarding the comparison of them. Teachers can then guide students to come up with reasonable questions and answers regarding this topic, such as "How have gun regulations changed over time, and why?" Teachers should encourage students to pull in more primary sources to help them corroborate thoughts and come to their own conclusion regarding gun control in America.

LGBTQ

Another important topic that needs to be brought into the secondary classroom is the history and current effects of LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer) issues. These minority groups are still being discriminated against on a regular basis. According to the Williams Institute at UCLA's School of Law (2020): (1) The nondiscrimination statutes in most states do not explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected characteristics. (2) Nearly half of all LGBTQ People lack protections from discrimination in employment, education, housing, public accommodations, and credit. Students themselves may have encountered environmental factors regarding this issue. (3) There are an estimated 13 million LGBTQ people aged 13 and older in the U.S. This controversial history topic, like others, needs to be taught in middle and high school classrooms. Students must feel safe and comfortable in a classroom for them to be able to engage with controversial curriculum. "Even feelings like embarrassment, boredom, or frustration—not only fear—can spur the brain to enter the proverbial 'fight or flight' mode" (Bernard, 2010).

Teachers can bring the LGBTQ subject into the classroom in a Civil Rights unit. The Library of Congress, again, has some wonderful finds on the LGBTQ community that can be included as primary sources when teaching about this topic. You can find programs from the American Archive of Public Broadcasting radio show, *LGBTQ People in Religion; Stereotypes Based on Appearance* (2012):

> Rabbi Kleinbaum is a recipient of the Woman of Valor Award given by the Jewish Fund for Justice. The Forward, a national Jewish weekly newspaper, and Newsweek have both named Rabbi Kleinbaum as one of the top 50 American rabbis. New York Jewish Week, another publication, named her as one of the 45 leading young American Jewish leaders in New York. She has been an activist since her college years. Also, in our first OutCaster audio essay, Mady talks about how appearances can be misleading.

Having students listen to the podcast and finding statements to support the LGBTQ lesson will help students understand the challenges faced by the LGBTQ community and how civil rights were violated. Revisiting the Library of Congress's *Teacher's Guide Analyzing Primary Sources* (e.g., Figure 2), students will be able to investigate, through observation, reflection, and questioning, all the different types of LGTBQ primary sources introduced to them.

Figure 9. ***Edna St. Vincent Millay***

Note. Genthe, A. (1914). Millay, Edna St. Vincent, Miss, portrait photograph [Photograph]. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/2018707797/

To help students understand the struggle the LGBTQ community endured, the Library of Congress has put together the *LGBTQ+ Voices in the Library of Congress Collections*. Not all sources in the collection are digitized but may still be requested through the Library. Teachers can start the conversation by using simple sources from the past, such as photos of Edna St. Vincent Millay, bisexual poet and playwright from 1914 (Figure 9), gay rights demonstrations of 1976 (Figure 10), or Karol Szymanowski, gay pianist and composer in the 1920s (Figure 11).

Figure 10. *Gay Rights Demonstrations of 1976*

Note. Leffler, W. K. (1976). *Gay rights demonstration at the Democratic National Convention, New York City* [Photograph]. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/2005696365/

Using these simple photographs can start student conversations, especially when discovering the dates these photos were taken. Students could make a timeline of the LGBTQ community in the United States. They could include Gay Rights demonstrators from 1976 or Billie Jean King playing tennis at Wimbledon in 1966. To expand the timeline, students could research unknown voices that would help populate the list. By analyzing these photos, students can start to develop an understanding of this part of American history.

Figure 11. *Karol Szymanowski*

Note. Bain News Service. (ca. 1920). *Karol Szymanowski* [Photograph]. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/2014714098/

The Library of Congress's Veterans Project has wonderful first-hand accounts of military life for a LGBTQ person. In the *Serving in Silence* stories, "Gay members of the Armed Forces have had to live with an extra layer of discretion and professionalism. Here are stories of men and women who served their country while balancing the need to keep their private lives private." One of the stories from *Speaking Out* states that

> Military service oftentimes demands sacrifices from those in uniform. Historically, LGBTQ veterans have faced a unique set of challenges. For many of these veterans, following a call to serve meant keeping their private lives entirely private, for fear that exclusionary policies would hold them back or end their careers altogether. Here, we present stories of LGBTQ veterans who served from the WWII era to the present, that illustrate these veterans' bravery, honesty, and unwavering dedication to their country.

Students could write an annotated timeline of these LGBTQ events, drawing out ideas when students use the Library of Congress's *Teacher's Guides and Analysis Tools* (e.g., Figure 2) with each source. These tools help students analyze these primary sources and help them understand the narrative of the time period. This will guide students to appreciate this controversial history topic and its impact on the United States by allowing them to see the whole picture.

Teachers may want to bring in more blatant controversy when it comes to LGBTQ issues. For example, *Obergefell v. Hodges* can be used for discussion of marriage of same sex couples. Students need to be mature and able to agree to disagree on controversial history topics like this one. It is suggested that this type of discussion should be completed after the lessons mentioned in this section of the chapter to help students understand this controversial topic better.

Racial Injustice

The place to start discussing racial injustice in the classroom should be the topic of enslaved people, and how two hundred plus years of oppression in the United States of America has fed the continuing hateful ideal of racism.

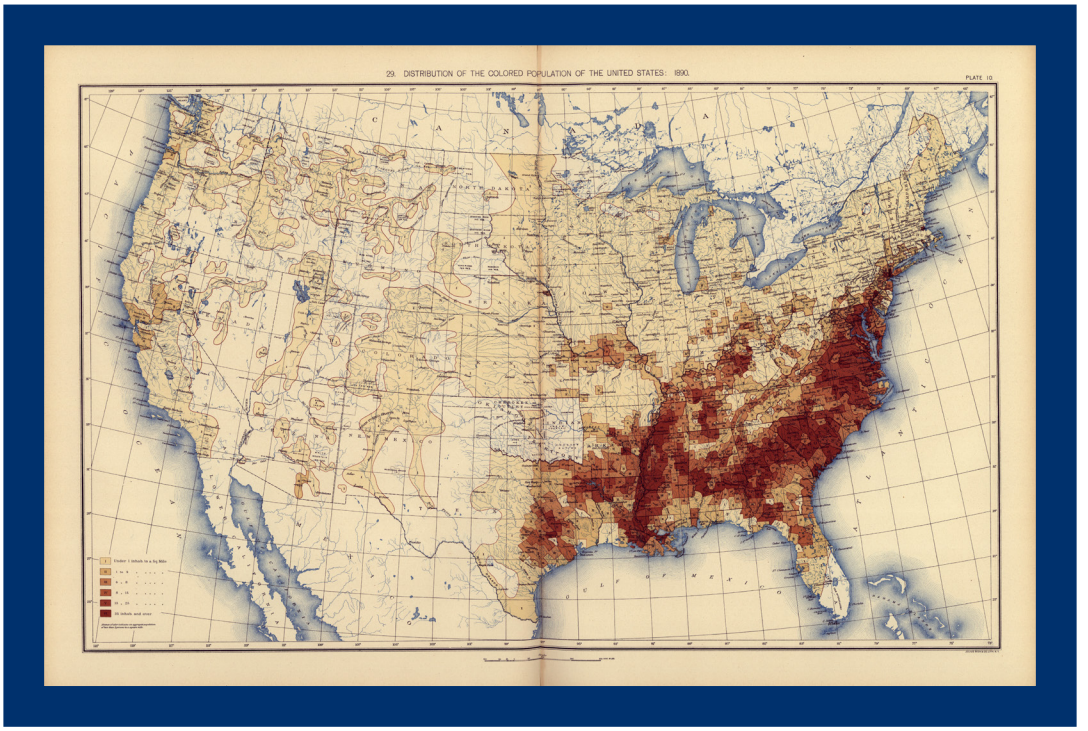
> But to achieve racial justice, we the people have to come to terms with America's long history of racial injustice. The starting point for this reckoning process is an honest examination of slavery.... Some say that slavery was our country's original sin, but it is much more than that. Slavery is our country's origin. (Jefferies, 2018)

> Schools are not adequately teaching the history of American slavery, educators are not sufficiently prepared to teach it, textbooks do not have enough material about it, and—as a result—students lack a basic knowledge of the important role it played in shaping the United States and the impact it continues to have on race relations in America. (Shuster, 2018)

While there are many resources on the history of enslaved people, the Library of Congress has a multitude of primary sources to use in the classroom. Using the same *Teacher's Guides and Analysis Tools* (Figure 2) mentioned throughout this chapter, students can begin to analyze the story of the enslaved people in America, discovering how the United States prospered using enslaved people for free labor. These primary sources will show students the historical, economic, cultural, and psychological history of African Americans as enslaved people.

The Library of Congress's Teacher's Guides for analyzing primary sources come in many different formats. For example, from the *Jim Crow and Segregation* Primary Source Set, students can use the Map Analysis Tool to study the "Distribution of the Colored Population of the United States: 1890" from the *Statistical Atlas of the United States* (Figure 12), based upon the results of the eleventh census and compare it to a more current census map (2000) taken from the Social Science Data Analysis Network.

Figure 12. ***Distribution of the Colored Population of the United States: 1890***



Note. United States Census Office & Gannett, H. (1898). Distribution of the Colored Population of the United States: 1890. In Statistical Atlas of the United States, based upon the results of the eleventh census [Map]. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3701gm.gct00010/?sp=26

Another of the many primary sources found at the Library of Congress, the collection *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1938* "contains more than 2,300 first-person accounts of slaves and 500 black-and-white photographs of former slaves collected as part of the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration" (Library of Congress, n.d.-d). These accounts of enslaved people can be a great asset to the history teacher who is diving into racial injustice. Not only does the classroom have to be a safe place for conversation, it should be remembered that "Some narratives contain startling descriptions of cruelty while others convey an almost nostalgic view of plantation life. These narratives provide an invaluable first-person account of slavery and the individuals it affected" (Library of Congress, n.d.-d).

Below are other primary sources to help teachers portray enslaved people in the United States to their students:

- Slavery in the United States: Primary Sources and the Historical Record Student Materials
- African American Soldiers during the Civil War
- African American Perspectives: Materials Selected from the Rare Book Collection

There are primary sources that teachers can bring in to support the idea of injustice in the United States. Primary sources like Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* or César Chávez's migrant plight will show students how injustice unravels, depending on the circumstance. Teachers can use these sources to add on to their lesson about activism. Students learning about the history of these injustices should be able to tie them into the founding documents studied previously. In the Library of Congress's *America's Library* online, one can find the back story of both Martin Luther King. Jr., and César Chávez. These short primary sources not only come with text, but photos that can be a very beneficial when studying these two Civil Rights activists.

Ideas of racial injustice in the United States are also a very important topic to address. In her article "Origin of the Idea of Race," anthropologist Audrey Smedley (1997) reminds her readers that "Contemporary scholars agree that 'race' was a recent invention and that it was essentially a folk idea, not a product of scientific research and discovery" (n.p.). In 2003, California Newsreel produced a three-part television series called *RACE: The Power of an Illusion*, with an accompanying educational website. The interactive resources are intended to help educators and civic leaders "effectively integrate the series into their classes and programs." Each episode, five to ten minutes each, addresses a different issue with the falsehood of race in the United States:

> Episode 1: The Difference Between Us examines the contemporary science — including genetics — that challenges our common-sense assumptions that human beings can be bundled into three or four fundamentally different groups according to their physical traits.
>
> Episode 2: The Story We Tell uncovers the roots of the race concept in North America, the 19th century science that legitimated it, and how it came to be held so fiercely in the western imagination. The episode is an eye-opening tale of how race served to rationalize, even justify, American social inequalities as "natural."
>
> Episode 3: The House We Live In asks, If race is not biology, what is it? This episode uncovers how race resides not in nature but in politics, economics and culture. It reveals how our social institutions "make" race by disproportionately channeling resources, power, status and wealth to white people. (California Newsreel, 2003)

This powerful curriculum, and all topics in the chapter, should be used with mature students. Its impact is everlasting; however, this topic is usually covered in elective classes such as psychology and sociology, which most high school and/or college students do sign up for. This controversial history topic uses scientific evidence to show how the basis of race is a falsehood portrayed from Reconstruction to present. It is imperative that teachers, parents, and students understand that even though the idea of race is not a scientific one, racism can be proven to exist in the United States and elsewhere, including racism as a major cause of

the Holocaust during World War II (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Using this curriculum with students can be eye opening. These lessons on race show students how humans are less different than society believes:

> If social studies teacher education is about helping our students teach humanity—Who is human and how to treat human beings—then anti-racism is needed to actualize the basic philosophical questions…Who am I?... What do I know to be true?... What should I do?" (King & Chandler, 2016)

A productive way to bring these racial injustice ideas into the classroom is through an Inquiry Design Model about the true story of Emmett Till, a fourteen-year-old African American man, who was murdered for allegedly flirting with a white girl in 1955. This historical inquiry is part of the College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework from the National Council for the Social Studies that encourages teachers to increase the rigor in the classroom. The historical thinking skills discussed in this chapter will prepare students for this type of inquiry, which includes critical thinking, problem solving, and becoming engaged citizens.

This inquiry starts with a compelling question, "Is it ever too late for justice?" High school students are led into answering four supporting questions to help answer the compelling question:

1. What happened to Emmett Till on August 28, 1955?
2. Why was justice denied in the original trial?
3. What efforts and struggles have occurred in recent attempts to pursue justice?
4. How does the story of Emmett's death and the legacy of his life impact people today?

Each question is accompanied by primary or secondary sources that help students find evidence to support an answer to each question. This is where historical thinking is introduced. Students will explore the sources by examining the date, author, and perspective. Going further into the subject of justice, this type of Inquiry Design Model allows students to compare primary sources and come up with a logical supported conclusion to the compelling question: "Is it ever too late for justice?"

Injustice has yet to end in the United States. Native Americans, women, people with disabilities, LGBTQ and other marginalized groups have continued to strive for rights in the court system. There are many Supreme Court cases that are an asset for discussion in the classroom. Using the opinions of the Justices is a unique way to look into society at that time. Table 1 is a chart of landmark Supreme Court Cases that may be beneficial to learning about the history of American controversy.

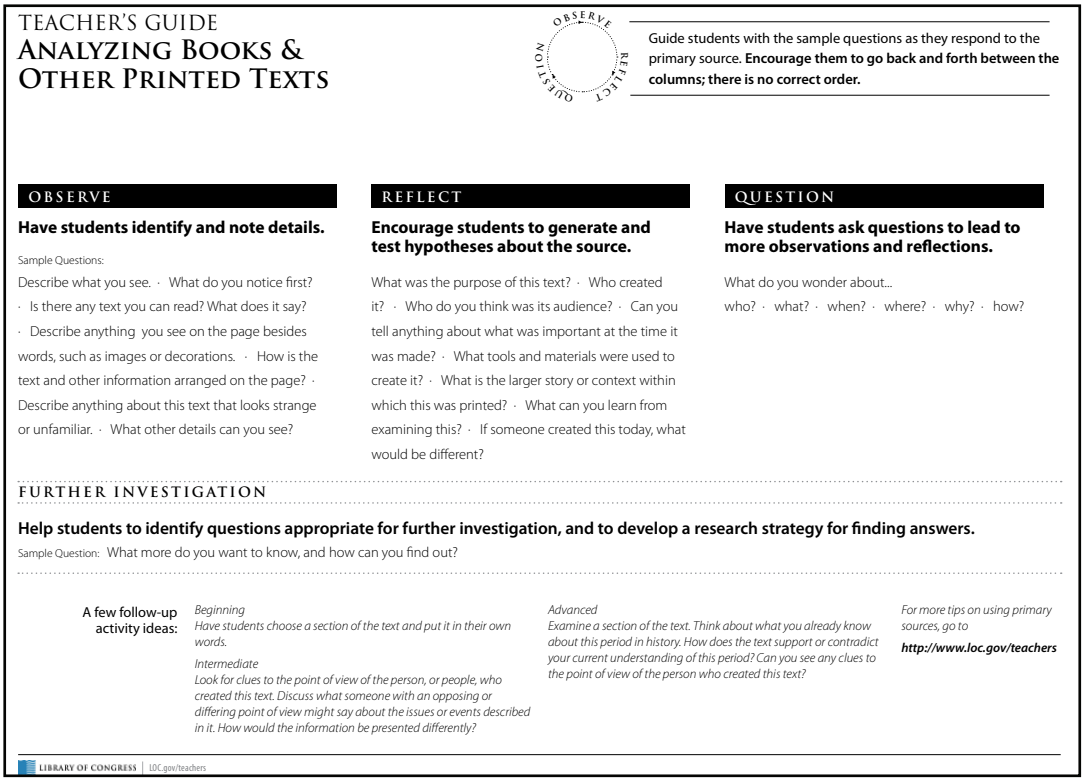
Table 1. Landmark Supreme Court Cases

Topic	Relevant Court Cases
Civil Rights	*Dred Scott v. Sanford* (1857) *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) *Korematsu v. U.S.* (1944) *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) *Furman v. Georgia* (1974) *Texas v Johnson* (1989)
Guns	*U.S. v. Miller* (1939) *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008)
LGBTQ	*Baker v. Nelson* (1972) *Romer v. Evans* (1996)
Police	*Mapp v. Ohio* (1961) *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963) *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966)
Presidential	*Mapp v. Ohio* (1961) *U.S. v. Nixon* (1974) *Bush v. Gore* (2000)
Teenagers	*Engel v. Vitale* (1962) *In Re Gault* (1967) *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1968) *Island Trees School District v. Pico* (1982) *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier* (1988)
Voting	*Baker v. Carr* (1962) *Oregon v. Mitchell* (1970)
Women	*U.S. v. Susan B. Anthony* (1873) *Roe v. Wade* (1973)

Figure 13. ***Case Study Format Sheet***

Case Study Format Sheet	
I. Name of the case	In this section record the name of the case and the citation if available.
II. Facts of the case	In this section the basic facts of the case should be written: a. Who was involved in the case? b. What happened? c. How did the lower court decide on the case? (Optional)
III. Issue	In this section the issue should be written as a question. What was the legal issue that had to be decided?
IV. Arguments (Petitioner & Respondent)	In this section the following should be written: a. What were the arguments for the Petitioner? b. What precedents were cited? c. What were the arguments for the Respondent? (If available.)
V. Decision	In this section the following should be written: a. What was the decision of the Supreme Court? b. What rationale was given?
VI. Impact of the court's decision	In this section the following should be written: What is the significance of this case?

Figure 14. ***Teacher's Guide: Analyzing Books and Other Printed Texts***



TEACHER'S GUIDE

ANALYZING BOOKS & OTHER PRINTED TEXTS

OBSERVE QUESTION REFLECT

Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. **Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.**

OBSERVE

Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

Describe what you see. · What do you notice first? · Is there any text you can read? What does it say? · Describe anything you see on the page besides words, such as images or decorations. · How is the text and other information arranged on the page? · Describe anything about this text that looks strange or unfamiliar. · What other details can you see?

REFLECT

Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

What was the purpose of this text? · Who created it? · Who do you think was its audience? · Can you tell anything about what was important at the time it was made? · What tools and materials were used to create it? · What is the larger story or context within which this was printed? · What can you learn from examining this? · If someone created this today, what would be different?

QUESTION

Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...

who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

A few follow-up activity ideas:

Beginning
Have students choose a section of the text and put it in their own words.

Intermediate
Look for clues to the point of view of the person, or people, who created this text. Discuss what someone with an opposing or differing point of view might say about the issues or events described in it. How would the information be presented differently?

Advanced
Examine a section of the text. Think about what you already know about this period in history. How does the text support or contradict your current understanding of this period? Can you see any clues to the point of view of the person who created this text?

For more tips on using primary sources, go to
http://www.loc.gov/teachers

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS | LOC.gov/teachers

Note. From Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides/

Teachers can have students examine these court case documents, first using the Case Study Format Sheet (Figure 13) to get students familiar with the court cases. Students can then use the Library of Congress's *Analyzing Books and Other Printed Texts* (Figure 14) to help them dig deeper into investigating the history behind the cases. This tool includes questions that help students understand the concept of the document. Corroborating these documents with other sources such as photos, newspaper articles, and journal entries from the same time period will help paint a narrative of the injustices of the time.

Taking Informed Action (C3 Dimension 4)

As was seen in the Inquiry Design Model, the C3 Framework is organized into four dimensions (Table 2). This framework outlines how teachers can direct students to work through the skills found in historical thinking which goes much deeper than most inquiries. In Dimension 4, students are to conclude this inquiry with some type of informed action. This action hopefully will motivate students to look at the future of the democracy and teach them to act as productive citizens. C3 Teachers has an inquiry that focuses on civic action

called *How Will I Make a Change?* In this C3 Framework inquiry, students are asked to choose a topic that would make an impact on society. They start by answering supporting questions that help lead them to their civic action:

1. What do people need to know about my issue/problem?
2. What can be done about my issue/problem?
3. What can I do about my issue/problem?
4. What challenges could I face?

If student feel safe in this space, they could choose a personal, important issue for this inquiry and help make a change in their community.

Table 2. ***C3 Framework Dimensions***

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRIES	DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY TOOLS AND CONCEPTS	DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE	DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION
Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries	Civics	Gathering and Evaluating Sources	Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions
	Economics		
	Geography	Developing Claims and Using Evidence	Taking Informed Action
	History		

Note. From National Council for the Social Studies. (2013). *The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History.*

Students are encouraged to make a difference in their communities, in this case regarding controversial history topics. Teachers never want to put their students in harm's way and with some of these topics being controversial, teachers should research and plan any type of informed action they and their students will be participating in. There are many organizations teachers and students can get involved in within their own community. Table 3 lists organizations that deal with these controversial history topics:

Table 3. Organizations with Resources on Controversial Issues

Learning for Justice	Their mission is to help teachers and schools educate children and youth to be active participants in a diverse democracy. https://www.learningforjustice.org/
Facing History and Ourselves	Together we are creating the next generation of leaders who will build a world based on knowledge and compassion, the foundation for more democratic, equitable, and just societies. https://www.facinghistory.org/
Embracing Our Difference, Inc.	Uses the power of art and education to expand consciousness and open the heart to celebrate the diversity of the human family. https://www.embracingourdifferences.org/index.php
Making a Difference Foundation	Makes a difference in the lives of others one person at a time by helping them acquire the most basic human needs: food, housing, encouragement, and opportunity. We believe that every person has the capacity to serve and make a difference in a person's life. Inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. https://themadf.org/
GLAAD	Rewrites the script for LGBTQ acceptance. As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. https://www.glaad.org/
Initiatives of Change USA	Initiatives of Change USA recognizes and engages the world as one, connected relational tissue, flowing out of the basic rights and responsibilities that every person has by virtue of the intrinsic dignity with which they walk this earth. https://us.iofc.org/

Conclusion

Using what they have learned from these controversial history topics, students need to try to make a positive difference not only in their school and community but also in their country. These moments can be more present for them when they use the concepts of historical thinking skills and look to past evidence to support their choices. Using knowledge supported with evidence, students can learn how to understand the history of the United States.

Finally, when talking about the violence of injustice, a teacher must be able to assess the students' environment and empathize with them. Half or more of your lessons should be about the upstanders found in the historical event. Letting students know that they can revolt against oppression and make a positive difference in their world while still practicing their right of assembly and grievances toward the government is how history can promote a change for the better.

Again, a safe classroom should be the number one priority when teaching students about violent past events of history that may, in some way, have affected their own family dynamic at one time or another. Stephanie Jones (2020) in "Ending Curriculum Violence" encourages teachers and curriculum writers to avoid *curriculum violence*,

> Curriculum violence occurs when educators and curriculum writers have constructed a set of lessons that damage or otherwise adversely affect students intellectually and emotionally…. Curriculum violence warrants special attention because, while it is not as highly reported as other forms of racial trauma, it has an active presence in our schools. And, unlike the other categories, it has implications for every single classroom. (n.p.)

Teachers and students are encouraged to visit Facing History and Ourselves. Teachers can sign up for free for access to all resources. Teachers can borrow movies, books, etc. The website also comes with a textbook about topics like the Holocaust, Reconstruction, and human behavior.

> Every day, reports of incidents of bigotry and hatred across the globe show us how fragile democracy can be. Through rigorous historical analysis combined with the study of human behavior, Facing History's approach heightens students' understanding of racism, religious intolerance, and prejudice; increases students' ability to relate history to their own lives; and promotes greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities in a democracy. (https://www.facinghistory.org/)

Using the historical thinking skills mentioned in the chapter, encourage students to think

long and hard about these controversial history topics, making their own conclusions using the evidence provided to them from their classroom, families, and communities. The skills of analysis and corroboration should be encouraged to be pushed into civic action, producing their own narrative for the legacy they wish to leave behind. The challenge of teaching controversial history is one that will help make a better teaching environment and in turn will express to your students that it is possible to make a positive difference.

> It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance. (Kennedy, 1966, n.p.)

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