The 1960's and American Education: An Examination of Textbooks and Analysis on the Use of Primary Sources to Foster Critical Thinking Skills

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The 1960’s and American Education: An Examination of Textbooks and Analysis on the Use of Primary Sources to Foster Critical Thinking Skills

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Chapter One: Introduction

Purpose and Rationale:

With our drastically changing world in the 21st century, it has become increasingly important for our students to be critical thinkers and effective problem solvers. Competition for acceptance into good colleges and lucrative careers has become global due to the ever growing interconnectedness of the world. In order to promote these skills within our students, social studies education has begun to shift from the basic memorization of dates and facts, to the accumulation of a set of historical thinking skills and a more conceptual understanding of history across time. These changes can be seen in the shift of New York State Social Studies Standards to the Common Core Social Studies Framework, in which the goal is to increase rigor and college readiness in the New York State social studies education curriculum.¹

According to the Common Core K-8 Social Studies Framework draft, provided by the official New York State Department of education website, the primary purpose of social studies education is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. While the new Common Core aims to fulfill this purpose, it also aims to fulfill to supplementary purposes through the addition of the Common Core Literacy Skills and the Social Studies Skills components of the framework. The document defines Common Core Literacy Skills as “cross disciplinary skills in reading, writing, research, speaking and listening that should be infused with all aspects of Social Studies.” Additionally, the document defines Social Studies Skills as “the essential skills or habits of mind utilized by social scientists and historians that students should develop through their social studies education.”² These two components are

¹ New York State Common Core K-8 Social Studies Framework, New York State Department of Education,
² Ibid, 3- 4.
meant to work interdependently with required content to support instructional assessment and planning. Therefore students will be receiving literacy and historical thinking skills, while at the same time developing comprehension for social studies content.

This change in curriculum across content areas but specifically in social studies education has caused educators to take another look at the types and rigor levels of texts and resources they are providing their students. By the time students leave high school, they must be prepared to interact with college level texts and media sources. Textbooks alone are not enough to prepare our students for what is expected of them. As my research has indicated, textbooks do not confront students with multiple perspectives within history, thus eliminating the opportunity for students to develop a more whole picture of history, as well as historical skills that require critical thinking. As teachers, it is our responsibility to stay abreast of these changes as well as adjust our own curriculum to reflect the Common Core and prepare our students. Because of these new changes, teachers must look outside of the standard and often unsatisfactory textbooks that are provided and instead seek out a variety of primary sources to increase the rigor in the classroom and foster historical thinking skills within our students.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

As Martin Luther King Jr. so eloquently put it during his speech, *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* at the 11th annual Southern Christian Leadership Committee:

Black Power is now part of the nomenclature of the national community. To some it is abhorrent, to others dynamic; to some it is repugnant, to others exhilarating; to some it is destructive, to others it is useful… One must look beyond personal styles, verbal flourishes and the hysteria of the mass media to assess its values, its assets and liabilities honestly.  

In the midst of the protesting, bravery and conflict of the 1960’s, actors of the time struggled to define an entity as intricate and complex as Black Power. In the twenty first century, more than 40 years later, historians continue to struggle with a clear definition for the term Black Power, its role in achieving equality for African American’s, and its place in the history of post-war America.

According to Peniel Joseph, author and professor of history at Tufts University, the Black Power Movement is a relatively neglected era in the early historiography of post war American history. Conversely, the Civil Rights Movement has enjoyed a rich history in which its examination has become one of the largest subfields of American history. The American perception the African American struggle for civil rights is marked with the iconic visions of morally sound and non-violent sit-ins, boycotts and marches. We teach our children the stories of

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the bravery in “turning the other cheek” and Martin Luther King’s calls for the end to segregation through strictly non-violent protest. And yet an entirely different mindset and mentality of achieving equality for African Americans was occurring at the same time. How has the popular mind defined this parallel movement? What images have shaped the American idea of the Black Power Movement? According to Joseph, what early discourse is available on the Black Power Movement often depicts it as destructive, short-lived, and politically ineffectual. Moreover, he claims that early 1960’s narratives attribute the movement to white backlash, urban rioting and a major player in the decline of the civil rights movement and its ability to create positive change in America. This narrative still too often provides the basis for popular understandings of the movement as a major failure and a negative counterpart to the more virtuous civil rights movement.5

Until recently this perspective has dominated the way Americans and scholars alike have defined the Black Power Movement and given it its place within our stories of American History. However, as African American studies have emerged as a new subfield in American history, historians, teachers and students have begun to view Black Power, Civil Rights and the 1960’s in a new light. Although the “evil twin” model has not been completely abandoned, as seen in Claybourne Carson’s In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960’s, in which Carson views the Black Power Movement as shattering the alliance amongst civil rights groups and effectually ending their ability to create a united front and a common message, many new ways to define the Black Power movement have emerged. For example, leading historians Jeffrey Ogbar and Peniel Joseph have interpreted the movement not as a thorn in the side of the civil rights movement but as a compliment to the advancement of African Americans. Most

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importantly, these historians offer the perspective that the Black Power movement demanded inclusion, while at the same time advocating autonomy and self-determination within the black community. Moreover, both authors argue that Black Power asserted black’s access to their full citizenship rights while also cultivating pride in being black. In essence, these authors make the claim that while each movement had a different approach to achieving equality in the United States, both effectively played a role in doing so. While this narrative; that of two complimentary movements, has increasingly become more accepted, author Simon Wendt offers a third place in history for the Black Power Movement. He examines gender roles during the time and argues from a sociological perspective that the Black Power movement was actually a result of the failure of the civil rights movement to appeal to the dignity and self-worth of black males.

Decades later, the office of President of the United States is held by an African American; members of the Congressional Black Caucus have considerable influence in congressional politics; New York, Los Angeles Chicago and Atlanta have had black mayors; schools across the nation have included Black History month in their curriculums; and music, fashion, and Hollywood have all found a place for the African American consumer. Both politically and culturally it is obvious that African American’s have a clear presence in the United States. The celebration of diversity in all aspects of American’s daily lives proves that America has taken significant strides towards equality. This essay examines the role the Black Power movement played in that change and how several authors have created a definition for Black Power for generations to come.
The Movement takes Root: Nation of Islam and Malcolm X

The infamous decision in 1954’s Brown vs. Board of Education is often seen as the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement. America’s televisions were tuned to the struggle of the Negro man as images of police officers beating young men and women in the streets and young girls being killed in church bombings flashed across their screens. Despite this, King and the most prominent civil rights groups: Southern Christian Leadership Committee (SCLC), Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), developed a belief and commitment to non-violence that ironically understood the power of violence. They knew that the images of strong morality in the face of racist violence would empower activists and bolster their cause. Martin Luther King Jr. was earning the support and sympathy of many white American politicians by leading a Ghandian type movement; one in which non-violence was at its center regardless of the dangers and insults it posed, with the hope that white racists would see the humanity in blacks and be forced to liberate them. As Martin Luther King Jr. arranged sit-ins and bus boycotts in southern America, another man was coming to the forefront preaching a much different idea. Malcolm X, an ex-convict turned local activist became a national spokesman for those seeking renewed faith in radical politics.

Malcolm’s political activism was shaped by his upbringing in black urban America and his identification with the poor working class. By joining and subsequently leading the Nation of Islam (NOI), he boldly confronted democracy and vehemently argued that the goals of integration fell far short of complete equality for African Americans. Instead, he felt that racial liberation required a complete political revolution. According to Joseph, Malcolm’s radicalism is

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most often recognized as the prelude to the fiery black awakening of the 1960’s and the establishment of further radical groups and politics of the Black Power Movement.\textsuperscript{7}

The NOI was arguably the first major group to provide a different outlet from that of the Civil Rights Movement, which overtly promoted social integration and political inclusion for blacks. Instead, Malcolm X and the NOI had a vision of separate black communities that celebrated racial pride and promised self-determined dignity for all African Americans. While the Civil Rights Movement attracted the more ‘polished’ and religious sects of African Americans, the NOI had a striking appeal to those who braved poverty, unemployment, crime and a scarcity of opportunity every day. The lowest on the social and economic totem pole saw hope in a man they viewed as a true black man: upright, strong, defiant of white supremacy, and intelligent. “He was not privileged from a Ph.D or from a middle class background and he did not insist that manhood meant allowing whites to beat, maim and attack black people.” As Ogbar argues, Malcolm spoke to many of those who Martin Luther King Jr. failed to reach.\textsuperscript{8} Their reality reflected the need for a different solution, a solution in which blacks created and dictated their own institutions rather than trying to integrate the white ones.

The NOI and Malcolm X took particular offense to the Civil Rights Movement’s rejection of direct action self-defense and they began to publicly denounce King and his movement. “How can you justify being nonviolent in Mississippi and Alabama when your churches are being bombed and your little girls are being murdered…?” For Malcolm it was quite simple, “If it it’s wrong to be violent defending black women and black children and black babies and black men, then it’s wrong for America to draft us and make us violent abroad in

\textsuperscript{7} \textit{Joseph}, \textit{Waiting til Midnight Hour}, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{8} \textit{Ogbar}, p. 21.
defense of her. And if its right for America to draft us, and teach us how to be violent in defense of her, then it is right for you and me to do whatever is necessary to defend our own people right here in this country.” The most popular phrase attributed to Malcolm X, “by any means necessary” became a phrase that many blacks held on to; they now felt empowered to defend themselves against the notoriously violent white police force who so often threatened their neighborhoods and livelihood. The Nation of Islam created a climate of militancy that would soon catch the eyes of formerly non-violent civil rights committees.

“Black Power!”

Many historians credit the official birth of the Black Power Movement during the 1966 Meredith March. Named after James Meredith, the first African American allowed to attend the University of Mississippi, the Meredith march was the first time the major civil rights groups: CORE, the SCLC and SNCC, publicly disagreed over civil rights strategy. Meredith’s original plan to lead a one man march was abruptly ended when he was shot by a sniper two days into the march. Civil rights activists subsequently mobilized to continue the march in his honor.

According to Ogbar, the leaders of the NAACP hoped to use the event to raise support for Johnson’s Civil Rights Bill. However, Stokely Carmichael, leader of the SNCC and Floyd McKissick, national director of CORE, overtly disagreed with the bill. While civil rights leaders saw it as a major accomplishment, Carmichael and other members of SNCC felt that years of federal, local and state antipathy to the efforts of nonviolent protest had forced them to change some of their beliefs regarding black liberation. To many of those living in poverty, a political right did not change their everyday struggle. Instead, Carmichael declared that the march was not

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9 Ogbar, p. 45.
10 Ogbar, p. 62.
to celebrate the bill but to demonstrate that the people would no longer cower to racist terrorism. They wanted marchers to make clear that they supported self-defense, which included being violent if necessary to protect oneself or a loved one. The NAACP and some other members of SNCC were clearly disturbed by the overt militancy of leading civil rights group members.\textsuperscript{11}

During the march, members were attacked by state police with tear gas and clubs. In frustration, anger and passion, Carmichael began to energize the crowd with shouts of “Black Power.” As the chant rung throughout the crowd, it was clear that the divide between a rejection of self-defense and the adoption of for a new more militant black consciousness had emerged. \textsuperscript{12}

\textbf{Controversy and Conflict- Review of} \textit{In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960’s}

What did this phrase, “Black Power” mean to African Americans? Strength? Violence? Retaliation? Pride? The interpretations and ways African Americans “lived” Black Power were endless and unique to each individual. However, a more examinable question is how did the Black Power Movement impact the advancement of African Americans during this time? Carson Clayborne touches on this question with his complete examination of the SNCC. His book, \textit{In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960’s}, is a well-researched, analytical account that follows the group from its beginnings, through the controversial period of the Black Power Movement, and its eventual expiration. Carson uses a large variety of primary sources including interviews, newspapers and archival materials to show the intricate workings of such a large organization. The book is organized chronologically into three parts, “Coming Together”, “Looking Inward”, and “Falling Apart.”

\textsuperscript{11} Ogbar, pp. 59- 65.
\textsuperscript{12} Ogbar, p. 62.
In “Coming Together” Claybourne describes SNCC as a flourishing group of young students, both black and white fighting for political and social equality. Their primary focus was voter registration and their idea of how they were going to achieve this was very clear: nonviolent protest. Carson exemplifies this by citing students from Atlanta University prior to launching a protest: (we plan) “to use every legal and non-violent means available to “secure full citizenship rights as members of this great Democracy of ours.”

The students were vehement in their beliefs and Carson’s accounts of scores of young people who took action to assert rights clearly display that. Carson undoubtedly envisions the early years of SNCC as its most successful and most important in the advancement of African Americans. Quoting a Nashville student activist; “for the first time in history black students sit down at the conference table with officials and are heard.”

SNCC’s efforts to register blacks in the dangerous areas of the south, coupled with their more militant and public protest broke new ground in forging relationships with the SCLC and white government leaders. It was clear that in the early stages, while these groups were still united under a common goal and common method of accomplishing that goal, changes in the political arena would continue.

Carson continues his discussion of SNCCs accomplishments throughout part 2. For the purpose of this study, part 3, “Falling Apart” is the most important to critically analyze as Carson makes his views on the failure of the SNCC quite clear. From merely catching a glimpse of the first chapter’s title in that section, “Black Power” one can assume that Carson views SNCC’s adoption of this phrase as a major cause of the organization falling apart. He argued that Stokely Carmichael’s popularization of the black power slogan shattered the fragile alliance of civil

14 Claybourne, p. 17.
rights forces, challenged the assumptions of previous interracial efforts to achieve national civil rights reforms and awoke the tradition of black radicalism and racial separatism.\textsuperscript{15}

The utopia between civil rights activists and members of SNCC ended as Carmichael began to urge them to abandon their role as a buffer zone between the black community and the white community. He wanted blacks to express their needs in the tone of the black community, not the white. He wanted blacks to take control politically and be able to make choices about their own lives and once this was accomplished, then could political alliances be formed. As Carson notes, this marked a significant change in direction for the SNCC. He argues that while Carmichael denied being anti-white or that his speeches incited anti-white violence, these connotations were an unmistakable part of the appeal of the Black Power rhetoric for many blacks. Carmichael was “purposefully ambiguous” in defining black power so that both his followers and opponents could attribute their own meanings to the phrase. Likewise, Carson also describes Carmicheal’s support for violence as unclear as well; “he usually avoided clear incitements to violence, offering instead implicit support for such activities even while explicitly suggesting more moderate courses of action.”\textsuperscript{16}

Finally, to further depict the widening gap between the civil rights movement and SNCC, Carson quotes Carmichael: “Each time the people in those cities saw Martin Luther King get slapped, they became angry; when they saw four little black girls bombed to death, they were angrier; and when nothing happened, they were steaming. We had nothing to offer that they could see, except to go out and be beaten again.”\textsuperscript{17} Carson’s choice to use this quote illustrates his belief that Carmichael actually blamed civil rights leaders, not Black Power, for the racial

\textsuperscript{15} Claybourne, p. 215. \\
\textsuperscript{16} Claybourne, p. 217-219. \\
\textsuperscript{17} Claybourne, p. 219.
rioting occurring in northern communities. In essence, what Martin Luther King had originally seen as a great media ploy to evoke sympathy from whites and white political leaders to gain rights, Carmichael saw as moments of weakness and a loss of dignity for African Americans. As this rift continued to broaden and SNCC workers became more successful in popularizing the Black Power slogan, Carson argues that SNCC also simultaneously began to lose influence in the movement. He states that Black Power caused SNCC to lose their ability to stimulate lasting feelings of racial potency such as those nurtured by the southern black struggle and thus clearly set limitations of what SNCC could do as a political organization.

Claybourne concludes this chapter by suggesting that it was impossible for SNCC to accomplish any of its goals while the staff was preoccupied with a controversy over the Black Power slogan. He calls their ideas of black unity “illusive” and their calls for black self-determination “attacks on the existing leadership.” Essentially, Claybourne sees the Black Power Movement as causing the conflict within the SNCC that led to its downfall. SNCC could not simultaneously support Black Power without expelling whites and breaking ties with those who had supported its early successes. Claybourne rarely points out any positive impact the term Black Power had on members of the SNCC and often uses it in the context of violence, ambiguity and controversy. Although it is obvious In Struggle is thoroughly researched and quite insightful in terms of the organization and dynamics of SNCC, it is also clear that Claybourne belongs to the group of historians who envision Black Power as a direct conflict to the efforts of the Civil Rights Movement. Although Carmichael’s adoption of the term Black Power caused conflict, it arguably caused unity as well. Nowhere in this book does Claybourne mention this other side of the coin.

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18 Claybourne, p. 226-227.

As previously mentioned historical memory often coincides with Carson’s In Struggle; leaving Black Power a term synonymous with destruction, violence, excessive rhetoric and racial rioting. As Joseph, a leading historian in the field consistently argues in many of his works, this perspective has been amplified by histories of the Civil Rights movement and the New Left. However, as scholarship in black studies has begun to develop, new perspectives on Black Power have arisen. Jeffrey Ogbar’s Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity is part of this new scholarship. An assessment from Daryl C. Howard of Howard University states, “Ogbar is to be celebrated for addressing the complex dynamics and the gross misconceptions about Black Power. His text is a necessary guide for anyone engaged today in the study of black political thought.”

Ogbar’s Black Power is a well written narrative examining black power through the eyes of several different people and political groups. It makes an extremely important contribution to current scholarship, identifying Black Power as a thought and not a specific group. He clearly and concisely depicts how each group took the term and molded it to their own needs. Moreover, Ogbar discusses the positive and negative implications of each interpretation.

Beginning with the Civil Rights movement and its most prominent actors, Ogbar describes how Black Power became both a challenge and a contribution to the movement. While most historians resolutely declare King as strictly non-violent, Ogbar describes King’s embrace

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of non-violence as more tactical rather than philosophically absolute. Just as Malcolm X often preached, and those in prominent groups such as the SNCC and CORE began to embrace, King did actually believe he had an obligation to protect his wife and child. According to Ogbar, when King began to receive death threats, he purchased a firearm. He also accepted an offer for armed protection from volunteers who served as guards at his home. Thus, he argues it is not entirely accurate to view the SCLC and King as purely non-violent.\(^\text{21}\)

Additionally, Ogbar describes how King’s ideas about black power evolved over time. Initially calling the phrase destructive and anti-white, King began to invest in black power with a positive meaning, “The Negro is in dire need of a sense of dignity and a sense of pride, and I think Black Power is an attempt to develop pride. And there’s no doubt about the need for power- he can’t get into the mainstream of society without it.” King went further to declare that “Black power means instilling within the Negro a sense of belonging and appreciation of heritage, a racial pride... We must never be ashamed of being black.”\(^\text{22}\) In essence, Ogbar identifies King as part of the Black Power movement because of his own acceptance and interpretation of the phrase, which came in the form of captivating the masses towards a common goal of political and social equality for all.

Ogbar continues his examination of the movement by discussing the impact of the socially active student populations during the 1950’s and 1960’s. As most were members of SNCC and CORE, he discusses how they began to move away from the patient and pacifist thinking of the many of the southern black leaders. These students began to see justice through

\(^{21}\) Ogbar, p. 41.
\(^{22}\) Ogbar, p. 149.
loving oneself, as opposed to a concentration on the traditional tactics of “loving thine enemy.”

According to Ogbar, for the small number of black students on white college campuses, the environment was typically unwelcome and often hostile. Ogbar highlights different students’ experiences while simultaneously identifying a common theme in each one; although most felt white hostility, black students had no organized community to feel a part of and were continuously trying to act ‘white’ to find any solace. “Integration was the aim of the civil rights movement, and despite insults and discrimination from their white peers, black students were loath to create any black organizations. As young activists in the movement grew weary of seeking white acceptance, Black Power emerged with a profound appeal.”

For young students, Black Power meant recognizing the importance of their heritage and bringing it to the forefront both academically and socially on campus. Ogbar states that by the close of 1969, most major universities with any sizeable number of black students had formed Black Student Associations and about two-thirds of U.S. four year colleges offered courses related to black studies. Here, it is clear there is a different purpose and meaning for Black Power than Carson illustrated. The phrase brought dignity and pride to those seeking an education in a place where they were not welcome. These changes, arguably, were extremely important in celebrating diversity on campus and bringing light to a culture that was left out entirely before this time.

Finally, Ogbar discusses Black Power through the eyes of blacks in poor neighborhoods, often referring to them as the lumpenproletariat. Seeking to have their own expression of Black Power, blacks stricken with lives of poverty and crime began to move beyond the non-violent

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23 Howard, p. 211.  
24 Ogbar, p. 136.  
positions of the SCLC and the moderate positions of CORE and the SNCC, to their own more militant and aggressive expression toward the attainment of equality.\textsuperscript{26} Focusing on the emergence of the Black Panther Party, Ogbar describes the varying degrees of militancy and violence between different chapters and specifically identifies how this party became the face of Black Power.

The Black Panther party considered itself the true vanguard party of the people, speaking and promoting the fundamental rights of the people as defined by them. However, by the people they specifically meant to the poorest of the poor, those who couldn’t find jobs, those who made up the criminal element of the ghettos, those who had no vested interest in capitalism or voting, and those who could rise up and cause a violent revolution to get rid of the people oppressing them.\textsuperscript{27} For many joining this group, being a brother from the block evoked toughness and machismo, a clear divergence from those Christian blacks in the Civil Rights Movement taking beatings from whites and turning the other cheek. They often tolerated and accepted rogue behavior such as theft, violence, drinking and cursing.

According to Ogbar, police brutality was the driving force behind initial party activity. They explained that the Black Panther Party was formed to resist police brutality by violence and guns if necessary. They believed that only violence and fear payed off, and they took it upon themselves to police the police.\textsuperscript{28} To the Black Panthers, Black Power meant overturning a history of oppression with a revolution in which blacks would dictate their own lives; intimidation and violence were the means of achieving this goal for them. Ogbar does a remarkable job of objectively detailing the many confrontations that arose from the philosophical

\textsuperscript{26} Howard, p. 212.
\textsuperscript{27} Ogbar, p. 95.
\textsuperscript{28} Ogbar, p. 87.
differences the Black Panther Party brought. He describes the realities of Black Power’s impact on young poor blacks and acknowledges the consequences of this interpretation of Black Power that many early historians drew from.

Despite the obvious negative consequences to the radical militancy of some parts of the Black Panther Party, Ogbar describes in his last chapter how these groups inspired other minorities to challenge the injustice of America. Ogbar introduces his readers to Black Power’s influence on many groups such as the Latino Brown Berets, the Asian American radicals and other various feminist groups. According to Howard, *Black Power* helps one to understand how the nation was changed through the action and thoughts of many who were engaged not only in politics, but also in music, African heritage fashion and the overriding rhetoric of conflict and revolution.  

Ogbar does a thorough job in presenting the positive and negative aspects of Black Power from several different prominent perspectives. He argues critically and systematically that Black Power was not wholly opposed to the Civil Rights Movement. It complimented the movement in interesting and unique ways by encouraging black people to boldly resist daily and constant encounters that challenged black humanity. According to Ogbar; “It (Black Power) was never a smooth or easy process, and it was often not pretty, but it helped bring black people closer to the liberation they sought and for which they struggled.”

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29 Howard, p. 212.  
30 Ogbar, p. 158.
The Liberators- A Review of *Waiting ‘til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America*

Just as Ogbar’s *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* attempts to reassess the traditional view of the Black Power movement, so too does leading historian in the field Peniel Joseph’s *Waiting ‘til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America*. While Ogbar mainly argues from the lens of different groups within the movement, Joseph takes a different approach; examining the movement through the lens of prominent individuals who impacted and were concurrently impacted by the movement. For example, Joseph profiles important leaders such as Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, Huey Newton, Bobby Seale and Eldridge Cleaver. Through this lens, Joseph offers a narrative history of the Black Power Movement, eloquently weaving the influence international politics, radical economic theories and pan Africanism had on the thoughts and hearts of these public figures.

Additionally, Joseph argues that understanding the history behind the iconic Black Power imagery- clenched fists, racial upheavals, Black Panthers, dashiki and afro-wearing militants, requires “plumbing the murky depths” of a movement that paralleled, and at times overlapped, the heroic civil rights era. His book begins in the early 1950’s with Malcom X’s journey with the NOI and continues through a discussion of the implementation of Black Studies in the 1970’s. Though extremely wide in scope, Joseph effectively illustrates the perplexity of Black Power and how each actor played a significant role in its growth. Furthermore, Joseph exemplifies how these prominent Black Power leaders were simultaneously inspired and disgusted by the civil rights struggles.

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While Ogbar arguably chooses to gloss over the NOI’s influence on the Black Power movement, Joseph devotes an entire section of his book to them, expressing his view that this group and its leader Malcolm X were essential to the movement’s development. He eloquently describes the long road they traveled on from urban America’s back streets to the center of racial discourse. According to Joseph, the Nation was successful because of its gradual downplay on religion and its strategically important stress on economic uplift. The NOI emphasized the rebuilding of African American pride and dignity through “the bootstraps rather than the ballot” by disputing the effectiveness of civil rights bills, picket lines, and other forms of standard protest. He makes the claim that when faced with a choice between social marginalization and poverty, and a national political arena that ignored that very fact, thousands of desperate black men and women opted for the Nation of Islam’s promise of dignity, racial pride and hope.\(^\text{32}\) Joining the NOI as an ex-convict, Malcolm X’s life experiences exemplified this very thing for African Americans. Joseph shows how his dynamic leadership brought the group from a membership of only several hundred in the early 1950’s, to only a decade later becoming the most controversial black organization in the United States with a following of over 500,000 members.\(^\text{33}\) Despite Malcolm X’s eventual departure from the group, it is obvious that there was a striking parallel between the ideologies of those in this group and those that later embraced Black Power as a means to overcome their struggles.

Joseph also shows extensive scholarship on the impact that international events played on the Black Power movement at home. Beginning with Malcolm X’s travels to Africa, Joseph depicts how African American’s in the United States began to create a pan-African surge in which Africans in the United States and Africans abroad were all leading independence

\(^{32}\) Joseph, *Waiting til Midnight Hour*, p. 11-12.  
\(^{33}\) Joseph, *Waiting til Midnight Hour*, p. 16.
movements. According to Joseph, black Americans were looking to Africa and the larger third world to be partners in exerting pressure on the United States, a country desperate to win the cold war. Across the globe, Africans claimed that they would show the world that they could take the lead in justice, tolerance, liberty, individual freedom and social progress. The early stages of Black Power had a strong hold in the ideology of a united black people, in which all were proud to be black no matter where they were on the earth.

This thought was also exemplified in Joseph’s research in the 1961 assassination of Congo leader Patrice Lumumba. As the Congo’s most powerful leader, Lumumba was the first African Prime minister in a country with an almost uneducated native population. However, according to Joseph, his combative speech was unacceptable in the eyes of Belgium colonial leaders and consequently he was assassinated at the hands of political enemies to end his rule. His assassination, at the hands of political enemies captured the imagination of scores of American blacks only recently introduced to African Independence movements. According to Joseph, Lumumba’s political ascendance catalyzed black militancy. This black militancy came in the form of a major riot outside the United Nations. Organized by some of Harlem’s leading activists, the protest demonstrated how united African Americans had become and was considered by many African American leaders as a promising sign of a black cultural awakening. Although not always in agreement in regards to the way African Americans should come together in support of independence movements abroad, the participation of both civil rights leaders and those who would eventually come to embrace Black Power, reflects the significance of pan-Africanism among blacks.

34 Joseph, Waiting til Midnight Hour, p. 18-19.
36 Joseph, Waiting til Midnight Hour, p. 44.
Finally, in weaving together a history illustrating key people and events, Joseph demonstrates some of the intersections between northern Black Power advocates and southern Civil Rights leaders at home. In the south, blacks faced the humiliations of a Jim Crow system in which signs announced they were not welcome at certain restaurants, movie theaters and swimming pools. In many areas blacks were fighting to register to vote for the first time, essentially battling what some might call an American apartheid. White resistance was equally as appalling; as white supremacist groups were seen partaking in activities such as beating up demonstrators with cooperation from local authorities and forming groups like the White Citizen’s Councils with the aim of preserving their segregated ways of life.\(^{37}\)

On the other hand, racial politics outside of the South took on a completely different character. Joseph describes white resistance in the North as a form of de facto segregation. Though not declared by law, African Americans were plagued by unequal housing, schools and deep poverty. Because of their freedom to use public accommodations and exercise voting rights, northern black rights seemed less urgent and less insidious than the battle going on down south.\(^{38}\) While it was seemingly ‘easier’ for whites to sympathize with the plight of southern African Americans, northern African Americans faced a much more difficult time making their grievances important on the white liberal agenda. In trying, and subsequently failing with tactics such as boycotts and community activism aimed at securing good jobs, schools, housing and equal opportunity, northern blacks began to look towards other alternatives to make their bread and butter needs known. Here Joseph describes the unique overlapping between the two movements; “while black power activists admired civil rights insurgency, and even joined civil


\(^{38}\) Joseph, *Waiting till the Midnight Hour*, p. 50-53.
rights groups in hopes of pushing them further to the left, black militants across the country laid the groundwork for turning local initiatives into an alternative national movement.”

Ultimately, Joseph successfully illustrates how Black Power emerged alongside civil rights activism. His ability to describe the entirety of the movement through the stories of different important actors gives the narrative an interesting twist from most other prominent scholarships. Joseph is effective in identifying how the personal plight and individual stories of Black Power advocates helped shape its meaning for different people. Additionally, just as Ogbar’s work does, Joseph establishes a clear divergence from the traditional Civil Rights Movement/good, Black Power Movement/bad paradigm.

We are Men- A Review of “They Finally Found Out that We Really Are Men: Violence, Non-Violence and Black Manhood in the Civil Rights Era”

Simon Wendt’s article published in the Journal of Gender and History titled, “They Finally Found Out that We Really Are Men: Violence, Non-Violence and Black Manhood in the Civil Rights Era” adds an interesting perspective to the numerous historical accounts that attempt to identify the relationship between the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power movement. As identifiable in the title, Wendt attempts to analyze the importance of gender roles and masculinity in the use of violence during the Civil Rights era. He uses a myriad of different sources such as memoirs, interviews and media coverage to argue that the elements of self-defense and violence in the Black Power Movement were a reflection of the black man’s desire to affirm his manliness by protecting their wives and daughters. Furthermore, Wendt claims that a closer look at the Civil Rights Movement in the south reveals that the non-violent strategy’s

39 Joseph, Waiting till the Midnight Hour, p. 53.
connotations of submissiveness hampered the efforts of civil rights activists to win over male African American men in supporting the movement and arguably, contributed to the rise of men who choose self-defense as a more acceptable means of achieving racial equality. As Wendt puts it, those men were attracted to the Black Power movement because of its appeal to their manhood and its ability to instill a positive black identity to the African American male.\(^\text{40}\)

Just as Ogbar and Joseph do, Wendt is successful in displaying how defensive violence and Black Power both complemented civil rights activity, as well as contradicted it at times. Beginning with a thorough history of the role of violence in the pre-civil rights era, Wendt sets up a successful argument by showing how these previous years fermented a concept in which African Americans believed the progress of their race rested on two things: black men’s willingness to fight for racial justice, and their ability to protect black women.\(^\text{41}\) While Wendt recognizes that some men felt the self-control and courage that non-violent protest required seemed to be a boost their male identity, most found it degrading to their manhood. He exemplifies this statement with a speech from Malcolm X in which he repeatedly suggested that passive resistance stood for powerlessness and effeminacy, while armed self-defense was thought to epitomize true black manhood. “Anybody can sit… An old woman can sit. A coward can sit… It takes a man to stand.”\(^\text{42}\)

Wendt’s section describing the Deacons for Defense and Justice (DDJ), a small defense squad that patrolled the town of Jonesboro, Louisiana, is a perfect example of his ability to show the parallels between those who supported Black Power and those that were still wed to non-


\(^{41}\) Wendt, p. 547.

\(^{42}\) Wendt, p. 555.
violence. According to Wendt, the DDJ patrolled the black section of town around the clock and protected the CORE activists who were assisting the local movement there. Armed with rifles, pistols and walkie-talkies, the DDJ quickly put an end to white violent harassment around CORE’s main workings in that area.\textsuperscript{43} While these DDJ members did not agree with CORE’s commitment to non-violence, they chose to support them with physical protection. Activist Robert Hicks explained to an interviewer, “see we never had adopted CORE’s philosophy… we believe in love and brotherhood, but just don’t go for the idea that if somebody slap me on my cheek, I turn the other one. If you slap me on my cheek then I have to defend myself.”\textsuperscript{44} The DDJ was a source of pride and respect for black males in their ability to protect their community. The appeal here was that whites did not respect the passiveness of non-violence, and a black man was nothing without respect. The appeal for armed defense and the self-dignity it provided for young males grew and became a significant auxiliary to civil rights activism such as registration drives and non-violent protest.

While Wendt makes the claim that self-defense was not necessarily Black Power activists’ first priority, its visibility and growth hints at the importance of gender in the black freedom struggle’s radicalization. Radicalization of the term came in the form of the Black Panther Party. Leaders, Newton and Seale, were vehement in projecting the idea that non-violent protest was degrading to masculinity. They believed their alternative construction of manhood, grounded in defending the black community through the use of violence, was the only way to create change. The Black Panthers, with their ten-point program, believed that they embodied the real traits of black manliness.\textsuperscript{45} Wendt’s analysis of the Black Panther Party also displays his

\textsuperscript{43} Wendt, p. 549.
\textsuperscript{44} Wendt, p. 549.
\textsuperscript{45} Wendt, p. 556.
ability to see the conflict that arose between civil rights leaders and more radical thinkers. These men seemed to be obsessed with being able to dictate their own roles as males in society. It was obvious being strong, violent, and anti-white were important characteristics of a black man in the Black Panther Party.

Regardless of the degree of radicalism that individual men choose to take in forming their own identities during the civil rights era, Wendt makes a clear argument that Martin Luther King was unable to appeal to the hearts and minds of young men like leaders of the Black Power Movement could. While King’s commitment to non-violence created powerful images for the American public and proved to be strategically valuable in gaining sympathy from whites, it was also extremely detrimental for many young African Americans’ identity. As Wendt articulates it, dominant notions of what it meant to be a man frequently impeded the efforts of civil rights organizers to convert African Americans to Ghandian non-violence. While on the other hand, the affirmation of manhood that resulted from the black man’s ability to protect himself, his wife and his child was extremely appealing to African American’s and played a significant role in the spread of Black Power. While lacking in his examination of how class and education may have differentiated an African American man’s appeal towards the machismo of black power, Wendt does an exceptional job in providing a new perspective to the history of Black Power and its relationship to the civil rights movement.

Conclusion

The evolution of Black Power scholarship has proved to redefine the meaning of the era and the impact that Black Power activists had on the advancement of African American’s in the United States. As many historians have argued, early scholarship and the popular mind
consistently associate the Black Power movement with tragedy, hatred, violence and a clear contradiction to the Civil Rights Movement. Recent scholarship, led by historians such as Peniel Joseph and Jeffrey Ogbar has attempted to reconsider this story. While Black Power remains an enigma, the emerging historiography has provided readers with an understanding that it constituted a multidimensional movement with a variety of different ideologies and agendas that accomplished much more than previously acknowledged. Recent historians have been able to go beyond the surface and identify elements that made this new way of self-identification and thought dynamic, multi-faceted and malleable for each individual.

While each historian’s ‘place’ for black power in the history of post-war America differs, it is evident that the movement celebrated black people and their self-determination as no mass movement had done before. Its widespread legacy is manifested in religion, music, education, culture and politics. While the identity of African American’s in the United States continues to change, one can be certain that the spread of Black Power has assured self-determination in this matter. Race relations have seen indescribable changes since the 1960’s but the battle continues to rage in different arenas. Today’s Civil Rights Movement continues in the form of the disparity in education amongst a majority of inner city students and their white suburban peers. What role is Black Power playing in the minds of these young students? Historians have yet to define how this movement has touched the lives of our current generation, yet it is unmistakable that a sense of pride in being black has cultivated and will continue to benefit all in our society for generations to come.
Chapter Three- Original Research

Introduction

I was 24 years old when I first realized that after 12 years of public schooling and 4 more years of private undergraduate education, somewhere along the way I had been misguided, cheated even, of the opportunity to consider evidence and draw my own conclusions of the world in which I grew up in. As a social studies teacher of 100 students in an urban and relatively low income middle school, I felt energized by my opportunity to teach them about the history of their country and to give them examples of real heroism and good, by which they could then model their own lives. The realization that I was ill-prepared to do such a thing confronted me during our black history month celebration.

The 8th grade students had created a presentation for the entire school, showcasing African Americans in history that they admired and respected. The classic ‘characters’ which we all expected were: Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, W.E.B Du Bois. However there was one that I, a white middle class woman, did not expect nor understand, Malcolm X. I was stunned at the mention of his name, wasn’t he in support of violence against whites? Didn’t he go against the peaceful teachings of the great MLK? All I had ever been taught in terms of the Civil Rights Movement boiled down to Malcolm X= BAD, Martin Luther King Jr.= GOOD. Why would this group of African American children be celebrating such an icon of hatred? I did not understand. That moment began my journey to ‘re-learn’ American History, and more specifically the 1960s, in a way that would help me to understand the children I was entrusted to teach each day, in a way that was not so black and white, and in a way that I could feel confident in teaching my students a more truthful and realistic history.
My own personal experience is a classic example of how history has often arguably been mistaught in American high school classrooms; an argument many historians and professors of education have made. According to James W. Loewen, in his book *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, history professors in college routinely put down high school history courses and see their main job as having to correct what their students learned in high school by providing more accurate information. Textbooks in American history, and the history curriculum itself, are often muddled by the conflicting desire to promote inquiry and indoctrinate blind patriotism. An overwhelming sense of nationalism in the perspectives highlighted in American history textbooks is obvious, even by their titles, *America: Past and Promise, The American Pageant* and *Triumph of the American Nation*. And while yes, we want our students to be proud of their nation and dedicated to the ideals the United States was built on, we do not want to do this at the expense of the truth. The truth, which may at some times, be controversial; which at times may show that the greatest actors in history were actually human, that while they may have created great change in America, they may have done so at the expense of others.

My historiographical research originally began focusing solely on the Black Power Movement; what it was about, who lead it and what ultimately came as a result of such a powerful and controversial movement. I found that the movement had several different facets, from peaceful pride to violent extremism. I found that Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Power movement were not always at odds, as I had previously imagined. Current historians had done the research and taken the time to reconstruct this idea for Americans, if we only knew where to look. However, as I began the second phase of my original research, my plan was to examine current history textbooks and their portrayal of the Black Power movement during the 1960’s, my path changed a bit. I began to notice other ‘flaws’ about the 1960’s era in general in

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several of our current textbooks. I determined that it is not just the subject of Malcolm X that is mistreated in the history classroom, but the several other ‘controversial’ aspects of the 60s as well. Thus my research took a new turn; in this paper, I have taken 6 different American history textbooks and analyzed the text; what was written, what wasn’t written, how it was written, who was quoted, where in the text it came, and many other things that impact the re-telling of our history. In my mind I hoped to find the answer to the question that confronted me in my first year of teaching African American students, why didn’t I know that? And how did the resources I had available have an impact on my knowledge of the controversial 1960s.

The 1960s in the popular memory of most Americans, and in history classrooms across the country, are neatly packaged into three main stories. First, the Civil Rights Movement: the heroic non-violent struggle for African American equality which was tragically replaced by the violent black nationalists. Then the war in Vietnam, a well-intentioned war to support freedom and democracy across the world but a letdown because of flawed tactics and the disillusionment with American failure. Then finally, a small section is always given to tell the story of the ‘crazy hippies’ who wore different clothes and just wanted to do their own thing. While these three stories provide a general overview for our students, it is the overview, the neat packaging of a story, which truly leaves them shortchanged about this era. In essence, the nature of the ‘packaging’ or summary tends to leave out important elements of the history that often leave students misguided. The events of the 1960’s must be unraveled for students to be confronted with the reality of controversy and the realities of forces of ‘evil’ and ‘good’ that exist within people and events simultaneously. Once American history textbooks more accurately reflect true history, regardless of nationalism, morality or controversy, students will then be confronted with
the opportunity to reason and make their own judgments about wrong, right, and the shades of grey in between.

**The 1960’s Race Relations**

The first part of the standard textbook treatment of the 60s begins with the Civil Rights Movement. In six textbooks, all published between the years of 1994 and 2006, authors begin their discussion of the 1960’s movement for the advancement of African Americans with the famous *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. Starting with headings such as “Laying the groundwork”, or “Setting the Scene”, textbooks generally set a basis for the students with the introduction of separate but equal facilities in the south. As all the books duly note, “the separate areas for African Americans were rarely equal to those for whites. Far less money was spent on schools for black children, for example. These schools had fewer books and seldom offered courses that prepared students for college.”

While *Brown v. Board* was a victory for African Americans, authors of 4 out of the 6 texts go directly into the story of the Little Rock Nine in order to exemplify how vehemently whites in the South protested such a measure.

Most of the texts continue on in some sort of chronological order, detailing Rosa Park’s refusal to give up her seat and thus lighting the flame to the victorious Montgomery Bus Boycott, the sit-ins that began in North Carolina and the Freedom Rides that evoked extreme violence from whites. These ‘main events’ are found within all of the six textbooks in some form of detail. Woven into these stories is the introduction of leading people and groups that participated in the Civil Rights movement. As anyone might expect, Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership are given a significant amount of attention in each book. Usually with the

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benefit of an entire section, MLK is integrated well into the history of the 1960’s. One text went
even as far as to discuss his upbringing and his own father’s participation in the struggle for
equality. An excerpt of his March On Washington Speech is placed in a bold or different color
font in 4 out of the 6 texts and his protest strategy is the basis behind each event noted above,
often coined as non-violent direct action or civil disobedience.

Credit is given to MLK and other prominent civil rights groups, including CORE and the
NAACP for the passing of the Civil Rights act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. While
acknowledging these two pieces of legislation as crucial to the movement and a great victory in
the south, all of the textbooks attempt to recognize the fact that problems still existed in the north
for African Americans in different ways. For example, in The American Nation, the authors
state: “The new civil rights laws did not end all discrimination. In the north, no formal system of
segregation existed. Informally though, housing in certain neighborhoods and employment in
many companies remained closed to African Americans.” With this transition however, comes
a great misrepresentation in the texts. While Malcolm X is generally introduced as the leader of
this new shift towards radicalism and violence, the texts consistently oversimplify and
consequently misrepresent the way in which Malcolm X truly influenced advancement of
African Americans.

Most of the texts simplify Malcolm X’s argument to one for a ‘separate white society’
and a ‘hatred of whites.’ Even more intriguing is that they all then subsequently mention his
trip to the Middle East and his drastic change of heart where he then called for “a society in
which there could exist honest white-black brotherhood.” While Malcolm X only preached this
new idea for the last and shortest portion of his life, this change of heart was mentioned in every

48 Dr. James West Davidson, and Dr. Michael B. Stoff, The American Nation, (Glenview: Prentice Hall, 2003), 863.
49 Ibid, 863.
paragraph where he was the main topic. While on the other hand, Malcolm X’s more famous speeches, such as the “Ballot or the Bullet” are never mentioned. In this speech Malcolm X urges African Americans to control their own autonomy by controlling the politics and the politicians of his own community. Furthermore, he clarifies his stance by stating, “it doesn't mean that we're anti-white, but it does mean we're anti-exploitation, we're anti-degradation, we're anti-oppression. And if the white man doesn't want us to be anti-him, let him stop oppressing and exploiting and degrading us.” An excerpt such as this one in a textbook would do much more justice to Malcolm X and his actual contributions to the history of African Americans. Here it is clear that Malcolm X was fighting against the exploitive ways of America and applying that concept to African Americans across the United States. He urged blacks to educate themselves so that they could dictate the politics and economics of their lives. From reading any one of these 6 textbooks, our students could only conclude that Malcolm X wanted to live separately in hatred of white people and then had a change of heart at the end of his life.

An analysis of the way Malcolm X is integrated into the high school curriculum shows how textbooks do a great disservice to our students. What he truly stood for is never mentioned; instead authors have attempted to keep him in the ‘neat’ role in which students are lead to believe that the great teachings of Martin Luther King were so virtuous that they even changed the mind of that evil Malcolm X in the end. Furthermore, there is no connection ever made between the unwavering violence imposed on blacks by whites that many would argue justify Malcolm X’s calls for armed resistance.

While there is a general uniformity in the misrepresentation of Malcolm X amongst all of the texts, there is also a great disparity in the mention of other radical groups that formed in the
late 1960’s such as the Black Panthers, SNCC and their subsequent contributions to the Black Power Movement. While only one text goes into great detail about the formation of such radical groups and their goals, both positive and negative, most attempt to abridge the radicalization in one or two paragraphs. Rarely are important activists such as Stokely Carmichael, Bobby Seale or Huey Newton mentioned and never are their speeches or more radical platforms and strategies referenced. Often, authors are quick to go directly into what is generally accepted as the positive outcomes of radicalism, rather than enlighten students with the totality of the movement, both positive and negative, both violent and non-violent.

For example, in Joy Hakim’s *A History of Us: All the People 1945-1999*, she presents the black power movement as a group with different ideas, some of which wanted to “get even for the terrible oppression of slavery and segregation,” some of which who wanted to separate themselves from whites and some “who wanted to bring respect and power to a black community that could then act on equal terms with whites.” Her bias comes through as she then states, “The first two ideas didn’t go far… but that idea of power through respect- now that was appealing.”

While black power did bring respect to African Americans, her subsequent statement, “so they could then act on equal terms with whites” is very misleading. Black Power leaders in reality did not want the movement to be a justification for their equality with whites, but instead one that had nothing to do with them. Carmichael defined it best in his Free Huey Speech in 1968, “Our problem is to develop an undying love for our people...an undying love for our people. We must be willing to give our talents, our sweat, our blood, even our life for our people. Nothing else! Not this country, OUR people! OUR people!”

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Again here there is a ‘dual reality,’ Carmichael did want Blacks to respect themselves by recognizing their own heritage and owning their own organizations, however at the same time he wanted nothing to do with benefiting white America. He saw it as the time for exploitation to be over. Again here we are attempting to shield our students from the reality of the situation. Is it not possible to address the fact that blacks wanted to focus on their own race rather than working to mold into the values that suited whites? Would it be ‘anti-American’ to tell a history this way? It seems that these questions have halted many leaders in curriculum design to show the authenticity and controversy that often existed in history.

Most of the textbooks end their discussion of the crusade for equal rights with the death of MLK in 1968. Generally, the students are left with some ambiguous statement which attempts to celebrate the victories of the Civil Rights protests while at the same time leading to the fact that true equality has yet to be attained. The simultaneous end of analysis on this time period, with MLK’s death reflects his concrete place in American History. While MLK and the non-violent protests of the time are consistently and more thoroughly discussed in the high school curriculum, more radical actors such as Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael do not. The disparity in the degree to which this second element is told reflects a clear inconsistency in the minds of textbook authors as to where or how this belongs in history. To clarify, it is not that the non-violent movement does not deserve such a spotlight in the American history textbooks; it is that a complete picture, one which includes the subsequent radicalization, that gives our students a clearer picture of what actually happened is necessary; whether it fits nicely in a little box or not.
American War In Vietnam

The second major part of the current textbook discourse on the 1960’s includes the American war in Vietnam and the social and political controversy it aroused in the United States. A brief background to the war is provided for students, accurately illustrating the United States’ initial intervention in Vietnam as a support for the French against Ho Chi Minh and his communist army. Each text also provides information on the Geneva Accords, which concluded the failure of France in Vietnam and initiated the division of the country, one half led by communist Ho Chi Minh and the other by a U.S. backed Ngo Dinh Diem. While not going into great detail, all six of the textbooks acknowledge the fact that Diem was not popular amongst the Southern Vietnam people. For example a statement to this effect is found in each text, “Diem lacked support in his own country. He imprisoned people who criticized his government and filled many government positions with members of his own family.”

Continuing with accuracy in setting the stage for the increasing involvement of the United States, four out of the six texts even stated, or at least alluded, to the fact that the United States indeed recognized that they could not win the support of the South Vietnamese with Diem and power and thus, “would not object to Diem’s overthrow by the military.”

Where the texts arguably begin to misrepresent information for students is the dialogue regarding the Gulf of Tonkin incident and its ensuing Resolution. It is now known that the Gulf of Tonkin incident; the ‘attack’ of an American ship by North Vietnamese torpedo boats, was a lie created by President Johnson and his supporters to garner increased support from Congress and the American public for the war. Here nationalism and desire to render a feeling of pride

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53 Andrew Cayton, Elisabeth Perry, Linda Reed, and Allan Winkler, America: Pathways to the Present, (Needham: Prentice Hall, 2002), 874
54 Ibid, 874.
within our students clearly overrides the truth about history within the curriculum. A few of the
texts did hint at the fact that the incident may have been fabricated, for example in America:
*Pathways to the Present* the authors called details of the attacks ‘sketchy,’ or in *Americas Past
and Promise* the authors put as a side note, “(It is not clear whether the attack took place.).”

However, not in one text book is there a statement to the effect that Johnson *purposely fabricated*
the details of the attack to persuade congress to support his Gulf of Tonkin Resolution.

Furthermore, there is an overwhelming and unsettling tone of innocence with regards to
the Gulf of Tonkin incident and the general motives for the United States’ involvement in
Vietnam in all of the text books. Nowhere in these texts is the fact that the government lied to its
citizens for its own purposes, nor a legitimate analysis of the implications of that lie on the
legitimacy of the war in Vietnam. The implications of this are concerning. Students seem to be
conditioned to believe that the government *always* has the most virtuous intentions behind its
actions. Rather than being confronted with the reality that the government does make wrong
choices and can be challenged.

Again the façade of innocence continues as the texts transition smoothly from the Gulf of
Tonkin to the failure of the American military against the Guerrilla fighters and the discontent at
home for the war. Exemplifying this air of innocence in regards to the purpose for the United
States’ involvement in the war is this statement found in Hakim’s text: “We thought we were
doing the right thing when we began. We really were unselfish. We weren’t imperialists. We
didn’t want to make Vietnam a colony… we just didn’t understand what the war was all
about.”56 The Gulf of Tonkin incident provides teachers with a perfect example for their students
of the harm in blindly trusting statements made by the president and other officials simply
because of their place in the government. Rather with this content teachers can emphasize the

56 Ibid, 132.
importance of staying abreast of events going on in their lives and doing their own research in matters that are important to them. However, because of the current discourse on this event, students do not get this opportunity and thus are molded to simply believe what they hear each night on the evening news.

Details of the warfare in Vietnam are general and diluted, and most accounts of the war end with the Tet Offensive and American’s consistent protest at home to end the war. An analysis of these sections reflects a consistent background of morality in the actions of American leaders attempting to ‘stop the spread of communism.’ The sections are generally brief and leave students with no real sense of the discontent at home that went beyond frustration with the lost lives of their brothers, fathers and husbands. Nowhere do the texts confront students with the protests of international leaders calling for an end, not just to the war in Vietnam but an end to American imperialism across the world. The war in Vietnam could be represented in a much broader theme of imperialism and exploitation, but is never done so. Our students are left with the flat assumption that it was all just an honest mistake.

**The Counterculture**

The Counterculture, the last of the ‘big three’ of the sixties is arguably the most mistreated topic in the American History curriculum of that era. It is portrayed as completely apolitical, unserious and in some cases detrimental to American society at the time. Most clearly reflecting textbook authors’ dismissal of the counterculture is purely the amount of space the topic received in these gargantuan books: only 12 short sentences in *The American Nation* and 6 sentences in *America’s Past and Promise*. Where more generous space is given to the counterculture in *The American Pageant, All the People* and *America Pathways to the Present*,
these pages are mostly filled with elaborations of the music and dress, never analyzing the political and social significance of these expressions. For example in one explanation of the counterculture the authors wrote; “Many young Americans joined the counterculture movement… Instead of traditional families, they lived together in groups or communes. Many listened to new forms of rock music. Some ‘turned on’ or experimented with illegal drugs.”

While these things are all true, the authors fail to give students the reasons why these young activists did such things. Never do they mention how the rock music was actually protest music, often saturated with lyrics that spoke out against racist murders, cold war ideology and American Imperialism abroad. Moreover, sexual freedom and experimentation with drugs, which were pillars in the counterculture’s message of liberation, are either alluded to in one short sentence or never mentioned at all. Most often, especially with drug use, the authors only emphasize the negativity and immorality of the use. Nowhere is this more evident than Hakim’s text. An entire section is highlighted ‘Drugs and the Sixties’ in which she lists all of the well-known actors, musicians and entertainers that died of drug overdoses between 1960 and 1980. Furthermore in her main text she gives the impression to students that the counterculture made no achievements, essentially because of the widespread experimentation with drugs; “they wanted to make America live up to its ideals, and they might have achieved more, if it hadn’t been for some of their experiments, like drugs, which turned to disaster.”

This is not an argument that the text books should promote drug use as an ideal in American society. However, while some young activists did get high just to be high, many others did it for different reasons; reasons which our students would benefit from if they are to understand the entire mentality of the counter culture. According to Timothy Miller author of

57 Davidson, 859.
59 Hakim, 166.
The Hippies and American Values, being high was a way for the hippies to escape the world of capitalism and exploitation, and instead search for their own authentic human existence. The hippies argued that if they had lived in a more humanistic society, there would be no need for such a release, but because our world was so corrupt, this was their way of thumbing their nose to the world.\textsuperscript{60} With this addition to the curriculum or discourse on the counterculture, students now have another perspective on the more idealistic element of the counterculture. They are taught that yes there were many fatal overdoses and the hippies may have largely underestimated the negative impacts of their drug use. However, they also see that the hippies felt dope was a statement against all that they believed was wrong with the world at that time; an extension of the protest in the schools and on the streets.

Along with drug use, rarely is the sexual revolution mentioned in the current discourse on the sixties and the counterculture. Four out of six texts do not mention the change in sexual behavior at all. The avoidance of the sexual element of the counterculture, paired with the fervent criticism of drug experimentation, lends itself to another argument about the current high school curriculum. While the content produced for the Civil Rights Movement and the war in Vietnam are undeniably twisted to bring about sentiments of nationalism and tranquility for our students, the content produced for the counterculture seems to be arguably one to censor our students knowledge of the actions of activists during the 1960s`. The textbooks seem to be taking a sort of parental role here, shielding students from any discussion of drugs and sex as if not to offend the students or ‘introduce’ them to such offensive topics. This parental role is flawed for two reasons, firstly it’s based on the assumption that high school teens have not already been introduced to such things in their own life, thus creating a false disconnect between students of the current time and their predecessors in the 60s. Secondly, there is again the element of truth

\textsuperscript{60} Timothy Miller, The Hippies and American Values, (University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 30.
and the disservice we are doing to youth’s education of American history. Drugs, sex and music were an integral part of the counterculture’s unique displays of protest against the government and those that chose to conform. Arguably, teachers do have the autonomy to introduce these topics in a way that confronts our students with the reality of the times without endorsing such actions. However, with our current textbooks, students are sold short by getting a picture that these kids just wanted to go against what their parents did, be insubordinate and have a good time.

**Conclusion**

An analysis of six textbooks on their portrayal of the 1960’s in American History shows that there are some serious flaws in our education system. One could make the argument that we are harming our students by avoiding, embellishing or completely leaving out specific events or people in history that don’t necessarily reflect democracy, honor, morality or any other virtue we hope our students to believe about the history of America. The harm is one in which students fail to learn how to critically analyze events and characters in history. They are not challenged to look beyond good and bad, or right and wrong, but are forced to see history in the neat little box that shines of the ideals envisioned by the founding fathers. Furthermore, with the current status of the curriculum, students fail to understand their past in authentic and upfront way. In not understanding their past, many students become incapable of thinking effectively about their present and future. Instead, a revision of the curriculum as examples have been set forth in this argument, will allow students to form their own conclusions about a more truthful history and evaluate effectively things going on in their own lifetime.
Best Practice for Teaching Social Studies and Fostering Historical Thinking Skills

Each discipline in the field of education has its own specific set of skills that students must develop fluency in to master that content area. While some social studies teacher might romanticize about creating a classroom full of students who will someday go off and write important contributions to the historical field, most know that this is just not the case. Instead, a social studies teachers’ job is to successfully arm students with the critical thinking skills necessary to study history, as well as be successful in navigating the adult world. When history class is just a series of memorizing dates, places and events; students lose the real world value and motivation in learning about history.

On the other hand, when teachers raise the expectations for themselves, as well as their students, an entire new set of skills becomes available for students to learn and apply to their real life. Social Studies education has a unique set of skills, mostly because of the inherent necessity for primary sources. History is told through the use of primary sources, and therefore it is essential that social studies teachers use primary sources in their classroom, as well as teach the necessary skills students need to effectively pull out information from the source. According to The National Archives Experience, a website dedicated to teachers seeking primary source materials and activities to supplement curriculum, when we ask students to work with and learn from primary sources, we transform them into historians. Rather than passively receiving information from a teacher or textbook, students engage in the activities of historians — making sense of the stories, events and ideas of the past through document analysis.\footnote{The Foundation For The National Archives, "The National Archives Experience." Accessed July 3, 2013. docsteach.org.}
following historical skills as most important: Chronological Thinking, Historical Comprehension, Historical Analysis and Interpretations, Historical Research Capabilities and Historical Issue Analysis and Decision Making.\textsuperscript{62} Similar to Bloom’s Taxonomy in general education, these skills are listed in a hierarchy of learning objectives set out for students. Therefore chronological thinking, the lowest in the classification of historical thinking skills, simply requires students to recall information in chronological order. Chronological thinking is an important base skill for students to have in order to develop a deeper understanding of historical events, places, people or primary sources. Historical comprehension requires students to activate their prior knowledge to make sense of new information. Students comprehend when they are able to organize, compare, translate and give descriptions of information.\textsuperscript{63}

Moving up to more complex skills, historical analysis and interpretation requires students to examine and break information into parts by identifying cause and effect or determining motive or bias. Students can make inferences based on historical information and find relationships between events, people and places in history. Historical Research capabilities focus on the student’s ability to differentiate between reliable and unreliable sources, as well as come up with historical questions to pursue through sound research methods. Finally, the site lists historical issue analysis and decision making as the most complex historical thinking skill to develop. This skill requires students to break down information and compile it to form new ideas. Additionally, students are able to make judgments about information and present and defend specific arguments based on historical information.

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid

Therefore, a social studies teacher’s job is to create learning objectives for his or her students based upon one or several of these historical thinking skills. This is often one of the most challenging aspects of an educator’s job, along with the responsibility of ensuring that each individual student succeeds academically in the classroom and can truly meet the intended objective. Teachers must dig through their ‘toolbox’ of instructional strategies to find the best way they believe they can help students to successfully achieve the desired objective of the day.

According to Ceri B. Dean, editor of the text *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*, these strategies need to be a part of a common language for instruction and must be supported by research that proves they can increase student achievement. Using research based strategies will ensure that high quality instruction is the norm, and each student’s needs are met.64

In this edition of *Classroom Instruction that Works*, the authors cite 9 specific research based strategies that they believe will increase student achievement in the classroom. The strategies are organized within a framework that is focused on instructional planning so teachers can systematically and successfully implement them in their teaching. The strategies are organized into 3 components: Creating an environment for Learning, Helping Students Develop Understanding, and Helping Students Extend and Apply Knowledge. Each component systematically flows into the next component to ensure that a higher level of knowledge and thinking is being achieved. According to the text, the strategies in the first component- Creating the Environment for Learning- are the backdrop of every lesson. The strategies in this component: Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback and Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition, ensure that students have the basic skills to be successful in the more advanced

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64 Ceri B. Dean, Elizabeth Ross Hubbell, Howard Pitler, and Bj Stone, *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*, (Denver, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, 2012), xiv
skills and thinking. When applying these strategies to teaching students the historical skills previously discussed, it is clear that these three specific teaching strategies can be best employed when attempting to develop a student’s ability to think chronologically. For example, Dean argues that setting objectives and providing feedback allow students to make connections to what they are doing in class with what they are supposed to be learning. He argues that learning objectives should not be so broad that they are meaningless or so narrow that they limit learning or provide few opportunities for differentiation. The learning objective is what students should know, understand, or be able to do as a result of an activity. Starting each lesson or unit with basic, yet specific and assessable objectives create a clear path of learning and success for students, which then lend itself to the teaching strategy of reinforcing effort and providing recognition to students. For example, if a teacher set the objective that at the end of a lesson, students will be able to identify three different events that led to the United States involvement in Vietnam; students have a clear idea of what they need to be able to do. It is a simple objective that does not require any of the higher historical thinking skills, yet also leaves room for differentiation as there are many events that led to the United States’ initial involvement in Vietnam.

Dean states that when teachers communicate objectives and then provide constructive feedback on the students success with that specific objective, students anxiety about their ability to succeed decreases and their intrinsic motivation to be successful increases. This is extremely important because it sets the stage for a student’s learning in the beginning of a unit or subject area, and promotes the learning of higher historical thinking skills later in the lesson or unit. For example, feedback should be criterion referenced, meaning it should address the

\[\text{65. Ibid, xv}\]
\[\text{66. Ibid, 7.}\]
\[\text{67. Ibid, 3.}\]
knowledge that students are supposed to learn and provide information that helps them know what needs to be done to improve their performance.\textsuperscript{68} A good teaching tool to make sure this is accomplished is using a rubric. While a rubric could essentially be used to provide essential feedback in developing any of the historical thinking skills, it is mentioned in this section because it gives students direct information as to how to achieve mastery at an objective and what steps need to be met in order to develop fluency in that specific objective. Furthermore as previously discussed, this type of direct and clear feedback increases motivation, which indirectly promotes higher achievement in the classroom.\textsuperscript{69}

The second component in the best practices for teaching—Helping Students Develop Understanding—consists of 3 more strategies which include; Cues, Questions and Advance Organizers, Summarizing and Note Taking, and Assigning Homework and Providing Practice. These strategies take students one step further in their learning and support them in constructing meaning from new information by integrating it with their prior knowledge. According to Classroom Instruction that Works, acquiring and integrating procedure-type knowledge involves constructing a model of the steps required to perform a skill, develop a conceptual understanding of the process and its variations and finally, using the process or skill fluently.\textsuperscript{70} These strategies can be best utilized when developing students’ historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretations, and historical research skills.

Effective cues and questioning are arguably one of the most important tools that a teacher can use in his or her ‘toolbox’. They help students access their prior knowledge and put that knowledge to use in learning new information. According to Dean, teachers should focus on what is important, use explicit cues, ask inferential questions and ask analytical questions in

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid, 14.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid, 20.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid, xvi
order to use this strategy best. For example, when providing students with a photograph of a traditional Black Panthers march, some inferential questions might be; “who is usually involved in this event?” or “what role might this group play in the Black Power movement?” Some analytical questions might be, “Why would someone consider this march to be positive/negative for the community?” or “How might white reporters have used this photograph to advance their arguments against the Black Panthers?”

Additionally, advance organizers provide an organized conceptual framework that is meaningful to the learner to relate concepts in the instructional material to elements of that framework.\(^71\) An anticipation guide is a great tool for social studies teachers to use prior to watching footage of real historical events or news casts from throughout history. An anticipation guide can help students to build a framework for learning by providing meaning and purpose for what is to follow.\(^72\) The guide might ask students to agree or disagree with specific statements relating to the content of the video before viewing the footage, and then answer the same questions again after they’ve watched to see how their knowledge/perspective have changed.

Within this second component of teaching strategies, Dean argues that teaching students how to summarize and take notes is essential to their success in college and the adult world. The skills of summarizing and note taking also go hand in hand with a student’s historical research capabilities. In order for students to fully engage in history and what it means to act as a historian does, they need to be able to do sound research by pulling relevant information and capture main ideas from both primary and secondary sources. According to *Classroom Instruction that Works*, students often find the task of summarizing confusing because they are unsure of what information is most important and what is irrelevant to their research objective. The text lists

\(^{71}\) Ibid, 50-52.
\(^{72}\) Ibid, 56-57.
three teaching strategies that best support students in their understanding of summarizing. These are: teach students a rule-based summarizing strategy, meaning they follow a set of steps to summarize information, use summary frames which follow a series of questions that create a summary, or engage students in reciprocal teaching in which students model the role of the teacher through a discussion framework. When students have the ability to summarize information, they can more efficiently pull out key information from historical text to answer their research question.

Additionally, teachers often assume that students simply know how to take effective notes, which often leads to students trying to copy down everything that is said or read verbatim. This does not allow students to process knowledge or assimilate it into their own understanding. According to the text, research has proven that students need explicit and differentiated instruction in note taking. Students should be taught a variety of note taking formats so they can choose which they find most suitable to their learning styles. Some strategies for teaching note taking include, giving students teacher prepared notes as a model in which teacher and student create notes together while information is being presented, using information webs, and providing guided notes in which students fill in blanks for important content. These note taking strategies could be used for research when the source might be a speaker or professor who is recognized as an expert on a specific historical topic. Or when students are reading texts and need to organize information efficiently based on their research topic.

Finally, in the text Classroom Instruction that Works, the authors identify practice and assigning homework as the last strategy in supporting students understanding of content and material. The authors of the text define practice as the act of repeating a specific skill or

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73 Ibid, 88.
74 Ibid, 92.
reviewing small amounts of information to increase recall, speed and accuracy.\textsuperscript{75} Homework acts as a perfect tool for students to practice skills they have learning in school, independently at home. It allows for important information to be repeated and then stored in a student's working or long term memory. The text highlights three important recommendations for using this tool appropriately; develop and communicate a homework policy so parents and students understand the purpose and appropriate way to complete homework, design homework assignments that support academic learning, and provide feedback on assigned homework.\textsuperscript{76} In social studies education, like all disciplines, homework can be a very important extension of the school day. Therefore, just as classwork social students assignments shouldn’t be a series of reading and comprehension questions, neither should homework assignments. While often more challenging, it is still possible for teachers to use primary sources in homework. For example, a great way to support students’ historical analysis skills would be to provide actual quotes from important actors in history. Students can answer analytical questions based on these quotes to support both their historical comprehension and historical analysis skills outside of the classroom.

The third component- Helping Students Extend and Apply knowledge- helps students to develop their deepest thinking skills. These strategies, Identifying Similarities and Differences, and Generating and Testing Hypotheses, take students beyond just finding the correct answer but allows students to expand their understanding of a concept, make judgments about information and apply skills to real world contexts. These specific strategies go hand in hand in developing a student's historical decision making and issue analysis skills. According to Dean and the other authors of \textit{Classroom Instruction that Works}, identifying similarities and differences is the process of comparing information, sorting concepts into categories and making connections to

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid, 101.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid, 103.
existing knowledge. These are all processes that need to be modeled and explicitly taught by the teacher in order to ensure a students’ success in thinking and learning at a deeper level. The text lists several tools to support a teacher in developing these skills for students which include using Venn Diagrams, Comparison Matrix, Graphic organizers and analogies displayed in pictorial form.\(^7\) When students have a deep enough understanding of a topic to be able to classify it and create metaphors and analogies, they can also make historical judgments based on their own knowledge and given knowledge. Furthermore, students begin to make connections to material they are learning in class to real world events. For example, students can analyze the relationship or potential impact of a current issue based on a similar historical event by identifying and understanding similarities and differences.

In addition, the mental processes involved in solving problems such as predicting, making inferences and creating theories, are all essential in promoting deeper levels of thinking. Research shows that when students generate and test hypotheses to solve problems, they ultimately have a clearer understanding of lesson concepts and make stronger connections with the content and real world events. Teachers must engage students in a variety of structured tasks for generating and testing hypotheses in the social studies classroom in order for them to develop their own ability to make decision and judgments about historical people, places and events. An excellent example is used in the text which involves investigation in a social studies lesson. Essentially when investigating, students are asked to identify and resolve issues regarding past events in which there are contradictions throughout history. Students must clearly identify the situation, identify what facts are already known about the issue and create a hypothetical solution or scenario based upon what is already known. Finally students seek out and analyze evidence based on differing perspectives and primary sources to determine if the solution or scenario is

\(^7\) Ibid, 130-134.
Plausible. An explanation of their learning is essential as a reflection piece for students to further develop their awareness of learning and development of key historical and life skills.

The research based teaching strategies taken from the well-respected and commonly used text, Classroom Instruction that Works 2nd edition, are meant to be used in any content area as the educator sees fit. It is up to the teacher to decide which strategy would work best for the intended learning objective. As a social studies teacher, it is essential to understand the specific skills that go along with learning about history and developing some of the major skills that historians have; and then choosing the best teaching strategy to instill that skill in a student. By planning well and using a variety of resources, including secondary and primary sources, teachers can create the best learning environment possible to meet the needs of all of his or her students.

Teaching Students about Race Relations in the 1960s using Best Practices and Primary Sources

The 1960’s was a time of great change and turmoil for citizens in the United States. Protest was rampant and thus differing opinions on social issues ranging from race, sexuality, war, and peace peppered the nation. These controversial issues during the 1960’s make thoroughly teaching this part of history to students very difficult. However, difficult as it may be, it is our responsibility to provide students with as much of these varying perspectives as possible to give them as thorough as an education as possible. This begins with the planning of thoughtful and rigorous learning objectives that help direct our teaching and our students learning. Once clear objectives are chosen, then teachers look to specific strategies that they know in order to support students in satisfactorily meeting the stated learning objectives. The following section is

78 Ibid, 144.
a portfolio of different sources and recommended teaching strategies to support specific historical skills that are best taught using sources chosen.

The first section relates specifically to introducing students to race relations during the 1960’s. The first source, a video highlighting the arguments of the Black Panthers taken from the records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation develops essential historical skills outlined by the National Archives. These skills, historical analysis and interpretation and historical issue analysis and decision making are best developed using three different best practice strategies outlined in *Classroom Instruction that Works*. The first strategy, using an anticipation guide, was chosen because it helps students build a framework for learning by providing meaning and purpose of what is to follow. Teachers can easily active student’s prior knowledge on a topic that they are sure they have had some exposure to. In this case, the purpose is to identify students’ perceptions on the police force and the role of government in society and understand whatever knowledge they are coming into the lesson with. The anticipation guide serves as a form of self-feedback for students and teachers following the video, identifying how student’s perceptions of these public groups do or do not match what they learned in the video.

During the video, teacher guided notes were provided to also to support students understanding of both how to take sufficient and relevant notes, as well as helping students focus their attention on important information necessary to achieve the desired objective. In this specific guided notes example, students are asked to use both auditory and visual skills in order to determine arguments and methods for protest of the Panthers. Finally, students are also asked analytical questions to support their ability to make decisions based on historical questions. Students are both confronted with what they know in their everyday lives to be the role of the police, and also the reality of the police force as an often times corrupt entity in the 1960s. They

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79 Ibid, 58.
must analyze this information by answering the provided questions and then make a judgment based on the information and their own values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>“Black Panther”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black Panthers Video</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from the National Archives Experience, <a href="http://www.docsteach.org">www.docsteach.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>This film is a newsreel in which Kathleen Cleaver spoke at Hutton Memorial Park in Alameda County, California. The footage also shows a student protest demonstration at Alameda County Courthouse, Oakland, California. Black Panther Party Leaders Huey P. Newton, Eldridge Cleaver and Bobby Seale spoke on a 10 point program they wanted from the administration which was to include full employment, decent housing and education, an end to police brutality, and blacks to be exempt from the military. Black Panther Party members are shown as they marched in uniform. Students at rally marched, sang, clapped hands, and carried protest signs. Police in riot gear controlled marchers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York State Learning Standard</td>
<td>Social Studies Standard 5 Civics, Citizenship and Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Core Key Idea</td>
<td>8.13 An extensive and powerful civil rights movement began in the 1950’s and helped transform African American rights during the 1960s. The success of the civil rights movement led to renewed reform efforts by women and other groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Core Conceptual Understandings</td>
<td>8.13. c- The strategies of activists in regions, cities, and campuses across the country responded to local politics and physical (natural or constructed) environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Objective</td>
<td>- Students will be able to identify activism strategies used by the Black Panthers based on video viewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Students will be able to explain at least 2 reasons why the Black Panthers and their followers choose these specific strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Skill</td>
<td>Historical Analysis and Interpretation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Historical Issue Analysis and Decision Making**

**Best Practice Teaching Strategy**
- Advance Organizer- Anticipation Guide (See Figure 1 below)
- Teacher Prepared Notes- (See Figure 2 below)
- Use Analytic questions- (See Figure 3 below)

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**Figure 1- Anticipation Guide**

*Before we watch the FBI video on the Black Panthers, read each statement below and check one of the boxes indicated whether you agree or disagree with the statement. After you watch the video, compare your opinions to the information presented. Be prepared to defend your opinions and explain any changes that you made after the video!*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Before Viewing</th>
<th>After Viewing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The police protect all people in the community regardless of race, gender or socioeconomic status</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government leaders make moral decisions for all in the United States and abroad</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Parties can make their views known to the world in any manner they see fit</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a group of people does not feel they are being protected by the government, it is ok to use violence against them to make their demands heard</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2- Teacher Prepared Notes

Pre-viewing class discussion:

1. What does it mean to be an activist? _____________________________________________

2. What methods have you learned about already that activists use to get their voices heard?
   -
   -
   -
   -

Directions: During the video, write down the different methods you see the Black Panther’s using to protest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things I See</th>
<th>Things I hear (not including interviews)</th>
<th>Words People Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Black Panther 10 point program

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Figure 3- Using Analytic Questions

1. What grievances does the Black Panther group have against the United States government and their local police force? _____________________________________________
   ________________________________________
   ________________________________________
   ________________________________________
2. What arguments do the Black Panthers have in support of their more radical methods? (Explain at least 2)

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

THINK DEEPER! MAKE A JUDGEMENT

3. Do you agree or disagree with the Panthers views? Be specific about which you agree with and which you don’t. Give evidence to support your answer.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

This second source is an article taken from the New York Times, written by Martin Luther King Jr., outlining his definition and meaning for Black Power. This source best supports the development of historical comprehension, when used independently, and historical analysis, when accompanied with a previous lesson on the Black Panthers or an article showing an opposing interpretation. These skills are best developed using the teaching strategies of an Argumentation Frame and a Venn Diagram as outlined in the text Classroom Instruction that Works.

The argumentation frame is a specific strategy used to help students develop their ability to summarize text and pull the appropriate main ideas and supporting details. When used with rigorous historical text, argumentation frames support students historical comprehension, simply understanding and being able to explain what was in the text. This specific argumentation frame asks students a series of questions in order to scaffold students thinking and help them in

80 Ibid, 86.
identifying MLK’s arguments for his definition of Black Power and the details he provides to support that main idea.

The second strategy, the Venn diagram, forces students to move into a higher level of thinking by comparing and contrasting MLK’s argument for Black Power versus Huey P. Newton and the Black Panthers’. A Venn diagram was chosen as the best teaching strategy for its strong visual element. Things that are similar between the two ideas or things being compared go in the intersecting parts, and things that are different go in the respective non intersecting parts, students can easily see where the differences and similarities lay. 81 Students take the main arguments they outlined in their argumentation summary frame and then compare them to the main arguments of other civil rights leaders, or in this specific case, Black Panther leaders. This helps students to understand how complex the concept of Black Power really was, and how each individual group interpreted it differently to accomplish different goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>“Martin Luther King Defines ‘Black Power’”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>An article from the New York Times written by Martin Luther King Jr. urges Negroes to discover how to organize their strength into compelling power so that the government cannot elude their demands. He gives arguments and methods in which Negroes can develop a situation in which the government finds it wise and prudent to collaborate with them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

81 Ibid, 123.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New York State Learning Standard</th>
<th>Social Studies Standard 5- Civics, Citizenship and Government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common Core Key Idea</strong></td>
<td>8.13 An extensive and powerful civil rights movement began in the 1950’s and helped transform African American rights during the 1960s. The success of the civil rights movement led to renewed reform efforts by women and other groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common Core Conceptual Understandings</strong></td>
<td>8.13.a – The demands for rights by African Americans, women of all races, Native Americans and immigrants grew out of longstanding struggles for equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Objective</strong></td>
<td>- Students will be able to identify at least 3 ways Martin Luther King Jr. believes African Americans can gain economic and political power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Students will be able to identify similarities and differences between MLK ideas of black power and the Black Panthers ideas of black power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historical Skill</strong></td>
<td>Historical Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historical Analysis and Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best Practice Teaching Strategy</strong></td>
<td>Summary Frames- Argumentation Frame (See Figure 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying Similarities and Differences- Venn Diagram (See Figure 2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 1- Argumentation Frame

**Directions:** Use the summary frame below to help you identify MLK’s claims to his given argument below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is MLK’s main argument in this article? (Given)</td>
<td>“When the Negro citizen learns that united and organized pressure can achieve measureable results, he will make his influence felt.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What information does MLK present that has led him to this argument? (Think about previous accomplishments of SCLC he describes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What examples or explanations support MLK’s argument? (Give 3)</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c.</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Summary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2- Venn diagram

- Martin Luther King Jr. and the SCLC
- Huey Newton and the Black Panthers

Similarities
Teaching Students about the War in Vietnam using Best Practices and Primary Sources

The war in Vietnam sparked thousands of protests across the United States and is still a controversial issue for many people today. Educators must be extremely careful in not presenting their own personal opinions about the development of the war and instead use various resources to show all different perspectives on the issue. Using a newspaper article taken from the New York Times, describing the specific warfare being used in Vietnam, students gain a sense of what it was like to be a citizen during the war, as well as imagining the battle ground as a soldier during that time. With another challenging text, the best teaching practice to support a student’s ability to understand the main idea of the argument and further the historical comprehension skill is a form of guided note taking.

According to Classroom Instruction that Works, research shows that teaching students a variety of note taking formats will help prepare students to be successful in school. When armed with a variety of strategies, students can then choose the one that best suits them. This type of note taking differs from the teacher prepared notes because information is not taken by both teacher and student as a guided process, but instead, the student independently reads and fills out the graphic organizer. However, this strategy still provides a solid support for the students in taking notes as it guides them by providing specific information rather than just having the students write down information they think is important. Finally, this graphic organizer incorporates the skill of inference to help students. They have to draw upon what they already know about warfare and specifically warfare in Vietnam, and then “fill in the gaps” based on what they read in the article.

__Ibid, 93.\_
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>“Vietcong Guerrillas Use Classic Tactics in Winning a Battle”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Author: Peter Groses Special to the New York Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New York Times; Feb 28, 1964; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times pg.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>The author describes a most recent battle between the Vietcong and the United States military. He highlights differing tactics of the Vietcong forces and specifically discusses the strength of the 514th battalion that has both Guerrilla and organized military strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York State Learning Standard</td>
<td>Social Studies Standard 1-History of the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies Standard 2- World History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Core Key Idea</td>
<td>8.11 The Cold War struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union dominated international military policy, global conflicts, technological advances, and global alliances for almost four decades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Core Conceptual Understanding</td>
<td>8.11.b The United States based its military and diplomatic policies from 1945 to 1990 on a policy of containment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Objective</td>
<td>Students will be able to describe the military tactics of the Vietcong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students will make inferences about the reasons for success of the Vietcong and failure of the United States Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Thinking Skill</td>
<td>Historical Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historical Issue Analysis and Decision Making</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 1- Graphic Organizer

1. Define Guerilla Warfare: ________________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________________________

2. Define Classic Warfare: _____________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________________________

*Directions: After discussing what we’ve learned so far in regards to the Vietcong and the United States’ Military endeavors in Vietnam, and reading the New York Times Article “Vietcong Guerrillas Use Classic Tactics in Winning a Battle” fill in the graphic organizer below.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Tactic of Vietcong</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Make an Inference: How might this tactic have contributed to US defeat?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This second set of sources to support student’s content knowledge and development of historical skills in regards to the war in Vietnam uses propaganda from two different anti-war groups, the National Peace Action Coalition and the Daughters and Sons of Liberty. Both groups provide various arguments as well as methods of protest against Nixon’s War. Because both groups are anti-war, these sources lend themselves to aiding students in developing their skills in research. This is because students are expected to find opposing views to those presented by other important groups and people during the same time. The teaching strategy that best supports the initial comprehension and comparison of the two articles is the comparison matrix. The comparison matrix was chosen because it allows the student to compare several different items at one time, and thus is a more complicated document than the Venn diagram. Using the comparison matrix after the Venn diagram is taught allows students to take on more of the cognitive work on their own.\textsuperscript{83}

The second objective, which is intended to develop student’s research capabilities, is best taught using the problem solving research guide. Students must generate a solution by creating a hypothesis to the proposed problem. According to \textit{Classroom Instruction that Works}; being able to generate a hypothesis about any type of content involves two types of thinking simultaneously: induction and deduction. Both induction and deduction force students to think deeper and increase their knowledge in a subject through evaluation and analysis.\textsuperscript{84} In this specific case, students research Nixon’s arguments in support of the war through a collaborative research guide. Students brainstorm possible problems they might encounter in research as well as solutions to those problems. Then they work together, assigning specific tasks to each team member to gather information to solve given problem.

\hspace{1cm}\textsuperscript{83} Ibid, 125.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid, 137.
| Title | 1) National Peace Action Coalition Convention Pamphlet  
|       | National Peace Action Coalition Pamphlet.pdf  
|       | 2) Informational Flyer for the New Patriot  
|       | Pamphlet for the New Patriot.pdf  
| Source | 1) Pamphlet, National Peace Action Coalition, No Date, Folder 34, Box 30, Social Movements Collection, The Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University.  
|        | 2) Informational Flyer for The New Patriot, ca. 1976, Folder 30, Box 32, Social Movements Collection, The Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University.  
| Overview | 1) National Peace Action Coalition Pamphlet outlines action proposal adopted by the convention. The pamphlet includes main principals of the coalition and a series of five proposals for action to end the war in Vietnam.  
|          | 2) Daughters and Sons of Liberty compare their duties to organize against the war with forefather’s actions against King George III of England during the Revolutionary War.  
| New York State Learning Standard | Social Studies Standard 1- History of the United States  
| Common Core Key Idea | 8.12 Domestic policies and everyday life in the United States reflected and responded to the international tensions of the Cold War.  
| Common Core Conceptual Understanding | 8.12.a The struggle to contain communism abroad was mirrored by a struggle to prevent the undermining of America within the United States and at times resulted in attacks on American civil liberties.  |
**Learning Objective**

Students will be able to describe the antiwar movement and investigate varying methods of protest to the war

Students will be able to research and explain arguments in support of the escalation of war in Vietnam

**Historical Skill**

Historical Analysis and Interpretation

Historical Research Capabilities

**Best Practice Teaching Strategy**

Identifying Similarities and Differences-Comparison Matrix (See Figure 1)

Generating and Testing Hypothesis- Problem Solving (See Figure 2)

---

**Figure 1**

**Comparison Matrix**

Directions: After reading and analyzing documents provided. Compare the tactics and methods of two different anti-war groups during the escalation of the Vietnam War by filling in supporting details in each box that applies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supported Violence as a method of protest</th>
<th>Used Propaganda</th>
<th>Followed policy of non-exclusion</th>
<th>Attacked Nixon’s Policy of escalation and the continued draft</th>
<th>Supports immediate withdrawal of US troops</th>
<th>Calls for revolution against US government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Peace Action Coalition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughters and Sons of Liberty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2- Problem Solving through Research

Problem: The National Peace Action Coalition is preparing another Convention in which they will refute all of President Nixon’s claims for increasing the United States military presence in Vietnam and continuing the war there. However, they don’t have enough information on Nixon’s policies and plan.

Proposed Solution: In order to help prepare the NPAC, your job is to create a pamphlet informing the coalition of at least 2 of Nixon’s argument for escalation.

Possible barriers/constraints to success: (Class discussion- list challenges)

Possible Scenarios to overcome barriers: (Class discussion)

Collaborative Research: Assign roles to each group member in order to create an informative pamphlet detailing support for the War in Vietnam.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Note-taker</th>
<th>Team Leader</th>
<th>Argument 1</th>
<th>Argument 2</th>
<th>Visuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name (s)</td>
<td>All members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Guide:
- Source:

- Argument Summary

- Supporting Details
Teaching Students about the Counterculture using Best Practices and Primary Sources

Because the Counterculture involved such a wide variety of issues and groups, it is rarely discussed in history textbooks used today. Additionally, it is often dismissed as a social movement of idealistic, sexual druggies with no real historical or educational contribution to make. However, as educators, if we look deeper into the resources available it becomes clear that several important movements arose out of the counterculture and therefore make it a significant aspect of the 1960’s to cover with students. This particular source, the Chicana Caucus Resolutions, specifically looks at the Women’s movement that arose out of the counterculture and the various women that influenced the formation of the movement. This resource best supports the development of student’s historical analysis and interpretation skills, as well as their ability to research through collaboration.

The best teaching practice strategy introduced for this particular resource is a form of teacher prepared notes using the concept map. This concept map was chosen for its visual element, but also in this case to help students gather and organize information from different sources and teammates. With the concept map students can clearly see how each event led to a specific grievance within the Chicana Women’s movement. Furthermore, students are asked to use their prior knowledge, based on previous lessons of the women’s movement within the counterculture, and answer analytic questions about the relationship between the Chicana movement, and the greater Women’s movement which involved women of varying social classes and cultural backgrounds. Both the concept map and the analytical questions allow students to create a map, in a sense, of the small events that occur and how they can lead to the formation of different groups that make up an entire diverse, yet strong movement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th>National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) Convention - Chicana Caucus Resolutions, 9-11 February 1973</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Source** | Chicana Caucus Resolutions, 11 February 1973, Steinem Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, MA.  
   http://www.smith.edu/libraries/libs/ssc/curriculum/steinem.html |
| **Overview** | The Chicana Caucus Resolutions is a document from the National Women’s Political Caucus Convention in which La Rauza Unida Party set out their goals for political expression and their demands for Chicana Welfare Rights. |
| **New York State Learning Standard** | Social Studies Standard 1- American History  
Social Studies Standard 5- Civics, Citizenship and Government |
| **Common Core Key Idea** | 8.13 An extensive and powerful civil rights movement began in the 1950s and helped transform African American rights during the 1960s. The success of the civil rights movement led to renewed reform efforts by women and other groups. |
| **Common Core Conceptual Understanding** | 8.13.b Successes within the civil rights and women's movements activated new social and political movements and the formation of a counterculture. |
| **Learning Objective** | Students will be able to research various events relating to the Chicana rights movement in order to analyze the Chicana Caucus Resolutions passed in 1973  
Students will be able to explain how race and class impacted the Women’s Movement in the counterculture. |
| **Historical Skill** | Historical Analysis and Interpretation  
Historical Research Capabilities |
| **Best Practice Teaching Strategy** | Teacher Prepared Notes- Concept Mapping (Figure 1)  
Ask analytic questions (See Figure 1) |
**Figure 1**

**Directions:** Using the provided concept map, research and take notes on the following events: The Talmadge Act, the Women's Education Act of 1973, the Farah or Boycott, and the Lettuce Boycott. Explain the event and how it relates to the concerns of the Chicanas based on their resolutions.
Discussion Questions

1. What are the concerns specific to the Chicanas?

2. How are race and class reflected in the concerns of the Chicana women?

3. Why was it necessary for the National Women’s Political Caucus to concern itself with the Chicana movement?

4. Based on this document and your knowledge of the Women’s Movement, how did race and class impact the Women’s Movement?
The second set of sources provided to teach the development of the Counterculture involves the war in Vietnam. Due to the complexity of the text and the message in the Port Huron Statement, this specific activity only requires students to summarize the information provided. The best teaching strategy to support this basic level of historical comprehension is the Argumentation frame. This summary frame again, supports students’ ability to identify main arguments and pull out details the author used to support those arguments. However, these argumentation frames do not provide the students with the main argument like the ones introduced previously. Therefore, students must be able to identify repeating and overarching themes within each source to accurately identify arguments on both sides.

| Title                                                                 | 1) Port Huron Statement Introduction: Agenda for a Generation  
|                                                                     | 2) President Nixon addresses the Nation on the War in Vietnam |
|                                                                     | http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SDS_Port_Huron.html |
|                                                                     | 2) President Nixon addresses the Nation on the War in Vietnam, 3 November 1969.  
| Overview                                                             | 1) The Port Huron Statement was written in 1962 as a manifesto of the American Student Activist Movement by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The statement outlines the group’s vision and programs for a social movement in the United States. More specifically, the statement is directly aimed at changing the racism at home and foreign policy of colonialism abroad  
|                                                                     | 2) President Nixon’s address the United States on the War in Vietnam outlines his plans for the future of the war. Additionally, Nixon address the student’s anti-war protests and his decisions to not immediately withdraw despite their grievances. |
| New York State Learning Standard                                     | Social Studies Standard 1- American History  
|                                                                     | Social Studies Standard 5- Civics, Citizenship and Government |
8.13 An extensive and powerful civil rights movement began in the 1950s and helped transform African American rights during the 1960s. The success of the civil rights movement led to renewed reform efforts by women and other groups.

8.13.b Successes within the civil rights and women's movements activated new social and political movements and the formation of a counterculture.

8.13.c The strategies of activists in regions, cities, and campuses across the country responded to local politics and physical (natural or constructed) environments.

Students will be able to determine the attitude of students towards the United States foreign policy and the attitude of politicians towards United States foreign policy.

Historical Comprehension

Summary Frame- Argumentation Frame (See Figure 1 and 2)

Asking analytic questions

**Figure 1**

*Directions: Use the summary frame below to help you identify main argument presented in the Port Huron Statement and the supporting evidence given*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is the main argument presented by the SDS in the Port Huron statement?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What information does the SDS present that has led them to this argument? (use historical evidence)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What examples or explanations support the SDS main argument? (Give 3)</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2

Directions: Use the summary frame below to help you identify Nixon’s claims to his main argument in his address to the nation in 1969.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is Nixon’s main argument in his speech?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What information does Nixon present that has led him to this argument?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Use historical evidence)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What examples or explanations support Nixon’s argument? (Give 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

Our students are reliant on us as educators to prepare them for success in their futures. Whether that begins simply at providing them with information and skills to pass the New York State tests, or moves further to giving them the skills necessary to read and comprehend college level text; we cannot rely on textbooks alone to do this. History is simply a story, woven from the perspectives and accounts of all who lived it. As my research indicates, textbooks often only select certain perspectives purposely to convey a specific message; in this case American textbooks create one of ‘blind patriotism’. The primary sources provided in this paper have been carefully selected to provide those perspectives that were lacking in the texts researched. Black Power is told and examined through the actual words of both Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Panthers; allowing students to see how the movement was interpreted in several different ways and used for both unity and aggression at the same time. The Vietnam War is examined more closely in regards to its failure and the sentiment across the United States during that time. And finally, the Counterculture is represented not just from the perspective of the hippies and druggies ‘looking to have a good time’, but also those who were educated and idealistic, seeking a different United States of America.
Additionally, these texts were carefully chosen to provide variety and text complexity at the 8th grade level. With the best practice teaching strategies given, students can better learn the skills necessary to create understandings through the integration of new information with prior knowledge. They can learn skills essential to break down information and categorize it accordingly; they can identify perspective, and similarities and differences between primary source texts. Finally, students can also learn to make judgments and decisions based on their thorough and rigorous social studies education. Research has shown that providing students with multiple perspectives in history helps develop their critical thinking skills and provides them with a deeper, more accurate knowledge of history. When students come into the social studies classroom, they often hold preconceived notions about different topics and peoples throughout history based on their everyday lives and experiences. Often times, these preconceived notions are misconceptions, and using primary sources texts can help to promote conceptual change of preconceived misconceptions. This project was created as a source for educators seeking to change misconceptions, provide alternate perspectives in history, and prepare students for the Common Core standards and college by engaging them with rigorous and complex texts.
References


[http://www.smith.edu/libraries/libs/ssc/curriculum/steinem.html](http://www.smith.edu/libraries/libs/ssc/curriculum/steinem.html)


Malcolm X: "The Ballot or the Bullet" (excerpts)
   The political, economic, and social philosophy of Black Nationalism; delivered 3 April, 1964 in Cleveland, OH


http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SDS_Port_Huron.html
