

## Digging in the Digital Archives: Engaging Students in an Online American History Survey

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THE DIGITAL WORLD has unhooked information from authority and created a post-truth ethos, yet it also allows for access to the building blocks of deliberative democratic discussions: sources, evidence, and databases. This article describes an approach to teaching the American history survey utilizing primary source databases as the students' main reading material. This approach, including Open Educational Resources, online teaching strategies, and a shift from "coverage" to understanding, created a culture of engagement, motivation, and deliberative discussion. In the four times that I have offered this online course, the experience has turned some students from history haters to history lovers, and from detached civic participants to thoughtful first-time voters. I will demonstrate how direct access to primary source databases resulted in a class culture of active learning, or "doing history"; of critical evaluation not just of historical, but also contemporary sources; and of deliberative discussion among people from diverse perspectives, class positions, and ethnic backgrounds.

Mobility, access, and flexibility have changed not just our students, but also us. Faculty and students are adapting to changes in the broad culture that have effects on our sense of time, our relationship to

authority, and our connections with each other. For even the smallest bits of information, we Google rather than remember. The digital accessibility of archival materials gives current-day students a wealth of information at their fingertips and provides new mechanisms for instructors to engage their students. Digital accessibility is also the reason that current American culture is in a crisis of authenticity of evidence, made most visible and notable by the preponderance of “fake news” during the 2016 presidential election.<sup>1</sup> Students’ use of non-credible sources mirrors similar choices made by news outlets, political candidates, and by their friends and family members. Though it would seem that the uncertainty of a “fake news” era might require the authority of a uniform textbook narrative, instead, sending students directly to original sources provided the necessary antidote to “fake news” and concerns about credibility. Students reported that the guided use of primary source materials promoted critical evaluation not just of historical, but also contemporary sources, and additionally promoted deliberative discussion among people from diverse perspectives.

### **Engaging Students with Primary Sources and Digital Tools**

Considering that the majority of students now walk into classrooms with more computing power in their pockets than I had on my first desktop computer during my undergraduate years, we need to reframe our thinking about coverage.<sup>2</sup> In 1998, the American Historical Association (AHA) recognized the promise of digital materials to amplify the learning outcomes of primary source student work in history survey courses for issues of student motivation, coverage, and the integration of skill development with content delivery. The AHA started an NEH-funded project, “Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age,” which was a group of three geographic clusters of both two- and four-year university instructors who incorporated computer-based primary source assignments into their history surveys.<sup>3</sup> Linda Pomerantz, one of the participants of the NEH project, reported that the end of the project raised the question of whether technology can provide a different or better solution to the problem of “coverage,” but that this issue drove their choices of what lessons to develop in a web environment.<sup>4</sup> In my course, technology wasn’t a simple solution to the problem of “coverage,” but technology *did* facilitate

the pedagogical approach of having students “do history” by working directly with primary sources as the main reading material of the course and, in many cases, by choosing their own sources from primary source collections. My approach mirrored some of the pedagogical goals described in T. Mills Kelly’s openly accessible book, *Teaching History in the Digital Age* (2013), which demonstrates the promise of a rapidly advancing digital age and its potential applications for engaging students in the practice of history.<sup>5</sup> Kelly proposes we utilize digital methods with our students to encourage thinking, finding, analyzing, and presenting, and he argues that “we should be very worried that we are losing the rising generation of students because our approach to the past seems increasingly out of sync with their heavily intermediated lives.”<sup>6</sup> Kelly demonstrates how our students are changing and moving forward without us, and how they differ in their interest in authenticity over originality—in other words, with their comfort with remix. He argues, “by structuring learning opportunities that address fundamental historical problems and give students enough free rein to take real ownership of their work, we open ourselves (and them) up to the possibility that much more can happen in our courses than the development of the most basic skills of historical analysis.”<sup>7</sup> Kelly encourages us to co-create classwork with students, utilizing their skills and desire to create web content while acting as historians and making historical arguments.

Tona Hangen’s “Historical Digital Literacy, One Classroom at a Time” (2015) provides examples of ways she engaged her students in digital historical assignments in order to demonstrate that “technology provides genuinely exciting ways to help students grasp the constructed nature of history.”<sup>8</sup> The assignments that she describes utilize commonly available digital tools so that students work actively and collaboratively with the vast array of historical materials easily accessible on the web. For example, her students use a Google Doc template to create their own “yellow journalism” and collaborate across semesters to evaluate and build mini-archives around historical topics, allowing students to see that history is constructed, is contested, and is a conversation among scholars. Hangen utilizes digital tools and active learning because “[e]ffective history instruction permanently and irreversibly awakens students to the insight that history is a constructed, contestable argument, and it does so in such a way that prevents students from unlearning it.”<sup>9</sup>

Because you could never “cover” every fact and figure from the time period in a survey course, these types of courses are ripe for rethinking and reframing how to shift our learning goals from coverage to understanding. The research on student motivation has long touted the benefits of active engagement over passive listening.<sup>10</sup> Cognitive science has demonstrated the ways in which our brains are structured to learn from application and reflection.<sup>11</sup> In particular, underrepresented groups benefit from active learning teaching strategies, and, therefore, it is important that we utilize these methods. The University of Michigan-Dearborn is a regional campus of just over 9,000 students, 42% of which are transfer students, 43% are Pell Grant eligible, and 44% have caregiving responsibilities. Additionally, 26% are students of color, there is a substantial number of students whose families come from the Middle East and North Africa, and 38% of our students are first in their family to attend college. Because we know students can look up facts and figures, data and information, our role is—now even more so than before—to guide them toward asking good questions, interpreting evidence, and constructing arguments. What better way for my students to practice these skills than through regular and routine primary source searching, analysis, and argument?

My students and I benefitted from the massive amount of work that people have put into the Open Educational Resources (OER) movement. John Hilton’s review of sixteen studies on the efficacy and perceptions of OER found that students generally achieve the same learning outcomes when OER are utilized.<sup>12</sup> Faculty barriers to adopting OER in their classrooms include lack of awareness, uncertainty about how to find materials, and quality of materials.<sup>13</sup> I did not approach my course with a commitment to trying OER. I thought of all of the history databases and archives that I had accessed free on the web and realized that the modality of an online course made it easier to engage my students with primary sources. I also pictured my online students purchasing a text from the bookstore, reading it at home by themselves, and responding to questions about the text in on our learning management system, and the whole process seemed somehow much more dry and disengaged compared to face-to-face courses. I wanted my students to be digging into archives like the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress or the Japanese American Relocation Digital Archive (JARDA) at the University of California’s Calisphere. The online format of the

class changed my approach of assigning primary sources. Though I had long since dispensed with assigning a “reader” textbook in favor of providing links to digitized primary sources, the method of online teaching opened my eyes to the possibility that my students could be digging for sources themselves rather than only working with sources curated by me. While in the first week, I did provide them with a list of ten sources for them to choose from, for the rest of the assignments, I sent them to digital archives where they chose sources for themselves. Selecting primary sources was part of the intellectual work of the course, and digitized primary source databases made that work possible.<sup>14</sup>

In order to contextualize their exploration of digital archives, they would still need a chronology, so I used segments from two openly accessible American history digital textbooks.<sup>15</sup> The textbook segments that I assigned were relatively short. They served as a quick chronology to set the stage for the students’ exploration of databases. My training is in American Studies with a disciplinary spine in ethnographic research methods, so the approach that I brought to the course focused on questions of inclusion and exclusion in changing relationships between groups defined and divided by gender, ethnicity, and class. The main work for each week consisted of two Discussion Forums that provided a guided exploration of digital archives. I provided prompts that linked to an archive, raised a big question, and guided students in the process of selecting sources. I required that they answer questions with evidence from the primary sources, make connections to the digital textbook, post sources to share with their peers, and interact with their peers’ posts.

For example, in a Week 4 Discussion Forum on the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, I sent the students to the well-curated Cornell University Library website on the 1911 industrial tragedy. I provided them some guidance in working through the site and then asked them to address these prompts:

- From your overall look at five to six primary sources, what can you learn about what life was like in cities around 1911? What role did working-class women play in city life? How did city life affect women? Provide *at least one example* from the readings in your online textbook or the video assigned for this week.
- Choose one primary source and post a link to it in this thread. Explain what it can teach us about working women and urban life.

Most of the Discussion Forum posts (more of which can be found in **Appendix A**, followed by the Discussion Forum rubric in **Appendix B**) followed a similar format.

At both the midterm and end of the semester, I gave students a list of articles published by historians and had them choose one of the provided secondary sources to address these prompts:

- Explain how the author contextualizes the primary sources by situating her or his analysis within its historical period.
- Explain how this article changes the way one should think about the subject (or about debated issues in the history of the U.S.).
- Identify, for discussion, the important issues and questions raised by the text.

My students, who had been working with primary sources themselves, did a good job on the part of the prompt that asked them to assess the scholar's use of primary sources.

The final project in our course (which can be found in **Appendix C**) asked the students to create their own Digital History Assignment that was modeled on the ones that had been our main learning tool, like the Triangle Shirtwaist example above. In order to give them skills practice for the final project, twice during the semester, I provided all of the materials for a regular Discussion Forum, minus the questions, and then asked the students to write the discussion questions for each other (a sample assignment can be found in **Appendix D**).

The pedagogical approach that allowed my students to actively “do history” was the online modality and the student-centered selection of course materials from digital primary source databases. One example that demonstrates students “doing history” in a face-to-face setting is Elizabeth Belanger's description of a redesigned course, in which she prioritized incorporating the research paper in a first-year course. She built in tiered assignments to guide students through their trepidation of using primary sources, culminating in a final research paper. She makes the case that first-year students not only can do a research project, but also that doing the research project helped them to understand historical thinking skills and to move away from their conception of history as a collection of facts.<sup>16</sup> Another example of a face-to-face pedagogical approach that avoids “the urge to march students through endless events, disembodied concepts, or subspecies of history” is discussed by

Paulina Alberto and Farina Mir in a 2018 article, where they propose that “[t]he answer to ‘What is history?’ should come in the form of a compelling story that is powerfully illustrated—and students must find themselves in it.”<sup>17</sup> They built their gateway course, History 101, around this question, and demonstrate to students the ways in which history is relevant to their lives. Similarly to these two face-to-face examples, my online courses developed a shift in my students’ view of history because, by utilizing digital primary source databases and selecting their own sources, my students were also “doing history.”

Though I had used digitized primary sources in my previous face-to-face courses, I did not incorporate them as the main reading assignment in the same way that I did in the online iteration. In an assessment that I conducted after the first time teaching the online version, I found that students, as a whole, were very strong in working with and contextualizing primary sources. This made sense because of our regular work with primary sources. Conversely, I found that students, as a whole, were weaker in understanding foundational historical thinking. I recognized that the course’s weakness was that there was not enough framing of the primary sources with the use and analysis of secondary sources. Therefore, I added more Discussion Forums, including the one discussed above, which engaged students with secondary sources so they could better understand the relationship between primary sources and historical arguments. The modification also enabled them to learn how a historian frames an argument. Another Discussion Forum, utilizing the AHA web series “What I Do,” engaged students in thinking about the work of a historian (included in **Appendix E**).

Once the course was built over the summer, I found the workload during the first semester to be relatively manageable. For me, it was less time-consuming than a standard face-to-face class, especially during the three subsequent semesters that I ran the course with minor changes. I split my thirty students into four groups of seven or eight, so they could have meaningful discussions. Three times during the semester, I shuffled the groups so that students would get a chance to know more of their classmates. The small groups created community in that students interacted effectively and thoughtfully with each other’s posts. Weekly modules were released on Friday, first posts were due on Tuesday by midnight, and forums were closed on Thursday at midnight. This, plus assigning points on the rubric

(**Appendix B**) that required meaningful engagement with their peers, resulted in conversations that were warm, productive, and highly interactive.<sup>18</sup> Though it was a forum-heavy course, I did not find my time to be overloaded with responding to students. I did not respond to each individual post in the forums, but I did grade the posts at the end of each weekly module with the use of a course management system grading tool that collates all of each student's responses. Nonetheless, students said that I provided good feedback. One student said it was the best feedback she'd received in any of her years on our campus. End-of-term evaluations for all four offerings were positive, ranging from 4.48 to 4.77 (out of 5) for the overall score of the course, and from 4.41 to 4.92 for the instructor.<sup>19</sup> In the next sections, I will provide details of student engagement and success from the four times this course was offered, from Fall 2016 through Fall 2018.

### **“Doing History”: Digging in Digital Archives as the Main Reading Assignment**

I approached the very first chronological topic with hesitation. Reconstruction is, to me, an incredibly important topic because clearing up students' misunderstandings about the end of the Civil War helps students better understand the legacy of racial segregation that continues to the current day. It was not without worry that I approached this topic in a way that felt like I was giving up control of their understanding of this crucial time period. We used a lesson plan adapted from the Library of Congress that required students to search the Library's African American Perspectives Collection to find a primary source related to a problem (such as racial violence or voting rights).<sup>20</sup> It was a good place to start because the lesson plan provided suggestions for problems to search, explained how to search, and suggested key search terms in the language of the day. This was a primer for the way that we would approach primary source databases for the rest of the term. Students posted responses with sources by well-known authors such as Ida B. Wells and Frederick Douglass, as well as sources by less well-known people, including a sermon from a reverend discussing the debate between industrial or higher education and an open letter to politicians from prominent African American residents of northern cities.

The following interchange between two students<sup>21</sup> helped me know that giving up control had not prevented students from learning what I think is the most important history lesson from Reconstruction:

**Lauren:** The constant theme that I see among your article as well as many of the other articles summarized here is the idea that, “technically African Americans were free, BUT...” This is so intriguing to me because people who are supposed to be protected by the law were being attacked, discriminated against, and forced to work manual labor jobs just as before even though they were qualified to do so much more. What good were these laws if only a new form of slavery was born? This really just showed me that when someone’s way of life is being threatened, they’ll go to drastic means to protect it and resist change.

**Amat:** Yes! And while abolishing slavery was a big step towards equality for the black community, they still had to work on changing the public’s opinion on them so that they stop seeing them as slaves and start treating them with respect as equals. That in my opinion is the hardest part—fixing the society’s mindset.

Ashley, a student in another discussion group, came to a similar conclusion, indicating that the assignment worked across different student perspectives to demonstrate this important lesson from Reconstruction:

A (rather obvious) theme is the continued oppression of African-Americans. While technically free, they really weren’t. They still had to fight for things that should have been basic rights like education, fair wages, voting rights. And of course they weren’t safe from all the people who opposed their freedom or even just their existence.

Though Ashley characterized the conclusion as “obvious,” my experience teaching this subject in face-to-face classes is that this conclusion requires that students are helped to see that equality of laws does not create immediate equality of opportunity or freedom from discrimination. In fact, the legacy of historical inequalities of Reconstruction is a very contentious point of discussion in face-to-face classes, and the modality of online conversation, coupled with the engagement with the primary sources, allowed the students to reach this “obvious” conclusion.

After that first discussion, the quality of student work and of student interaction remained high. Each week, different students

would be excited by one of the topics and then put sources to work to explore their passion. This example from Natalia, in a weekly discussion post, engages primary sources about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire<sup>22</sup> in order to understand the human costs of industrialization and urbanization:

From the primary sources I read, I could tell that life in the cities in 1911 was tiresome...Last week we focused on the terrible conditions that primarily men encountered in the steel and oil factories during the Industrialization era. This week we are looking closely at how Industrialization and Urbanization affected women and their working conditions...They sat at a sewing machine for 10-11 hours a day and put together garments as quickly and neatly as they could...In *Among the Poor Girls*, the author speaks of a farm girl who came to the city with all this excitement and a great deal of hope to soon become rich... The author wrote of how she struggled to go to work day in and day out, but she continued to go to work, collect a tiny paycheck, and send part of it home to her family without speaking of her own hardships.

Though the language is somewhat informal, as was appropriate for our weekly discussion posts, Natalia's contribution demonstrates complex thinking and effective use of primary sources. She connects the previous week's learning activity to this topic: working women in cities in early twentieth-century America. The conclusions that she makes about working conditions and pressures for women are based in her close reading of primary sources. My students were engaging in the work of historical interpretation in weekly discussion posts because their main reading materials for the course were primary source databases. This meant that not all students were reading the same sources. Nonetheless, their work together in Discussion Forums led them to understand the most important lessons from the particular time period.

In a reflection paper, Jessica demonstrated how the methods of primary sources helped her learn more and engage effectively:

I find myself constantly wanting to learn more in this class, whenever I can I like to do further research than what is provided to make sure my response (and my knowledge) get the most out of the topic. Although in 15 years from now I may not remember the exact details of things, I at least can recall that specific event(s) happened because I take the extra step to actually learn about it.

This kind of engagement is the ultimate goal of all teachers—that students will do more than required and anticipate that what they have learned will stick with them in the future because they learned it themselves.

### **Engaging Students with Each Other and with Difficult Course Topics**

Utilizing primary source databases as the main reading material for my American history survey resulted in my students actually “doing history” and also resulted in high student engagement with the class. Even though it was a solely online class, as the section above demonstrates, the students interacted effectively with each other and demonstrated serious engagement with course materials.

Students reflected on our learning strategy in the private communication of our two reflection papers, which were written individually by the students and submitted only to me as the audience. In the final reflection paper, Brian noted:

One of the key differences from this course to other history courses in exception for this being online, is the fact that we looked at multiple historic events and were grouped together to discuss the outcomes and challenges. In most history courses there is a lot of one-way communication, typically in the form of professor lecture followed by essay based and multiple-choice exams. Although I prefer in class verbal discussion the online format effectively required us to analyze historic documents and share our individual thoughts and ideas.

Despite the fact that an online course was not Brian’s preferred modality, he appreciated the fact that engaging with documents allowed the students to do historical analysis themselves, individually, and in groups.

Mike noted that our course, in moving the students away from a reliance on a textbook, allowed them to engage in the creation of historical arguments:

This course is especially helpful because of the approach we have taken to history. Instead of relying on text books and lectures, this course asks us to attack the information from an entirely different perspective. We are not simply reading history; we are actively participating in it.

I appreciate that students were enthusiastic about the opportunity not just to read history, but also to actively engage in historical analysis. Similarly, Omar appreciated the work of digging in the (digital) archives:

Throughout this course, discussions and papers were assigned that required the use of primary and secondary sources. As I would complete these tasks, I found myself digging through databases, documents, articles, historical records, and many other sources on a daily basis that required me to develop arguments by thinking critically. By consistently doing this it helped me utilize this skill that I believe helps me fulfill my major.

Though his major was in the natural sciences, he saw the connection of utilizing good sources and developing arguments in pursuit of original, critical thinking.

Midway through the semester, as a skills practice for the final project in which the students would create their own learning activity using primary source databases, I gave the students materials and sources and asked that they write the discussion questions themselves. They were then required to respond to each other's questions. For this activity, I chose a topic that I knew would interest them and that few, if any, had heard of: the U.S. State Department Jazz Ambassadors program. Starting in 1956, musicians such as Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, and Duke Ellington performed around the world, including in developing nations, to promote an image of the United States that would combat Soviet criticisms of racial inequality.<sup>23</sup> The following exchange between two students demonstrates the success that this teaching strategy achieved. Danny and Lauren were able to engage with the historical material to analyze the stated goals of the program and the way that the program failed to accurately represent race relations in the U.S. at the time. In response to Danny's question on whether the Jazz Ambassadors program was a way for the State Department to dispute the image of racial discrimination in the U.S., Lauren said:

Wow this is such a great question! I think this may have been a way to defend against attacks from Russia. This was a great way for the U.S. to convince other countries that they were respecting the civil rights of all Americans. (Notice I said convince them...clearly we were not respecting all human rights during this time). But by showcasing an African American musician, it implies that in the U.S. anyone has the

opportunity to make a whole new life for themselves. Anyone is able to achieve fame and greatness. In reality, many of these musicians were most likely still heavily discriminated against in the U.S., but their tour could have been used to cover up Russia's claims.

As I hinted at above, I do think these global tours made the United States look good. It showed that we are a melting pot of all cultures and that everyone has a chance to follow their dreams. Clearly, even today that isn't true. Americans don't all start on an even playing field, but this tour gave the illusion that our government supported all people.

For the assignment prompt, I provided no introduction to this topic. The students engaged in a critical analysis of the materials to understand that the goals of the State Department program did not match the reality of race relations in the United States at that time. They also applied the critical lens to our current moment to wonder how much of this lesson is still applicable today. I was thrilled with the outcome of this teaching strategy because my goal is not to tell students what or how to think about history, but instead to provide them the tools to think critically about the American past and how it applies to our country today.

In a reflection paper early in the semester, I was surprised to read a very personal reflection about how our learning approach engaged an American immigrant who had lost trust in historical truth after her participation in the Yemeni Revolution in January 2011 before her immigration to the United States. In a reflection paper, Amat expressed her appreciation for digging into primary sources:

Even as a kid, I've always been a skeptic one. But it wasn't until a few years ago that I became as untrusting of history books as I am now. It took me a civil war and a revolution to realize just how unreliable official narratives could be and how easily facts in general can be altered, distorted, buried, and hidden forever.

Describing the discrepancies between the coverage of the protests and Saudi Arabia's interventions from her view as a protestor, Amat continued:

It is this kind of dirty politricks that made me believe I'd never really be in a history class where I can guarantee I'm learning something 100% factual. Basically, I adapted a habit of taking anything I'm presented with in a history class or a news report or any article with a grain of salt.

Our method of engagement with sources, however, changed Amat's outlook on history and coursework:

But then I took this class and was introduced for the first time to the idea of digging up facts from primary sources on my own. It was a challenge; at times, I found it hard to have to evaluate the source and make my own judgement on an event. I've never had to do that as all history classes I've taken so far do the judgement-making for [students] by presenting the stories and narratives that shape our impression a certain way. But to have the chance to actually examine the sources from a neutral perspective is a first, and I like it very much...I realize that we don't always have the complete picture to make the most accurate judgements, and sometimes it'll depend on the type of primary sources we have available, but I assume it'll still give us a closer-to-the-truth idea about our history than just learning it via secondary sources...I think by now it's very clear why and how much I wholeheartedly enjoy, support, and appreciate this method of teaching history. Thank you for offering us the chance to experience that; it shows a level of respect of and a trust on our judgement, and that's special. [sic]

Amat's shift from distrust of narratives in history classes to a wholehearted support of and engagement with our style of historical analysis demonstrates why engaging students in the learning process is so important. Her background and the reason for her distrust are extraordinary, as most of my students did not participate in the Arab Spring, but her example illustrates why engaging students in their learning process is valuable in the way that it uncovers meaningful connections that have an impact, in real ways, on our students' lives. In the next section, I will provide examples of the ways that students applied their critical analysis tools not only to historical sources, but also to current events.

### **Applying Critical Engagement of Sources to the Current Moment**

In addition to engaging students in the process of "doing history" by using predominantly primary sources as reading materials, a second major goal for this course was to help students see the connections between what they were uncovering and our current-day experiences. Sometimes, weekly discussion prompts directly asked students to make connections from their historical analysis

to the present day. Other times, the students made the connections unprompted. They used their developing critical analysis skills to think seriously about issues and concerns in the daily news, considering validity of evidence and credibility of arguments.

The connections to our current moment were most evident during the week that we discussed Japanese Internment during World War II. Some students were surprised to learn that American citizens were interned, and all were shocked to view images of the living conditions in the internment camps. The prompt (**Appendix A**) that I wrote asked the students to share and analyze one primary source. Ashley described her chosen image of the new “homes” that internees made in former horse stalls:

The way these people were stripped of their humanity and treated like animals is disgusting and a shameful part of American history. It is important to study negative parts of American history because we need to know how far we’ve come and also learn from our mistakes. Japanese internment was a mistake. It should never happen again to any ethnic or racial group and politicians who imply it should are not fit to serve as their values clearly are not American.

Her disgust at the fact that Japanese and Japanese Americans were made to live in horse stalls helps her conclude that knowing the negative parts of American history is valuable to prevent what she describes as un-American values held by public servants. She also connected the treatment of and attitudes towards Japanese and Japanese Americans with current misconceptions about Muslim Americans:

Today SO many people group all Muslims into the same group with the title “enemy” on top. We assume that because they share the same religion as a few radical terrorists that all Muslims are capable of such crimes. Also...there is an ongoing debate about allowing refugees into America. We have generalized an entire population as dangerous and a threat to our country. So that kind of rationalization is sadly not just a part of “those times.”

Lauren noticed the pattern of making broad generalizations about a group of people based on the actions of a few and realized that our current moment presents examples of similar mistakes.

Wanting the students to critically engage the news and information around them is my major goal whenever I teach any course; the strategy of simply offering them primary sources so they could make historical analysis seemed to have reached my goal very effectively.

In learning the information themselves, they were able to apply their critical reading techniques more broadly to the current news stories around them. Mike described how our course enhanced his ability to be a critical reader of current news sources:

What has intrigued me are the primary and secondary sources and the peer reviewed articles and journals. We all need to pay more attention to the information that we receive and the sources that provide the information. Our media driven world is so full of unreliable information that there is now such a thing as fake news. All educated people need to be on high alert as we scrutinize the sources that provide information to us. This class has made keenly aware of testing the sources of information.

Providing students with strategies to protect themselves against “fake news” is a part of our course that I did not anticipate, but the fact that the first time I taught this course online dovetailed with the 2016 American presidential election meant that students saw that our tools were immediately applicable to their real-world experiences.

Not only did students learn a tool to apply to the news around them, their first-hand connection with primary sources inspired them to become informed voters. Alexander noted:

[This class] influenced me to become an informed voter when I voted for the first time in November because I realized I have a voice, just like all those who came before me, and that many brave people fought hard to give me the privilege to exercise my right to vote. It basically prompted me to learn about candidates and what they stand for so I can make the decision to support people whose beliefs I support.

Lauren also noticed how the class strategy connected to her as a voter:

[T]his class has made me realize that I as a constituent and voter have a great responsibility to ensure that history does not repeat itself. I plan on using my new knowledge of American history to create more complete opinions of political candidates so that I can vote for someone who will continue to honor those who fought so hard to make this country great.

The course resulted in increased civic engagement in the newly informed voters of Alexander, Lauren, and others. The teaching strategy gave students the tools for critical analysis and also gave them the responsibility of sustained engagement to come to their own conclusions.

Not only did students recognize the class's role in their identity as voters, they also recognized that the course developed their ability to debate and discuss U.S. politics. In Omar's words:

I believe with the knowledge I've obtained throughout this course I will be able to actively engage in debates with others that regard U.S. politics while having the ability to apply background knowledge.

The course gave him the background knowledge and the interest in discussion and debating politics. Salah acknowledged that an interest in politics for her was newly formed by our course:

I plan to apply the knowledge I accumulated during this class to many present day issues. I have never really been into politics or anything of that nature, but throughout this course we have had questions that made us relate back to things happening today, and these really opened my eyes and made me a little more interested.

Moving students away from civic disengagement to become motivated and informed citizens was an unanticipated, but very welcomed, outcome of this course. Giving them the tools to critically engage direct sources piqued their interest and development of their knowledge base so they could find their own connections to political and cultural events happening around them.

### **Engaging Students with Sources and with Each Other and the Resulting Deliberative Discussion**

Students were doing history, were highly motivated, and became more civically engaged. They also developed a tool that would help them engage productively in their communities. Through sharing discussions across different points of view, they expanded their ability to have deliberative discussions across racial, ethnic, class, gender, and religious differences. Because they marshalled primary source evidence to make their points, they learned to conduct discussion across differences, based in facts and in the historical record. This allowed students to learn from each other and to respect perspectives that rested in different experiences. As Yara stated:

Throughout this history course I have engaged in a form of learning that is quite different from ways in the past. For the first time I was able to have a discussion and learn from my peers in an atmosphere different than the typical lecture-based classroom. This form of

learning has equipped me with the tools to go out in the world and converse about pressing topics in a non-biased, respectable way.

Noting that it was a new experience compared to lecture-based classes, Yara believed the course gave her the tools to discuss current topics in appropriate ways.

Jack's comments demonstrate why it is important for students who come from privileged backgrounds to learn about exclusions and inclusions, and to learn from their peers who have had different experiences:

The most beneficial aspect of this class to me personally was being able to communicate with people from all different kinds of backgrounds and cultures, and be able to share my opinions and listen to their opinions on events from the American past. I grew up in a town and went to a high school where most families were upper middle class and the student population was 98% white, so this was a new and exciting experience for me. This has changed my way of thinking because I now understand why different cultures and ethnicities think the way they do. I will definitely take this experience and apply it to my life when it comes to listening to and understanding political opinions and opinions on current events in our country and around the world.

Other students also expressed in their reflections that they were able to see new points of view due to this learning style. Derek said:

[T]he knowledge I have gained from this class has taught me that not only is it beneficial to consult history before reaching a conclusion, but more importantly to consider the viewpoints of others. Listening to someone else's account of the same event or topic can offer information that you may have not previously considered. I think that is an excellent quality to have and the weekly discussions are ones which I won't forget.

The weekly discussions helped Derek understand that conclusions should be based in historical evidence and that other viewpoints can help you understand your own.

Joshua pointed out that, though the course content itself was valuable, the development of deliberative discussion skills was invaluable:

While the content taught in this course expanded my knowledge base by a considerable amount, the proper ways to participate in

community forums, specifically ones with differing viewpoints, was the most crucial piece of this course in my mind.

Our weekly discussions were sometimes contentious and students often disagreed, but the tone was always warm and respectful because students hooked their arguments directly to sources and therefore were able to disagree based on evidence rather than on emotions or beliefs. The ability to have deliberative discussion—across racial, ethnic, class, gender, and religious differences—was the result of a teaching method based in the student engagement of primary sources. This method allowed students to “do history,” and some moved from professed history haters to history lovers, and from non-voters to first-time voters and active citizens.

### **Lessons Learned**

I have presented this course design at several faculty enrichment sessions on my campus and at an international faculty development conference.<sup>24</sup> Faculty are surprised by the depth and quality of my students’ participation in the class. We should set up learning environments that challenge students with intriguing questions and that incorporate their interest in looking things up for themselves. I have suggested to non-historians that they can allow students to do the work of their disciplines by utilizing data sets, case studies, maps and GIS, media production tools, etc. My students became junior historians, researching historical arguments directly with primary sources. If we can show our passion for historical questions, and prompt our students to follow their own passions and interests, we can connect even with students who have previously expressed a dislike of history. My challenge now is to take the ethos of “doing history,” civic engagement, and deliberative discussion from the online modality and find ways to infuse it into my face-to-face classes.

## Notes

1. Hunt Allcott and Matthew Gentzkow, "Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31, no. 2 (Spring 2017): 212.

2. Sometimes in survey courses, instructors struggle with a misconception of the need for coverage, which parallels students' misconception that history is the memorization of names and dates. Instructors of survey courses, and many other kinds of courses, worry they cannot "give up" time to active learning techniques because it would take away from the time that they have to "cover" their content. History survey courses are the opportune place to work against the notion of coverage. As Lendol Calder argued in *The Journal of American History* in 2006, "it is a good moment to remind ourselves what the introductory survey could be (and what it already is for some teachers) if we replaced generic pedagogies of coverage with teaching and learning marked by the distinctive signature of history" (p. 1360). Calder strives towards a signature pedagogy with active learning in which students emulate the work of historians by struggling with historical questions and investigating primary source documents. He sets up repeated opportunities for students to practice primary source analysis and historical inquiry because he believes that by *engaging* with history, students will better learn the historical method. Perhaps learning the main facts, figures, names, dates, etc., was one of the highest priorities before smartphones and Google made information so readily available. Joel Sipress and David Voelker note, also in *The Journal of American History*, that historians have been making an argument for the reform of the survey—and less of a reliance on facts first—for more than a century, but insist that with the rise of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and the current technology, the time is ripe for pedagogy to change because "Facts are easy to come by in the information age. What students need are the tools to assess the validity of facts, to weigh their significance, and to deploy them in everyday discussion and argument about the meaning of the past" (p. 1066). See Lendol Calder, "Uncoverage: Toward a Signature Pedagogy for the History Survey," *The Journal of American History* 92, no. 4 (March 2006): 1358-1370; and Joel M. Sipress and David J. Voelker, "The End of the History Survey Course: The Rise and Fall of the Coverage Model," *The Journal of American History* 97, no. 4 (March 2011): 1055-1066.

3. Noralee Frankel and Linn Shapiro, "A Collaboration of Two- and Four-Year Colleges: Reconceptualizing the Introductory Survey Course," *The History Teacher* 33, no. 1 (November 1999): 91.

4. Linda Pomerantz, "Bridging the Digital Divide: Reflections on 'Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age,'" *The History Teacher* 34, no. 4 (August 2001): 516.

5. T. Mills Kelly, *Teaching History in the Digital Age* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2013), available online at <<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.12146032.0001.001>>.

6. Kelly, *Teaching History*, "Introduction," paragraph 4.

7. Kelly, *Teaching History*, "Introduction," paragraph 8.

8. Tona Hagen, "Historical Digital Literacy, One Classroom at a Time," *The Journal of American History* 101, no. 4 (March 2015): 1192.

9. Hangen, "Historical Digital Literacy," 1194.

10. See Robert B. Barr and John Tagg, "From Teaching to Learning—A New Paradigm For Undergraduate Education," *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning* 27, no. 6 (November-December 1995): 12-25; L. Dee Fink, *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003); Michael Prince, "Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research," *Journal of Engineering Education* 93, no. 3 (July 2004): 223-231; and Scott Freeman, Sarah L. Eddy, Miles McDonough, Michelle K. Smith, Nnadozie Okoroafor, Hannah Jordt, and Mary Pat Wenderoth, "Active Learning Increases Student Performance in Science, Engineering, and Mathematics," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111, no. 23 (June 2014): 8410-8415. For an example of how digital education and active learning increased engagement of non-history majors in a History of Engineering course, see Christopher F. Jones, "Building History Enrollments Through Online Courses for the Professions: Lessons from Teaching the History of Engineering," *The History Teacher* 51, no. 4 (August 2018): 549-570.

11. See Susan A. Ambrose, Michael W. Bridges, Michele DiPietro, Marsha C. Lovett, and Marie K. Norman, *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010); Barbara Oakley, *A Mind for Numbers: How to Excel at Math and Science (Even If You Flunked Algebra)* (New York: Penguin, 2014); and Saundra Yancy McGuire with Stephanie McGuire, *Teach Students How to Learn: Strategies You Can Incorporate Into Any Course to Improve Student Metacognition, Study Skills, and Motivation* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2016).

12. John Hilton III, "Open Educational Resources and College Textbook Choices: A Review of Research on Efficacy and Perceptions," *Educational Technology Research and Development* 64, no. 4 (August 2016): 588.

13. I. Elaine Allen and Jeff Seaman, *Opening the Textbook: Educational Resources in U.S. Higher Education, 2015-16* (Babson Park, MA: Babson Survey Research Group, 2016), 31, available online at <<https://www.onlinelearningsurvey.com/reports/openingthetextbook2016.pdf>>.

14. With so many more digitized archives than when Michael Eamon was writing in 2006, my course was able to fulfill the promise that he saw when he suggested that digitized archives create a laboratory where students are able to learn through research. He asked, "Why should one of the most engaging parts of the study of history—the exploration of the primary source—remain the domain of an elite group of historians, archivists and educators?" Michael Eamon, "A 'Genuine Relationship with the Actual': New Perspectives on Primary Sources, History and the Internet in the Classroom," *The History Teacher* 39, no. 3 (May 2006): 310.

15. Steven Mintz and Sara McNeil, *Digital History* (2018), available online at <<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu>>; and Ushistory.org, *U.S. History: From Pre-Columbian to the New Millennium*, available online at <<http://www.ushistory.org/us/>>.

16. Elizabeth Belanger, "Bridging the Understanding Gap: An Approach to Teaching First-Year Students How to 'Do' History," *The History Teacher* 49, no. 1 (November 2015): 35-62.

17. Paulina L. Alberto and Farina Mir, "History 101: What It Is and Why We Need It Now," *Perspectives on History* 56, no. 4 (April 2018), <<https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/april-2018/history-101-what-it-is-and-why-we-need-it-now>>.

18. I owe much of this course design—the small groups and the first post deadline—to Stein Brunvand, Associate Dean and Professor of Educational Technology at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. He allowed our teaching center to post his online course as an exemplar and I found his model highly useful. One of my students had been his student and noticed the similar design.

19. Course evaluation for Fall 2016: 48.15% response rate; average overall score for the course was 4.54 (out of 5); score for the instructor was 4.83. Course evaluation for Fall 2017: 73% response rate; course 4.48; instructor 4.41. Course evaluation for Summer 2018: 72% response rate; course 4.50; instructor 4.78. Course evaluation for Fall 2018: 71.43% response rate; course 4.77; instructor 4.92. Student comments celebrated the engaging aspects of the course and directly discussed the pedagogy of the course. This means the reflection assignments allowed students to see the structure of the course and understand not just *what* they were learning but *how* they were learning. For example, one student said: "I liked that this course was discussion based. It allowed each student to see other students' views about the topics we were covering. The prof made the class very welcoming and appealing. I also liked the Reflection Papers, they allowed me to go back and review past material. It let me re appreciate how we were learning. This class is not solely fact based, but allows the student to dive into history and critically think about the topics. In the past I've taken several history classes, and I prefer this teaching method! I also appreciated that all of the material was online and that we did not need to purchase a textbook. The ways that primary sources backed the online textbook were a new way of learning, and I liked it very much."

20. Library of Congress, "After Reconstruction: Problems of African Americans in the South - Student Procedure," <<https://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/reconstruction/studentindex.html>>.

21. All names of the students have been changed to protect their privacy. Student comments have not been edited so as to preserve the students' own words.

22. Wirt Sikes, "Among the Poor Girls" (1868), as quoted from excerpts from Leon Stein ed., *Out of the Sweatshop: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy* (New York: Quadrangle/New Times Books, 1977), 12-13, available at "Remembering the 1911 Triangle Factory Fire: Testimonials," Cornell University, <[https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/primary/testimonials/ootts\\_WirtSikes.html](https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/primary/testimonials/ootts_WirtSikes.html)>.

23. Penny M. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

24. Carla Vecchiola, "Student Voices Uncovered in the History Survey and Faculty Voices Amplified by a Department Liaison Program," paper presented at the International Consortium for Educational Development Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, June 5-8, 2018.

## Appendix A

### Sample Weekly Discussion Forums

*Discussion Forums were assigned twice per week in a fifteen-week semester.*

#### **Week 8, Discussion A: World War II and Japanese Internment**

The internment, by the U.S. government, of over 120,000 people of Japanese descent, just over 60% of whom were United States citizens, is a useful topic to discuss the meaning of inclusion and exclusion for American people. It is also an interesting topic related to our current moment because more than one<sup>1</sup> elected official<sup>2</sup> cited Japanese internment as a precedent to advocate for limiting Muslim immigration.

1. View these two video clips, [here](#)<sup>3</sup> and [here](#)<sup>4</sup> about Japanese internment.
2. Then, search either the [Japanese American Relocation Digital Archive](#)<sup>5</sup> or the [Densho Digital Repository](#)<sup>6</sup> to find a primary source.
3. Post a link to your primary source (or if it is an image, [embed](#)<sup>7</sup> the image) and use information from the video clips and your primary source to **answer these questions**:
  - In what way were the constitutional rights of Americans of Japanese ancestry violated during World War II?
  - What sacrifices did Americans of Japanese ancestry have to make? Did these sacrifices help to ensure liberty worldwide?
  - Was Japanese internment consistent with American values? Explain why or why not.

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1. <<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/donald-trump-defends-muslim-plan-by-comparing-himself-to-fdr/>>

2. <[https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/roanoke-may-or-david-bowers-reject-refugees-like-us-interned-japanese/2015/11/18/9714681a-8e34-11e5-acff-673ae92ddd2b\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/roanoke-may-or-david-bowers-reject-refugees-like-us-interned-japanese/2015/11/18/9714681a-8e34-11e5-acff-673ae92ddd2b_story.html)>

3. <<https://www.densho.org/looking-like-the-enemy/>>

4. <<https://www.densho.org/american-concentration-camps/>>

5. <<https://calisphere.org/exhibitions/t11/jarda/>>

6. <<https://ddr.densho.org/>>

7. <<https://guides.instructure.com/m/4212/1/190965-how-do-i-embed-an-image-in-a-discussion-reply-as-a-student>>

## Week 12, Discussion A: HIV, Art, and Activism

You may remember that we asked the question, “Are Artists ‘Workers?’” when discussing the New Deal. We are now going to consider whether and how art should be used for political activism.

1. Let’s start by looking [Silence=Death](#),<sup>1</sup> a 1987 poster by the Silence=Death Project.
2. Read [this excerpt of an essay](#)<sup>2</sup> by Jesse Green, entitled “When Political Art Mattered,” and [this article](#)<sup>3</sup> by one of the poster’s creators, Avram Finkelstein, about the rationale for the poster campaign. Thinking about the connection between art and politics, read or listen to several oral histories from [Act Up’s Oral History Project site](#).<sup>4</sup>
3. For your post in this Discussion Forum, **answer these questions:**
  - What kind of political activism did the poster represent?
  - What are some examples of the ways in which Larry Kramer and the Act Up organization attempted to call attention to the AIDS crisis? Provide at least one example from [Act Up’s Oral History Project](#).<sup>5</sup>
  - Do you think artistic works are an appropriate vehicle for political messages? Why or why not?

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1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silence%3DDeath\\_Project#/media/File:A\\_pink\\_triangle\\_against\\_a\\_black\\_backdrop\\_with\\_the\\_words\\_%27Silence%3DDeath%27\\_representing\\_an\\_advertisement\\_for\\_The\\_Silence\\_%3D\\_Death\\_Project\\_used\\_by\\_permission\\_by\\_ACT-UP,\\_The\\_AIDS\\_Coalition\\_To\\_Unleash\\_Power.\\_Wellcome\\_L0052822.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silence%3DDeath_Project#/media/File:A_pink_triangle_against_a_black_backdrop_with_the_words_%27Silence%3DDeath%27_representing_an_advertisement_for_The_Silence_%3D_Death_Project_used_by_permission_by_ACT-UP,_The_AIDS_Coalition_To_Unleash_Power._Wellcome_L0052822.jpg)

2. <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/07/magazine/when-political-art-mattered.html>

3. <https://www.nypl.org/blog/2013/11/22/silence-equals-death-poster>

4. <http://www.actuporalhistory.org/interviews/index.html>

5. <http://www.actuporalhistory.org/interviews/index.html>

Appendix B

**Weekly Discussion Forum Rubric**

<b>Total Points: 10.0</b>				
<p><b>4.0 pts.</b></p> <p>Readings and sources are engaged thoughtfully using specific examples.</p>	<p>4.0 pts.: Readings and sources are engaged thoughtfully using specific examples. Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the material. Examples are well-chosen to provide effective analysis.</p>	<p>3.0 pts.: Readings and sources are engaged using examples. Demonstrates understanding of the material. Some examples are well-chosen.</p>	<p>2.0 pts.: Readings and sources are somewhat engaged using some examples. Demonstrates some understanding of the material.</p>	<p>0.0 pts. No Marks</p>
<p><b>3.0 pts.</b></p> <p>Writing is clear and persuasive.</p>	<p>3.0 pts.: Writing contributes to discussion with clear, concise comments formatted in an easy-to-read style that is free of grammatical or spelling errors.</p>	<p>2.0 pts.: Writing contributes valuable information to discussion with minor clarity or mechanics errors.</p>	<p>1.0 pt.: Writing has errors in clarity or mechanics.</p>	<p>0.0 pts. No Marks</p>
<p><b>2.0 pts.</b></p> <p>Discussion responds to and engages with colleagues' posts.</p>	<p>2.0 pts.: Discussion demonstrates analysis of others' posts and extends meaningful discussion by building on previous posts.</p>	<p>1.0 pt.: Discussion elaborates on an existing post with further comment or observation.</p>		<p>0.0 pts. No Marks</p>
<p><b>1.0 pt.</b></p> <p>First post was submitted before Tuesday 11:59 pm.</p>	<p>1.0 pt. Full Marks</p>			<p>0.0 pts. No Marks</p>

## Appendix C

### Final Project, Digital History Assignment

*First draft due, for feedback from your colleagues, Tuesday, November 27th*

The goal of this assignment is to create a Digital History Assignment, similar to the ones that you've completed for your Weekly Discussion Forums.

#### Criteria:

- Engage an audience in a learning activity about American history since 1865.
- Utilize a collection of primary sources or a digital archive of primary sources.
- Ask substantive questions or require complex activities that demonstrate key ideas about a particular time period, a historical event, or a historical group of people.

**Format:** (please label as “Part A,” “Part B,” “Part C,” and “Works Cited”)

Part A: Describe the activity (1-2 pages and double-spaced, or in an alternative format such as Prezi, Jing, etc.)

- Link to sources or archives (you can use [this page](#)<sup>1</sup> to help you in your search for a primary source collection).
- Explain questions or activities.
- This could look (somewhat) like your weekly Discussion Forums.

Part B: Describe how the learning activity helps an audience learn about the topic (1-2 pages and double-spaced, in DOC, DOCX, or PDF format)

- Who is the intended audience: your peers, a high school class, an elementary school class, a popular audience such as for a blog?
- What about this activity will help this particular audience think critically about the topic and about its historical context?

Part C: Reflect on what you have learned (1-2 pages and double-spaced, in DOC, DOCX, or PDF format)

- Why did you choose this topic and this intended audience?
- Explain how secondary sources helped you draft the questions or activities and how secondary sources helped you provide historical context. (Be sure the sources are cited on your Works Cited page.)
- In constructing this activity, what have you learned about the topic in particular and about American history in general?

Works Cited: Include the sources you consulted

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1. This link is to an internal page within the learning management system that guides students towards appropriate primary source databases.

## Appendix D

### Sample Discussion Forum for Student-Written Questions

#### Week 10, Discussion B: More Movements

As mentioned in this week's guidelines, the Civil Rights Movements included more than the Southern Freedom Movement of 1951-1968.

Here are links to digital archives of other movements:

Farmworker Movement Documentation Project:

<<https://libraries.ucsd.edu/farmworkermovement/>>

Women's Liberation Movement Print Culture:

<<https://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/wlmpc/>>

Black Panther Party Community News Service:

<[https://search.freedomarchives.org/search.php?view\\_collection=90](https://search.freedomarchives.org/search.php?view_collection=90)>

AIM and Wounded Knee Documents:

<<https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/the-american-indian-movement-1968-1978>><sup>1</sup>

Stonewall and Beyond: Lesbian and Gay Culture:

<<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/eresources/exhibitions/sw25/case1.html>>

**For your first post** in this Discussion Forum:

- Take your time, choose one primary source from the above archives, consider all of the background context information, and compose one good Discussion Question<sup>2</sup> on the primary source for this Forum.
- Like last week's Discussion Forum on the Cold War Jazz Ambassadors, this is skills practice for your final assignment (the Digital History Assignment), so be sure that you research your topic carefully and that you take your time in crafting a strong discussion question.
- Be sure to either embed the image or post a link to the primary source for your colleagues.

**For your follow-up post** (and these may be longer than your first post):

- Answer one question written by your classmates. If possible, please try to respond to a question on a movement other than the one that you focused on in your own question.

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1. The database that we used in this class is no longer available. If I were to offer this assignment again, I would use the primary source set at the link indicated.

2. <<https://homepages.wmich.edu/~acareywe/discussion.html>>

## Appendix E

### Sample Discussion Forum Demonstrating the Work of a Historian

#### Week 7, Discussion B: The Work of a Historian

This Discussion Forum should not take you as much time as you usually devote to a Discussion Forum. The points have been reduced accordingly.

The videos, linked below, are part of an American Historical Association web series, “What I Do: Historians Talk about Their Work,” that answers some of the questions people have about where historians work and what they do.

Look at the titles or descriptions and choose one video to watch, available at <<https://www.historians.org/x12646.xml>>.

**For your post in this discussion,** briefly summarize the historian’s work and describe the broader impact of their work.

1. What I Do: Jessie Kratz - Archivist for the National Archives
2. What I Do: Aaron Marrs - Historian, US Department of State
3. What I Do: Ramona Houston - Entrepreneur and Activist-Scholar
4. What I Do: Stephanie Young - Historical Skills in Contemporary Research at RAND
5. What I Do: Valerie Paley - Uniting Museum and Research Library
6. What I Do: Laura Kamoie - From History Professor to Novelist
7. What I Do: Rachel Reinhard - UC Berkeley History-Social Science Project
8. What I Do: Stephen Aron - History Professor and Chair of the Autry Institute
9. What I Do: Carol Geary Schneider - President of the Association of American Colleges and Universities
10. What I Do: LuAnn Jones - Historian, US National Park Service
11. What I Do: John Lawrence - Former Chief of Staff for Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi
12. What I Do: Lincoln Bramwell - Chief Historian, US Forest Service