



Annual Conference

Best Practices in History Education

Breakout Sessions

Session A

9:10-10:00

Teaching US History Through Sports: Using High-Interest Topics to Promote Student Engagement

Michael Soffer and Matt Maloney

Oak Park and River Forest High School

We will present the structure and curriculum of our one-semester, elective course, Sports and Resistance in American History, to show an example of how schools and teachers can leverage high-interest topics to promote student engagement and interest in US History. We will demonstrate how to teach US History through the lens of sports, with a focus on how major themes of race, gender/sexuality, oppression, exploitation and resistance play out in sports history. Intended for high school history teachers, the framework of this curriculum can be adapted for an elective, a unit, a lesson, or even a single classroom activity.

Freedom 'Riters: John Dolan's Story

Spiro Bolos

New Trier High School

The activists from the Civil Rights Movement can often appear unrelatable to today's students, in that the former have achieved nearly legendary status in American history. By putting the focus on a single individual (John Dolan) who was not much older in 1961 than our students are today, students can better connect with the events that surrounded him. Dolan had significant conflict within his own family over his activism with CORE. Participants will be assigned or introduced to one of six rotating stations where they will analyze and interpret a variety of primary sources in preparation for a summative assessment.

Hate Speech, Group Libel, and “Then” as a Way to Discuss “Now”

Tiffany Middleton and Howard Kaplan

American Bar Association

Explore the 1952 U.S. Supreme Court case, *Beauharnais v. Illinois*, which concerned a 1917 Illinois statute that made it a crime to “exhibit in any public place any publication which ‘portrays depravity, criminality, unchastity, or lack of virtue of a class of citizens, of any race, color, creed or religion.’” *Beauharnais*, president of a white supremacist group, was prosecuted for distributing a pamphlet aimed at African-Americans in Chicago. It was a landmark decision concerning free speech and hate speech at that time. The case presents a “best practice” opportunity to use historic cases and primary sources to discuss contemporary controversies.

FDR and the Quarantine Speech

Eric Smith

Illinois Math and Science Academy

This presentation offers both a historical primer on the context for FDR's famous speech as well as usable classroom materials to think about the challenge the president posed. Moreover, FDR did not at that time get the result he desired. This offers a node for classroom discussion.

Session B

10:10-11:00

The Classroom and the Future of the Historical Record: Teaching with Digital History

Beth Ann Williams

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

These days everyone is a potential historian, publisher, and curator. Ever-growing internet has radically changed the nature of accessing and assessing historical sources. Collaborators from the University of Illinois, Michigan State, and University of Nebraska have been grappling with how to prepare students to manage those changes. How should we equip them to engage and historicize massive amounts of online materials? We will share lessons as well as ongoing challenges of our journey, aiming to introduce audiences to various strategies for teaching students digital methods and critical thinking to thrive in our online age.

Exploring Intersectionality throughout US History

Betsy Gutstein

Evanston Township High School

To truly engage students in history, they need to discover that intersectionality - the overlapping dimensions of one's identity - is not a 21st century phenomenon. How have people navigated in society over time when some aspects of their identities have been affirmed while others were considered intolerable, or worse? What factors have led to greater or lesser acceptance of others over time? I'll share lesson strategies that challenge students to interrogate the past through a social lens with primary sources that include archival records from the Illinois Writers Project.

Game Theory and the Humanities: Using Formal Models to Teach Strategic Interaction in History Classrooms

Patrick Kearney

Illinois Math and Science Academy

Discussions of strategic interaction are cornerstones of any history course. How might we attempt to formalize those discussions using the concepts of Game Theory to better understand motivations of historical actors and find patterns over time? This presentation will introduce the concept of Game Theory to those new to it and provide some concrete examples of how to include it in classroom lessons.

Racism, Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism: The Philippine-American War in Political Cartoons

Steve Drajpuch

New Trier High School

American attitudes toward the Asiatic Other were consistent throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. American involvement in the Philippine -American War was both supported and opposed using racist arguments. By examining a series of political cartoons, we can better understand the uses of racist ideology in pursuing American foreign policy goals.

Session C

1:40-1:30

Bridge the Gap to AP History

Anne Eichman

Lakes Community High School

Learn how to develop a 10-day curriculum for a summer course designed to prepare students for the demands and challenges of AP History courses. This “bridge course” focuses on building reading, note-taking, document analysis, and writing skills that are aligned to all AP History curriculums. The goal is to help students feel more comfortable and confident when taking upper level history courses for the first time. We have successfully used this approach to increase enrollment in AP History courses and to support students who otherwise might not have considered AP History as an option. Participants will walk away with a day-by-day plan and suggested materials.

Is America Exceptionally Violent?

Paul Horton

University of Chicago Laboratory School

This presentation will contrast the ideas about the history of American violence in the work of Richard Slotkin (Regeneration Through Violence) and Fitzhugh Brundage (Civilizing Torture) with the viewpoints of Steven Pinker and the NRA. After reading excerpts from the works of Slotkin, Brundage, Pinker, and the NRA, those attending will engage in a discussion that critically assesses these viewpoints and the role that violence has played and continues to play both within American society and through the extension of American power.

'63 Boycott: Using Documentary Film to Teach, Connect & Act

Jill Bass, Chief Education Officer, Mikva Challenge

Tracye A. Matthews, Producer '63 Boycott, Kartemquin Films; Executive Director, Center for the Study of Race, Politics, & Culture, University of Chicago

Join Kartemquin Films and Mikva Challenge for a screening of the Academy Award shortlisted film, '63 Boycott (25 min) and receive a free curriculum that supports teachers in using the film in their classroom. During this interactive workshop, participants will examine strategies to use the film as a vehicle for student inquiry and civic action, and reflect on how to integrate this module in their existing curriculum.

Floor Modeling Conflict in US History: Guildford Court House

Lee Eysturlid

Illinois Math and Science Academy

This session will walk participants through the use of a "floor model" exercise of a famous battle in US History. Teachers will engage in effective textual sources and images for a single battle as a model for others. Attendees will then actually walk through Guildford Courthouse as a student activity. Finally, instruction and ideas will be available so as to model any conflict.