

Teaching American History Grant: Learning Experience 2006-2007
(Bernadette Condesso – Poughkeepsie Day School)

Topic Title: Struggle for Civil Rights: African American Women **DATE: July 18, 2006**

Grade Level: 11th and 12th

Overview of the Learning Experience:

- Curriculum Integration: Civil Rights Movement of the 1950's and 1960's.
- Goals and Objectives:
 - Develop knowledge of continuing struggle for full participation and equality on the part of African-American women in both the white and black communities.
 - Students will learn the significant role African American women played in the struggle for civil rights.
 - Analysis and synthesis of primary source documents.
- New York State Social Studies Learning Standard Performance Indicator(s):
 - Standard 1 – History of the United States: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.
 - Standard 5 - Civics, Citizenship, and Government: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the necessity for establishing governments; the governmental system of the United States and other nations; the United States Constitution; the basic civic values of American constitutional democracy; and the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship, including avenues of participation.
 - Compare and contrast the experiences of different groups in the United States
 - Compare and contrast the experiences of different ethnic, national, and religious groups, including Native American Indians, in the United States, explaining their contributions to American society and culture.
 - Analyze historical narratives about key events in New York State and United States history to identify the facts and evaluate the authors' perspectives.
 - Prepare essays and oral reports about the important social, political, economic, scientific, technological, and cultural developments, issues, and events from New York State and United States history

Essential Question:

- Successful movements for social change (Abolition, Progressives, Socialism, Unionization, etc.) depended on the mobilization of women to achieve the movement's goals. Simultaneously, these movements often neglected the social demands of women for gender equality. How can African American women reconcile the Civil Rights Movement's demands for social and racial equality while it perpetuated patriarchy and gender inequality within the movement?
- Do global demands for social equality overshadow the demands of insular minority groups? Specifically, should the needs of the few take a second place to the needs of the many? Do individuals have a moral obligation to seek justice for the largest number of people at the expense/neglect of their individual needs?

Time Allotment (classroom time): 2 class periods – block schedule of 1:45, adjust as needed.

Vocabulary (key terms):

Gender: term used to refer to the social and cultural interpretations and expectations that are associated with sex yet that go beyond biological characteristics. Gender is an institution that “established patters of expectations for individuals, orders the social processes of everyday life, is built into the major social organizations of society, such as the economy, ideology, the family, and politics, and is also an entity in and of itself.” (Einhower, 682)

Jim Crow: laws seeking to maintain a racially segregated society in the South and continue racist attitudes decades after slavery had ended; affected all aspects of public interaction-entrance and seating in movie theaters, lunch counters, parks, hotels, restaurants; literacy tests, poll taxes, and other measures were used to disenfranchise African Americans; laws helped to socialize “many people into accepting a world of structural discrimination as normal.” (Parillo, V.M. (1985), *Strangers to these shores*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, p. 319)

NAACP: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

SNCC: Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

Materials/Resources:

- Student Resources
 - LaVerne Gyant; Deborah F. Atwater. “Septima Clark’s Rhetorical and Ethnic Legacy: Her Message of Citizenship in the Civil Rights Movement.” *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 5, Special Issue: The Voices of American Women in the Civil Rights Movement. (May, 1996), pp. 577-592.
 - Aprele Elliott. “Ella Baker: Free Agent in the Civil Rights Movement.” *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 5, Special Issue: The Voices of American Women in the Civil Rights Movement. (May, 1996), pp. 593-603.
 - Janice D. Hamlet. “Fannie Lou Hamer: The Unquenchable Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement.” *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 5, Special Issue: The Voices of American Women in the Civil Rights Movement. (May, 1996), pp. 560-576.
 - One-Page Directions.

- Teacher Resources
 - Belinda Robnett, “African-American Women in the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965: Gender, Leadership, and Micromobilization,” *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 101, No. 6. (May, 1996), pp. 1661-1693.
 - LaVerne Gyant; Deborah F. Atwater. “Septima Clark’s Rhetorical and Ethnic Legacy: Her Message of Citizenship in the Civil Rights Movement.” *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 5, Special Issue: The Voices of American Women in the Civil Rights Movement. (May, 1996), pp. 577-592.
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 - Teresa A. Nance. Hearing the Missing Voice. *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 5, Special Issue: The Voices of African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement. (May, 1996), pp. 543-559.
 - Rachel Einhower, Jocelyn A. Hollander, Toska Olson. Engendering Social Movements: Cultural Images and Movement Dynamics. *Gender and Society*, Vol. 14, No. 5. (Oct., 2000), pp. 679-699.
 - Lecture notes of history of NAACP, SNCC, leaders of Civil Rights Movement, and role of women in Civil Rights Movement.
 - Packet of “Student Resources” readings for each student.
 - Computer, PowerPoint, Projector.

Procedure:

- Previous Night’s Homework Assignment: reading assignments from Student Resources on Ella Baker and Septima Clark.
- Collect one-pager for each reading assignment.
- Day One:
 - PowerPoint Presentation or lecture on historical background of NAACP, SNCC, leaders of Civil Rights Movement, and roles undertaken by African American women within the Civil Rights Movement.
 - Discussion Questions:
 - *What was the goal of the Civil Rights Movement?*
 “Integration of blacks to the existing system, the destruction of caste barriers, the affording of basic civil rights to all Americans. Civil rights activists were not questioning the structure and goals of the system itself. The movement demanded the implementation of the liberal philosophy on which this country was founded.” (Rollins, 64)
 - *Why did women play an integral role in the grass root movements of the CRM?*
 Motivation (desire for freedom and equality); Family (strong religious and family backgrounds); Religion/Spirit (belief and faith in God and Christian principles of salvation and pilgrimage); and, Racial Injustice (poor living conditions, lack of participation in the system, high rates of illiteracy among adults and children, violence against African Americans). (Gyant, 632-639)

- *What roles did women play in the Civil Rights Movement?*

Student responses should reflect the work of Ella Baker and Septima Clark within the Civil Rights Movement. Students should also speak to the difficulties experienced by African American women within the inherently patriarchy of the Civil Rights Movement leadership and organizations.

- Homework:
 - Reading packet on Fannie Lou Hamer.
 - One-pager on above reading.
- Day Two:
 - Collect one-pager on Fannie Lou Hamer reading.
 - Discussion on Fannie Lou Hamer.
 - Students break into groups of three and generate two questions per group for large group discussion.
 - Possible questions:
 - What motivated Hamer?
 - How was her background and lack of education both a positive and a negative for her work?
 - How did Hamer view leadership?
 - How did Hamer view the relationship between men and women in the Civil Rights Movement?
 - In-class writing assignment:
 - Using your reading packet on Fannie Lou Hammer address the following questions. Be sure to cite the document in support of your analysis. Take 30 minutes to complete the writing, you may hand write or type.
 - How did Hamer use her personal experiences to motivate others? How was her ethos different and what was its effect? What made her a powerful voice for the Civil Rights Movement?

Assessment:

- Collect one-pager writing assignment from students to demonstrate students completed reading assignments and grasped large concept in the readings; specifically, women played an integral role in the Civil Rights Movement's grass roots operations but were denied access to top positions of leadership within national organizations.
- In-class writing assignment – well argued and textually supported analysis of question.
- Student participation in discussion questions reflect student understanding of readings and ability to synthesize materials and ideas.

One-Pager Instructions:

A one-pager is a double-sided writing of your reading in your one-pager notebook. It is a way of making your own pattern of your unique understanding of history and the reading sources. It is a way to be creative and experimental. It is a way to respond imaginatively and honestly. It is a way to be brief as well as to recall a large volume of information. A one-pager is a valuable way to own what you are reading. Create a one-pager in such a way that your audience will understand the context of your thinking and what you have read.

Directions:

Pull out four-six quotations and write them on the page. Use them as a springboard to explore your own ideas.

1. Use a visual image or images, to create a central focus for your page. Cluster around the image or images dominant impressions or thoughts regarding what you have read.
2. Identify and state the historical significance of individuals in the reading.
3. Describe the historical significance of two major issues.
4. Make a personal statement about what you have read.
5. Ask a question or two and answer them.