

FREEDOM AND DIGNITY PROJECT

The Roosevelt Administration and Messages for Today

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Topic: Marginalizing in Times of Stress: The Roosevelt Administration and Messages for Today

Grade Level: 8 and 11

NY State Learning Standard(s) assessed:

This learning module will address standards 1 and 5. Standard 1 states that students “will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.” Our module examines the theme of marginalization during the presidency of a great leader from New York, whom history treats as a man able to make liberal change; yet, for many reasons, he was not able to take a liberal stance this issue. In doing this, we will also be able to focus on the ways in which economic and military events affect the culture of the times in which they occur.

Additionally, Standard 5 asks that students “use a variety of skills to demonstrate their understanding of...basic civic values of our constitutional democracy; and the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship.” Our learning module points directly at this standard by providing a discussion of lynching during the Great Depression, internment during WWII, and recent internment issues. The discussion will easily segue into an examination of our responses to these events, our responsibilities toward these events, and the possibility of violation of constitutionally guaranteed rights.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- ❑ Compare and contrast the experiences of certain groups during times of national or international crisis;
- ❑ Discuss the specific experiences of Black Americans and Japanese Americans during the depression and war years; and Afghan and Iraqi prisoners resulting from recent events;
- ❑ Examine constitutional guarantees violated by lynching and internment;
- ❑ Determine individual and collective responsibility when dealing with such violations;
- ❑ Analyze and utilize documents that relate to issues of lynching and internment;
- ❑ Debate the idea that rights and responsibilities are crucial, but can cause conflict within society.

Essential Questions:

1. Why do democracies value civil rights, and how does denial of those rights impact democracy?
2. What have we learned about ourselves from past and present discriminatory practices?
3. With rights come responsibilities. Why do individuals avoid responsibility when confronted by civil rights violations?

Overview of the Learning Experience Module:

This lesson is designed for advanced eighth grade students and eleventh grade students. In both cases, curriculum objectives about the Great Depression and WW II are met by the lesson plan. However, character education issues, as encouraged by the NYS Department of Education, are also addressed by this lesson plan. The ultimate goal is for students to apply real life historical experiences toward the development of an understanding of civil rights and responsibilities.

Time Allotment: 1-2 class periods

Vocabulary: Internment, lynching, civil rights, constitutional democracy, violation, executive order, liberty, constitutional guarantees

Materials/Resources:

Documents including: recent media articles, diary entries, telegrams, book excerpts, photographs, letters, PowerPoint software, computers, easel, overhead projector, political cartoons. Documents used will vary in level of difficulty.

Procedure:

1. Formulation of a debate on this thesis question: In times of national stress, does the federal government have the power to suspend constitutional protections? (11th Grade).
2. Individual group analysis of a single document. Report of the analysis to the entire class. Application of each analysis to the essential questions (8th Grade).

Assessment:

- ❑ Upon completion of debate, each student will create a written personal opinion on the topic of debate, by responding to one of these opening sentences:
 - After listening to the debate, my opinion on the debate topic has changed...or
 - After listening to the debate my opinion has not changed....
- ❑ Upon completion of the group document analysis and subsequent application to the essential questions, eighth graders will write a “letter to the editor” detailing their position on the this question:
 - When civil rights of a particular group are limited during times of national stress, how are other groups affected by this government decision?

National Stress and the Denial of Civil and Human Rights

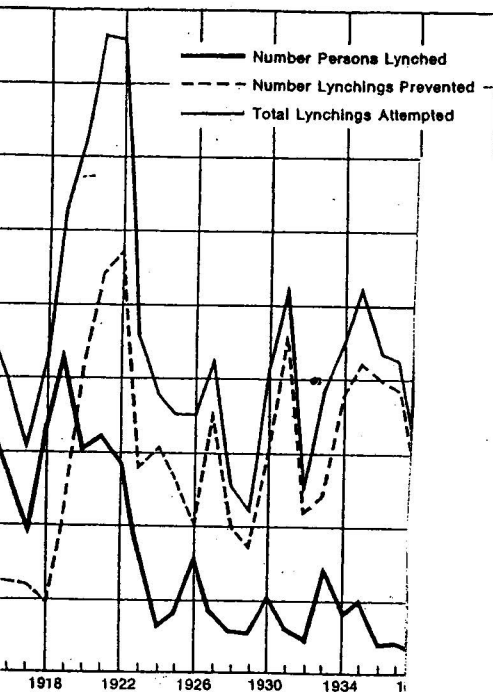
When we study the presidency of FDR, we emphasize his willingness to include women and blacks among his Cabinet members and advisors. We stress his friendship with Mary McLeod Bethune; we marvel as to how he organized a concert in front of the Lincoln Memorial so that Marian Anderson could share her voice with thousands, even though she had been snubbed by the DAR. But FDR was a realist who was confronted by situations that produced enormous threats to our nation, and placed citizens under great stress. FDR would do whatever he had to when dealing with these threats, even if it meant that human rights would be sacrificed.

Background facts:

1. Lynching grew out of control in the mid-1920's, but then subsided. However, the grim economy of the 1930's created a new set of circumstances and stresses, leading to a concern that lynching would again increase. Each year, since 1919, several members of Congress introduced anti-lynching bills, but none were ever enacted into law.
2. The internment of Japanese Americans was strongly desired by many Americans, particularly those living on the west coast. No law was passed by Congress enabling this to occur; instead FDR issued Executive Order 9066, and the internment process began.
3. Since 9-11 and the subsequent war in Afghanistan, hundreds of prisoners are being kept at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo, in Cuba (we have kept this base despite our many differences with the Cuban leader, Fidel Castro). These prisoners have been denied access to lawyers or contact with loved ones. For over 2 years, they have simply been told they are war prisoners and are not entitled to the opportunity to prove their innocence.

Figure 2

Lynchings and Prevented Lynchings, 1914-1942



e: Data from Monroe N. Work, ed., *Negro Year Book*, p. 157 and 1941-1946, p. 309.

The White House

Washington

10 PO jm 72 D.L. 1231pm

New York, Nov. 13, 1935.

The President:

The sixteenth and seventeenth lynchings of 1935 occurred in Texas yesterday and the eighteenth in West Virginia. Two other negroes were shot and killed in the Gretna Louisiana jail on November first under circumstances which seem to indicate lynchings. Would you be willing to see small group of three to five persons to discuss with you lynching situation and general plight of negro.

Walter White, Secretary,
Nat.Ass'n. for Advancement Colored
People, 69 Fifth Ave.

Why would Walter White, the president of the NAACP, be concerned that lynching might increase due to the depression?

'In rural areas, planters sometimes used lynching as a quasi-official instrument of coercion for enforcing labor contracts and crop lien laws. The incidence of lynching rose in the summer months when the hard work of planting was done and only the lucrative harvest remained.'

How did planters use the threat of lynching?

"There were often two components of lynching.....the second was the economic aspect. For example, upon successful lynching of a black farmer....the land would be available and the market opened for white farmers.

"lynching." www.Encv4u.com

According to the quote, what could be accomplished by lynching?

" Lynching, they came to see, was rooted in poverty.....middle and upper-class southerners...benefitted from the economic exploitation it enforced, and were directly or indirectly responsible for its persistence."

According to the reading, what is the root cause of lynching?

"With minor exceptions, until the civil rights movement of the mid-1960s, the South was able to frustrate any national effort to make a dent in America's apartheid. In this climate, it was not even possible to pass so basic an expression of a national commitment to justice as an antilynching bill.

"The NAACP fought for such a law. Walter White was a confidant of Eleanor Roosevelt and, through her, gained access to Franklin D. Roosevelt. In 1935, FDR tried to explain to White why he had chosen to sacrifice the rights of black Americans to the economic needs of the country as a whole: 'I've got to get legislation passed by Congress to save America. The southerners by reason of the seniority rule in Congress are chairmen or occupy strategic places on most of the senate and House committees. If I come out for the antilynching bill now, they will block every bill I ask Congress to pass to keep America from collapsing.' By 1940, there had been almost 3,500 lynchings in the country, mostly in the small towns and rural areas of the South. Between V-J day, the end of the war against Japan, and June 1947, less than two years later, there were twenty-six lynchings of blacks" (16-17).

What reasons does FDR give for not directly addressing the lynching problem?

Mc June 20
 Does the President
 want to send a message.
 If so any ideas re the
 lynching subject?
 S.E.

Mc June 20
 Does the President want to send a message.
 If so any ideas re the lynching subject?
 S.E.

The White House
 Washington

Memo. to Mr. Hassett:

The President says he does want to send a message to Annual Conference National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, but avoiding lynching and other controversial issues Just cordial greetings, etc. Will return file to you tomorrow morning.

McIntyre.

June 23, 1938 11:12 a.m.

"The refusal of Franklin Roosevelt to intervene shocked and angered the black community..."

**from Revolt Against Chivalry : Jesse Daniel Ames and the
 Women's Campaign Against Lynching; written by Jacquelyn
 Dowd Hall. Columbia University Press; 1993**

Why might FDR refuse to intervene in the lynching problem?



Do not look at the Negro.

His earthly problems are ended.

Instead, look at the seven WHITE children who gaze at this gruesome spectacle.

Is it horror or gloating on the face of the neatly dressed seven-year-old girl on the right?

Is the tiny four-year-old on the left old enough, one wonders, to comprehend the barbarism her elders have perpetrated?

Rubin Stacy, the Negro, who was lynched at Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on July 19, 1935, for "threatening and frightening a white woman," suffered PHYSICAL torture for a few short hours. But what psychological havoc is being wrought in the minds of the white children? Into what kinds of citizens

will they grow up? What kind of America will they help to make after being familiarized with such an inhuman, law-destroying practice as lynching?

According to the document, what potential problems are created when white children view a lynching.

7.

**WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION**
Presidio of San Francisco, California
April 1, 1942

**INSTRUCTIONS
TO ALL PERSONS OF
JAPANESE
ANCESTRY**

Living in the Following Area:

All that portion of the City and County of San Francisco, State of California, lying generally west of the north-south line established by Junipero Serra Boulevard, Worcester Avenue, and Nineteenth Avenue, and lying generally north of the east-west line established by California Street, to the intersection of Market Street, and thence on Market Street to San Francisco Bay.

All Japanese persons, both alien and non-alien, will be evacuated from the above designated area by 12:00 o'clock noon Tuesday, April 7, 1942.

No Japanese person will be permitted to enter or leave the above described area after 8:00 a. m., Thursday, April 2, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the Provost Marshal at the Civil Control Station located at:

1701 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California

The Civil Control Station is equipped to assist the Japanese population affected by this evacuation in the following ways:

1. Give advice and instructions on the evacuation.
2. Provide services with respect to the management, leasing, sale, storage or other disposition of most kinds of property including: real estate, business and professional equipment, buildings, household goods, boats, automobiles, livestock, etc.
3. Provide temporary residence elsewhere for all Japanese in family groups.
4. Transport persons and a limited amount of clothing and equipment to their new residence, as specified below.

Examine the document, then provide at least two examples of human rights that were violated by this order,

LIEUTENANT KEI TANAHASHI was killed in action in Italy on July 4, 1944.

He was born in Los Angeles 25 years ago. From Lincoln High School he went to the University of California at Los Angeles. There he was president of the Bruin's Club, a member of Scabbard and Blade, and a captain in the Reserve Officers Training Corps. He graduated in 1939.

He was assistant scoutmaster of the famous Troop 379 of Los Angeles which was presented to President Roosevelt during the Scout Jamboree of 1935.

With his family, Lt. Tanahashi was evacuated first to the Pomona Assembly Center and then to Heart Mountain Relocation Center, where those dearest to him are now. They have been held for over two years without charge and without trial--something new in American justice. Of this evacuation Justice Murphy of the United States Supreme Court said, "It bears melancholy resemblance to the treatment accorded the Jewish race in Germany and other parts of Europe."

Shortly before his death, Lt. Tanahashi wrote:

"WHEN THIS UNFINISHED BUSINESS IS TAKEN CARE OF, WE SHOULD ALL BE ABLE TO LIVE TOGETHER AS GOOD AMERICANS. MY FERVENT HOPE IS THAT THE SLANT OF THE HEART WILL DETERMINE A MAN'S LOYALTY."

Nisei Officer Killed in Italy 8



LIEUTENANT KEI TANAHASHI of Los Angeles, Calif., whose parents now reside in the Heart Mountain relocation center in Wyoming, was killed in action in Italy on the Fourth of July, according to the War Department.

NOTICE

Memorial services for Lt. Kei Tanahashi, who was killed in action in Italy on July 4, will be held at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, July 29 at 2-27 mess hall.

Joy Tanahashi, wife
Soji Tanahashi, father
Kin Tanahashi, mother
Yasaku Hirano, father-in-law
Chiye Hirano, mother-in-law
Kiyoshi Tanahashi, brother
Fusaye Tanahashi, sister-in-law
Masako Fujii and Hanako Cho, relatives
Boy Scout Troop 379
Block 2 residents

NOTICE OF AN AMERICAN MEMORIAL SERVICE TO BE HELD BEHIND THE BARBED WIRE OF HEART MOUNTAIN RELOCATION CENTER, WYOMING.

Camps Hold Kin of 45 Nisei Soldier Dead

WASHINGTON, Sept. 7. (AP)—Forty-five American soldiers of Japanese ancestry with next-of-kin living in relocation centers have been killed in action in Italy, W.R.A. Director Dillon S. Myer reported today to Secretary of Interior Ickes. Other casualty telegrams received in the centers have told of 92 wounded and two missing.

Earned by Japanese Americans in Italy:

Over 1,000 Purple Hearts
46 Silver Stars
31 Bronze Stars
9 Distinguished Service Crosses
3 Legion of Merit medals
The Distinguished Unit Citation



According to the document, how did Japanese Americans show their loyalty to the U.S.?

August 12th, 1942

9.

Hon. Marvin H. Mc Intyre,
The White House,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

At the suggestion of our mutual friend, Marvin A. Harlan, we are enclosing one of our special Jap hunting licenses. Please feel free to make unrestricted use of it and may you enjoy an honest laugh at it, as so many of our friends here have done.

Very truly yours,

PLAZA CLUB,

By

Raymond Guealey

RQ-c

**JAP HUNTING
LICENSE**

FROM DECEMBER 7, 1941
UNTIL THE RISING SUN GOES DOWN

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

having paid the fee of 25c is hereby authorized to observe Open Season on Japs either before or after sun-up, before or after sun-down and with or without bow and arrow, pitchfork, shotgun, blunderbus, sub-machine gun, 75-millimetre gun or trench mortar.—NO BAG LIMIT.

221½ N. MESA AVE.
EL PASO, TEXAS

PLAZA CLUB

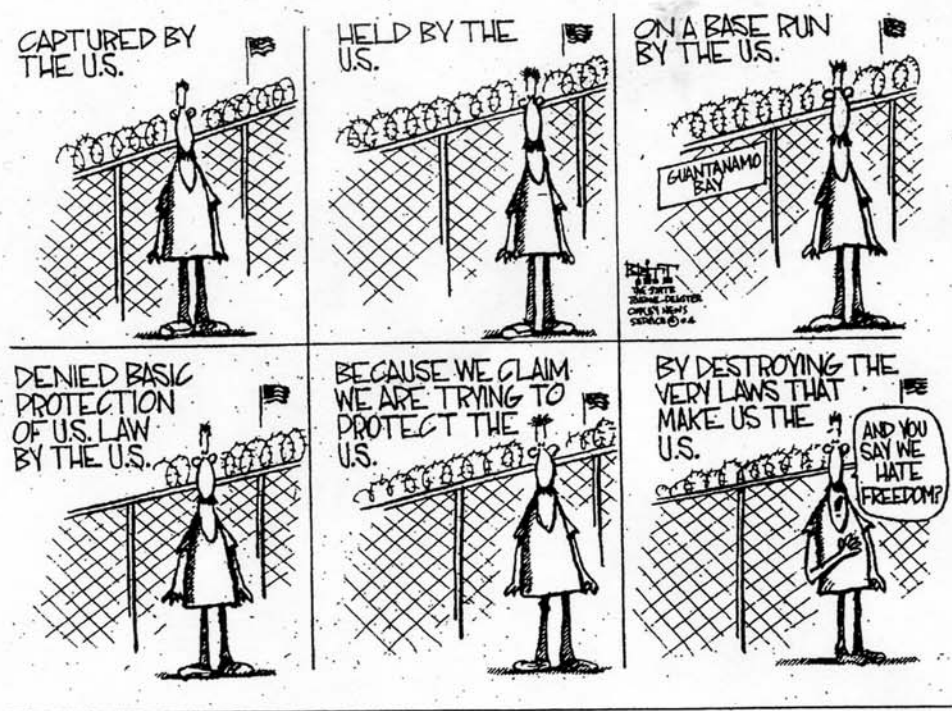
SIGNED

Raymond Guealey

To whom was this "hunting license" sent?

Who else might have seen it?

Predict what was done with this after it was received?



Write a "letter to the editor" protesting the either FDR's refusal to openly support an anti-lynching bill; or the internment of Japanese-Americans; or the denial of legal counsel to the detainees at Guantanamo. In your letter, use reasoning we have developed through our discussions, as well as personal opinion of your own. Be sure to focus primarily on the denial of civil/human rights, and the role national stress plays in these situations.

GULF NEWS

Amnesty to help Gulf detainees in Guantanamo

Manama | By Mohammed Almezal | 05/02/2004 | [Print this page](#)

Amnesty International plans to hold a conference in April to "formulate a strategy" that would help the hundreds of Gulf nationals detained by US authorities in Guantanamo Bay, it was announced here yesterday.

The more than 600 detainees, who were captured late 2001 during the US war in Afghanistan, "are beyond the reach of proper judicial channels," said Lamri Chirouf, Amnesty Middle East Programme Researcher. "They have no access to lawyers, to their families and to a chance to defend themselves," he added.

Chirouf spoke to reporters at the end of his visit to Bahrain, part of his team's current fact-finding mission in the region. He said a great number of the detainees in Guantanamo are GCC nationals, "and their detention is not in conformity with human rights standards."

He said that Amnesty International was planning to "mobilise the data collected on the detainees through his visits to Bahrain, Qatar, Yemen, and the UAE and his colleague's visit to Kuwait and present it at a conference."

The conference, in which the detainees' families, human rights groups and lawyers would take part, "will plan a unified strategy to help them," he said.

Six Bahrainis, suspected of having fought with the Taliban regime, are detained in Guantanamo including one member of the royal family. Chirouf also regional countries to release those detained following the September 11 attacks.

"At the conference in April, we will to debate upon the condition of these detainees in these countries and come up with recommendations to press for action. We want to spotlight the wrongs of state behaviour and urge the countries to offer detainees clear and transparent access to justice.

"We are not saying governments should release convicted criminals but we want to make clear the distinction between justice enforced by the security system and justice measured out by the judiciary.

"Punish the wrong-doers by all means but while the state may accuse, the accused should be given the right to defend himself," he explained.

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Supreme Court Hears Detainees' Appeals

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

NEWS

WASHINGTON — The **Supreme Court** () heard a key case in the War on Terror on Tuesday as justices heard appeals on whether enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay can sue American courts to try to win their freedom.

The key question for the high court is: do U.S. courts have any jurisdiction over more than 600 men from 44 countries who are said to be members of Al Qaeda and Taliban and who are being held at the Naval base in **Guantanamo Bay** (), Cuba?

Federal officials say absolutely not. Government lawyers say these men are a danger to the United States and the military should have the ability to keep them detained as long as they want.

In these cases the prisoners aren't asking for their freedom. They want the ability to bring a lawsuit inside the American courts that would argue for their freedom.

A lawyer for the men told the Supreme Court that the United States has created a "lawless enclave" at the military base in Cuba without access to American courts.

Attorney **John Gibbons** () said "it's been plain for 215 years" that people in federal detention may file petitions in U.S. courts.

The prisoners were mostly picked up in the fighting that toppled the Taliban government in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the months following the Sept. 11 attacks.

Chief Justice **William H. Rehnquist** () noted that the detainees are not on American soil, and asked how a judge in Washington is to deal with a case from Cuba.

Gibbons said the men should have some way to get their complaints before a judge. The United States holds the only real control over the Guantanamo Base, and U.S. law governs what happens there, Gibbons replied.

"No other law applies there. Cuban law doesn't apply there," he said.

Justice **Antonin Scalia** () said that if the courts are opened to cases from foreign combatants, battlefield detainees would try to use American courts.

Without oversight by U.S. judges, there would be no checks and balances on the president's power at Guantanamo, Justice **Stephen Breyer** () observed later.

"The executive would be free to do whatever they want," Breyer told the Bush administration's lawyer, Solicitor General **Theodore Olson** ().

Not so, Olson replied. The United States routinely asserts temporary or nominal control over foreign territory such as military bases, he noted.

"It would be remarkable for the judiciary to start deciding," when and where the United States could do that, Olson said.

In addition to the jurisdictional issue raised by the Guantanamo case, the court next week takes up two related cases about the rights of American citizens labeled enemy combatants and held under similar restrictions.

The most important theme in all the cases is the power of the president to conduct a new kind of war as he sees fit.

Some spectators for Tuesday's argument camped out overnight, and a line of several hundred people snaked around the building.

In the Guantanamo case, the Bush administration's top Supreme Court lawyer argued in court filings that allowing the prisoners to go to court would "place the federal courts in the unprecedented position of micromanaging the executive's handling of captured enemy combatants from a distant zone."

The Bush administration asserts the right to hold and interrogate the men as long as necessary, without formal charges or the guarantee of a trial or access to a lawyer. The administration also asserts the men are not traditional prisoners of war, who would have guaranteed rights under the Geneva Convention.

The lawsuit before the high court was brought by lawyers who had not met their clients. Since then, a few Guantanamo detainees have been granted access to attorneys.

The lawyers say the men are in a nightmarish legal limbo. Furthermore, they say their clients had nothing to do with Sept. 11 and have never harmed Americans.

The cases are *Rasul v. Bush*, 03-334, and *al-Odah v. United States*, 03-343.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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