

Social Studies Teaching and Learning

Volume 1, Issue 2

December 2020

An open-source peer-reviewed journal of the



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How Museums Can Serve Teachers' and Students' Needs During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond: A Self-Determination Perspective

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Abstract

The authors describe how social studies teachers and museum educational programming can help serve the needs of students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, the authors identify digital resources and discuss how implementation of authentic instructional activities, through a self-determination theory perspective, have the potential to support student autonomy and facilitate student motivation.

Keywords: COVID-19, self-determination theory, autonomy, museum education, virtual programming

Even in the best of times, social studies teachers experience periodic moments of self-doubt regarding their instructional efficacy. One thing is for certain, the proliferation of COVID-19, which has led to seismic shifts in instructional design and delivery, has likely exacerbated those doubts. Teaching and learning in our new instructional reality gives cause for teachers to reflect on current practices and evaluate how to most effectively promote active learning while physical distancing. Perhaps now more than ever, teachers need to focus on locating practical and learner-appropriate instructional resources. While “our read-the-chapter-and-answer-the-questions-in-the-back pedagogy has familiar coziness,” it is plain that trying to maintain such customary approaches will only deliver discord and discontent for our students (Wineburg, 2018, p. 6). As teachers continue their search for resources to implement, it is possible that museums could help meet the instructional needs of students.

As expected, museums and other nonprofit institutions are also experiencing the negative ramifications and challenges presented by COVID-19. Many such institutions were ordered to temporarily close due to their non-essential status. Some museums are still shuttered, while others are operating with extremely limited capacity. According to the American Alliance of Museums, one in every six museums faces “significant risk of closing permanently because of financial duress exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic” (Vankin, 2020). Thus, in an age where funding and financial viability are at a premium, museums find themselves struggling to stay afloat. COVID-19 has forced museums around the world to drastically alter nearly every aspect of how they function. Many museums, even internationally acclaimed institutions like the Metropolitan Museum of Art, have furloughed or laid off staff, decreased salaries and benefits,

and/or cut back on programming in order to remain viable during this economic crisis (Pogrebin, 2020). Grants have become more competitive, and public donations are drying up.

In light of these unusual circumstances, museums are taking extra steps to sustain and even strengthen their relationships with local communities. The potential defunding of museums should be of great concern to teachers – both now and in the future. Due to the potential loss of digital resources and instructional materials that could enhance the teaching and learning of social studies, increased collaboration among stakeholders must serve as a starting point. In fact, scholars in the field of museum education have been suggesting this type of collaboration long before COVID-19. Stoddard (2018) posits that increased collaboration between museum educators and staff with teachers and teacher institutes would support and promote powerful teaching opportunities.

The overarching objective of this article is to support social studies teachers as they navigate teaching and learning in the age of COVID-19. We intend to do this by,

1. Describing how museums are shifting their methods and materials for teachers' instructional use.
2. Presenting teachers with examples of available instructional resources developed by museums that can be implemented in classrooms, irrespective of synchrony of delivery.
3. Delineating facets of self-determination theory (SDT) and autonomy-supportive strategies, and how teachers' understanding of SDT – coupled with implementation of museum-based resources – can potentially support students' needs.

Museums' Shift to Virtual Offerings and Connecting to Classrooms

Traditionally, museums function as repositories of knowledge, in which irreplaceable artifacts are housed for posterity. Academically-inclined curators create exhibits and programs that are intended to be authoritative in nature, which can be intimidating to the average visitor. History museums have been particularly prone to such inaccessible educational offerings. In fact, it could be suggested that such authoritative approaches can impede the historical thinking process for students because it denies them the opportunity to challenge and “evaluate the ways museums present the past” (Marcus et al., 2012, p. 67).

In recent years it has become more commonplace for a history museum's education department, not the curatorial department, to control gallery interpretation and public programming. The education department's role is to ensure that the museum's collection is fully accessible to visitors of all ages and backgrounds. Some institutions have fallen behind relative to modern educational programming – in large part due to a serious lack of funding. The vast majority of museums in the United States are nonprofit institutions; as a result, there exists an overreliance on federal grants and public donations to stay afloat. In spite of, or perhaps because of, their financial difficulties many history museums were making dramatic changes to their educational offerings even before COVID-19, in order to better appeal to their visitors. The

pandemic has only served to spur museum educators to more quickly create effective virtual programming intended to support the general public and, more specifically, classroom teachers.

Many museums across the country have been working for years to properly document their collections in order to make them accessible to the public in an online format. Initially, virtual collections were meant to accommodate those visitors who, for whatever reason, could not physically visit the museum. Closures are a lingering concern, and as such, these virtual collections have become one of the only ways for the public to visit their treasured museums. The pandemic has caused an unforeseen crisis in the educational community, but it has also led to an unexpected opportunity for museums to fully realize their digital presence. COVID-19 created an educational vacuum when it forced schools across the nation to close, and museums have been hustling to roll out more dynamic virtual programming to fill that void.

For many years now, history museums' educational offerings have often included programs that coincide with state content requirements and that support teachers' classroom curricula. The in-person student programs are often geared towards specific grades and curricular units. Many teachers rely upon such field trips to supplement their lessons and instructional design, and to provide tangible, experiential learning opportunities that are so unique to museum programming. However, field trips to museums are often fraught with complications – including cost and logistics – and often prevent teachers from thoroughly benefiting from the museum experience. Perhaps an increased utilization of virtual museum resources will help teachers learn how to use museum programs to encourage interest in the learning of history (Marcus et al., 2012).

Web-Based Educational Programming and Social Media

There are countless virtual resources available for social studies teachers to utilize in their specific content areas. While many resources exist for the different content areas, this article will focus on offerings related to US History. In this new age of virtual classrooms, museums are in the midst of preparing fresh, dynamic digital offerings. For instance, the Smithsonian Learning Lab offers a free interactive platform that allows for the exploration of authentic digital resources within the Smithsonian's expansive collection. This includes digital images and recordings as well as texts and videos related to history, art, and culture. The Library of Congress has also compiled hundreds of resources on every imaginable subject while also providing tips for teaching, lesson plans, free access to its World Digital Library, and virtual professional development to help teachers better utilize the institution's online resources. Even Google has rolled out its "Art & Culture" platform, where educators can find a vast array of virtual collections from acclaimed museums and cultural institutions. The collections on Google's "Art & Culture" site concern subjects such as the history of American democracy, the importance of our national parks, and women in culture.

For teachers looking to incorporate art into a US History class, the National Portrait Gallery is offering virtual school programs on a wide variety of topics and concepts – such as

identity, democracy, and social justice – until May 2021. The Bill of Rights Institute has developed virtual learning lessons on such topics as the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration of Independence. It has also created opportunities for students to engage with more abstract concepts such as democracy and civil disobedience. Local museums across the country are likewise trying to compensate for empty, visitor-less galleries by offering an array of virtual educational opportunities that connect the public to their unique collections. Some have created 360-degree self-guided tours, virtual field trips for students, special online exhibits, gallery talks with museum curators, and exciting interactive activities related to the collections (see Table 1).

Table 1

Examples of Educational Opportunities within Museum and Web-Based Collections

Collection	Examples of Digital Resources for US History*
Smithsonian Learning Lab https://learninglab.si.edu/	<i>Audiovisual resources</i> include, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the Spanish Flu Impact America’s Ability to Fight in WWI? • National Youth Summit, Women’s Suffrage • American Indian Removal: What does it Mean to Remove a People?
Library of Congress https://www.loc.gov/education/	<i>Teacher-made lesson plans</i> include, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After Reconstruction • The American West: Images of Its People • Baseball, Race Relations, and Jackie Robinson
Google https://artsandculture.google.com/	<i>Art and museum collections</i> include, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIFE Photo Collection • The Art Institute of Chicago • Amon Carter Museum of American Art
National Portrait Gallery https://npg.si.edu/teachers/school-groups	<i>Virtual school programming</i> include, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring Identity through Portraiture • Visualizing Democracy • Voices of Social Justice
Bill of Rights Institute https://bilofrightsinstitute.org/educate/educator-resources/	<i>Virtual learning lessons</i> include, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being an American • The Gilded Age and Progressive Era • Heroes and Villains

Note. The resources listed above are not exhaustive but were selected by the authors to serve as exemplars.

Museums are also taking advantage of this unusual time to expand their social media presence. Museums are “urging Congress to include nonprofit museums in economic relief,” by using the hashtags #4BillionForMuseums and #MuseumsAdvocacy to ask their communities and online audiences for financial support (Souza & Lee, 2020). The Carnegie Museum of Natural History has started a TikTok account to reach out to the younger generation. Others are creating podcasts, in which educators and curators discuss interesting artifacts, and YouTube channels, where teachers can find exciting educational videos or informal webinars. The Twitter hashtag #MuseumFromHome contains intriguing images and snippets of information about internationally acclaimed museums’ collections. With so many students enjoying easy access to social media these days, there are endless opportunities to incorporate museums’ social media platforms into a social studies curriculum.

Supporting Students’ Needs

The dramatic pivot to online learning platforms over the past few months has led teachers to re-examine various aspects of their instructional design. One of the most prominent concerns is how to effectively motivate students in these new instructional spaces. While there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to answer that concern directly, teachers’ understanding of self-determination theory (SDT) and autonomy-supportive strategies have the potential to mitigate such worries.

Self-Determination Theory and Student Motivation

Self-determination theory (SDT) is an approach to motivation and personality that is based on the assumption that humans (i.e. students) are “innately curious, interested creatures who possess a natural love of learning” (Niemec & Ryan, 2009, p. 133). Moreover, SDT posits that support and promotion of students’ need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness is essential for facilitating growth and for constructive social development and personal well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 68). It is safe to state that, even in ‘normal’ face-to-face learning environments, teachers struggle with motivating students; thus we might conclude that the shift to online learning environments will likely amplify such struggles.

In order to fully understand SDT, we must begin by describing the roles that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play in the learning process. *Intrinsic* motivation refers to the motivation to engage in an activity or work on a task because it is deemed to be enjoyable. Schunk et al. (2008) suggest that “task participation is its own reward” which does not require further “explicit rewards or other external constraints” (p. 236). *Extrinsic* motivation serves as a means to an end, meaning that it directs students to work on a task because it might result in a desirable outcome (i.e. teacher praise, reward, avoidance of punishment, etc.). Given this, it is imperative that teachers seek to implement instructional methods that will challenge students while also creating

opportunities centered on curiosity and independence. Facilitating students' *intrinsic* motivation can be based on five assumptions:

- Preference for challenge rather than for easy work.
- Incentive to work to satisfy one's own interest and curiosity rather than working to please the teacher.
- Independent mastery attempts rather than dependence on the teacher.
- Independent judgment rather than reliance on the teacher's judgment.
- Internal criteria for success and failure rather than external criteria (Harter & Connell, 1984).

In each of these assumptions, it is evident that students' intrinsic motivation can be supported when they experience varying degrees of autonomy. Simply put, motivation produces. Authentic, intrinsic motivation reveals students who have "more interest, excitement, and confidence...manifest[ing] both as enhanced performance, persistence, and creativity" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 69).

Autonomy-Supportive Strategies

Teachers want to put the needs of their students first, even in the face of a pandemic. However, many teachers are restricted in their pedagogical flexibility as a result of the various external pressures they face on a daily basis. These pressures can lead to an increase in teacher-centered approaches being employed. Such overreliance on teacher-centered approaches can dramatically thwart students' autonomy – which has proven to be a critical characteristic in facilitating students' intrinsic motivation.

In basic terms, autonomy is an individual's ability to exercise control and agency within his or her environment. Teachers can work toward supporting students' autonomy by fostering relevance, providing choice, and encouraging independent thinking. Implementing autonomy-supportive measures has to be intentional and systematic – especially given our current educational uncertainty. Moreover, while such strategies promote intrinsic motivation, they are also likely to increase various facets of engagement (i.e. behavioral, cognitive, and emotional). Autonomy-supportive strategies can take shape in various manners (see Table 2).

Supporting Students' Needs through Museum-Based Resources

While the proliferation of COVID-19 has caused near countless issues for various stakeholders, it also presents social studies teachers with an opportunity to expand their instructional horizon. While digital resources for teachers and students are plentiful, identifying quality resources from reputable institutions can be somewhat daunting and can cause teachers to return to a pedagogy that is familiar and comfortable (i.e. teacher-centered, direct instruction, etc.). Moving forward, we will identify several such museum-based resources and demonstrate how they can potentially facilitate student motivation while also supporting students' autonomy.

During the instructional design process, teachers should consider the following in order to develop lessons that meet the curricular standards while also being autonomy-supportive (see Table 3).

Table 2

Autonomy-Supportive Strategies: Adapted from Stefanou et al. (2004)

<i>Organizational Autonomy Support</i>	<i>Procedural Autonomy Support</i>	<i>Cognitive Autonomy Support</i>
Students are provided opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose evaluation procedures • Participate in development of classroom rules • Be responsible for due dates 	Students are provided opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose materials • Display work in an personal manner • Openly discuss wants and desires • Choose the form in which their project will be displayed 	Students are provided opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss multiple approaches and strategies • Have ample time for decision making • Receive informational feedback • Debate ideas freely • Ask questions freely • Formulate personal goals

Effective implementation of museum-based resources can support both curricular requirements and the needs of students. Some of the benefits of considering the intersections between student autonomy and our new online platforms for delivery might not be as tangible or as apparent as others. As Reeve (2016) points out, “the goal of autonomy support is clear and obvious—namely to provide students with learning activities, a classroom environment, and a student-teacher relationship that will support their daily autonomy” (p. 133). The power of teacher-student relationships is unmistakable – when teachers respond to students’ needs and are emotionally warm and available, students tend to be more motivated in class and achieve at higher rates (Davis & Dague, 2020). Ultimately, the coalescence of new instructional resources coupled with autonomy-supportive behaviors can lead to teachers being more in-synch with their students (Reeve, 2016).

Autonomy-supportive strategies implemented in face-to-face learning environments are still possible in online platforms. Below, we have isolated a lesson plan from the Library of Congress entitled, “Baseball, Race Relations and Jackie Robinson.” This provides students the opportunity to explore primary sources that relate to “Jackie Robinson’s breaking of the racial barrier in professional baseball,” and how it “leads to a deeper exploration of racism in the United States, both in and out of sports” (Pulda, n.d.). In this case, the lesson calls on students to analyze two primary sources and answer a series of questions. Through the source analysis,

teachers can set up their own online instructional activities that can meet curricular requirements while facilitating students' motivation. (see Tables 4 and 5).

Table 3

Evaluating Autonomy-Supportive Measures (adapted from Reeve, 2016)

Characteristics of Autonomy Support	Application of Autonomy Support
Takes the Students' Perspective	The teacher, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> invites, welcomes, and incorporates students' input is aware of students' needs, wants, and goals
Vitalizes Inner Motivational Resources	The teacher, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> piques students' curiosity frames instructional activities with students' goals
Uses Non-Pressuring, Informational Language	The teacher, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is flexible, open-minded, and responsive provides choices and options
Displays Patience	The teacher, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> allows students to work at their own pace and in their own way waits for students' signals of initiative and willingness

Table 4

Description of "Baseball, Race Relations and Jackie Robinson"

Instructional Objectives	Resources
The students will, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze primary documents closely. Research documents specific to the history of race relations in the mid-20th century United States. Draw conclusions moving from the specific documents to the broader society and text them for validity 	The resources include, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter from Jackie Robinson to Branch Ricky, 1946 Branch Ricky's speech to the "100-percent Wrong Club"

Table 5

Examples of Supporting Students' Autonomy in Online Platforms – Jackie Robinson

Instructional Activity	Online Instructional Delivery*	Type of Autonomy Supported
<p><u>Posters and Gallery Walk</u> This is a popular evaluation tool for teachers. In this case, students could demonstrate their understanding of topics related specifically to Jackie Robinson, as well as additional sub-themes like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The place of sports in American life • The conflict between urban and rural values (i.e. placement of baseball stadiums and cities planning) 	<p><u>Synchronous/Asynchronous</u> Utilize shared spaces for group recording and view products as a whole class (i.e. Padlet, Google, etc.).</p>	<p><u>Procedural and Cognitive</u> By allowing students to display work in a personal manner, students' interest in the topics and products will be facilitated. Additionally, this activity supports students' perspective and allows the student to choose the form that the project will be displayed.</p>
<p><u>Think-Pair-Share</u> To encourage active engagement, students could explore a compelling question based on one of the primary sources. For example, after reading Robinson's letter to Branch Rickey, teachers could ask students to address the following question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was Rickey's leaving Brooklyn harder on Robinson than others? 	<p><u>Synchronous</u> Create breakout meeting rooms in online conferencing platforms.</p> <p><u>Asynchronous</u> Pose a similar type question and ask students to respond in a discussion-based forum.</p>	<p><u>Cognitive</u> The use of the compelling question will likely pique students' interest and will support students' perspective taking. Additionally, it will allow students to debate ideas freely – even if those ideas are displayed in an asynchronous manner.</p>

Note. Adapted from Baumgartner (2020) "Active Learning while Physical Distancing"

Conclusion

Instead of withering under these trying times, many stakeholders are taking the initiative to find innovative ways to connect. In this case, teachers are trying to connect with their students while museums are trying to connect with a variety of audiences in new ways. When looking toward the future, both teachers and museums must consider how circumstances today, and their responses to those circumstances, will affect their focus and offerings later on. Both have the

opportunity to develop a unique and potentially symbiotic relationship that should not be taken for granted and should not be forgotten once more normal times return.

What is at stake is our social studies students being afforded the opportunity to experience the many wonders that exist online. Teachers need to take the lessons learned during this crisis and continue to provide students with authentic instructional activities. Moreover, applying a deeper understanding and appreciation of self-determination theory can help create synergy between the instructional materials and the students. Further, for museums, it will be imperative to continue to build on their educational programming. While some museums are opening their doors again, with limited capacity, the aforementioned virtual programming should continue to be explored in an effort to reach a broader and more diverse audience. This is a rare opportunity for educators to look at their curricula with a critical eye and to incorporate new and exciting digital material into their lesson plans – such alterations could benefit students' education for many years to come.

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Teaching the History of Native American Pandemics to Highlight the Effects of Racial Discrimination in Indigenous Communities

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Abstract

As experts and politicians debate the best approaches to combatting the coronavirus, low income communities of color and Native Americans continue to experience the worse effects of the pandemic. Even before the advent of COVID-19, epidemics have ravaged populations in the developing world and in Indigenous communities, but inadequate attention has been devoted to assisting them. It is society's inferior view of communities of color and Native Americans that causes them to be neglected by the federal government when it comes to resource distribution. Throughout the history of the United States this racial prejudice and discrimination against American Indians has been a common reality. Discrimination manifests itself in school curriculum, in that many US history texts do not include the study of the history and culture of indigenous people. But social studies educators can counter this by offering a more multicultural curriculum. Using James Banks' transformation approach this essay will discuss how social studies classrooms can combat racial discrimination by showing history from a non-traditional perspective, highlighting the impact of pandemics on Native American communities, and closes with a sample unit plan for teaching the topic.

Keywords: pandemics, Native Americans, multicultural curriculum, social studies

The smallpox was always present, filling the churchyards with corpses, tormenting with constant fears all whom it had stricken, leaving on those whose lives it spared the hideous traces of its power, turning the babe into a changeling at which the mother shuddered, and making the eyes and cheeks of the bighearted maiden objects of horror to the lover.

—Thomas Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II*

A few years ago this opening passage about the scourge of the nineteenth century smallpox pandemic may have seemed foreign to US citizens. But now the dangers of widespread disease are all too familiar as the number of coronavirus cases and deaths continue to rise. The idea of a pandemic has become a part of everyday reality in the United States of America.

As experts and politicians debate the best approaches to combatting this modern pandemic, low income communities of color and Native Americans continue to experience the worse effects of the coronavirus (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2020). Even before the advent of the coronavirus, epidemics have ravaged populations in the developing world and in Indigenous communities, but inadequate attention has been devoted to assisting them (Ross, 2020). Indeed, only those in Western society and wealthy nations seem to get proper resources to combat the virus. This has been the case in the United States as it relates to Native Americans and COVID-19. For example, the Navajo nation has been hit especially hard and not enough attention has been given to this crisis. COVID-19 cases have increased at an alarming rate in that community because of inadequate resources given to combat the disease (In Numbers: COVID-19 Across the Navajo Nation, 2020). While at the same time, states like New York that have been especially hard hit by the coronavirus have gotten ample resources and assistance from the federal government (Cuomo, 2020). It is society's inferior view of communities of color and Native Americans that causes them to be neglected by the federal government when it comes to resource distribution. Throughout the history of the United States this racial prejudice and discrimination against American Indians has been a common reality.

Schools can play a key role in combatting this racial discrimination. Much of the social studies curriculum in the United States has not included the study of the history and culture of Indigenous people (Vaught, 2011; Wong, 2015; Yacovone, 2018; Zimmerman, 2004). On the one hand, in-depth historical content about Native Americans and other minoritized groups has been absent from US textbooks; on the other hand, material that privileges European American culture and ideology has been prominent in US classrooms (Speed, 2015). That is why the role social studies educators play in implementing a multicultural curriculum cannot be overstated (Banks, 1999).

When educators teach the history of pandemics in Native communities, it can help students get a fuller picture of US history and combat current discrimination against Native Americans and other Black and Brown communities. Using James Banks' (1999) transformation approach this essay will discuss how social studies classrooms can combat racial discrimination by showing history from a non-traditional perspective, highlighting the impact of pandemics on Native American communities. The first section of this article will outline and discuss James Banks' four dimensions of multicultural education. The second section will build upon Banks' transformation approach, to highlight the impact COVID-19 has had on Indigenous communities, focusing on the inappropriate response by the US government. The third section will briefly examine a non-traditional perspective in studying pandemics, leading into the fourth section that will offer a historical survey of widespread disease throughout the history of Native Americans in the Americas. This will help us put contemporary conversations about COVID-19 and Native American communities within a historical context. In the appendix of this article we offer a unit plan outlining ways this material can be used in social studies middle and secondary classrooms.

An Effective Multicultural Curriculum

It is important that schools strive toward developing a more inclusive curriculum that goes beyond simply patronizing people of color. James Banks (1999) offers four levels of multicultural curricular reform that is effective and meaningful and integrates more diverse perspectives and social justice into the lesson.

The first level is Banks' (1999) *contributions approach*. This approach is very common in many classrooms throughout the US, but requires the least amount of effort out of the four approaches. With this curricular approach, teachers make no real effort to integrate diverse perspectives into the lesson. Also called the "Heroes and Holidays" approach, teachers often incorporate books and other material that highlight famous people, holidays and special events from various cultures (Zarillo, 2011, p. 122). A common example of this approach is when students learn about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on his birthday. Other popular people and events from this approach might include readings on Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks as well as discussion of holidays such as Cinco de Mayo or Kwanza (Banks, 1999). But the key to this approach is that these prominent figures and special events are merely mentioned, and no changes are made to the overall curriculum.

Banks' (1999) second level is the *additive approach*. This is an improvement upon the contributions approach. Teachers that implement this strategy are intentional about developing a more multicultural curriculum. With the additive approach, diverse content and perspectives are added to lessons, but no change is made to the basic structure. Zarillo (2011) points out that "the units of study change only in that content is added to include multicultural perspectives" (p.123). Curriculum that uses this approach would integrate material by and about people from diverse cultures into the unit without any structural change. Examples might include adding cultural diversity to the traditional Thanksgiving story by exploring the Native American history and culture related to the holiday (Banks, 1999). Another example of this approach includes incorporating a unit on the Civil Rights movement into a larger study of modern US history.

The *transformation approach* presents an overhaul of sorts to the entire curriculum. The key aspect of this approach is that it gives students the opportunity to view social studies topics from multiple perspectives, thus giving them a more in-depth understanding of the material (Banks, 1999). The curriculum is revised to have students look at social studies from multiple perspectives to get a fuller picture of the world. For example, if a teacher was doing a unit on slavery, they might find primary sources that discuss the history from the perspective of slaves (e.g. slave narratives) in addition to reading sources written by slave masters. Then students could compare sources to arrive at a fairer and more balanced picture of history. Another example is middle school students could study what life is like for seventh graders in southern China. Students could compare their lives to their Chinese peers. There are also wonderful digital pen pal projects that one could develop using this approach.

The last approach is the *social action* approach. Zarillo (2011) points out that “this approach combines the transformation approach with activities to strive for social change” (p. 124). Students can go beyond just looking at history from multiple perspectives as an academic exercise and put their work to action. For example, after completing a unit on the Civil Rights movement, students can become involved in non-profit organizations in their community that address social needs of people of color. They can even be involved in teacher-led volunteerism in their neighborhoods (Banks, 1999).

Often middle and high school history classes privilege the impact of diseases on western civilization and on White settlers in North America. The examples of disease outbreaks in Western nations are plentiful including the bubonic plague in the middle ages, the New World smallpox epidemic of 1520, the Yellow Fever outbreak in the US of the 1800’s and more recently the Spanish flu of 1918. While it is important to understand the impact of pandemics in Western society, in the tradition of Bank’s work it is also important to learn about underrepresented groups in history as well. We can get a fuller and more accurate picture of history when we study it from multiple perspective. With the transformation approach in mind we will offer a brief historical discussion of the impact of diseases on Indigenous populations in North America.

The Impact of Disease and Pandemics on Indigenous Populations

Much of the public response to the novel coronavirus has been focused on the effects of the disease on Western nations. As it stands, in our world, White lives are valued more than those in minoritized communities (Pew Research Center [PRC], 2016). Using the transformational approach, we can shift lenses and look at how the coronavirus has affected Native American communities.

In the ultra-conservative political environment of 2020, the problems in Native Americans communities seem to have been exasperated, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Minoritized individuals that identify as Black, Brown or Native American have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic because of inequitable responses from authorities (CDC, 2020).

Discrimination against Native Americans can be noted in how resources are allocated to Indigenous people in the US. In this way, relief efforts in response to the novel coronavirus came to Native Americans as an afterthought and often after much political pressure (United Nations, 2020). Indeed, a recent report from the CDC states that “American Indian and Alaska Native people have suffered a disproportionate burden of COVID-19 illness during the pandemic” (CDC, 2020). As of December 2020, coronavirus cases on the Navajo Nation grew to 16,711 out of a population of nearly 174,000. At least 656 people have died on the reservation since February 2020 (In Numbers: COVID-19 across the Navajo Nation, 2020), which is consistent with Lakhani’s (2020) report that the Navajo had the highest infection rate in the United States.

These issues have come about as a result of racial discrimination toward Native American tribes in the US. In order to combat this, Writer (2008) using the philosophical lens of Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) argues that one must “unmask, expose, and confront continued colonization within educational contexts and societal structures, thus transforming those contexts and structures for Indigenous Peoples” (p. 2).

As Writer (2008) pointed out, Native American society has been decimated by the ugly legacy of colonization and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted, even amplified a longstanding racial caste in our society. Native Americans of course recognize the familiarity of COVID-19 devastating their communities. In this way Lakhani (2020) states:

The coronavirus is novel to the world, but the impact on Native communities is anything but a new experience. Native Americans feared the worst because they’ve been here before many times. European colonizers introduced, sometimes deliberately, an array of new infectious diseases including measles, cholera, typhoid and smallpox, which for many decades historians believed were solely responsible for killing more than 70% of native people who had no immunity to these deadly foreign germs (p.1).

Thus, as was stated in the passage above, widespread disease is nothing new in Native American communities. Banks’ transformation approach calls for educators to take a unique perspective on historical topics. In the next sections we will continue to use this approach to briefly examine a non-traditional perspective in studying pandemics and then go into a historical discussion about the impact of widespread disease on Native American communities in history.

Most of the major diseases that have caused pandemics in the Americas originated in the Old World (Crosby, 1976; Nunn & Qian, 2010). Because Native Americans had very limited contact with groups outside of North and South America, the development and spread of deadly diseases was limited (Kelton, 2007; Martin & Goodman, 2002). With the arrival of Europeans in the Americas, diseases from the Old World devastated entire tribes. Native Americans were not previously exposed to most diseases brought to the continents by European colonists, they had not built immunities to those bacteria and viruses. Europe served as a crossroads between many different peoples. Through constant warfare throughout the continent and interactions along the Silk Road from the East, Europeans developed immunity to a large variety of diseases (Hansen, 2012). In this way, the diseases Europeans brought to the Americas, decimated Native populations but had little effect on Europeans (Larcombe, 2005). A phenomenon called the virgin soil epidemic (Crosby, 1976; Jones, 2003; Rice, 2014). Koch et al. (2018) outline the devastation diseases brought to precolonial America. They state that there was:

unprecedented mortality rates after European arrival. Existing evidence suggests that the indigenous population collapse was primarily caused by the introduction of pathogens unknown to the American continent (“virgin soil epidemics”) together with warfare and slavery. Part of a wider Columbian Exchange of once-separate continental fauna and flora, these epidemics were introduced by European settlers and African slaves and were

passed on to an indigenous population that had not been previously exposed to these pathogens and therefore did not initially possess suitable antibodies. Such diseases included smallpox, measles, influenza, the bubonic plague, and later malaria, diphtheria, typhus and cholera” (pp. 20-21).

These diseases brought unspeakable destruction to Native communities, often wiping out entire villages (Robertson, 2001). Like COVID-19 in modern times, many of the Europeans that carried diseases were asymptomatic and thus did not realize they were spreading the diseases (Liu et al., 2021).

There is at least one case of the British intentionally exposing Native Americans to disease. In the Ohio country they gave blankets to the Natives as gifts that had come from their smallpox infirmary. Many scholars argue that this is the first instance of biological warfare in the US (Fenn, 2000; McConnel, 1997; Ranlet, 2000). Barras & Greub (2014) point out that this biological attack on Natives did not have its intended effects, stating that “in the light of contemporary knowledge, it remains doubtful whether... [The British] hopes were fulfilled, given the fact that the transmission of smallpox through this kind of vector is much less efficient than respiratory transmission, and that Native Americans had been in contact with smallpox” (p. 499). This early biological attack was consistent with the legacy of imperialism, colonialism and racial violence against Native Americans. With the imperialist mindset Europeans felt entitled to Native land and tried to obtain it by any means necessary, even if that meant implementing biological warfare.

The Plains Indians Struck Hard by Widespread Disease

Some tribes were hit especially hard by disease through much of their history. That is, widespread disease had an impact on specific Indigenous peoples in different ways. The Plains Indians were ravaged by disease in the nineteenth century (Ostler, 2004; Sundstrum, 1997). Between 1837 and 1870, at least four different epidemics struck the tribes in the plains. It was such an issue that the Plains Indians began to avoid Europeans when they learned that they were the source of the diseases (Kelton, 2004). However, Europeans had valuable goods and resources that Indians relied on such as metal pots, skillets, and knives. Thus, the allure of trade was too great and they traded with the Europeans eventually and spread disease throughout their villages (Daschuk, 2013; Taylor, 1982).

Native Cultural Practices and the Spread of Disease

Native cultural practices and their way of life contributed to the rapid spread of disease in their communities. For example, they placed much emphasis on visitation of their sick, which led to the rapid spread of illness through continual contact. Native religious cultural practices also increased their exposure to disease. Many believed that sickness was caused by magic and sorcery and that if the body was not protected properly by the spirits they were susceptible to diseases. This increased their exposure to these diseases (Robertson, 2001). They often called on

religious practitioners known as shamans to cure them of illnesses. Shaman healers used practices and rituals that involved continual close human contact. Lyon (1998) in describing some these practices stated, "Healing often involves driving out an evil spirit from the body of a patient" (p.14). One practice of the Shaman was to have

the patient laid out on the floorboards. He then walked about the patient, examining him from all angles. Then he might touch the patient about the spot where the pain lay. He licked his hands, then rubbed them over the painful area. Some shamans blew on the affected part, occasionally sucking at it tentatively at first if the case was diagnosed as one of (object) intrusion (Lyon, 1998, p.15).

These beliefs only allowed the diseases to proliferate even more.

Depopulation

The introduction of Old World diseases brought great depopulation to many Native tribes. On average many Native Americans lost 25–50% of their tribe to illness (Pearson, 2003). The Native population before the arrival of Cortés' invasion was estimated to be between 25-30 million in Mexico. However, half a century later the population was reduced to just three million, largely due to infectious diseases brought by the Spanish. In 1520 there were 700,000 Native Americans in Florida. However, by 1700 the number was reduced to 2,000 because of widespread disease (Cowley, 1991; Koch et al., 2019). Disease affected smaller tribes in a greater way, as epidemics often brought certain tribes to the brink of extinction.

Smallpox

Given the name the running face sickness by the Lakota Indians, smallpox was the most devastating disease brought from the Old World by Europeans (Ostler, 2004; Stearn & Stearn, 1945; Robertson, 2001). The disease was lethal to many Native Americans, bringing sweeping epidemics and affecting the same tribes repeatedly. The first well-documented smallpox epidemic happened in 1518. A smallpox epidemic struck the Huron Natives in 1639 in the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes regions through traders from Quebec (Jones, 2003; Jones, 2004). Disease cut the Huron population in half, going from 18,000 people in 1634 to nearly 9,000 just about five years later. In the 1770s, smallpox wiped out an estimated 30% of the West Coast Native Americans. A decade later in the 1880's the same disease devastated the Plains Indians (Hopkins, 1983). McIntyre and Houston (1999) point out that, "In the west, the worst and most widespread smallpox epidemic came north from the Missouri River in the summer of 1781. It reached susceptible aboriginal people... along the Saskatchewan River by the end of the year" (p. 21). As a result of the smallpox outbreak the federal government of the United States established a smallpox vaccination program for Native Americans in 1832. In their 1839 report The Commissioner of Indian Affairs discussed the casualties of the 1837 Great Plains smallpox epidemic. They stated that:

No attempt has been made to count the victims, nor is it possible to reckon them in any of these tribes with accuracy; it is believed that if [the number 17,200 for the upper Missouri River Indians] was doubled, the aggregate would not be too large for those who have fallen east of the Rocky Mountains” (Stearn & Stearn, 1945).

Widespread disease and depopulation have had a lasting effect on Native communities throughout history. The division of labor and interdependence that was indicative of Native culture has been greatly impacted by the epidemics. Fewer people were available to hunt, plant crops, and or support their community in other ways. Loss of cultural knowledge transfer also impacted the population (Hopkins, 1983). Scholars have noted this impact even up to the present day, with many tribes having populations that have been reduced by 90% or even sadly no longer in existence as a result of pandemics (Lopatin, 1940).

Conclusion

What Can We Learn?

The transformation approach allows educators to shift perspectives on historical analysis or in other social science and humanities disciplines in order to expand the curriculum. This can help the learner gain a deeper understanding of the topic. Within the context of this essay, studying the history of widespread diseases from the perspective of Native Americans can be helpful in combatting racial stereotypes and discrimination as it can perhaps create empathy, allowing Westerners to see American Indians and other minoritized people as human. As we have stated, the impact of pandemics in the past on indigenous people can help us understand their struggles in the present with diseases like COVID-19.

Teachers can highlight these discussions in their social studies classrooms during US and World history units. A robust and well-rounded multicultural curriculum that builds upon Banks’ framework can help students understand that a version of history that privileges White males is an intellectually dishonest portrayal of the past. Educators can help students understand how things that happened in the past in Native American history affects the present.

It is important to reiterate the importance of historical studies to help shed light on systemic racism and to also come up with effective solutions. In particular, it is important to be reminded that widespread disease is nothing new to Native communities. When we are reminded of the racial prejudice the indigenous people endured, we can be equipped to fight modern prejudices of all kinds, leading the way for our students. Sensoy and DiAngelo (2018) urge us to critique the notion that Whiteness is the standard and that all other races are deviant. The bias and discrimination they highlight has been the view of many Americans and even textbook curricula. We provide a unit plan (see Appendix) that will help social studies educators engage in a meaningful and thoughtful study of Native American history and culture with their students, tying the past to the present.

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Appendix: Sample Unit Plan

Title: Disease and Pandemics in Native American History

Introduction to the Unit

This unit can be taught as either a stand-alone unit or as part of a larger unit in US or world history. Native American history expands outside of US history and has roots long before the establishment of the United States of America. This unit plan is designed for middle school through high school usage. It can be adjusted depending on the grade level or topic one is teaching. Language arts teachers can collaborate with social studies teachers by integrating fiction or non-fiction texts surrounding Native American history and culture. The unit is aligned with the National Council for the Social Studies' (2010) Ten Thematic standards and the Common Core State Standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council for Chief State School Officers, 2020) for literacy. We have allotted ten days for the unit below, but it can be expanded or contracted depending on classroom needs.

NCSS (2010) Ten Thematic Standards:

Culture (Standard 1) Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

Time, Continuity, and Change (Standard 2) Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.

People, Places, and Environments (Standard 3) Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.

Common Core State Standards (2020) for Literacy:

Middle Grades

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.9 Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Secondary

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of

information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

State Social Studies Standards

Because the unit covers a broad range of material, it can be easily aligned with the three State Social Studies Standards of Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio. For example, the objectives align with Kentucky's eighth grade social studies standard 8.G.MM.1 Geography Standard and 8.H.CH.1 History Standard (Kentucky Department of Education [KDE], 2019). Standard 8.G.MM.1 states that lessons should help “Interpret how political, environmental, social and economic factors led to both forced and voluntary migration in the United States from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction from 1600-1877.” Standard 8.H.CH.1 states “Explain the role changing political, social and economic perspectives had on the lives of diverse groups of people in the Colonial Era.” Both would align with the study of Native American history and culture. Various Ohio and Indiana middle grades and secondary social studies standards also can be easily tied into this unit.

Unit Objectives and Assessments

Day One through Five Objectives:

Content Objectives

1. Students will be able to discuss and write about what life was like for various Native American tribes in the mid to late 1800’s.
2. Students will be able to compare the impact of pandemics throughout Native American history to the effects of COVID-19 on Native Americans.
3. Students will be able to compare and contrast the life and customs of various Native tribes in order to challenge the myth that they are one homogenous people group.

Process Objective

1. After reading several primary and secondary sources, participating in interactive lectures with the instructor and watching film clips on Native Americans in the 1800s, students will be able to discuss and write about what life was like for various Native American tribes in the mid to late 1800’s.
2. Students will read the texts *Rotting Face: Smallpox and the American Indian* and *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* and other non-fiction primary and secondary sources to be able to describe what life was like for Native Americans in the mid to late 1800s.

Value Objective

Students will use their understanding of racial prejudice and discrimination against Native Americans to combat prejudices in contemporary times.

Day One through Five Assessments:

Reflection and Discussion

As students do the readings, they will write reflections discussing the everyday life of Native Americans and the impact of widespread disease on their lives based on what they learned from the texts. Student understanding of contemporary Native American culture and discrimination they receive will be strengthened as they also learn and *write about* what life was like for them prior to the twentieth century. Students can focus on items such as Native cuisine, hobbies and entertainment, treatment by white society, assimilation into white society, family structure, courtship, childhood, occupations, religion and values, dwelling places and everyday tasks and responsibilities. Students can strengthen their understanding by consulting primary sources such as treatise with US officials, analyzing Native constitutions, reading narratives and letters and secondary sources that describe the daily lives of Native Americans prior to the twentieth century.

Lesson Opener: BrainPOP Video Opener and Assessments

Middle grades educators can begin their lesson with a BrainPOP (2020) video with several options for assessments embedded into the online resource. Students can view the vast collection of BrainPop videos on Native American history and Culture. Good examples of BrainPop (2020) videos to include in the lesson would be *Wounded Knee Massacre* (<https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/ushistory/woundedkneemassacre/>) and the *Seminole Wars* (<https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/ushistory/seminolewars/>).

Interactive Lecture

The instructor should share information with the class about the life of various Native American tribes prior to the twentieth century making reference to the effect of widespread disease on their lives through history. The instructor should integrate images, interactive Internet resources, videos and films to make the lecture more engaging. Discussion questions that tie it into the book will also be used to help the students be more engaged in the lesson.

Select Films to Supplement the Study of the Native American History and Culture

Many films portray Native Americans in a stereotypical light and should be viewed in advance for their instructional merit. These films can be used to highlight discussions about past and present racial discrimination against Native communities. The films listed below are a mere fraction of the number of films available for classroom use on the topic. Many can be found for free on Youtube.

Apache (1994); Apache Drums At Risk (2010); Barking Water (2009); Battle Cry (1955); Battles

of Chief Pontiac (1952); Big Sky (1952); Broken Arrow (1950); Buffalo Bill and the Indians (1976); Sitting Bull (1954); Buffalo Dance (1894); Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (2007); Dances with Wolves (1990); The Dark Wind (1991); Daughter of Dawn (1992); Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier (1955); Dead Man (1995); The Doe Boy (2001); DreamKeeper (2003); The Last of His Tribe (1992); Island of the Blue Dolphins (1964); The Last of the Mohicans (1992).

Day Six through Nine Objectives:

Content Objectives

1. After reading the primary and secondary sources on the history of widespread disease in Native American communities, students will better understand the impact of COVID-19 on Native American communities today.
2. After reading contemporary literature on the impact of COVID-19 on Native American communities today students will be able to compare and contrast the impact of widespread disease on Native American communities in the past and present.

Process Objective

Students will read primary and secondary sources on the history of widespread disease in Native American communities, students will better understand the impact of COVID-19 on Native communities today.

Value Objective

Students will use their knowledge of Native American history and the impact of pandemics in their communities to help them understand Native American struggles in contemporary times and to combat racial discrimination.

Day Six through Nine Assessments

Interactive Lecture:

The teacher will provide an interactive lecture about the impact of widespread disease throughout Native American history. The teacher will tie this group of lectures to the content from the previous days about Native American history and culture.

Reflection and Discussion

Students will end the day by writing a reflection on the lectures, readings and course material. The class will end with a discussion.

Research Paper

Students will begin to develop a research paper focusing on some aspect of the daily life of Native Americans prior to the twentieth century. Students should pay particular attention to tribal differences. Examples of projects students can focus on include Native American education, the impact of widespread disease, Native diet, hobbies and

entertainment, cultural differences between tribes, family structure, occupations, dwelling places, and responsibilities between women, men and children. Students should discuss the implications their history has on contemporary Native life.

Oral presentation

When students have completed their papers, the teacher can set aside days where they can give oral presentations that highlight their findings. Students are free to use PowerPoint, Prezi or other digital tools to present their work.

Extensions for Learning

Video Resource and Reflection

Students can view excerpts from the films *Cheyenne* and *Broken Arrow* to discuss Native American stereotypes that persist today.

Game Project

Students will create a game designed to teach some aspect of Native American history. Examples of games students can create include a board game, a card game or a digital game.

Create a Documentary

Students can create their own documentaries highlighting key concepts from readings, primary source materials and lectures.

Dramatic Role Play

Students can act out important scenes from the Native American history in ways that are culturally sensitive. They can also create skits, or even three act plays depicting the history they have learned for a final assessment.

Lewis Hine as a Change Agent: Discussing the Fight against Child Labor as a Model for Taking Civic Action

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Abstract

In this article, the author describes a lesson in which students examine public issues of the Gilded Age using the lens of taking civic action. The *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards* (C3 Framework) challenges social studies teachers to incorporate opportunities for students to take civic action (National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 2013). The lesson described in this article focuses on the taking informed action part of the C3 Framework. Designed for use in a high school history course, the lesson introduces Lewis Hine as an example of a historical figure taking civic action to address a public issue of his time, child labor. Students start with a brief review of the Gilded Age. An important concept of the lesson is that the absence of government oversight during the Gilded Age not only helped the United States industrialize, but it also allowed corruption and exploitation to flourish. In this context, students see how people in the Gilded Age responded to problems caused by industrialization. The different types of writing assignments in the lesson help students synthesize information from the Gilded Age. In another activity, students write a letter from the perspective of Lewis Hine about the conditions of child labor across the country. In the final activity of the lesson, students write a Ted Talk script on Lewis Hines's fight against child labor during the Gilded Age.

Keywords: taking civic action, public issues, child labor, C3 Framework

The novel corona virus (COVID-19) that struck the United States in the spring and summer of 2020 laid bare many unresolved issues in the U.S. economy. COVID-19 has revealed income inequality among Americans on a scale similar to the Gilded Age of the late 19th century in the United States (Boushey & Park, 2020). Even more unsettling was the revelation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2020) that income inequality played a significant role in the higher rates of infection and death for African Americans and Latinx populations. Bartels (2016) cited evidence that the New Gilded Age started in the 1970s, and then continued into the 21st century. He argued that real income growth for Americans in the 95th percentile grew at a rate more than ten times the real income rate of Americans in the 20th percentile. In the face of such inequality, social studies teachers must develop lessons that help students learn how to take an active role in the U.S. democracy to address income inequality. One topic that can be used to address income inequality are the issues that led to the creation of child labor laws.

Using the discussion of public issues followed by writing prompts on taking civic action provides opportunities for teachers to connect perennial public issues to models of individuals taking civic action. In this article, the author reviews the literature on the use of public issues before describing a high school U.S. history lesson in which students analyze and discuss the public issue of child labor during the Gilded Age. Copies of the primary sources, the handouts,

and the writing prompts for implementing the lesson in the social studies classroom have been provided throughout the article.

Literature Review on Discussing Public Issues

Shirley Engle (1960) argued that effective social studies instruction should prepare students for active participation in U.S. democracy. Furthermore, he stated that for students to become good citizens, they must be able to take information from a variety of sources and perspectives, weigh the evidence, and make the best decision based on the findings. The Harvard Social Studies Project, created by Donald Oliver, Fred Newmann, and James Shaver, developed out of an experimental curriculum project using the jurisprudential approach to teaching social studies (Oliver & Shaver, 1966). Oliver and Shaver (1966) defined jurisprudential teaching as a hodge-podge of contemporary and historical factual questions from a range of areas like law, ethics, and government surrounding perennial public policy issues in U.S. society. Students moved into definitional, legal, and factual questions as they started comparing legitimate solutions to problems caused by public policy issues (Oliver and Shaver, 1966).

The jurisprudential framework usually began with the teacher presenting an evocative story or account in a historical or contemporary context. In the story, the characters usually faced a controversial decision. The struggle of the characters in the story led students into discourse about the controversial issues of the story. Oliver and Shaver (1966) acknowledged that the content was not as important as was the difficult discourse created by answering ethical, legal, and definitional questions at the heart of the controversy. According to the authors, the most important focus was on the dialogue, whether it be between teacher and students or between student and student.

Oliver and colleagues (1967) published a series of pamphlets adapted from the Harvard Social Studies Project which stressed the use of case studies and student discourse. The authors presented the case study highlighting the characters' struggle with a difficult choice. As students discussed the choices available to the characters, questions about the characters' roles in the dilemma, as well as what they should or should not do, emerged (Oliver et al., 1967). The authors called these disputes from these perennial public policy issues persisting problems or dilemmas (Oliver et al., 1967). Discussing these perennial public issues, according to the authors, was the key to more lively discussions in the social studies classroom. Defined as questions "involving a choice or a decision for action by citizens or officials in affairs that concern a government or community," public issues help the community unite around common causes (Oliver et al., 1967, p. 29).

Discussions such as the ones described in the pamphlets by Oliver and colleagues (1967) help students make sense of the persisting problems, or issues of a community. Students begin by analyzing a case study in which a person must make a crucial decision. Then, they must clarify the issue by resolving disputes over definition, facts, explanation, and broader concerns about legal issues and disagreements over frames of reference. This process of clarification helps

students reach conclusions on the persisting issue by evaluating its different perspectives. Oliver and colleagues (1967) asserted that when students go through this discussion process, they think on two different levels. On one level, they must take a stand on the persisting issue. On the other level, students must exercise a type of active listening in which they ask themselves whether they are being sensitive to what the other people in the discussion are saying, or whether they are jumping from issue to issue. This duality in thinking helps students make sense between the differing perspectives about a persisting issue. Practicing the discussion and analysis of public issues better prepares students for participation in a democratic society (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Brooks, 2008; Oliver et al., 1967).

A decade later, Barr and colleagues (1977) analyzed rationales for teaching social studies including the jurisprudential model. They concluded that the common purpose of the social studies was to prepare students to be good citizens. Oliver and Newmann (1992) explained that analyzing and discussing public issues provides opportunities to gain a better understanding of the U.S. political system and public policies created in response to community needs. They defined public issues as problems or value dilemmas persisting throughout history and across cultures. Differences in how people define problems or dilemmas caused by differences in values frequently repeat in a democratic society (Oliver & Newmann, 1992; Hess, 2009). This was a prominent reason for using the discussion of public issues across the different disciplines of the social studies (Oliver & Newmann, 1992). In more recent history, public issues like universal healthcare, civil rights, and gun control have been hotly contested in the United States.

Oliver and Shaver (1966) were among the first to use discussions of public issues to engage students in learning social studies. Several authors also wrote about using discussions of public issues in the social studies classroom. Oliver and Newmann (1992) advocated using public issues to teach social studies in secondary schools. The authors stressed that discussing public issues could be applied across the social studies disciplines. Hess and McAvoy (2015) argued that teachers can use the discussion of controversial public issues as a model for students to utilize when they enter the “highly divisive political discourse” of a democratic society (p. 43). McAvoy (2016) highlighted the importance of teaching students to see how other people use reason when discussing controversial public issues. Even when individuals agree to disagree, participants have a better understanding of the different perspectives of the issues under discussion (Journell, 2017). Clabough (2018) argued that students must have opportunities to analyze and examine issues in depth which also allows for students to experience the complexity of contemporary issues and public policies.

The series of pamphlets written by Oliver and colleagues (1967) focused on several issues found throughout U.S. history. In the pamphlet “The Rise of Organized Labor,” the lesson provided a case study of different workers in different industries during the Gilded Age. In the pamphlet focused on the crisis of law and change, the persisting questions were embedded into the content for the American Revolution. Other pamphlets included issues related to immigration, business competition, and the legacy of oppression.

In his book about the megalopolis of the northeastern United States, Short (2007) noted that almost 20 percent of the population under 18 fell below the national poverty line. The author also provided examples of public issues for different groups in the megalopolis. Issues of poverty, racial inequality, public health, and others continue to plague the megalopolis. Bartels (2016) echoed similar issues like economic inequality, racial inequality, and political inequality across the U.S. since the early 1900s. Tindall and Shi (2013) described the poverty of the Gilded Age: “After the Civil War . . . millions of children took up work outside the home, operating machines, sorting coal, stitching clothes, shucking oysters . . . and tending looms. Parents desperate for income believed that they had no choice but to put their children to work” (p. 770). Examples such as these illustrated the perennial nature of public policy issues.

The goal of this article is to illustrate how teachers can integrate the civic thinking involved in the discussion of public issues with taking civic action called for in the C3 Framework (NCSS, 2013). Civic thinking refers to the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that students must possess as democratic citizens to work at the national, state, and local levels of governments as change agents (NCSS, 2013; Clabough, 2018). To achieve this goal, the author describes activities for a high school U.S. history class about the issue of child labor during the Gilded Age. The author selected this time period because students can see how public policies in the Gilded Age were slow to develop in the face of such rapid industrialization.

Applying the Public Issues Lesson

Staging the Inquiry

The first part of this lesson is an introduction to the activity. The teacher gives students a copy of the handout with the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution as they enter the classroom. A printable copy of the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution can be found on the National archives website: <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript>. As students enter the room, make sure that the following questions are on display: 1. How would you define the phrase, *promote the general welfare*? 2. What do you think the authors of the preamble meant by *promote the general welfare*? Debrief by asking students how their own definitions compared to what they thought the framers of the U.S. Constitution meant. Discuss similarities and differences as a class. Ask students to keep definitions for use later in the lesson. Students are introduced to the ideas of public issues and taking civic action by breaking down what the authors of the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution meant by promoting the general welfare.

In the next step of the activity, the teacher gives students a copy of the background text on the Gilded Age. Rich information on the Gilded Age can be found at the Digital History website (<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraid=9&smtid=1>). While in pairs, students read and annotate the text. Annotating the text allows students to do a close reading of the details of the text and to put the text into their own words. Students highlight or underline important ideas that help them answer contextualization questions such as when and where the Gilded Age

took place, what were some of the problems associated with the Gilded Age, what public policies, if any, were in place to address the problems of the Gilded Age, and why this time period was significant. Once students have finished reading and annotating the background information, they answer the contextualization questions in the Gilded Age graphic organizer (see Figure 1.).

Figure 1.

When and where did the Gilded Age take place?	
What were some of the problems associated with the Gilded Age?	
What public policies, if any, were in place to address those problems of the Gilded Age?	
What is the historical significance of the Gilded Age?	

Once students have completed reading the background text and have finished the graphic organizer, ask them to provide examples of public issues they found in the readings. Before proceeding to the next step of the lesson, discuss students' responses to the prompts in the graphic organizer by allowing them to share out their responses. Ask students how business magnates from the Gilded Age viewed the lack of public policies.¹ Also, ask students why public policies were not needed prior to the late 1800s.² Debriefing allows the teacher to correct or clarify any misunderstandings from the text before proceeding to the next step of the lesson.

Next, students write a summary paragraph using the information from the background text. The purpose of summarizing the text is for the students to articulate in their own words difficult concepts from the background information on the Gilded Age. Students must respond to the following prompts in their summaries: 1. When did the Gilded Age take place? 2. What happened during this time period in history? 3. What is important about this time period in history? Include text evidence from the readings to support your answers. Students' paragraphs

¹ The absence of a policy was policy. Very few public policies existed at the time that the U.S. industrialized in the late 1800s. Leaders of industry viewed the lack of a policies as permission.

² Industrialization on this scale did not exist.

should not exceed five sentences. Limiting students' responses to five sentences causes students to carefully choose the wording and text evidence for their summaries (Clabough et al., 2017; Yancie & Clabough, 2017). Provide an example text like the one given here to help students write their summaries:

The Gilded Age that took place in the U.S. during the late 1800s was the result of massive industrialization. Large numbers of people moved to the cities for work in the factories. Innovative businessmen built corporations and companies using ruthless tactics to reduce competition and control their costs. During the Gilded Age, many inventions taken for granted today were invented like the telephone, the radio, and subway trains. People were also poor and less educated during this time period. For example, “only about two-and-a-half percent of the school-aged population graduated from high school.” This time period is important because it witnessed the building of great fortunes, unregulated by the government, to make the U.S. a major economic power by the turn of the 20th century.

When finished, ask one or two students to share their paragraphs with the class. Writing a summary of the background information helps students synthesize the information and make it their own (Clabough et al., 2017). It is also the best way for students to communicate their understanding of historical events (NCSS, 2013). Additionally, students benefit from the use of model texts by helping them replicate the writing process found in the model texts (Clabough et al., 2017).

Disciplinary Source Work

Child Labor during the Gilded Age

Display the following question for when students enter the classroom: How would your life be different if you had to stop going to school before fifth grade in order to get a job to help the family pay rent and buy food? Allow students to share out and discuss their answers. Once students have had a chance to share their answers, provide them a copy of the reading passages on the public issue of child labor in the Gilded Age. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics provides a wealth of information at the following website: <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2017/article/history-of-child-labor-in-the-united-states-part-1.htm>. Inform students that they are going to read about a specific public issue—child labor. Students read and annotate the background information on child labor by underlining or highlighting important details from the text. Then, they respond to the prompts in the graphic organizer handout. The prompts in the graphic organizer helps students understand the public issue of child labor and the lack of a response to the public issue during the Gilded Age.

In this part of the activity, allow students to discuss the information from the reading passages on child labor in a whole discussion. Ask students to retrieve their definitions from

earlier in the lesson. Display or provide students a copy of the discussion prompts: 1. Did what you learned about child labor match your definition of promoting the general welfare? 2. Did it match the Founding Fathers' definition? Explain why or why not. After students have discussed the prompts, allow them to share their ideas with the whole class. Use this time to discuss inconsistencies between students' definitions of promoting the general welfare and the existence of child labor during the Gilded Age. Discussions help students make connections among different bits of information and process knowledge (Clabough et al., 2017).

Next, students write a first-person perspective piece on child labor. Perspective writing helps students develop historical empathy by exploring historical figures' thoughts, beliefs, and actions (Brooks, 2008). Students pretend that they are children working in a factory job during the Gilded Age. They write a journal entry telling about their life in the factory. Students use the reading passages on child labor, the information from the graphic organizer, and their responses to the discussion to write their journal entries. The journal entry should be written in first person, include a date, and be at least five sentences. Journal entries must show evidence of identification of the public issue (i.e., child labor), explain why it is a public issue, and why it was allowed for so long during the Gilded Age. Students must also use text evidence to support their answers. Once students have finished their paragraphs, ask a few students to share their paragraphs with the class. Writing first-person perspective pieces helps students explore the thoughts, feelings, and actions of people in the past which gives them the freedom to speculate and make inferences (Brooks, 2008).

Champion Against Child Labor: Lewis Hine

In this stage of the activity, students begin their examination of an historical figure who took informed civic action against child labor. Start by putting the following prompt on display for students to answer once they enter the classroom: What would you do if you saw that your neighbor's house was on fire? Explain. Give students approximately five minutes to answer the question. Debrief students by helping them understand that most people would take action. However, not all public issues are as clear as a house on fire. End the introductory discussion by telling students that they are going to learn about someone who took civic action against child labor during the Gilded Age.

Students examine the actions of a child labor reformer from the Gilded Age in the next part of the lesson. Give students a copy of the reading passages about Lewis Hine, a photographer who took pictures of children working in factories and other industries during the Gilded Age. The National Archives (<https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2017/article/history-of-child-labor-in-the-united-states-part-1.htm>) provides information about Lewis Hine and access to primary sources he created. Place students in pairs to read and annotate the reading passages on Lewis Hine. The reading passages are comprised of both primary and secondary sources. Students write notes in the margins of the text to help them better understand the information. Students use a graphic organizer (see Figure 2.) to help them organize the details from the

readings. Students use their responses to the prompts in the graphic organizer to help them in the next step of the activity.

Figure 2.

What is the public issue?	
Which principle from the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution is connected to the public issue? Make a text-to-text connection between the two texts.	
How did Lewis Hine respond? Explain his actions.	
Did his actions lead to the creation of public policy regarding the public issue? Explain your answer.	

In this turn and talk activity, students turn to their neighbors and discuss the following prompts: 1. What is the relationship between public issues and taking civic action? Explain. 2. Do you think the author was a good citizen? Why or why not? Discuss students' responses to the questions on the graphic organizer before moving on to the next step of the lesson. The teacher should walk around the classroom and clarify any misunderstandings about Lewis Hine and his actions.

Students create their own original primary sources in this stage of the activity. Activities like creating their own original primary sources help students articulate their understanding of the text as well as build their own understanding of the past (Bickford, 2011; Yancie & Clabough, 2017). The purpose of this activity is to help students contextualize the actions taken by Lewis Hine. Students write a letter from the perspective of Lewis Hine. Use the following prompt for the faux primary source assignment:

Pretend that you are Lewis Hine. You have just finished another long day of taking pictures and scribbling notes in your pocket about child labor. Today was particularly troubling because you had to lie to the factory superintendent to get in and talk to the children who work in the factory. Every night, you sit down to write your wife a letter. In the letter, you describe the children who are working, their ages, their appearance, and the

conditions where the children are working. Also, in the letter tell your wife how it feels seeing the children in such conditions, and what you think should be done about it.

The letter should be at least six sentences long, including text evidence. If time permits, choose one or two students to share their letters with the class. Encourage students to read the letters as if they are Lewis Hine. The writing activity benefits students by allowing them to articulate their understanding about the actions of Lewis Hine during the Gilded Age (Yancie & Clabough, 2017).

Taking Civic Action

This stage of the lesson requires students to use the information they have learned about child labor in the Gilded Age to write a script for a Ted Talk. Ted Talks are short but powerful spoken presentations meant to encourage the free spread of ideas (<https://www.ted.com/talks>). Use the following prompt to allow students to articulate their understanding of child labor during the Gilded Age:

You have been invited by the local Tedx club to speak about child labor. You write a script for your Ted Talk that explains child labor during the Gilded Age. You also include information about how people viewed the public issue, the actions taken in response to child labor during the Gilded Age, and the public policies created in response to the public issue. You conclude your Ted Talk with a short discussion of why you think Lewis Hine took civic action and whether or not his actions made him a good citizen.

Answer students' questions about the writing prompt and clarify any confusion about the assignment before moving on to the next stage of the activity.

Next, students use a graphic organizer (see Figure 3.) to help them write their Ted Talk scripts. Provide students copies of the graphic organizer handout. Students use information from the graphic organizer to write their scripts. Using a graphic organizer helps students sort the information needed to complete the Ted Talk script assignment.

In this step, students write their Ted Talk scripts. Writing activities like the Ted Talk script gives students the opportunity to use what they have learned about child labor during the Gilded Age (Yancie & Clabough, 2017). Tell them to use the information in the graphic organizer and the readings from the earlier steps in the activity to help students complete the task. Remind students that they must have text evidence in their Ted Talk scripts to support their answers. The teacher should walk around the room to assist students and clarify any misunderstandings that may come up during the activity. The number of sentences used for this activity should vary, but students need at least eight sentences in the script to embody the spirit of the Ted Talk assignment. Bring the activity to a close by asking a few students to share their

Ted Talk scripts. Debrief students by asking them whether they think Lewis Hine’s actions made him a good citizen.

Figure 3.

What is child labor?	
Who supported and who opposed child labor? Why?	
What civic action did Lewis Hine take?	
Which public policies were put in place to protect children? Why?	

Conclusion

Now, more than ever, students must learn how to make decisions based on evidence and take informed action (NCSS, 2013). Designing lessons that include the discussion of public issues is an effective way to help students learn how to take an active role in a democratic society. In this article, the author described a lesson where students analyze and discuss the public issue of child labor during the Gilded Age. Then, they looked at an example of an historical figure taking civic action. Students also responded to a series of writing prompts to articulate their thoughts about the public issue.

In today’s contentious society, students need the skills to discuss public issues and public policies rationally with other members of our democratic society (Journell, 2017). Students benefit from discussing public issues because when they disagree constructively, they develop more tolerance for diverse views and question their own long-held beliefs in the face of contradictory evidence (Journell, 2017). Preparing students for civic engagement has become the primary focus for teaching social studies. Oliver and Shaver (1966) suggested that incorporating the discussion of public issues improves students’ ability to think critically. Parker (2008) emphasized that for students to become “democratically enlightened and democratically engaged” citizens, they must be engaged in the practice of learning and doing civics (p. 76). Discussing public issues as part of social studies instruction helps students get into the knowing and doing of civics. Hess (2008) noted that discussing controversial issues engaged students’ interest in the topic, increased their understanding of democratic principles and policies, and

improved critical thinking skills. She also remarked that discussing controversial issues increased students' motivation to take civic action as well as their interpersonal skills. Designing lessons using the strategies described in this article helps teachers build students' civic literacy, thinking, and argumentative skills across the social studies disciplines.

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But I'm a Social Studies Educator, So I Must Stay Connected: A Theoretical Examination of Technology Use During the Pandemic

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Abstract

Technology integration, use, and application have been of utmost necessity during the pandemic known as COVID-19. However, there is a need for more philosophical and critical reflection concerning technology use. First, I discuss the nature of how people, including myself, use technology; I do this through a running narrative about how I methodically limited and then eradicated my social media use. I then discuss the concept of connectivity in terms of social media use, and then lastly I discuss possible long-term effects of technology use under COVID-19 in terms of technologies' impact on civic engagement and active citizenship.

Keywords: technology; civic engagement; social media; COVID-19

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, each day I would get up and start the day by engaging in my daily scroll on Twitter and Facebook; I had to make sure I was up to date on the latest news, ideas, online pedagogies, and materials. However, at the end of each day, I felt as if I was connected, but nothing had changed except my level of anxiety. I pushed those feelings to the side and attributed those feelings to the pandemic, which was partly true, but I could not help but think there was more to the story. In this reflective article, I will seek to interrogate this idea by discussing my evolution of dissecting my technology and social media use throughout the pandemic.

Reflecting on My Social Media Consumption

To manage my anxiety around social media consumption, I decided to organize specific times without my phone, social media, or constant connectedness; I did this to ensure that I was not allowing myself to become overly anxious by keeping myself constantly connected to “breaking news” which seemed to happen every minute of the day. While these times of being separated from technology/social media were great for my mental health, as soon as I logged on my irritability would increase as I saw people on social media propagating and advocating misinformed stances and ideologies. It was at this point that I began to question social media's role in connecting me to the political/ news world.

I was curious if others experienced similar skepticism of social media, so every opportunity I had to speak with someone I would ask them about their social media use. Most people I spoke with did not have a positive view of social media, but they still kept it and their reason was usually something similar to, “that's how I stay connected to friends and family” or

“that’s how I follow the news.” Both responses elicited emotional responses in myself, rooted in partial truth, as both of these responses were reasons I convinced myself to stay on social media up to that point. Not to mention, I am a social studies educator and how effective would I be if I did not stay connected to the events happening around the world?

However, it was at this point I started to critically examine my connectedness and started to question whether my connectedness was authentic or forced and if any good actually came from this connectedness. Was my unity with others through this time actually real unity or forced? John Dewey discusses the concept of mechanical vs. organic unity. One may think of a mechanical unity as a forced situation, whereas organic unity is more likely to occur naturally and is therefore truly representative of diverse viewpoints, opinions and approaches. For example, Rockefeller (1994) notes, “An organic unity is not, then, an undifferentiated one or a dead conglomerate of mechanically related parts, but rather it is a living unity of distinct individuals, a whole which exists in and through diversity” (p.81). While social media theoretically unites diverse groups of people, research indicates that Twitter and Facebook alone is liable to produce a type of echo chamber experience/confirmation bias, but users of technology and digital media broadly may be more exposed to different types of viewpoints and thoughts (Rajan, 2019). While I did consider myself a user of technology and digital media broadly speaking, my focus in this article is more specifically focused on social media.

Dissecting my Technology and Social Media Consumption

Step One: Getting Rid of My Smartphone

I decided that the first step in my process of dissecting my connectedness was to get rid of my smartphone. This seemed harmless enough, since I still had access to Facebook and Twitter through my computer. I did much research prior to this. For example, I read reflections of people who had made a similar decision, as well as watched random YouTube videos to ensure myself that I was making the right decision (for example, see Germano, 2017). After much thought, I ordered a flip phone and made the transition. The transition was not easy, as I found myself many times throughout the day reaching for my phone to look up something quickly only to find that I did not have that capability. Instead, I started writing down what I wanted to look up later that day when I was near a computer. By the time I returned to my list each evening, most of what I NEEDED to look up in the moment just seemed of no value later that day.

Step: Two: Deleting Facebook

I decided that I must NOW go forward and know the answer to whether or not social media was actually keeping me connected to anything or anybody. I again did much research prior to this decision and one of the most instrumental resources I came across was a TEDx Talk

about quitting social media by a professor of computer science (see Newport, 2016). After much thought, I decided I would delete Facebook first and see what happened. I wrote a draft of a post about deleting my account around three weeks prior to actually deleting my account to ensure I was making the right decision. I finally decided to go forward with my post, expecting people to come out in droves to want to connect with me outside of that platform. People “liked it” and people commented, but not ONE person reached out to connect another way. This confirmed my suspicion that I was not legitimately connected to any person on this outlet.

Step Three: Deleting Twitter

The next step of deleting Twitter was arguably the most difficult for me, as I had many professional connections on this platform. My account was well-followed, I had connected with many people within, across, and beyond my field, and I had even published an article focused on Twitter use (see Mullins & Hicks, 2019). Not to mention, I had many instances where I had interacted with celebrities, well-known authors, and influential community members. However, I still decided to go through with deleting the account. Prior to deleting it, I notified my followers I would be deleting my account and asked if anyone would like to connect outside of this platform; three people reached out to me. Ironically, the three people that reached out to me were the three people I had planned to contact to try to make sure we stayed connected after I left Twitter. Again, the network I thought I had built was not necessarily a network at all.

Reflections after One Month with No Social Media or a Smartphone

It has been around a month since getting rid of my smartphone and a few weeks since getting rid of all social media. I have been able to keep up with news and current events, but I have had to be more deliberate about this. Instead of keeping the constant flow of Google notifications and Facebook news stories, I have to take time each day to read the news or listen to National Public Radio (NPR). I do find that many conversations with people start with, “You probably saw my post...” I then remind them that I do not have social media and we usually engage in an authentic conversation about something new that is occurring in their life.

I have also found that more people call me now because they know I have a flip phone and cannot respond very well to texts, which has been enjoyable because talking to someone allows a connection that is not attainable through text. Additionally, there were some contacts in my phone I had never actually spoken to and had only texted. Because of my transition to a flip phone, I have gotten to have real conversations with them and hear their voices for the first time, some of those conversations being the few people on Twitter that were willing to engage outside of social media.

The most surreal learning from this so far, is noticing the world and people around me. I see people living through technology rather than enjoying what is in front of them. Often, I will scan rooms around me and notice couples, friends, and families sitting with each other without

any conversation, while everyone is looking at their respective technologies. I have watched people experience nature through a device, and pose several times in front of something before getting the perfect shot, instead of taking time to enjoy the moment.

Social Studies Implications

As a social studies educator and scholar, my recent observations and experiences with technology have perplexed me. For a couple months now I have been “off the grid” so to speak and I have found myself no less engaged with the world than I was before when I had social media and a smartphone. If my experience is similar to others, this has significant implications for the field of social studies.

The field of social studies often discusses lofty terms such as civic engagement and citizenship. In fact, many of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) position statements use such terms (<https://www.socialstudies.org/advocacy/ncss-position-statements>). However, perhaps we as a field need to re-examine such concepts as civic engagement in an era when we are constantly engaged, but with technology, not each other. We have to be careful not to reduce citizenship and activism to controversial Twitter posts, Facebook tirades, and social media rants that do not produce meaningful change. Metaphorically speaking, screens are blocking authentic engagement, organic unity, and civic engagement, and to be a citizen now is almost equated to owning a device and posting how you believe when something happens in the world that you may find detestable. Civic engagement and citizenship must refocus on engagement with each other as citizens, in real conversations, and platforms that do not allow us to hide behind a social media handle. I believe that technology has given us the facade that we are making change, but when the technology leaves and the world stays the same, that makes me believe that perhaps we are not putting forth a sustainable, noticeable effort. It may be necessary to re-examine our roles as citizens in an era of connectedness to ensure we are truly, authentically, and organically unified (Rockefeller, 1994) and connected to each other outside of the digital world.

Conclusion

This article is not meant as a manifesto on technology use, but it is rather a challenge to social studies educators to rethink what engagement means in the era of COVID-19, when we are all almost exclusively required to be in online spaces. In these instances, we have to be careful that we do not let online engagement substitute for true and authentic civic engagement with real people in real places. That is why I decided to dissect my technology use to provide others with a point of reflection to analyze how connected they are to the literal, actual, existing world.

When COVID-19 is under control, will civic engagement look different forever? Perhaps it already looks different and we do not even realize it. We have to push to make sure that even if civic engagement and active citizenship is permanently changed under the “new normal,” that

we are still willing to push ourselves out of online spaces as a sole means of trying to invoke change in our world. Otherwise, we may give people the impression that citizenship is simply being a passive participant and they have no place in being the leaders of their own lives (Mullins, 2019). However, the hope is that we can show another generation the benefit and necessity of taking an active role in the world, politics, and citizenship.

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