

2016

Incorporating LGBTQ and Gender Studies into Massachusetts 9-12 United States History Curriculum Frameworks

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Pesaturo, Sarah, "Incorporating LGBTQ and Gender Studies into Massachusetts 9-12 United States History Curriculum Frameworks" (2016). *College of Education Undergraduate Honors Projects*. 1.
<https://doi.org/10.7275/R5KWSD87> https://scholarworks.umass.edu/education_honors/1

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INCORPORATING LGBTQ AND GENDER STUDIES INTO MASSACHUSETTS 9-12
UNITED STATES HISTORY CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

An Individually Contracted Honors Project

Presented by

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Completion Date:

April 2016

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ABSTRACT

Title: **Incorporating LGBTQ and Gender Studies into Massachusetts 9-12 United States History Curriculum Frameworks**

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Thesis/Project Type: **Individually Contracted Honors Project**

Approved By: **Julio C. Capó Jr., Department of History**

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Studies

Gender and LGBTQ studies have emerged as fields worthy of academic study since the 1980s. While they have increasingly entered college curricula, much work still has to be done for these to be integrated into public K-12 curricula. Currently, the Massachusetts 9-12 United States History Curriculum operates without these histories. My work aims to expand the current curriculum in such a way that integrates and emphasizes (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) LGBTQ and gender histories within the pre-existing U.S. History Standards. The areas of study are taken directly from the Massachusetts learning standards, specifically focusing on the curriculum framework of U.S. History II, Reconstruction to the Present, 1877 to 2001. I address two key sections: Age of Reform: Progressivism and the New Deal, 1900 to 1940 and Cold War America at Home: Economic Growth and Optimism, Anticommunism, and Reform, 1945-1980. My work provides the necessary historical background for teachers to familiarize themselves with important figures, events, ideas, and movements within these time periods. It also provides a selection of recommended readings for teachers to help incorporate this material into their classrooms. The outline also includes a collection of primary sources and inquiry questions for historical investigations. My purpose is to add additional information that will help fill educational gaps, enrich and enliven the curriculum, and provide students with a more inclusive and multicultural American history.

INTRODUCTION

In order to be an effective teacher of history, the goal must be to educate students about the world around them. In today's society, more than ever, people are exposed to the multicultural nature of the world and our history teaching should reflect that knowledge. In order for today's history curriculum to adhere to these criteria, it must include experiences of every identity group. When curriculum is implemented inclusively, it aids in reflecting individual's experiences while also providing opportunities to learn about others' viewpoints. This includes content from different cultural and identity groups, providing equal educational opportunities for all, and creating an environment of equality and inquiry into diversity. All of these aspects are necessary for learners to piece together the many stories in each area of history.

The education system in the United States has increasingly taken steps to provide a more inclusive history of the country and the world, as well as the many social and cultural differences that make them so rich. In Massachusetts, this is evident through the 2012 amendments to the Department of Education Laws and Regulations. Law 603 CMR 26.00, or the Access to Equal Educational Opportunity specifically addresses regulations for the curricula. Section 26.05, Curricula, states that "all public systems shall, through their curricula, encourage respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation." It further states, "teachers shall review all instructional and educational materials for simplistic and

demeaning generalizations, lacking intellectual merit, on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. Appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials shall be used to provide balance and context for any such stereotypes depicted in such materials.”¹ Both of these regulations indicate the state’s efforts to create and implement a multicultural education. Today, this is evident in school’s participation in Black History Month or Women’s History Month, for example, and discussions of family origins as it pertains to immigration history.

It is this project’s argument that we must now address the lack of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) history in 9-12 public education.² The introduction of this interdisciplinary field also requires the study of gender and sexuality more broadly, as they create a fundamental basis to understand social and cultural perspectives of identities overtime. In order for students to accurately study the diversity of the American identity throughout history, they must first understand how gender and sexuality intersect with political, economic and transnational movements within the United States. Like other social histories, these stories are essential to understanding the American identity. Despite that, this information has been largely, if not completely, left out of curriculum frameworks.

¹ “Education Laws and Regulations: 603 CMR 26.00 Access to Equal Education Opportunity,” Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, accessed February 23, 2016, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr26.html>.

² For the purpose of this paper, the term “queer” is utilized to refer to any person who falls outside normative and traditional sexual or gender expressions. In observation that these identities and expressions take on different meanings over time, this includes those whose gender and sexualities are non-conforming and do not identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

In order to meet the Department of Education's regulations that mandate the inclusion of all gender identities and sexual orientations, these histories must be included.

The erasure of LGBTQ identities is not a distinct phenomenon within our educational system. LGBTQ people have been largely erased from our history books as a result of being marginalized from society for so long. They have been excluded from the pages of U.S. history given their differences in sexual orientation and gender identity. The historical record listed them as criminals, sinners, or having some type of mental illness. In the United States, they have been denied equal rights and a voice within society.³ This does not mean, however, that they did not challenge this, or that they did not make significant contributions to U.S. history.

This absence of LGBTQ voices in United States history is reflected in today's curriculum, and educators have begun to notice. Gerald Unks, professor and editor of the book *The Gay Teen*, reflected on this stating, "Within the typical secondary school curriculum, homosexuals do not exist. They are 'nonpersons' in the finest Stalinist sense. They have fought no battles, held no offices, explored nowhere, written no literature, built nothing, invented nothing and solved no equations."⁴ As Unks carefully points out, the lack of LGBTQ figures and events within the curricula effectively denies this identity group any meaningful record of their existence in society. Not only is the disregarding of important LGBTQ historical figures

³ David Eisenbach, *Gay Power: An American Revolution* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2006).

⁴ Gerald Unks ed., *The Gay Teen: Educational Practice and Theory for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Adolescent* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 5.

discriminatory, it also presents a history that is incomplete, inaccurate and non-inclusive. This creates a greater problem for the educational system as a whole. It fails to incorporate the multicultural lens of history, it fails to comply with the state laws and regulations, and it fails to reflect the identities within our own communities.

This continued exclusion of LGBTQ history has already had a major impact on students' education, reception, and personal lives. Unks adds, "The lesson to the heterosexual student is abundantly clear: homosexuals do nothing of consequence. To the homosexual student, the message has even greater power: no one who has ever felt as you do has done anything worth mentioning"⁵ Researchers from Rice University have also been studying the impact of the lack of diversity within classrooms. Their findings show that negative perceptions from others may translate to negative perceptions of oneself.⁶ Therefore, the lack of LGBTQ visibility and voice within history curricula may prompt LGBTQ students to wrongly judge their own abilities.

As a teacher, it is important to know both the content you are teaching and the audience to whom you are teaching. Each classroom has a diverse set of students with distinct backgrounds, needs, and identities. Multicultural education that incorporates inclusive histories helps to highlight all of these identities within a classroom setting. As Unks points out, it is important to recognize that a diverse

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Enrica Ruggs and Michelle Hebl, "Diversity, Inclusion, and Cultural Awareness for Classroom and Outreach Education," accessed March 22, 2016, https://www.engr.psu.edu/awe/ARPAAbstracts/DiversityInclusion/ARP_DiversityInclusionCulturalAwareness_Overview.pdf.

classroom includes students of all sexual and gender identities. Failure to teach content that explores these identities groups does a disservice to students. A multicultural education that integrates LGBTQ histories will improve socialization among students, foster positive self-regard in each student's identity, and promote positive regard towards the identities of others. The inclusion of LGBTQ history within the curriculum is essential to creating a positive and impactful classroom that recognizes and appreciates the identities of all its students.

Gender and LGBTQ studies, although still mostly absent within the K-12 system, have become growing fields within college communities. Both are relatively new disciplines that largely began in the 1980s through the inspiration of other minority histories including ethnic and women's studies.⁷ In the 1970s, many women began to criticize the gender blindness of various disciplines in academic settings.⁸ Women's studies arose from these criticisms, focusing on the position of women in society both in the past and present. However, the issues surrounding gender inequality could not be entirely addressed under the framework of women's studies. This led to the creation of an entirely new discipline of gender studies, which focuses on gender classifications, performances, expressions and power systems within every society.⁹ These studies led to the formation of queer theory by the 1990s. Its focus remains on the diverse nature of gender and sexuality

⁷ Vicki Eacklor, *Queer America: A GLBT History of the 20th Century*. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2008).

⁸ The Swedish Research Council's Committee on Gender Research, "Gender Studies – A Summary," *Vetenskapsradet*, https://www.vr.se/download/18.6a9398491107cea06a580003155/1340207556565/Gender_Studies.pdf.

⁹ Ibid.

expressions that are much more fluid than society's binary constructions and much more forcefully challenged concepts of "deviancy" and "normativity."

The greater visibility of gender and sexuality studies allowed LGBTQ studies to gain momentum in the academic arena. In the case of LGBTQ studies, it was a time when historians began to look into the changes in sexuality and gender ideologies over the course of United States history.¹⁰ This included the construction of these identities, and the economic and political forces that led to the change of identities overtime. These studies help to showcase the intersection of sexuality, gender identity, race, class, and ability in understanding the world and the systems put in place by society.¹¹ LGBTQ studies also allows for the recovering of marginalized voices throughout American history. Students within college communities gain not only an understanding of the LGBTQ figures and events throughout history, but also how these histories have played a role in policies and movements that have influenced our current communities. Although impactful and informative, the wide array of studies and restrictiveness of course requirements do not allow for all college students to take part in these classes. This means that throughout a student's educational career, they may never be exposed to this kind of material. Many students may also not have the privilege of going onto college level classes, and never have the opportunity to engage with these fields. For this, and many other reasons, it is important to begin teaching inclusive and multicultural curricula to

¹⁰ Margot Canaday, "LGBT History," in *Intimate Matters at 25: Reflections on the History of Sexuality*, vol. 35 of *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 11-19.

¹¹ Lee Ann Bell, "Theoretical Foundations," *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*, ed. 2 (2010): 20-26.

students at an earlier age and explore the various identities that make up our social world.

Organizations within the United States have been working to bring a more inclusive education to the public school systems. GLSEN, the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, was formed in 1990 by a group of Massachusetts teachers to create an education system that fought against the bullying and discrimination of LGBT¹² students. GLSEN's efforts aim to ensure that every member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. In order to reach this goal, GLSEN has been collecting research to see what students are currently being taught and how this affects their learning experience. One of the ways they do this is through conducting surveys on LGBT middle and high school students' experiences at school. The results of the surveys have helped GLSEN to create appropriate and effective solutions to establish a more positive school environment.¹³ According to its 2013 National School Climate Survey, LGBT representation in K-12 education is minimal. Within the state of Massachusetts specifically, they found that many LGBT students did not have access to important school resources including an LGBT-inclusive curriculum.¹⁴ According to a GLSEN study, only 35% of students were taught

¹² Although this project covers LGBTQ identities, all information and research taken from GLSEN solely specifies LGBT identities.

¹³ "Who We Are," Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, accessed March 20, 2016, <http://www.glsen.org/learn/about-glsen>.

¹⁴ "2013 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth in Our Nation's Schools," Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, accessed February 23, 2016, <http://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/GLSEN%202013%20Massachusetts%20State%20Snapshot.pdf>.

positive representations of LGBT people, history and events, while 42% could not access information about LGBT communities on school Internet.¹⁵

Although some may read this as encouraging data, there is no way to judge the quality of material that students are receiving. Without set standards for LGBTQ curricula there is no way to judge the accuracy of information, the amount of information, or even how the material is presented in the classroom. This is why it is important to consider the type of curriculum in which LGBTQ history is being presented. The mention of an LGBTQ figure or an LGBTQ event in history is not enough. In fact, it can work to the disadvantage of teachers and students. When an individual is recognized only for his or her LGBTQ identity without a context into this identity's importance, the teacher is creating a token effect. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, a professor at Harvard Business School, studied the impacts of tokenism on men and women in the workplace. She found that women in business, who took on a token position, often experienced enhanced visibility associated with increased performance pressures, exaggerated differences, and social isolation.¹⁶ These issues that arise within career settings are also relevant to the classroom. Rather than leaving students with a positive impression of the impact this person has made in history, they are pointing out their difference. In doing so, they further separate this figure's identity from the rest, which may result in stereotyping.

If action is not taken to change the curriculum, then ignorance to LGBTQ identities and histories will continue the pattern of marginalization and "othering"

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 207.

within the school system. GLSEN's research showcases the detriments of marginalization of LGBT students through non-inclusive education. According to their 2013 Survey, six in ten LGBT students (59.2%) heard negative remarks about gender expression and transgender people in school, and 59.8% of LGBT students felt unsafe in the past month due to their sexual orientation.¹⁷ This research highlights the impact that an inclusive curriculum can have on LGBT students to combat these issues. Their findings indicated that in schools with an inclusive curriculum, LGBT students heard negative remarks about gender expression and transgender people less frequently by 15.7%. They also recorded a 25% decline in LGBT students feeling unsafe due to sexual orientation.¹⁸ Overall, GLSEN found that the inclusion of LGBT-related issues in the curriculum in a positive manner could create a more positive school climate.¹⁹

This movement towards a more inclusive K-12 LGBTQ education has already begun to build in the United States. In 2011, California state legislators passed a first-in-the-nation law requiring public schools in the state to teach students about the contributions of LGBTQ Americans in state and U.S. history.²⁰ This was entitled the FAIR, Fair, Accurate, Inclusive, and Respectful Education Act. The act provides updated educational guidelines in order for school systems to adopt learning materials without discriminatory bias or negative stereotypes based on gender,

¹⁷ "2013 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth in Our Nation's Schools," 69.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Hailey Branson-Potts, "New LGBT-specific history lessons planned for L.A. County Schools," *Los Angeles Times*, October 1, 2013.

sexual orientation or disability.²¹ When residents were asked about the new mandate, many remarked that this curriculum has been a source of empowerment where students can see themselves, their families, and members of the community reflected in the curriculum and reflected in the American identity.²² Although ideas for curriculum changes are beginning to spread, there is still a lack of resources available for teachers who wish to bring these inclusive histories into their classrooms. Currently, Massachusetts organizations are attempting to help teachers further integrate LGBTQ history into the classroom. One of the most prominent is History UnErased or HUE, a professional development provider registered with the Department of Education in Massachusetts. HUE recognizes the absence of LGBTQ figures within K-12 curricula, and is working to correct this problem through educative training and creating materials for teachers to bring to classrooms. HUE's weeklong workshops provide LGBTQ content and training for professionals within the education system. This training includes discussion of historical case studies. It also addresses questions of how to properly teach LGBTQ history and how to integrate it into the curriculum. One of HUE's main successes is its mission to directly amend the curriculum. Working with ONE Archives Foundation, the largest research libraries of LGBTQ collections, both organizations have created units of

²¹ "About FAIR," The FAIR Education Act, accessed on March 20, 2016, <http://www.faireducationact.com/about-fair/>.

²² Branson-Potts, "New LGBT-specific history lessons planned for L.A. County Schools"

study that include primary sources, investigative questions and topics for reflective discussions. This can be utilized as models for teachers in their everyday lessons.²³

EXPANDING THE CURRICULUM

This body of work contributes to the expansion of current curricula to incorporate a multicultural lens of history. It can be used as a resource for historical investigation into LGBTQ and gender studies. It also acts as a reference tool to assist teachers present LGBTQ and minority histories within the Massachusetts 9-12 United States Curriculum. The areas of study are taken directly from the Massachusetts learning standards, specifically focusing on the curriculum framework of U.S. History II, Reconstruction to the Present, 1877 to 2001. Within this framework there is a focus on LGBTQ, women, immigrant and African American history as it pertains to the Age of Reform: Progressivism and the New Deal, 1900 to 1940 and Cold War America at Home: Economic Growth and Optimism, Anticommunism, and Reform, 1945-1980. Although this project focuses on 9-12 curriculum, it is important to consider changes like this for earlier education curricula. It is my hope that there will be continued efforts in finding resources for teachers, so they can introduce this material in lower levels.

The purpose is to expand current curriculum frameworks by offering time period specific gender and LGBTQ resource materials that will help fill educational gaps and provide students with a more detailed American history. When students

²³ "Bringing LGBTQ history to every classroom," History UnErased, accessed March 20, 2016, <https://historyunerased.com/>.

are provided with more information, they will better understand larger historical ideas of cultural, political and social change. This information will aid in the recognition of all identities to help promote greater inclusion within the classroom and between students, in an effort to create a more accepting and positive learning environment. This expanded curriculum will also better comply with the laws and regulations for Massachusetts education. I purposely chose historical events that are currently being taught to provide teachers with resources for curriculum that can be realistically implemented using the existing framework. I intend to revise within current standards, so that adequate time and effort can be put into teaching a lesson that is historically accurate and meaningful while also being informative and engaging for the students.

The body of work below includes information and resources that can be utilized in creating a curriculum plan for these units of study. Each unit contains an explanation of gender studies and LGBTQ content included in the Massachusetts curriculum standards, a teacher background, bolded key terms with definitions, unit objectives, a select list of recommended readings for teachers and primary sources. The explanation of LGBTQ content within the frameworks showcases areas in the current curriculum where this information can be added to enhance the unit. It also provides context for teachers to understand how this information fits into the larger story. Meanwhile, the teacher background provides an overview of the entire unit, focusing on key events and figures that impacted that time period. This section includes terms from the current standards along with additional LGBTQ figures, terms and events that coincide with the unit of study. The key terms are bolded to

easily showcase the main topics of the unit, and the most important concepts students should learn. The unit objectives act as a guideline for teachers to understand the main “takeaways” of each lesson, specifically how it relates to LGBTQ and gender histories. The selected recommended readings is a short list of secondary sources that teachers can reference to gather more information on a given topic or event. The list is not exhaustive, of course, and is not intended to cover every idea in the unit of study. Instead, it seeks to provide some of the most comprehensive sources and supplemental information on the material.

The primary sources at the end of each unit can be utilized as a resource for teachers to enhance students’ understanding on certain topics or events by providing visual or contextual evidence. Each primary source contains a brief description to help teachers familiarize themselves with the source, and a set of questions that can be asked in the classroom to get students to think critically about the source, the event and the time period. Each primary source has an attribution from where it was retrieved. Appropriate URLs and organizations are cited, so that teachers can continue to research additional materials that work best within their classrooms. It is my intention that this work is made public so any teacher can find and easily access this information, and utilize these sources within their own classroom.

CHAPTER 1

The Age of Reform: Progressivism and the New Deal, 1900-1940

This curriculum falls under the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework of U.S. History II Reconstruction to the Present 1877-2001. The information and primary sources presented below address the following standards of this unit.

- **USII.8** Analyze the origins of Progressivism and important Progressive leaders, and summarize the major accomplishments of Progressivism.

Within this standard, additional information is provided on how the Industrial Revolution, and the economic changes it brought about, influenced U.S. perceptions of gender. This specifically includes the cultural constructs of femininity and masculinity, and how these gender expressions played out in society through economic roles and employment. It provides greater detail into the transitions of white women into the public sphere and the progressive nature of their new presence in the political, economic and social world. It also includes the effects of

industrialization and progressivism in regards to African Americans and those who later became known as gays and lesbians with the rise of metropolitan areas. These additions provide students with a more complete background of the Progressive era.

- **USII.9** Analyze the post-Civil War struggles of African Americans and women to gain basic civil rights.

Within this standard, there is a greater emphasis on the creation and increase of African American and women's voices in the political and economic arena. Looking at both identity groups prior to the Progressive era, and the systems of oppression that silenced their voices in the past, will help students to understand the obstacles they faced and how they were successful in gaining civil rights.

- **USII.10** Describe how the battle between traditionalism and modernity manifested itself in the major historical trends and events after World War I and throughout the 1920s.

Within this standard, there is a focus on the tension between traditionalism as it pertains to old Victorian values of masculinity and femininity, and modernity that arose from the Industrial Revolution. An analysis in the shift of these values helps explain certain events that took place throughout the 1920s including women's suffrage, imperialism, anti-lynching campaigns and the Pansy Craze of the 1930s. Focusing on gender, students will better understand the tension that arose in the shift to modernity, as well as the drastic changes it created in the United States landscape.

TEACHER BACKGROUND:

The Progressive Era, roughly between 1890 and 1920, served as a crucial time period for changing meanings of gender in the United States. Economic and social transformations in U.S. society directly influenced traditional values and gender identities. In this case, gender identities refer to the range of characteristics differentiating between masculinity and femininity. Prior to this time, white women and men operated in different social worlds, or spheres. It was not until the Industrial Revolution and the rise of factories – as well as a growing white feminist movement – that traditional gender roles began to dissipate and women gained greater public visibility.

The Industrial Revolution acted as the beginning force for challenging traditional gender norms in American society. Prior to 1820, most white men and women operated under a family economy due to the prominence of farming. With work and home being the same location for white families, each member of the family had certain roles in order for this internal economy to run smoothly. For

men, this meant taking on labor outside of the home, and for women it meant working as a caretaker within the home. Traditional ideas of white masculinity and femininity are derived from these roles. The early 19th century carried the consensus of white women as being innately domestic and pure. Given these Old Victorian sentiments of **domesticity**, it was culturally expected that women's roles included caring for the home while their husbands worked in the public sphere.²⁴ Ideas of **masculinity** were centered on this idea of the breadwinner in the public sphere, and the **femininity** associated with women's work as confined to the private domestic sphere. It was not until the Industrial Revolution took off in the United States in the mid-1800s that these roles were more seriously challenged. **The Industrial Age** brought about the market economy and wage labor within factories in the northern cities. This economy drew people from agricultural jobs done near home to work in the **public sphere** of factories within the cities. For the first time it was necessary to go outside the family in order to make money to get supplies and ultimately survive. This separation of home and work spheres created greater individualization and less interdependence. From this, distinct separate and gendered roles between men and women in a family became more prominent. As the Industrial Revolution grew the market economy, there was a greater need for workers. Towards the later half of this transformation, this created an opportunity for women to become involved in this economy. There was a growing necessity for workers in places like textile mills where children were too unskilled to do the

²⁴ Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage a History: How Love Conquered Marriage* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 59.

work. This necessitated the recruitment of young, single, white female workers. Women now began to transition from domestic workers to wage earners.

It is important to recognize that although this breadwinner and housewife sentiment was reflective of much of the white population, experiences of black and immigrant households were much different. In the early 1900s, a majority of black households were headed by both parents. This dual leadership was rooted in slavery where men and women were both called on to be laborers. There was a brief rise in black domesticity after the abolition of slavery when women refused to work in the fields, instead opting to labor inside the home, as was the custom for white women in society.²⁵ The economic recovery of the South after the Civil War resulted in a forced contract labor that utilized both black men and women as laborers. With black women being a part of the agricultural force, they were excluded from the ideas of full domesticity. Because black families, especially black wives, were not included in the cult of domesticity, women were more likely to join the labor force within the public sphere in order to support the family while their children went to school. This was vastly different from white families, who called upon their children to work before the mothers. This dual leadership of both women and men working in the public sphere was also true for immigrant families. Often times having to work for the lowest wages, both immigrant women and men were forced to work within the factories in order to survive.

²⁵ Bart Landry, *Black Working Wives: Pioneers of the American Family Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California, 2000), 70.

Many societal expectations and traditions began to change as more women entered the public sphere. Their entrance into the economic public sphere created greater visibility for women in American society. This new public visibility and voice in society led to women's movements around the country. These movements challenged traditional gendered ideologies of women and fought for greater rights as equals to men. Journalist **Rheta Childe Dorr** released a book in 1910 entitled *What Eight Million Women Want*. It focused on women's movements and political activism of women at the time. Her work showcases the growing influence of women in a once-male dominated public sphere. The three main movements examined in her book included economic freedom of women in industries, freedom of divorce and **women's suffrage**. Dorr discussed the need for women to have a greater political liberty in order for the nation to achieve reform. She points out many aspects of societal change that women could implement with their ability to vote.²⁶ In 1917, President Thomas Woodrow Wilson urged Congress to pass a voting rights amendment for women, and in August of 1920 the 19th Amendment was ratified, providing full voting rights for women on a national scale. These movements not only fought for women's right to enter the male sphere, but also to become equals in it. In this sense their reforms went beyond the idea of gender transgression to the erasure of historical gender norms in the United States. Another one of these voices was **Ida Tarbell**, who was an investigative journalist. She became a leading "**muckraker**" from her investigative reports that sought to expose

²⁶ Rheta Childe Dorr, *What Eight Million Women Want* (Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1910).

unfair business practices within the Standard Oil Company run by business tycoon J.D. Rockefeller. Another important figure was **Jane Addams**, a female reformer and social activist. Her rejection of traditional female gender norms of marriage and motherhood allowed her to focus on social reform efforts. This included co-founding a settlement house for middle-class workers in Chicago with friend, Ellen Starr.²⁷ Their relationship was an example of a “**Boston marriage**,” a same-sex, long-time friendship that was, at times, also quite intimate and romantic. This term became popular after the publication of *The Bostonians*, a book written in 1886 that discussed a relationship between two women, closely resembling a marriage. This was largely a New England phenomenon where a greater number of women were financially independent through family inheritance or their careers as doctors, store owners or professors. This was also the same time that numerous women’s colleges emerged around New England including Smith, Wellesley and Vassar. Being financially and educationally independent, these women did not have to rely on partnerships with men in order to survive. This gave them the freedom to explore other relationships. One woman who represented this financial independence was **Madame de Naucaze** of Northampton, Massachusetts. In 1908, along with her female partner Marie Von Veltheim, she opened Ye Rose Tree Inn in Northampton. She was well known within the community not only for the gender transgressive

²⁷ Julie Abraham, *Metropolitan Lovers: The Homosexuality of Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 119.

nature of her work and manner of dress, but also for her success as a businesswoman.²⁸

At the same time female gender roles were transforming, the concept of masculinity was also being redefined. The emergence of public working women created a “crisis of masculinity.” What resulted was the remaking of American manhood on the basis of male masculine authority. The remaking of manhood began in the 1890s just as the United States began consolidating its own national identity. Ideals of masculinity and femininity played a key role as the United States was emerging as a global power. This time period was characterized by ideals of American exceptionalism and **imperialism**. The idea of imperialism was utilized to justify the United States interests and advancements in other nations on the basis of economic, military and cultural superiority. One of the ways this power was articulated was through the conquering of people perceived to be primitive. The United States united under this superior, paternal identity during the Spanish-American War of 1898 and Philippine-American War of 1899.²⁹ **Theodore Roosevelt**, President from 1901-1909, was the embodiment of this era’s civilized manliness, the masculine ideal and epitome of manhood. In order to become an influential political leader, Roosevelt emphasized his masculine image and claim to manhood.³⁰ At this time men and women clung to “natural” sex roles of the man as

²⁸ Elizabeth Kent, “Anna de Naucaze and the Rose Tree Inn,” accessed January 15, 2016, <http://www.historicnorthampton.org/rose-tree-inn.html>.

²⁹ Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998).

³⁰ Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 170.

the protector and women as the housewife. Roosevelt utilized this ideology in his political agenda of imperialist gain calling on the nation's men to act as protectors and provide for the racial collective home.³¹

Gender expectations of this time greatly influenced and managed individual's gender performance within society. The concept of a civilized manliness was also used as a political weapon, most notably from **Ida B. Wells**, an African American activist for racial justice. Wells wrote for multiple publications in an anti-lynching campaign. She challenged the ideas of male power and white supremacy by utilizing the concept of civilization. She argued that a civilized man would not be able to tolerate or allow the lynching of African Americans.³² Her work challenged not only notions of black inferiority, but also women's inferiority.

Industrialization also transformed urban life in the United States. Jobs created by the Industrial Revolution brought many workers out of the countryside and into the cities in a process known as **urbanization**. During the 1920s, there was a **Great Migration** of African Americans from rural southern states into the northern cities. This created various black enclaves in these cities where black culture became increasingly visible. One of the most prominent examples of this was the **Harlem Renaissance**, occurring between the 1920s and mid-1930s; it was a movement in which the Black cultural identity experienced a revitalization of pride. This period in the 1920s is often called the "**New Negro Movement**," in which there was a renewed sense of racial pride, economic independence, and political activism.

³¹ Ibid,180.

³² Lisa Duggan, *Sapphic Slashers: Sex, Violence, and American Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 19.

Political leaders of this movement were also highly critical of United States imperialism. African American activist **William Monroe Trotter** played an active role in protesting race-based politics within the United States in the later 1910s. He, like many others within the movement, insisted that true democracy would not be realized within the United States until racial injustices against African Americans were resolved. This included the resolution to white supremacy within the United States colonized nations as well.³³ This political activism was a major component of the African civil rights organization, the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**, which lobbied for the prohibition of lynching and supported influential black figures.

Urbanization also allowed for gay culture to flourish in large cities, such as New York City. Places like dance halls, saloons, speakeasies, bars and restaurants all functioned as social centers for gay and working-class men. Gay entertainment featured in certain sections of New York City gained prominence in the **Prohibition Era** between 1920 and 1933, the time period in which the manufacture, transportation and sale of alcohol was banned in the United States. Several dance halls, clubs and speakeasies saw a growth in popularity at this time, as spaces people could drink illegally. The increased attendance within these performance areas led to the **Pansy Craze**, when heightened white middle-class intrigue of gay performers allowed for their performances to be moved to more prominent cultural areas in the city such as Times Square. This allowed queer culture to be pulled out of

³³ Stephen R. Fox, *The Guardian of Boston: William Monroe Trotter* (New York: Scribner, 1971).

underground communities and become openly acknowledged. Many women and men, especially within the white middle-class, came to the city to explore their sexuality free from the restraints of traditional Victorian ideas of masculinity and femininity. Many also came out of curiosity to watch people different from them who did not ascribe to the standards of the time. One such performer, prominent during the Pansy Craze, was **Gene Malin**. He was one of the first openly gay performers, working in clubs around New York City. Malin was known for his exaggerated “pansy acts” in which he amplified the stereotypes of someone who identified as queer. In doing so, he acted overly flamboyant and effeminate on stage.³⁴

This time period also led to the popularity of music genres including jazz and blues. There were multiple women who gained fame in the early **blues** movement. This included African American singers Bessie Smith and “**Ma**” **Rainey**. “Ma” Rainey gained particular notoriety from the nature of her lyrics and dress. She would often wear a suit and tie when performing, and her lyrics spoke of romantic relationships with women. People were intrigued by her masculine attire, and increasingly came to watch her perform. She used her rising popularity to become more publically assertive about her gender and sexual difference.³⁵ Another notable performer was **Kokomo Arnold**, an African American blues musician based in Chicago. In one of his songs, *Sissy Man Blues*, released in 1934, he contests that he would either want a

³⁴ Chad C. Heap, *Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 87.

³⁵ Francis Abbott, “Rainey, Gertrude Malissa Nix Pridgett (Ma Rainey),” in *Music*, ed. Bill C. Malone, vol. 12 of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* ed. Charley Reagan Wilson (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2008) 332-334.

woman or a sissy man. This song helps to emulate the fluid nature of sexuality at the time.³⁶ During the 1930s, there was not a clear differentiation of sexuality from gender. Instead they were interchangeable, where a feminine man and a woman could be seen as one in the same.³⁷ Both performers showcase the prominence of queer culture within the cities of New York and Chicago.

OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the distinction between private and public working spheres and male and female gendered tasks.
- To recognize the importance of gender expectations and gender performance within American society.

³⁶ JD Doyle, "Sissy Man Blues," Queer Music Heritage, accessed March 4, 2016, <http://www.queermusicheritage.com/feb2004smb.html>.

³⁷ George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

- To explore the influence of women and female support networks in the public sphere.
- To recognize the thriving and visible African American and gay culture that flourished in the cities between 1890-1940.

SELECT RECOMMENDED READINGS FOR TEACHERS:

- Abraham, Julie. *Metropolitan Lovers: The Homosexuality of Cities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.
- Bederman, Gail. *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

- Chauncey, George. *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940*. New York: Basic Books, 1994.
- D'Emilio, John and Freedman, Estelle B. *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988.
- Duggan, Lisa. *Sapphic Slashers: Sex, Violence, and American Modernity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Faderman, Lillian. "Lesbian Chic: Experimentation and Repression in the 1920s." In *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: Penguin Books, 1991.
- Hoganson, Kristin L. *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American War*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Landry, Bart. *Black Working Wives: Pioneers of the American Family Revolution*. Berkeley: University of California, 2000.
- McGirr, Lisa. *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015.
- Mumford, Kevin. *Interzones: Black/White Sex Districts in Chicago and New York in the Early Twentieth Century*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
- Murphy, Kevin. *Political Manhood: Red Bloods, Mollycoddles, and the Politics of Progressive Era Reform*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
- Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

PRIMARY SOURCES:

Teacher's Note: Below are six primary sources that coincide with important concepts, events, and figures within this unit. Each source is complemented with a brief explanation and summary of the source under the title. There is also a set of class questions below each source. They have been bolded for clarity. The writing after each question can act as a guide for teachers to make sure their students understand the importance of each source.

- 1) NAACP, *For the Good of America*
1926
- 2) Gertrude “Ma” Rainey. “Prove It On Me”
1928
- 3) *The Chicago Whip*, “Nosey Sees All Knows All”
November 6, 1920.
- 4) Letter from Agnes Betts, Smith College student, to her mother
October 11th, 1912.
- 5) Al Posen, *The Chicago Tribune*, “Them Days is Gone Forever”
1922.
- 6) New York Tabloid, *Broadway Brevities*, “No Difference”
December 14, 1931.

1. NAACP, *For the Good of America*, 1926

This source is part of a collection within the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. To find this source, visit <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/jim-crow-and-great-migration/resources/lynching-america-ca-1926>

The poster is one part of a series of full-page ads published by the NAACP in the 1920s. These ads were aimed at highlighting lynching statistics within the United States in attempts to pass the Anti-Lynching Bill. Ads much like this one, included

statistics showcasing the cruelty of the United States' past. This ad was created to encourage citizens to aid the organization.

Image Caption: To maintain civilization in America and for the good name of the nation before the world you cannot escape your responsibility.

Class Questions from the Source:

- **What does this poster have to do with the idea of civilized manliness and imperialism?** Have students focus on the caption. The poster urges people to see how lynching takes away from this idea of a civilized nation, and therefore must be stopped.
- **How does this poster correlate with Ida B Wells' work?** Students can connect this poster with Ida B Wells' anti-lynching campaigns and writings. Both this ad and Wells challenged U.S. concepts of civilized manliness and cultural superiority, arguing that a civilized man would not be able to tolerate lynching of African Americans.

2. Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Paramount Records, "Prove It On Me", 1928

This source is an excerpt from one of "Ma" Rainey's most well-known songs. Rainey, a black, female singer in Harlem, performed this song shortly after being put in jail for an "indecent party" thrown at her apartment. Rainey capitalized on the publicity that her arrest created, and performed this song as an act of defiance. The picture that advertised the song included a woman dressed in men's clothing talking to a group of women as a police officer watches nearby.

To listen to the song, visit

[http://wn.com/gertrude 'ma' rainey prove it on me blues](http://wn.com/gertrude%20%27ma%27%20rainey%20prove%20it%20on%20me%20blues)

To view the album cover along with more information about Ma Rainey visit this Jas Obrecht Music Archive page, <http://jasobrecht.com/ma-rainey-the-mother-of-the-blues/>

“Went out last night, had a great big fight
Everything seemed to go on wrong
I looked up, to my surprise
The gal I was with was gone.

Where she went, I don't know
I mean to follow everywhere she goes;
Folks say I'm crooked. I didn't know where she took it
I want the whole world to know.

They say I do it, ain't nobody caught me
Sure got to prove it on me;
Went out last night with a crowd of my friends,
They must've been women, 'cause I don't like no men.

It's true I wear a collar and a tie,
Makes the wind blow all the while
Don't you say I do it, ain't nobody caught me
You sure got to prove it on me.”

Class Questions from this Source:

- **What are some of the song's themes?** Students can point to differing gender roles and representations (e.g., “it’s true I wear a collar and tie”), same-sex relationships (e.g., “it must have been a woman ‘cause I don’t like no men”), societal expectations (e.g., “folks say I’m crooked”), taunting (e.g., “cause they say I do it, ain’t nobody caught me, sure got to prove it on me”).

- **Why study this song?** Students can give a number of answers to this question. They can discuss its significance as a prominent blues song within the era, discuss its importance in openly acknowledging same-sex relationships, or perhaps discuss the differences in gender representations and how traditional masculine and feminine roles were made interchangeable.

3. *The Chicago Whip*, “Nosey Sees All Knows All,” November 6, 1920.

This source appears in OutHistory.org, a site containing various LGBTQ histories. It can be found specifically within the unit entitled Queer Bronzeville, which contains a history of African American gays and lesbians in Chicago. The page is copyrighted to Tristan Cabello. To find this source, visit

<http://outhistory.org/exhibits/show/queer-bronzeville/part-1/pre-history>

The cartoon comes from *The Chicago Whip*, a popular African American newspaper that circulated around the 1920s. It featured a combination of stories and cartoons that focused on entertainment and community gossip. This source is part of a column entitled “Nosey Sees All” in which the writer, under the pen name of “Nosey,” commented on activities seen in the area of Bronzeville, Chicago.

Image Caption: Nosey was out on Halloween Eve and what he saw would fill a book. He saw one lady, the mother of six children, out in men’s clothes, switching like a bride’s train with a cigarette stuck jauntily in the corner of her mouth. He saw young matrons’ bordering on the danger mark of thirty years running up and down the streets yelling like Comanche Indians. They were attired in keeping with their brains, clown-like. He saw grown up men-parading the highways in unspeakable costumes. The evening was a return to the age of foolishness and many fools were in evidence.

Class Questions from this Source:

- **Where was this published?** This question will help students to identify Chicago as a major urban center with a rich history of gender and sexual fluidity at the time.
- **Why is it important he sees a mother?** This question will help students understand that it was not just young, single men and women who were

- taking part in non-normative gender expressions, but also men and women with families, living relatively gender-normative lives. Point out the importance that this women's drag took place at night, where she could be possibly hiding her true identity from the everyday society she operates in.
- **What is Nosey's attitude towards these people?** This will help students see that although there was a wide audience intrigued by drag and gay culture, it was still seen as different and deviant. To many people in society this difference was seen as, in this case, foolish and clown-like.

4. Letter from Agnes Betts, Smith College student, to her mother, October 11th, 1912.

This source comes from Historic Northampton, an organization that creates programs, exhibits and public projects that focus on the local history of the community. The letter was a part of the Hestia Mural 35th Anniversary Lecture Series. The research was conducted by Elizabeth Kent who focuses on queer studies

and researching LGBTQ history. To find this source, visit

<http://www.historicnorthampton.org/rose-tree-inn.html>

The letter is from a student from Smith College, a private women's liberal arts college. In the letter she discusses her experience at the Rose Tree Inn, which was owned by businesswoman Anna de Naucaze, otherwise known as Madame de Naucaze.

“On our way home we stopped at the most adorable place and had something to eat. It is called ‘Rose Tree Inn’ ...The most fascinating part of the whole affair is ‘Madame.’ There is a mystery surrounding her, and she has short gray hair and never wears anything but a suit and white stiff collars just like a man and never takes her coat off. No one knows whether it is a man or woman. Some say she is fleeing from justice, that she married a Frenchman and were greatly in debt so left France and came to America. All Smith is crazy over Rose Tree Inn.”

Class Questions from this Source:

- **What does the student point out that is different about this woman?**

This question will get students to identify certain descriptions such as wearing a “suit and white stiff collars just like a man,” and therefore recognize the importance of her wearing gender non-normative clothes.

- **What is the importance of the Madame owning the inn?** This is a two-part question. First, the students should recognize that it is a woman owning the business, which at the time was a gender transgressive concept, as many women began pursuing more public sphere, male designated jobs. Second, the students could point out that not only is it a woman owning the inn, but it is also a woman who does not ascribe to the feminine gender. Both her job and her employment are gender non-normative, but she still runs a successful business.

5. Al Posen, *The Chicago Tribune*, "Them Days is Gone Forever," 1922.

This source is from the National Humanities Center: America in Class. This organization provides primary and secondary sources for history and literature teachers. The comics are part of a primary source collection entitled "Becoming Modern: America in the 1920s." It is part of a series of comic strips created by

cartoonist, Al Posen, titled *Them Days is Gone Forever*, originally published in *The Chicago Tribune*. For more on this collection, visit <http://americainclass.org/sources/becomingmodern/modernity/text2/themdays.pdf>

The comics focus heavily on women in the 1920s, specifically pertaining to their increased presence in the public sphere. They include themes of economic, political and social transition.

Class Questions from the Source:

- **How does the wardrobe cartoon represent a shift in women's gender roles?** Students can discuss the Progressive Era and women's entrance into the public working sphere, where working in factories, women would not be wearing corsets. The lack of corsets may also point to the rejection of old Victorian values of femininity.
- **What is the significance of the women being in all the barbershops?** Here, students can be prompted to discuss the visibility of women in society, not only in public, but also in politics, employment, entertainment and news reporting. Students can focus on the language, "a barbershop was once a place where ladies were taboo," and could be prompted to think of other places that women would have previously been that would have seen taboo. This can also get students to think about the significance of the women gathering in a barbershop, which would traditionally be considered a "man's space."

6. New York Tabloid, *Broadway Brevities*, “No Difference,” December 14, 1931.

This cartoon is featured in George Chauncey’s social history, *Gay New York*. It appears in the book’s first chapter, “The Bowery as Haven and Spectacle.” It was taken from *Broadway Brevities*, which was one of the first national gossip tabloids in the United States. The tabloid included highly sensationalized stories and features of

the New York theatre world. Some of its most prominent topics included sex, drugs, and crime.

Image Caption: “But this is exclusively a woman’s hotel!”

“Well!”

Class Questions from this Source:

- **Who created this source?** Students can see that it was produced in New York City and recognize the prominence of non-normative gender representations in this city. Students should also recognize the significance of this coming from a magazine that covered popular figures in the New York theatre world. This helps to show that these gender representations were a visible part of New York City culture. They could also point to the fact that it is a tabloid, and how that changes the way people look at the picture.
- **What do you notice about his dress?** Students can discuss the extravagance of his outfit as being different from the way gender normative males dress. They can also discover how his dress and mannerisms indicate his gender and even possible sexual identity.
- **What is the importance of his response to the woman’s club clerk?** This question can help students to understand gender and sexual fluidity during this time-period. It is a visual representation of how people could choose their gender representations, specifically in this picture how this man

adopted a more feminine style, believing that this femininity was a mark of a woman.

CHAPTER 2

Cold War America at Home: Economic Growth and Optimism, Anticommunism, and Reform, 1945-1980

This curriculum falls under the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework of U.S. History II Reconstruction to the Present 1877-2001. The information and primary sources presented below address the following standards of this unit.

- **USII.22** Analyze the causes and consequences of important domestic Cold War trends

Within this standard I have included information about Cold War gender and sexual anxieties. These arose from the belief that domestic stability and unity were essential for the United States to win the global Cold War. Therefore, anyone who was seen as deviant from the majority gender and sexual identity was seen as a potential threat to national stability. What resulted was a greater push for the return to traditional Victorian values of male masculinity, female femininity and heterosexual family models. It also set the stage for political, economic and social discrimination and oppression for those who did not ascribe to these norms. Consequently, many who identified as LGBTQ hid their identities in order to escape persecution or harassment. This addition can help students to better understand Cold War anxieties that arose within this time period, and how they affected United States policy and culture for years to come.

- **USII.24** Analyze the roots of domestic anticommunism as well as the origins and consequences of McCarthyism

Within this standard, I have included information about the Lavender Scare, a period of tension similar to the Red Scare in which there was a heightened anxiety of homosexuals within the United States government. In 1950, West Virginia Senator Joseph McCarthy presented an analysis of United States security risks in

which he linked the susceptibility to communism as being similar to the susceptibility of homosexuality. His public assertions sparked fear in mainstream America, where anxiety over communism now included homosexuality. This led the federal government to begin formal investigations and mass firings of any perceived homosexual working within the government. Students can tie this event into the McCarthyism phenomenon that marked the era. In doing so, they can better understand the time period's emphasis on conformity, and how the public perception influenced government policy.

- **USII.25** Analyze the origins, goals, and key events of the Civil Rights movement
- **USII.26** Describe the accomplishments of the Civil Rights movement
- **USII.27** Analyze the causes and course of the women's rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s

Within these standards, I incorporate figures of civil rights movements who have largely been left out of U.S. history textbooks, yet have played a key role in the advancements of this era's social movements. I also included organizations that played a key role in the homosexual and women's rights movements so students can have a better understanding of the political and social activism that took place across the United States. This will provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the fight for equality for minorities within the United States at this time.

Teacher Background:

Often identified as the Red Scare, the early Cold War era between the 1940s and 1950s was a time of heightened anxiety of communism within the United States. The **Cold War** began shortly after the end of World War II in 1945. It represented a long

period of tension between democracies in the Western world and communist countries largely in Eastern Europe. Although there was no official declaration of war, the two main powers fought indirectly through proxy wars to demonstrate power and dominance. The political tensions that arose among countries transferred over into U.S. society. More than ever, U.S. citizens and members of the government grew suspicious of communists hiding within the population. One of the consequences of this became a stricter adherence to conformity, as it seemed to be the best safeguard for political conservatism. Many things that were seen as deviant, subversive, or against the grain were perceived as a threat to national security. In this context, homosexuals and gender non-conforming people faced institutionalized persecution along with communists. The federal government created investigative committees, executive orders, and immigration acts that aimed to systematically exclude homosexuals within the United States. At the very same time, however, the United States underwent great social transformation. Minority groups that were seen as threats and persecuted by the government fought back and challenged state discrimination, including African American, gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people.

Public and conservative anxieties first arose from the expansion of the government and policies implemented by the New Deal. **The New Deal**, set in place by President **Franklin D. Roosevelt** beginning in 1933, combated the effects of the Great Depression through relief, recovery, and reform. During this time the government instituted a number of projects and programs to restore prosperity to the United States. As the Depression continued into 1935, Roosevelt adopted more

aggressive federal programs and additional New Deal agencies to provide further employment to relieve the nation.³⁸ This led to a migration of people from rural towns into cities like Washington, D.C. in order to find work within one of these government agencies. The type of jobs within the federal civil service often attracted people who lived outside of societal norms. This was because the examination process was neutral and therefore more hospitable to women and men who did not fit in with the masculine business world. Much like the black and gay enclaves created in the 1920s and 1930s in New York City and Chicago, urbanization in Washington D.C. in the 1930s and 1940s created a gay subculture where gays and lesbians were able to find work and greater social acceptance.³⁹ However, the great presence of homosexuals in Washington D.C. was a source of anxiety for many conservatives who began using this demographic as a political weapon to attack the liberal ideals of the Democratic Party. Many conservatives also saw the domestic programs and growth of the government as a gateway to socialism, and feared U.S. democracy was dwindling. In the 1940s and early 1950s, it was commonly believed that in order to win the Cold War, the nation needed to be domestically stable and united. Homosexuals were seen as a threat to the United States because of their deviancy from “normal” behavior, or the dominance of heterosexuality. Gender and sexual conformity became critical to winning the war, and therefore anything or

³⁸ “Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1933-1945,” The Library of Congress, accessed February 5, 2016, <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/depwwii/newdeal/>.

³⁹ David Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 41.

anyone who was seen as deviant was stamped out. This led to a domestic revival of white women entering back into the private working sphere, and white men taking on the traditional Victorian masculine role of the family provider.⁴⁰

As the Cold War intensified, the United States dealt with mass cultural hysteria over the perceived threat of communists within the population, and the large number homosexuals within the government. With heightened anxieties, any remarks made about possible security risks were taken very seriously. In February 1950, West Virginia Senator **Joseph McCarthy** presented an analysis of security risk cases, two of which involved homosexuals. In between citing the cases he referred to a conversation he had with an intelligence officer. In this conversation the officer told him that every active communist is twisted mentally or physically in some way. McCarthy then strategically compared homosexuality and communism to point out that just as people with psychological maladjustments were drawn to homosexuality, they were also more likely to be driven to communism.⁴¹ After these reports, special investigation subcommittees were formed to investigate what they called “sexual perverts” in government agencies. The findings of these subcommittees were congruent with McCarthy’s earlier assertions that homosexuals were unsuitable for government employment. The subcommittees also pointed out the security risk of homosexuals being more susceptible to blackmail. The subcommittee believed that homosexuals would be more likely to release information to communist spies if they were threatened with public exposure to

⁴⁰ Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 136.

⁴¹ Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 17.

their gay and lesbian identities. At this time, public persecution of gay and lesbian identities meant social ostracism and unemployment. This forced many people to remain closeted and secretive about their gay and lesbian identities out of fear of losing their public image or their job, which would leave them unable to provide for themselves or their families.

The search for perceived security threats intensified in 1953, when President **Dwight D. Eisenhower** issued **Executive Order 10450**. This placed the power in the hands of the heads of federal agencies and Office of Personnel Management supported by the FBI to investigate federal employees and to determine if any posed as security risks. Previously, in 1947, President Harry S. Truman issued an order that appointed a review board to investigate employees to determine whether they posed security risks for the nation. This was created in order to limit the role of the FBI in order to avoid widespread persecution. The new order 10450 not only granted the FBI more power, it also created more general guidelines for potential security risks rather than having it just be politically based. The broad descriptions encompassed areas such as character, stability, and reliability. Most importantly it now included sexual perversion as a security risk.⁴²

The policing of homosexuality was not a phenomenon exclusive to government employment. It also played an important role in new immigration policies and determining who was eligible for citizenship in the United States. The

⁴² Executive Order 10450 of April 27, 1953, Security Requirements for Government Employment, *Code of Federal Regulations*, title 3 (1953): 936, <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/10450.html>.

Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, also known as the McCarran-Walter Act, was the first time that there was a distinct statutory exclusion of people who were read as sexually deviant.⁴³ It is important to note that this act was passed at the height of McCarthy-era anxieties and the persecution of potential subversives. These fears allowed for the expansion of the grounds for exclusion of those seen as most dangerous during the Red and Lavender Scares: Communists and homosexuals.

At a time of what seemed to be mass gender and sexual conformity, it was also a revolutionary time for those confined by rigid gender roles. The case of **Christine Jorgensen** was one of the most prominent and popular examples of this. Jorgensen served in the U.S. Army during World War II before going to Denmark to obtain sex reassignment surgery. Upon returning to the United States, Jorgensen became the first widely known **transsexual** woman. Jorgensen's decision and surgery fascinated the United States, which helped expose the contested nature of male and female and masculinity and femininity. Jorgensen used her publicity as a platform to advocate for transsexual and transgender people and others who were living in the margins of the U.S. society.⁴⁴ Her success came from her ability to assimilate into the ascribed gender roles for a female within the United States.

The Cold War repression of homosexuals in the government also inspired the emergence of the first sustained gay rights movement in U.S. history. Conservatives'

⁴³ U.S. Congress Senate, *Immigration and Nationality Act*, 82nd Cong., 1952, Public Law No. 82-414, 163-282,

<http://library.uwb.edu/static/USimmigration/66%20stat%20163.pdf>.

⁴⁴ ChristineJorgensen.org, accessed January 8, 2016,

<http://www.christinejorgensen.org/MainPages/Home.html>.

defensive efforts to expel homosexuals from federal employment helped mobilize them. One important figure at this time was **Frank Kameny**, a U.S. Army veteran who lost his job after being arrested for homosexual activity. He co-founded the Washington, D.C. branch of the **Mattachine Society**. The Mattachine Society, originally formed in California in 1950, was a gay rights organization that aimed to unify homosexuals and combat negative stereotypes and replace them with positive ones. In particular, Kameny helped popularize the phrase, "Gay is Good."⁴⁵ This slogan helped transform how gay people were perceived, as people had historically heard and seen negative associations with homosexuality.

Another main contributor to the homophile movement was the Daughters of Bilitis. First formed in San Francisco in 1955, **The Daughters of Bilitis** was the first U.S. lesbian rights organization. This organization utilized the era's rhetoric of integration and equality to pursue its agenda in challenging homophobia and also sexism within the U.S.⁴⁶ Similarly to the Mattachine Society; The Daughters of Bilitis strove to conform to societal norms of **respectability** in order to de-stigmatize the negative lesbian image.⁴⁷ They did so by maintaining a positive public image through appropriate dress and manners. One of their most notable members was **Barbara Gittings**, one of the organizers of the New York chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis. As a public activist, she worked closely with Frank Kameny in picket lines that brought attention to the government employment ban on homosexual citizens.

⁴⁵ Eisenbach, *Gay Power*, 50.

⁴⁶ Eacklor, *Queer America*, 145.

⁴⁷ Marcia Gallo, *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughter of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement*. (Berkeley: Seal Press, 2007).

Organizations like the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis were also deeply influenced by other civil rights groups gaining prominence within growing counterculture of the late 1950s and 1960s. The **Civil Rights Movement**, which fought for the expansion of civil rights and liberties for African Americans, created a model of nonviolent protests and civil disobedience for other identity groups to follow. The civil rights movement was characterized by boycotts, sit-ins, marches and Supreme Court rulings all in an effort to end segregation and promote equality. One figure of resistance at the time was **Claudette Colvin**, a 15-year-old girl in Montgomery Alabama who refused to give up her seat on a bus. Although history widely remembers **Rosa Parks** for the same action, Claudette publically resisted bus segregation before Parks.⁴⁸ Another influential figure of the Civil Rights Movement was **Bayard Rustin**, who worked as an advisor to **Martin Luther King Jr.** Rustin worked as organizer and speaker at the **March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom** in 1963. This march aimed to rally Americans to stand up against the continuing political and social injustices African Americans faced. It took place at a critical moment in the civil rights movement when tension and racial unrest had been building. However, Rustin's work and activist writings were largely erased from U.S. history due to his self-identification as a homosexual.⁴⁹ Both Colvin and Rustin's untold histories reveal the politics of respectability. Colvin's actions were never noted because she was a teenager whose dark skin color and eventual

⁴⁸ "Claudette Colvin: The First Rosa Parks," Congress of Racial Equality, accessed March 10, 2016, <http://www.core-online.org/History/colvin.htm>.

⁴⁹ John D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003).

pregnancy did not fit the profile of a symbol that the civil rights leaders at the time were looking for to affect change. Instead, the leaders chose Parks who was a secretary of the NAACP and lighter skin could be associated with the middle class.⁵⁰ At the time neither were seen as proper figures for the movement.

The activism that sparked in the 1960s also ushered in a new era for women's rights. The late 1960s brought about a new era of feminist thought, often referred to as **Second Wave Feminism**. As opposed to the first feminist movements in the early 1900s, which largely fought for women's political equality in areas such as voting rights, this second wave of feminism focused on women's dissatisfaction with domestic life and workplace discrimination. One of the largest organizations that represented this movement was the **National Organization for Women**. It was established in 1966 to advocate for gender equality in the workplace and the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to eliminate gender-based discrimination in the United States.⁵¹ One of NOW's notable founders was **Betty Friedan**, a writer, activist and feminist, whose 1963 book *The Feminine Mystique* helped to highlight how American femininity disadvantaged women. While both feminist and lesbian organizations played a critical role in the social transformations of this era, it is important to recognize that these organizations were also distinct from one another. NOW was largely comprised of white, middle-aged, middle-class women who largely ignored lesbians thinking they would

⁵⁰ "Claudette Colvin," Congress of Racial Equality.

⁵¹ "Founding: Setting the Stage," National Organization for Women, accessed April 5, 2016, <http://now.org/about/history/founding-2/>.

undermine the feminist movement.⁵² For lesbians this meant facing the burden of both heterosexism and sexism within the United States, and led to formation of separatist groups and organizations.

OBJECTIVES:

- To recognize the sentiment of the masculine, heterosexual hegemony of the American identity during the 1950s.

⁵² "Lesbian Feminism, 1960s and 1970s," OutHistory.org, accessed April 5, 2016, <http://outhistory.org/exhibits/show/lesbians-20th-century/lesbian-feminism>.

- To understand the connections between Cold War culture and homophobia.
- To identify how the repression of homosexuals inspired the emergence of a civil rights movement.
- To explore how attitudes and perceptions of the LGBTQ community changed due to social activism.
- To identify key figures of the Civil Rights movement, including both African American women and men, who have largely been excluded from its history.

SELECT RECOMMENDED READINGS FOR TEACHERS:

- Bérubé, Allan. *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in WWII*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990.
- Canaday, Margot. *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth Century America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- D'Emilio, John. *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003.
- D'Emilio, John. *Sexual Communities, Sexual Politics: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970*. Chicago: Chicago University Press: 1983.
- Gallo, Marcia M. *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement*. Berkeley: Seal Press, 2007.
- Howard, Clayton. "Building a 'Family Friendly' Metropolis: Sexuality, the State, and Postwar Housing Policy." *Journal of Urban History* 39, (2013): 933-955.
- Johnson, David. *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Luibhéid, Eithne. "Looking Like a Lesbian: The Organization of Sexual Monitoring at the US –Mexican Border." In *Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border* *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 477-506. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

- May, Elaine Tyler. *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*.
New York: Basic Books, 2008.
- Meeker, Martin. "Behind the Mask of Respectability: Reconsidering the
Mattachine Society and Male Homophile Practice, 1950s and 1960s."
In *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 10 (2001): 78-116.
- Meyerowitz, Joanne. *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the
United States*. Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Stein, Marc. *Sexual Injustice: Supreme Court Decisions from Griswold to Roe*.
Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013.

PRIMARY SOURCES:

Teacher's Note: Below are six primary sources that coincide with important concepts, events, and figures within this unit. Each source is complemented with a brief explanation and summary of the source under the title. There is also a set of class questions below each source. They have been bolded for clarity. The writing after each question can act as a guide for teachers to make sure their students understand the importance of each sources.

- 1) *The Washington Post*, "Perverts in Government"
December 27, 1950

- 2) *New York Daily News*, "Ex-GI Becomes Blonde Beauty"
December 1, 1952

- 3) Frank Kameny's letter for Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy
June 28, 1962

- 4) Barbara Gittings picketing at Independence Hall
July 4, 1965

- 5) Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*
1963

- 6) Bayard Rustin, *From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement*
February 1, 1965

1. *The Washington Post*, “Perverts in Government,” December 27, 1950

This source was found from the ProQuest Historical Newspaper database.

In 1950, Investigation Subcommittees were formed by government officials, tasked to study employees engaging in “overt acts of homosexuality or other sex perversion.” These subcommittees were created in response to allegations made in February 1950 that homosexuals working within the government posed as distinct security risks to the nation. The article details why homosexuals should not be under government employment, and the importance of the subcommittees to effectively find and dismiss such individuals.

Paragraph 2: “The subcommittee feels that perverts are unsuitable for Government employment both because they commit illegal and immoral acts and because they constitute security risks in that they are susceptible to blackmail.”

Class Questions from the Source:

- **What were the findings of the subcommittee?** Looking at the source students can answer from the quotes that “the subcommittee feels that perverts are unsuitable for government employment both because they commit illegal and immoral acts and because they constitute security risks in that they are susceptible to the pressure of blackmail...” Students should be able to identify that the subcommittee found that homosexuals are security risks and are unfit for employment.

- **Does the article take a position on the issue?** Students should find that the article agrees with the subcommittee and goes on to talk about the need of an effective board to combat this problem.
- **Does it represent popular opinion at the time?** This question should get students to see this article as an example of the common ideology of homosexuals as deviants and threats to national security.

2. *New York Daily News*, “Ex-GI Becomes Blonde Beauty”, December 1, 1952

This headline is one of many that appeared in late 1952. Jorgensen’s surgery took the nation by storm, with her transition appearing on all major news sources and magazines. She was the first transsexual woman in the United States to embrace and publicize her sex change.

Image Caption: “A World of Difference”: “George W. Jorgenson Jr., son of a Bronx carpenter, served in the Army for two years and was given honorable discharge in 1946. Now George is no more. After six operations, Jorgensen’s sex has been changed and today she is a striking woman, working as a photographer in Denmark. Parents were informed of the big change in a letter Christine (that’s her new name) sent to them recently. –Story on page 3”

Class Questions from the Source:

- **Why is this headline news?** Students can recognize this headline as an important piece of American history, and they can see how much of a sensation Christine Jorgensen was.
- **What does the title tell us about changing gender roles in the United States?** Student should recognize the gender stereotypes that go along with each descriptor. “Ex-GI” being the epitome of masculinity and “Blonde Beauty” being the epitome of femininity in the United States. Here students should recognize a massive shift in gender identities and gender expectations for Jorgensen as a transsexual woman.

- **How does this represent the views of this time period?** Students can link this headline to the ideas of conformity that were so prevalent in society at this time. Even as a transsexual woman, Jorgensen was expected to conform to the societal standards of a feminine woman even as many members of society expressed confusion or skepticism over her “authentic” gender.

3. Frank Kameny's letter for Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy

June 28, 1962

This source came from the Kameny Papers, a collection of letters, government correspondence, testimonies, photographs and other memorabilia collected by Frank Kameny and given to the Library of Congress. The collection is said to be the most complete record of the gay-rights movement in America. To find more documents from the collection, visit

<http://www.kamenypapers.org/correspondence.htm>

Frank Kameny, a member of the Mattachine Society, writes this letter to Robert F. Kennedy, the Attorney General at the time. The Attorney General is the head of the Department of Justice. Kameny is writing a complaint about investigations of the FBI, which operates under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice. In his letter he describes the persecution many homosexuals feel under these invasive investigations. He also writes to ask for the assistance of the Federal government in improving the position of the homosexual minority group within Washington, and in the greater United States.

Paragraph 3: We feel that, for the 15,000,000 American homosexuals, we are in much the same position as the NAACP is in for the Negro, except for the minor difference that the Negro is fighting official prejudice and discrimination at the state and local level, whereas we are fighting official prejudice and discriminatory policy and practice, as ill-founded, as unreasonable, as unrealistic, and as harmful to society and to the nation, at the Federal level. Both are fighting personal prejudice at

all levels. For these reasons, and because we are trying to improve the position of a large group of citizens presently relegated to second-class citizenship in many respects, we should have, if anything, the assistance of the Federal government, and not its opposition.

Class Questions from the Source:

- **Why does Kameny connect the Mattachine Society to the NAACP?**
Students should think about both movements as civil rights movements with similar aims for equal civil rights and treatment.
- **How does this document about FBI investigations differ from previous ones during the 1950s?** This document showcases the investigations from the other side: the ones being investigated. Students can see that these investigations were invasive and offensive to many people.
- **Does this change the image of homosexuals in American culture?**
Students can begin to point to the change in perceptions of homosexuals not as threats, but as respectable people within the community who are tired of being persecuted.

4. Barbara Gittings picketing at Independence Hall on July 4th, 1965

This image was taken from The New York Public Library Digital Collections. To view this source, visit <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e3-b6aa-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

On July 4th, 1965, a group of gay rights activists assembled outside of Independence Hall in Philadelphia. They held picket signs that demanded for legislation that would secure LGBTQ rights. Pickets much like this one, took place over the next few years across the United States, picketing for similar issues. Many picketers were members of different chapters within the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis.

Image Reads: “Homosexuals should be judged as individuals” and, “Support Homosexual Civil Rights”

Class Questions from the Source:

- **What is she wearing? What are those around her wearing?** This question should prompt students to recognize that they are wearing nice clothes with women in dresses and men in button downs and ties. Students can connect this into the idea of respectability, which was so important at the time, and how appearing and acting respectable helped their cause.
- **What is important about the date of this picket?** Students can see that this took place on the 4th of July, a celebration of the United States’ independence. The activists chose this date to prove a point, that just as the United States had to fight for their rights, so will the homosexual. Make sure students pay

close attention to what the signs say and how they tie into this idea of standing up for your rights.

- **Why are they wearing glasses?** Here students can point out that the sunglasses work to conceal the picketers. At a time where people are being fired from their jobs and facing social persecution within the United States, these picketers are also protecting their own identity. This can help students to understand the fear many people had in standing up for this cause, and how much they had to lose self-identifying as a homosexual.

5. Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc., 1963)

This excerpt comes from the first chapter of Betty Friedan's book, *The Feminine Mystique*. The chapter is aptly titled, "The Problem That Has No Name."

"The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the United States. Each suburban wife struggled with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night—she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent questions—"Is this all?"

Class Questions from the Source:

- **What is "the problem that has no name?"**

Students should be able to describe this as a problem with societal expectations of femininity, specifically the pressures women felt in the 1950s and early 1960s to fit into a particular type of feminine image. It is this pressure to be confined to the domestic sphere that Friedan argued caused women to feel unhappy and unfulfilled.

- **According to Friedan, what are the expectations for women at this time?**

Students can cite a number of examples from the text (e.g., "their role was to seek fulfillment as wives and mothers"), (e.g., "truly feminine women do not want careers, higher education, political rights"), or (e.g., [a] "suburban wife"). All of these examples point to the same general expectation of women being housewives and mothers.

- **How does this fit into the larger feminist movement?**

This question can get students to think about Second Wave Feminism and women's rights groups that advocated for gender equality in the workplace. Students can also critically think about idealized femininity at the time, and why people like Friedan viewed this as a problem.

6. Bayard Rustin, *From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement*, February 1, 1965

This source was taken from the American Left Ephemera Collection created by Dr. Richard J. Oestreicher, Associate Professor of History at the University of Pittsburgh. The collection is comprised of sources from the 1890s to present day. To view the full source, visit

<http://digital.library.pitt.edu/u/ulsmanuscripts/pdf/31735066227830.pdf>

This source is an excerpt from Bayard Rustin's writing *From Protest To Politics*, which was published in Commentary Magazine in 1965. His work reflects on the importance of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination based on race, religion, sex, or national origin. Bayard remarked that it was now time to advocate for African American equality in the "American socio-economic order" and for the "fundamental conditions of life of the Negro people."

First paragraph: The decade spanned by the 1954 Supreme Court decision on school desegregation and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 will undoubtedly be recorded as the period in which the legal foundations of racism in America were destroyed. To be sure, pockets of resistance remain; but it would be hard to quarrel with the assertion that the elaborate legal structure of segregation and discrimination, particularly in relation to public accommodations, has virtually collapsed. On the other hand, without making light of the human sacrifices involved in the direct-action tactics (sit-ins, freedom rides, and the rest) that were so instrumental to this achievement, we must recognize that in desegregating public accommodations, we affected institutions which are relatively peripheral both to the American socio-economic order and to the fundamental conditions of life of the Negro people."

Class Questions from the Source:

- **What is important about the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?**

Students should recognize this Act as an important milestone for African Americans, as well as other marginalized minority groups, for equality within public institutions.

- **Why does Rustin state that more needs to be done for African American equality?** From his writing, students should gain a better understanding that

equality under the law does not solve all of problems of minority groups. In this section, Rustin argues that equality now needs to be received in economic and social matters.

- **How do his ideas coincide with the homosexual civil rights movement?**

Here, students can compare Rustin's argument for complete political, economic, and social equality within the United States to that of homosexual advocate groups in the 1960s. Both organizations were striving for complete integration into U.S. society.