

2005-06 Oakland TAHG  
Blue Books –Teacher Comments

Teacher Comments  
Blue Books  
Summary

There were four main topics written about in the 2005-06 TAHG Blue Books. Written comments concerning the speakers comprised most of the total content. Next were comments written about the lesson study process, followed by comments concerning the projects writing process and the summer institute.

Robin Einhorn received the most positive responses concerning the speakers. “Why not have Einhorn lecture the whole week? I doubt we could find a more expert and energetic, charismatic lecturer!” This quote is a sample of the many positive comments she received. Some of the speakers received mixed comments, with some teachers writing positive comments and others writing negative comments. The rest of the comments written about the other speakers were primary positive.

Lesson study generated many written comments, most were positive. A few teachers thought the theory behind lesson study should have been reviewed at the start. A few teachers were not happy with their group’s decisions, but they all seemed to agree that the lesson study process was very valuable and appreciated the opportunity to participate in it.

Most of the teachers had comments, ideas, and suggestions about student writing, writing samples, and writing prompts. Many teachers shared suggestions on how to go about improving their students writing results next year. Most of the ideas involved starting earlier, better defining of the writing prompts terms, more explicit writing instructions, and more scaffolding of the writing process.

Most of the teachers wrote down comments, ideas, and suggestions about the overall project, as well as the project’s activities throughout the year, and the summer institute. Most of the comments were very positive. Some of the teachers offered suggestions on improvements, or just shared their thoughts about the projects activities and components. The overall common theme was that the teachers loved being treated respectfully, as educators and learners.

Each individual teacher’s written comments will follow. A few comments were not included, due to illegible hand writing, and or they were not felt to be relevant.

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Jeannie Young

10/18 – Caroline Cox. The constitution among individual states was an issue of debate before the Declaration of Independence was written.

11/17 – Discussion on Peter Zenger. I thought the presentation on Peter Zenger was a great way to introduce the freedom of expression, and what the impact of it was in the eighteenth century, and even now. I think that when the information is given to students (through an upcoming lesson) the 5<sup>th</sup> graders will hopefully be able to understand that we have more freedom now than before! Although only to certain extent – there are parameters to freedom of expression.

12/8/05 – I thought today’s discussion on the lesson study topic (The Zenger trial) was a great springboard to sharpening the focus of what we want from our students. How can the dissent of the people cause significant change regarding the freedom of the press?

1/26/06 – When grappling, with the case of Peter Zenger, I think it’s really important for students to understand the consequences people have to face when speaking the truth. Although there is a greater good, is it worth being incarcerated or persecuted against?

5/18/06 – Today’s presentation on the Salem Witch Trials was not only fascinating, but an interesting way of realizing that even today there could be witch hunts regarding people who are non – conformists and refuse to believe in living with in the guidelines of a “structured society”. Anyone who goes against the grain or who defies a particular way of doing something could be persecuted against or mistreated because of being “different”.

6/26/06 – I really enjoyed collaborating with other teachers about the lesson study and how it could be improved, etc. I think it is extremely helpful to have input from other teachers to gain insight and perspective as to how students can begin to appreciate history through well thought out lessons and activities.

6/27/06 – Carolyn Winterer’s presentation on “The Trouble with Tea”, was an interesting and informative portrayal of how the colonists felt prior to and after the protest on the tea tax. It really seemed like a slap in the face to the colonists when they became disenfranchised from the British after immersing themselves in English culture. I learned a lot more from today’s presentation than from any literature I’ve come across.

6/28/06 – I feel like I learned a lot about the Dred Scott decision, and how it led to the Civil War. What I found frustrating is the fact that I have not been able to teach anything following the Gold Rush because of time constraints and the mandates of Open Court. How can I teach something I’m really not familiar with and don’t have time to cover? I think teachers that do teach this (Dred Scott decision) have a lot of background knowledge and can bring in their own understanding outside of what the curriculum offers.

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6/29/06 – The lecture given by Jennifer Spear on the “Indians Old and new Worlds” was important because it showed that there was a diverse complex, and incredible rich history the Indians had prior to Columbus’s arrival to America.

6/30/06 – Mark Brilliant’s lecture on racial classifications was a real “eye opener” for me because I wasn’t aware of what happened in San Francisco in the 1970’s with the desegregation and busing issue. People need to acknowledge that are “cure” may be advantageous for some and disadvantageous for others. If the Chinese students were already settled in their community and had established their niche, it is completely unfair to forcefully bus them outside of their community for so called “equal and same” treatment under the desegregation act.

In order for children to become better students, it is essential that the teacher fine-tune his or her skills as an educator. For example, if students are to become better writers, they will need a focus question that clearly lays out what it is they need to address in an essay. Explicit teaching is paramount if children are to successfully achieve what is expected. Also, using graphic organizers in history lessons or even in other areas of the curriculum can be the necessary scaffolding tool students need to excel, or understand the content of what they are learning. One of the ideas I have for next year is to assign children a novel to read like The Witch of Black Bird Pond, and have them debate over whether or not the book was historically accurate. (This will enhance their historical thinking skills)

### Maryann Wolfe

11/8/06 – Einhorn was fabulous – Not just as a charismatic speaker but also because her ideas were intriguing and so useful to me. This lecture will become a part of my curriculum, indeed! I appreciated the way you set up the lesson study session – using us “oldies” to inform the new ones. It was a good way to get to know each other! I would like to have more time set aside for lesson study groups to meet however. This venue is the most efficient for lesson preparation.

Brilliant was brilliant! Not only was this presentation lively, but the focus was clear, well documented, and helpful for future lessons.

5/22/06 – Good idea to debrief the Foner lecture with Postel leading the discussion. It’s good to reflect, as this may remind us to use this info in our classes. Johnston’s talk was interesting, though his proof seem limited. I really didn’t learn a lot from his presentation, though he seemed like a nice man. Daisy Martin’s topic may have been helpful to the less accomplished in our team. I really didn’t get any new ideas, though the charts might come in handy. The CST Standards Grant info assignment was unclear and too limited in time to be of much value. I also think AP teachers would probably have a different list of high and lower standards.

6/25/06 – Robin Einhorn & Lesson Study. Why not have Einhorn lecture the whole week? I doubt we could find a more expert and energetic, charismatic lecturer! I loved the foundation she planted in terms of looking at the development of national power.

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Lesson study went well; we all worked hard, accomplished much, and probably won't need time Friday afternoon.

6/27/06 – Chris Arriola

Eye opening info. The video was particularly helpful, though I thought the speaker did not provide a truly academic lecture. The murder mystery of David Walker was well presented. The format of the lesson was excellent, and certainly could be used at any level, which is good in terms of getting more teachers to use lessons that engage students. We talked about how the question “loaded” the outcome.

6/30/06 – Brilliant was again brilliant. It's unfortunate that the era of his talk is one that most teachers never cover, but the issue he raised about “one size fits all” can be an anchor or asterisk that once can use conceptually in a US history course.

Stan you must apply for another three year grant. That will keep me teaching, enthusiastically!!!

PS – Most importantly, this project provides us with the intellectual stimulation that energizes our brains and drives our classrooms. This project has made us all better teachers, better at our craft!

PS – We would like to see the structure of how to write up the lesson study revisited, streamlined for next year. What will we do without Teddy? The last day of this project needs to run more efficiently.

### Carin Geathers

11/18/05 – As always great speaker – I'm glad we chose this topic. I wasn't “feeling” Zenger before but now I have lots of ideas. Also like the group and I hope to work closely with them this year. Of course I want to teach the lesson again.

6/26 – I liked the listening with a purpose technique – focused my thinking and kept me prepared to work thinking historically and keeping the content standards in my head. We thought we could use this technique in our classrooms.

6/27 – Listening to Carolyn Winterer speaking about Tea was eye opening. She gave me several ideas about different ways to approach the topic (non traditional)! I also love her use of “evidence” not just being pictures, photos, etc but also the evidence of ideas and thoughts. It's still not totally clear but I think I'm getting it. Seeing the excellent work going on in other lesson study groups makes me so happy to be apart of this group! Seeing real students working thinking, etc, in real schools is GREAT.

6/30 – The completion of another unit, another year and another opportunity to meet and work with other teachers has been a pleasure. I am almost inspired to stay one more year to have fun with historical fiction my love. Anyway – Mark was Brilliant – as were all of

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the historians. Keep up the good work – I will keep you informed about where I land next year.

This year I have I have learned that both the content and the thinking skills should be addressed simultaneously. That is thinking about the big idea – questions and working backwards to get there. I would pay more attention to how to get students where I wanted them to be in terms of their writing, oral speaking and presentation skills and of course student’s abilities to integrate the historical thinking skill and the content learned. This year I especially came away with looking at history using a different set of lenses – looking at traditional areas (events, people) in nontraditional ways (Using social issues and the law to examine historical issues).

### David Braden

10/18/05 – Caroline Cox’s speech brought up two interesting questions for me that I think the students will be interested in as well. (a.) The genesis of the Bill of Rights, and the Bill of Rights in general. (b.) Comparing the Iroquois Confederacy to the Articles of the Confederation. Although I felt very passionately about teaching religious freedom as a lesson study, I am now convinced that Zenger was a better choice because it most directly relates to the Constitution.

I really liked looking at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade writing samples. It leads to me thinking about types and graduation of significance. I thought the ideas shared out were very valuable. I want to ask my students what they think about the phrase “freedom of speech.” Maybe their responses will help illuminate how to approach the lesson study.

5/18/06 – Great presentation on the “Salem Witch Trials.” I wish we had gone with that. I also appreciated the survey results presentation. I would be very interested to see a comparison of Oakland’s results with a suburban district. Also I would really be interested in a lesson study around Native Americans.

6/26/06 – I found the lecture on “Federalism” very interesting – but I’m not sure how to work it into the curriculum except perhaps as a way of teaching the Articles of Confederation more accurately. In our lesson study discussion we came to the conclusion that teaching history chronologically is not always the best way to teach history. Students need frequent connections made to the present day.

6/27/06 – I found Carole Winterer’s lecture on the Tea Tax to be very user friendly. It had an obvious hook that I could envision using in my classroom. It also suggested ways that the historical thinking standards could be weaved in evidence and chronological thinking.

6/28/06 – I thought the conversation around significance is important. I wonder if the significance standard needs to be adjusted for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Or perhaps 5<sup>th</sup> graders are better able to determine personal significance.

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6/29/06 – I really thought Jennifer Spear’s presentation on teaching Native American history to be both interesting and practical. It also raised a problematic issue of whose history should we be teaching. The presentation helped me to create some key ideas I want my students to come away with after having taught the unit. This will allow me to teach the unit more economically.

6/30/06 – I really liked today’s lecture topic because it was so relevant to my life as a teacher. I felt like I was inside this living history and how the topic tied to the issue of Federalism all the way back to the founding of our county. American history kind of lit up for me as a living, breathing, entity of which I am a part.

Year Reflection – It was interesting for me this year because teaching John Peter Zenger was not my first choice. I found it hard to invest myself in the lesson. But the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts and in the end I did feel a part of the lesson, and proud of what we created. So what I come away with is the realization that lesson study is a group process and within any group there will be differences between individuals toward the topic. Lesson study focus on the lesson and on the pedagogical question neutralizes those differences.

[Lisa Capuano](#)

12/8 – last class really enjoyed listening to speaker. It felt great to hear about something other than open Court.

5/18 – Great day – a lot of learning. Biggest points for me.

- Common good versus individual rights.
- Acknowledge respectfully counterarguments.
- Debate vernacular.

Writing the implications of figuring out and questioning the whole process of teaching children to apply historical events to different times is difficult to achieve. The application of knowledge and the connection between events is such a difficult concept to just teach.

6/26 – Robin is an incredible speaker. I love these sessions so much. Historians think so differently. I love the way they use source materials.

6/27 – Carolyn Winter was again, amazing. I love the way she weaves artifacts, music, primary sources into her presentations. I would love a list of historical fiction, fiction, non fiction for 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

6/28 – Okay, there was a discussion about significance.

6/29 – The issue of teaching history from European settlement time to present is a big one. We rarely see enough time dedicated to the pre colonization – I am thinking about how I can begin the year with the continents indigenous peoples.

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6/30 - Articulate the expectations better – I did not define “event”, “significance”, criteria, and perimeters. So the prompt wasn’t responded to well. I keep going back to better defining things... making sure the goals and expectations are clear. I think writing is a personal thing. Our children are taught to write how they feel, what they think, how this effects them. When they “make connections” in OCR they are asked to related ideas to themselves. Significance is tied to themselves – so defining personal significance versus historical significance and T chart these ideas with regards to new information is important.

The writing responses are only as clear as my explanations are. Next year I want my curriculum opening with:

1. Land bridge
2. Journeys and Quests
3. Astronomy
4. Indian immigrations
5. Heritage
6. Colonization
7. Making a new Nation
8. Colonization going West
9. History of Gold Rush
10. Also use literature choosing a book unit for lesson study.

### Marilyn Spingarn

I loved Robin’s lecture. She is such a dynamic speaker. I found that I was having difficulty taking notes, even though I seemed to have highlighted the important points. I appreciated the opportunity to debrief with Mark Brilliant. As a teacher lecturing, I thought of several areas that would need to be addressed in fifth grade.

1. Front load some of the vocabulary
2. Maybe pre teach where you are going (maybe post an outline)
3. Provide and outline for taking notes
4. Give lecture
5. debrief

I really value being given time to collaborate on our finished lesson plans.

The Trouble with Tea – I am growing in awareness of the important role economics plays in historical events. Our lesson study last year focused on slaves as a commodity in the triangle trade. Today’s lecture enlarged my understanding of the economic influences on the revolution. It is a perspective that needs to be brought into all discussions. For next year it would really be helpful to have a continued discussion about our goals for student writing and historical thinking. I was focused on our lesson study and forget about this year’s long term goal.

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Friday – I noticed in Mark’s lecture he started out by telling us what he thought was the significance of the lawsuits he would talk about. I think it is important to be explicit like this. It then gives the student a framework for hanging the rest of the lecture. The teacher could start the year telling the kids the significance, and then have the students identify the significance of events as the year goes on. They should then be well prepared for that end of the year writing prompt.

With regard to next year – I would like a list of questions for use with historical fiction at the beginning of the year, as I would like to start modeling reading historical fiction as a whole group activity. As I mentioned before, it would be great to have “book club” discussions with colleagues before using the book with my class. I am thinking I would like to use one novel for each big standard or time period. With regards to lesson study: I would like to do several smaller studies through out the year.

### Matt Smith

6/26 – The federalism discussion has classroom implications. I think it’s a significant course theme for 8<sup>th</sup> grade. How about a year long question: “Who has power in the United States?” This question would need to be refined to account for historical change, but it’s a good starting point for contextualizing Federalism; it makes events more understandable and fleshed out what federalism means.

6/27 – It was useful to hear how the murder mystery lesson went. I think that many of these ideas will be helpful in developing a district wide assessment. A variety of primary and secondary sources is useful. The “CSI” hook, though perhaps shifting the lesson’s goal slightly, gets students engaged (Very Key). My reference point is the TCI lesson on lost Mayan cities. Though fantastic in theory, it lacks a hook. It also explores three cities with little depth. How about examining one city with a mix of primary and secondary sources? TCI’s tendency to distill complex ideas into a few paragraphs may not be useful in this case.

6/28 – I plan to move forward pushing students to write about historical significance. At the seventh grade, there are fewer events studied so there may be fewer opportunities. I hope to ask a series of questions routinely to students. It’s also critical to define the terms “event” and “significance.” Leading students through some initial prompts (Even fill in the blanks) would help start their thinking about how to effectively explain an event’s significance.

6/29 – The presentation on presidential authority in the Civil War and Reconstruction periods was perhaps the most relevant for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade content standards. I think that Reconstruction is the most interesting subject in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade standards and I hope to convey that to students. Maybe it is critical to teach this period by using an analogy (A parent disciplining a defiant, runaway child’s; or the current situation in Iraq), but analogies should make sure to leave room for the inherent complexity of Reconstruction.

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6/30 – Legal questions simple aren't too interesting to me, so this morning wasn't terrible interesting. The question of "What is democracy?" and examining checks and balances and the powers of the three branches of government through that lens, can be useful and stimulating in the classroom.

### Reflections on the Year

How will this influence my future practice?

1. Writing prompts that push students to think about and write about historical significance. I want to refine my teaching of this and integrate it into each unit.
2. More depth and use of primary sources. This correlates to better teaching of the historical thinking standards.
3. I have a greater understanding that really good instruction in history instruction is difficult to accomplish! But, I also have additional tools to make it happen in my class.
4. Good writing prompts. Hooks that engage students. Strong questions that frame lesson units, and even the whole year. Pointing out threads that run through the curriculum makes it all more understandable.
5. Talking with others about teaching in a structured format is highly rewarding.

### Ora Clay

6/26 – I thought the format Robin chose for today's topic made the subject easier to understand. The question of how much we want the federal government interference depends on our positions on the topic. When we disagree we don't want government interference. When we want something we would like for the government to enforce their actions. Hopefully most of the time we have the same position as the federal government but that is not the case normally.

6/27/06 – This topic was interesting because I had not heard about the Mendez case. Learning about this case was great for me but more than that I think it is important to help students see the importance of the case. The textbooks will have one story but there is so much more to the story. I see teaching as going beyond the text and talking or teaching about what led to this event. Sometimes this means giving the human side of the story.

6/28/06 – The speaker (Clarence Walker) began by giving background which he did from notes. This part of the talk was necessary but not as exciting as the later section of his talk. Clarence Walker has a great sense of humor where he likes to throw in tidbits of info that sometimes makes fun of the subject.

6/29/06 – I appreciate this project because the speaker gives teachers the opportunity to go deeper into the subject we have to present to our students. Kevin's talk about Lincoln's and Johnson's actions during the Civil War and Reconstruction – We, as teachers get to think about what is happening today and at the same time, look again at the Civil War period.

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6/30/06 – I think there will always be some tension between different ethnic groups as to what a particular group wants.

Reflections – For me the teaching History project is an exciting learning experience. It has been a time to listen to historians talk about history but also relate it to things going on today. I appreciate the support of the Teaching History Grant staff. They are always helpful and always with a great attitude. It's a privilege to be a part of the project.

[Ryan Haynes](#)

1/26/05 – We just finished our first attempts at phrasing our teacher and student questions and I think I can get my students to make decisions about libel, etc as they pretend to be the Zenger jury, but I feel like it is so difficult, almost developmentally inappropriate to give them much semblance of a historical accurate viewpoint for 1735. For them to judge the case from our 2006 viewpoint thoughtfully with knowledge of constitutional issues is a lofty enough goal but to try to give them a sense of 1735 sensibilities seems very difficult.

5/18/06 –I am really excited about Saturday and also the Salem presentations this morning was excellent. My lesson study team is really great to work with – it was exciting to modify the lessons in our unit to try to create a successful activity for my class. The students are increasingly speaking about controversial issues and showing understanding of both sides.

6/26/06 – For starters I'd like to say being asked to respond free form in a blue book makes for a more thoughtful response than a generic evaluation form that we are asked to do for most professional development. Robins lecture today had strength similar to the witch trial presentation, which is the use of "lenses". We traced the changing relationships between federal, state, and local government by tracking the flow of money, and judicial history legislation. To look at an historical phenomena multiple times through different lenses like this is very exciting, and contributes somewhat, to multiple perspectives and is probably a strategy, underutilized in elementary classrooms.

6/27/06 – Caroline Winterer's presentation this morning was one of my favorites. Until she organized the info, it hadn't occurred to me the process of introducing addictive products to European markets; rum, tobacco, coffee, tea, sugar, chocolate which were all to be imported from European colonies. What begins as addictive luxury items can become integrated into an elaborate culture complete with rituals and clothing and paraphernalia until it will be seen as a necessity to a critical mass of people. Then importers who control the supply can become rich and powerful when consumers forget how to do without these products. I see this as frightening similar to the way we are at the mercy of internet service providers, cell phones, cars, etc, technologies that progress from the status of luxuries to "can't live without it" as they are integrated into polite society. I think teaching the 13 colonies in the context of global economy will be much more engaging.

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6/28/06 – Clarence Walker’s talk on Dred Scott and Robin’s summary of 1845–1860 included interesting info that I really should be informed about. Even though 5<sup>th</sup> grade standards include content through 1850, my curriculum has frequently trailed off after the Louisiana Purchase. Finding out some of the drama and compelling story lines of the pre Civil War era will help me to teach it and enjoy teaching it.

6/30/06 – The TAHG project has again this year been academically stimulating and professionally supportive. The high quality college level detail of the history lectures really make me jealous of university students – I often call my friends and sister as soon as I get home to discuss the historical concepts that I hadn’t realized the significance of before.

Pedagogically – this project allows me to prioritize US History in class, and helps me to develop methods which are more exciting and memorable than a straight forward use of textbooks as the foundation of a history program.

This year in the lesson study project we generated a series of lessons by first determining what content and historical thinking standards we wanted the students to know and be able to do then creating the lessons that would meet them where they are in language skill and historical knowledge.

### [Thea Marston](#)

11/8/05 – Today went well overall. I thought the talk this morning was very interesting. I learned a lot about effects of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment that I was unaware of before. I believe this will give more depth to my discussions with my students. I thought Daisy’s information was interesting, but it was frustrating that people were arguing about details and focusing on the problems. I think that is clearly a challenge for people to find the strengths in student writing, perhaps this is something we need to address. I think Daisy’s idea of finding strategies and sharing is valuable, but it is clear that many of us are unsure of how to teach this. Perhaps this is something else we need to consider.

12/6/05 – I think the presentation on Asian American history was good. I am glad to look at other issues in American history. Even though I took a lot of Asian American studies courses it is a good reminder to infuse more into the curriculum.

5/13/06 – I thought the structure of the day was good. The rehashing of Eric Foner’s talk brought up some interesting issues. I thought the speaker brought an interesting perspective to MLK, but I did not think his knowledge on the topic was very deep since he had difficulty answering many of the questions. In some ways it is almost better to hear an historian talk on what he or she knows better, rather than something more relevant. The rest of the day was helpful especially Daisy’s lecture.

6/21/06 – The Monday talk was interesting, and gave me ways to improve my curriculum in that area. I thought the lesson study on David Walker was interesting, my concern would be the time demanded to put together a lesson like this. But it is a good reminder

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for me to use evidence in different ways. It brings home that I need to have students question the sources more and who wrote them and how that influenced the meaning.

6/22/06 – I liked Walker’s discussion in the sense that he gave more information on the issues facing free blacks before Dread Scott. Robin’s discussion was one of the most succinct and interesting discussions for me and helped me to understand better that complex time period. The afternoon was very helpful in looking at student writing and thinking about what is important.

6/23/06 – The discussion on presidential authority was helpful, especially in giving a political view of Reconstruction, because I tend to focus on success and failure of Reconstruction. It was really helpful in emphasizing the framework of the Congress versus the President. The discussion after was helpful again. Also the discussion on next year’s topic was interesting and I appreciated that we got an opportunity to give some suggestions on lecture topics for next year.

6/24/06 – This morning’s discussion on bilingual education in desegregation was really engaging. It reminds me to discuss bilingual education in terms of desegregation and use San Francisco in the 1970’s as a case study. Again the discussions with Robin and Charles were very helpful. I think these discussions are the best addition to the institute.

One recommendation: It would be helpful if you could provide a better framework or outline for the lesson–study write up. This process was a bit confusing.

6/26/06 – The presentation on Federalism was honestly the best presentation I have heard in this grant. (Robin Einhorn) The other have been good, but Robins talk was clean, interesting and helpful in giving me a better understanding of federalism in a provocative framework. I definitely would be interested in getting copies of some of her graphs. I also appreciate the post discussion on how the talk is applicable in the classroom, this piece seems like it will be very helpful and I think you should do this throughout the year. I thought it was a bit rude how people were interrupting Ms. Einhorn during her presentation. I think questions should be kept until the end of the presentation.

Overall year: In terms of content, I have included my thoughts after the presentations. In terms of thinking skills I am definitely going to add more activities on specific historical thinking skills such as historical significance and interpretation as well as bias. It would be helpful if we continued to discuss significance and looked at some possible activities to use it in our classrooms. Overall I found the Constitution focus more interesting and applicable to my curriculum than biography from last year.

[Mark Zucker](#)

Response/Evaluation –

- Very interesting
- Permanent war – Government funds
- Policy dictated by corporations

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- Loss of power
- Sincerity of organizations
- Government to provide support of democratic ideals
- Conservation
- Minimum standards for health and labor
- Fear drives all in this crumbling empire

Response/Evaluation – Great! Really opened my eyes to how globally linked the world already was back then, and how people developed into the consumer religion, group identity, class marker that buying a product has become. I need to give my students more experience with primary documents, and I need to develop better scaffolds so they will get the context.

- Content/Purpose
- Significance of the documents

Response/Evaluation – Increased enfranchisement of poor whites.

- **Institutionization of racism**
- **Fear of “them taking over” crucial to developing war mentality**
- **How were events “spun” to rally troops behind “Fighting words” by those whose economic interests were truly at stake!**
- **How much did religious nationalism play into North?**
- **Religious racism play into South?**
- **Dred Scott confirmed northerners fears of southern slavery conspiracy, along with other 1850 events.**

Response/Evaluation – Need more sentence frames to target historical thinking.

- Place, time, context
- Before and after
- Represented, stood for, symbol
- Changed, affected
- Past, future
- Inspired, helped, struggled

Final Reflections – Being a learner has stimulated me tremendously as a teacher. The lectures and discussions have been stellar. Lesson study (as practiced by my group) has been the most profound professional collaboration I’ve ever been involved with. It’s forced me to be a better listener and a better teacher. My group was fantastic! I have realized that I need to let the historical thinking standards play a larger role in my curriculum planning. I’ve always focused on deep, meaningful content, but I’ve learned it’s even more important to train students to use the language necessary to dissect and digest and integrate the content. This has been a great few years basking in the light cast by this fabulous history project, even through these dark times.

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Christina Villarreal

I was able to learn about the “lesson study” that I will be participating in. Other than that, I am still feeling incredible overwhelmed as this is my first year of teaching. I feel excited about the project and am pleased with what I experienced today.

11/8 – Robin Einhorn was the stand out today. I really enjoyed her lecture and teaching style. Professors like her make me love to learn. I also really enjoyed learning from my colleagues. I was able to get a list of ideas from veterans of the project. I think that our talk regarding student work felt a bit scattered and stunted. Perhaps next time, just have small focus groups rather than the whole? I appreciated being able to meet my lesson study group. (Christina thought it would enhance the morale of the whole group if they all get together for drinks or a dinner in order to socialize outside of structured meetings)

12/6 – I was very pleased with today’s presentation by Dr. Martin. I am definitely going to use notes from his lecture in my lessons with my students. I truly enjoyed his lecture and it DEFINITELY helped prepare me for our lesson study project topic, David Walker.

5/23 – Today’s workshop as all the others was informative. Dr Johnston’s presentation reminded me of the importance of incorporating the study of class into our study of history. I would have enjoyed a more meaningful long and structured debriefing of Saturday’s conference. It was still fresh on people’s minds and I think people were still excited and ready to talk about it. Matt Russell presentation was especially thought–provoking and informative. I think it helped to get teachers thinking about Oakland in relation to other school districts.

6/26 – I really enjoyed hearing Professor Einhorn speak again. She helps to make the information incredible accessible with her upbeat, energetic delivery. Not only did I learn a lot more about Federalism but I really learned a lot about the way I approached any topic in our standards. I was reminded about the idea of defining historical terms within their contexts – something huge for our kids. I additionally appreciated the time allotted for lesson study wrap up and conclusions.

6/27 – I had studied the Mendez case before in a similar context and was anxious to relearn the material through the lens of a teacher. I enjoyed the group discussions that followed as opposed to our usual table discussions. I appreciated the feedback on our lesson study from the teachers. I discussed how much we liked the graphic organizers about summarizing the speaker’s arguments and evidence.

6/28 – It got me to really consider the idea of citizenship and how it applied to different people living in American during this time. I also got more ideas on how to teach about Dred Scott. As always Robin’s talk was amazing. She had an excellent story that made all the connections and it was very fun and interesting to hear.

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Mel Stenger

Monday – Robin Einhorn – Really liked her presentation. I found it very stimulating and insightful. Enjoyed working with my teacher’s group, articulating our lesson study.

6/26 – I found Caroline’s presentation on the Trouble with Tea to be very thoughtful, informative, and intriguing. Using photos of tea accoutrements and referring to historical events she painted a complex but unifying picture of the cultural shift. Fascinating to hear how central tea was to the lifestyle of the colonial people, how it was a result of globalization of the economics by England, and how when its availability was threatened the early Americans were sparked towards revolution. I also came to think that many traits of the American Profile had their beginnings even before our county was born: belief in upward mobility, and frustration and resentment when that belief is threatened; seeing ourselves as equal to all others, claiming a right to participate in the consumer culture. Yet I’m left with the question: Where has our backbone gone? When these same issues arise today most Americans seek immediate gratification in our TV’s computers, and cell phones.

I found myself nearly continually comparing the build up toward the Civil War and the Dred Scott decision to our current issue of gay marriage and states rights.

6/29 – Jennifer Spear was obviously an expert on her topic, but she wasn’t engaging as some others, for some reason. I got the impression that she felt that we and our students are operating under her three myths. I believe most teachers don’t hold these beliefs so the problem isn’t one of convincing us that these myths are wrong but that we need information, sources, and materials with which to teach the topic of Indian history.

6/30 – I found this week to be enriching and disturbing. (Disturbing in a good way.) Each of the speakers presented well – planned presentations on their topics and excited me enough to take it beyond our classroom into my personal life.

Yesterday in our discussion with the grant evaluator I was a bit frustrated when a couple of the questions asked about the usefulness of the speakers and materials. I spoke up that I thought this week was valuable precisely because it wasn’t “useful”. For years I have found teacher professional development to be a sharing of clever teaching tricks. My bag of tricks became plenty full years ago. I’ve been hungry for the type of professional development that respects me as a professional. The presenters this week gave information and inspiration for their topics; how that translates into practice will depend on many factors but I know that it will influence me because it has changed the way I view the topics presented and the way I view my teaching.

I took a walk last evening with a good friend. As he asked me about current happenings in my life I found myself returning to my week here at Berkeley. Finally he caught on and began asking me about each day and its speakers. I was surprised at how much I remembered of their presentations, how excited I was as I recounted them, and how my mind had begun processing the information for implications for myself as a citizen and a teacher. My biggest pedagogical renewal was around the importance of depth over breadth. My experience this week has confirmed the effect of depth when

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considering a topic to be able to spark me into new ways of thinking, so I presume it will do the same thing to my students. My experience with lesson study renewed for me the value of collaboration with my colleagues; I watched as insights developed and synthesized precisely because of time spent together.

I am going to be a principal this coming school year. I wonder if I will be able to provide my staff with similar opportunities to help them develop as professionals. To give them time and information to delve more deeply into their craft. At a time when district staff development seems to be about “clever teaching projects, using the standards, data reporting and interpretation it’s extremely important to help teachers develop their minds so that their teaching will develop the minds of their students, not merely their repertoire of skills. Our time together was a chance to investigate larger questions about what we teach and why. The time we spent went to the very heart of our profession, and so it is professional development at its deepest level. Although the specific results are difficult to trace and pin down the experience added to who we are as teachers, thus the effects are varied, widespread, deeper, and more profound. As I move into my new position I am anxious that I can translate my years of experience with Shelly into my new practice. The type of professionally development has lead to my transformation as a teacher, and it is my hope that I incorporate this style into my school staff development. I am looking forward to the transformation of my staff and school.

### Shannon Carey

10/18/05 – I loved this session! I thought that Caroline Cox was fabulous, and the lesson study was well-chosen. Thank you for bringing the project into being, and I look forward to more interesting speakers and historians.

11/8/05 – Another great day. I appreciate many aspects of the program so far.

12/6/05 – Waldo Martins lecture was totally fascinating, and these lectures are making me want to go to history grad school.

6/27/06 – Robin Einhorn was a wonderfully compelling speaker, and did not talk down to us. David Arriola was also wonderful.

Thoughts for next year.

We definitely need to come back to the issue of significance, and hold ourselves accountable to coming back to it explicitly throughout the year. Looking through the student work packet made me think about the direction of disconnected facts with little significance for making meaning in ones life. Only the 11<sup>th</sup> grader had a sense of why one might want to study history – how can we make sure that 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders understand the significance of what were studying, and how can we make sure we actually teach what is actually significant?

6/30/06 – What have I learned from the project? What will I take away from this? I learned more than I ever have about the Constitution and the historical contexts of

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Constitutional struggles. I learned that the study of the Constitution can be and should be incredibly vibrant, and that it taps into some very central and relevant themes of US history for 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

I cannot actually say that I learned a great deal about pedagogy, and I blame myself. I was somewhat frustrated in my lesson study group, and therefore did not throw myself into it as I might have had there been exciting pedagogical ideas surfacing and therefore cannot point to any key learning in pedagogy. This is where I personally would like to focus next year. There is no strategy of fascinating, relevant, and rigorous units of study out there for US history, but how to teach theory that all learners are engaged and achieving at grade level, remains elusive to me. I see an inevitable weakness in lesson study as being imprisoned with a group of teachers who may not necessarily be innovating and learning. This is not a weakness of the project; rather, it's a common fact of human interaction. I do not think that our lesson study really helped me to understand how students learn history. I think we could have guaranteed that this happened if I had really thought out the whole lesson study. As a new participant to lesson study, I really needed more of an overview of the purpose and practices of lesson study.

### Will Wong

12/6/05 – The gap in my knowledge of Alien Land Laws was filled in considerable in Mark Brilliant lecture. I appreciated the framing of specific perceptions towards Asiatic categories of naturalization. What may extend our understanding would perhaps focus on issues of linking today's fears and those historical fears or threats.

5/23/06 – The complexity of “class” as a category of social and historical analysis has always been fascinating and tough. Bill Bigelow's curriculum (Rethinking schools, etc) had some interesting modules on what his group called “classism” teaching. How to define class? Why is it still useful? What would historians suffer if they emitted such attempts of analysis? Social position and its relations to ideology seemed to be a continual basis for debate and analysis. Dr Johnston's grappling with “middle – class bashing” (as an analytical bashing) posed intriguing dilemmas.

Suggestions: More discussions and teaching examples of class analysis would be very welcomed. (Like rethinking school materials, etc) (Especially connecting such “methodological” question to debates within the history teaching scholar between “left”, and “far—right radicals”, and “right” and “far right radicals”

6/26 – Points were drawn fairly clearly, but the relationship could have been discussed with more thought – provoking examples.

6/27 – The Mendez case was very intriguing. Connection from specific “local” case to the large “civil rights” movement was well drawn out – particularly to Brown versus Board. Why the Mendez case remains largely unknown is itself a lesson topic. In exploring the experience of Latino's, a major gap in our textbooks is addressed. I appreciated the speaker's own path of inquiry. His description of why he became

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fascinated with the Mendez case added a very passionate perception to the lecture. Documentary was relevant and useful.

6/28 – The Dred Scott decision was framed as a culmination point of a process. The discussions added considerably to analyzing how the case fit into the process.

6/29 – An important stress pointed and Lincoln’s suspension of habeas and other acts – as intended to be a temporary measure. This gave me an approach to link to Bush’s claim today for presidential authority. For students this would help decipher the constitutional rules and their relevance for protection of individual rights.

6/30 – The debate between equality and “equity” (meeting the needs of individuals) seemed to be at the heart of various inequality issues. This requires a much nuanced approach to social justice. For students this would necessarily stretch their conception of legal and moral fairness.

### Harry Pasternak

(Robin Einhorn “What is Federalism?” Date: June 26, 2006) 14th amendment analysis of the appropriation of the 14th Amendment due process clause for the benefit of corporations and private property rights under “substantive due process” impels me to review the development of 14th Amendment doctrine in Lawrence Tribes book on the Constitution. Our lesson study group wants to examine 14th Amendment problems – of which Einhorn– but we need a more comprehensive view or general theory of 14th Amendment court interpretations and developments to determine what ought to be the focus of our study. As on previous occasions Einhorn’s passion and brilliance on Constitutional issues was the highlight of the day.

On a personal note I should tell you that I’m pleased that I can be a part of the high school’s lesson study team’s effort to examine the Constitution and provide both teachers and students with more bang in my pedagogy on the development. Finally I always enjoy Postel’s historical observations and tips for further reading.

12/6/05 – Attended Mark Brilliant’s analysis of the effect on Asians if Alien Land Laws and other insidious laws and acts to restrict Japanese, and Chinese non-citizens from land acquisition in California. Brilliant supplies useful information on government and land policy between 1860 and 1940 – with case law – that fills in critical gaps in my knowledge of the laws that attenuated their rights, especially after the Chinese Exclusion Law of 84.

5/23/06 – This was a great day. The review of Eric Froner helped me understand him or locate him properly as to historical thought and place. Charles Postel, division of Froner historical thinking from his role as a private citizen was especially useful here.

Now Johnston’s explorations and probes into middle class radicals was fascinating. Why? Because it’s totally outside my political notions of how to conceive or conceptualize political or historical movements. And it’s directly challenges some of my long held beliefs about political change.

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Finally I need to study the data more closely to make any meaningful statement about the programs data. But I'm pleased that my colleagues focus on the standards that we have covered.

P.S. Daisy's presentation was great. I try to do some of her suggestions but don't have the language or clear framework that she presents. On the other hand my California studies class uses no text and so is interpretive biased balanced factual, literacy and much more variety of materials and calls for questioning, inquiring and evaluating the material by everyone in the classroom.

### Michael Jackson

11/8/05 – The World we live by is a great book to add to my collection. This mornings sharing was fun. It's a good idea to mix groups up and hear about other schools. Could we have time to share problems and solutions related to our designated tables?

Daisy Martin will help us improve student writing on the five historical events and explain one event in detail. I like exploring how contexts, parameters, and criteria change what we say and what we choose to express.

12/6/05 – Mark is Brilliant. This is just the kind of info we need to be better teachers. It's just not in the texts, the pure racism of it is so important to acknowledge.

Overall comments – Great workshop, this improves my knowledge, which improves my confidence, which improves my subject enthusiasm, which makes me a better storyteller – which makes a big impact on my students and their study of history. I love the books we get. I love the access to scholars. I love the time to think deeply. I love the time to work with smart people. Why not a speaker on how community control has influenced social movements, court cases, and domestic policy.

### Tim Bremner

From what I was able to get I appreciated the focus on the evolution and change of the meaning of the Constitution. Also, identifying how money and ultimately greed played such an influential role. I would have liked to see a little more of a social movement and justice perspective in the evolution interpretation and implementation or lack there of Constitutional principals. What are current and historical examples that highlight inequity in US History and people's movements to address it. I appreciated the opportunity to speak with other teachers about lesson study. I also liked the focus on writing strategies and criteria and how to build those in. I like coming back to reading, writing and thinking about tips strategies and approaches. A focus on skills is always helpful. I would like to see us discuss more of how to teach with the students we have, i.e. kids of color inner city, marginalized Oakland students, many of whom have not had positive experiences in education. How to reinvest/commit? How can history help this? How can this process be a reflection on us as educators in a process with our students coming from a variety of backgrounds and experiences? The conversation in our group is great; I look forward to fine work.

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12/6/05 – I appreciated looking at immigration laws through history. It was interesting to see how the law is manipulated to justify racist ends and keep ultimately white groups in power. The replacement of different non-whites groups depending on labor needs or who the US happens to be at war with was also good.

I like the depth at which the information is presented. It is thought provoking, but how will the content translate into the classroom. I understand this is our task as teachers; however, it would be helpful if part of the conversation / presentation is about how to support students to access the information, buy in and find connections to their lives.

### Britt Badgley

6/26/06 – Robin Einhorn – I love the way she lectures – engaging, funny – I lost her a few times and at other times really wanted clarification. I wonder if an outline might have helped her in scaffolding so that we could have anticipated the build up and her purpose/point. I still wonder how I can deconstruct simplify this for my low performing students (which are most of my students) and at the same time engage them.

6/27/06 – I was extremely impressed and humbled by the story of Medez. The story of the Medez family and their willingness to fight for access to education was entirely new to me and very valuable – as an educator. I thought the David Walker lesson was amazing. “Jig sawing” with kids not only engages kids, but allows for critical thinking and exploration.

6/30/06 – I am glad that we finished the week looking at the Chinese American cases in the 1970’s because it furthered the expansion of how we look at “minority” groups and the complexity involved. I am so used to the traditional debates around equity and equality – it was interesting to see it turned on its head.

### Reflections of the year

I did not get out of the grant this year as much as I did last year. I found my lessons study did not connect well with the theme of the Constitution – it did not inform me of how better to teach the constitution. Most presentations were excellent – especially Clarence Walker – wonderful speaker and historian. I also enjoyed earlier presentations on Mexican Americans. Other than that, I would like to see more focus and direction next year as to theme and how we connect the content of our lessons to that theme.

### Carrie Oretsky

6/26 – I must say this lesson study on Peter Zenger which seemed a lot of energy on such an uninteresting topic, has become quite exciting... almost brilliant. We are even talking about starting the year with this lesson – exploring ideas of democratic society and freedom of expression, as an introductory umbrella lesson... oh well, maybe not... Robin’s lectures explanations, points of view are really fun. I learn so much from these presentations. I feel honored – and smarter.

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6/27 – Carolyn’s talk was enlightening. These historians are really smart. The idea of a material culture... buying tea goodies the ritual of tea...(I love this ritual – you should see my teapots, cups, assortment of stuff... I am excited about the possibilities for next years study:

- Some kind of mystery: CSI Style
- Historical fiction – Finding evidence
- Collecting primary sources

I love the idea of messy learning – giving students the experience of playing with data.

6/28 – I am anxious to look at ways of actually teaching historical significance – time lines, charts of “so what” on – going... I know I need many opportunities to engage with new thinking to own it – Adding to qualities. Student voice. Academic language. It is amazing to me how mixed up kids can actually get using ideas, facts, events... some of the “stuff” they wrote about in the end of the year essays had to have been made up.

6/30 – I continue to be amazed at this process – the respectful attitude towards teachers, as learners, and educators, from parking passes to time for reflection and discussion. I love having these highly informed and intelligent lecturers expanding my view point and understanding, access to support. Shelley, Stan, Donna, and Phyllis always listening, moving us forward, “getting it”. I just feel so supported, energized, creative engaged, informed confused, questioning. Next year I hope to:

- Work on aspects of student writing – expository text.
- Internet with primary sources – documents, visuals.
- Historical thinking.
- What is significant – charts.
- Academic language.

I am excited by the idea of using historical fiction as a focus – picture books, short stories, poems, and novels. This summer I am hoping to research some titles – bookstores, booksellers, book talks, and reading.

### Jean Rusting

10/18/05 – I was surprised at the number of people – it seemed like this was a much larger group, and certainly many new faces. I like Cox; her presentations are always clear and direct. I was a bit confused about not going back to the original interpretation. I like #3 Walker for the lesson study unit.

11/8/05 – I love the energy that Robin Einhorn brings to her lectures and found the explanations of what brought about certain amendments fascinating. I certainly will remember 13–14–15 in a different way. Robin’s points of “History of race” – what didn’t happen, and “History of Class” – What did happen are very useful tags. The new book we received The Words We Live By is an excellent resource and in thumbing through it, lo and behold on page 216 substantive due process, Lochner and Carolene jumped right out

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at me. Robin is most enjoyable but I couldn't take notes fast enough – what a help this book is going to be! Daisy Martin's approach on student writing was a bit confusing. I was happy to get the three samples of 8<sup>th</sup> grade and 11<sup>th</sup> grade but could not always hear comments made around the room. I didn't like having to rush through the analysis because I agree with the man who spoke about teaching students to write essays first. My students need to do practice essays. Thank you for pulling this together.

12/7/05 – I found Waldo Martin both interesting and useful. My own research on David Walker left me feeling rather uncertain about the best way to do this study and Waldo's emphasis on including the black women abolitionist voices – and proving us with accessible information (Hine's Work) is truly quite helpful. Also the clarifying point of seeking to understand the simmering rage and the focus of black patriots on the Declaration of Independence – all this makes me feel this is coming together for me.

1/24/06 – This was a very useful gathering. The burning question for me – in fact I asked Marty on the way over – just how I make the transition from the Constitution to David Walker. The connections – the “links” do not spring readily to mind. We talked about the various paths people take to change things, and the strategies employed by different abolitionists and we talked about the form protests take. Marty and I plan to meet again on Monday to continue our brainstorming.

### Tim Liebler

10/18/05 – I enjoyed the kickoff by Caroline Cox. Engaging my students in the intricacies of the constitution currently eludes me – so I am looking forward to the whole year of lectures.

12/6/05 – I liked the informal 8<sup>th</sup> grade only format and the lecture by Waldo Martin. The content from this discussion will come in handy during the Absolution, Slavery, Civil War units. Waldo gave some good ideas on topics for discussion. I enjoyed the meeting.

5/23/06 – Sorry I missed Eric Froner lecture on Saturday. The discussion led by Charles was very interesting. Freedom in USA made me think of the conflict between individual rights and groups rights. Historically individual rights seemed to be the focus. As inequality of various groups became commonly acknowledged groups rights began to take its place.

Johnson's talk on the radical middle class seemed a little weak. As was pointed out, I don't see the connection between the middle class and radicalism. It seems unrelated. I was interested in the topic and title – maybe he can refine the topic and present again in the future.

### Yumi Matsui

11/8/05 – I really am looking forward to the lesson study. I wish we had more time to meet. Our group has six people – seems a little too big to coordinate. I'm having a bit of

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difficulty again in doing the lesson since my school teaches thematically, I'm never can be on the same page. I hope I can teach it, I feel like I'm bringing a bit of the overall purpose of the group.

Presentation was overall very insightful and interesting. This topic was very pertinent to my class and I will be able to use it next year. I have already covered this time period. The lesson study is going very well. Our first meeting was very productive and I'm excited about our topic.

5/23/06 – I enjoyed Dr. Johnston talk today. The continuing discussion on freedom and liberty makes me think a lot about my curriculum. I've never really thought about incorporating class into my curriculum but it makes sense. It is another lens to study history and I know the students can relate. I believe these issues surrounding class can bridge many gaps and interconnect many of my students where they are often divided through race. It is something very poignant and I will think of it when teaching American history next year.

[Betty Olson-Jones](#)

Dear Shelly, Phyllis, and Stan. Another full and invigorating day – Caroline Winterer was an excellent speaker– witty, funny, extremely knowledgeable– I wasn't very familiar with John Peter Zenger – Learned a lot! Daisy was excellent, as usual. My brain is fried right now.

10/18/05 – Excellent presentation by Caroline Cox– Thanks.

12/8/05 – We had a very stimulating discussion about the lesson study – we plan to do a simulation with the kids first, to prepare them for reading about the Zenger trail.

5/17/06 – Thanks for another excellent brain stretching day. Charles Postel's talk on Salem Witch Trials, and Daisy's presentation, made me wish we had more weeks in this year. And it was exciting to hear the three groups who'll be presenting – it shows what teachers can do when given the support, time and opportunity – which you provide so gracefully. Thank you!

[Jack Herman](#)

11/8/05 –Robin Einhorn was great as always. I believe it would have been more helpful for the new teachers if we had a full exposure to what lesson study is–it's history, what we have done well and what would or should have been done better. We held more of a spelling out of what lesson study ideally should look like – what should you be looking for in a topic, and driving questions.

12/6 – Brilliant was his usual Brilliant self.

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5/23/06 – Generally a very informative day and enjoyable. Postel’s part in looking at Froner talk helped me formalize what Froner was saying and the input from other teachers really had me look at the ideas from a different view. Robert Johnston views and presentation was informative, but I really didn’t get his concept of using classes. Teacher input and questions were great.

I really got something from talking the scholastics we are hearing here and using it in my classroom. I’m going to use the “Six ideas for opening up textbooks”. Matt’s presentation really left me cold. I got nothing from it.

### Robert Taylor

12/8/05 – A great session. Events that lead up to the Constitution are important especially how they relate to the way we live today. Words are powerful when used correctly and can bring great change.

1/26/06 – The new handouts and lesson study suggestions, web site info will really segway the Zenger topic into my classroom discussions. I feel my students will need more pre-Zenger information to help clarify what the importance of freedom of the press is and how it relates to them now.

I’m sorry I missed the Salem Witch craft speaker (My sub didn’t show up till 10:30) Being from Massachusetts, I’ve always been interested.

I’m glad I had the chance to get together with my Zenger group to bone up on our upcoming Saturday conference. As far as Zenger, he’s still alive and well in my classroom especially when individual freedoms are discussed. He was a great lead-in to U.S. History chapters in Open Court concerning the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

### Ruben Rodriguez

The discussion about how the meaning of freedom changes through history was interesting. Many teachers voiced ideas that helped me understand this illusive concept better. The meaning of freedom changed during the Civil War and that same concept during the Reconstruction was invested with a different understanding.

The great presentation about the middle class never seemed that special to me. Perhaps it was too deep.

Overall, I enjoyed the conference. Working with other teachers especially those at OHS was a great plus. Thanks for the great opportunity.

### Steven Moreno

Today was an enjoyable day. It was good to see everyone again. The speaker, Robert Johnston was good. However, I do not really see how I can connect his

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information to my classroom. He did talk about Martin Luther King Jr. but the fact that he grew up middle class doesn't really related to what he did, at least in a way that can further students understanding in regards to the standards.

I really enjoyed Daisy's work. She gave us ideas and documents that we can actually use in class. The Townsend and Language documents were great. I wish I had these when I was teaching the Depression.

I also liked looking at the CST to see how what I teach compares to the test. It helps me understand some of the topics and ideas I may need to emphasize more.

### Susan Brooks

6/26/06 – As usual I find the morning portion of these days the most useful! The lectures and follow up are thought provoking and enlightening. The afternoon seems a bit too long. I am not sure the extended day lends itself to group work and lesson study.

6/30/06 – Content. I have benefited greatly from this weeks, and this past years lecture series. Not only have I gained significantly deeper understanding of American History, but I have re—ignited my own curiosity. Beyond facts and figures I am more able to see the complexities of our three branches of governmental system and how the interaction between them has influenced or caused change. I actually would prefer to spend the days discussing the lectures. I have had a difficult time transitioning to lesson study, while my mind was processing the lecture.

LessonStudy – Problem. Teaching writing – we need more support to do this if we use writing as a measure of success. We need to move through it differently. Perhaps we could do it earlier in the year – then refine it, and finally, using some strategies teach additional lesson.

### Sylvia Mollard

About History – Highly subject to interpretation. One must be wary of social circumstances and how subjective recorded history can be.

Pedagogy – Kids should be provided with clear timelines, models of writing and a set of guidelines within which they may interpret and discuss historical events and their significances.

### Erika Strand

Dear Stan and Shelley. I've really enjoyed the TAHG program over the past two years. I look forward to learning something new and fascinating, every time I see you guys. The speakers today, Daisy and Charles were excellent as always. Thank you for your commitment to providing fantastic professional development in Oakland.

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[Marty Steiger](#)

I am so impressed with Robin Einhorn's growth over these past years – She's become a very interesting and fascinating lecturer.

Chris Arriola – He is a real hero to me. He works tirelessly to bring the light of truth out. The details are fascinating. Seeing how ordinary people affect history is fascinating.

[Akilah Thomas–Byrd](#)

Interesting perspectives given in regards to the Salem Witch trials. Since I missed most of the year it was good to hear about the different group's lesson studies. I hope to get a copy of the group's handouts from today for my own collection.

I know that I keep asking this, but can we purchase the "Intro the West" DVD on VHS? It goes with our standards and is sold at Best Buy.

[Helen Lim](#)

This program has provided me the chance to take a closer look at history lesson planning. My lesson study got together planned a series of lessons around a historical topic – freedom of speech versus personal freedom. From these lessons students were trained to apply what they have learned and apply it to other subject areas. They developed their argument in a persuasive writing and learned to support a topic with substantiation versus just their opinion. They were later able to identify counter arguments to defend their opinion. It is a good chance for me to appreciate students learning skills levels and their hard work.

[John Kittredge](#)

I thought today was great. I thought the mix of learning discussion analysis, and practical advice was engaging. As always there was not enough time to discuss, but that is normal. As projects like this go, this has been much more effective than many I've been involved in.

[Mary Graham](#)

12/6/05 I enjoy speakers like Ellsberg who is more "involved" and contemporary. I would love to hear from someone who could lecture on current politics.

Text book adoption 5/23/06 – Look forward to Eric Foner's talk on DVD. Robert Johnston's Radical Middle class was very interesting. Meaning of freedom change. I learned a lot from historians and fellow teachers. Opening up textbook – great ideas.

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Joyce Black Carson

10/18/05 – Great lecture – just what is going on in the classroom today. Enjoyed being able to take back this information for my class. She raised questions for me to ponder about the Constitution.

Stephanie Kingdon

Thank you for your hard work. The work with the grant this year has been professionally and personally satisfying. I have enjoyed meeting other history teachers. I am the only person in the department at Cole that has been given the opportunity to collaborate. I also enjoyed increasing my own historical knowledge. I look forward to next year.

Unknown teacher (No name on note)

Caroline Winter was fantastic! After listening to her lecture, I was surprised to find out how unimportant the Zenger Trial was. I've always taught this as a cornerstone of the first amendment and freedom of speech. I always learn something when I attend.