

**Witness for Freedom and the Teaching of History:
Handbook for Professional Development**

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Design of the Amherst Program	2
The Academic Program	3
Teaching By Example	6
Dividing the Work	7
Recruiting and Selecting the Participants	8
Evaluation/Impact	10
Budget	13
From Institute to Collaborative	17
Staff and Participant List	19
Appendix A: Witness for Freedom Syllabus	20
Appendix B: Witness for Freedom. A Selected Bibliography	26
Appendix C: Teaching Activities	33
Appendix D: Recruiting/Publicity	38
Appendix E: Evaluation Forms	39

Witness for Freedom and the Teaching of History: Handbook for Professional Development

Introduction

This handbook is intended to provide the information needed to offer a successful professional development program for middle and high school social studies/history teachers. It is based on a two-week summer institute for teachers and librarians offered at Amherst College in 1996, funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), with additional support from the Nan and Matilda Heydt Fund through the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. Using the volume *Witness for Freedom* (ed. C. Peter Ripley, University of North Carolina Press, 1993) as the core text, the two-week program focused on the role of African Americans in the abolitionist movement as well as the experience of emancipation in the Civil War. The institute explored a variety of ways to use primary documents in the classroom.

The handbook has two distinct yet related goals. The first is to provide the specific information needed to duplicate, in whole or in part, our program on black abolitionism; the second, to provide basic guidelines for establishing the framework for an on-going history collaborative. We have intentionally kept this document brief so as not to overwhelm the novice with unnecessary details or the experienced program director with information he/she already knows. From experience, we have learned that collaboratives need to be tailored to meet the needs of the teachers and that these vary from place to place.

Design of the Amherst Program

The Five College/Public School Partnership and the History Teaching Alliance, coordinators of this project, selected a topic and employed teaching strategies that would:

- provide teachers with a solid understanding of the experience of African Americans in the nineteenth century and additional historical context that would allow them to use primary documents effectively in their own teaching;
- provide opportunities to work with the documents through close reading and discussion of *Witness for Freedom*, *Free At Last*, the slave narratives of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs, and supplementary texts;
- prepare participants to teach their students how to place the documents in historical context, raise questions that illuminate the meaning and significance of the materials, identify common ground as well as conflicts between black and white abolitionists, evaluate secondary accounts in light of these primary sources, and draw conclusions based on the evidence provided in this collection;

- encourage and document the teachers' classroom plans to use the texts with their own students; and
- establish the basis for a long-term school/college collaboration in western Massachusetts, having this group of teachers and librarians at its core.

We wanted the teachers and librarians to have the opportunity to be practicing historians, to experience the satisfaction of learning for its own sake, and to hone their critical thinking skills. These goals relate directly to an underlying premise that the best teachers are those who understand and practice their discipline.

We also recognized that our participants were professional educators and, therefore, needed concrete plans for adapting what they were learning into successful teaching strategies. In short, we tried to provide teachers and librarians with opportunities for learning history *and* developing ways to teach what they learned to their own students. Both elements were important to the success of the program.

The Academic Program

We chose our topic and designed our two-week program to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills they would need to meet curriculum requirements in a wide range of schools.

The history of slavery, abolition, the Civil War, emancipation, and Reconstruction continue to be central topics in teaching nineteenth-century American history and literature. As a result of policy decisions by state and local officials in recent years, the treatment of these topics has expanded beyond the traditional approach, which had focused primarily on the leaders of reform movements, political parties, and military campaigns.

- Current guidelines call for teachers and students to explore grass root efforts to effect change, examine the sources of political support and the implications of political decisions on the governed, and consider the experiences of those on the home front as well as the role of soldiers who served in the military.
- Newer textbooks attempt to accommodate this more inclusive approach to history, stressing social process as well as public elites; however, many of the groups who made significant contributions are still marginalized, literally, in these books. The need for good supplementary materials to meet curricular demands is evident.

- Current reforms also emphasize historical thinking skills, including analysis and interpretation of primary documents. Increasingly, state assessment tests and college entrance examinations ask students to analyze and discuss primary documents.

We designed our project to give teachers, many of whom were educated when political and military history were the norm, the breadth and depth of understanding to integrate the documents relating to black abolitionism in their examination of nineteenth-century history – not merely as an exercise in working with primary materials but with an appreciation of their historical importance and a substantial knowledge of their context and meaning.

The central theme, the main idea around which we selected texts, films, and related activities, was the fact that African Americans were themselves agents for change. They assumed positions of leadership in the abolitionist movement, supported emancipation by raising funds and joining the ranks of the union army, and demonstrated their worth while demanding social, economic, and political equality.

Witness for Freedom was the perfect vehicle for achieving our goals. This collection of documents, drawn from the five-volume set of *Black Abolitionist Papers*, is a rich resource for learning about the role of African Americans in the nineteenth-century abolitionist movement. The documents trace the evolution of black participation in the abolitionist movement and acknowledge the differences among black leaders. They also recognize grass root efforts to bring about emancipation and describe the role of women in the movement.

We added to the reading list two important slave narratives from the period: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, written by Harriet Jacobs. Both of these are readily available and commonly - though not universally - used in both English and history classes. They served as good starting points for the institute, in large part, because the teachers were comfortable discussing familiar texts and appreciated learning historical background that would enable them to make better use of these works in their classrooms.

We also assigned Ira Berlin's *Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War*. The primary sources in this collection pick up on the central themes in *Witness for Freedom*, reinforcing the point that blacks were actively engaged in the movements to abolish slavery and insure equal rights for African Americans. The documents in this volume - a wide range of materials including letters, government reports, and official transcripts - have been selected for use in the classroom; they vary in length as well as degree of difficulty but, for the most part, are readily accessible to students at both the middle and high school levels.

For background, we assigned James B. Stewart's general history of the abolitionist movement, *Holy Warriors*, and James Horton's *Free People of Color: Inside the African American Community*. The supplementary readings provided useful comparisons and valuable

content. Throughout the program, we added materials - poems, maps, film reviews, statistics, and articles - relating to the topics under discussion. A complete syllabus is included in Appendix A. A supplementary bibliography appears in Appendix B.

The institute focused on these assigned texts; however, it was not limited to reading and discussion. For example, Jim and Lois Horton, social historian and historical sociologist respectively, gave an excellent talk on how to use primary documents in the classroom. Relying on a variety of local records, all of which are available to teachers, they framed the questions needed to turn musty pages into rich resources for learning about individuals, neighborhoods, institutions, and the community.

The field trip to Boston gave teachers a great deal of information about the politics of historic monuments and preservation as well as new ideas for enriching field trips taken with their own classes. The day began with a lecture by Thomas Brown on the political maneuvering behind the monument on the Boston Common honoring Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts Regiment. Brown, who has just completed a book on the monument, is a wonderful story teller but, more to the point, a first-rate historian. His detailed description of the thirty-year battle over who was being honored, who would pay, who would choose the artist, who was chosen as artist, how the various patrons would be represented, and, ultimately, what the monument would look like made very clear that history extends beyond a single event to include the broader question of how that event is understood by various groups within the community. During the afternoon, we took a National Park Service tour of the Black Freedom Trail, on Beacon Hill, and visited Tremont Temple, where New England abolitionists gathered on the eve of emancipation.

We scheduled two sessions at the Amherst College library. The first of these introduced participants to computer-based research and provided short-cuts to help them access museum exhibits, archives, and other resources available on the World Wide Web. The second, an afternoon in the archives, was even more successful. (In retrospect, we wished we had scheduled this earlier in the institute so that teachers could have gone back to the archives to explore further.) The archivist brought out, among other things, abolitionist tracts, collections of private correspondence, and nineteenth-century newspapers. The teachers' response made clear that handling the "real thing" is very different from reading a primary document in an edited collection, seeing a facsimile, or pulling an item up on the computer screen. The original has a life of its own, an integrity, that carries meaning far beyond the words on the page. That same afternoon, we reserved a study room in the library for the teachers to thumb through the WPA slave narratives and sample the different strategies used in collecting those oral histories. That activity was also enormously worthwhile.

During the course of the institute, we showed several films. The most useful to the teachers were those to which they had ready access: a PBS documentary on Frederick Douglass, *When the Lion Wrote History*; episodes 3 and 9 from *The Civil War*; and a documentary on the Massachusetts 54th from *The American Experience*. For the most part,

we focused discussion of a film on the question of how it could be used most effectively in the classroom; however, we occasionally criticized a film for its historical accuracy, use of sources, and arguments.

Although the program explored aspects of American history generally overlooked or given cursory treatment in history textbooks, our intent was not to replace or to challenge the traditional narrative. Rather - and this was a point that we made several times during the institute - we wanted to broaden and deepen the teachers' understanding of the abolitionist movement by adding an important chapter to the story.

Teaching By Example

Once we had determined *what* we were going to teach, we turned to the question of *how* we were going to teach it. Fortunately, the three directors (David Blight, Associate Professor of History and Black Studies at Amherst College and the lead scholar for the program; Christine Compston, director of the History Teaching Alliance; Mary Alice Wilson, Coordinator of the Five College/Public School Partnership) agreed that classroom presentations and teaching approaches were as important as the material we had to share. Indeed, the Partnership had years of experience that teachers participating in summer institutes use the pedagogy of the institute as much as, if not more than, the content.

Our first goal was to match the variety of teaching materials already described with a variety of appropriate teaching methods. For example, a close reading of a primary document focusing on content, tone, format, purpose, audience, etc. can be accomplished by in-class writing, by small groups discussing single documents or comparing two or three documents, and by plenary discussions. Evaluation of films, either as historical pieces or as teaching tools, can begin by having teachers prepare reviews and then share their insights or can begin immediately after the viewing in order to capture fresh thoughts and reactions. Opportunities to apply new information (in this case, plans to use the documents in the classroom) can include individual or group reports (written or oral), small group planning that is then shared with the group in a traditional presentation format, or a multi-level small group activity (a jigsaw). Examples of specific assignments are included in Appendix C.

Our second goal was to focus on both content and discipline-based skills. We, therefore, discussed how specific sources can be used to teach social studies/history, English, and library skills to students from upper elementary through 12th grade. We focused especially on such critical thinking skills as evaluation of evidence, comparison of perspectives, and understanding of historical content. We also provided an opportunity for teachers to link artifacts with written texts by giving each of the grade-based groups a set of items relating to documents in *Free at Last*. The objective was to have them explore ways to use the artifacts as a hook to draw students into close reading of the documents in this collection.

Dividing the Work

Every summer institute develops its own division of labor, depending on the backgrounds, interests, skills, and time commitments of the staff. We were fortunate to have all three co-directors involved from the beginning in the preparation of the proposal to NHPRC. Although we had developed distinct areas of expertise, we had all taught high school earlier in our lives, and that common experience laid the foundation for our collaboration. We divided some responsibilities and shared others - it was more efficient for us and more fun. However, no matter how one divides or combines the responsibilities, three kinds of work need to be done:

Scholar(s): must have expertise in the field, knowledge of the available materials, strong teaching skills, a sense of humor, and stamina. The lead scholar is responsible for the syllabus (sequence, selection of materials, and pedagogy). We strongly recommend that there be two scholars working as a team, teaching together for the entire institute.

Administrator(s): must have expertise in proposal writing, recruiting, logistics of institute organization, background in providing on-going support to project members, a sense of humor, and stamina. The principal administrator is responsible for publicity; registration; all mailings to participants; staff and advisory council; book orders; local arrangements (meeting rooms, audio-visual equipment, field trips); budgets; timelines; duplication and copyright permissions. Ideally, the administrator has support from an office staff and an undergraduate who serves as go-fer during the institute.

Evaluator/Documentor(s): must have expertise in assessment, evaluation, report preparation, a sense of humor, and stamina. The principal evaluator is responsible for designing and monitoring the evaluation, summarizing data, and reporting it in a timely fashion. S/he writes the required reports, and, if the project includes dissemination, prepares those materials as well.

Advisory Council: must have expertise in the field (content, materials, and pedagogy) and represent the appropriate constituencies (in our case - schools, colleges, and museums/libraries). Our council was especially valuable in the selection of reading materials (the initial list was much too long) and in editing the second draft of this handbook. The Partnership also has a Steering Committee that advised the project on recruiting and logistical questions.

Recruiting and Selecting the Participants

Recruiting

We initially hoped to recruit teams of teachers (history and/or English) and librarians to fill the twenty places available in the program. We succeeded in attracting a couple of teams; however, most of our applicants were individual teachers or librarians from nearby schools.

Unless the planners have an established network of teachers and administrators already in place, a good way to reach social studies/history teachers is through the National Council for the Social Studies or the state council for the social studies. These two organizations have overlapping membership – some teachers belong to the National Council, many to the state council, a few to both. The National Council can provide names and addresses for a particular state, and it can supply information on how to contact the state organization. There may be a charge for this service. Contact: Membership, National Council for the Social Studies, 3501 Newark Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016, 202/966-7840. State humanities councils often have lists of teachers who have participated in their programs.

Usually a direct mailing to prospective participants is the best way to get the word out; however, notices in humanities or social studies newsletters are less costly and may reach individuals who are not already “on the circuit.” Mailing lists frequently consist of educators who have participated in similar programs, which is not necessarily a bad thing; however, one also wants to reach those who have not yet attended a summer institute or comparable program.

The Five College/Public School Partnership carried notices of this institute in its newsletter, which is sent to 5,000 teachers and administrators in western Massachusetts, and it did a targeted mailing to teachers who had been involved in previous social studies programs. Our first flier did not provide enough detailed information to spark the interest of potential applicants, nor did it make clear that the program was geared primarily toward history. A second flier corrected those oversights. In the meantime, four or five English teachers applied and were accepted; these participants, because of their different training and perspective, enriched the program enormously. Nevertheless, we learned the importance of complete and accurate publicity. An example is included in Appendix D.

The Five College/Public School Partnership serves school districts ranging in size from 24,000 K-12 to 450 K-12. To the south of Amherst, Springfield is 33% black, 36% latino/a, and 31% white; Holyoke is 68% latino/a and 32% white; Franklin County, to the north of Amherst, is rural, white, and the second poorest county in the state. We were fortunate to have teachers from city, suburban, and rural public schools, a rural regional vocational high school, parochial schools, (Our Lady of Hope, Cathedral High School and Yeshiva Academy), a private school, and a GED program for pregnant and parenting teens. The teachers were responsible for history, social studies, English, and bi-lingual classes; the librarians, for both library skills and working with teachers in all disciplines. Participants ranged in teaching

experience from one year to twenty-five years. A list of participants appears at the end of the text. While few programs will be able to replicate the range of experiences and teaching assignments in our institute, we encourage directors to make every effort to recruit as widely as possible.

Application Process

We did not use a separate application form because most teachers prefer to word process their applications, nor did we require a vita since many teachers do not have an updated version ready to put in the mail. Instead, we asked each candidate to provide the following information (one page):

- name
- school address and phone
- home address and phone
- teaching responsibility (grade(s), subject area(s), position)
- a statement of why s/he was interested in the institute
- relevant background and experience
- how s/he envisioned integrating the program into the curriculum and classroom

The Partnership reviewed applications at the beginning of each month and mailed acceptances within a week. Using that procedure, a few of our participants joined the group after the spring meeting, but that was not a problem. The Partnership sent a personal (mail-merged) letter of acceptance to each participant with a copy to the principal or supervisor. The letter restated the dates, times, responsibilities, compensation, expectations, and costs (e.g. college credits or any other items not covered by the budget). The last paragraph concluded, "Two copies of this letter are enclosed, please sign one, add your social security number and home address, and return within two weeks of receipt of this letter." We forwarded the signed letters along with the daily attendance sheet, initialed by participants, to the business manager when we requested stipend checks.

Further communication

Six to eight weeks before the institute, we sent a second mailing containing information about where to park (along with a parking pass), where the class would meet, and the daily schedule. About two weeks ahead of time, we sent a third letter - this one from the scholar - containing a revised syllabus and a gentle reminder to get started on the reading. Throughout the next year, participants received a letter about some activity or additional resources approximately every two months.

Stipends

The initial grant for this program did not cover stipends for the teachers; however, we obtained funding from a local foundation to help defray the costs of child care, transportation, and loss of summer income. The Partnership traditionally pays half the stipend on the first day so that participants who wish to pay for academic credit are able to do so; the other check is traded for the final evaluation on the last day. We also paid a small stipend to those who attended the follow-up meetings.

Evaluation/Impact

The evaluation process began with the institute application that asked the teachers to explain how they were planning to use the institute in their teaching. At the preliminary meeting in the spring, we asked the participants to tell us their goals for the institute and how they thought we might be able to determine if those goals were met. We also requested a bit more information about what they were already teaching about abolitionism and the teaching approaches they used. We used all of this information when we reviewed our goals and objectives in the weeks leading up to the summer institute. Copies of the questionnaires appear in Appendix E.

During the institute, we handed out a questionnaire at the end of the first week (handed out on Thursday and collected on Friday so that participants had time to answer thoughtfully). Focusing on the specific activities of the week, the responses helped us to modify our daily schedule, adapt the small group work to serve the teachers' needs, and introduce new strategies based on particular interests.

On the second Wednesday, we handed out a second questionnaire and asked that it be returned on Friday along with proposals for implementing what they had learned in their own classrooms. At the same time, we returned copies of the questionnaire they had completed in the spring so that they could measure the institute against their original objectives and indicators of success.

The proposals for implementation served the purpose of reinforcing the teachers' commitment to use what they had learned at the institute in their own classrooms. As part of the proposal, teachers were expected to give some indication of how they would assess their results. Over the years, the Partnership has learned that teachers need to collect data on new teaching strategies so that they can satisfy themselves (and others) that students are mastering both content and skills. This kind of information is also important to funding agencies. Professional development programs are increasingly being asked to demonstrate an impact in the classroom; consequently, teachers must be held accountable for developing both lesson plans and assessment strategies to document how programs affect teaching and learning. We

did not hold the teachers to the specific proposals they submitted, but we did ask them to report on how they had used what they had learned in their own classrooms at both the fall and spring meetings and encouraged them to share their most effective lessons with others.

At the November 14 meeting of the institute, teachers reported on their initial efforts. Of course, the high school history teachers had not yet reached the Civil War in their American History classes and other social studies teachers had spent considerable time on the presidential election and so were somewhat behind their usual schedule. Nevertheless, the work was impressive.

New/underutilized materials:

searches of school libraries and classrooms uncovered many underutilized sources dealing with the black experience; these included collections of primary documents as well as secondary materials;

orders for new books and videos and requests for more next year;

discoveries of useful materials on sale tables at local bookstores and through publishers' overstock catalogues.

Changed assignments/new teaching methods:

increased emphasis in both social studies and literature classes on the use of evidence (in class discussions and in the assessment of student work);

a requirement that primary documents be used;

juxtaposing of documents from the institute in new ways in high school classrooms (selections from Karl Marx and Frederick Douglass in a sociology unit on economic theory and class struggle; *Invisible Man* and documents from *Free At Last* in one literature class; *The Crucible* and a selection of primary documents in another literature class);

increased use of visual materials as primary sources;

adapting institute activities, e.g. using the "artifact activity" for classroom skits and the "Alphabet of Slavery" to stimulate student poetry;

use of appropriate primary documents in other periods of history (colonial to the presidential election) or in conjunction with thematic units, such as Catholic Schools Week;

increased willingness to let the primary documents and the students drive the questions.

New assignments:

In the seventh grade, each of the five classes received a set of 12 primary documents, many taken from *Witness for Freedom* and *Free At Last*. Students chose 5-6 to read, write a summary or reaction, and complete a written task for each. They also maintained a log of their work, which was submitted with the completed packet.

In a pregnant and parenting teen GED program, students read documents from *Free At Last*, wrote and exchanged GED questions, visited the local public library and a community college library to do research on the Civil War's impact on their own community. Some did additional reading and response writing using the slave narratives.

The Elizabeth Jennings incident (*Witness for Freedom*) was used in a number of classes: both to understand historical events and as a basis for discussions of personal responsibility and behavior within the school.

Working with colleagues:

discussions within the department or team on the use of primary documents and sharing ideas from David Kobrin's book, *Beyond the Textbook: Teaching History Using Documents and Primary Sources*;

developing new units: designing an oral history curriculum following the reading of the Harriet Jacob's narrative; expanding the Civil War study to include the Irish experience (in a school with a strong Irish heritage); connecting the units on the Holocaust and slavery; developing curriculum around a new text, *Literature and the Language Arts: The American Tradition*, EMC Paradigm, NY 1995) to tell a coherent story.

One of the participating history teachers recommended that even those who were not going to use the materials until later in the year should have been expected to bring their completed unit to the fall meeting. They then could have had the benefit of feedback from the group.

Samples of classroom assignments and bibliographies will be included in a later edition of this Handbook. The first student impact data will be available by the end of the academic year.

Budget

A basic budget for a program similar to that which was held at Amherst (spring meeting, 2 week summer institute, fall and spring meetings and presentations) would

include the following:

Teaching team: 4 weeks each for preparation and teaching
1/10 of salary for academic year

Administrator: 4 weeks for the program
1/10 of annual salary plus benefits

Support person: 5 hours/week for 10 weeks
hourly wage plus benefits

Consultant: including guest lecturers, outside evaluators, etc.
funding agencies generally set a *per diem* rate (\$250-350/day)

Workstudy: 4 weeks (1 week before, 2 weeks of the institute, 1 week after). Rates vary with college requirements for academic year and summer salaries and employer match.

Participants' stipends: some funding agencies do not pay participants' stipends; however, you may seek additional support from local foundations. Ideally, participants should receive 1/10 of their salary for the academic year, but generally speaking, stipends fall far short of that mark. Practically, offer enough to offset the cost of graduate credit for the course and other expenses (e.g. child care, travel, etc.) incurred as a result of attending the institute. Designate a portion of the stipend for the follow-up meetings. Present NSF rates are \$60/day; NEH rate is \$50/day.

Instructional supplies and books: Calculate the cost per person of books, duplicating, and supplies then add the cost of copyright permissions.

Refreshments: allow about \$2/person/day during the summer institute to cover the cost of coffee, bottled water, juice, and snacks and about \$10/person to cover the cost of dinner at the preliminary and follow-up meetings. (Remember to calculate the advisory council members as well as participants, scholars, and administrator when budgeting for the dinners.) Ideally, pay for lunches during the institute - usually by providing meal tickets to the college dining commons. At least have a closing luncheon or reception at the end of the institute.

Travel: field trips during the institute, presentations by staff and participants after the institute, perhaps travel for some consultants.

Office supplies and operations: telephone, postage, stationery, etc. Costs will vary with the geographic spread of the participant area. Assume at least \$30/month for the duration of the project.

From Institute to Collaborative

A single summer institute will become an on-going school/college collaborative project only if the institute creates a sense of community among a group of school and college faculty. In such a community, the members recognize that they share a common passion for their work, that each of them brings expertise to the group, and that they enjoy learning together. Institute planners can use a number of strategies to help achieve this goal.

- Select a topic that has a central place in the curriculum, has been enriched by recent scholarship, and is compelling.
- Recruit a teaching team who are experts in the field, excellent teachers, and able to take the time to plan and teach together for the duration of the institute. In addition, select a teaching team who will have time to continue to work with the participants.
- Recruit participants who have diverse teaching responsibilities and experience.
- Start a summer institute with at least one spring meeting that introduces the group to each other, the logistics of the facility, and the kind of teaching/learning that will take place in the summer. (Programs that draw from too large a geographic area to meet before the summer need to think of alternative approaches including ListServes, a newsletter, or at least some personal phone calls from the staff.)
- Follow the summer institute with at least a fall and a spring meeting where participants can describe their classroom adaptations and share new resources they have discovered. (Again, widely separated participants will need to be kept together somehow and helped to find a like-minded group in their geographic area.)
- Encourage the participants and staff to give presentations to their colleagues (in schools and at professional meetings) about their experience. The Five College/Public School Partnership usually provides special workshops for participants giving presentations so they can consider alternative approaches and design presentations that suit their topic, audience, and personal styles.
- Work with school administrators to make sure that the goals of the program and the curricular implications are understood and supported.

Finally, there is the challenge of expanding the participation to include others who could not attend the original institute. We have found that, with some administrative

support and monitoring, such groups can continue for many years. The kind of support varies with the group, but usually includes both clerical and financial assistance.

- Organizing the planning committee with members drawn from the staff and participants of the institute and then serving as clerk to the group - monitoring the timeline, circulating minutes, making coffee - whatever is needed to keep the group doing what it wants to do but might forget in the pressure of other responsibilities. Over time new participants must be brought onto this group if the program is going to remain vital.
- Helping find whatever level of funding is necessary - often very little is needed to do mailings and other publicity, make sure that thank you notes are written for the donated time of the speakers, and pay for cookies. Some groups collect small fees to cover costs. Sometimes groups have projects that require major funding efforts and then the collective help of the group in identifying funding sources and editing proposals is essential.

Two stories of on-going collaboration are told in other Partnership documents (*The NSF/5C5E Handbook: Doing Science Research in the Classroom* and *Understanding the Native American Experience in New England*.) These documents are available by mail from the Partnership (Five College Center, 97 Spring Street, Amherst, MA 01002) or on the web (<http://k12s.phast.umass.edu/~partner>).

While the stories of these and other on-going collaborative projects vary, they all have planning committees made up of school and college faculty from the initial program (plus others added over the years) as well as representatives from other institutions appropriate to the topic. For example, the Understanding the Native American Experience Planning Committee, now in its eighth year, is sponsoring a 7-part monthly seminar series. A comparable group of secondary chemists planned a 6-part series this year.

Sometimes groups dwindle when the most active planners retire or move away. Sometimes, they become so active that they form their own separate organizations; participants in our 1986-87 math institute formed MathWest, which is now an active NCTM affiliate. Middle School principals organized themselves as the 413 Middle School Administrators (413 is our area code). Our Writing Planning Group became the Western Massachusetts Writing Project, an affiliate of the National Writing Project.

Inside each of these groups are inspiring stories of school and college faculty who have taken on new responsibilities and new teaching challenges - and been sustained in their efforts by the network of colleagues created originally in a summer institute. Such sustained, supportive environments are essential to strengthen the learning experience for teachers and their students.

Staff and Participant List. For more information, please contact

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Appendix A: Witness for Freedom Syllabus

Witness for Freedom: Using Primary Documents in the Classroom
Summer Institute for Secondary Teachers, July 8-19, 1996
David W. Blight and Christine Compston
Amherst College

Readings sent to participants. They were discussed at the April meeting:

Ralph Ellison, "What Would America Be Like Without Blacks," (1970), in Ellison, *Going to the Territory*, (1983).

John Higham, "Multiculturalism and Universalism: A History and a Critique," *American Quarterly* 45, (June 1993), 195-219.

Molefi Kete Asante, "The Afrocentric Idea in Education," *The Journal of Negro Education* 60, (spring 1991), 170-180.

Eric Foner, "The Meaning of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation," *The Journal of American History* 81, (September 1994), 435-460.

Summer Readings

This institute is designed to provide nourishment for the intellectual lives of teachers and other professional educators, as well as to offer intensive reading and discussion of how to teach about slavery, abolitionism, the Civil War, and emancipation through primary documents. For all concerned with American history this will provide an opportunity to engage the latest scholarship about the story of the antislavery movement and emancipation, to address the question of the place of African-American history within American history, and to participate in a full discussion of methods and strategies for teaching about the destruction of slavery and the beginning of freedom for black people.

Required Books:

James Brewer Stewart, *Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and American Slavery*. Hill Wang, 1976.

C. Peter Ripley, et al., eds., *Witness for Freedom: African American Voices on Race, Slavery, and Emancipation*. University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

James Oliver Horton, *Free People of Color: Inside the African American Community*. Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993.

Ira Berlin, et al., ed., *Free At Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War*. The New Press, 1992.

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, Bedford Books, 1993.

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Harvard University Press, 1987.

David Kobrin, *Beyond the Textbook: Teaching History Using Documents and Primary Sources*, Heinemann, 1996

Schedule of Daily Sessions:

Monday, July 8: Contexts of Antebellum Society, Reform, and Abolitionism.

AM: Introductions and discussion of schedule. Lecture by David Blight, “The Antislavery Movement: Obstacles, Stages, and Ideologies.” (begin discussion of Stewart).

PM: Discussion of Stewart, *Holy Warriors*. Possible topics for discussion: origins, ideologies, and strategies of the antislavery movement; the religious character of abolition; the two abolitionisms (one black, one white); and helping students think about historical analogies. Participants should feel more than free to bring their own ideas for discussion topics.

* 2:30 p. m., film, “Sankofa”

Reading: Stewart, *Holy Warriors*.

Tuesday, July 9: The Rise of Black Abolitionism.

AM: 45 min. discussion of classroom possibilities for film, “Sankofa.” Discussion of documents, chs. 1-2, *Witness for Freedom*. Form and work in five small groups. Session led by Christine Compston. Consider the documents in two contexts: how they were understood in the 1830s or 1840s; and how they might be understood today.

PM: 45 min, continue meeting in small groups. Classroom applications, prepare group “jig saw” of various questions and activities conceived around one or more documents in chs. 1-2.

* 3:30 p.m., film, "Frederick Douglass: when the Lion Wrote History."

Reading: *Witness for Freedom*, introduction, and chs. 1-2, pp. 1-120.

Wednesday, July 10: African Americans and the Political Crisis of Slavery.

AM: Full group discussion of Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* and its classroom applications. Continued discussion of film, "Frederick Douglass." Two members who teach English initiate the discussion of the *Narrative* as a literary document. Discussion aimed at understanding the slave narratives as both literary texts and historical documents.

PM: 1:00 - 2:45, introduction to the Robert Frost Library, the World Wide Web, the media center, CD Roms, the Library of Congress and the National Archives on the Internet, with Susan Edelberg, reference and document librarian.

3 - 5:00, discussion of *Witness for Freedom*, chs. 3-4, pp. 121-210. Classroom applications, work in small groups (choose one chapter for your group). Session led by Christine Compston

Reading: Douglass, *Narrative; Witness for Freedom*, chs. 3-4.

Thursday, July 11: The Slave Narratives as Abolitionist Literature and Historical Documents.

AM: Discussion of Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents*. Interpretations, comparison to Douglass, the question of gender and women's voices, and classroom applications. Particular theme of the slave woman's voice addressed.

PM: Lecture (Blight), "Slavery and the Political Crises of the 1850s."

3:00, film, "The Massachusetts 54th."

Reading: Jacobs, *Incidents*.; Blight, "They Knew What Time it Was: African Americans and the Coming of the Civil War." (provided)

Friday, July 12: Field Trip to Boston and Examination of the Shaw-54th Mass. Memorial

All Day: Bus trip to Boston Common, the Joy St. Church, the Robert Hayden house, the Shaw Memorial, and Tremont Temple. A lecture at Shaw monument by historian, Tom

Brown, an expert on the Shaw-54th Memorial and Civil War monuments in general. A guide from the National Park Service helped interpret the remainder of the Black Heritage Trail. En route to Boston aboard bus, the film, "Glory," is shown, the ending of the film, the assault on Fort Wagner, occurs as bus arrives on Beacon Street and stops near monument. Afternoon ends with visit to Tremont Temple, discussion of the building's storied abolitionist history, and a reading by Blight of Frederick Douglass's remembrance of Emancipation night, December 31-January 1, 1863 in that hall.

Reading: Speeches by William James and Booker T. Washington at the unveiling ceremony, May 30, 1897; poem, Robert Lowell, "For the Union Dead." (to be provided).

Monday, July 15: African-American Life and Community in the Antebellum North.

AM: Lecture (Blight), "African Americans and the Meaning of the Civil War." Discussion of ch. 5, *Witness for Freedom*, classroom applications and work in small groups. How would you teach the various meanings of the Civil War in your classroom? How do we engage students in questions of "meaning" generally in history? In contemporary life?

PM: Guest presentation with slides by James and Lois Horton, "The Life and Times of Edward Ambush: Methods in 19th Century African-American History." Discussion of selected essays in *Free People of Color* with Hortons. Further discussion of the remarkable uses of federal census documents for research and teaching.

Reading: Horton, *Free People of Color* (selected essays to be assigned); *Witness for Freedom*, ch. 5, pp. 211-262.

Tuesday, July 16: Emancipation as Wartime Process.

AM: Discussion of *Free At Last*, chs. 1-3. Each person should choose approximately six documents from each chapter and be prepared to discuss how one might teach about their content and meaning. Groups and general discussion. In group discussion, individuals volunteered to present the meaning and use of a single document.

PM: Discussion of emancipation documents carries over to afternoon, groups report possible lesson plans derived from one or more document. Groups choose a spokesperson, but try to fashion a collaborative plan.

3:00 p. m., film, "The Civil War" PBS series, episode 3, "Forever Free." Discussion follows of historical film techniques and their pedagogical significance.

Reading: *Free At Last*, chs. 1-3.

Wednesday, July 17: Emancipation as Wartime Policy.

AM: Lecture by David Blight, "Who Freed the Slaves?" Lincoln, Race, and "Emancipation."

Discussion of readings by James McPherson, "Who Freed the Slaves?" and Ira Berlin, "Emancipation and its Meaning in American Life." (provided)

PM: Carry-over discussion of war, emancipation policy, Lincoln's role. A reading and interpretation of special document in neither collection of readings, a letter by ex-slave, Jourdan Anderson, to his former owner, summer, 1865. Mary-Alice Wilson discusses assessment procedures and future follow-up plans for institute.

3:00, film, episode 9, "The Better Angels of Our Nature," "The Civil War," PBS series. Discussion of how this ending of the Ken Burns series interprets the meaning and memory of the Civil War and emancipation.

Reading: McPherson and Berlin (provided).

Thursday, July 18: Emancipation as Wartime Process.

AM: Discussion of *Free At Last*, chs. 4-6. Same procedure as above on Tuesday. Discussion of the question of legacies and aftermath of freedom for blacks. What are legacies, and how do we help students understand them?

11:00, a reading and interpretation of Lowell's "For the Union Dead," by Rusty Blossom; and reading and interpretation of the "Emancipation Proclamation" as a legal document by Christine Compston.

PM: 1:00 - 3:00, Frost library, visit and hands-on exploration of Special Collections—Archives holdings on slavery and abolitionism. *Harpers' Weekly* illustrations, art and pictorial books on black history and the Civil War, the published volumes of the WPA narratives, and related subjects. Teachers make plans for possible visits with their students to the archives to handle and use the documents.

3 - 5:00, free time in library resources.

Reading: *Free At Last*, chs. 4-6.

Friday, July 19: Wrap up and Assessment.

AM: Group exercise planned by Blight/Compston. In four groups of five, teachers given numerous objects, from tools and photographs to books, clothing, and coins. Each group has to fashion a classroom activity using these objects, some documents on emancipation or slavery, and present their activity as a student-centered classroom exercise between 11 and 12. All members of the institute serve as the class participants. Skits, group presentations, jig saws, songs, and various other plans are presented. Discussion continues of the whole project of using documents and objects to involve students in full participation in learning history.

PM: 1-3:00 p. m., final meeting with lunch at David Blight's house. Group plans for next session in November, when teachers report on their own classroom applications of the institute's sources and experiences. All members turn in their personal design of a particular lesson plan based on the documents in the institute.

Appendix B: Witness for Freedom. A Selected Bibliography

David W. Blight
Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts

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Appendix C: Teaching Activities

Questions for Consideration, *Witness for Freedom*, chapters. 1-2.

Chapter 1: The Rise of Black Abolitionism.

1. Writing exercise: (15-20 min.).

Select a document or a pair of complementary documents in ch. 1 that feature an idea or theme you consider central to the study of the African-American experience in the nineteenth century. Write a brief analysis in which you:

- explain the significance of the idea or theme.
- describe how the theme is presented in the document(s).
- discuss the importance of tone, vocabulary, and style.

2. Discussion for small groups:

A. Take on the perspective of a journalist in the first half of the nineteenth century who has been assigned the task of covering the issue of slavery and in particular the response of the black community to colonization, abolition, and the status of free blacks. How would you report on the activities of black communities to your readers? What factors would influence your writing? You should assume the voice of either a black or white writer, and determine the audience for which you are writing.

B. Shift your perspective and assume the role of a historian in the late twentieth century who is concerned with the same issues one hundred years before. How would your treatment of the records differ or complement those of the journalist? Why does this question of *perspective* matter?

Witness for Freedom, Chapter 2: African Americans and the Antislavery Movement (Jigsaw)

Group 1: Blacks as Advocates

1. How would you characterize the tone and approach adopted by blacks who were categorized as “advocates”?
2. What is the significance of the seizure of language by black abolitionists?
3. How did these advocates portray slavery?

4. Which of these various documents do you find most effective in its denunciation of slavery? Why? Would your criteria for making this judgment have been different if you were a reporter covering these issues in the nineteenth century?

Group 2: Slave Narratives

1. What value did the telling of these stories have to the whole abolitionist movement?
2. What insights do these narratives provide of the emotional and intellectual lives of slaves?
3. How do you account for the enormous popularity of these narratives within the abolitionist community?

Group 3: Black Women Abolitionists

1. What was at stake for black women who supported the abolitionist movement?
2. What kinds of activities did women engage in? What factors defined/prescribed the nature and the extent of their involvement?
3. How were the experiences of black women, as represented in these documents, similar to and different from those of black men?
4. How effective was poetry in fighting slavery?

Group 4: Antislavery and the Black Community

1. What evidence is provided in these documents of *real* or *significant* change resulting from involvement in the antislavery movement?
2. What was the relationship between black religion and black abolition?
3. How much of “black abolitionism” reflected the needs of southern slaves, and how much reflected the needs of northern black communities?

Group 5: Problems in the Movement

1. What were the basic differences between the black and white factions of the abolitionist movement?

2. In what ways do these documents reveal the nature of racial prejudice in the antebellum period?
3. Do the documents suggest that black abolitionists were re-defining the movement for whites?
4. What was at stake for black abolitionists that forced them to compromise with whites? What were some of the compromises?

Witness for Freedom, Chapters 3 & 4

We have asked you to work in groups with teachers who are working with approximately the same grade or level of students. Our goal is to have you develop an exercise, using some of the documents from Witness for Freedom, that you can take back to your own classrooms and use with your own students.

Start your discussion by deciding what points (two or three key ideas would probably be manageable) from these two chapters that you want to raise with your students. You may focus on either chapter or use material from both chapters. The critical element in your discussion should be determining *what* your students should learn about the black abolitionist movement based on the collection of primary documents in this volume.

Once you have settled on the ideas you want to emphasize, select a group of documents that deal with those issues. For younger students, you will probably choose two or three documents; for older students, perhaps as many as four or five. As part of the process, consider the criteria for selecting your documents.

Formulate a question or set of questions that you would give to your students along with the selected documents. You might consider a question intended to elicit a written response and/or set of questions designed to generate discussion. In either case, the question(s) should be crafted in a way to lead students to the principal ideas that you identified in the first step of this exercise.

Witness for Freedom, Chapter 5

Working in your grade-based discussion groups, develop a teaching strategy (lesson plan) that you can take back to your own classrooms and use with your own students.

As you have done before, start by deciding what points from this chapter should be explored with your students; in other words, determine what your students should learn about the black abolitionist movement based on the collection of primary documents in this chapter.

Once you have settled on the ideas you want to emphasize, select a group of documents that deal with those issues and then formulate a question or set of questions that you would give your students along with the selected documents. Take into account as you develop this exercise whether you want the students to be working individually on the documents, in small discussion groups all dealing with the same set of questions, or in small groups focusing on the different questions (i.e. anticipating a “jigsaw” structure), or *using some other teaching strategy that will engage them in a close examination and analysis of documents from this chapter.*

We will ask your group to make an informal presentation this morning and to prepare by tomorrow a more formal description of your teaching plan, to be distributed to all the teachers in this program.

Free at Last, Chapters 1 & 2

Small group discussions:

This collection of documents illustrates a critical lesson in the study of history: That players - women and men, blacks and whites, slave and free, civilian and soldier - are affected by decisions and events in very different ways and, therefore, respond or react to the changes as individuals, taking into account either consciously or unconsciously their own concerns and interests.

As you meet in your groups to discuss these two chapters, focus on the individual as someone who is *affected* by historical decisions and events but also as one who *makes* history. Using these documents, explore ways in which these two roles converge and the problems/opportunities raised for individuals by the policies adopted to deal with the war.

Free at Last, Chapters 3 & 4

These two chapters of the collection *Free at Last* deal with the topics of labor, work, and money. Working in your grade-based groups, develop a presentation/lesson that makes use of the artifacts provided as a way of engaging students in a closer examination of the documents. The groups will have 90 minutes to prepare and 20-30 minutes for each presentation.

Sample Collections for Groups

Lincoln photograph

Chalk

Stationery

Money

Illustration of slave family moving possessions in a cart

Copy of Emancipation Proclamation

13th Amendment

Tools: hammer, screw driver

Medicine

Lincoln bookend

Bar of soap

Coins

Hammer

Illustration of contraband camps from *Harper's Weekly*

Old shirt

Stationery

Hoe

"Battle Hymn of the Republic"

Straw hat

Stationery

Photograph of a black soldier

Work shirt

Bible

Frying pan

Appendix D: Recruiting/Publicity

Witness for Freedom Flier (*original legal length*)

Summer Institute at Amherst College

Institute: Monday-Fridays, July 8-19

Spring Meeting: Wednesday, April 10, 4-8 PM

The Partnership, with support from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, will offer a two-week summer institute in July 1996 for 20 teachers of history and English and school librarians. The institute, which will be led by David Blight, History and Black Studies, Amherst College, will focus on the collection of Black abolitionist writers in a new anthology, *Witness for Freedom*, and ways to use these primary sources and related secondary readings and media in the classroom.

This institute is designed to provide nourishment for the intellectual lives of teachers, as well as to offer intensive reading and discussion of how to teach abolitionism, the Civil War, and emancipation through documents. The core source of documents is *Witness for Freedom*, a collection taken from the Black Abolitionist Papers Project. But we will also sample and read two famous slave narratives (one by Frederick Douglass, and the other by Harriet Jacobs), as well as numerous selections from *Free At Last: The Documentary History of Slavery, the Civil War and Emancipation*. We will also read two major secondary works on the history of the antislavery movement and the free black experience in the northern states respectively. For all teachers of American history this will provide an opportunity to engage in the latest scholarship about the story of abolition and emancipation, to address the question of the place of African-American history within American history, and to participate in a full discussion of methods and strategies for teaching about the greatest crisis and change in nineteenth century America.

There will be one spring meeting of the institute and three follow-up meetings during the 1996-1997 academic year. (Institute participants will select the 1996-1997 dates during the summer; they will not require release-days from your teaching.) Participants will be eligible to receive two graduate credits through Continuing Education, University of Massachusetts at their own expense (\$120). PDPs will also be awarded (80 pdps) at no cost. We will be able to offer a \$150 stipend and, pending additional funding, may be able to announce an increase in that stipend in April.

To apply, send a brief letter with the following information: name, school and home address and phone, grade level(s)/position, a statement of why you are interested in the institute, relevant background and experience, and how you envision integrating the readings and background information into your teaching. Send to the Partnership, 97 Spring Street, Amherst, MA 01002. Applications will be reviewed at the end of each month and letters sent out immediately.

If you have questions, please contact the Partnership at the address above, by phone 413-256-8316 x3018 or by email (mwilson@k12.oit.umass.edu).

Appendix E: Evaluation Forms

Note to Handbook Readers: the original forms all provided enough space for participants to complete the questions. Participants are always asked to give their names so that we can follow up on individual comments and requests.

Evaluation at the initial meeting, April 10, 1996

1. Goals for the institute (What do you hope to gain from your participation?)
 - a.
 - b.

2. Given those goals, how can the Partnership know if we have been successful? (What are possible indicators of success?)

 Goal a (above):
 indicator #1:
 indicator #2:
 indicator #3:

 Goal b (above)
 indicator #1:
 indicator #2:
 indicator #3:

3. How can the institute best achieve these goals?

4. Do your students presently study the black abolitionist movement? If yes, which sources are you presently using?

5. What other approaches, resources, activities to you use to teach about this topic?

6. Please use the rest of this space, or add an additional page to make any suggestions, make comments, or ask any questions about the summer program.(What question should we have asked?)

Evaluation at the end of the first week of the institute. Handed out Thursday, collected Friday

Based on the first four days to this program, please comment on the *character* and the *quality* of each of the following:

1. readings
2. films
3. discussions
4. teaching strategies
5. timing and pacing

Other comments

Evaluation at the end of the second week of the institute. Handed out Wednesday, collected Friday. Copies of the original questionnaires were given to participants to help them complete these questions.

1. Please begin by reviewing the goals you listed when you signed up for this institute.
 - a. To what extent did the institute succeed in meeting your goals?
 - b. In what ways did the program fall short? What might we have done differently?
2. How did your professional goals change during the institute, if at all?
3. What was the most significant feature of this program in terms of your work as an educator?
4. Based on the last five days of this program, please comment on the character and quality of each of the following:
 - a. readings
 - b. films
 - c. discussions
 - d. teaching strategies
 - e. trip to Boston
 - f. library sessions

- g. presentation by the Hortons
- h. timing and pacing

5. Other comments

6. Were the Five College Partnership to offer another program in history/the humanities, what topic would you want that institute to focus on?

Evaluation for the fall and spring call-back meetings

1. Please describe briefly how you have used the institute experience in your classroom.
2. Please describe briefly how you have used the institute experience in your work with colleagues (in your school or in other settings).
3. It is always difficult to evaluate the impact on students, please list the activities you have done with your students, what content or skills you hoped to have students' master, and how you evaluated them.

Classroom Activity	Goals for Students	Assessment Strategies

4. If you were helping someone else organize a similar project, what would be the most important advice you could give him/her?
5. Others thoughts, advice, requests? Questions we should have asked?