

Chapter 1

Contrasting

Curriculum Coverage and Uncoverage

To me, contrasting content means content that tells an opposing story. It's content that tells the untold story, one that traditionally has been left out of the history books. It's content that is multicultural and includes many perspectives, particularly the perspectives of people who have been historically marginalized and oppressed. It's taking the traditional viewpoint or story and directly contrasting it with the untold.

—Middle School Teacher Candidate

For many students and teachers, the history of the American West is framed by images of the Gold Rush, the transcontinental railroad, and violent conflicts between native peoples and White settlers. In Hollywood movies and the popular imagination, the story unfolds in similar ways—European settlers in wagon trains tamed the frontier, bringing civilization, religion, and progress to the wilderness. Yet, the American West is a far more complex and problematic concept than most imagine, filled with the hidden histories and untold stories of women, native peoples, African Americans, and immigrants from Asia and Mexico, all waiting to be included so history can be more fully understood.

“The West is a land of infinite horizons and unimaginable distances. But it was never empty,” said filmmakers Stephen Ives and Ken Burns (1996, p. vii). For emigrants from eastern states, the West offered opportunities for wealth, land, and/or community. For powerful politicians it was a place to fulfill visions of Manifest Destiny and new statehood. For many others, “the West” did not exist in such terms. It was “the East” for those who came from China and Russia; “free land” for African Americans; “el Norte” for Spanish settlers from Mexico; “South” for British and French settlers moving down from Canada; or simply “the Land,” “Home,” or “the

Center of the Universe” for the Native Americans who had lived there for thousands of generations.

History is multiple realities, not singular occurrences. There is not one American, Asian, African, or European story. There are parallel, overlapping, intersecting pasts, forming mosaics of human experience. This multiple and varied view of history stands markedly in contrast to the collection of names, dates, and places taught straightforwardly in many K–12 history/social studies classes. Students or teachers thinking in terms of a single reality or a single account of events privilege a dominant viewpoint or repeat a prevailing metanarrative rather than expressed nuanced views of national or regional history.

Contrasting, the first of 7 Cs of democratic teaching recognizes that students develop ideas and understandings about democracy from the academic content expressed in their school’s history/social studies curriculum. Textbook reading assignments, teachers’ lesson plans, classroom discussions, and learning assessments are important in terms of what curriculum content they include or leave out. In our highly politicized, media-driven society, deciding what will be taught is a difficult and contentious process. Ideological disagreements, party politics, and competing television news channels have diminished informed discussions among scholars. Teachers, and then students, are at the center of controversy about the nature of history education in schools.

Debating History Content

The academic content of K–12 history curriculum has long been the subject of intense political debates (Foner, 2003). Questions of what, when, and how much history should be taught in schools create “flash points” as conservative and progressive educators seek to structure educational standards to match ideological agendas. University of Georgia historian Peter Charles Hoffer (2004, pp. 1–2) refers to the current state of American history teaching as “two-faced,” consisting of the importance of celebrating the ideals of democracy, justice, and equality and the importance of critiquing how far short of those ideals has been the experience of people of color, women, and other groups. For teachers at every level, there is “an almost intolerable burden: to balance a critical approach and a rightful pride.”

Common ground can be enormously difficult to find. Exploring the role of historic places in American culture, for example, students and teachers will encounter the competing perspectives of James W. Loewen’s (1999) *Lies Across America*, which details how national parks and monu-

ments distort the actual events that happened in those locations and Newt Gingrich's *Recovering God in America* (2006), which presents a walking tour of Christian religious symbols displayed at the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress, the White House, and other locations in the nation's capitol.

As the wide expanse between the Loewen and Gingrich books illustrates, progressive and conservative groups have sharply competing and contrasting visions for what content should be taught at each grade level. Conservative commentators call for a renewed emphasis on the values and institutions that Americans share in common. Minimizing the differences among us, they urge more in-depth study of the founding fathers, the Constitution, America's technological and scientific progress, and the civic responsibilities of citizens. Progressive educators, citing the multicultural nature of American history and contemporary society, want more instructional time spent addressing the experiences of women, Blacks, Native Americans, Latinos, and other groups that are typically left out the curriculum. Studying diverse histories of many groups enables students to understand how existing patterns of class, race, and gender have evolved over time, and might change in more equitable directions in the future.

Teaching Traditional American History

In 2002, the U.S. Department of Education began administering a Teaching American History (TAH) grant program. The purpose of TAH was to "raise student achievement by improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of and appreciation for traditional American history." The authorizing statute, Title II, Part C, Subpart 4, was vague in its definition of traditional American history, stating only that the TAH recipients must carry out activities to promote the teaching of traditional American history in elementary and secondary schools as a "separate academic subject (not as a component of social studies)."

The reference to history as a separate academic subject rather than a component of social studies in the TAH legislation reflected a longstanding concern on the part of many educators that historical thinking and analysis is diluted when history is grouped together with psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science—the fields of the social studies. However, by 2002, traditional American history had become a politically charged term, one that held great meaning to political and social conservatives who sought to move the history curriculum away from what they regarded as too much multiculturalism and not enough core values and heritage.

Debates over the content of history frameworks illustrate how conservative political groups have coalesced reform efforts around the concept of

traditional American history. Pennsylvania State University historian David Warren Saxe (2006) defined traditional American history as:

The installation of patriotism and love of country as the norm, not the exception; Textbooks proudly reflected America as THE exceptional nation; “One nation, one people” defined American heritage; and a common American history provided admiration for national heroes, reverence for America’s founding, promotion of America’s seminal documents; acceptance of America’s founding principles, and respect for America’s law and Constitutional heritage. (p. 12)

In an essay entitled “Reviving Traditional American History in an Age of Social Justice,” Saxe (2006) asserted that since the social upheavals of the 1960s, public school classrooms are no longer providing students with the “knowledge, skills, and tools of American heritage for citizenship” (p. 12). Classrooms are “more like little political activist camps not places of education,” with too much emphasis on social change and the contributions of diverse groups instead of America’s founding documents and principles (p. 12).

Other conservative commentators, calling for the teaching of “traditional” American history in sometimes politically less strident terms, cite consistent themes: a focus on founding documents and principles, the vital role of religion in society, an emphasis on American exceptionalism, the criticism of multicultural education and teaching about dispossessed groups in history, and the importance of a capitalist economic system. There is a strong effort to defuse criticism of American foreign and domestic policies, past and present. The effect of these proposals, concluded two history educators, has had less to do with changing instructional practices in schools than returning the “social studies curriculum to its place as a battleground in the culture wars where debates over American values can be staged” (Williams & Maloyed, 2013, p. 26).

State of the State U.S. History Frameworks

Reviewing the academic content in history and social studies curriculum frameworks in 49 of the 50 states in 2010 (Rhode Island has no statewide curriculum), the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, a conservative-oriented policy organization, graded each standard on its historical quality (Stern & Stern, 2011). The report was a follow-up to an earlier review of state standards in 2002 of which David Warren Saxe was one of the authors.

South Carolina earned an A, whereas Alabama, California, Indiana, Massachusetts, New York, and the District of Columbia received A-minuses. All the other states received very low ratings, mainly “mediocre to awful,” for a national average of D, leading the report’s authors to conclude that our schools are “creating a generation of students who don’t understand or value our own nation’s history” (Finn & Porter-Magee, 2011, p. 5).

What shortcomings produce “weak” standards? A main culprit, in the view of the Fordham Report, was “states’ ill-considered decision to embed history in ‘social studies’” (Finn & Porter-Magee, 2011, p. 8). As a collection of social science disciplines—sociology, psychology, geography, anthropology, political science, and history—social studies lacks the explanatory power of historical thinking. Using a social studies perspective, “teachers and students fail to grasp why history unfolded as it did,” relying instead on “trans-historical (and often ahistorical) interpretive ‘concepts’ over historical facts and context” (pp. 8, 12).

Concerns about history content have also become part of the debate over what to teach at the college level. “The Vanishing West,” a 2011 report from the National Association of Scholars, criticized the “decline and near extinction of the Western Civilization history survey course in America’s top colleges and universities” (Ricketts et al., 2011, p. iv). Examining history requirements at 50 major institutions of higher education plus 75 additional state universities, the authors found a “parallel decline of the American history survey requirements” and the “emergence of ‘world history’ as a substitute for the history of the West” (Ricketts, Wood, Balch, & Thorne, 2011, p. iv).

Throughout the 20th century, argue the report authors, the Western history survey course provided a coherent narrative for all college undergraduates, whatever their academic major. “Studying the history of the West brings a student to grips, as nothing else can, with the roots, the shaping events, the underlying causes of the process and substance of globalization, indeed of the creation of modernity itself” (Ricketts et al., 2011, p. 19). Now, as the survey course requirement moves to the wayside, there is no substitute in place. Lacking a Western history survey, “the curriculum spins out into an all-things-to-all-people cornucopia of offerings, many of them exceptionally narrow in scope and many of them trivial in character” (Ricketts et al., 2011, p. 8).

Repeating familiar conservative criticisms, the report’s authors define multicultural history as a major problem in the college curriculum: “Multiculturalism leaves students ill-equipped to understand the context of their own lives or the world around them.” Without a deep knowledge of

Western civilization, continued the report's authors, because it is so interconnected with the histories of the world's civilizations and cultures, students can "achieve at best only a superficial knowledge of the larger picture" (Ricketts et al., 2011, p. v).

Progressive educators and historians, by contrast, see state and national curriculum frameworks as insufficiently historic, multicultural, and educational. In books and articles, they urge a dramatic refocusing of the history content that is taught in schools: Howard Zinn presents a "people's history"; James Loewen seeks to "teach what really happened"; Ronald Takaki looks through a "different mirror"; Ray Raphael reveals "founding" and "constitutional myths"; Henry Louis Gates explores African American "life upon these shores"; Ellen Carol DuBois and Lynn Dumenil view history "through women's eyes"; and Ray Suarez honors Latino Americans' "500-year legacy that shaped a nation."

These writers and many more directly resist calls by conservative commentators for a greater emphasis on teaching traditional American history in schools. Acknowledging the importance of the founding documents, they envision curriculum that emphasizes the ways in which the principles of freedom, justice, and equality have been systematically denied to African Americans, Native Americans, women, and other groups in society throughout American history. They urge thorough examination of our capitalist economic system to reveal historical disparities of wealth and poverty and the destructive contemporary impacts of economic and social inequality. They stress the expansionist nature of American foreign policy and its uses of armed force around the world. As Ray Raphael (2009) noted at the beginning of his book *Founders*, "if the American nation is about 'the people,' our national narrative must be too" (p. xiii).

Collective Memory and the Cultural Curriculum

Employing the concepts of "collective memory" and the "cultural curriculum," Stanford University historian and teacher educator Sam Wineburg explores how everyday people develop views of history apart from the school classroom. In one study, Wineburg and his colleagues (Wineburg, Mosburg, Porat, & Duncan, 2007) followed a group of 15 high school students from three very different schools (an inner-city high school, an elite college preparatory academy, and an Evangelical Christian school) during their 11th- and 12th-grade school years. Presenting iconic photographs from the Vietnam War era, the researchers interviewed the students about their historical knowledge of the time period. Despite the differences among the

students, their families, and their schooling, the researchers found a common narrative in the responses: “How America entered the conflict, what happened on the battlefield, and how a cloud of despair hung over the nation in the war’s aftermath.” Among White and non-White, affluent and poor, native-born and immigrant, Christian and nonpracticing individuals, these “young peoples’ narrative bore a remarkable likeness” (Wineburg et al., 2007, p. 173).

Little information from high school history/social studies classes were part of the students’ narratives, even for youngsters whose teachers discussed the 1954 Geneva Conference that partitioned Vietnam, the parallels between the American “Declaration of Independence” and the “Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam,” or the role of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War in reversing American public opinion about war policies. Nor did the students mimic the views of their parents, who had lived through the time period and had sharply divided views about the purpose and effect of American involvement in Vietnam. These students had developed their own perspectives from their own societal experiences.

To explain common narratives among students the researchers turned to the ideas of “collective memory” and “the cultural curriculum” (Wineburg, 2001). Collective memory refers to what someone has learned, as opposed to what is remembered from lessons at school. Discussing the Vietnam War era, these youngsters’ collective memory included “soldiers fighting” and “hippies protesting.” There was no recall about prowar demonstrations or George McGovern’s defeat as the “peace candidate” in the 1968 presidential campaign.

The students’ collective memories are a product of what Wineburg calls a “cultural curriculum,” a compelling, memorable set of assumptions, influences, and generalizations, largely conveyed by the media and the popular culture. Not a formalized or agreed on collection of standards or lesson plans, the cultural curriculum is a “‘sensitizing concept’ that points to the distributed nature of learning in modern society” (Wineburg & Montezano, 2008).

As a cultural artifact, the 1994 movie *Forrest Gump* was one of the key influences on student impressions about the Vietnam War. Most students had seen the film; in two of the three schools in the study, it was required viewing in history/social studies classes. *Forrest Gump* presented an uncomplicated narrative of the Vietnam era with the complexities and nuances of the time glossed over by the movie’s compelling narrative thread. The movie’s main character flows in and out of the key historical events of the time, but those events have little meaning beyond the film’s images.

Yet they generate long lasting, strongly held impressions for viewers about what happened historically during that time.

The cultural curriculum has a profound effect on how students think about history. Hollywood movies, television documentaries, school-sponsored trips to national monuments, or rap artists “may be far more powerful in shaping young people’s ideas about the past than the mountains of textbooks that continue to occupy historians’ and educators’ attention” (Wineburg et al., 2007, p. 176). The cultural curriculum produces widely shared common knowledge about the past despite the economic, social, and political experiences that divide many Americans. Youngsters who are rich or poor; urban, suburban, or rural; and White or non-White have learned certain ideas from the culture; ideas that Wineburg suggests need no “proof text nor justification” (2007, p. 176).

In another revealing study, Wineburg asked high school students and ordinary adults aged 45 and over to list the most famous figures in American history, not including presidents or first ladies. Eight of the 10 most-named figures were the same for both groups, suggesting the reach of shared information and shared assumptions across generations (Wineburg & Monte-Sano, 2008). The challenge, concluded Wineburg et al. (2007), is for teachers and students to find “new ways to engage the cultural curriculum that engulfs them” by identifying “the history that does or does not ‘seep into cultural pores’” (p. 177).

Voices of Teacher Candidates: Teaching Academic Content to Students

History and social studies teaching candidates in our program, like many experienced classroom educators, are struggling to negotiate their way through politically intensified debates about the teaching of history as well as broad, sometimes competing, sets of academic curriculum standards. Not surprisingly, given all of the information and controversy surrounding the teaching of history, candidates have strong opinions about curriculum frameworks, textbooks, and what history teachers should teach.

When asked “What does contrasting content mean to you?” candidates repeatedly defined contrasting content in terms of opposing and untold stories. One candidate said, “contrasting content means to see both sides of the story,” whereas another stated, “contrasting content means looking at history from multiple perspectives.” Still another new teacher saw

contrasting content as a teacher serving as a point/counterpoint or devil's advocate, "to deliberately go against what your students will most likely rationalize as 'normal.'"

Some candidates divided history content into two, mostly mutually exclusive categories, the traditional and the untold, as in this statement by a high school teacher candidate: "contrasting content includes seeing pro and con sides of arguments, good and bad effects of certain events, and the perspectives of those people that are not included in the 'majority.'" Others expanded the idea of content to feature many or multiple categories: "Contrasting content means exactly what it says—introducing different perspectives so that students can compare and contrast lessons from multiple perspectives. It includes providing competing narratives, untold stories, and ideas that may not be widely known with respect to a topic."

Asked to describe how contrasting content happens in the classroom, teacher candidates cited the importance of multiple sources of information as a way to provide students with many ways to look at people and events: "I like to give students primary and secondary sources other than the textbook," noted one high school candidate, "so that they can see the differences in how each source presents history." She went on to say, "I also ask students to find examples of bias in what they read as well to discuss which histories and herstories are often written out of history textbooks."

Other candidates stressed the importance of discussion and debate as a way to broaden the content that is being taught. Discussion and debates assured candidates they were being fair-minded and neutral rather than giving their own opinions about historical matters. As one middle school intern noted, "If we push the views we believe upon students, we are not giving them the opportunity to explore their own creativity and critical thinking skills."

Following along with the idea that discussions and debates are essential components of expansive teaching, a high school candidate indicated "contrasting content looks like classroom discussions that are not directly related in the learning targets." He told the story of how a lively debate had occurred in a world history class about the rights of Western archaeologists and museums to remove artifacts from countries such as Egypt and Greece—both in the past and in the present. Although this topic was not in the lesson plan for the day, he found pleasure in how "students shared their feelings pro and con about disturbing ancient tombs and burial sites for the sake of academic knowledge."

Having expressed a high level of commitment with the idea of contrasting content, candidates struggled with how to implement this democratic teaching practice. Citing the ever-present constraints of covering the curriculum frameworks and following the school's chosen textbook, they felt there was too much to teach and too little time to do so. Accompanying this view was a prevailing fear of losing control of the class when raising controversial or untold topics. They were not sure how students might react to serious discussions about North American slavery, the atomic bombing of Japanese cities, McCarthyism, Iran/Contra, or the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Candidates were perplexed about how curriculum frameworks required by school systems could include contrasting content for students. A middle school geography teacher told us that she was "confused as to how contrasting content plays out in my world geography classroom where the standards are so bland and particularly people-centric. It's not as though the standards tell me to teach one dominant viewpoint. There really isn't a viewpoint. The standards are basic, dry, and uninspiring." It took time and trial and error before she found ways to teach required material in contrasting ways: "I turn dry standards such as locating countries on a map or studying population statistics or basic economic concepts such as supply and demand into content and lessons that put people and their needs at the forefront." She also noted that while studying the Middle East as a geographic region, she included examining stereotypes about Arabs, Muslims, and the Middle East in general.

Several candidates expressed ideas about methods to integrate contrasting content in teaching. A high school candidate noted that in his plans, "contrasting content shows as either a discussion or a debate." Another candidate at the same school stated: "Democratic teaching doesn't just mean allowing students greater voice in rules, classroom structures or in how they learn. It's also about the content that is taught. It's about creating student-centered lessons where students are exposed to and analyze many different viewpoints (many of which have been left out the history books) and then allowing students to come to their own conclusions and solutions." Also seeing a direct connection to democratic teaching, a middle school candidate stated "contrasting content can make students see things that they may not have noticed before and allowing them to air their thoughts promotes a democratic classroom by giving students a chance to share their feelings/views."

Contrasting Strategies for Building Democracy

At the beginning of his book, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*, and as part of his speaking engagements at colleges and conferences around the country, historian Ronald Takaki (2008) tells the story of a cab ride he took from the airport to a meeting in Virginia Beach, Virginia more than three decades ago. Takaki, a slender man of Asian descent, was gazing out the window when the cab driver, a White man in his 40s asked, “How long have you been in this country?” Momentarily taken back, Takaki, whose grandfather had come to America from Japan more than 100 years earlier, replied “All my life.”

Recalling the experience later, Takaki realized that an Asian man traveling from the airport to the Virginia seashore, did not fit a conception of “looking American.” “What had he learned about Asian Americans in courses called U.S. history?” Takaki (2008, p. 4) thought of the driver’s intent to begin a conversation. The cab driver, using the frame of reference he possessed, did not consider the long history of Asian Americans struggling to achieve status and place in American society because this may never have been part of his cultural or historical knowledge.

This chapter’s “Building Democracy” activities focus on ways that teachers and students can use the content and language of school textbooks and curriculum frameworks to uncover and discover hidden histories and untold stories of the multicultural past. We start with textbooks and how they become sources to be analyzed rather than collections of facts to be memorized for a test. We introduce the idea of “curriculum uncoverage” to show that teaching democratically involves accessing hidden histories and untold stories to build curriculum that integrates multicultural content in substantive and transformative ways. Finally, we propose that teachers and students examine language use in curriculum materials to understand the ideas and assumptions contained in academic terms.

Strategy: Analyzing Textbooks

Large and lengthy, textbooks present the past chronologically, acknowledging “important” names, dates, events, and places through a particular lens of historical analysis or point of view. Many history/social studies teachers rely on textbooks to transmit common ideas, assigning pages as required reading and testing students to assess recall and understanding of information. Students lament the linear, text-based presentations in textbooks, finding them

uninteresting, or, with newer editions, densely packed with overwhelming amounts of visual images, graphs, and related sidebars on each page.

Researchers have been critiquing public school history textbooks for decades. Francis Fitzgerald (1980) documented the ways textbooks presented different periods of American history, actually revealing more about the time period when the books were published than about the historical topics discussed. Diane Ravitch (2003, p. 8) has argued that textbook publishers, in an effort to eliminate bias against different societal groups, have intentionally narrowed and diluted the presentation of historical topics, stripping “away everything that is potentially thought-provoking and colorful.”

Examining disputes over the content of history textbooks since the Civil War, Joseph Moreau (2004) found that publishers concentrated on “unifying myths” at times in the past when Americans were struggling to “reinterpret the past and forge a new consensus about it” (p. 24). As Moreau noted, “a bit of historical amnesia can make it easier for people to imagine themselves as a single body,” but “repressing truths about subjects central to a country’s identity, like slavery or racism . . . makes it impossible to construct a version of the past that doesn’t collapse under its contradictions” (pp. 337–338).

Shortcomings and distortions in textbooks are not restricted to American history. Examining five popular world history textbooks in light of recent scholarship, researcher Michael Marino (2011) found that although the book titles promised “world history,” the content emphasized “Western civilization.” At least 55% of page content (and in some texts more) focused on European history. Although many historians argue that “world history is about defining a version of historical chronology that transcends the history of any one geographic region and creates a global vision of the past,” the textbooks being used in schools are “firmly ensconced in a Western version of historical chronology and evolution” (pp. 441–442).

Exploring How Textbooks Present the Past

James Loewen, an outspoken critic of history education in K–12 schools, suggests that students and teachers analyze each textbook for its strengths and weaknesses as a presentation of the past. Loewen’s books include *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (2005) and *Teaching What Really Happened: How To Avoid the Tyranny of Textbooks and Get Students Excited About Doing History* (2010).

Examining the lives and works of Helen Keller and Woodrow Wilson as representative case studies, Loewen finds that textbooks offer biographical facts while omitting controversial political realities. Students read how Helen Keller as a blind and deaf girl who overcame her physical disabilities, but

they do not learn that she was a radical socialist who worked tirelessly to improve the lives of poor and disenfranchised Americans, contributed to the NAACP, helped to found the ACLU, championed birth control, and protested outside a theater showing a movie of her life because the film focused on her disabilities and not her political activism.

In textbooks, Woodrow Wilson is presented as a courageous president who led the country during World War I, but not as the commander in chief who sent troops to intervene in Latin America more often than any other time in American history. Nor do textbooks capture the complex nature of the man who wept at his White House desk after asking Congress to declare war on Germany, a speech in which he declared: “It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance.”

For Loewen, the examples of Helen Keller and Woodrow Wilson reveal a fundamental problem with textbooks. Caught between “the conflicting desires to promote inquiry and to indoctrinate blind patriotism,” the vast majority of history textbooks reflect historical facts and perspectives in selective slices, not in fluid panoramic views (Loewen, 2010, p. 6). They compress the past into bits on timelines, leading students to think, in a simplified context, of history as sequential information to be memorized rather than people’s actions, decisions, and choices to be analyzed and understood.

Instead, Loewen (2010) urges “schools to help us learn how to ask questions about our society and its history and figure out answers for ourselves” (p. 356). Students can act as editors of their textbooks, adding historically accurate information about the struggles and accomplishments of individuals and groups while locating examples of bias, inconsistency, and inaccuracy within the text (Ward, 2010, p. xv). This will generate a wider view of historical experience, for as African American poet James Baldwin observed: “history is longer, larger, more various, more beautiful, and more terrible than anything anyone has ever said about it.”

Introducing Students to Alternative Texts

Beginning in 1980 with the publication of the first edition of *A People’s History of the United States* (1980/2010), historian Howard Zinn has produced a host of materials that challenge traditional textbooks while providing teachers and students with alternative content for the study of history. *A People’s History* alone has sold more than 1 million copies.

Zinn’s writing crosses multiple genres: young adult: *A Young People’s History of the United States* (Zinn & Steffoff, 2007); primary sources: *Voices of a People’s History of the United States* (Zinn & Arnove, 2004); graphic

comix: *A People's History of the American Empire* (Zinn, Konopacki, & Buhle, 2008); memoir: *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train: A Personal History of Our Times* (Zinn, 2002), and anthology: *The Zinn Reader: Writings on Disobedience and Democracy* (Zinn, 2009).

All these books present voices that “have mostly been shut out of the orthodox histories, the major media, the standard textbooks, the controlled culture” (Zinn & Arno, 2004, p. 24). Standard curriculum and traditional teaching create what Zinn calls a “passive citizenry, not knowing its powers” to enact change in society. Students need to learn when and where people rose against oppression to remake society, for “history looked at under the surface, in the streets and on the farms, in GI barracks and trailer camps, in factories and offices, tells a different story” (Zinn & Arno, 2004, p. 24).

Zinn's critically minded history books for student readers, notes media critic James Heflin (2011, p. 20), offer an approach that is very different from the “sober, distanced analysis” of mainstream history textbooks, viewing history “from a broad perspective, discussing how events impact nations and societies.” Other writers have followed Zinn in exploring the experiences of everyday people, notably *A People's History of the American Revolution* (Raphael, 2002), *A People's History of the World* (Harman, 2008), *A People's History of Christianity* (Bass, 2010), *A People's History of the Supreme Court* (Irons, 2006), and *A People's History of the Sports in the United States* (Zirin, 2009). Although mainstream textbooks can be useful teaching tools, they “ride along on waves of dates and numbers and non-gripping narratives” (Heflin, 2011, p. 20). By contrast, alternative texts enable students and teachers to see history “up-close and personal” through first-person narratives and compelling stories.

Alternative texts present an important point/counterpoint to mainstream textbooks. As they read and discuss the textbook, students and teachers can examine different presentations about a topic and compare it with what the textbook tells them. Further information can be added using primary sources and historical studies. This mixture of information from different perspectives creates a more nuanced, historically complex portrait of people, places, and events where students must make informed judgments about cause and effect, motivation, and power, probing deeply into events to understand their meaning and impact.

Exploring Hidden Histories and Untold Stories

Hidden histories and untold stories refers to the experiences of individuals and groups who are mostly absent from textbooks and curriculum frame-

works, particularly women, African Americans, Native Americans, Mexican Americans, gays, lesbians, and workers. As a guide for contrasting curriculum content, students and teachers can use national or state curriculum standards to explore hidden histories and untold stories from different historical time periods.

Table 1.1 shows how students and teachers can connect hidden histories and untold stories to curriculum frameworks, using examples from both the U.S. History advanced placement (AP) and Massachusetts learning standards.

Any learning standard from any curriculum framework can be a starting point for uncovering the hidden histories and untold stories of diverse individuals and groups. The goal is to first see what the state or national standard expects teachers to teach and students to learn. Then, students and teachers collectively identify and learn about individuals, groups, and events that have been omitted or neglected by the standard.

Many excellent resources support the hidden history/untold stories research process. *The Secret Histories*, an anthology of documents assembled by John S. Friedman (2005), is a useful companion for exploring the untold stories of the recent past. It features the work of courageous journalists who lifted the veil of government secrets including I. F. Stone's expose of the Korean War, Edward R. Murrow's report on Sen. Joseph McCarthy, and Seymour Hersh's investigations of the My Lai massacre and torture at Abu Ghraib. These secret histories enlarge often told textbook accounts by offering students more complex historical understandings.

Ray Raphael, a history researcher at Humboldt State University, writes about the hidden histories of the American Revolutionary era. His recent books include *Constitutional Myths: What We Get Wrong and How To Get It Right* (2013), *The First American Revolution: Before Lexington and Concord* (2011), *Founders: The People Who Brought You a Nation* (2009), and *Founding Myths: Stories that Hide Our Patriotic Past* (2004). Eric Foner's *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History* (2010) has an impressive collection of primary sources for use in the classroom while his historical writing focuses on Civil War and Reconstruction periods in American history, notably *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (2011). "If We Know Our History," a regular column on the Zinn Education Project website, features articles by teachers and researchers explicitly challenging myths and stereotypes found in mainstream textbooks.

The films of Ken Burns are a compelling source of contrasting content. His made-for-television documentaries, notes media scholar Gary R. Edgerton (2001, p. vii), have focused on "epic events, landmarks and

Table 1.1. Hidden Histories and Untold Stories by Learning Standards

<i>Learning Standard</i>	<i>Hidden History/Untold Story Topic</i>
<i>Massachusetts Grade 5.31:</i> Describe the significance and consequences of the abolition of slavery in the northern states after the Revolution and of the 1808 law that banned the importation of slaves in the United States.	Benjamin Banneker: A free Black astronomer, mathematician, surveyor, author and farmer whose opposition to slavery was published in <i>Benjamin Banneker's Almanac</i> , a collection of scientific information (compared with Benjamin Franklin's <i>Poor Richard's Almanac</i>), published annually between 1792 and 1797.
<i>Massachusetts United States History I.4:</i> Analyze how Americans resisted British policies before 1775 and analyze the reasons for the American victory and the British defeat during the Revolutionary War. <i>AP United States History Theme 4:</i> The American Revolutionary Era, 1754–1789	Seeking freedom from slavery, Blacks fought on both sides of the Revolution; an estimated 5,000 served in the Continental Army (including the First Rhode Island regiment) or at sea, whereas others resettled in Sierra Leone, Australia, and Nova Scotia.
<i>Massachusetts United States History I.28:</i> Explain the emergence and effect of the textile industry in New England and industrial growth throughout antebellum America. <i>AP United States History Theme 6:</i> Transformation of the Economy and Society in Antebellum America	Lowell Mill Girls: Women and young girls in the textile mills were part of the development of the Factory Girls Association and the Strike of 1836 in Lowell, Massachusetts.
<i>Massachusetts United States History II.9:</i> Analyze the post-Civil War struggles of women and Blacks in gaining basic rights <i>AP United States History Theme 17:</i> Populism and Progressivism	Ida B. Wells: Wells, an early civil rights activist, journalist, and anti-lynching campaigner refused to give up her seat in a Jim Crow-era railroad car, setting in motion a seminal court case that challenged segregation.
<i>AP United States History Theme 19:</i> The 1920s	Tulsa Race Riots: Rioters burned Oklahoma's second largest Black community in 1921, destroying more than 1,000 homes and businesses and killing as many as 300 people.

Massachusetts United States History II.17:
Explain the important domestic events that took place during World War II.

Zoot Suit Riots: Race riots in Los Angeles in 1943 directed against Mexican Americans and involving racial profiling by the police.

AP United States History Theme 22: The Home Front During the War

Navajo Code Talkers: The role of Native Americans in creating a military communication code based on the Navajo language that the Japanese forces could not break during World War II.

Massachusetts United States History II.24:
Analyze the roots of domestic anti-communism as well as the origins and consequences of McCarthyism.

The Lavender Scare: Persecution and criminalization of gay and lesbian federal employees during the 1950s.

Advanced Placement United States History Theme 24: The 1950s

institutions of historical significance . . . understood through the popular mythology of America’s collective memory.” Weaving throughout the films are the often hidden histories of African Americans, women, and other dispossessed groups, all framed in terms of American ideals of democracy and justice for all.

In the classroom, every Burns film connects historical people and events to contemporary audiences in emotionally empathetic ways. As a biographer, Burns is able to “stimulate powerful feelings of intimacy in audience members as they watch and relate to the featured characters’ life stories” (Edgerton, 2001, p. viii). The “American Lives” series (Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, Frank Lloyd Wright, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mark Twain, Horatio’s Drive, and Jack Johnson) is now available on iTunes. In 2014, Burns released an iPad app that enables students and teachers to view mixtapes drawn from more than 8,000 minutes of film from 23 award-winning documentaries, organized by themes of innovation, race, politics, art, hard times, and war. In the classroom, with handheld cameras or smartphones, students and teachers can write, document, and film their own videos about historical topics, adding music, and using the “Ken Burns effect” of zooming in and out of still photographs to sustain interest and involvement by viewers.

Writing a “post-Loewen” view of history for students is a complex process, notes Scott L. Roberts (2013) about his efforts to write a revised

version of the Georgia state history book, *Time Travel Through Georgia*. At the outset, Roberts (2013) had six Loewen-inspired goals for his revision, each intended to address the inaccuracies and biases found in other state textbooks:

1. remove unnecessary information/focus on the standards;
2. remove heroification;
3. make the text relevant to the lives of students;
4. remove the tone of an omniscient/noncritical narrator;
5. incorporate more historical sources; and
6. limit the assumption that Georgia's history and culture was superior to those of other states.

Meeting these goals proved difficult for Roberts. The publisher deleted critical assessments of some historical figures (e.g., an analysis of Woodrow Wilson's presidency) to meet page-limit requirements. Colleagues and teachers criticized sections of the book as not informative enough about the Battle of Gettysburg or Hernando de Soto's cruelty toward native peoples. History book authors, concluded Roberts (2013), have to compromise about what to include in a text while, most importantly, students and teachers have to "learn how to locate and use different sources in order to prevent the overuse of textbooks" (p. 57).

Strategy: Uncovering and Discovering the Past

In 1968, Bill Cosby narrated *Black History: Lost, Stolen or Strayed?* a CBS News television special critiquing the absence of African Americans in history textbooks. Andy Rooney wrote the Emmy Award-winning script. As the film opens, Cosby, then a young actor and humorist, enters an elementary school classroom while the children are exiting for recess. When the room is empty, he begins recounting stories of African Americans who have accomplished great things in history, but who are not in textbooks, before pointing out it is less important whether a few Black heroes were lost, stolen, or strayed from the textbooks than why they were left out. Societal and institutional racism systematically fails to give credence or agency to the actions of African Americans in American history.

Key to going beyond mainstream histories is understanding the words *coverage* and *uncoverage*, note Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (2005, p. 16), the authors of the *Understanding by Design* approach to curriculum development. In the authors' view, coverage is a "negative term (whereas introduction or survey is not)." When teachers put an emphasis on covering the material, "the student is led through unending facts, ideas, and readings with little or no sense of the overarching ideas, issues, and learning goals that might inform study" (p. 16). Uncoverage involves "guided inquiry into big ideas, where knowledge is made more connected, meaningful, and useful" for students (p. 104).

Historian Lendol Calder also champions "uncoverage" as an approach to curriculum development. In a 2006 *Journal of American History* article, Calder contrasted the scholarly work of practicing historians with the realities of teaching history to students. The structure of basic history survey courses (Calder was discussing courses for college undergraduates but his points apply to public schools as well) "require professors to pass on essential information about a time period." Covering curriculum in a "facts first" framework involves lectures, assigned readings, and written exams; what Calder characterizes as the "signature pedagogy" for teaching history to beginning students. All too often, the result is disengaged, disinterested students who feel overwhelmed by the amount of information they must remember. Similar student responses happen in public schools when history classes resemble college survey courses where teachers try to cover as much content as possible within the school year.

Calder proposes challenging the "signature pedagogy" of coverage. Coverage, he notes, has many meanings from "to go the length of" all the way "to conceal." Many lecture-based survey courses stressing dates over information embody this second meaning, keeping students from experiencing the "inquires, arguments, assumptions, and points of view" that encompass the work of historians and social scientists. Students need to examine primary sources and draw conclusions about the causes and consequences of events based on historical evidence. Without opportunities to do this, students do not experience debates. Instead, they assume that the meaning of the past has already been decided when in fact it is constantly being revisited and revised.

Examining Historical Events Thematically

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS; 1994, 2010) organizes curriculum standards around 10 themes drawn from different social science

fields to create interdisciplinary approaches to the design, delivery and assessment of instruction:

1. Culture and cultural diversity,
2. Time, continuity, and change,
3. People, places, and environment,
4. Individual development and identity,
5. Individuals, groups, and institutions,
6. Power, authority, and governance,
7. Production, distribution, and consumption,
8. Science technology and society,
9. Global connections, and
10. Civic ideals and practices.

Using the academic concepts and tools of different social science disciplines, curriculum topics can be studied from multiple perspectives. One example is King Philip's War of 1675–78 (also known as Metacom's War or Metacom's Rebellion), a brutal and bloody struggle that occurred between Native Americans loyal to the Wampanoag tribal leader Metacom and English settlers and their Native American allies throughout New England. In Massachusetts schools, King Philip's War is studied in fifth grade as part of the learning standard: "Explain the early relationship of the English settlers to the indigenous peoples, or Indians, in North America, including the different views on ownership or use of land and the conflicts between them (e.g., the Pequot and King Philip's Wars in New England [Massachusetts Department of Education, 2003])." King Philip's War might also be taught in U.S. History AP Theme 2: "Transatlantic Encounters and Colonial Beginnings, 1492–1690."

King Philip's War was a seminal event in colonial North America; it "cleared southern New England's native population from the land, and with it a way of life that had evolved over a millennium" (Schultz & Tougias, 2000, p. 1). Native peoples were "slaughtered, sold into slavery, or placed in widely scattered communities throughout New England after the war." Over time, the war has been largely neglected in textbooks and curriculum frameworks. But there is much for students to learn from this struggle. Contrasting the popular view of native peoples feasting peacefully with