

# Teaching Hidden History

Course website and samples of  
student work


# Course website

## TEACHING

### *Hidden History*

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Explore AMERICA'S past  
through everyday objects

### Teaching Hidden History

Teaching Hidden History is a hybrid course featuring online components and in-person meetings utilizing the 4-VA Telepresence rooms on the Mason and Virginia Tech campuses. [More...]

Teaching and learning history in the digital age by researching and building online modules.

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**4-VA**  
Made possible with funding from 4-VA, a statewide initiative dedicated to fostering collaboration among Virginia universities with the goal of improving all Virginians' access to higher education.

[edchnm.gmu.edu/teachinghiddenhistory](http://edchnm.gmu.edu/teachinghiddenhistory)

# Graduate students created online learning modules on a chosen historical topic

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## Student Modules



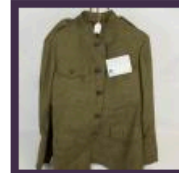
The Key to the  
Civil War



Revealing  
Nature



Camp Meeting



Virginia Tech  
and the Great  
War



Building  
Cultural Bridges



George  
Washington's  
Dream



Amos 'n' Andy  
toy taxi



A New Deal  
for African  
Americans

# Each module was based on an image or artifact from the past

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Clone content



**Your name**

sleeter1

#### Instructions

Examine this historical photograph and answer the following questions: 1. What do you notice about this photograph? 2. What might this photo teach us about American History?

[Resources](#)

# Students created twelve resources with narrative text to explain the “hidden history” behind their artifact

## Oil on Hands

View Outline

Clone content



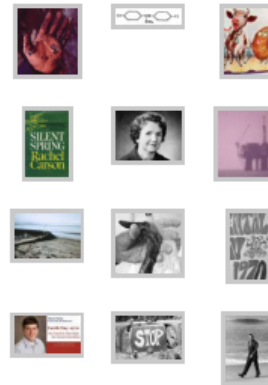
The oil on this man's hands could be a symbol of failed environmental policies. Yet these hands were actually those of an environmental protection worker, cleaning up pollution. Jim Pickerell photographed Preston Sleeper cleaning up a 4,000 gallon oil spill in Stony Run, Maryland during February of 1973. The photograph was not a sensational journalist's coverage of catastrophe, but part of a federal program to document and improve America's environmental landscapes.

America did not always have a concern for protection of the environment. Conservation and proper use of natural resources became important to Progressives between 1890 and the New Deal. But these efforts continued to view nature as a resource to be extracted. How the American public gained an appreciation for landscapes, not just resources, was a story both of and apart from other 1960's protest movements. The social movements built on work to recognize the civil rights of marginalized groups like African Americans, women, Native Americans, and Chicano/as. The movements highlighted America's diversity and the Environmental Movement fit into this effort. Simultaneously, the antiwar protests and counter-culture movement rejected some of America's traditional viewpoints on materialism and the Environmental Movement's changing view towards nature embraced these narratives as well.

Finally, scientific advances documenting new dangers influenced the Environmental Movement's policy goals. This dimension separated it from the other social movements based more on a sense of equal justice than scientific evidence. These scientific advances occurred even as scientists invented new chemicals, like DDT and other pesticides described in this module. It is difficult to detect the changed consciousness of Americans toward the environment until in a burst of activity, new protections and agencies realigned national policies.

### Instructions

Click on each image to learn more about the objects and their role in American environmental history.



<< Hypothesis Rethink >>