

Instructor: Brian Solski

Email: brian_solski@charleston.k12.sc.us

Google Classroom Code: zvj26z

Book Website: <http://www.historyisaweapon.com/zinnapeopleshistory.html>

Welcome to AP United States History! This class will be an intensive study of the history of the United States of America. In preparation for this class you will have part of a book to read over the summer. The assignment for *A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn is to be turned in on August 20, 2018. The assigned reading serves two very important purposes. First, I hope to spark your interest in United States History. Second, it will provide you with the background knowledge necessary to begin our coursework together. The selected book is an alternative viewpoint to United States History and is critically acclaimed, but also controversial. It looks at history through the eyes of the common people rather than political and economic elites. *A People's History* has been assigned as reading in many high schools and colleges across the United States. It has also resulted in a change in the focus of historical work, which now includes stories that previously were ignored. You will only be required to read the **some chapters** in the book. The rest of the book will be read over the course of the school year. To get the book, you can use the above website for free or purchase the book online or at Barnes & Noble (used copies are pretty cheap on Amazon).

This Assignment is Worth 200 Points Towards Your 1st Quarter Grade

Assignment

This assignment will require you to do the following:

1. Read the assigned chapters
2. Create an electronic journal on Google Drive and answer the questions below. All answers must be written in complete sentences (most questions will require more than one sentence).
3. Submit your journal by the first day of school (August 20, 2018). Share it with me using my CCSD email and give me editing rights.
4. Be prepared to discuss the summer reading in a Socratic Seminar over the first few days of school. The debate resolutions at the end of this handout will be the topics of discussion, along other aspects of the book.
5. Take a test on the content of the assigned chapters during the first week of school.

*Use 12 point font, Times New Roman/Georgia Font, 1.5 Spacing

**Make sure name is at the top of the assignment!

Section I: Zinn Chapter Discussion Questions

Chapter 1: Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress

1. Write down the five most important things Zinn says about Columbus. Write down the two most important things about the writing of history.
2. Compare and contrast Columbus's Log Entries with Las Casas's journal entries.
3. Was Columbus responsible for the behavior of his men?
 - a. Identify what the soldiers' behaviors were
 - b. Identify what Columbus could or could not have done to alter that behavior

Chapter 9: Slavery Without Submission, Emancipation Without Freedom

1. On what basis did the U.S. government support slavery?
2. How was the Emancipation Proclamation a military tactic?
3. What caused Republicans to abandon their defense of black rights? Discuss economic as well as political reasons.

Chapter 11: Robber Barons & Rebels

1. What was the technology that transformed the work place from 1865-1900? What economic and social effects did the new technology have on society?
2. How did J.P. Morgan justify his methods of doing business?
3. What methods did each of the following use to build his fortune?
 - a. Morgan
 - b. Rockefeller
 - c. Carnegie
4. How does Zinn argue that the Supreme Court cannot possibly act in a neutral fashion? What is the argument against Zinn?
5. During the period from 1865-1900, how did the political/economic elite
 - a. Contain the demands of blacks for equal rights?
 - b. Contain the demands of farmers and laborers for economic justice?
 - c. Respond to Indians' desires to be allowed to exist?

Chapter 13: The Socialist Challenge

1. Emma Goldman argued that “the cause of the Spanish American War was the price of sugar . . .” How could that be?
2. What was the topic of Upton Sinclair’s 1906 novel, *The Jungle*? What might have accounted for its popularity?
3. Why did 146 Triangle Shirtwaist Company workers die in the fire of 1911?
4. Discuss the 1st Amendment in relation to the laws the Wobblies were fighting against with their “free speech” tactics.
5. Why were workers attracted to socialism? Why did businessmen find socialism the greatest of threats? Why would women/African American workers be skeptical of socialism?
6. Why did the coal strike at Ludlow “culminate” in a “massacre”?

Chapter 14: War is the Health of the State

1. How was America’s interest and participation in World War I an extension of the same foreign policy rationale behind the government’s decision to wage war in Spain in 1898?
2. Did the U.S. government’s decision to enter World War I cause an increase in the popularity of socialism in America or did socialism’s popularity merely coincide with America’s participation in the war?
3. What were the reasons to oppose America’s involvement in World War I? What were the reasons to support the war?

Chapter 17: “Or Does It Explode?”

1. In what way did the 1954 Brown decision by the Supreme Court mark a departure from its previous course? In what way did it not?
2. What was the key strategy that King contributed to the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s?
3. What did Malcolm X think of the 1963 March on Washington?
4. How did the Watts riot begin? How did it end?
5. Why did the Black Panthers have guns?
6. Why did King speak out against the war in Vietnam? Why did he wait so long to say anything?
7. Were Fred Hampton & Mark Clark murdered? Defend your answer.

Chapter 18: The Impossible Victory: Vietnam

1. How did the Johnson administration persuade Congress to give the president the freedom to wage war on Vietnam?
2. What were the Pentagon Papers? Why did the government want to keep them secret? Why was Ellsberg not jailed for releasing classified material?
3. “But Vietnam produced opposition by soldiers and veterans on a scale with a fervor never seen before.” Why?

Chapter 19: Surprises

1. What was the double bind that working women were in?
2. Why could women not seek legal action before 1967 if they had been discriminated against because they were women?
3. Why is abortion perceived as a feminist issue and not a medical or civil rights issue?
4. How was George Jackson an example of a new kind of political prisoner?
5. Why was the emergence of the American Indian Movement (AIM) a surprise to whites?

Historical Debate Resolution

Directions: These are the some of the topics we will discuss during our Socratic Seminar to start the year, so be ready.

Chapter 9 Slavery without Submission, Emancipation without Freedom

- The Civil War was fought to end slavery

Chapter 14 War is the Health of the State

- A government needs to silence dissent when it is at war.

Chapter 17 “Or Does It Explode?”

- Voting affects neither social nor economic change?