

“Power of Identity” Stories Go Viral

8th grade history students begin the year with a unit on identity, which establishes the course’s essential questions:

- *What is a just society?*
- *How do societies change?*
- *How can individuals and groups make a difference?*

At Putnam Avenue Upper School, teachers **Jenny Chung** (History) and **Woodly Pierre-Louis** (ELA) guide students in thinking about the ways identity stories can combat stereotypes. Public Radio International’s (PRI’s) Jeb Sharp recently featured their work, including students’ personal narratives. WGBH first aired Sharp’s “The World” story on May 27. The PRI story sparked *Metro* to follow up with an article on the power of one student’s story, which in turn was picked up by the *Huffington Post*. You can check out the stories at the following links:

PRI broadcast and transcript:

<http://www.pri.org/stories/2015-05-27/learning-each-us-gets-stereotyped-helps-us-move-beyond-single-story>

and

<http://www.pri.org/stories/2015-05-27/i-am-muslim-and-bangladesh-does-not-mean-i-am-terrorist>

The *Metro*’s “Thirteen-year-old Cambridge girl Sumaiya Mahee takes on Islamophobia” at:

<http://www.metro.us/boston/you-re-not-who-you-say-you-are-cambridge-girl-takes-on-islamophobia/zsJofi---LY4foLhYZn1EA/>

Huffington Post:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/10/sumaiya-mahee-challenges-islamophobia_n_753588.html



PAUS teachers **Jenny Chung** (History), **Woodly Pierre-Louis** (ELA), and their students
Photo courtesy of Jeb Sharp for Public Radio International, <http://www.pri.org/>

Kimborough Scholars

This year, eight CRLS students - **Lara Adekeye, Etianna Alcius Etienne, Elorpheton Deneus, Linda Mindaye, Marjorie Ofori, Connor Hogue Rodley, Dakotah Sanford** and **Jwahir Sundai** - participated in the second annual Kimborough Scholars Project, which honors the legacy of **Leslie Kimbrough**, former teacher and administrator at CRLS. The students worked with law students and faculty at the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Clinic of the **Northeastern University School of Law** to help investigate cold murder cases of the 1930s and 1940s. In a classroom seminar led by **Kathleen Fitzgerald**, the students also explored the history of racial injustice in the United States. This April, the Kimborough Scholars travelled to south Florida to conduct fieldwork related to a 1942 police shooting that they researched extensively. They presented their findings to the CRLS community on May 28th.



*Kimborough Scholars and Advisors in Florida
Photo by Larry Aaronson, courtesy of Kathleen Fitzgerald*

Haggerty's First Graders Explore Patriotic Symbols

This spring, the History Department was awarded a Building Aligned Curriculum grant to pilot "From Sea to Shining Sea: Patriotic Songs and Symbols", one of the model curriculum units developed by **Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**. **Haggerty** 1st grade teachers **Kerri Favreau** and **Linda Yeh** collaborated with history coach **Julie Craven** to implement the unit, which encourages students to explore the following essential questions:

- *What are patriotic symbols?*
- *Why do we have them?*

- *What can we learn about a nation through its patriotic symbols?*
- *What are the stories of our patriotic symbols?*



Photo by Julie Craven.

Each week students focused on a particular patriotic symbol: the Statue of Liberty, the American Flag, the White House, and the Bald Eagle. As Linda Yeh noted:

The kids were super excited to learn about U.S. symbols and loved making connections to the symbols in their own lives. One...of my students got to visit the White House over spring break and excitedly brought in pictures of the White House, which we had just learned about.



Photo by Julie Craven.

By introducing the national ideals of liberty, democracy, and unity, the unit laid important foundations for future civic learning. Students also became skilled at an important writing goal for first graders, organizing information into appropriate categories. As a culminating project, students created books highlighting a particular symbol. Librarian **Sarah Novogrodsky** helped students to create **VoiceThread** recordings describing pictures of their symbols. Students then presented their books and recordings to parents at a recent breakfast.

7th Grade History Teachers Collaborate in Online Professional Development

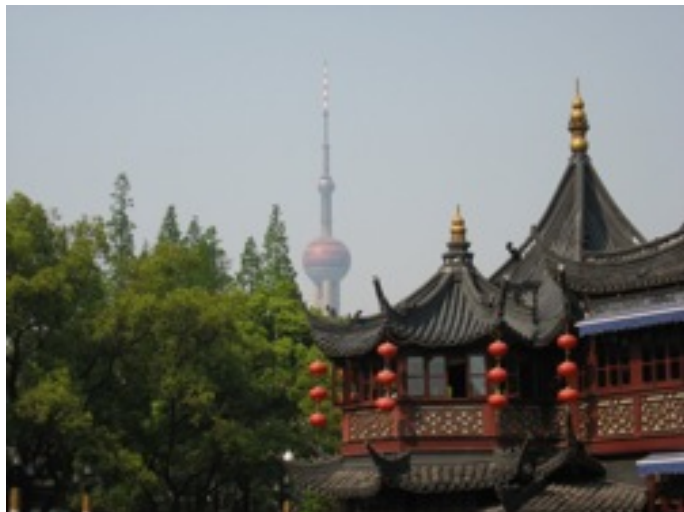


Photo and image to right from <http://www.primarysource.org/>

From January to March, 7th grade history teachers **Tracey Gordon** (CSUS), **Chris Rettig** (VLUS), **Ferdando Santos** (PAUS), and **Tom Trainor** (RAUC) deepened their understanding of their curriculum by participating in an on-line course, "The Enduring Legacy of Ancient China," which was offered by **Primary Source**, a long-standing partner of Cambridge Public Schools. Here's what the 7th grade team had to say about the experience:

"Related content was presented in ways that would also be engaging for our 7th graders. And it was interesting to read (my colleagues') postings." --**Tracey Gordon** (CSUS)

"The Enduring Legacy of Ancient China was an in-depth three-month experience that exposed teachers to hundreds of primary sources and other amazing resources, such as websites and the accompanying secondary text... Additionally, the benefit of having my three other fellow seventh grade history teachers participate in the course simultaneously allowed us to create and improve lessons and units of study on China. The ability to visualize with my colleagues what these resources and topics will look like in a seventh grade classroom in Cambridge further enhanced the tangible effect this will have on my teaching."

--**Tom Trainor** (RAUC)

"I really appreciated some particular elements and lessons, especially one in which we were able to participate in a virtual seminar (a webinar)

with a Harvard professor. It was great to hear his direct answers to our questions, especially about Chinese belief systems... I also found the lessons on art and poetry especially useful. There was a very moving short story we read about a woman whose husband died working on the Great Wall; I'll definitely use that this spring! It was neat to take the online course together..." --**Chris Rettig** (VLUS)

PRIMARY SOURCE

This summer, four CPS teachers were selected to participate in summer workshops with Primary Source:

- **Rachel Otty**, CRLS, "Modern African History"
- **Michael Batt**, Amigos, "Teaching for Global Understanding"
- **Katie Reed**, Cambridgeport, "Thinking Like a Historian"
- **Angelica Brisk**, RSTA, "Window to the Islamic World"



Nickolas Perrault,

https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Nicolas_M._Perrault.s

The CPS history and social studies curriculum can be found at:

https://sites.google.com/a/cpsd.us/history_social_science/home?pli=1

National History Day Winners

Four CPS students, **Karolyn Lee** of CRLS and **Alice Jacob**, **Sam Kravitz** and **Zev Dickstein** of CSUS were winners at the Massachusetts National History Day (NHD) in April and advanced to the national competition in Washington, DC, in June.



Cambridge Street Scholars at National History Day
Photo by Paula Feynman

Jacob and Lee wrote historical essays for NHD, with Alice exploring the life and legacy of transcendentalist Margaret Fuller. Karolyn Lee's exemplary paper on Lyndon B. Johnson led to her being selected to attend the 2nd Annual Writers Conference at the Library of Congress. Lee and her advisor, **Dr. Barbara Weaver**, then had the opportunity to meet with **Senator Elizabeth Warren**.



Karolyn Lee, Senator Elizabeth Warren & Dr. Barbara Weaver
Photo courtesy of Dr. Barbara Weaver

Kravitz and Dickstein's documentary on Ben Bradlee won **10th place** at the national competition!



Photo by Paula Feynman

Congratulations to the winners and all of the participants. Thanks to their advisors **Paula Feynman** and **Barbara Weaver**!

Upper School and CRLS Teachers Engage in Understanding by Design

This year, the History and Social Science Department continued to create and refine **Understand by Design** (UbD) units of study. In October, all history teachers participated in a workshop led by **Kim Brandon** of **Authentic Education**. Grade level teams continued this work throughout the year. Highlights include:

- an 8th grade collaboration with [Facing History and Ourselves \(FHAO\)](#) to create "Civics and Power: The Individual and Society," which incorporates the "Choices in Little Rock" curriculum
- a new 10th grade unit on the Constitution, including a research paper where students delve into connections between current public policy debates and the Constitution.

In *The Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High-Quality Units*, the late Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe liken their principles to a "cookbook", noting that as with cooking, the creation of curriculum "is inherently nonlinear as you try things out, alter various 'ingredients,' and double-back to ensure that the end product works" (p. 2). In this manner, CPS teachers continue to refine and improve existing units to align assessments and instruction, so that students master the relevant content and skills while engaging in meaningful historical investigations.