

National History Day 2024
“Turning Points in History”
Missouri, Kansas, and Truman Research Topics

General Research Resources:

Harry S. Truman Library & Museum Online Collection:
<https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/online-collections>

Johnson County, Kansas Museum:
<https://jcprd.com/1836/Museum>

Kansas City Public Library Public Library Digital History Resources:
<https://kclibrary.org/digital-history>

Kansas State Historical Society :
<https://www.kshs.org/>

Kenneth Spencer Research Library Archival Collections at The University of Kansas:
<https://archives.lib.ku.edu/>

Library of Congress:
<https://www.loc.gov/>

Missouri State Historical Society:
<https://shsmo.org/>

UMKC University Archives:
<https://library.umkc.edu/sca/university-archives/>

National Archives
<https://catalog.archives.gov/>

Missouri Topics

- *Gaines v. Canada*, 1938

- In 1935, an African American student, Lloyd Gaines, was rejected from the University of Missouri School of Law because the Missouri Constitution instituted racial segregation in education.
- Gaines would go on to sue Silas W. Canada, the registrar for MU, hoping to overturn the separate but equal laws established by *Plessy V. Ferguson* in 1896.
- Gaines gained popularity and was significantly aided by the NAACP, helping to win his case before the supreme court in 1938. However, this victory did not succeed as intended, as the courts only acknowledged Gaines's rights were violated but did nothing to overturn the laws that had led to those rights being violated.
- While his case did not overturn education discrimination laws, this case marks a turning point in the fight for equal education opportunities. Many of the defenses from this case would greatly aid in ending education discrimination in the *Brown V. Board of Education* years later.
 - <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1900-1940/305us337>
 - https://historicmissourians.shsmo.org/?page_id=6877
 - <https://kcblackhistory.org/articles/lloyd-gaines>

- Lewis and Clark expedition, 1803-1806.
 - Under direction from President Thomas Jefferson, Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark would lead a series of exploratory missions with the Corps of Discovery Expedition into the then newly acquired land from the Louisiana Purchase.
 - With the aid of a Lemhni Shoshone guide, Sacagawea, the corp could map out the vast territory of the new American frontier, writing important maps and documenting the Flora and Fauna of the area. The base of much of their operations was stationed in the old French settlement of St. Charles.
 - The discoveries made by Lewis and Clark and the reaction their findings had on the Americans initiated the pouring of Americans from the east coast into the modern American West and beginning the westward expansion that would become known as “Manifest Destiny.”
 - <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/lewisandclark/lewis-landc.html>
 - https://historicmissourians.shsmo.org/?page_id=7519
 - <https://www.kcur.org/arts-life/2021-11-03/lewis-and-clark-expedition-kansas-missouri>

- Missouri-Mormon war:

- Soon after the founding of Mormonism in 1830 in New York, the religious founder, Joseph Smith, began dispatching missionaries to parts of modern-day Jackson County in western Missouri.

- The following year, Smith proclaimed the areas he had sent his missionaries were to be declared the New Zion, where the second coming of Christ would occur. Soon after, Smith's message drew a flood of Mormon settlers to the American frontier centered in western Missouri. Soon after their arrival, the old immigrants and members of the LDS (Church of Latter day saints) would begin clashing. The old settlers argued that the LDS was trying to uproot their way of living and called the Mormons fanatics who mocked Republican ideals by placing power in the hands of one man. Meanwhile, the Mormons claimed innocence and felt attacked for their faith.
- These tensions escalated to violence which the state government would try to mend by creating Caldwell County in northern Missouri as a Mormon refuge. The amount of migration into the state, however, made this impossible, and violence began to spread again, resulting in riots and mobs of anti-Mormon militias would form. Increasing violence caused Missouri's Mormon residents to form paramilitary groups, resulting in violence across the state for much of the 1830s.
- Eventually, the state's government expelled their LDS residents and followed up with a law that called for the total extermination of all Joseph Smith followers. This would lead to many Mormons heading west and establishing a new Zion in the Utah territory. They would populate and eventually turn into an environment marking a turning point in settling the West as Utah became a significant destination.
- <https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/mormon.asp>
- https://americainclass.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/6-mormon.boggs_.pdf
- <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/mountainmeadows/leeconfession.html>

- Redlining in Kansas City:

- Redlining is a practice of housing discrimination in virtually all American cities in the 19th and 20th Centuries, with famed Kansas City developer J.C. Nichols often cited as an early and prominent user of the practice.
- This system involves maintaining racial segregation by intentionally restricting homeowner associations and covenants based on race, thus severely limiting the housing opportunity of the city's black population and keeping them away from white neighborhoods.
- These practices were standard nationwide, and nearly all American cities have some redlining due to its influence on suburban and city planning.
- In 1948, *Shelley V Karamer* ruled racial restriction of housing was unconstitutional. Nevertheless, designers like Nicols would continue to use racially motivated housing practices, such as particular contracts and unnecessary criteria for housing that almost always ensured neighborhoods would be separated racially. These policies have thus shaped the urban development of the Kansas City area, marked a turning point in the city's layout, and have dramatically affected the displacement of African American communities.
- <https://kclibrary.org/signature-events/segregation-redlining-and-opportunity-hoarding-case-reforms://jcprd.com/1811/Special-Exhibit---Redlined-Cities-Suburb>
- <https://jcprd.com/1811/Special-Exhibit---Redlined-Cities-Suburb>

- Opening of the Santa Fe and Oregon trails, 1811 and 1821:
 - Starting in independence, the opening of the Oregon and Santa Fe trails marked the beginning of mass westward expansion across the country, the first of its kind since the Louisiana Purchase
 - Both trails carry settlers into the Oregon territory along the west coast and down to Texas on the Santa Fe trail. Both routes would be the main routes people would get west to settle parts of the new frontier throughout the 19th Century. Marking the beginning of Manifest Destiny within America.
- <https://www.santafetrail.org/the-trail/history/history-of-the-sft/>
- <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/education/lesson-plans/independence-and-opening-west>

- Andrew Taylor Still, 1826-1917:
 - Still is often called “The Father of Osteopathic Medicine.” He saw that medicine in his day often did more harm than good to patients; unclean surgery spaces and toxic chemicals like Arsenic, Opium lead, and Cocaine. These treatments often resulted in more deaths than cures.
 - Andrew Still looked into alternative treatments for patients, such as bone-setting, dieting, hydrotherapy, and magnetic healing. These often had a far less damaging effect on his patients. Additionally, Still was a proponent of modern common medical ideas such as treating a person's disease instead of just its symptoms.

- Still would go on to found the first school of Osteopathy in Kirksville, Mo, in 1892 (A.T Still University).
- While not considered conventional medicine, many of Still's ideas and techniques have been adopted into modern medical practices. His perception of whole-body medicine and minimizing the use of chemicals in medical treatment changed how medicine is thought of and practiced today.
- https://historicmissourians.shsmo.org/?page_id=4522
- <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/andrew-taylor-still/16903#:~:text=Born%20August%206%2C%201828%2C%20Lee,Douglas%20County%2C%20Kansas%20in%201853.>

- Dred Scott Decision, 1857:

- In 1846, Dred Scott, a black man in slavery, sued in the St. Louis courthouse for his freedom; he argued that he and his wife had been transferred from a slave state to states such as Illinois, where slavery was outlawed. Because he had been in a free state and brought back into a slave state as an enslaved person, he argued he and his wife were being held unlawfully.
- While cases of enslaved people petitioning for freedom were relatively common within Missouri, this case would grip national attention as it dragged out between 1846-1857.
- The Supreme Court declared that not only were Scott and his wife not entitled to their freedom, but African Americans were not citizens regardless of whether they were free or enslaved. Furthermore, the Missouri Compromise, the political

alignment that had kept peace between pro and anti-slave states for decades, was unconstitutional.

- This decision greatly angered the growing abolitionist movement and considerably changed the political landscape of America. Without the Missouri Compromise to maintain relations in the government, politics would break down and eventually lead to civil war within the country.

- <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/dredscottlinks.html>
- https://historicmissourians.shsmo.org/?page_id=4802

Truman Topics:

- The Berlin Blockade and Airlift, 1948-1949:

- In June 1948, the Soviet Union blocked the city of West Berlin, effectively halting land shipments of food and other essential supplies from getting into the city. In response, the Truman Administration began using leftover freight planes stationed in allied-occupied Germany to airlift food to Berlin for 16 months. This saved the civilians of West Berlin and marked the beginning of diplomatic hostilities between the Soviet Union and America, marking the beginning of the Cold War.
 - <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/online-collections/berlin-airlift>

- Desegregation of the armed forces and Federal Government 1948:

- Authorized under executive orders 9980 and 9981, President Truman implemented one of the first federal acts of racial equality by integrating the civilian government workforce

and the military. This came after a slew of reports of black veterans returning from WW2 brutally attacked and calls from African Americans for better legal treatment by the government.

- This act is seen by many as one of the first acts of civil rights for African Americans by being the first instance of government desegregation in many years. This eventually caused significant turmoil within the democratic party, with some Southern Democrats breaking off and forming the “Dixiecrat” party to oppose Truman.

- <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/executive-order-9981>
- <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/online-collections/desegregation-of-armed-forces>

- Deciding to Drop the Atomic Bomb, 1945:

- As the brutal Pacific theater was entering its final stages, and Truman was only recently made aware of a secret government project to develop atomic weapons, an impossible decision rested on Truman's shoulders: Should he drop this new weapon, knowing he would win the war and defeat Japan but cost hundreds of thousands of people, military and civilian alike, their lives? Or, was he to invade Japan by land, knowing he would drag the war out and potentially get just as many U.S. soldiers killed? In August 1945, Truman would be the first and only head of state to use an atomic weapon, dropping two bombs on Japan.

- In doing this, Truman not only ended World War 2 but the revelation to the world of Atomic technology would enter the world into a new kind of world, where the possibility of powerful nations using even more powerful weapons would

dominate military policy and would have a continuous impact on the nature of world politics.

- <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/online-collections/decision-to-drop-atomic-bomb>

- Korean War, 1950-1953

- After the end of Japanese occupation, the Korean peninsula was divided at the 38th Parallel, with a communist-backed regime in the North and a U.S backed government in the South. In 1950, the North invaded, seeking to reunify the whole peninsula under the rule of Kim Il Sung. President Truman responded by deploying U.S. troops alongside a UN force sent to protect South Korea.
 - This proxy war would be the first of many fought between the U.S. and its allies and the Soviet Union. The U.S. committing troops alongside partners to prevent the rise of Communism would become a fixture of U.S. foreign policy.
 - This conflict also marked the first time that nearly the entire UN committed troops to maintain the sovereignty of an independent state against foreign aggression and helped to retain strength amongst nations, not wanting to see hostile invasions become the norm again in international politics.
 - This conflict has permanently divided the Korean peninsula. Even today, the 38th parallel marks a division between a Russian-supported northern state and a southern state firmly allied with the US.
- <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/online-collections/korean-war-and-its-origins>

- Recognition of Israel, 1948:

- Following the end of WW2 in Europe, most of the Jewish population of Europe had been displaced by the war and Holocaust. Coupled with a rise of Zionists ideals within the last century fueled a desire to see those affected by the horrors of Nazi Germany move to British Palestine. Despite being occupied by long-time Arab residents, this area was seen as the holy land for the Jewish people.
 - With America's support, the British signed an agreement for Palestinian land to be handed over to the Jewish refugees soon after the war. Truman's good friend, Eddie Jacobson, was thought to be highly influential in this decision as he was Jewish.
 - Truman would become the first head of state to recognize Israel in 1948, which almost immediately triggered war for Israel. The Arabs residing in the area and the surrounding countries by the displacement of so many fellow Arabs were greatly upset and invaded.
 - American recognition would boost the young nation's international acclaim, and establishing positive relations starting with Truman would significantly impact the Middle East in the coming decades.
- <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/education/presidential-inquiries/recognition-israel>

Kansas Topics:

- Ed Jerman 1865-1936:

- Ed Jerman was an inventor often credited with developing the first widely used technology to administer X-Rays in doctors' offices and hospitals.
- After spending time working in the newly growing medical technology industry, Jerman invented the static machine to give power to doctors using electrical medical treatment. Jerman's was the only device big enough to provide power for X-Ray machines, leading to him establishing the Jerman Electric Company in 1897. While Jerman invented much of the technology, he spent most of his time on the sales and manufacturing side. After 1916, Jerman would spend much of his time helping to train staff in various clinics and offices around the country on how to use his machines appropriately.
- Jerman's work led to a massive increase in X-Ray technology, profoundly improving medical care.
- <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/ed-c-jerman/12099>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/7644607/>

- Menninger Clinic, 1919

- The Menningers were a family of doctors who, in 1919, opened a psychiatric clinic in Topeka, Kansas, Karl Menniger. From here, the family would open several other institutions of treatment and education in psychiatry.

- Their emphasis on teaching psychiatrists to tend to patients' physical needs, as well as emotional and mental, was a revolutionary way of thinking within American medicine at the time.
- The revolutions made by the research and education tactics of the Menniger institution changed much about how modern mental health professionals view how to treat patients. Publications made under the Merringer Institute, particularly Karl Mennigers *The Human Mind* and his family's work in mental health education, were instrumental in the shifts taken in mental health treatment in the past 100 years.
- <https://kansaspress.ku.edu/9780700605132/>
- <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/menninger-clinic/12147>
- The invention of the Dial telephone, 1892
 - After settling in Kansas and working as an undertaker, Almon Brown Strowger encountered competition when a new undertaker came to town. His business was severely affected by this new competitor as his wife was a local phone operator at a time in which all telephone callers first had to have an operator connect them to the intended party.
 - To work around this and keep his business successful, Strowger would work off pre-existing models of phones that had yet to be patented to create the first working dial telephone that allowed for direct calls.

- Strowger would leave the undertaking business and form Strowger Automatic Telephone Exchange Company, who installed the first Dial telephone in La Porte, Indiana, in 1892.
- Strowgers technology would be the basis of all dial and rotary phones that would come after, paving the way for the evolution of the telephone and forever changing human communication.
- <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/almon-strowger/16911>
- <https://kchistory.org/islandora/object/kchistory%3A66473>
- Alfred Fairfax, 1840-1916
 - Originally born into slavery in Virginia, Fairfax escaped, joining the Union Army during the Civil War. Here, he would learn to read and write.
 - After the war, Fairfax settled in Kansas, becoming an influential and outspoken Republican in Chautauqua County, Kansas.
 - Along with many other newly freed people, Fairfax would distinguish himself in 1888 when he won a local election for state legislator, making him the first black man in Kansas to hold public office.
 - Though his office time was brief, constituents described him as speaking quite eloquently, often calling for better treatment and representation for his fellow African Americans. Marking a turning point in the diversity of local politics within Kansas.
- <https://spencer.lib.ku.edu/collections/university-archives>
- <https://legendsofkansas.com/alfred-fairfax/>

- <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/alfred-fairfax/11733>

- Bleeding Kansas, 1854:

- The Kansas-Nebraska Act established that residents in the new area of Kansas could vote on whether they would want to allow slavery within their state or abolish it. This triggered bloody local conflicts as a local pro and enslaved-person militia fought along the state's border to determine the outcome.
- Large amounts of property were destroyed, and potentially hundreds of people were killed or wounded. The violence peaked during Lawrence's sack and burning by pro-slavery "Border Ruffians." This prompted abolitionist commander John Brown to kill five suspected pro-slavery fighters at Pottawatomie Creek.
- The violence from this time highlighted the lengths people were beginning to take to assert their position on slavery within the country. The effects of this would eventually play into the outbreak of the American Civil War.

- <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/bleeding-kansas/15145>

- <https://guides.loc.gov/chronicling-america-bleeding-kansas>

- Lucy Hobbs Taylor, 1833-1910:

- Born in New York, Taylor would become the first American woman ever to receive a Doctorate of Dental Surgery (DDS)
- After being rejected from a medicine program in Ohio, she would go on to study privately under one of the school's professors, who turned her towards dentistry.

After further study under the private instruction of the Dean of Ohio College of Dental Surgery, she raised herself to the position of a practicing graduate.

- Despite her knowledge, she was further denied entry to medical school because of her sex. Despite this, she would open her dental practice in Cincinnati. After working across the midwest for years, it would finally be in November of 1865 that Taylor was admitted to medical school.
- After moving to Lawrence, KS, with her husband, they opened a successful dental practice in the area until her retirement in 1886. Hobbs marked one of the first women to defy the gender barriers of 19th Century America and was an important figure in the early feminist movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Her admittance into medical school made her one of the very first women to do so in America.
- <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/lucy-hobbs-taylor/15500>
- <https://lawrenceks.org/lprd/parks/sesquicentennialpoint/steps/1867hobbstaylor/>