

McCarthy and the “Great Fear”

Fear and Reason in the USA

TAHPDX: Teaching America History Project

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Introduction to Guide

McCarthyism and “The Great Fear” Introduction to the Curriculum Guide

Abstract:

This guide explores the balance between civil liberties and government national security within the context of McCarthyism and the Cold War. Activities allow the student to experience the suspicions and accusations associated with this era. Students will analyze a wide range of documents, images and maps that frame the Cold War Era. A dramatic piece surrounding the trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, convicted of espionage and electrocuted in 1953, allows students to experience the attitudes and paranoia of the era. Debriefing activities will help students to understand the controversial issues surrounding this case, as well as the many other examples of the “Great Fear.”

Curriculum Guide Goals:

1. Students will explore the balance between civil liberties and government national security.
2. Students will gain an understanding of McCarthyism within the context of the Cold War Era.
3. Students will be able to describe the public reaction to the communist threat.
4. Students will analyze primary source documents and produce a document-based essay.
5. Students will gain a deep understanding of multiple perspectives concerning the trial of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg through the performance and discussion of a dramatic play.

Order, Rationale, and Objectives for Organization of Curriculum Guide:

1. Students participate in “Introduction to the Great Fear” Activity. Students will explore a situation in which students must choose between personal civil liberties and the need for national security; students experience a simulation that addresses the issue of giving up personal freedoms in lieu of the greater good.
2. Students participate in “DBQ Hook” Activity. Students will experience some of the suspicions and accusations associated with the McCarthy era.
3. Teacher uses “Teacher Background Narrative: Framing the Climate of Cold War America” to scaffold themes of the Cold War to students. The purpose is to provide students with enough context to include background knowledge within their DBQ Essay response.
4. Students participate in “McCarthyism and ‘The Great Fear’ DBQ Exercise.” Students will analyze the documents to create categories of analysis to support their position in an essay response.
5. Teacher uses “Mr. and Mrs. Rosenberg Go to Trial: A Dramatic look at the Political Climate and Culture of Cold War America.” Teacher introduces students to the context of the Rosenberg Trial and the characters in the play.
6. Students participate in “Mr. and Mrs. Rosenberg go to Trial.” Students will experience the tone, mood, and hysteria of the McCarthy era through their own interpretation and performance of the play.
7. Students debrief “Mr. and Mrs. Rosenberg go to Trial.” Students will lead and discuss the controversial issues surrounding the Rosenberg Trial, the outcome of the court case, connections to the DBQ, and the guilt or innocence of the Rosenbergs. Teacher will monitor and encourage students to include these major themes in their discussion.

McCarthy and the “Great Fear”

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Background Narrative
Framing the Climate of Cold-War America

McCarthyism and “The Great Fear” Framing the Climate of Cold War America

Fear is a persuasive catalyst to illicit conformity. It promotes posturing; encourages speculation; and creates hysteria. This theme permeated American politics and popular culture during the McCarthy era of the 1950s.

As WWII ended, nations began to polarize. The United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the leading economic and military states, and began competing for influence throughout the countries they now occupied upon liberation from Germany and Japan. Under the banner of their own brand of idealism, they individually sought geopolitical control and economic benefit. As the stakes increased, competition between the two powers spread to the atomic arena and the exploration of space. The result for the next 45 years is a saga of fear not only of the other side,



Atomic Explosion. Source:
<http://www.historywiz.com/images/coldwar/atomicblast.jpg>

but also fear of contamination of ideals and subterfuge of power from within.

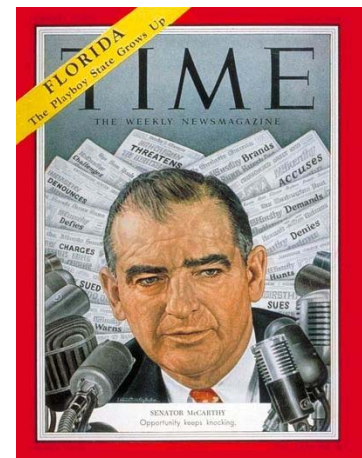
However, to condemn those in positions of power for their actions is to misinterpret the volatile climate of the Cold War Era in which they operated. The polarized political thought and the turbulent domestic events that shadowed everyday life had a profound impact on American thought and culture and the lives of public figures who dominate the story. To truly understand the impact of these characters and the climate of

the American Cold War theatre, the

complexity of the dynamics within society must be understood from the point of view and the ideology of the primary characters that occupied the stage and the prevailing fears dominated American thought and culture.

Joseph McCarthy as the Epithet of an Era

On March 14, 1953, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy stared down from the elevated stage, under an intense spotlight, to the Junior Chamber of Commerce in the town of Waukesha, Wisconsin. His oratory was a personal favorite—the story of a chaplain who on his deathbed empowers his unit to fight for the equality of man—those who cannot defend themselves. Further, his current path was the path of righteousness. His delivery was emphatic and powerful. His fist pounded the pulpit, and his voice growled with vigilance.



Senator Joseph McCarthy. Source:
<http://markc1.typepad.com/relentlesslyoptimistic/images/mccarthy.jpg>

“You the American people could hope, could hope that both of America’s two great political parties would realize, even at this late date, how rapidly the sands in the hourglass of time are running out -- realize that, as of tonight, we are winning a war, winning it – I beg your pardon – losing a war, losing it deliberately and disgracefully, losing it at the tune of American blood which will continue over the weeks and months ahead -- you could hope, you could hope, if we could keep in mind the words of that chaplain, that maybe, that maybe then both parties would join hands and do what is still possible my good friends -- what is still possible but will not be possible for too long. And that is set about the task of creating a decent, peaceful world in which the rights of all men could be respected.”¹

Over the next two years, McCarthy’s well documented “skunk hunting” sought to expose and convict Communists accused of infiltration of the federal government, and even his beloved army. However, McCarthy’s accusations were largely falsified and unfounded and his methods questionable and abusive. This led finally to a formal Senate censure and the collapse of his creditability not only within the government, but also in the eyes of the American public. Ironically, McCarthy’s Communist-threat hearings became the mechanism of the subversive internal threat that he so intensely rebuked during his ascendancy to power, and the epithet “McCarthyism” – the use of unfair investigatory or accusatory methods in order to suppress opposition – ultimately became his legacy.

HUAC: American Exposé



The Hollywood Ten. Source:
<http://dentonlibrary.files.wordpress.com/2007/10/ten2.jpg>

McCarthy wasn’t the only congressional leader trying to flush communist factions out of American society. The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) was created in 1938 and focused its mission on exposing subversive activities within various sects of popular culture. As the political environment of the nation intensified after WWII, the focus of the committee collided with the development of atomic energy and weapons and the prevailing fear that surrounded the threat of nuclear destruction. As a byproduct of this cultural phenomenon, the public’s concerns (and much of available evidence) shifted HUAC’s mission to uncovering acts of espionage.

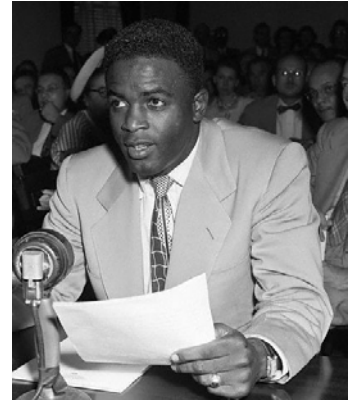
The first wave of hearings came in 1947 with the testimony of Ayn Rand, a novelist who defended the committee’s accusations of pro-communist bias in the film *Song of Russia* (1944). These hearings also contributed to the blacklisting of hundred of actors and artists after the convictions of the “Hollywood Ten” who, after refusing to answer the committee’s questions about their

¹ Joseph McCarthy, “Comments to the Junior Chamber of Commerce” (speech to the Junior Chamber of Commerce, Waukesha, Wisconsin, 14 March 1952).

“communist” affiliations, adamantly claimed their civil liberties had been violated. They were sentenced to prison terms for contempt of Congress.

The “Hollywood Ten” included outspoken writer John Howard Lawson, and other writers Alvah Bessie, Lester Cole, Ring Lander Jr., Albert Maltz, Samuel Ornitz, and Dalton Trumbo. Also called to testify were writer/producer Adrian Scott, writer/director Herbert Biberman, and director Edward Dmytryk. These ten refused to answer questions, vehemently denounced the committee, and were held in contempt of Congress. The indictments led to brief prison terms for all ten when the Supreme Court refused to reverse their convictions.

In 1949, HUAC subpoenaed Jackie Robinson, Major League Baseball’s first African American player with ties to the NAACP to testify about the infiltration of Communism into Minority Groups. The full transcripts can be viewed online. They show the depth of the public paranoia about the activities of various minority groups.² Robinson was measured in his responses to the committee, which seemed somewhat uneasy of the growth of the NAACP’s influence.



Jackie Robinson at the HUAC Hearings (1949).
http://www.authentichistory.com/1950s/speeches/Images/19490718_Jackie_Robinson_at_HUAC.jpg

In 1956, HUAC continued to seek exposure of subversive activities. On January 22 1953, playwright Arthur Miller’s, *The Crucible*



Arthur Miller testifying before the HUAC Committee.
Source:
http://www.peacebuttons.info/IMAGES/0807_Arthur-Miller-HUAC.jpg

premiered at the Martin Beck Theatre in New York. In was a sensational play that was set in Salem, Massachusetts during the Witch Hunts. The obvious parallels with the Communist paranoia theme was popular with viewers and it was an instant classic. It’s reference to the activities of HUAC did not go unnoticed. In June of 1956, Miller was first called in front of HUAC for his past attendance at alleged communist meetings with director Elia Kazan. It wasn’t until 1975 that Miller was found guilty of contempt of Congress for refusing to release names to HUAC of members who had been present at the meetings he attended. That conviction was later

overturned in the U.S. Court of Appeals.³

² For the full files see <http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/robinson.htm>.

³ Source: <http://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/50s/miller-mccarthyism.html>.

Mr. and Mrs. Rosenberg Go To Trial: A Dramatic look at the Political Climate and Culture of Cold War America

In the summer of 1949, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) received information that the secret on how to construct the atom bomb had been stolen and turned over to the Soviet Union. The theft was investigated and the first conspirator identified was Emil Julius Klaus Fuchs, a German-born British atomic scientist. Fuchs was arrested by the British on February 2, 1950, and admitted his involvement in the Soviet atomic espionage. Although he did not know the identity of his American contact, the FBI was able to use the extensive British investigation to identify Harry Gold, who was a chemist living in Philadelphia.

After being interrogated by the FBI in May 1950, Gold confessed his involvement in the espionage activity. Through the investigation of Gold's confession, the FBI was able to uncover the involvement of David Greenglass. Greenglass had been a United States Army enlisted man who had been assigned to the atomic laboratory at Los Alamos, New Mexico, in 1944 and 1945. Gold told the FBI he had picked up material from Greenglass during June of 1945 after being given instructions from his Soviet "handler" (later identified as Anatoli Yakolev, a former Soviet vice-consul in New York City). Through the interrogation of Greenglass and his wife Ruth, admissions of espionage by both led to identification of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. David Greenglass was Ethel's brother.⁴ The case would unfold in a New York City courtroom, but it was closely followed throughout the entire country through newspapers and radio reports.



Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (mug shots).
Source: www.jamd.com/image/g/3245082

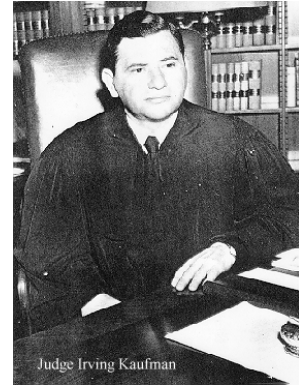
The hysteria that had manifested since the end of WWII, was now on the minds of everyone in the nation. When the Soviets exploded their first atom bomb on August 29, 1949, Americans wondered where the technology had come from. The Rosenberg Case became not just a federal case, but a trial of public opinion, and the Rosenbergs became America's most treacherous villains. What isn't clear in the evidence, however, is the reality of that label. The play included in this curriculum guide will explore the trial in the New York Courtroom and in the minds of Americans everywhere.

⁴ Source: <http://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/50s/miller-mccarthyism.html>.

The Characters

The Judge: Irving R. Kaufman

Judge Irving R. Kaufman was just 40 years old when he presided over the Rosenberg case. The tough Kaufman was described by Julius Rosenberg as looking "like a cross between a rabbinical student and an Army sergeant."⁵ Kaufman's trial rulings, harsh sentences, and post trial interference in the Rosenbergs-Sobell case and the criticism that followed delayed his elevation to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals by several years. In 1961, he was finally promoted to the Court of Appeals, where he would finish his judicial career.⁶



The Prosecutor: Irving Saypol



Irving Saypol was the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and the Chief Prosecutor of the Rosenbergs and Sobell. Saypol graduated from Brooklyn Law School and quickly rose through the ranks of the United States Attorney's office. Saypol was an experienced prosecutor of Communists, as he had convicted Alger Hiss, William Remington, Abraham Brothman and others, prior to taking on the Rosenberg case. Part of his success was attributable to his sincere belief that he was punishing evil. His success in the Rosenberg trial accelerated his career. Saypol was appointed to the New York Supreme Court just months after the trial.

The Defense Attorney: Emanuel Hirsch Bloch

Emanuel "Manny" Bloch, along with his father Alexander, was the defense attorney for the Rosenbergs. He was known in the legal community as a defender of leftist sympathizers, most recently having defended the leader of the Communist party of Pittsburgh and the Trenton Six. During the course of the trial and the many appeals Bloch grew very close to the Rosenbergs and their children. The relationship between Bloch and the Rosenbergs went further than attorney and client. Bloch cast aside his caseload to focus entirely upon the Rosenbergs. He continually made efforts in the days before the



⁵ Doug Linder, "Judge Irving R. Kaufmann." Famous Trials: The Rosenberg Trial. Available from http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/rosenb/ROS_BIK.HTM. Last accessed 17 June 2008.

⁶ Ibid.

scheduled execution to spare his clients from the death sentence. Following the executions, Bloch delivered the eulogy at their funeral and served as guardian for the two Rosenberg sons, Robert and Michael. Just two years after the trial, Bloch was found dead in his apartment; a heart attack took his life at age 52.

Prosecution Witness: Max Elitcher

Max Elitcher had been a high school and college classmate of Morton Sobell, who was a co-conspirator named by Greenglass and who was to be tried alongside the Rosenbergs. Elitcher graduated from the College of the City of New York with a degree in electrical engineering. In his testimony, Elitcher pointed out that Julius Rosenberg had also studied engineering during the same time he was attending. After graduation in 1938, Elitcher was employed with the Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department, in Washington, D.C. He worked there for ten years. In 1939, Elitcher and Sobell moved into an apartment together. Sobell was also employed by the Bureau of Ordnance. In 1941, Sobell moved out to attend graduate school at the University of Michigan.



Elitcher testified that while living with Sobell, he was pressured into joining the Young Communist League. The group formed a local branch of the Communist party, discussed communist publications like the *Daily Worker*, and events relevant to their cause. Elitcher also testified that he and Julius Rosenberg discussed the deteriorating military relationship between the U.S. and Soviet Union during the war. Rosenberg claimed the Soviets were being denied important war information. According to Elitcher, Rosenberg also stated that some people were providing information to the Soviets, and asked him to do so as well. Rosenberg allegedly asked for specific plans relating to the fire-control systems of missiles firing from guns, Elitcher's assignment at the Bureau of Ordnance. He testified he never funneled specific information to Rosenberg, even though Julius approached him again in September of 1945.⁷

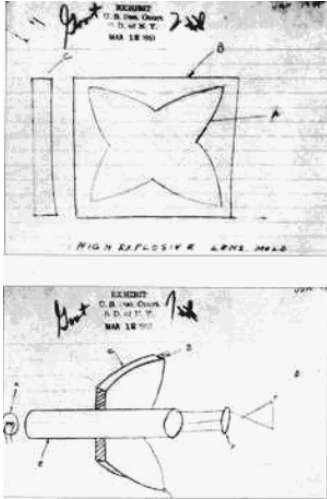
Prosecution Witness- David Greenglass

The Testimony of David Greenglass was the main evidence against the Rosenbergs presented by the prosecution. Other witnesses were mostly used to verify his story. Greenglass entered the United States Army in April of 1943. In July of 1944, he was assigned to the Manhattan Project (the project that developed the atomic bomb). When the project was moved into the operational phase in Los Alamos, New Mexico, Greenglass was transferred



⁷ "The Rosenberg Espionage Conspiracy," pp. 48-55.

there. His testimony outlined the family connections that developed between he, his wife Ruth, the Rosenbergs, and the various other players. The most damning evidence in the case was Greenglass' testimony that he provided technical drawings to Julius Rosenberg, who then passed the information onto his Soviet handlers. The drawings are shown in the image below.



David Greenglass's drawings of the high explosive lens molds, introduced as prosecution exhibits #6 and #7.

Greenglass testified that he gave these drawings to Julius Rosenberg with the knowledge that Rosenberg would then give them to Soviet agents.

The Defendants: Julius and Ethel Rosenberg

Julius Rosenberg was born on May 12, 1918 in New York City. He was the son of Polish Jewish immigrants. His father Harry worked in the garment industry and his mother Sophie took care of the couple's five children. As a boy, Julius attended Downtown Talmud Torah and then Seward Park High School where he graduated at 16. Although his father hoped Julius would become a rabbi, Julius enrolled at the City College of New York to study electrical engineering.



In college, Julius also pursued his interest in politics and joined the Steinmetz Club, the campus branch of the Young Communist League. There he met Morton Sobell, William Perl, and Joel Barr (Sobell was listed as a co-conspirator at Julius and Ethel's trial). Julius also became a member of the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, and Technicians (FAECT), a rather radical union for professionals. Julius Rosenberg became so engrossed in his political activities that his studies began to languish. Rosenberg graduated in 1939, but was one semester behind the rest of his class. Later that same summer, Julius married Ethel Greenglass.

After leaving college, Julius did freelance engineering work until the fall of 1940 when he was hired as a civilian employee of the U.S. Army Signal Corps. Julius was promoted in 1942 to the position of inspector. The new position allowed the Rosenbergs to move to a new three bedroom apartment. Around this same time, Julius and Ethel became full members in the American

Communist Party. Julius was the chairman of Branch 16B of the Party's Industrial Division which held its meetings at the Rosenberg's apartment. By 1943, however, the Rosenbergs dropped out of the Communist Party, the argument was that it allowed them to pursue espionage activities.

Early in 1945 Rosenberg was fired from his job with the Signal Corps when his past membership in the Communist Party came to light. Julius took a job with the Emerson Radio Corporation for a while and then in 1946 formed G & R Engineering Company with David Greenglass (Ethel's brother), Bernard Greenglass, and Isadore Goldstein. But this small machine shop was never a success. On June 17, 1950, Julius Rosenberg was arrested on suspicion of espionage after having been named by David Greenglass. Julius Rosenberg was convicted of espionage yet stoically maintained his innocence throughout the length of his trial and appeals. On June 19, 1953, Julius Rosenberg was executed at Sing-Sing Prison in New York.⁸

Ethel Greenglass Rosenberg was born September 28, 1915 in New York City to Barnet and Tessie Greenglass. Her father ran a repair shop for sewing machines, but was barely able to provide for his wife and four children. The Greenglass family lived in a shabby tenement that was unheated. Ethel, the only daughter, showed that she was a strong-willed and intelligent girl. Ethel attended a religious school, Downtown Talmud Torah, and then Seward Park High School, where she graduated at the age of only fifteen.

Ethel became a clerk for a shipping company immediately after finishing school. She remained at this job for the next four years until she was let go because of her role as the organizer of a strike of 150 women workers. Ethel was not just an activist at work, she was also interested in politics. Ethel joined the Young Communist League and eventually became a member of the American Communist Party. In addition to her clerk job, Ethel enjoyed singing, alone as well as with a choir. Ethel was waiting to go on stage to sing at a New Years Eve benefit when she first met Julius Rosenberg. The couple was married not long afterwards in the summer of 1939.

Although mentally tough, Ethel Rosenberg's body was weak. She was not healthy enough to work after the Rosenbergs were married. Instead, Ethel stayed home with their two sons, Michael and Robert. By the summer of 1950, Ethel's younger brother, David Greenglass, had named Julius as a participant in the spy ring. The FBI questioned her husband and eventually placed him under arrest. On August 11, 1950, Ethel Rosenberg was herself arrested. At trial Ruth Greenglass, Ethel's sister-in-law, implicated Ethel in the atomic spy ring by testifying that Ethel had been the one to type the engineering notes provided by David Greenglass that were eventually given to Soviet agents. This testimony sealed Ethel's fate. She, too, was convicted and executed in 1953.⁹

⁸ Doug Linder, "Julius Rosenberg," Famous Trials: The Rosenberg Trial. Available from http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/rosen/ROS_BJRO.HTM. Last accessed 17 June 2008.

⁹ Ibid.

McCarthy and the “Great Fear”

Fear and Reason in the USA

Classroom Simulation Activity

McCarthyism and “The Great Fear”

Classroom simulation and discussion about civil liberties and public safety.

Objectives:

1. Put to test the balance between civil liberties and personal security.
2. Create an accusatory environment where people can be accused of wrong doing.

Method: create a situation where students must choose between privacy and security.

Activity:

1. Have an administrator bring in a fake memo and read it to the class (good opportunity for observation of teaching). The memo on the following page can be used.
2. Pose the question: please raise your hand if you agree to preserve the safety of all people in this class by allowing us to search your bags and binders.
3. Options:
 - a. If everyone agrees continue to Step 5.
 - b. If everyone does not agree continue to Step 4.
4. Ask students to explain why other students voted against them (not why did you vote the way you did - but instead why did they vote the way they did?).
 - a. This discussion will lead to students being accused of being “the one” as well as being accused of pressuring others to surrender rights that are not theirs to surrender.
 - b. Before anyone gets upset or too confrontational, move onto Step 5.
5. Explain that the threat was a fake in order to demonstrate how people determine a position between rights to privacy and everyone’s safety.
 - a. What rights should people surrender when safety is in doubt?
 - b. How should people measure the threat level before accepting a loss of rights?

Extension Activity: After answering the questions above, have students conduct additional research in preparation for a classroom debate on the following question: Should government officials have the right to violate civil liberties to protect the nation from a potential threat? The research should include historical examples from US history when this compromise was deemed necessary.

Discussion: Introduce McCarthyism (or the Red Scare) material. Ask students to compare the introductory activity with the actions and reactions of the Red Scare.

Example Note:

The school just received a call from a reliable source that a student in this room was seen bringing a knife into class. The person who reported seeing this knife also stated that they overheard threats against an unknown person. This person could not, however, positively identify the individual with the knife.

This threat has put all students in significant potential harm. Unfortunately, we cannot prevent this threat from coming to fruition without the assistance of every student in the room.

We need to search the bags and binders of every student in the room. However, we will only search your bags if you all agree to be searched. We all need to agree to do the right thing if we are to preserve our safety.

McCarthy and the “Great Fear”

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Document-Based Question Exercise

McCarthyism and the “Great Fear”

DBQ Hook Activity:

Opener: Students will be led through a simulation called the “Dot-Game” (adapted from a History Alive! activity).

Students pick a small piece of paper from a plastic bag. Some of the pieces of paper have a red dot on them while most of the pieces are blank. Students are not to reveal what is on their piece of paper to anyone else.

The object of the “game” is for the students to create the largest group possible without any red dots. They may question each other as they form groups (e.g. “Are you for or against red dots”).

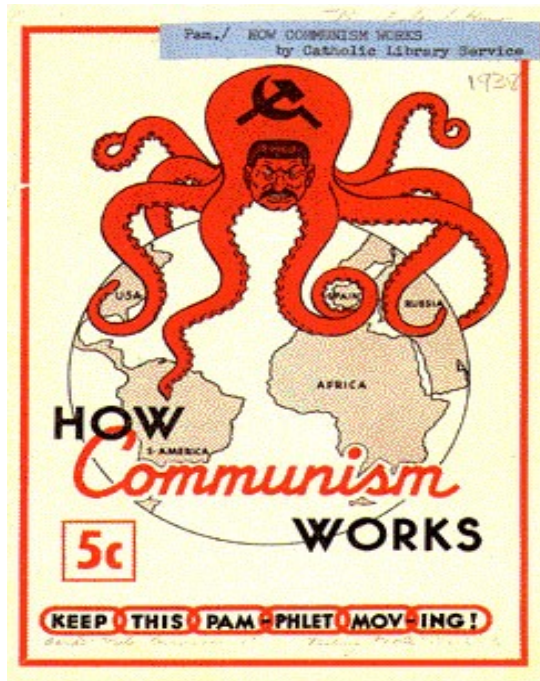
REMEMBER: NO STUDENT IS TO REVEAL WHETHER OR NOT THEY HAVE A RED DOT ON THEIR PAPER.

The largest group without a member with a red dot wins. Any person who holds a red dot and has infiltrated a group wins.

Goal: The purpose of the “game” is for the students to experience some of the suspicions associated with the McCarthy Era and the questioning tactics used by HUAC and McCarthy in the hearings.

McCarthyism and the "Great Fear": DBQ Exercise

Document 1

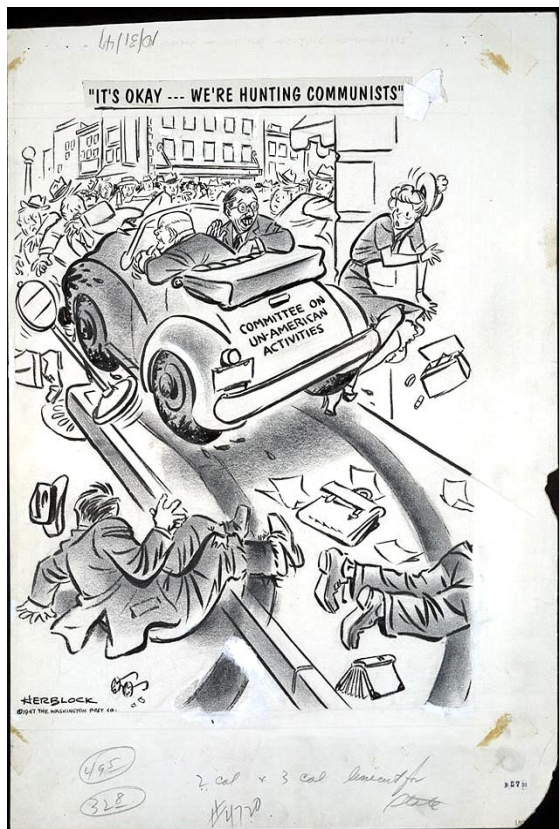


"How Communism Works"

1. Who might the Octopus represent?
2. Why did the author choose an octopus as the symbol for communism in this poster?
3. What is the message of this poster?
4. Who paid for the production of this poster and why is that important?

Source: Catholic Library Services, 1938

Document 2



"It's Okay, We're Hunting Communists"

By Herbert Block, Oct 31, 1947
Washington Post

1. What is happening in the cartoon?
2. How does the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) car parallel HUAC activities of the time?
3. How are people affected by the HUAC car in the cartoon?
4. What do you think is the author's attitude toward HUAC?

Document 3



“You Read Books, Eh?”

By Herbert Block, April 24, 1949
Washington Post

1. What are the men in the cartoon doing (collectively)?
2. What animal do many of the men look like? Is there any significance to this?
3. What evidence are the men finding that they might use against the teacher?
4. What is being ridiculed in this cartoon?

Document 4

Seattle Post-Intelligencer Are They Ashamed?

July 28, 1948

The professors at the University of Washington who refused to answer pertinent questions are indeed dumb if they think the public is not entitled to have the information requested by the investigators. Those teachers are working for the people of the State of Washington. The taxpayers, who are paying their salaries, have every right to know whether or not the professors are, or ever have been, members of the Communist Party.

Are They Ashamed?

Seattle Post Intelligencer, July 28 1948

Author Unknown

1. Is this editorial supportive of or oppositional against Communism?
2. What assumption is the author of this editorial making regarding the professors?
3. What type of a news story is the author of this editorial likely responding to?
4. What result is the author hoping to achieve?

Document 5

“One communist, one communist in the faculty of one university is one communist too many. One communist among the American advisors at Yalta was one communist too many. And even...even if there were only one communist in the State Department, even if there were only one communist in the State Department that would still be one communist too many.”

"One Communist"

By Senator Joseph McCarthy, July 7, 1952

1. What is the assumption regarding the result of having “one Communist” in any of the situations the author lists?
2. Who are the intended audiences for this speech (not necessarily who he is speaking to at the time of the speech, but who might he hope to get a response from)?
3. What type of response is McCarthy likely to get from this portion of his speech?

Document 6

"THIS DEATH sentence is not surprising. It had to be. There had to be a Rosenberg case because there had to be an intensification of the hysteria in America to make the Korean War acceptable to the American people. There had to be hysteria and a fear sent through America in order to get increased war budgets. And there had to be a dagger thrust in the heart of the left to tell them that you are no longer gonna give five years for a Smith Act prosecution or one year for Contempt of Court, but we're gonna kill ya!"

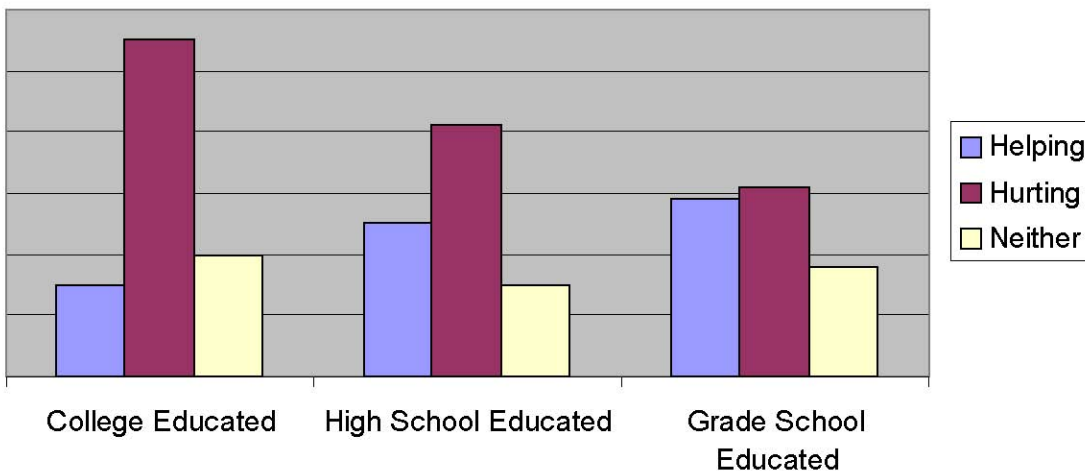
--Julius Rosenberg in a letter to their lawyer Manny Bloch

Letter from Julius Rosenberg to Manny Bloch, 1953

1. Who is Julius Rosenberg and what is this letter a reaction to?
2. What does the quote reveal about Julius's feelings towards American policy during this time period?

Document 7

McCarthy's Impact on the United States 1954 Gallup Poll data



Response to the following question asked of those who heard about McCarthy's accusations: Some people say these charges are doing the country more harm than good. What do you think?

1. Does this poll suggest that people in the US are more likely support or oppose Senator McCarthy's actions?
2. What is the implication of education level on one's opinion of McCarthy's accusations?
3. What would you guess is the thinking behind people who answered "neither"?

Document 8

Judge Kaufman's Statement Upon Sentencing the Rosenbergs (April 1951)

Citizens of this country who betray their fellow-countrymen can be under none of the delusions about the benignity of Soviet power that they might have been prior to World War II. The nature of Russian terrorism is now self-evident. Idealism as a rationale dissolves . . .

I consider your crime worse than murder...In committing the act of murder, the criminal kills only his victim. The immediate family is brought to grief and when justice is meted out the chapter is closed. But in your case, I believe your conduct in putting into the hands of the Russians the A-bomb years before our best scientists predicted Russia would perfect the bomb has already caused, in my opinion, the Communist aggression in Korea, with the resultant casualties exceeding 50,000 and who knows but that millions more of innocent people may pay the price of your treason. Indeed, by your betrayal you undoubtedly have altered the course of history to the disadvantage of our country.

No one can say that we do not live in a constant state of tension. We have evidence of your treachery all around us every day--for the civilian defense activities throughout the nation are aimed at preparing us for an atom bomb attack. Nor can it be said in mitigation of the offense that the power which set the conspiracy in motion and profited from it was not openly hostile to the United States at the time of the conspiracy. If this was your excuse the error of your ways in setting yourselves above our properly constituted authorities and the decision of those authorities not to share the information with Russia must now be obvious . . .

In the light of this, I can only conclude that the defendants entered into this most serious conspiracy against their country with full realization of its implications . . .

The statute of which the defendants at the bar stand convicted is clear. I have previously stated my view that the verdict of guilty was amply justified by the evidence. In the light of the circumstances, I feel that I must pass such sentence upon the principals in this diabolical conspiracy to destroy a God-fearing nation, which will demonstrate with finality that this nation's security must remain inviolate; that traffic in military secrets, whether promoted by slavish devotion to a foreign ideology or by a desire for monetary gains must cease.

The evidence indicated quite clearly that Julius Rosenberg was the prime mover in this conspiracy. However, let no mistake be made about the role which his wife, Ethel Rosenberg, played in this conspiracy. Instead of deterring him from pursuing his ignoble cause, she encouraged and assisted the cause. She was a mature woman--almost three years older than her husband and almost seven years older than her younger brother. She was a full-fledged partner in this crime.

Indeed the defendants Julius and Ethel Rosenberg placed their devotion to their cause above their own personal safety and were conscious that they were sacrificing their own children, should their misdeeds be detected--all of which did not deter them from pursuing their course. Love for their cause dominated their lives--it was even greater than their love for their children."

1. What are the Rosenbergs found guilty of? Did the Judge believe that both Julius and Ethel were equally guilty?
2. What are some of the reasons the judge gave to support his decision to sentence the Rosenbergs to execution?
3. Who is the “enemy” in this statement?

Document 9

Walt Disney’s Testimony to HUAC,

In his testimony to the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), Disney discusses the effect that he believes communists have had on his employees, who had recently unionized and gone on strike.

SMITH: Do you have any people in your studio at the present time that you believe are communist or fascist, employed there?

DISNEY: No; at the present time I feel that everybody in my studio is 100 percent American.

SMITH: Have you had at any time, in your opinion, in the past, have you at any time in the past had any communists employed at your studio?

DISNEY: Yes; in the past I had some people that I definitely feel were communists.

SMITH: As a matter of fact, Mr. Disney, you experienced a strike at your studio, did you not?

DISNEY: Yes.

SMITH: And is it your opinion that that strike was instituted by members of the Communist Party to serve their purposes?

DISNEY: Well, it proved itself so with time, and I definitely feel it was a communist group trying to take over my artists and they did take them over.

CHAIRMAN: Do you say they did take them over?

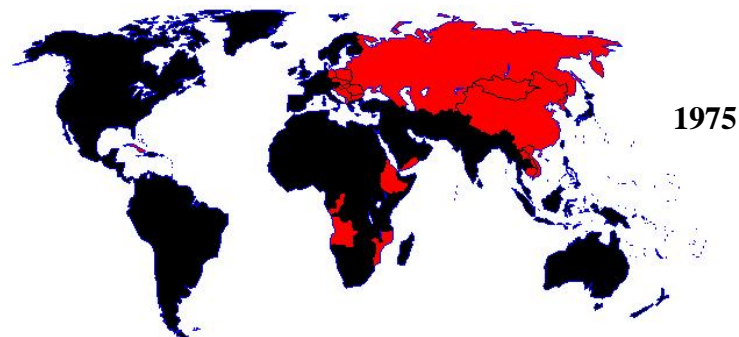
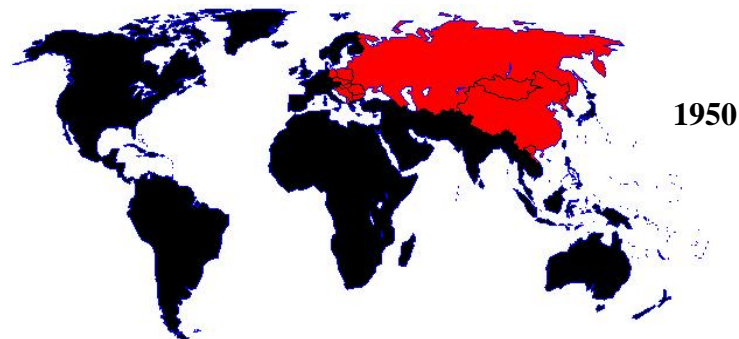
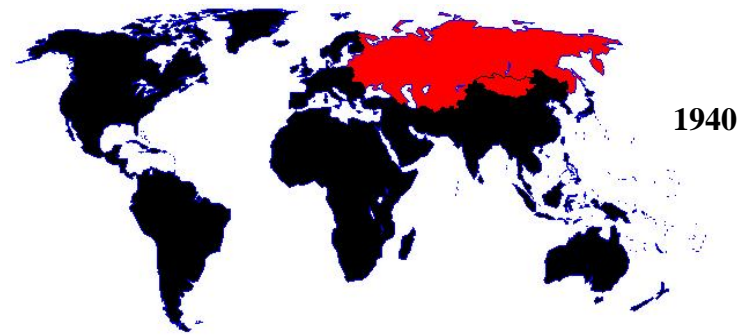
DISNEY: They did take them over.

1. According to the testimony above, how had communists affected Walt Disney’s studios?
2. Was any evidence presented to support the accusations in this statement?

Document 10

Spread of Communism Maps

Communism on the World Stage (www.rationalrevolution.net)



1. From looking at these maps, does it appear that communism is spreading over time?
2. If you looked at the first three maps (1920, 1940 and 1950), what assumptions can you make about the spread of communism?
3. What can't you tell about communism from these maps?
4. Are all communist countries the same?

Document 11

Rosenberg Trial Spectators

Unknown photograph image from Spartan Spectator

1. Describe the feelings and attitudes in the U.S. at this time in history that accounts for the signs in this photograph.
2. What could be a potential use of this picture in 1954?
3. Why did the photographer take this picture?



Document 12

Transcript of Senate Resolution 301: Censure of Senator Joseph McCarthy (1954)

Sec 2. The Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. McCarthy, ... in stating to the press on November 4, 1954, that the special Senate session ... was a "lynch-party"; in repeatedly describing this special Senate session as a "lynch bee" ... in characterizing the [Select Committee] as the "unwitting handmaiden," "involuntary agent" and "attorneys-in-fact" of the Communist Party ... [McCarthy] acted contrary to senatorial ethics and tended to bring the Senate into dishonor and disrepute, to obstruct the constitutional processes of the Senate, and to impair its dignity; and such conduct is hereby condemned.

1. According to the document, how did Senator McCarthy characterize the activities of the Select Committee?
2. Why did the Senate decide to censure McCarthy?

McCarthy and the “Great Fear”

Fear and Reason in the USA

Dramatic Piece

Mr. and Mrs. Rosenberg Go To Trial

McCarthyism and “The Great Fear” Mr. and Mrs. Rosenberg go to Trial

A play in one act

Cast:

Kaufman (Judge)
Saypol (District Attorney)
Bloch (Defense Attorney)
Max Elitcher (Prosecution Witness)
David Greenglass (Prosecution Witness)
Julius Rosenberg (Defendant)
Jury members – 12 assorted people
Ethel Rosenberg (after conviction – writing and narrating letter)
Reporter
Newspaper Headline Reader

Setting and Setup:

It is 1951, New York City. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg have been accused of espionage. They have been accused of conspiring with each other, and others, to deliver information vital to the national defense of our country to Soviet Russia. The courtroom is the stage with 12 chairs for a jury, a judge’s seat, witness box, seats for the two defendants and the two lawyers.

Before the play begins divide the remaining students into two groups. Instruct the groups that they will be playing parts in the play and will be called upon to add their voice to the play. The characters in the first group need to take the position of everyday citizens who are adamantly opposed to any communist activity in the United States and feel that all communists should be removed from the United States. This group of students see the Rosenbergs as just the tip of the iceberg and feel that they should receive the harshest of punishment possible for their crimes.

The students in the second group are far more sympathetic to the Rosenbergs. This group understands that the Rosenbergs may have betrayed the country but doubt that their espionage was significant and had little impact on the course of history. This group believes that if the Rosenbergs are to be charged with any crimes that the punishment should be slight.

At noted points in the play the court proceedings will pause. During this time the characters in the courtroom will become the audience as the other students are asked questions by a classmate who serves as the roving reporter whose job is to record the views of the average citizen. The reporter will move about the room and ask students to respond to the questions provided (and any other questions you wish to add). The student who is asked the question should answer as though they are the character they were assigned. The answers should include information from the court proceedings as support for the position they are presenting. The number of people the report speaks with will depend on the size of your class and the amount of time you have available.

HEADLINE: Spy Case Against 3 goes to Jury Today

Scene One:

Scene from Atomic Café (The first 48 sec. of part 5. You can find these segments on YouTube) projected stage center. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg emerge from stage left, hand cuffed and escorted by two guards, and are led across projection and are seated stage right. Kaufman, Saypol and Bloch enter stage right and take their seats.

Fade sound of Atomic Café.

Jury enters and is seated in silence.

KAUFMAN (*clearing his throat*): In the case of The United States v. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, are both sides ready?

SAYPOL and BLOCH (*simultaneous*): We are your honor.

KAUFMAN: Very well then, we will hear the opening statements. (*motioning to Saypol*) Mr. Saypol, you may begin.

Projected on the wall during the opening statement, is a map of the spread of Communism. This map is to remain projected until Bloch objects to Saypol's line of questioning.

SAYPOL (*rising and walking towards the jury. Mr. Saypol is extremely animated with his hand gestures throughout this trial*): Mr. Foreman, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I am the United States Attorney. It is my duty to direct the presentation of evidence that has been assembled to prove the truth of the charges against the defendants on trial here before you.

(*Saypol pauses, turns and faces the Rosenberg's—walking towards them as he delivers...*) Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are charged with conspiring with others to commit espionage. They conspired with each other, and others, to deliver information vital to the national defense of our country to Soviet Russia. These are the charges which are before you for your final judgment.

(*turning back to the jury*)

For the purpose of clarity, at this point, I would like to say briefly that a conspiracy is very simply an agreement between two or more people to violate some law of the United States.

(*motioning to the Rosenberg's as he delivers...*)

When any person knowingly enters into an agreement that violates the laws of the United States, they are guilty of conspiracy.

(*turning back to the jury*)

The plot of this case will unfold before you and the evidence will show that the loyalty and allegiance of the Rosenberg's were not to our county, but to Communism; Communism in this country and Communism throughout the world.

BLOCH (*jumping to his feet*): If the Court pleases, I object to these remarks as irrelevant and ask the Court to instruct the Mr. Saypol to refrain from making any remarks about Communism, because Communism is not on trial here. These defendants are charged with espionage.

KAUFMAN (*moving his gaze from Bloch to the jury*): I want to make this clear, the charge here is conspiracy to commit espionage, in matters vital to national defense, for the purpose and intention of giving Russia an advantage. You are not to determine the guilt or innocence of the defendants on whether they were Communists.

(*turning his attention back to Saypol*)

KAUFMAN: Mr. Saypol, do you wish to continue?

SAYPOL: No your honor, I believe I have made my point.

KAUFMAN: Very well then, Mr. Bloch, are you ready to deliver your opening statement at this time?

BLOCH (rising): I am your honor.

KAUFMAN: You may proceed.

BLOCH (*has the odd habit of pacing back and forth. That is, five steps in one direction before turning 180 degrees and pacing five steps in opposite directions and then repeating the process*). Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I would like to say that Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who I represent, have always asserted their innocence. They have pled not guilty to this indictment. I would like to impress upon you to remember at all times the oath that you took when you were sworn in as jurors to remain impartial and render an honest and true verdict according to the evidence.

(*Pausing and indicating the defense as he delivers*)

Let me say now that the Government will not be able to prove these charges beyond a reasonable doubt.

(*Turning back to the jury*)

We ask you, we plead with you, don't be influenced by any bias or prejudice or hysteria. These defendants are charged with a conspiracy to commit espionage. The Government has to show not that the Rosenbergs believed in one "ism" or another "ism," but that they conspired to commit espionage.

(*Becoming quite animated as he delivers...*)

Don't be swayed by emotion. The defendants do not come to you at this time or at any other time and expect you to give a verdict on basis, sympathy, passion or prejudice. We want you to use your mind and your reason. That is all we have a right to expect of you, but that much we have a right to expect, and we tell you that in our opinion by the time you have heard all of the evidence in this case you will be convinced that these defendants are innocent of these crimes for which they are now being charged.

(Bloch returns to his seat, patting Julius on the shoulder, and seeming quite pleased with himself, as well as his remarks).

KAUFMAN: Thank you Mr. Bloch.

Play pauses as it shifts to reporter and citizens:

REPORTER *(to citizens)*: What role do communists have in the United States?

(The reporter should indicate to one individual in each group to respond. Responses should be: all communists should slowly and painfully be killed at one extreme to we live in a free nation where people should have the right to believe what they wish but communists should be closely watched so as to make sure they do not try to disrupt that freedom at the other extreme).

REPORTER *(to citizens)*: Who do you think the Rosenbergs are?

(Reporter should indicate another individual in each group to respond. Responses should be: typical communists whose only thought is to control the world and restrict people's liberty at one extreme to they are a middle class family who got mixed up with the wrong group of people who have been used for an evil cause - they are victims at the other extreme).

Play flashes back to the courtroom.

KAUFMAN: Mr. Saypol, you can call your first witness.

SAYPOL: The prosecution calls Max Elitcher.

Elitcher enters, is seated, and is sworn in.

SAYPOL: Mr. Elitcher, did you ever know a Martin Sobell?

ELITCHER: Yes

SAYPOL: In what way did you know Mr. Sobell?

ELITCHER: He was my friend.

SAYPOL: Did Sobell ever invite you to join meetings of the Communist Party?

ELITCHER: Yes. At first, I declined, but he continued to ask me and I finally visited a group of the Communist Party and joined it.

SAYPOL: Did you thereafter attend meetings of this Communist group with Sobell?

ELITCHER: Yes.

SAYPOL: Do you know the defendant, Mr. Rosenberg?

ELITCHER: Yes, I met him at one of the meetings.

SAYPOL: In talking with Mr. Rosenberg, did he ever mention Mr. Sobell?

ELITCHER: Yes, Rosenberg said Sobell was one of those who were getting military information for him.

SAYPOL: For what purpose?

ELITCHER: To transfer to the Soviet Union. Rosenberg persuaded him to do this.

SAYPOL: Did Rosenberg tell you how he got into espionage?

ELITCHER: He told me that a long time ago he decided that this is what he wanted to do, and he made it a point to get close to people in the Communist Party, until he was able to approach a Russian.

SAYPOL: Thank you Mr. Elitcher.

Saypol sits down.

KAUFMAN: Would you like to cross examine this witness Mr. Bloch?

BLOCH: Yes, your honor.

BLOCH (*rising*): Did you ever sign a loyalty oath for the Federal Government?

ELITCHER: I did.

BLOCH: Do you know the contents of the oath you signed and swore to?

ELITCHER: I signed a statement saying that I was not, or had not been, a member of an organization that was dedicated to overthrow the Government by force and violence. I don't remember whether the statement specifically mentioned the Communist Party or not.

BLOCH: At the time you verified that oath, did you believe you were lying when you concealed your membership in the Communist Party?

ELITCHER: Yes. I did.

BLOCH: So you have lied under oath?

ELITCHER: Yes.

BLOCH: Were you worried about it?

ELITCHER: Yes....

BLOCH: As a matter of fact, didn't you leave the Government service to try to get a job in private industry because you were afraid you might be prosecuted for perjury?

ELITCHER: That is not the entire reason for my leaving.

BLOCH: But that was one of the substantial reasons?

ELITCHER: I would say, yes.

BLOCH: Thank you Mr. Elitcher, you are dismissed.

Elitcher steps out of the witness box and exits away from the defendants without looking at them.

HEADLINE:

Theft of Atom Bomb Secrets in war stressed at Spy Trial (March 8, 1951)

Former college classmate accuses 2 on trial as spies (March 9, 1951)

Play pauses as it shifts to reporter and citizens.

REPORTER (*to citizens*): What do you think of Elitcher's testimony?

(Reporter should indicate to one individual in each group to respond. Responses should be: he is a typical communist who should be killed. He knows what the Rosenbergs have done and he is doing the same thing - he is selling our country to the reds at one extreme to his testimony is evident that he is still acting in fear for his own life at the other extreme).

Play flashes back to court room.

SAYPOL: : The prosecution calls David Greenglass.

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg show especially stoic faces during the Greenglass testimony. Greenglass enters, walks to the witness box and is sworn in.

SAYPOL: Mr. Greenglass, please inform the court of your relationship with the defendants Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.

GREENGLASS: I am Ethel's brother.

SAYPOL: Please tell the court about the conversation you had with Julius Rosenberg regarding the secrets of the atom bomb.

GREENGLASS: Julius said to me that he wanted to know what I had for him. I told him "I think I have a pretty good description of the atom bomb."

SAYPOL: The atom bomb itself?

GREENGLASS: That's right.

SAYPOL: Did you draw up a sketch of the atom bomb itself?

GREENGLASS: I did.

SAYPOL: Did you prepare descriptive material to explain the sketch of the atom bomb?

GREENGLASS: I did.

SAYPOL: Was there any other material that you wrote up on that occasion?

GREENGLASS: I gave some scientists' names, and I also gave some possible recruits for espionage. Ethel Rosenberg typed the secret information on a portable typewriter while we clarified the draft. Julius then put the draft into the briefcase with his lunch in it and gave it to Russia.

SAYPOL: Thank you, Mr. Greenglass.

Saypol sits. Bloch begins to rise as judge offers the witness for cross-examination.

BLOCH: Mr. Greenglass, you knew at that time, did you not, that you were engaging in the commission of a very serious crime?

GREENGLASS (*smiling a little to himself*): I did. . . .

BLOCH: Are you aware that you are smiling?

GREENGLASS: Not very. . . .

BLOCH: And from the time in the latter part of November 1944, during your entire career in the Army, you continued to spy, did you not?

GREENGLASS: I did.

BLOCH: And you received money for that, did you not?

GREENGLASS: I did.

BLOCH: You received \$500 from Harry Gold in Albuquerque, New Mexico for that, did you not?

GREENGLASS: I did.

BLOCH: What exactly happened when you met with Gold?

GREENGLASS: I drew some sketches of a lens mold and how they are set up in the experiment, and I gave a description of the experiment.

BLOCH: Was this another step in the same experiment on atomic energy, of which you had given a sketch to Rosenberg?

GREENGLASS: That is right, and I also gave him a list of possible recruits for espionage. I gave him my report in an envelope and he gave me an envelope, which I felt and realized there was money in it and I put it in my pocket.

BLOCH: How much was in the envelope?

GREENGLASS: My wife and I counted it later. There was \$500-- I gave it to her.

BLOCH: How long ago did you plead guilty?

GREENGLASS: A year ago.

BLOCH: Have you been sentenced?

GREENGLASS: No.

BLOCH: Do you believe the Court will be easier on you because you are testifying here?

GREENGLASS: No, I don't.

BLOCH (*going back to sit at his seat*): Thank you, the defense is done.

Greenglass exits.

HEADLINE:

Atom Bomb Secrets Described in Court (March 13, 1951)

Atom Bomb Spying Described as Easy (March 14, 1951)

Play pauses as it shifts to reporter and citizens.

REPORTER (*to citizens*): What do you think of Greenglass's testimony?

(Reporter should indicate to one individual in each group to respond. Responses should be: I hope he gets the chair too because he is an admitted spy for the Soviets at one extreme to He is a horrible person who is trying to save himself at the expense of others. at the other extreme).

Play pauses as it shifts back to the courtroom.

KAUFMAN: Does the Prosecution have any more witnesses?

SAYPOL: The prosecution rests, your honor.

KAUFMAN: Mr. Bloch, would you like to call your first witness?

BLOCH: If the Court, please, my first witness is the defendant Julius Rosenberg.

Julius Rosenberg rises solemnly but proud and walks toward the witness box. He is sworn in, more slowly and louder than the others. He does not flinch.

BLOCH: Now, Mr. Rosenberg, are you aware of the charge that the Government has leveled against you?

ROSENBERG: I am.

BLOCH: Do you know what you are being charged with?

ROSENBERG: Yes, conspiracy to commit espionage to aid a foreign government.

BLOCH: Did you ever give Ruth Greenglass \$250, for her to go out to visit her husband in New Mexico, for the purpose of trying to enlist him in espionage work?

ROSENBERG: I did not

BLOCH: Did you ever give Ruth Greenglass one single penny at any time during your life?

ROSENBERG: I did not.

BLOCH: Now, Ruth Greenglass has said, that she went out to visit her husband, and when she came back here she conveyed certain information which she had received from her husband, and I refer specifically to the names of certain scientists like Dr. Niels Bohr, Dr. Oppenheimer, Dr. Urey. Did you ever have a conversation with Ruth Greenglass in the month of December 1944, in which any of those names were mentioned?

ROSENBERG: I did not have such a conversation. . . .

BLOCH: Did you know of the existence of the Los Alamos Project in December 1944?

ROSENBERG: No, I did not.

BLOCH: At any time prior to January 1945, had anybody discussed with you, anybody at all, the atom bomb?

ROSENBERG: No, sir; they did not.

BLOCH: Did you know anybody at all in the Russian Consulate office?

ROSENBERG: I did not, sir.

BLOCH: Did you at any time meet with Mr. Greenglass as the prosecution has suggested to receive and convey names of scientists in the Los Alamos project and names of possible recruits for espionage?

ROSENBERG: No I never have had those conversations with Mr. Greenglass.

BLOCH: Thank you Mr. Rosenberg. The defense rests.

KAUFMAN: Would the prosecution like to cross examine the witness?

SAYPOL: Not at this time your honor.

Rosenberg exits.

KAUFMAN: Very well, let us proceed with the closing statements then. Mr. Saypol?

Saypol rises and addresses the jury.

SAYPOL: I want you to imagine a wheel (*drawing a wheel with his hands in the air and illustrated with gestures throughout*). At the center of that wheel is the Rosenberg's reaching out like the tentacles of an octopus. Julius Rosenberg (*pointing to each as he goes*) to David Greenglass. Ethel Rosenberg to Ruth Greenglass. Julius Rosenberg to Harry Gold, Sobell, and Elitcher. Tentacles reaching out for classified information, to be supplied to Soviet Russia in order to aid the spread of Communism.

As for David Greenglass, there is no excuse for this activity. David Greenglass is a confused member of the Rosenberg espionage ring. By his own guilty plea he has made himself liable to the death penalty, too. The idea that David Greenglass has concocted a story about espionage, making himself liable to the death penalty in the process, is absurd.

(Walking towards the jury)

The atom bomb secrets stolen by Greenglass at the instigation of the Rosenberg's, were delivered by Harry Gold right into the hands of an official representative of the Soviet Union. This cannot be contradicted. You have in evidence before you. This description of the atom bomb, delivered to the Soviet Union, was typed up by the defendant Ethel.

(Pointing at Ethel and becoming quite animated)

Just as, on countless other occasions, she had sat at that typewriter and struck the keys, blow by blow, against her own country in the interests of the Soviets. We know that Julius Rosenberg told Ruth and David Greenglass to go and commit espionage in the interests of communism in the Soviet Union. We have not only the testimony of Ruth and David Greenglass about Rosenberg's espionage activities. We have Elitcher's, a man who never saw Ruth and David Greenglass or Harry Gold. Elitcher has placed the brand of Soviet spy on the Rosenberg's.

(Again becoming quite animated)

The evidence of the Rosenberg's' guilt is incontrovertible. Their guilt is established by proof

beyond a reasonable doubt. I am a firm believer in the American jury system. I have confidence in the perception of the jury of twelve intelligent American citizens. I am confident that you will render the only verdict possible on the evidence presented before you in this courtroom--that of guilty as charged by the grand jury as to each of these two defendants.

(Saypol sits, Bloch rises and begins his closing statement addressing the jury)

BLOCH (rising and resuming his pacing routine in the general direction of the jury)

I know that there is not a person in this world who does not have some prejudice. In fact, you would be inhuman if you did not have some prejudice. But I ask you now, as I asked you before, please don't decide this case because you may have some bias or some prejudice against my clients. If you want to convict these defendants because you think they are Communists and you don't like communism and you don't like any member of the Communist Party, then, ladies and gentlemen, I can sit down now and there is absolutely no use in my talking.

(Indicating towards his clients)

But, that is not the crime. I am representing Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, two American citizens, who come to you as American citizens, charged with the specific crime of conspiring with others to commit espionage. They are asking you to judge them the way you would want to be judged if you were sitting over there before twelve jurors.

(Turning his direction back to the jury and then to David Greenglass)

Now, let us take a look at David Greenglass. He is a self-confessed spy. This came from his own mouth. Is there any doubt in any of your minds that Dave Greenglass is a self-confessed agent of Russia? He characterized himself that way. Dave Greenglass was assigned one of the most important secret projects in this country and, by his own admissions, he told you that he stole information from this project and gave it to strangers, knowing this information would go to the Soviet Government. Is this the kind of person that you would trust? Is this the kind of person you should believe?

(Becoming increasingly animated in the attention he gives Greenglass)

Let me tell you about David Greenglass. Let me tell you about the plot he is trying to unfold. It has two parts. The David Greenglass figured that he would lessen his own punishment by pointing the finger at someone else. He needed to point the finger at someone here in the United States and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were the perfect victims because Julius had been fired from his Government position for being accused of being a member of the Communist party. The Rosenberg's were people that were very open about their view of the United States and the Soviet Union, this made them an easy target.

(Turning his attention back to the jury)

Now, you are intelligent people. I want to conclude very simply. I told you at the beginning and I will tell you now that I am not coming to you looking for sympathy. Believe me, ladies and gentlemen, there is plenty of room here for a lawyer to try and harp on your emotions, especially so far as Ethel Rosenberg is concerned; a mother, she has two children, her husband is also under arrest. No, we want you to decide this case with your minds, not with your hearts, with your minds. I say that if you do that, you can come to no other conclusion than these defendants are

innocent and by doing this, you are going to show to the world that in America a man and a woman can get a fair trial.

(Bloch sits in a huff. Again, quite pleased with himself)

HEADLINE: 3 in Atom Spy Case are found guilty: Maximum is Death

Play pauses and shifts to reporter and citizens.

REPORTER *(to citizens)*: How should the judge rule in this case?

(Reporter should indicate an individual from each group to respond. Responses should be: The Rosenbergs should be killed as well as the witnesses. They are all communists trying to take over the US at one extreme to Ethel should not be executed on the other extreme)

Play pauses and shifts back to the courtroom.

End scene. Atomic café plays on the back screen (0:49-1:24 in section 5).

Scene Two

Ethel is sitting alone at a table in her jail cell, writing and narrating a letter. Project on the back and side walls the application for executive clemency and the following letters:

“June, 17th, 1953. Dear Mr. President, Today 4 o’clock Robby, my grandmother, and I are going to Washington, since you have not answered my letters yet I would like to speak to you and tell you how good my mommy and daddy are. Very truly yours, Michael Rosenberg.”

“February 12th, 1953. So far, 436 telegrams have been received in opposition to the president’s actions [allowing the execution of the Rosenberg’s] and 57 in support of his action.... Less than 10% go into the question of guilt or innocence. The majority express shock at the president’s action and urge reconsideration.”

“February 23rd, 1953. I am sure you understand that my interests are not in saving the Rosenberg’s. They deserve to fry a hundred times for what they did to this country.”

While Ethel is writing at a table in jail cell, three voices narrate the contents of her letter.

Dearest Sweethearts, my most precious children,

Only this morning it looked like we might be together again after all. Now that this cannot be, I want so much for you to know all that I have come to know. Unfortunately, I may write only a few simple words; the rest your own lives must teach you, even as mine taught me.

At first, of course, you will grieve bitterly for us, but you will not grieve alone. That is our consolation and it must eventually be yours.

Eventually, too you must come to believe that life is worth the living. Be comforted that even now, with the end of ours slowly approaching, that we know this with a conviction that defeats the executioner!

Your lives must teach you, too, that good cannot flourish in the midst of evil; that freedom and all the things that go to make up a truly satisfying and worthwhile life, must sometime be purchased very dearly. Be comforted then that we were serene and understood with the deepest kind of understanding, that civilization had not as yet progressed to the point where life did not have to be lost for the sake of life; and that we were comforted in the sure knowledge that others would carry on after us.

We wish we might have had the tremendous joy and gratification of living our lives out with you. Your Daddy who is with me in the last momentous hours, sends his heart and all the love that is in it for his dearest boys. Always remember that we were innocent and could not wrong our conscience.

We press you close and kiss you with all our strength.

Lovingly, Daddy and Mommy

Fade out. Atomic Café plays from (1:25-3:51 of part 5). Fade to black.

Play shifts to the reporter and citizens for the last time

REPORTER (*to citizens*): How do you feel now that the Rosenbergs have been executed? (Reporter should indicate one individual from each group to respond. Responses should be: Two down a lot more to go - I just hope all the other communists understand that they too will die if they don't change their ways at one extreme to A great travesty has occurred the punishment did not fit the crime. at the other extreme)

Play Ends.

Debriefing Activities and Questions for the Drama:

The play ends melodramatically, with Ethel's letter and an emotional account of the execution. It may help to discuss what the students are feeling after the play. How does the testimony in the courtroom – the rational facts of the case – juxtapose with the emotions of the times (as reflected in the “citizen” comments and the touching scene at the end)?

Are the Rosenberg's Guilty?

Have students create a T-chart or use some other graphic organizer to make sense of the facts in this case. Students can also do further research on the many good websites (see Famous Trials) to supplement the information given in the play. Have a class discussion about the Rosenberg's guilt or innocence.

Follow up with some current information that claims Julius Rosenberg was definitely guilty of espionage (although not necessarily for the acts for which he was convicted), but Ethel's guilt (to the level of her conviction) is still suspect. Famous Trials has a short narrative dedicated to recent information (http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/rosenb/ROS_ACCT.HTM).

Have students look at the websites that claim the Rosenbergs did not get a fair trial. Do they agree with the assertions on these websites (start with <http://www.rosenbergtrial.org/>).

Debrief questions:

1. How do the documents in the DBQ inform this drama?
2. What is going on in national and world events that enter into this story?
3. At the beginning of the play, Bloch objects to Saypol's reference to communism – why do you think Bloch objected so much (and conversely, why do you think Saypol tried to use this tactic)?
4. Bloch, in his closing speech, urges the jury to act rationally, not with prejudice or emotion. Do you think Bloch succeeded?
5. What about the witnesses – Elitcher and Greenglass? Do you think they were credible? Why or why not?
6. What is the definition of a “scapegoat?” Do you think that Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were scapegoats (as many have claimed)?

McCarthy and the “Great Fear”

Fear and Reason in the USA

Annotated Bibliography

McCarthy and the “Great Fear” Annotated Bibliography

Background Narrative:

DiBiase, Kim and Katie Seavey. "Defining US." *McCarthyism*. Available from <http://chnm.gmu.edu/fairfaxtah/b34.html>. Last accessed 22 April 2008.

Kim DiBiase and Katie Seavey were participants in a Teaching American History program. Their program was based at George Mason University in Fairfax Virginia.

House of Un-American Activities Committee. *Rand, Ayn*. Oct 20, 1947. Originally Accessed from Lawrence, Richard. "Objectivism Reference Center." *Ayn Rand's HUAC testimony*. Available from <http://www.noblesoul.com/orc/texts/huac.html>. Last accessed 22 May 2008.

Ayn Rand was a Russian born woman who moved to the United States. She was a novelist, playwright and philosopher. During the era of McCarthyism she served as a friendly witness for HUAC. She was a strong supporter of Laissez-faire capitalism and an aggressive opponent of communism.

Noakes, John. "Official Frames in Social Movement Theory: The FBI, HUAC, and the Communist Threat in Hollywood.." *Sociological Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (2000): 657-680. *America: History & Life*. [Database online.]

John Noakes is an associate professor of sociology at Arcadia University. The focus of his studies includes political dissent and the states response to political dissent.

"*Jackie Robinson*." Federal Bureau of Investigation. Available from <http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/robinson.htm>. Last accessed 20 May 2008.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has created a vast online file of documents that are open to public scrutiny under the Freedom of Information Act. The files include information about all people that were investigated by the FBI. The documents that are available are censored for security reasons and therefore not absolutely totally revealing. Jackie Robinson was not a person who was investigated by the FBI but he was included in investigations of the NAACP. He also testified before HUAC as a witness to communist infiltration of minority groups.

Miller, Arthur. "Are You Now or Have You Ever Been." *The Guardian / The Observer online*. Available from <http://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/50s/millermccarthyism.html>. Last accessed 20 May 2008.

Arthur Miller was a playwright with a liberal perspective. His works focused on the plight of working class America. One of his most famous plays “The Crucible” was set in 1690’s Massachusetts and focused on the witch trials of Salem. The play was an allegory for the Communist fears of the 1940s. As a result, in 1956, Congress subpoenaed him to testify before HUAC. During the investigation he spoke openly about his political views and affiliation but when asked to give names of others who shared his affiliations, he refused. As a result he was found in contempt of Congress, fined five hundred dollars, and sentenced to thirty days in jail.

"Federal Bureau of Investigation." *Famous Cases: the Atom Spy Case*. Available from <http://www.fbi.gov/libref/historic/famcases/atom/atom.htm#background>. Last accessed 17 May 2008.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation was regularly receiving inquiries about a number of cases of historical significance. To help ease the access to this information, they decided to create a web-based collection of data about the trials for which they received the most inquiries. On the web page they have created monographs about the trials. They provide overviews of the trials and the key players. The FBI does not encourage using this source as an exhaustive resource. Instead, they encourage people to use libraries and other information resources when seeking deeper understanding (in other words – they do not claim to be in the business of document archiving).

"Execution of the Rosenbergs: Enemies of Democracy." *The Guardian: Article History*. Available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/1953/jun/20/usa.fromthearchive>. Last accessed 17 May 2008.

The Guardian Newspaper, based in London England, was founded in 1821. It is a weekly paper that attempts to summarize the international news of the week. The stories do not go into great depth but instead the paper covers as many stories as possible. The paper takes a liberal perspective and is often criticized for being excessively liberal at times.

DBQ Documents:

"How Communism Works." *Catholic Library Service*. 1938

"How Communism Works" is a pamphlet created by the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church in the United States worked vigorously against Communism in the 1930's and 40's. Despite their efforts against Communism, they had little impact on policy because of their minority status and the US Constitution's expectation of a separation between church and state.

Block, Herbert. "It's Okay – We're Hunting Communists." *Washington Post*. Oct. 31, 1947.

Originally Accessed from the Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/herblock/fire.html>). "Herblock's History: Political Cartoons from the Crash to the Millennium." Last accessed 22 April 2008. Herbert Lawrence Block is the man who coined the term "McCarthyism." He worked fifty-eight years as a political cartoonist. Forty-five of those years he worked for the Washington Post where he created works that earned him two of his three Pulitzer prizes. Block supported New Deal policies and was vocal in his opposition to McCarthy, Soviet aggressions and the Nixon administration.

Block, Herbert. "You Read Books, eh?." *Washington Post*. April 24, 1949.

Originally accessed from the Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/herblock/fire.html>). "Herblock's History: Political Cartoons from the Crash to the Millennium." Last accessed 22 April 2008.

“Are they Ashamed?” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 28 July 1948.

The Seattle Post-Intelligencer was one of many Hearst owned newspapers. William Randolph Hearst used his many newspapers to speak out against Communism and to influence opinion. His newspapers helped to pressure the public to remain vigilant in identifying suspicious behavior that could be classified as un-American.

McCarthy, Joseph. “One Communist.” *1952 Republic Convention Speech*. July 7, 1952
Originally Accessed from CNN. "Cold War Episode Six: Reds – Episode script." CNN Interactive. Available from <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/episodes/06/script.html>.
Last accessed 22 April 2008.

Joseph McCarthy was a minority Senator from Wisconsin. He became a vocal opponent to Communism during the early 1950's. He gained almost instant mass popularity when he started to vigorously speak out against Communism. He made many exaggerations about the level of Communist activity that existed within the United States.

Rosenberg, Julius. “*Letter to Manny Bloch*.” Read on Sept 22, 1953.

Originally Accessed from LewRockwell.com. "June 19 -The Anniversary of the Execution of the Rosenbergs." LewRockwell.com. Available at <http://www.lewrockwell.com/orig/felkins12.html>.
Last accessed 22 April 2008.

Manny Bloch was the attorney for Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for their trial for espionage against the United States. The court sentenced both Julius and Ethel to death on April 5th 1951. The letter is written in response as both a reaction to the sentence as well as a response to the mood of the era. The letter is addressing the idea that the nation had been so worked up against Communism and that there had been no substantial concrete evidence to justify the uproar. The letter is published in a variety of sources but it was retrieved from the LewRockwell.com web site.

Gallup, Dr. George H.. *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1971*. New York: Random House, 1972.

George Gallup collected data about human nature and behavior. His work is generally used by mass media to gauge public opinion. The data that was collected in 1954 was collected before the Gallop Corporation that we know today existed. However, the format is very similar to what the current Gallup Corporation does because the current corporation was formed from Gallup's many opinion research firms that he operated world-wide.

Linder, Doug. "Judge Kaufman's Statement Upon Sentencing the Rosenbergs." *Famous Trials: The Rosenberg Trial*. Available from http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/rosenb/ROS_SENT.HTM. Last accessed 22 April 2008.

Doug Linder is a law professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He earned his J.D. from Stanford Law School. He started the creation of his Famous Trials web site in 1996. It has become the largest online collection of primary source documents that relate to both significant and infamous trials in US History. He added the Rosenberg trial resources to the website in 2001.

House of Un-American Activities Committee. *Disney, Walter E.* Oct 24, 1947. Originally Accessed from Woelfel, Scott ed. "Cold War Episode Six: Reds - Filmmaker Walter E. Disney: Testimony to the House Un-American Activities Committee." CNN Interactive. Available from <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/episodes/06/script.html>. Last accessed 22 April 2008.

The House of Un-American Activities Committee was an investigative committee of the House of Representatives. Their purpose was to identify activities of Americans that would undermine the stability of the US Government and economy. Joseph McCarthy, being a Senator, was not involved with this committee. CNN is a news network based in Atlanta Georgia. The network first aired in 1980. The Network is currently owned by Time Warner and operated by Turner Broadcasting System. CNN Interactive (CNN.com) was created by CNN in 1995 to meet the growing demand for online news resources. The Cold War webisode was started in 1998. Within a year the editor, Scott Woelfel had oversaw the development of over one-thousand web sites that chronicle the Cold War through eye witness accounts and primary source documents.

White, Matthew. "Communism: Development and Duration." *Historical Atlas of the Twentieth Century*. Available from <http://users.erols.com/mwhite28/communis.htm>. Last accessed 22 April 2008. Originally Accessed from Rational Revolution. "Communism on the World Stage." This War is About So Much More. Available at http://rationalrevolution.net/war/communism_on_the_world_stage.htm.

Mathew White is a librarian who uses online tools to help organize his research. He does his research to satisfy his own interests and makes his maps available under fair use laws. His maps have been used in more than forty-five published books and eighty scholarly publications.

"Spartan Spectator." Bconservative. Available from <http://spartanspectator.blogspot.com/2007/07/burn-all-reds.html>. Last accessed 22 April 2008.

Kyle Bristow is a Michigan State University student with a strong conservative perspective. He actively promotes the conservative position within the United States. Freedom seems to be a significant motivator for his actions. He seems to also be particularly interested in the preservation of a segregated society.

"*Transcript of Senate Resolution 301: Censure of Senator Joseph McCarthy (1954).*" Our Documents: 100 Milestone Document. Available from <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=86&page=transcript>. Last accessed 22 April 2008.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) created and maintains the Our Documents website. The mission of the NARA is to safeguard and preserve government records. They want to make sure that the records are maintained so that people can access them and use them to learn more about the past and to help "support democracy, promote civic education, and facilitate historical understanding of our national experience."

McCarthy and the “Great Fear” Supplemental Resources

The Climate of the Cold War

Ambrose, Stephen and Brinkley, Douglas. *Rise to Globalism*. Harlow, England: Longman, 1998.
Ambrose and Brinkley present a complete narrative which traces U.S. and Soviet geopolitical and economic competition from the end of WWII to the end of the Cold War.

Miller, Richard Lawrence. *Heritage of Fear: Illusion and Reality in the Cold War: A Review*. Walker & Company, 1988.

Focusing on the theme of military aggression, Miller surveys the Communist movement from its origins to the present, arguing that American fear of an onrushing Red juggernaut bent on destroying Western democracy is not and never has been based on reality. It is chronologically organized, and reviews Communist failures from 1918 to 1987 and argues the perspective that not a single democracy has fallen to Communist military aggression.

Weart, Spencer. *Nuclear Fear: A History of Images*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988.
Originally trained as a physicist, Weart became a historian and one of the leading historians in Cold War nuclear technology. The book is widely reviewed in academic journals.

Evidence of the actual threat of Communism

Gabrick, Robert and Klehr Harvey. *Communism, Espionage, and the Cold War: A Unit of Study for Grades 9-12*. UCLA: National Center for History in the Schools, accessed at <http://nchs.ucla.edu/NH185-preview.pdf>, Last accessed 19 June 2008.

The Unit provides some very good lessons around the Venona Project and other aspects of Soviet Espionage.

Haynes, John Earl and Klehr, Harvey. *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America*. 1999.
Haynes and Klehr present evidence uncovered from recovered KGB Files that details actual communist spy activities in the domestic United States.

Weinstein, Allen and Vassiliev, Alexander. *The Haunted Wood*. 1999
The narrative chronicles the history of Soviet espionage from the Soviet perspective. It begins with Stalin and delves into the 1950's with particular focus on Eisenhower's presidency, and the Soviet responses to policy and actions of the U.S. government.

Wittkopf, Eugene R. and McCormick, James M. “The Cold War Consensus: Did it Exist?” *Polity*, 1990 22(4): 627-653.

Wittkopf addresses the actual evidence and evaluates the climate of the Cold War.

McCarthyism

Anderson, Jack, and Ronald W. May. *McCarthy: The Man, the Senator, the "ism"*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1952.

Bayley, Edwin R. *Joe McCarthy and the Press*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981.

Buckley, William F., and L. Brent Bozell. *McCarthy and His Enemies: The Record and Its Meaning*. 1954. Reprint. New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1970.

Belfrage, Cedric. *The American Inquisition, 1945-1960: A Profile of the "McCarthy Era"*. 1973. Reprint. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1989.

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De Santis, Vincent P. "American Catholics and McCarthyism." *Catholic Historical Review* 51 (April 1965): 1-30.

Dulles, Eleanor Lansing. "Footnote to History: A Day in the Life of Senator Joe McCarthy." *World Affairs* 143 (Fall 1980): 156-62.

Evans, Medford. *The Assassination of Joe McCarthy*. Boston: Western Islands, 1970.

Evans, M. Stanton. *Blacklisted by History: The Untold Story of Senator Joe McCarthy and his Fight Against America's Enemies*. New York: Crown Forum, 2007.

Ewald, William Bragg, Jr. *Who Killed Joe McCarthy?* New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984.

Feuerlicht, Roberta Strauss. *Joe McCarthy and McCarthyism: The Hate that Haunts America*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.

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