

Northwest History Consortium

McCarthyism

Kaycee Taylor
10th - 12th Grade
National Standard

Era 9: Postwar United States (1945-1970s) / Standard 3A

Standard 3A: Analyze the rise and fall of McCarthyism, its effects on civil liberties, and its repercussions.

SCENARIO

The United States and the allies have achieved victory over the Axis powers by August of 1945. However, the ensuing peace is fraught with continued conflict as Europe lies in ruins, Germany is divided amongst the victors, and Japan is an occupied country under American military rule.

Adding to the tension around the world is the competing political, social, and economic policies of the United States and former ally—the Soviet Union. Within the borders of the United States there is fear that the Soviets are bent on world domination and that communists have infiltrated the government and film industry. In addition, Congress has begun to hold hearings to uncover those suspected of disloyalty, citizens are encouraged to build bunkers to prepare for a coming nuclear war, and many in the nation seek to return to a time of more traditional values, while others struggle for expanded civil rights.

TASK

You work for one of the new television stations as a creator of Public Service Announcements (PSA). The president of your broadcasting company has given you the responsibility of crafting several different public service announcements that highlight the current affairs in America, paying close attention to what is happening in society as well as the workings of the government. Your boss is looking for you to capture the complexities of the time as the nation struggles with its post war identity. Some of the things that he is concerned about are:

- How can/should the rights of citizens be protected while ensuring national security?
- What values should be supported and furthered?
- What does it mean to be a loyal American?
- How does conformity enhance or undermine a society?
- How does fear (real or imagined) affect a society?

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RESOURCES

Books

“Are You Now or Have You Ever Been?” (Testifying before House Un-American Activities Committee). Ordinary Americans: U.S. History Through the Eyes of Everyday People, 2nd edition, edited by Linda R. Monk. Alexandria, VA: Close Up Publishing, 2003.

Internet

“American Memory Home Index.” Library of Congress. 2010. Washington, DC. 3 May 2010 <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>>.

“Audio and Visual Resources Related to the 1950s.” 3 May 2010. Digital History (University of Houston). ©2006 – 2010. Houston, TX. 3 May 2010 <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/resource_guides/content_av.cfm?tpc=28>.

Block, Herbert. “Herblock’s History: Political Cartoons from the Crash to the Millennium.” 3 June 2003. Library of Congress. 2010. Washington, DC. 3 May 2010 <<http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/herblock/>>.

“Charter of the United Nations.” United Nations Organization. ©2010. New York, NY. 30 April <<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml>>.

Churchill, Winston S. “Iron Curtain Speech.” 5 March 1986. Modern History Sourcebook (Fordham University). ©1997 – 2010 Paul Halsall. New York, NY. 30 April 2010 <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/churchill-iron.html>>.

“Cold War Images.” Internet Archives. 2001 – 2010. San Francisco, CA. 3 May 2010 <<http://www.archive.org/search.php?query=cold%20war%20AND%20mediatype%3Amovies>>.

“Communism in Washington State.” 1919 – 2002. Communism in Washington State History and Memory Project (University of Washington). ©2002 – 2010. Seattle, WA. 1 May 2010 <<http://depts.washington.edu/labhist/cpproject/index.shtml>>.

Davis, Sid. “Films by Sid Davis.” Internet Archives. 2001 – 2010. San Francisco, CA. 3 May 2010 <<http://www.archive.org/search.php?query=sid%20davis>>.
The Coronet Films found here can also be checked out from the teacher.

Eisenhower, President Dwight D. “Domino Theory,” 7 April 1954. Matrix History Classes (Michigan State University). East Lansing, MI. 3 May 2010 <<http://coursesa.matrix.msu.edu/~hst306/documents/domino.html>>.

“Guided Readings: Postwar America: 1945 – 1960.” 3 May 2010. Digital History (University of Houston). ©2006 – 2010. Houston, TX. 3 May 2010 <<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/subtitles.cfm?titleID=68>>.

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“Have You No Sense of Decency: The Army-McCarthy Hearings.” 1954. History Matters (George Mason University/Center for History and New Media). ©1998 – 2010. Fairfax, VA. <<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6444>>.

Lawson, John. “‘They Want to Muzzle Public Opinion:’ John Lawson’s Warning to the American Public.” 27 Oct. 1947. History Matters (George Mason University/Center for History and New Media). ©1998 – 2010. Fairfax, VA. <<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6441>>.

“The Literature & Culture of the American 1950s,” compiled by Al Filreis. University of Pennsylvania (www.writing.upenn.edu). ©2010. Philadelphia, PA. 3 May 2010 <<http://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/50s/home.html>>.

MacArthur, General Douglas. “General Douglas MacArthur’s Farewell Speech: Given to the Corps of Cadets at West Point,” 12 May 1962. The National Center For Public Policy Research. ©2010. Washington, DC. 3 May 2010 <<http://www.nationalcenter.org/MacArthurFarewell.html>>.

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McCarthy, Senator Joseph R. “Senator Joe McCarthy: Audio Excerpts, 1950-1954.” Marquette University (Raynor Memorial Libraries). ©2008 – 2010. Milwaukee, WI. 30 April 2010 <<http://digitalmarquette.cdmhost.com/JRM/>>.

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“100 Milestone Documents: 1776-1965.” National Archives and Records Administration (www.ourdocuments.gov). 2010. College Park, MD. 3 May 2010 <<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/content.php?flash=true&page=milestone>>.

Reagan, Ronald. “We Must Keep the Labor Unions Clean: ‘Friendly’ HUAC Witnesses . . . Blame Hollywood Labor Conflicts on Communist Infiltration.” 23-24 Oct. 1947. History Matters (George Mason University/Center for History and New Media). ©1998 – 2010. Fairfax, VA. <<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6458>>.

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“The World at Stake: Three ‘Friendly’ HUAC Hollywood Witnesses Assess Pro-Soviet Wartime Films.” 1947. History Matters (George Mason University/Center for History and New Media). ©1998 – 2010. Fairfax, VA. <<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6442>>.

*See the classroom teacher with other resources that you may have discovered. Additionally, you are welcome to check out resources from the classroom teacher’s library.

REFERENCES/CITATIONS

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