

# New Frontiers

A newsletter for ★ educators

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF THE JOHN F. KENNEDY PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

## JOSEPH P. MOAKLEY PUBLIC SPEAKING INSTITUTE

The Moakley Public Speaking Institute, a nine day summer program for high school students, was held from August 13-23, 2007. The Institute is designed to help teens master the art of public speaking. Sixteen high school students (grades 9-12) participated in this year's program. The students were recruited from Upward Bound Programs



Moakley Participants 2007

at Boston University, Roxbury Community College, Simmons College, and Chelsea High School, as well as Boston College's College Bound program, TeachBoston, Urban Scholars, Health Careers Opportunity Program, WriteBoston, and the Boston Student Advisory Council. During the final banquet, students delivered speeches to approximately 75 guests on topics of their choice including images of beauty, the prevention of AIDS, the war in Iraq, world poverty, pollution, funding for Boston Public Schools, teen fathers, and domestic violence. ★

## Shaping Up America: JFK, Sports and the Call to Physical Fitness

During your next visit, don't miss the Museum's special exhibit, "Shaping up America: John F. Kennedy, Sports and the Call to Physical Fitness." Original objects and archival materials tell the story of the Kennedy family's interest in sports and President Kennedy's re-invigoration of the President's Council on Physical Fitness as an essential element of his "New Frontier."



Senators John F. Kennedy, Henry "Scoop" Jackson, and Mike Mansfield join colleagues in a game of softball.

Exhibit highlights include President Kennedy's golf clubs, a photograph of JFK throwing the ceremonial first pitch at the 1962 Washington Senators' opening game, a football presented by the 1962 Navy football team signed by players and coaches including Steve Belichick (father of current Patriots head coach), a photograph of Senator John F. Kennedy with Red Sox player Ted Williams and Rose Kennedy's souvenir Boston Braves "Royal Rooters" button from the 1914 World Series. Younger students will also enjoy the popular Snoopy cartoons of the period encouraging children to do their "daily dozen" exercises.

The exhibit's physical fitness theme is certainly a timely issue, and one that's relevant to all ages. As early as December 1960, John F. Kennedy wrote an article for *Sports Illustrated* about the growing decline in the level of Americans' physical activity compared with that of other nations, a fact that was especially worrisome during the Cold War period. In this article, and in later speeches as President, he stressed the importance of physical fitness as "a foundation for the vigor and vitality of all the activities of the nation." He warned readers that if Americans neglected physical fitness, their intellectual and creative capabilities would suffer as well. The exhibit is sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, creator of the award-winning program "Jump Up and Go!" that helps children, their families and communities become more physically active and develop lifelong healthy behaviors. The exhibit is on display through September 2008. ★

### HIGHLIGHTS

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4 Reading, Writing and History

5 Upcoming Kennedy Library Forums

6 How Do You Know It's True?

## THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS AND ITS LEGACY: A CONFERENCE FOR TEACHERS

On October 17th, 2007, the Kennedy Library presented a special conference to mark the 45th anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The day-long program featured eyewitness and historical perspectives of this landmark event, and provided unique teaching tools to support U.S. and World History curricula.

### The Cuban Missile Crisis and Its Legacy

Graham Allison, Director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University, began the conference with an overview of the crisis and its legacy. He then presented four ways to enhance students' understanding of the event. He suggested teachers use the movie *13 Days*, a film directed by Roger Donaldson, centered on the 13 days of the crisis in the U.S. He played excerpts of the film and highlighted different ways to tie the movie into classroom units. He also suggested teachers use the web site [cubanmissilecrisis.org](http://cubanmissilecrisis.org), which provides students with a comprehensive breakdown of the crisis. In addition, the web site

**As a personal friend and adviser to Kennedy, Sorensen admired him as a leader who possessed “a sense of history and perspective, humanity and modesty.” When asked about his own personal fears during the crisis, he replied, “I was too busy to be scared.”**

features primary sources, and a section on the lessons of the crisis, and its applications to today's world. He also recommended that teachers consider his book, *Essence of Decision*, as a way to demystify the event for students. The



Theodore C. Sorensen addresses Conference participants

book presents three frameworks for analyzing decision-making during the Cuban Missile Crisis which serve as models for studying other events. Allison concluded by sharing articles that helped make a connection between the crisis and events taking place today.

### The October Crisis and the Caribbean Crisis: Cuban and Soviet Perspectives

The next session featured panelists James G. Blight (Professor of International Relations, Brown University), Timothy Naftali

(Historian and Director of the Nixon Presidential Library and Museum) and moderator Janet M. Lang (Adjunct Associate Professor, International Relations, Brown University) who provided insights into the Cuban and Soviet perspectives based on their research of previously closed documents and new oral histories. Professor Lang opened the panel by advising the teachers that a true picture of the October events could not be fully understood without incorporating the Cuban and Soviet viewpoints. Professor Blight, an expert on Cuba's perspective, addressed Fidel Castro's concerns as the leader of a small socialist nation in the shadow of the United States. He evoked a vivid picture of Castro's fears in October 1962 as American planes thundered over the island, and an impending U.S. invasion seemed imminent. Timothy Naftali noted that Nikita Khrushchev, knowing that the USSR had fewer nuclear missiles than

the U.S., was hoping to achieve strategic parity by placing missiles in Cuba. He stated that Khrushchev never wanted a nuclear war. However, following President Kennedy's October 22nd speech outlining the U.S. response, he considered that if the U.S. were to invade Cuba, the Soviets might ultimately have to respond with nuclear weapons. Naftali suggested teachers go to the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs web site <http://millercenter.virginia.edu/scripps/> and click on the "Kremlin Decision Making Project" to read the minutes from Soviet meetings during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

During the lunch hour Allan Goodrich, the library's chief archivist, presented a special display of President Kennedy's own annotated map of the missile sites.

### **An Insider's Perspective: A Conversation with Theodore C. Sorensen**

Theodore C. Sorensen, Special Counsel and Adviser to President Kennedy, recounted his own experience of the thirteen days in October of 1962, echoing historian Arthur Schlesinger's observation that the crisis was "the most dangerous moment in human history." As a member of the Executive Committee, the group of advisers Kennedy assembled, Sorensen personally witnessed the tense deliberations that took place over whether to invade Cuba; place a naval quarantine around the island; or do nothing and wait to see how the Soviet Union proceeded. Sorensen explained how the advisers formed two camps, later termed "hawks" and "doves" by the media, and took the audience step by step through Kennedy's final decision to place the quarantine around Cuba. As a personal friend and adviser to Kennedy, Sorensen admired him as a leader who possessed "a sense of history and perspective, humanity and modesty." When asked about his own personal fears during the

crisis, he replied, "I was too busy to be scared." For a transcript of "An Insider's Perspective: A Conversation with Theodore C. Sorensen" visit the "Kennedy Library Forums" section of our web site.

### **The Cuban Missile Crisis After 45 Years**

The final session featured Sheldon Stern, author of *Averting 'The Final Failure': John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings* and former Kennedy Library historian who addressed the significance of the



Theodore C. Sorensen and Graham Allison

presidential tape recordings of White House meetings during the crisis. Stern, a national expert on presidential recordings, emphasized the importance of using these tapes in research and classroom applications to shed new light on historical events, noting that the narratives on these tapes, "capture the nuances of the discussion—the tone of voice, anger, laughter, etc.," more so than even eyewitness accounts. While stressing the reliability of tapes over memory, Stern also acknowledged the difficulties inherent in transcribing old tape recordings, and encouraged teachers to visit the Miller Center web site to listen to the recordings themselves for classroom use. (<http://www.millercenter.virginia.edu/index.php/scripps/digitalarchive/presidentialrecordings/kennedy/index>)

### **Bibliography**

Allison, Graham and Phillip Zelikow. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. New York: Longman, 1999.

Blight, James and David Welch. *Intelligence and the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Routledge, 1998.

Blight, James and Phillip Brenner. *Sad and Luminous Days: Cuba's Secret Struggle with the Superpower After the Missile Crisis*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2002.

Naftali, Timothy and Aleksandr Fursenko. *One Hell of a Gamble: Khrushchev, Castro and Kennedy, 1958-1964*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1997.

Stern, Sheldon M. *Averting 'The Final Failure': John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.

Stern, Sheldon M. *The Week the World Stood Still: Inside the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.

For more resources relating to the crisis, visit the "For Teachers" section of our web site at [www.jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org). ★

# Reading, Writing and History

A Conference for Teachers of Grades 3 to 8 and School Librarians

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum

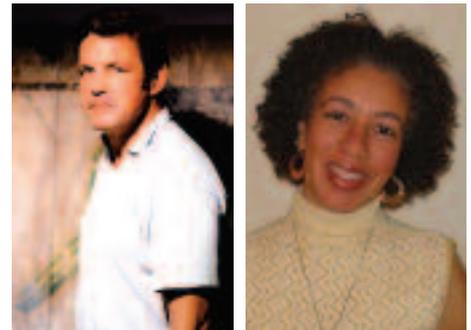
Monday, March 17, 2008 ★ 8:30am – 2:45pm

Co-sponsored by the John F. Kennedy National Historic Site

Many children are missing out on learning history as schools increasingly emphasize basic literacy instruction. But, as author Joy Hakim suggests, “We have a key to the nation’s reading crisis, and we’ve been ignoring it... when it comes to critical reading, history shines. Hardly anything approaches it in its demand for analysis and thinking. Besides that, history is a natural with children. It’s filled with adventures, battles, heroes and villains; they all just happen to be true.”

Can this vital “content area” be viewed as integral to the teaching of essential skills? Join outstanding authors and educators as we discuss how history engages young readers

and provokes young writers to reach for their pens. Speakers include: **Katherine Paterson**, author of *Lyddie* and *Bread and Roses, Too*; **Marc Aronson**, author of *Witch-Hunt: Mysteries of the Salem Witch Trials* and *The Real Revolution: The Global Story of American Independence*; **Carole Boston Weatherford**, poet and author of *Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-ins* and *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom*; **Peter Sís**, author and illustrator of *Starry Messenger: Galileo Galilei* and *Follow the Dream: The Story of Christopher Columbus*. The program will also include curriculum-relevant workshops presented by classroom teachers, children’s literature specialists and history educators.



Katherine Paterson, Marc Aronson, Peter Sís, and Carole Weatherford

For further information, please contact Sam Rubin at [sam.rubin@nara.gov](mailto:sam.rubin@nara.gov) or Esther Kohn at [esther.kohn@nara.gov](mailto:esther.kohn@nara.gov) ★

## SPREADING THE NEWS: MASS MEDIA IN AMERICA, PAST AND PRESENT

**THE LIBRARY’S ANNUAL AMERICAN STUDIES SUMMER INSTITUTE**, in partnership with UMass Boston, offered participants an opportunity to critically examine the news media in the United States. Of the 48 people attending the Institute last summer, 33 were middle and high school teachers.

Guest presenters provided thought-provoking lectures and led discussions about the development of various media from the penny press to the Internet. Speakers included Professor Christopher B. Daly of Boston University, who gave teachers an historical overview of the development of newspapers from colonial days to the early 1900s, and Professor Michael Keith of Boston College who provided a history of radio news. Professor Michael Milburn of UMass Boston discussed the content and effects of television news.

The “beats” of crime (Christopher Wilson, Boston College), sports (Bill Littlefield, host, “Only a Game,” National Public Radio), and foreign affairs (Nicholas Daniloff, Northeastern University) were also addressed, as well as local ethnic news media (Ellen Hume, UMass Boston, and Gerardo Villacres, Director/Editor, *El Planeta*) and the impact of blogs and Web 2.0 on journalism today (Andy Carvin, National Public Radio).

The annual Institute is co-directed by Paul Watanabe, Professor of Political Science at UMASS-Boston, and Nina Tisch, Education Specialist at the Kennedy Library. Participants may earn three graduate credits in American Studies or receive PDPs. For information about the 2008 program please visit the “Professional Development” portion of our web site at [www.jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org). ★

## Upcoming Kennedy Library Forums

**THE KENNEDY LIBRARY** has several exciting forums this winter relating to civics and history curricula. Teachers and students are invited to attend. To register for a forum or for more information, visit our web site at [www.jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org).



Sargent Shriver

### **A Screening and Discussion of *American Idealist*** Sunday, January 13, 2008 ★ 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.

*American Idealist*, a documentary about the many accomplishments of Sargent Shriver during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, including the Peace Corps, Head Start, Legal Services for the Poor, VISTA, and Job Corps, will be introduced by his daughter, **Maria Shriver**.

Following the screening, there will be a conversation with film director **Bruce Orenstein**; Sargent Shriver's biographer **Scott Stossel**; and close friends and colleagues of Sargent Shriver, **William Josephson** and **Edgar May**.



Madeleine Albright

### **A Conversation with Madeleine Albright** Monday, January 14, 2008 ★ 5:30 to 7:00 PM

Former Secretary of State **Madeleine Albright** will discuss her new book, *Memo to the President Elect: How We Can Restore America's Reputation and Leadership*.

### **A Civil Rights Milestone – June 11, 1963**

Monday, January 21, 2008 ★ 2:00-3:30 PM (MLK Day)

On June 11, 1963, two African American students—James Hood and Vivian Malone—were barred entry to the University of Alabama by Governor George Wallace. In response, President Kennedy called out the National Guard; Governor Wallace stepped aside; and the President delivered his major civil rights address to the nation. After President Kennedy's speech, civil rights leader Medgar Evers was tragically murdered at his home. Join **James Hood**, **Myrlie Evers-Williams**, civil rights activist and widow of Medgar Evers; **Nick Katzenbach**, former Attorney General; and **Theodore C. Sorensen**, Special Counsel and Adviser to President Kennedy, as they discuss the events of this historic turning point in American history. **Callie Crossley** will moderate.



Charles Simic

### **Welcome to the new Poet Laureate** Monday, January 28, 2008 ★ 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Former Poet Laureate **Robert Pinsky** and new Poet Laureate **Charles Simic** discuss poetry and read their favorite poems. ★

## CHALLENGE YOUR STUDENTS TO WRITE THE NEXT PROFILE IN COURAGE



Al Hunt (far left), Chair of the Profile in Courage Award Committee and Caroline Kennedy honor Maia Gottlieb (far right), winner of the 2007 *Profile in Courage* Essay Contest and Phillip Stephenson, her nominating teacher from Baltimore City College High School.

**ENCOURAGE YOUR STUDENTS** to participate in the annual *Profile in Courage National Essay Contest*. The *Contest* invites students from across the nation to write an essay on the political courage of a U.S. elected official who has served since 1956. It is a companion program to the *John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award™*, named for President Kennedy's 1957 Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Profiles in Courage*, which recounts the stories of eight U.S. senators who risked their careers by taking principled stands on unpopular positions.

Maia Gottlieb of Baltimore City College High School wrote the 2007 winning essay, *Shirley Chisholm: Challenging the System*. Winning essays, including Ms. Gottlieb's, are posted on the *Profile in Courage Essay Contest* section of our web site at [www.jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org).

The *Contest* and an online curriculum supporting its use in the classroom address national standards for social studies and language arts, and provide lessons on identifying and analyzing acts of political courage. Both help to prepare students for the writing component of standardized tests.

The *Contest* is sponsored by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation and generously supported by Fidelity Investments.

The deadline for entries is **Saturday, January 12, 2008**. ★

# How Do You Know It's True? Evaluating Biographies with Children

When asked how biographers gather information about a person's life, elementary and middle grade students often respond, "They read books," and "They use the Internet." Third and fifth grade teachers in Boston Public Schools are implementing a new approach to teaching history through biography with exciting results. Participants in *History Makers*, a professional development seminar presented by the Library's Education Department in partnership with Boston Public Schools, are learning how biographers research their subjects and select and interpret information. During the twelve-week program, teachers meet with guest authors and children's literature specialists. They practice, adapt and implement critical reading strategies exemplified by Myra Zarnowski in her book *History Makers: A Questioning Approach to*



Boston Public School teachers participating in the *History Makers* seminar learn to evaluate biographies and guide their students to read biographies with a critical eye.

## *Reading and Writing Biographies.*

In one of these practical classroom activities, Zarnowski, a professor of Elementary and Early Education at

Queens College in New York, outlines a strategy in which students compare two or more biographies about the same person. They examine similarities

## RELATED TEACHING RESOURCES AND CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS

### Related Teaching Resources

Visit our web site, [www.jfklibrary.org](http://www.jfklibrary.org), in the "For Teachers" section to find **Historical Resources for Elementary and Middle Grades** including:

- **Biographies in American History: Annotated Bibliographies for Elementary and Middle Grades.** These extensive booklists describe recommended biographies for the **Colonial Period**, the **Revolutionary Era**, the **19th Century** and the **20th Century**.
- **Evaluating Biographies and Nonfiction Books for Elementary and Middle Grades** – Handout for Teachers
- **What to look for when you read a biography** – Handout for Students
- **Criteria adapted from the Orbis Pictus Nonfiction Award** offer guidelines for selecting high-quality books for elementary and middle grade students

### Classroom Applications

Refer to the annotated bibliographies above to select at least two books about the same historical figure for each

student to read. Have them work individually or in groups to record information about one or more elements of the biographies:

1. Did you find conflicting information? Different versions of the same story?
2. What source materials did the authors use? How do you know? Which sources are more likely to be accurate? Which are less likely to be accurate?
3. What was the main theme of each biography? How did you determine this?
4. What information did the biographer choose to include and how was it presented?
5. Is there information about how the author became interested in the historical figure?

### Reference:

Zarnowski, Myra. *History Makers: A Questioning Approach to Reading and Writing Biographies*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003. ★

and differences in the selection and interpretation of information, source material, authors' notes, illustrations, theme and style.

Several teachers who have implemented the strategy found that students quickly realized that biographies about the same person often include different information. The students also discovered that some biographies had conflicting "facts." Faced with this dilemma, the teachers asked their students, "How do you determine which one is true?" This question prompted further investigations: How did the biographer gather this information? What sources were used? Were they accurate? To answer these questions, students had to think like historians as they evaluated the evidence presented by the author.

Students were fascinated to find that biographers interpret the same historical figure's life differently and sometimes even have different versions of the same episode. As students became familiar with criteria for analyzing biographies, they offered their own interpretations and ideas about the author's approach. Empowered with her new knowledge and skills, one student requested that her teacher help her find a book by an author she deemed trustworthy, based on having evaluated his source material. One teacher reported that as his students learned to compare biographies, "the conversations that were going on in the classroom were amazing. The students learned more about learning (in history) than any other subject." ★

(*History Makers* is presented in partnership with Boston Public Schools, and is supported by a Teaching American History Grant from the U.S. Department of Education.)

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN YOU READ A BIOGRAPHY

**A GOOD BIOGRAPHY PRESENTS THE FACTS ABOUT A PERSON'S LIFE** including what the subject did and how he or she made a difference in the world. It should also tell the story in an interesting way, showing what the person was really like, how he or she acted, and how others responded. What picture does the author paint of the individual?

**WHAT IS THE AUTHOR'S POINT OF VIEW?** What does the author think of the person he or she is writing about? Biographers interpret information in different ways. How is the person's life presented? What conclusions does the author draw from the person? What parts of the book show you the author's point of view?

**WHAT INFORMATION DID THE AUTHOR INCLUDE AND WHAT IS LEFT OUT?** If you read two or more biographies about the same person, you will find different information in each biography. Why do you think the author included certain information and left out other information?

**IS IT TRUE?** This can be a very difficult question to answer. Biographers make their writings accurate by learning as much as possible about their subjects. They study materials such as diaries, personal letters, oral histories and autobiographies. The most accurate biographies are based on historical evidence. But some biographers are less thorough and careful in their research and may not use the best source materials. Also, the book may be fictionalized, or partly made up. Sometimes authors use their imagination in writing about a person's thoughts, feelings and conversations. (A fictionalized biography may be a good story, but it is not necessarily true.)

### **HOW CAN YOU CHECK WHAT EVIDENCE A BIOGRAPHER USED?**

See if the book has a bibliography, end notes or an author's note to explain what sources the author used.

**REMEMBER THAT JUST BECAUSE** something is in a book doesn't mean that it's true.

**WHEN WAS THE BOOK PUBLISHED?** What is the copyright date? Older biographies can be excellent, but newer books may include new information based on more recent research. They may also have fewer stereotypes. Newer books often look more appealing, too; they are designed for kids and may have beautiful illustrations and interesting photographs.

**BE SURE TO EXAMINE PICTURES THAT LOOK "HISTORICAL."** Sometimes these images were actually created many years after the event by artists who did not know anything about their subjects. They were not made to show what life was actually like, they were created as art. The images may also be based on stereotypes of certain groups of people. Look to see if the captions show when and by whom the pictures were made. It is important to be aware that just because an image appears old and "historical" doesn't mean that it is authentic.

### **THINK ABOUT WHY SOME PEOPLE HAVE MANY BIOGRAPHIES WRITTEN ABOUT THEM AND OTHERS HAVE FEW OR NONE. ★**

*Prepared by Sasha Lauterbach and Marion Reynolds for History Makers, a professional development program presented by the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Education Department in partnership with Boston Public Schools, supported by a Teaching American History Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, 2007.*

*To download this student handout, visit the "For Teachers" section of our web site.*

## BRING YOUR STUDENTS TO THE KENNEDY LIBRARY!

**THE LIBRARY OFFERS MUSEUM-BASED PROGRAMS** for elementary, middle and high school students from September to June:

### **Elementary School:**

Students in grades 3-6 become biographers for the day as they explore John F. Kennedy's early years, his presidency, and his legacy in a program entitled *Who Was John F. Kennedy?* We also offer two specialized programs for this age group: *Presidential Campaigns and Elections* and *Equal Rights for All: Investigating the Civil Rights Movement*. For more information or to make a reservation, contact Esther Kohn at [esther.kohn@nara.gov](mailto:esther.kohn@nara.gov), (617) 514-1649.

### **Middle School:**

Students are usually the ones being graded, but in *Report Card for the President*, a guided museum program, the tables are turned as students develop an evaluation tool for assessing a Chief Executive's performance. The three-hour program includes pre- and post-visit materials. For more information or to make a reservation, contact Sam Rubin at [Sam.Rubin@nara.gov](mailto:Sam.Rubin@nara.gov), (617)514-1650.



Students observe picture of Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy and family.

### **High School:**

Teachers may choose from a variety of programs, including *The Civil Rights Movement: 1960-1963*, *The Cold War Heats Up*, *Launching into the Sixties*, and *Approaching a DBQ: An Introduction for AP U.S. History Students*. Students explore events and issues of the early 1960s using primary source documents and audiovisual materials. For more information or to make a reservation, contact Nina Tisch at [nina.tisch@nara.gov](mailto:nina.tisch@nara.gov), (617)514-1647. ★

**Museum Hours**  
Daily, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Closed Thanksgiving,  
Christmas and New Year's Day

The Kennedy Library Education  
Department offers free  
museum passes to teachers  
considering a field trip to the  
Library. Please call 617.514.1600

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