

**TEACHING A PEOPLE'S HISTORY**

ZINN EDUCATION PROJECT

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN RETHINKING SCHOOLS AND TEACHING FOR CHANGE

## Zinn Education Project News

Dear Zinn Education Project friends,

As the Pentagon commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, we revisit Bill Bigelow's article that deals with the textbooks' failure to grapple with the import of the Pentagon Papers, which were historical documents not military secrets, and why Daniel Ellsberg felt the American public needed to know the history of U.S. intervention and deceit.

On this 45th anniversary of Earth Day, we also feature articles and lessons to help students confront the causes and consequences of climate change and the broader environmental crisis.

Sincerely,

Lauren Cooper, Zinn Education Project Coordinator

### Camouflaging the Vietnam War: How Textbooks Continue to Keep the Pentagon Papers a Secret

By Bill Bigelow

In the Academy Award-winning documentary [Hearts and Minds](#), Daniel Ellsberg, who secretly copied and then released the Pentagon Papers, offers a catalog of presidential lying about the U.S. role in Vietnam: Truman lied. Eisenhower lied. Kennedy lied. Johnson "lied and lied and lied." Nixon lied.

Ellsberg concludes: "The American public was lied to month by month by each of these five administrations. As I say, it's a tribute to the American public that their leaders perceived that they had to be lied to; it's no tribute to us that it was so easy to fool the public."

The Pentagon Papers that Ellsberg exposed were not military secrets. They were historical secrets— a history of U.S. intervention and deceit that Ellsberg believed, if widely known, would undermine the U.S. pretexts in defense of the war's prosecution. [Continue reading](#).



Free Lessons on  
the Vietnam War

50th Anniversary of the  
Vietnam Peace Movement



**Teaching the Vietnam War:  
Beyond the Headlines  
By Zinn Education Project**

Eight lessons about the Vietnam War, Daniel Ellsberg, the Pentagon Papers, and whistleblowing. [Read more.](#)



**Vietnam: The Power of Protest  
Washington, D.C., May 1-2**

Organizers explain, "This effort began last fall in reaction to the Pentagon's plans for their own commemoration, including extensive public outreach and a false and one-sided website history of the Vietnam War that excluded the peace movement." [Read more.](#)

**Earth Day 45th Anniversary: Teach About Climate Change**



**New Teaching Activities  
on the Environment**

Our collective house is burning down. The least we can do is help our students understand why and consider ways to respond. [Please download](#) these, use them, and share with colleagues.



**A People's Curriculum for the Earth:  
Teaching About the Environmental Crisis  
Edited by Bill Bigelow and Tim Swinehart**

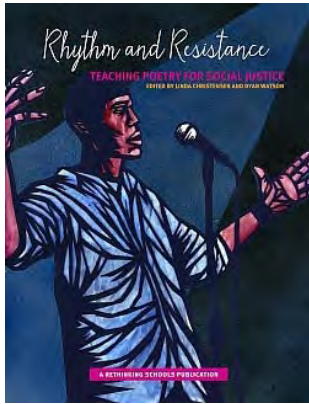
Articles, student readings, and teaching activities to understand environmental problems and imagine solutions. [Read more.](#)



**An Earth Day Message: Take Heart from the  
Abolition Movement  
By Bill Bigelow**

Abolitionists were waging not just a moral struggle against the enslavement of human beings. Slavery was the largest industry in the United States, worth more than all the factories, banks, and railroads combined. In effect, the abolition movement aimed to expropriate without compensation the wealth of the most powerful social class in the country. [Continue reading.](#)

## New from Rethinking Schools



### **Rhythm and Resistance: Teaching Poetry for Social Justice** Edited by Linda Christensen and Dyan Watson

*Rhythm and Resistance* offers practical lessons about how to teach poetry to build community, understand literature and history, talk back to injustice, and construct stronger literacy skills across content areas and grade levels—from elementary school to graduate school.

[Learn more.](#)



### **Spring 2015 Issue: Rhythm and Resistance**

Articles in this issue include:

- **Celebrating Skin Tone:** The science and poetry of skin color
- **Other People's Lives:** Persona poems teach insight
- **They Deserve Good Teaching, Too:** Social justice in a classroom for students with autism
- and [much more.](#)

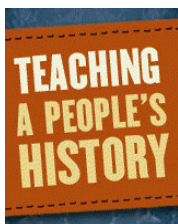
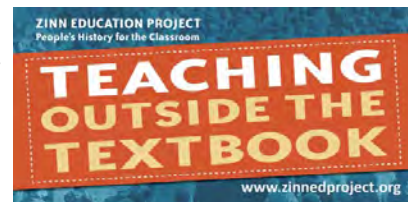
## Support People's History in the Classroom



Wayne Au, Rethinking Schools editor, shows his support of the Zinn Education Project with a Teaching Outside the Textbook sticker.

Show ***your support***  
and get your sticker.

**DONATE  
TODAY!**



The goal of the Zinn Education Project is to introduce students to a more accurate, complex, and engaging understanding of United States history.

[www.zinnedproject.org](http://www.zinnedproject.org)

