Positioning Contested History in 21st Century Classrooms

PILOT PROJECT REPORT

HistEdu Working Group
(2022-2023)

Denmark, Ireland, Israel, Portugal
in partnership with
Germany, Italy, Poland,
Slovakia, Spain, and UK (Wales)

December 2023

Strengthening International Co-operation in the Field of Civic Education, (HistEdu)

The Slovak Centre for Communication and Development and their stakeholder partners proudly present a collaborative project aimed at strengthening mutual support, promoting empathetic and critical understanding, and enhancing learning in the field of historical research and investigation.

In teaching and learning about history - in particular, history's contested elements - this project seeks to fortify academic integrity amongst young people, highlight research quality, and raise investigative competencies across borders.

This project utilises an international network of knowledge and practical problem-solving on a multi-lateral level with innovative, skills-based answers to changes and challenges posed by increasing digitalisation.

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Preamble

In early 2021, when the world was still recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, we realized that something had definitely changed. Perhaps these changes were already in the pipeline somewhere, but the global health threat accelerated this evolution. Among other things, the ways of communication and education have changed; the digital world has proved to be an indispensable means of collaboration. The negatives and positives of the virtual world have emerged dramatically, and today, as we face the rapid rise of artificial intelligence, we realise that for how many times in human history technology and innovation have outpaced the mental preparedness of people, their traditional communities, and mindsets.

It was necessary to react and try to assess and discover the positives and possible opportunities that digitalisation brings.

Thus, in early 2021, a simple idea was born to create an informal digital space for interested professionals to learn from each other, share views and experiences at different levels and in different topic clusters. It was essential that these experts, teachers, academics, representatives of non-profit organisations had previously (and still do) co-exist in the [EUSTORY network](#) and their common interest was (and is) the organisation of national competitions for secondary school students in modern history, with the identical name - EUSTORY.

It took a year on and off to get the idea sorted out and the pilot project ["Strengthening International Cooperation in the Field of Civic Education](#)" has been given a concrete content.

The working method since January 2022 became regular bi-weekly online meetings of EUSTORY network members who had the ambition and interest to create innovative approach to history teaching and learning, with solid research background but at the same time functional and practical. And so, a **Working Group** called **HistEdu** was

created. The founding members were from Ireland, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Russia, Germany, UK (Wales), and Slovakia.

Later on, thanks to the support of the Körber-Stiftung, a face-to-face meeting of the HistEdu Working Group in Bratislava, where other countries were also invited, was successfully rounded off in June 2022. This meeting helped to accelerate the pilot project of "contested history" into a phase of concrete outputs; new collaborators were added as well.

I believe that the result of our efforts will be beneficial, especially to all those with open minds for improving history teaching and connecting it to the pulse of today's complex times. Many thanks to Paul Flynn, Luke O'Donnell, Shamir Jeger, Miguel Monteiro de Barros, Espen Kirkegaard Espensen, Elisabetta De Martino, Agnieszka Kudełka, Natalia Kolyagina, Nandina López-Jacoiste Ortiz, Carole Bryan-Jones, Katja Fausser, Inka Siuts and, finally, to my colleague Richard Klimeš.

December 2023   Zuzana Jezerská
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Overview

History rarely reflects a consensus. Perceptions of history and the competing narratives which often fortify them also prompt division and dispute. Our shared human macro-heritage is complex. Yet this complexity and competition, and these conflicting accounts should also prompt dialogue and discussion. Where history has damaged futures, history too holds tools to repair. By revisiting, negotiating, and articulating subsequent narratives history may help patch divisions and pacify discontent: going back to find forward momentum, so to speak.

A rising tide of objection has deemed some history so abhorrent and atrocious; campaigners have begun cancelling it. When considering the ever-vocal groundswell of 21stC *cancel culture*, it is crucial to remember erasure of historical perspective does us few favors. No matter how uncomfortable or grotesque history's acts and agents may be, academic energy is better-directed revising simplistic narratives. By researching and acknowledging alternative threads, contested history with its sub-plots and side-stories may begin to heal those scars, be they figurative or physical. Conspicuous by their absence from the contemporary mainstream and a constant source of disenfranchisement and agitation for those who suffered, more balanced inclusive narratives can educate and heal.

Traditional or 'old school' approaches to historical research may have avoided atrocity and injustice, celebrating instead elements of conquest and achievement. Historians, academics, and special interest working groups seeking to engage greater society through dialogue (in various forms), recognise that in order to compose and disseminate more complete histories due diligence must be paid to pragmatism too. This sense of realism concedes history is as complex as the very lives of its citizenry, its readership, stakeholders, and individuals. In exploring contested histories, the intended outcome therefore should not be to *cancel* historical perspectives but appreciate shared, inclusive, and representative complexity - be it uncomfortable or not.

Be they fact-based, *fake news* or outright inaccurate, conflicting historical narratives may each be vehemently defended and held in high esteem by their subscribers. Many are characterised by the absence or priority of some facts over others. Narratives which include and amplify facts deemed particularly relevant to one perspective may ignore or marginalise others. Most often disputed is the interpretation of these facts. Indeed, many interpretations are so layered and interwoven any reconciliation may seem impossible. Competing narratives can outright contradict one another or run parallel. And while some alignment may seem less challenging, the very polarisation which defines contestation can, over time, entrench equally significant obstacles to consensus and pothole the pathway forward.

Historians today celebrate historians past. In exploring contested history tomorrow in the correct context with academic integrity and a fundamentally positive purpose, those engaging with this project become agents of history, passive and active observers, become sources and ultimately historians themselves. The provision of education be it formal and/or non-formal represents a microcosm of society. This sliver directly or indirectly includes ministries, industries, academia, local communities, teachers, school management, students, and their families – all invested stakeholders in these eco-systems or *edu-systems*. It makes sense therefore, to consider education settings as suitable locations from which to explore contested histories and discover how more inclusive and complete narratives can positively impact the communities that surround, shape, and celebrate those stories.

Research Question

Educators drafted and trialed this Contested History research project in accordance with guidelines detailed in the University of Galway's School of Education Handbook and Practitioner Research module documents. Related research tasks included:

- Understanding the role of the historian;
- Understanding Contested History as era-sensitive (where many historical interpretations are contingent on societal practices and norms within the context of an era);
- Completing a literature review;
- Satisfying ethical obligations;
- Harvesting and analysing data, and;
- Submitting a final report.

Participation in this study focused on the following over-arching Research Question:

How may contested histories be positioned in a 21st Century European second-level classroom?

Timeline

There were the following core calendar components critical to project completion:

Jan - Nov 2022: Theme-specific discussion.

Dec 2022: Finalise topic/theme-specific plan and formulate resources.

Jan 2023: Finalise trial module (Ireland) and commence research.

Jan - Mar 2023: Commence Core Partner research (Denmark, Israel, Portugal). In-class data collection Phase I, Ireland (students).

Mar - Apr 2023: Data-collection and analysis Phase II (researchers).

Sep 2023: Submission of final project report (researchers).

Nov – Dec 2023: Final editing online publication.

Method

Researchers employed an **Action Research Methodology** including mixed-methods data collection tools such as surveys and exit cards (physical or digital); completed teaching method templates (lesson plans); compiled and prepared resources; and reflected post-lesson. The pilot study encouraged participants to include any additional data points appropriate to a lesson delivery context or research circumstances. The use of specific teaching methodologies (such as a **Lean Canvas,** instruction provided), also formed an essential component of participation and engagement in this project.

At each juncture (see **Timeline** above), three sub-questions supported both data analysis and exploration of the over-arching Research Question:

1. In what way has exploring contested histories in my classroom impacted on my teaching practice?
2. In what way has exploring contested histories in my classroom impacted upon my students' learning?
3. In what way has using the *Lean Canvas* as a planning tool impacted on the effectiveness (or otherwise) of exploring contested histories.

Given this study focused on how **contested histories** may be positioned in 21[st]Century classrooms (and in-line with typical Action Research activities), discoveries from the programme's first iteration (pilots) shall inform subsequent iterations. While very much in its infancy, this programme and/or programmes similar to it, possess far-reaching and positive potential as well as inherent risk. To that end, we recommend a Reflective Journal (or comparable tool) be utilised by practitioners to capture timely insights, innovations, and critiques for future programme development.

Data Collection

Typically, the pilot programmes were designed and intended to roll out according to class, workshop or tutorial format. *Lesson Planning* was recommended not only in the interests of academic rigour and integrity but for sake of uniformity in programme delivery between facilitators and researchers. Likewise, Lesson Plan reviews (post-delivery) helped inform future programme development and best practice.

Stage I
- Lesson design using an appropriate lesson plan format.
- Development of appropriate resources, etc.… including effective implementation of the Lean Canvas (training and guidance provided).
- Engaging a suitable critical friend to inform lesson planning.

Stage II
- Teach the lesson(s), workshop(s), tutorial(s) as per the prepared plan.
- Collect exit poll data (provided) from each learner and practitioner/facilitator involved.
- Undertake a brief bullet-point lesson reflection after each lesson and attach it to the corresponding lesson plan.

Stage III
- During programme delivery phase, select two lessons: a lesson you determined was successful, and a lesson you determined could have been improved, and
- Review each of the selected lessons (2) and review with greater depth, insight, and explanation. It may serve you well to organise this feedback under the following three prompts or sub-headings:
  - (i)   *Learning,*
  - (ii)   *Timing,*
  - (iii)   *Assessment/Achievement*

Data Analysis

This section explores mechanics and rationales underpinning the research to ensure its integrity as a bona fide teaching tool and case study for future development and uptake.

Throughout the initiative's development phase, researchers leaned heavily on a teacher-perspective (albeit not at the exclusion of the researcher-perspective or student/learner-perspective) and envisioned multiple phases from commencement to completion, for example:

- Planning Phase (Teacher Perspective)   A
- Teaching Phase (Teacher Perspective)   B
- Teaching Review Phase (Teacher Perspective) C
- Research Review Phase (Teacher Perspective) D

Each is discussed in greater detail below.

Planning Phase (teacher perspective) (A)

A1:   Topic Selection – why was the topic selected?

A2:   How restrictive or accommodating were curricular considerations?

A3:   How instructive or helpful was the Case Study as a reference tool?

A4:   Lean Canvas planning – did the canvas present any challenges?

A5:   Lean Canvas planning – how were challenges navigated?

A6:   Lesson planning (Scheme of Work) – what lesson-plan format was employed?

A7:   Lesson planning – did the Lesson Planning (development or format) present any challenges or uncover/highlight any specific considerations or concerns?

Planning Phase (Data Collection Tool) = short survey

Planning Phase (teacher activity) = Topic selection, Lean Canvas Plan, Lesson Planning.

Teaching Phase (teacher perspective) (B)

B1:   Did the teacher feel that the students responded well?

B2: Did the teachers feel that the Learning Outcomes were achieved?

B3: Did the teachers feel the students were able to engage with the planned activity?

Teaching Phase (Data Collection Tool1) = Lean Canvas; Lesson Plan live notes; Post-Its, and short post-lesson reflections.

Teaching Phase (teacher activity) = in-class teaching/lesson delivery.

Teaching Phase (teacher perspective) continued overleaf.

Teaching Phase (Data Collection Tool2) = Student artefacts/assessment; Student completion of tasks; Live learning checks for participation (in-lesson).

Teaching Phase (Student Perspective)

B4: Did the students enjoy the experience?

B5: Did the students struggle with the task?

B6: What did the students learn?

Teaching Review Phase (teacher perspective) (C)

C1: What worked well during class time?

C2: What did not work well during class time?

C3: What needs revising on the Lean Canvas?

C4: What needs revising in the Module Toolkit (planning and resources)?

Teaching Review Phase (Data Collection Tool1) = Deeper Reflective Piece

Teaching Review Phase (teacher activity) = Topic re/de-selection; Lean Canvas Revision; Lesson Planning Revision

Teaching Review Phase (Data Collection Tool2) = Exit Cards (possibly reflection)

Teaching Review Phase (Student Perspective)

Timing of lessons, sub-sections within lessons.

How relevant was the topic?

How difficult was the module content, and module format?

What would the students change?

Research Review Phase (Teacher Perspective) D

D1:   How did the process impact upon your approach to planning for contested histories?
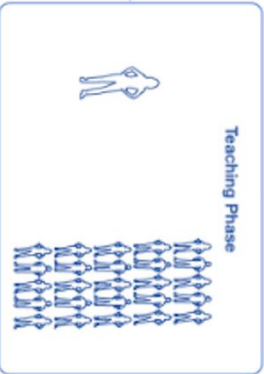
D2:   What do you believe to be the module impact upon your students?

D3:   Self-efficacy? (Teacher self-appraisal) and (Teacher student appraisal).

Research Review Phase (Data Collection Tool) = Interview / Survey / Scale

Research Review Phase (Teacher activity) = Impact on Teachers, Impact on Students, Contribution to field (pedagogy, research instruction).

[see next page]

Perspective A	Data Collection Tool	Activity / Perspective C	Data Collection Tool	Perspective B
Planning Phase **Teacher Perspective** Topic selection - why was topic selected? Curricular considerations? Did having a case study to refer to help? Lean Canvas Planning - what were the challenges associated with using the lean canvas? Lesson Planning - what lesson plans were utilised? Were there any specific considerations or concerns that the lesson planning process uncovered?	Short Survey	**Planning Phase** Topic selection Lean Canvas Planning Lesson Planning	N/A	N/A
Teaching Phase **Teacher Perspective** Did the teachers feel that the students responded well? Did the teachers feel that the LOs were achieved? Did the teachers feel that students were able to engage with the planned activity?	Lean Canvas/Lesson Plan Live Notes/Post-its Short post-lesson reflections	**Teaching Phase**	Student artefacts Student completion of tasks Live learning checks participation	**Teaching Phase** **Student Perspective** Did the students enjoy the experience? Did the students struggle with the task? What did the students learn?
Teaching Review Phase **Teacher Perspective** What worked well during the class time? What did not work well during the class time? What needs to be revised on Lean canvas What needs to be revised in planning and resources	Deeper Reflective Piece	**Teaching Review Phase** Topic re/de-selection Lean Canvas Revision Lesson Planning Revision	Exit cards (possibly reflection)	**Teaching Review Phase** **Student Perspective** Timing Topic relevance Difficulty What would students change?
Research Review Phase **Teacher Perspective** How did the process impact your approach to planning for contested histories? What do you believe is the impact on your students? Self-efficacy ?	Interview/survey/scale	**Research Review Phase** Impact on Teachers Impact on Students Contribution to field	N/A	N/A

The Pilot Case Studies

Positioning Contested History in the 21st Century Classroom

With particular reference to Irish case study statistics below, much of the ensuing discovery may be applied in large part to the other three pilot settings (Denmark, Israel and Portugal) where **The Role and Responsibility of the Historian** and **Learner Understanding of Contested History** are concerned.

This section explores preparatory elements of the Irish case study focusing on data and commentary gleaned from workshop facilitators (those delivering the learning), teachers (those observing learners and the learning) and students (the learners and researchers themselves); and their impressions and discoveries of any disciplinary upskilling which did (or did not) occur. For the convenience of those wishing to commence similar Contested History projects, consider the following indicative of learner findings from the other pilot case studies. May it guide future iterations and investigations when exploring **The Role and Responsibility of the Historian** with learners and their **Understanding of Contested History**.

Context and Key Outcomes

Where history's second-level focus may lean more toward curricular content than key research and contextual concepts, teachers and learners would do well to devote time to both understanding history (historical events, timelines and agents of change) and the historian skillset and robust research. These contextual concepts include (but are not limited to) **cause-and-consequence, historical immersion,** and **empathetic consciousness**, (where learners imagine themselves within the studied environment and period). While much curricular content affords teachers and learners ample opportunity to explore both the history and research thereof, curriculum completion will often take precedence and priority. As a result, second-level formative (and summative) assessment may not always explore fundamental historiographical questions, as to:

1. how evidence may have been initially harvested;
2. how it may have been preserved, (and what may have been discarded);
3. its reliability and integrity throughout the passage of time;
4. whether it reflects the reality (or the complete and comprehensive reality);
5. who may have conspired in the interim to flavour or skew historical interpretations (the narratives);

6. and above all else - why?

The HistEdu initiative seeks to help balance that disparity.

Key Concepts

In determining how the second-level Teaching & Learning process may better serve learners wishing to progress their studies to the third level (within the discipline of history or not), upskilling earlier not only aids in expediting and smoothing the transition between school and higher education, but may also identify some of history's little-known disciplinary truisms. To this end, Eric Foner and George Lipsitz offer valuable insight:

> **"Historical interpretation always changes. This is part of what historians do is to come up with new perspectives, new questions, new ways of looking at the past,"** (Foner, Facing History & Ourselves, "Introduction: A Contested History" video; 2022).

Lipsitz' reflection, with specific reference to American slave-ownership, allows us to expand further beyond the bounds of 'curricular' peculiarity:

> **"The people who get to tell (history's) story are so often the victors, so the people who wrote the first histories…that other historians relied on, were the descendants of slave owners… And so, they wrote justifications of slavery, because they thought it was right. And they didn't think they had to figure out what the slaves thought, because they really didn't think the slaves thought anything,"** (Lipsitz, Facing History & Ourselves, "Introduction: A Contested History" video; 2022).

Slavery aside, Lipsitz speaks explicitly of the singular perspective above. Not necessarily an active avoidance or refusal to speak from the vantage point of other stakeholders, but a passive ignorance and omission of any alternative view. In other words, historic oversights and the absence of fair and balanced perspective often manifest most profoundly as modern problems, and not always (though often) by design.

Given the passage of time elapsed between the proverbial 'then' and now no matter the circumstances, events or periods, many stakeholder perspectives dilute, fade, and even disappear altogether. History students of any age and study stage would do well to ask why.

- Recorders neglected to appreciate a bigger picture. There was every chance the 'biggest' picture was their own, their perspective, rather than all perspectives (or other perspectives).
- Certain events, injustices and grievances may have been deemed too exclusive, exceptional, atypical, restrictive, insignificant, or subjective to warrant research efforts.
- The perspective disappears with the affected cohort. Slaves become rural poor, for instance, the same way Ireland's tenant farmers became emigrants, become urban poor, or died. Any change in status risks extinguishing an earlier perspective - the perspective, therefore, vanishes when the demographic assumes its new label.
- Death was far from conceptual. Other stories, other experiences and other perspectives died in battle with those who lived them, died too of disease, and expired as lives ended taking 'history' and historical insight to the grave.
- Displacement and migration where stories, memories and perspectives vanished from the interest site. The history of a place is often contingent on the people of that place. As they leave, so does much of the source material.
- Literacy (and illiteracy), where many of history's affected, disenfranchised, aggrieved, or displaced stakeholders had neither the ability nor capacity to commit their perspectives to paper or another tangible archive. Oral histories, while culturally invaluable, are among those records most prone to interpretation, dilution, embellishment, or omission.

Lipsitz summarised these challenges succinctly asking :

"**What do you do with a truth that's very valuable? The truth of Reconstruction, the history books told it wrong, the politicians told that wrong, the movies and television and radio told it wrong, and that meant the preachers and the journalists and the parents told it wrong. The lie has outlived the truth in this respect… That's why it's so important to get [these] stories right, because if we continue to let the lie live, we continue to add to the harm that it's always done**," (Lipsitz, Facing History & Ourselves, "Introduction: A Contested History" video; 2022).

Contested History and the Role of the Historian

School/College 1 (MC)

Q.1: **Understanding the concept of Contested History**

	Entry Card	Exit Card
The student submitted **no response**	4	0
The student's response showed **no (or minimal)** awareness	4	0
The student showed **some** awareness	9	1
The student showed **great awareness** (perspective, grievance, etc.)	2	20
	19	**21**

From a workshop start-point of minimal collective awareness of the intricacies of contested history, (nor how to adequately articulate its definition), at least 19 students (and two latecomers) collaborated to define *Contested History* by posing a simple, initial definition and padding or fortifying it with discursive additions and edits. Socratic questioning methods stopped short of suggesting words or phrases but simply asked throughout the drafting process whether learners thought anything essential was missing, or could certain word choices be improved or amended.

The collaboration determined the following as the most ideal and appropriate definition for their purpose as researchers of *Contested History*:

To question and/or interpret historical sources based on new evidence or alternative perspectives and determine a more complete narrative.

That no student submitted a vacant, erroneous or uninformed response nor appeared to misunderstand the concept of *Contested History* after the 90minute workshop suggests significant (and uniform) uptake. Of particular note is not only the absence of vacant responses after the workshop, but an absence also of students with no (or very little) awareness of what *Contested History* comprised.

Q.2: **Understanding the Role of the Historian** - (Entry card v Exit card)
With either keywords or a short sentence, what do you feel are the THREE most important parts of a historian's role?

At the workshop outset, 19 English-speaking female 5Y students identified 29 keywords or short two-word concepts pertaining to the Role of the Historian. Each student volunteered three keywords/concepts they deemed most important.

Research/Researching (9); **Studying/Analysing/Evaluating/Scrutinising Sources** (8) and **Fair/Non-Biased/Unbiased Objectivity** (5) appeared most prevalently before the workshop. On completion however, while **Research and Source Analysis** remained (10 apiece), **Narratives/Summaries/Storytelling** also scored 10 mentions, and while **Unbiased Objectivity** did not disappear it emerged in much more complex and

academic framing. Students wrote of "**Distinguishing or identifying bias in history**" and "**Distinguishing and identifying omissions in history**". Furthermore, students also wrote of the importance of appraising different perspectives. All told, specific mentions of bias, omission, and alternative perspectives (albeit reframed in more academic language) numbered 13 responses on Exit cards.

School/College 2 (CE)

Q.1: **Understanding the concept of Contested History**	Entry Card	Exit Card
The student submitted **no response**	5	3
The student's response showed **no (or minimal)** awareness	9	0
The student showed **some** awareness	5	9
The student showed **great awareness** (perspective, grievance, etc.)	26	32
	45	**44**

In contrast to the cohort discussed above (SM), the CE learners appeared significantly more aware of what contested history meant or may have meant on commencing their workshop - indicative of either prior knowledge or evident disciplinary awareness. Where two among the 19(SM) students showed great awareness (10.5%), almost 58% of (CE) students (a mixed-gender class of History and English students) proffered definitions which suggested great awareness. The fact this was a cohort heavily populated by non-History students (around half), lends weight to the supposition an early, pre-workshop returns of "great awareness" likely came from the history cohort who may have encountered the term or at least an iteration of the concept in their junior cycle studies.

On quizzing their teacher, he replied that the workshop theme had not been discussed prior to the data harvest, but added disputed history, multiple perspectives and empathetic awareness were disciplinary themes he would have covered in the junior cycle.

Responses varied from individual to individual both before and after the workshop, and like the (SM) cohort, information uptake was also high at (CE), where 41 of 44 (93.2%) later responses indicated some or great awareness on completion. The corresponding percentage at (SM) was 100%. Little to no conceptual awareness of "Contested History" following the learning was absent from both.

Q.2: **Understanding the Role of the Historian** - (Entry card v Exit card)
With either keywords or a short sentence, what do you feel are the THREE most important parts of a historian's role?

At the workshop outset, 45 English-speaking 5Y students comprising boys and girls identified 29 keywords or short two-word concepts pertaining to the Role of the Historian. Each student volunteered three keywords/concepts they deemed most important. Most popular among which (pre-workshop) were: **Educating others/Sharing Discoveries** (13/44); **Research/Researching** (9/44); **Having Knowledge or Retaining Knowledge** (9/44); **Facts/Fact-Checking** (9/44); **Accuracy/Detail** (9/44); and have an **Interest, love or passion for history** (8/44). Other responses worth mentioning include: **Concluding/Forming conclusions** (7/44); **Learning from mistakes/Understanding impacts** (7/44); **Fairness/non-Bias/Objectivity** (6/44); **Honesty/Truth/ Truthful/Integrity** (6/44); **Evidence** (4/44); **Recovering/Preserving/Saving** history (4/44) and **Studying/Analysing/Evaluating/Scrutinising** sources (4/44).

Where the 71 most popular pre-workshop responses were spread across eight general themes, 75 of the most popular responses post-workshop were confined to six themes, indicating a collective and common concentration of themes on lesson conclusion. Streamlined further, six general themes accounted for 57 of the most popular responses before the workshop commenced, whereas 80minutes later, 57 responses were confined to four.

Comparing the six highest early returns with those 80mins later **Research/Researching, Accuracy/Detail**, **Facts/Fact-checking** and **Educating people/Sharing discoveries** survive. An interest in or love for history no longer registered among the students as one of the most important (although remained in the top10) and **Having/Retaining Knowledge** dropped out of the top10. Deemed most important after the workshop were: **Research/Researching** (23/44); **Appraising different perspectives and being openminded** (12/44); **Studying/Analysing/Evaluating/Scrutinising Sources** (11/44) and **Accuracy/Detail** (11/44). **Narratives and Storytelling** jumped from 14th equal before the workshop into the top10 (7th). The full list appears in the appendices.

School/College 3 (JB)

	Entry Card	Exit Card
Q.1: Understanding the concept of Contested History		
The student submitted **no response**	3	1
The student's response showed **no (or minimal)** awareness	1*	0
The student showed **some** awareness	4	2
The student showed **great awareness** (perspective, grievance, etc.)	3	11
	11	**14**

Similar to the (SM) cohort but in stark contrast to the (CE) learners, the (JB) cohort appeared to be an even spread of awareness, (see above). Whereas four showed some awareness of the Contested History concept and three were well aware, only one had little grasp of the concept before the workshop commenced. Of the six who submitted no response, three were present at the outset and may be presumed to have **little** or **no awareness** raising that count from one to four* and dropping **no response** from six to three. Like (SM), this cohort appeared to absorb well an understanding of *Contested History* and articulated that understanding in academic terms on completion (11/14).

This was an inner-city, all-boys school, and the history students were all in their fourth year of secondary study, (with two years remaining). appeared significantly more aware of what contested history meant or may have meant on commencing their workshop – indicative of either prior knowledge or evident disciplinary awareness.

Among the language used to defined Contested History on completion were "debated elements", "debatable aspects", "conflicting historical accounts", "…because of bias, omission or a lack of viewpoints" and "history from two different perspectives". That 78.6% of those present at the end of the workshop, including three students not present at the outset and thus unable to record their initial understanding, volunteered robust and academic definitions suggests significant understanding and uptake in 60minutes.

Q.2: **Understanding the Role of the Historian** – (Entry card v Exit card)
With either keywords or a short sentence, what do you feel are the THREE most important parts of a historian's role?

As with the other learner groups, students volunteered terms most applicable in their opinion, to the Role of the Historian. Again, each student volunteered three keywords/concepts they deemed most important. Most popular at the outset were:

Studying/Analysing/Evaluating/Scrutinising Sources (6/14) and two students apiece all opted to highlight **Research/Researching**; **Accuracy/Detail**; **Investigating**; **Primary and Secondary Sources**, and somewhat bizarrely **Archaeology**. By lesson end, Archaeology had retained its two subscribers, both **Studying/Analysing/Evaluating/Scrutinising Sources** (10/14) and **Primary & Secondary Sources** (5/14) had climbed considerably within the hour. **Research/Researching** (6/14) had tripled its tally from two.

Comparing Learner Cohorts (C1-SM), (C2-CE) and (C3-JB)

Comparing in close confines, we may surmise obvious and evident gains from the workshops, despite anomalies in workshop timing. The (JB) students accomplished their learning in 60minutes, (CE) in 80minutes and (SM) in a little over 100minutes. While impressive as a raw figure, the (SM) definition was a collaborative class experiment with the results available to all. The only surprise here perhaps, given it was a class wide collaboration, was that 95% was not 100%. Comparing more individualised definitions from the other two learner cohorts, we see more comparable figures separated by around 6% where 73% of (CE) learners showed great conceptual awareness of Contested History and 79% of (JB) showed the same. On the ground or in the classroom perhaps, especially in a collaborative and communal learning space, "some" awareness and "great" awareness provide for a strong foundation level from which to explore the concept and apply it to any given narrative. Thus, combining "some awareness" and "great awareness" suggests even greater success for students (and no doubt teachers) navigating higher-order analysis of somewhat trickier content material and research methods. Combined, the figures read as 100% (SM), 93% (CE) and 93% (JB). Such prevalent awareness of a previously unfamiliar concept among a learner cohort in less than two hours bodes well student and teacher expectations. Especially considering 42% (SM), 31% (CE) and 37% (JB) of surveyed students appeared to have little to no functional awareness of Contested History (or what the phrase meant) on commencing the workshops.

Q.1: *Understanding the Concept of Contested History*								
(raw figures)	(SM)	(SM)		(CE)	(CE)		(JB)	(JB)
	before	after		before	after		before	after
No response	4	0		5	3		3	1
No/very little awareness	4	0		9	0		1	0
Some awareness	9	1		5	9		4	2
Great awareness	2	20		26	32		3	11

	19	21	45	44	11	14
Q.1: Understanding the Concept of Contested History						
(percentages)	(SM)	(SM)	(CE)	(CE)	(JB)	(JB)
	before	after	before	after	before	after
No response	21%	0	11%	7%	27%	7%
No/very little awareness	21%	0	20%	0	10%	0
Some awareness	47%	5%	11%	20%	36%	14%
Great awareness	11%	95%	58%	73%	27%	79%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Key Challenges

While curricular content may differ from one state ministry to another (internationally) and, in some instances from government to government (intra-nationally), the historian's disciplinary toolkit (or skillset) should not only align much more comparably regardless of the country, but also seek to fortify transversal, transferrable skillsets among learners whether pursuing history beyond school or engaging in any kind of critical research regardless of the sector, profession or academic discipline.

Curricular specifics aside therefore, one of the most prevalent challenges second-level teachers must overcome is student skepticism over relevance. Nathalie Popa of McGill University (Montreal, Canada), explored more relevant school history, and making history more relevant in the second-level space in 2022. Her research identified a perceived disconnect between what is studied in history, and how that history is relevant to students' lives. Where students may doubt the relevance of certain curricular elements of their second-level school study they may be more receptive acknowledging the worth or relevance of a fortified research skillset, their ability to think critically, their discretion and judgment, and capability to argue from fact-based foundation.

Teaching Points

The following graphics, lifted from this project's summative slideshow, demonstrate key teaching points and classroom delivery mechanisms in the interests of subsequent learning and convenience of teachers seeking to introduce contested history and research thereof. Pertinent commentary and further clarification follow each image in caption format. While the graphics likely lend little in the way of curricular value

(given contested history offers many and varied subject matter), many of the methods may be adopted, adapted or both by subsequent teachers and learners.

The graphics and commentary hereunder should neither dictate nor prescribe future research pathways but operate only to guide and suggest as a casual reference resource.

This allows both teachers and learners to agree:
- research parameters;
- appreciate and understand their own individual and collaborative roles in the research process, and;
- establish the context of their study in their own vernacular, the learner language. Ideally, this language rapidly evolves to a more academic register during the research process.

By way of a simple questionnaire collated by the teacher (whether summarised and returned to the learner cohort or not), learners and teachers also establish the starting baseline – the learner level of topical understanding (the research subject) as well as disciplinary understanding (the historian's or researcher's purpose).
The final question should target curricular/topical awareness.

On commencing the **disciplinary awareness** sub-module (Contested History)

[see next page]

Loosely categorised or classed, some students may volunteer no response at all indicating anything from non-awareness of the concept or a lack of confidence in answering.
Non-responses remain an invaluable component of the comparative analysis.

What do you understand the phrase **contested history** to mean?
- **no response** —— blank entries
- incorrects
- partials
- non-academic [but correct]
- correct [academic wording]

BEFORE   AFTER

Likewise some learner answers may not correlate at all with the dictionary definitions.
These too constitute invaluable markers in the teaching and learning pathway and help establish a cognitive baseline before commencing research.

What do you understand the phrase **contested history** to mean?
- no response
- **incorrects**
  - it may have something to do with the time of it, BC or AD maybe?
  - focused on a particular area of history?
  - history with no hard evidence
  - another form of history
  - asking questions about the past
  - memorials and statues
- partials
- non-academic [but correct]
- correct [academic wording]

BEFORE   AFTER

Partially correct responses can frame subsequent definitions as workable start points or springboards.
With elaboration, expansion and even merging, partially correct suggestions rapidly evolve into robust and academic definitions.

What do you understand the phrase **contested history** to mean?
- no responses
- incorrects
- **partials**
  - "history that may or may not have actually happened."
  - "history people debate is true or not true."
  - "history that may or may not have happened."
  - "history that is debateable."
  - "someone doesn't think a part of it is true and wants more proof that it happened?"
  - "going against other historians."
  - "history that there isn't an answer to."
- non-academic [but correct]
- correct [academic wording]

BEFORE   AFTER

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Slide 1

What do you understand the phrase contested history to mean?

- no response
- incorrects

- partials

- **non-academic (but correct)**

- correct (academic wording)

"it might be the kind of history people disagree on. They debate it, they debate whether it's real or correct?"

"history that is argued to be different than what was said to have happened."

"conflicting reports or accounts of history."

"part of history where people perceive different things happened."

"history only certain people believe."

"history different stakeholders give different explanations for."

"when historians argue about what version of a story is true."

"history with conflicting sources where they don't know what's true or false."

BEFORE   AFTER

In much the same way many partially correct responses rapidly advance to higher-order definitions, non-academic (but correct) definitions need even less developing in order to reach an academic standard akin to university/third- level.

Slide 2

What do you understand the phrase contested history to mean?

- no response
- incorrects

- partials

- non-academic (but correct)

- **correct (academic wording)**

"facts argued by historians based on research which clashes with opposing or alternative information."

"controversial or disputed history which can be interpreted different ways based on perspective."

"challenging historical facts with new evidence, alternative perspectives and additional sources."

"when a historical narrative's validity is challenged."

"where two or more researchers give conflicting accounts of a historical event."

"when different stories on the same topic or event contradict each other."

"An historic event in which the history behind it has been twisted to improve a certain side's image or reputation."

BEFORE   AFTER

This caliber of response suggests a high degree of disciplinary awareness, often framed as two (or three-pronged) complex, compound sentences.
There is little need for teachers (nor learners) to limit crucial definitions to single sentences. Of highest priority is the under-standing, rather than brevity or length of definition.

On completion of the **disciplinary awareness** sub-module (Contested History)

Slide 3

What do you understand the phrase contested history to mean?

- **no response**
- incorrects

- partials

- non-academic (but correct)

- correct (academic wording)

blank entries

blank entries :
were 15 (before), only four blanks submitted **after** the workshops.

Suggests : at least 11 completed their **Contested History** workshop with an **infinitely better understanding** of contested history than on commencing the research project.

BEFORE   AFTER

As per the discovery detailed at left, whether some response as opposed to none at all suggests greater **understand-ing** or greater **engagement**, teachers (and students) may reasonably infer a positive outcome regardless.

On completion of the **disciplinary awareness** sub-module (Contested History), continued…

Disciplinary upskilling is more evident at right (than above), when correlating learner responses from those initially offering incorrect replies at the outset. Comparing and contrasting responses from the same individuals indicated huge leaps in both awareness and under-standing. Each showed little, limited or no prior knowledge before the project commenced, yet submitted more complex, higher-order definitions on completion.

Suffice it to say, conceptual awareness (even of highly specialised content) will more likely take root explained in simple language, or in the language of the learner.
Where students draft their own definitions based on robust understanding, the definitions may later be molded in more academic language without compromising learner under-standing of the concept.

By allowing learners to develop definitions (and understanding) in steps, teachers may better monitor how that learning occurred, and in what form (or which words) the developments took shape.
At right is the evolution of a correct (but incomplete six-word definition) into a three-line complex, compound sentence comprehensively packaging the key idea "Contested History" still in simple language.

On commencing the **disciplinary awareness** sub-module (Historian's Role and Responsibility)

In focusing on **keywords** and limiting the number of keywords submitted, learners should **prioritise** what they understand as the fundamentals, and allow for greater comparative analysis post-module.

In limiting the keywords to three per student, collective or collaborative priorities should emerge (where a handful of concepts may emerge ahead of others). Unlimited keyword submissions may yield an infodump saturation of all words and concepts remotely associated with the discipline.

On concluding the **disciplinary awareness** sub-module (Historian's Role and Responsibility)

Curiously, the most popular themes to emerge post-module still included **research and researching** but also began to reflect the importance of **different perspectives** and historical **narrative, summaries and storytelling.**

On concluding the **disciplinary awareness** (Historian's Role and Responsibility), continued…

While this is by no means an exclusive list nor is it exhaustive, it fairly reflects what many second-level high school students identify as the fundamental roles and responsibilities of modern historians; and a key feature of that is packaging historic discoveries in a balanced and digestible narrative format.

Harking back to the first initiative: **understanding Contested History**, most prevalent was the immediate uptake in conceptual awareness. After little more than an hour and no longer than two, most students could articulate and appreciate a previously unfamiliar concept or one with which they were only vaguely familiar. Similarly, the language students began to use in the learning space became more academic in tone akin to third-level study

rather than second level (high school). Having understood the concept in their own language, they are better placed thereafter to articulate that understanding using many higher-order, discipline-specific (history-savvy) terms absorbed throughout the research process. Additionally, was the emergence of compound, complex sentences replacing much shorter and less comprehensive sentences at the module outset.

In Summary

Disciplinary literacy, the **Historian's role & responsibility**, and understanding **Contested History**.

In as little as an hour exposed to history's **disciplinary language** (that is, the terms and phrases commonly found studying history) students began to articulate simple ideas and fundamental understanding in more academic language. They packaged written responses in complex, compound sentences comparable to third-level study (university) than second-level, schoolyard language.

Thus, history teachers have an additional task: helping students navigate the transition between understanding and appreciating an unfamiliar or vaguely familiar concept, in this case Contested History. As a concept, this history comes laden with enduring grievances, many and varied stakeholders, and numerous challenges and sensitivities. Learners (young historians rather than simply history students) must then articulate their discoveries in such a way to score as highly as possible when formally assessed.

This teacher-learner dynamic still allows students to embed much of their core learning in their own schoolyard or adolescent language (so to speak) but develop in order articulate or convey it later with academic nuance and polish.

Students also rapidly identified several core functions of a historian and essential tenets underpinning robust historiography when surveyed pre-workshop. These included **accuracy and detail**, **research**, **data analysis and sources**, among others. Post-workshop (bearing in mind the workshop emphasised the virtues and challenges of Contested History in particular), students added: **different perspectives**, **open-mindedness**, and the sharing of research discovery through more **robust, balanced and complete narratives** (storytelling), in order to share knowledge and educate.
In this respect historians not only research and evaluate source material, but also have an obligation (or responsibility) to repackage those discoveries for universal consumption.

Exploring the Pilot Case Studies
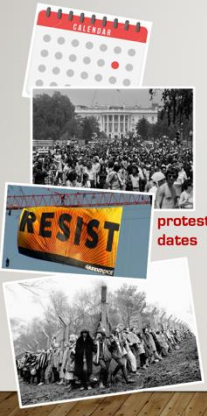
Positioning Contested History in the 21st Century Classroom

Topic selection, and identifying flawed narratives

One of the most reliable start-points when seeking subject matter is in consulting calendars. Memorial days, dates commemorating nationhood and independence, and those remembering atrocity and injustice often highlight grievances and prompt protest and objection. In many countries (and even within countries), mainstream celebrations often invite criticism from minority fringes. These exchanges underpin what we know as contested history, controversial history, and conflictual history, by any other name.

Detailed at right are other avenues for exploration:
Government settlements for one, activist and protest marches for another. Contested history often prompts aggrieved stakeholders to protest and vandalise and appeal for media profile and publicity.Dramatised cinema all too often departs from history's actuality (and its archives and anecdotal evidence) essentially its truth, for the sake of entertainment. This in turn further fuels misinformation and disinformation as many then glean their historical

awareness from box-office and home cinema experiences, rather than source material.

To this end, we may explore overleaf how learners may initially identify "flawed" narratives for use in the classroom. Incomplete or inconsistent narratives comprise the popular (and often abbreviated) storylines from which non-historians understand history.

Entry-level textbooks seldom delve beyond the superficial and while they provide information aplenty for cursory understanding of personalities, events, and chronological context they are limited by wordcount and page space.

To this end, primary-school or early secondary-school texts are often ideal for summary understanding and establishing an investigative start-point.

Likewise, simple tables like the one at right, can help organise and order not only those stakeholders well-represented in popular narratives, but help learners identify where gaps (and perspectives) may exist.

Ultimately, initiatives like this one seek to expand and complete historical narratives, better represent absent or disenfranchised stakeholder perspectives, and encourage non-historians to accept and appreciate more balanced, more inclusive, and more accurate shared histories. Fairer and more balanced representation may mitigate and ameliorate historic grievances. After all, history's controversies largely manifest as present problems.

Positioning Contested History in the 21stC Classroom
Denmark   *Espen Kirkegaard Espensen*

Material facts: Denmark signed a non-aggression pact with Germany in 1939, hoping to revisit its WW1 neutrality. New global conflict presented a greater, fresher threat. The Third Reich invaded Denmark in April 1940 and, hours after fighting began, Danish negotiators accepted German occupation and the Nazis agreed limited local governance (King Christian X, Danish Govt, and Danish Police) would continue. Denmark became an occupied country under special arrangement albeit claiming neutrality. This special situation continued to August 1943, almost two years before the Allied victory in Europe.

Strategic geography and proximity to warzones saw several European players attract Axis attention or invite Russian ambitions as border buffer zones. Dr David Woolner (The Last 100 Days: FDR at War and Peace; New York, 2017) sympathised, "in short, staying neutral in an ever-expanding war proved virtually impossible for these nations." Woolner summed up many European countries' wartime roles as "somewhat ambiguous and still controversial."

The module opened with Primary source material for context and connection.

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Again, the two-pronged protest movement(s): resistance in the civic sense (objecting to the state, the government) and resistance in the traditional wartime sense (against an oppression invader), establish the Danish case not merely as a present-day contested history but also a contested present, historically during the Second World War.

Denmark's policy of co-operation during the Second World War

Espen Kirkegaard Espensen, DK

• **Basic premise of research module :**
9 Apr 1940, Danish Govt asserted its sovereignty and neutrality in WW2, by accepting German occupation.
This "**Policy of Co-operation**" continued until August 1943.
Operation Weserübung

• There was protest (at the time), but non-combatant Denmark accepted a Nazi German military presence. There was a resistance movement *(v Nazi Germany,   v Danish Govt Policy of Co-operation)*

• Denmark continues to debate its WW2 neutrality : "was **occupied but neutral** morally and politically right ... or wrong?"

a hushed history

The Danish pilot – in summary

Where the study of history is concerned, in particular contested, controversial or conflictual history (and in no way confined to Denmark's WW2 history, nor Denmark alone), there is much scope for cross-curricular exploration. Specifically, the Danish pilot drew connections to political science (be it Politics in Education, Politics and Society, or whichever label it takes in various ministries the world over), especially where government policy is concerned, or widespread and enduring protest movements. Within history's disciplinary orbit, the Danish pilot also focused its lens on topical study worth or the metric value of any given topic. Suffice to say, most history to some degree is contested at some level or another, and teachers and learners would do well to weigh or measure the worth of one topic/subject against another. As far as research is concerned, this preliminary debate only adds to the research experience and, in turn, pulls from an economics orbit too – opportunity cost in studying something and not another, and anticipating the greater (educational) return on the (research effort and time) investment.

To finish on perhaps the Danish pilot's most overarching and enduring takeaways, future teachers may wish to open their modules and engage their students with the insight detailed above : History's controversy is often much more a present problem than a past problem. Inadvertently or overtly, the present-day impact (as determined by students), may influence their decision upon which topic or subject matter they wish to devote their efforts.

And questions like,

- "Which event, which injustice, which omission affects most people today?"
- "Which oversight or atrocity is most profoundly felt in the current era?" or
- "Which prevailing narrative needs the most attention to fill the greater gaps?"

may help guide topic selection and encourage the greater student engagement.

Positioning Contested History in the 21stC Classroom
Ireland
Luke O'Donnell & Dr Paul Flynn

Material facts: Ireland's 19thC population halved as a result of mass starvation, malnourishment and desperate emigration. Almost 180 years later, that population figure remains a long way off. The prevailing narrative highlights famine-induced starvation, but seldom mentions an abundance of food. It also echoes the rural poor's reliance on potatoes, but as impactful were meagre wages and subsistence. Emigration is often portrayed as an option for blight-affected farmers who felt an agri-conomy was no longer sustainable, yet it was only an option insofar as death and destitution were equally viable alternatives.

While the Irish case study sought to investigate the validity and scope of prescribed curricular content as well as fortify second-level research skills and upskill young historians' disciplinary toolkits, limited access to second-level student cohorts (researchers) precluded project completion. The Irish case study however, achieved significant strides in terms of disciplinary proficiency and practitioner awareness, namely:

- **Determining** foundation skills (of the Historian) - **why** historians research;
- **Fortifying** and **implementing** the historian skillset - **how** historians research well, and;
- **Acknowledging and celebrating** appropriate historical narratives - **best practice** presentation, publication and promotion of research.

These have already been discussed in greater detail during the Case Study introductory pages.

The Irish case study isolated a seminal event in Ireland's modern history some 175 years ago, **The Great Famine (1845-49),** ripples of which continue to impact descendants within and beyond Ireland, and impact upon the 21st Century Irish state itself. Ireland's case study focused upon the Great Famine's prevailing historical narrative as evidenced by current second-level textbooks, recently published children's history books, and online source material (YouTube educational videos).

The demographic distribution in 1840s Ireland was a far cry from present-day Ireland, and learners would benefit from a contextual overhaul. Teachers should be wary when commencing modules that students are aware of funda-mental social, scientific, and economic differences between the *then* and the *now*. In this respect historical consciousness is crucial.

The Irish pilot neatly demonstrated how a narrative may attain historic authority or weight, simply because of its popularity or notoriety.
It will stand teachers and learners in good stead to remember (and be reminded) throughout the process that narratives do not make history, facts and evidence do.

The Irish pilot – in summary

While mention is made in second-level textbooks and children's picturebooks of other contributing elements to the blighted Irish' plight during the famine, potatoes, the rural poor's reliance on them for subsistence survival, and the ensuing global diaspora occupy priority. Upon examining source material, much more significant and conspicuous is the death and disease among the affected poor. Likewise, a more balanced narrative would reflect a general abundance and ready supply of food (albeit not potatoes) but no means for those most affected to purchase at market prices. The third trunk element absent from the popular narrative is Britain's insistence Ireland (during the famine, at least) was independent although there was very little 'independence' conceded by Britain during the Home Rule era, during the First World War, leading up to Ireland's War of Independence. There are several substories too

briefly mentioned in textbooks, or not at all, which all contributed either to the famine story itself or as evidence of above.

Ireland's Famine history is an incomplete narrative offering school-level historians plenty of research material to investigate without needing special archive access or expensive subscriptions. These too may factor in topic selection when determining a research angle. Furthermore, and in no way exclusive to this Irish subject matter, the Famine also allows learners to strategise (hypothetically on a large scale, but actively at the local level) how best to promote and publicise their discoveries in order that a more complete and balanced narrative gain traction in the public sphere.

Positioning Contested History in the 21stC Classroom

Portugal *Ana Catarina Pinto & Dr Miguel Monteiro de Barros*

Material facts: So much of Portugal's global legacy hinges on its maritime excellence and expertise. Consider De Gama (Europe to India), consider Cabral (VeraCruz/Brazil), and Magellan (Pacific Ocean/global circumnavigation), Cão (navigation/south west Africa), Dias (Cape of Good Hope), the Corte Real brothers (north west Europe and Greenland), and several others who colonised dozens of islands off the west African coast. Courage and cunning in hostile landless environments at the mercy of winds and waves yielded great economic returns trading with otherwise inaccessible suppliers. But the goods trade evolved to include a sinister human element, plucking people from various homelands to become indentured labour. While much of the passage and pathway is celebrated, aspects of the produce are sometimes overlooked. The Portuguese pilot sought to address and demystify its mainstream historic colonial narrative, still marked by Estado Novo propaganda (an authoritarian regime which ruled in Portugal from 1932 to 1974). At the heart of this project was the question:

> **How can we address these traumatic events and processes with our students in such a way they are able to analyse and evaluate how people (at any stage of Portugal's history, including the present day) reacted to them?**

The Portuguese pilot ensured from the outset all participants were aware not only of gaps in historical narratives, but that gaps were often determined by those most well-represented, not by those missing, absent or muffled.

Controversial history in Portugal: Historical narratives report various controversial events and processes but concede little or no space to other perspectives apart from the mainstream. In Portugal's recent history there are several examples, of which this

pilot highlighted colonialism and relations established from 1890 to the present day, with peoples of the colonized territories.

As mentioned above, foremost among Portugal's research directives was the thesis question:

How can we address traumatic events and processes with our students in such a way they are able to analyse and evaluate how people reacted to them?

Interpretations of controversial pasts, present in mainstream narratives (history books, encyclopaedia, textbooks) often prompt a highly emotive sense of grievance and disenfranchisement for certain individuals and communities. And those not directly targeted or emotionally charged by those interpretations are rarely aware of how one-sided, controversial, offensive, and traumatic these narratives may be.

This pilot's parallel focus (with Portugal's colonial content) narrowed on historical research techniques; building collaborative, inclusive narratives; and balancing narratives with acceptance and diversity all while amplifying long-silent, forgotten, or ignored voices. Its ultimate goal was equipping researchers (and readers, viewers, learners) with transversal skills enabling them to counter prejudice and ignorance, and promote common sense, inclusion and empathy.

In-line with the initiative's universal aims, the Portuguese pilot sought two ultimate outcomes: Fortifying students' disciplinary skills and aligning their research integrity closer to third-level (university) than the second (high school); and whittling, improving, streamlining and improving future roll-outs of research projects such as this pilot.

Portuguese Colonialism :
from 1415 to the present day
Ana Catarina & Miguel Monteirro de Barros, PRT

Historical narratives traditionally report contested elements and processes to an extent but concede little or no space to other perspectives apart from the majority mainstream.

• **Basic premise of research module :**
Historically, maritime technology and seafaring was so advanced in Portugal, the oceans helped elevate Portugal to a global superpower. Ships once laden with foreign fabrics, exotic spices and mineral riches began returning to Portugal (and rerouting elsewhere) with people – and so began the slave trade.

• How should historians vested with an academic obligation to seek truth and scrutinize information, present and promote their findings even if they defy patriotism, parochiality and Portuguese national pride?

an enduring history

The Portuguese pilot debated various elements of the local 'mainstream' narrative, stressing that **popularity and prevalence** seldom equate to accuracy or integrity.

Thus, the Portuguese learners each assumed integral roles in determining and identifying controversial elements of their colonial narrative, despite Portugal's colonial history and maritime excellence fueling much national pride.

As with the narrative itself, consensus and compromise posed challenges in the classroom too. Teachers reiterated the importance of academic responsibility during periods of contention –be they novice researchers or experienced academics – highlighting the narrative must be malleable, with diversified sources during construction, (including but not limited to: school textbooks, peer-reviewed academic articles and encyclopaedia entries, excluding Wikipedia).

Sources such as school textbooks and encyclopedias tend to avoid complicated contested elements while preserving most material facts.

When stitching together a narrative, or constructing one from component parts, teachers should encourage students to avoid too many details (and, also, poring through too much evidence), and focus instead on the 'narrative' element. As with the universal guidelines, students bore in mind how they might package a simple two-minute narrative, how might they package it for a younger audience, and what to include if bound by a 250-word limit?

In the Portuguese context, 'stakeholder' pertained to those directly and indirectly affected by the Portuguese colonization process, both on the colonies and mainland Portugal, as well as those researching its history. Learners remained mindful of a multitude of affected parties (stakeholders) as well as the perspectives and grievances (stakes).

Portuguese Colonialism : from 1415 to the present day
Ana Catarina & Miguel Monteirro de Barros, PRT

an enduring history

The Portuguese pilot also yielded an important discovery with regard the research process. Having set out to unpack the role and responsibility Medieval Portugal played (and present-day Portugal plays) in the human trafficking equation, learners discovered parallel or tangential connections similarly contested and controversial.

On completion of the Portuguese pilot's research process and wary of how best to represent or reproduce an alternative, more balanced and complete narrative, the students invited sector experts to contribute to the bigger picture. Future iterations and investigations (beyond Portugal) would do well to adopt a similar strategy and seek professional insight (be it during the research phase or the presentation stage). In this instance, learners staged a topical debate, complete with student 'press gallery' for Q&A. Despite the learner research cohort numbering fewer than 30, the debate's audience comprised several times that figure and was recorded and archived for the benefit of other history students.

Portuguese Colonialism : from 1415 to the present day
Ana Catarina & Miguel Monteirro de Barros, PRT

an enduring history

The Portuguese pilot co-opted feature guests as project contributors (an anthropologist and historian) and engaged them in a structured debate complete with Q&A interrogation on closing. The learners spearheaded all logistical elements (invitations, hosting, agenda) as well as chairing/adjudication.

The Portuguese pilot showcased one publication/dissemination strategy and shared discovery for maximum local positive return. In some respects, this strategy (while microcosmic), suggests more ambitious dissemination may be achieved without big-budget expense. Avenues worth exploring may include an evening presentation to parents and the community; a podcast or YouTube production; or short presentation at a high-profile event. Remembering the greater initiative's ultimate goal: reconciliation of controversial histories.

This discussion lends itself to social media's 21st century scope as well, making use, where relevant and possible, of incidents involving public figures which might have had a significant impact on an event, cause or campaign, or the public's interpretation of such.

The Portuguese pilot – in summary

If one virtue may be spotlighted from the Portuguese pilot, it is the celebration of discovery by (and dissemination of information beyond) the learner cohort. Portuguese facilitators underlined the perception of relevant intervention and responsibility among their students, as well as an essential intellectual respect for both research tenets, and how a learner experience like this can reinforce the importance of open and honest dialogue when exploring shared histories.

The experience allowed learners to realise their power to intervene both individually and collectively; and to act as responsible agents in building, sharing, and disseminating knowledge. In addition to the historiographical method experienced, the challenging demands of the project, together with respect for the intellectual integrity of the group and close support at all stages, the project reinforced the relevance of this specific learning process for dialogue-based co-existence.

While the research was of paramount importance to both learner skillsets and the curricular or topical content, of similar gravity was the packaging of the eventual product. Utilising academics (a historian and anthropologist) outside the initial research process but within the validation process not only lends considerable weight to the study by way of personal pedigrees but does much to embed the experience in a holistic sense. At various times throughout the investigation the learners not only collaborated amongst themselves with guidance from their teacher, but involved academics, and the wider school community.

From a curricular point of view, much can still be made of Portuguese maritime hegemony at a time when technological developments, craft construction and seafaring was improving as a rule throughout the known world. Likewise, through its ability and ambition Portugal established itself as a well-funded geopolitical superpower during the Age of Expansion. That said that period of its history was not a celebration for all stakeholders, given the depopulation, the displacement, and the devastation wrought upon those who suffered as a result of a thriving slave trade. This investigation sought to amplify their stakeholder profile as well.

Positioning Contested History in the 21stC Classroom
Israel   *Dr Shamir Yeger*

Material facts: Unlike the other pilot projects, Israel's was a living history, active in the 20th and 21st Centuries, yesterday and tomorrow. Israel's geopolitical role in its region be it the west Mediterranean or the Middle East predates the 20th Century by thousands of years, and its role in a broader 'wider world' sense is as conspicuous as any other.

The demographic compositions of Israel in 1948 or 1967 were significantly different from its current composition more than half a century later. Many cohorts and many adherents among those cohorts remain wary of carte blanche assimilation and association. In Israel, this pilot offered an opportunity for students to collaborate on a common project, via the metaverse (with head-mounted Virtual Reality technology) and engage with one another in a shared virtual digital space rather than the actual, tangible alternative.

The Israel pilot's point of difference, aside from studying a living history unfinished and enduring, was its researcher cohort. Whereas other contested history projects demanded an immersive degree of stakeholder consciousness (adopting the philosophy of another, or another, and stepping into the shoes of an aggrieved stakeholder), the Israeli pilot drew affected stakeholders directly into the collaborator community. Learners of any origin, of any region and investigating any topic may wish to follow this lead and redirect some preparatory time to exploring their own researcher cohort at the outset. In exploring and understanding connections to certain stakeholder perspectives, researchers may identify invaluable insight potential within the research team. Insight gleaned from childhoods and family histories, from personal experiences and encounters with other stakeholders and their present-day descendants has every opportunity to enhance (rather than detract) from perspective and objectivity.

Virtual reality headsets and handheld consoles allowed research and knowledge to be shared within a safe space in real time, without having to travel to or occupy an actual space.

Within a computer-generated virtual environment, learners, researchers, and facilitators (teachers) could meet negating travel or travel expenses (although the headsets themselves constitute their own expense), and any additional factor which may impinge upon collaboration potential especially in a security sensitive setting, in this case Israel (Tel Aviv).

The Israeli pilot showcased as well as any, that regardless of where content or curricular matter placed on the timescale, research practice involved cutting edge technology. The potential here of course, depending on the applications or programs employed, allows for an immersive research experience within a recreated historical era or period as well as real-time collaboration with colleagues who may be in another room, city, country or time zone.

As detailed at right in the commentary, the Israeli pilot with its VR potential exposes learners to digital research possibilities beyond simply internet search engines and digitised hardcopy archives, as well as allowing for cross-cultural collaboration free from travel expense and time spent commuting or in transit.

Of significant benefit is the opportunity for stakeholders to share perspectives in real time, with real people. It does not negate or deny researchers a chance to imagine 'an other's' perspective (be it different to their own or removed from their time) but allows each researcher an opportunity to hear, see, feel and appreciate alternative viewpoints as articulated by the stakeholders themselves. Likewise, Virtual Reality also presents those articulating viewpoints a somewhat anonymised forum from which to speak.

In Israel, major logistical overhauls could present learners from disparate and different origins with opportunities to collaborate in a shared space, but some of those situations also present additional challenges. Those challenges may be difficult to overcome or accommodate and even prove insurmountable when teaching history in highly conflictual and sensitive areas.

Given the potential to break down, dilute and even dissolve ingrained or indoctrinated prejudice by sharing and exposing perspectives and viewpoints to traditional adversaries, this method of collaboration hints at significant positive possibilities.

Engaging with the headset allows users to immerse themselves in an alternative setting. The educational possibilities are limitless, be it under the sea, in space, or another year. Somewhat figuratively but tangibly too, those alternative settings allow users to escape conflict, escape judgement, escape first impressions and ingrained prejudice and presumption too.

The Israeli pilot – in summary

While there remain several active conflict hotspots around the world approaching the 21st Century's first-quarter milestone, few regions may claim such historic bitterness and enduring animosity as the Israel/Palestine region and Israel's relationship with its Middle Eastern neighbors. Israel therefore was tragically well-qualified to trial such a pilot using Virtual Reality technology, seeking schools with different majority demographic compositions, each reflective of Israel's ever diversifying population make-up.

This particular pilot used a VR platform as one of its key components allowing students and teachers to experience different perspectives of the same historical events and narratives. Aside from any and all research, collaborators also engaged in a social sphere too participating in role plays, debates and presentations. This pilot centered on questions of self-identity tied to each's own personal and collective (or shared) history.

When weighing budgetary obligations in availing such technology to users in multiple sites, decisionmakers must also consider the relative expense of the alternative. If the end result is a collaborative workspace comprising delegates or users of different and disparate origins, learning by way of experiential immersion in yet another space, replication of those variables would involve significant travel expenses, entry fees, accommodation to say nothing of delegate availability and scheduling. As mentioned

prior, the Virtual Reality option also negates any security or safety conundrums, particularly in traditional conflict zones.

Where most collaborative research - especially in a classroom, school or college setting - culminates in Pedagogical Content Knowledge (that is, Content Knowledge or subject matter and Pedagogical Knowledge or delivery context), the VR platform so evident in the Israeli pilot introduced high-end Technological Knowledge as well. As a result, teachers and collaborators alike were able to bolster their Research Capital with Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (developing digital practice in the classroom) and Technological Content Knowledge (embedding subject matter via non-traditional or non-text means).

The Case Studies as a collective
Positioning Contested History in the 21st Century Classroom

In appraising each of the pilots' fundamental take-homes and unique virtues side-by-side, those wishing to pursue similar lines of enquiry may better appreciate the positives this initiative sought to evoke, and the actual positives produced. Teachers should explain at outset, or better still have learners explore the **complexity of disputed history,** and the **real-world importance of unpacking the past**.

In positioning **Contested History** in the 21st Century classroom, **HistEdu** sought to broaden achievements beyond simply the curricular sphere. Namely, the three foremost objectives might be summed up as:

- **Upskilling young historians, earlier**, in the second-level space (high school) but closer to third-level (university) or semi-professional caliber;
- **Addressing incomplete narratives**, where popular mainstream understandings of shared histories fail to adequately account for the experiences of all stakeholders, and risk fuelling grievances through to the present; and
- **Repairing relationships** by balancing, completing, and redrafting historical narratives, validating those grievances with archival, evidentiary engagement, and giving voice and volume to history's muffled, marginalised and muted stakeholders.

focal teaching and learning points :
- History isn't **just** history, it's political science too.
- Anything in history worth studying is probably **controversial, disputed** and **contested**.
- History's controversy is often much more a **present problem** than a past problem.

focal teaching and learning points :
- You are **historians**, not history students.
- Genuine emphasis on **primary source analysis**, and **dialogue amongst students**, and formulation of **high-calibre, inclusive narratives**.

focal teaching and learning points :
- Narratives don't prove history, **facts do**.
- What's **left out of a story** is often as fascinating as what's put in.
- 175 years later the prevailing narrative ignores crucial elements and focuses instead on some **simple themes** and **unavoidable misfortune**.

focal teaching and learning points :
- History may be archaic, **but learning can be modern** – VR platform as a key component.
- Learners from **different spheres collaborate** on a joint project **in the same shared space** (virtual).
- **Self-identity is celebrated** with, rather than over, other cross-cultural identities.

revisiting our case studies (Denmark, Ireland, Israel, Portugal)

The Danish pilot drew from beyond history's traditional disciplinary scope, pulling invaluable lessons from political science and economics. Investigating history with multi-disciplinary lenses adds considerable degrees of perspective to an initiative which celebrates perspective, alternative viewpoints, and other angles. It also acknowledged in the absence of absolute historical knowledge (where historians cannot know absolute intentions and absolute ambitions of history's agents-of-change, nor know the absolute entirety of events and eras), all history is contested or conflictual or controversial to some extent. And knowing such, history is still worth exploring in the present era given its controversies and grievances often pose many more present problems, than historic ones.

Touching on the Portuguese pilot and taking its own focal elements into any given study sphere and subject matter, facilitators would do well to engage learners of any age as historians, rather than simply history students. It is often the gravity of contested history's subject matter and the positive potential for change which commands and demands: a higher degree of scholarship; greater adherence to historiographical principles; more robust research; and a genuine, vested interest in improving understanding. In addition, the Portuguese pilot showcased how easily positive change may be disseminated and proliferated beyond the research cohort, no matter how difficult or sensitive those discoveries may be.

While all the pilot directors sought to upskill young historians' research toolkits, Ireland and Portugal showcased well how that might be achieved on the ground, (or in the classroom). Ireland's focus on the role and responsibility of contemporary historians and establishing an early baseline understanding of contested history in particular demonstrated how easily disciplinary enthusiasm may be converted to talent and expertise. In short sessions, historiographical fortitude and role awareness rose as evidenced by learner responses. Those wishing to embark on their own comparable investigations will waste little time establishing who among the learners/researchers appreciates the gravity of the task at hand, and whether those who initially may not, better understand their role and responsibility before research commences in earnest. In Ireland's own Famine setting, what was missing from the narrative (and the possible motives behind those absences or inconsistencies) was as fascinating a discovery as any made.

Israel embraced modern technology not only when researching its content, but during its research practice and collaboration. Engaging directly with different stakeholder

insights and perspectives within the researcher cohort is one of this broader **HistEdu** initiative's greatest celebrations. And while not all subject matter lends itself to this level of inclusion, co-operation, and perspective, it demonstrates just how well it can be executed given the opportunity to do so. Being able to address lingering grievances around the research table with those inherently connected to relevant (and multiple) stakeholder perspectives, at least in theory can only help lubricate and streamline the reconciliation process. The Israeli project closed with a line taken from www.theenemyishere.org, "**The Enemy is always invisible. When he becomes visible, he ceases to be the enemy.**"

This pilot programme (and its Danish, Irish, Portuguese and Israeli case studies) identified alternative, absent and inconsistent narrative elements in each respective shared history; acknowledged and celebrated multiple perspectives; and sought to draft and promote more complete, balanced and inclusive historical narratives. As importantly, throughout every encounter be it a workshop or a lesson, be it a collaboration of presentation, be it the research process or dissemination and proliferation of discoveries, we also sought to highlight the craft as well as the content.

In revisiting your own Contested Histories wherever they may be, whomever they may involve, whatever they may represent we hope they fortify and inspire responsible historians and yield inclusive and complete historical narratives.

Appendices
Appendix 1.0

Contested History
definition, description, application, and overview

Contested history, **by way of a working definition**, is history with competing agendas, factual disparities, and alternative narratives, whether by omission, embellishment or inaccuracy and refutation. The prevailing or popular narrative (labelled also the *"mainstream narrative"*) often marginalises or ignores a party or stakeholder (*"side/team/cohort"*) and allegations or grievances claimed. As a result, that history's future or interim may be laden with anxiety, aggression, disenfranchisement, frustration and the potential for ongoing grievance, protest, redress and even violence.

Countries and cultures with Nationalist contention include:
- (i)   Serbs and Croats,
- (ii)   Palestinians and Israelis,
- (iii)   Catholic Irish and Northern Irish Protestants,
- (iv)   British Commonwealth member states, (to name a few);

And several other minority or ethnic cohorts within countries / regions, also include:*
- (v)   Native Americans in the US and Canada,
- (vi)   Middle Eastern Kurds,
- (vii)   Cambodians of the former Khmer Republic,
- (viii) Australian Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders (Australia),
- (ix)   New Zealand Maori (New Zealand),
- (x)   Jewish nationals of World War2 Continental Europe, and
- (xi)   People of former Soviet States, (for example).

*The above catalogue is by no means exhaustive, but merely represents geographical/geopolitical diversity within a "contested history" fold.

Examining only historiographical inclusion and validation (and setting aside grievance redress, justice, and injustice), we may isolate and identify how various majorities, minorities, and cultural and ethnic cohorts sustain particular and peculiar identities among shared (and often ancient or enduring) histories.

Against this backdrop, even contemporary relationships may be punctuated by liberation and oppression, by domination and resistance. Divided memories steeped

in local, regional, and family folklore often conspire against modern harmony despite the absence of recent conflict. Any *"shared existence"* (with all manner of comparable hardship and loss on various sides) often continues to fuel yesterday's corrosive co-existence today, and in all probability long into tomorrow.

Almost always sensitive and offensive, many feel particularly atrocious and barbaric contested histories should not be celebrated or commemorated but relegated and censured. Cancel Culture is not confined to social media and popular culture, but inherently more academic circles as well.

Contested histories are a layered stratum comprising the events of the past, their timely interpretation and representation for the future, their fallout (or consequences), the contest element, and the contextual mesh through which they are sieved and disposed. A contested history is as academic as it is emotive, steeped in as much objectivity as subjectivity, and deserving of all the integrity and analysis so revered in history's traditional disciplinary conventions.

When investigating contested history, focal questions abound, including:

1.0.1 What prompted objections and grievances?

1.0.2 Which remedies have been proposed?

1.0.3 Which remedies have been ignored?

1.0.4 Who are the stakeholders?

1.0.5 Are the remedies agreed among the aggrieved?

1.0.6 Which elements are contested?

1.0.7 Which remedies are contested?

1.0.8 Which elements are to be re-written?

1.0.9 Which elements are to be buried (cancelled)?

1.0.10 And perhaps, why should they be preserved?

Appendix 2.01

Project Fundamentals, Lesson Delivery, and The Lean Canvas

Fundamental Programme Objective:

Produce a robust model of future co-operation in the field of contested historical narratives in 21stC classrooms.

Secondary Programme Objective(s):

- create a methodology which can/could be adapted in alternative settings;
- equip practitioners with tools, practical examples, case studies, definitions and processes to help navigate teaching and learning dilemmas (regarding contested histories).

Fundamental Principles:

1. Meaningful engagement, which includes classroom and departmental/faculty discussion; debate; reflection; learning.
2. Historiographical literature as an evolution, or work-in-progress. Practitioners/teachers must emphasise how crucial it is that research and history be responsive to new material, alternative interpretations, and how open and receptive researchers must be to re-prioritising competing and/or contested narratives.

Fundamental Practices:

With regard **the historian's toolkit** and **research methods** in particular, the foremost focus of all historical writing must be ***selection, interrogation, and interpretation,*** that is,

- the thoughtful selection of topics and questions that seem most impactful, and;
- the responsible interpretation of sources in order to construct meaningful arguments, and;
- best articulating those arguments with appropriate language and perspective.

With regard **lesson planning specific to the 2L history classroom**, due diligence must be taken to ensure lessons may be consistently delivered despite variables in subject matter, variables in assessment tools, variables in classroom timing/duration, and teacher/practitioner variables.

With regard *lesson delivery specific to the 2L history classroom*, due diligence must be taken to ensure appropriate and constructive ***Technology Elements*** (including Lean Canvas, visual aids, and inclusive action learning) be accommodated and encouraged wherever and whenever possible.

University Galway pledges a robust and readymade Literature Review (approx.40 articles on Lesson Planning), including discussion on Lean Canvas application within that review.

Project Fundamentals, Lesson Delivery and The Lean Canvas

Lesson Plan: Format, Aims & Objectives, Assessment Criteria:

In-line with Appendix 2.01 above (Project Fundamentals), lesson preparation should highlight the transitional pathway from novice or curious history student to critical thinking researcher. Under the umbrella of **Contested History**, teachers should therefore frame lessons with critical thought, empathetic consciousness, and research integrity in mind at all times. This initiative is as much about reframing more inclusive historical narratives as it is about historiographical development; in other words: the history **and** the historian.

Given modern reliance (and the prevalence) of digital information, teachers should scaffold significant portions of collaborative (or teacher-led) research with digital instruction. In order to embed researcher best-practices in their student skillsets, teachers should allocate time to not only showing or demonstrating **how to** research in the digital space but monitor and supervise independent (or semi-independent) student attempts to navigate that space as well. Be it identifying archive potential, accessing archived content, note-making and organising relevant material into a working order, teachers-as-collaborators straddle both an instructive role in the first instance and a subsequent supervisory/advisory role within this project.

The same may be said of the post-research phase – where students present their findings. This project hopes to produce significant research material in the harvesting phase, but most students will need further advice on how best to articulate, convey and present their discovery. Teachers therefore will need to allocate time for instruction/demonstration, as well as supervision, feedback, and advice.

Aims & Objectives:

- Encourage and ensure enthusiastic, courteous, critical, and informed student engagement throughout the module, at each assessment juncture, while researching, and in class.
- Evaluate individual *historian toolkits* at the project outset, emphasise relevant *toolkit* elements throughout the module, and evaluate *toolkits (and toolkit awareness)* on completion.
- Discuss and determine how a reframed narrative may become a prevailing narrative. Discussion may include how a competing narrative may be woven through a prevailing narrative in order to better reflect a shared history, begin to address grievances, and help heal figurative wounds.

Using the Lean Canvas:

The Lean Canvas should be employed as a flexible (but not fluid) research plan, to guide and focus research as a roadmap. Researchers should engage with the Lean Canvas throughout the process (day-to-day/session-to-session) and be encouraged to contribute to it with additions and expansions as and when necessary to better inform future practice.

Researchers and practitioners should bear in mind subtle distinctions between each of the eight focal elements of the canvas, (and may refer to Appendix 2.03.3 – Lean Canvas Pillars, for further clarity).

Elements 2, 3 and 7 operate as pillars directly linking the schedule (6) with the outcome (top) and supporting the module/research outcome as well as the showcase elements. Central among this three-pillar support network is the personal worth: **Learning Outcomes**. These are the fundamental improvements each stakeholder may celebrate on completion and equate to transversal/transferrable skills. Either side of this trunk support are the measurable specifics of those gains (3) **Items of the Shared Education**, and (7) **Evaluations** (of stakeholders and the programme/initiative).

Underpinning the entire initiative trajectory is its timeline (6) the **Storyboard**. Planned effectively, this not only serves as an agenda or schedule (Scheme of Work) but can also house the KPIs (key performance indicators, milestones or markers). If any element demands regular attention and constant reference, it is the **Storyboard**.

Between the pillars may best be termed the logistical or showcase components which distinguish this programme or this canvas from others, (elements 1,4,5 and 8). These speak to the theory and purpose of the initiative be they the goals prompting project design, themes, where the research will take place (the learning or research environment), and its future direction for any subsequent iterations.

Given much of the preliminary canvas development is complete, any subsequent metric/measurement additions or real-time reflective insights may be added to the it as Post-It notes in hardcopy or margin notes (online). Alternatives include an accompanying document numbered 1 through 8, or sub-headed accordingly.

Project Fundamentals, Lesson Delivery and The Lean Canvas

Lean Canvas rollout:

The Lean Canvas is a single-page business or project plan template designed to help deconstruct a broad idea into key assumptions and targets. In addition, participants may also refer to (and build upon) the canvas throughout project development (and completion process) to monitor content, guide strategy direction and maintain pathway focus. Therefore, the initial canvas is best-drafted not only with project commencement in mind but eventual objectives (and completion) too.

With regard HistEdu's Lean Canvas structure, each element differs in terms of focus AND purpose. Quite aside from the focal (content) elements pertinent to the eight-stage pathway, users should bear in mind how those elements dovetail or complement one another as foundation elements *supporting* project entirety; pillar elements offering *structural integrity*, and showcase elements designed to *illustrate or represent* discovery.

Education-specific Lean Canvas template

[see next page]

7. Evaluation
of students

6. Storyboard

1   2   3   4

5. Shared education spaces
pedagogical spaces

8. Scaling up

physical spaces

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2. Special contributions of the shared education

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Add Text Here
Add Text Here
Add Text Here

1. Goals of the shared education program

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4. Key thematic points for the shard education

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3. Items of the shared education
topic from the curriculum

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Historical thinking skills

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Lean Canvas (Traditional):

[see next page]

CELEBRATING SHARED HISTORIES,

7. Evaluation (of students)
- Exit Cards
- Questionnaire + open questions and prompts
- Attendance
- Engagement in class and positivity
- data / grades

(of teaching program)
- Individual
- Reflections
- Critical Friends
- Appendices (LPs, resources)

5. Shared Spaces, Learning Zones
- online, at home
- traditional classr'm
- IT space (or computer lab) or a
- hybrid setting

2. Learning Outcomes

for second-level students
- greater participation
- more robust skillsets
- greater empathetic & academic awareness

for second-level teachers
- heightened scheme participation
- greater awareness of contested history within and beyond your curriculum

8. Scaling Up
- pending pilot feedback and respondent data on completion of programme

1. Goals of the Design Method
- enhance student engagement in the history classroom
- improve 21stC historian's toolkit
- more robust historiographical skillsets, and shape better historians

3. Items of the Shared Education
- understanding and implementing the full range of the historian's toolkit
- more robust research skills
- keener and cleaner academic writing

4. Key Thematic Points of a Shared Education
- curricular alignment
- debate, discursive discovery and the Art of the Argument
- scaffolded learning, visual-auditory aids

6. Storyboard
- Scheme of Work and teaching/learning schedule, focusing on the teaching process and programme delivery to ensure where possible consistency and comparability across countries and settings,
- general lesson delivery schedule (including amount), with clear and achievable milestone metrics,
- lesson evaluation markers.

Lean Canvas (Pillars):

CELEBRATING SHARED HISTORIES, AND UNDERSTANDING CONTESTED ELEMENTS

1. Goals of the Design Method
– enhance student engagement in the history classroom
– improve 21stC historiographical skillsets, and shape better historians

2. Learning Outcomes

for second-level students
– greater participation
– more robust skillsets
– greater empathetic & academic awareness

for second-level teachers
– heightened scheme participation
– greater awareness of contested history within and beyond your curriculum

3. Items of the Shared Education
– understanding and implementing the full range of the historian's toolkit
– more robust research skills
– keener and cleaner academic writing

4. Key Thematic Points of a Shared Education
– curricular alignment
– debate, discursive discovery and the Art of the Argument
– scaffolded learning, visual-auditory aids

5. Shared Spaces, Learning Zones
– online, at home
– traditional classr'm
– IT space (or computer lab)
or
– hybrid setting

6. Storyboard
– Scheme of Work and teaching/learning schedule, focusing on the teaching process and programme delivery to ensure where possible consistency and comparability across countries and settings,
– general lesson delivery schedule (including amount), with clear and achievable milestone metrics,
– lesson evaluation markers.

7. Evaluation (of students)
– Exit Cards
– Questionnaire + open questions and prompts
– Attendance
– Engagement in class and positivity
– data / grades
(or the programme)

(of teaching program)
– Individual
– Reflections
– Critical Friends
– Appendices (LPs, resources)

8. Scaling Up
– pending pilot feedback and respondent data on completion of programme

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Contested History on the Ground: A Case Study
New Zealand (1840 to 2020)   Luke O'Donnell

The *Case Study* (overleaf) does not pretend to be exhaustive and is only as accurate as far as its restrictive wordcount allows. Its sole purpose within these appendices, is merely to highlight the degree of disparity between one mainstream historical narrative and an aggrieved alternative. Somewhat sadly, this level of disconnect is not confined to the South Pacific, nor to colonial and imperial relations, and certainly not simply to the last 200 years.

New Zealand's inclusion as a case study showcases just how many facets of contested history invite investigation and exploration, namely:

- a colonial past (and disparate power dynamic)
- a one-sided narrative
- indigenous v settler population disparity
- enduring legacy grievances
- cultural misappropriation
- under-representation (of aggrieved stakeholders in policymaking process)
- over-representation   (of aggrieved stakeholders in key performer statistics)
- lawful protest appeals
- unlawful protest escalations
- saturation of *consequence* publicity v dearth of *cause* publicity
- contested redress / remuneration
- ethno-cultural division

and many more.

Elements such as these and dozens not included above will punctuate and pockmark contested histories the world over, throughout human history. As 21[st]C researchers, it is essential **big-picture appraisals** be undertaken from multiple vantage points and through empathetic stakeholder-specific lenses, in as objectively and critically-robust a manner as possible.

CASE STUDY – New Zealand

Treaty of Waitangi – Founding document – Indigenous rights –
Colonial authority - Race relations – Disenfranchisement –
Protest movements – Legal actions - Constitutional law –
Māori/Pākehā – Ambiguous sovereignty – Interpretation

- Introduction –

New Zealand's global reputation has long reflected positive imagery and pride[1]. Scratch a little deeper and competing visions of its colonial past constitute hotly contested historical ground. National identity bears an all-too-conspicuous ethnic divide, the last 60years punctuated with protest, frustration, and conflict. NZ's most popular narrative celebrates *a noble savage*, a benevolent Crown, hardy pioneers, and an intercultural meeting-of-the-minds. **The Treaty of Waitangi**[2] promised indigenous Māori partnership, participation and the perks and protections of British subjects on one hand; and 19thC European arrivals bureaucratic and legal recourse in a modern society on the other bereft of overcrowded London cobbles. Blessed with arable land and a forgiving climate, New Zealand presented immense opportunity for its occupants.

- The Narrative -

Whereas settlers and Crown systems drove the main trunk narrative at the outset, disaffected Māori ancestors (and many wary Europeans) voiced alternatives. Dutchman Abel Tasman claimed offshore *discovery* in 1642,[3] but archaeologists determined Pacific paddlers to have touched base shortly before 1300. Five hundred-plus years of almost exclusive Māori occupation later a NSW delegation on behalf of the British Crown annexed much of the North Island in the name of Queen Victoria[4]. In early 1840 a much more formal agreement[5] signed by local Māori chiefs (albeit not all) cemented diplomatic allegiance to the United Kingdom. Aside from the highly contentious pricetag, this *compromise* has occupied much Treaty debate since the 1960s.

- The Contention -

If the *devil is in the details*, New Zealand's demons lurk in terminology, interpretation, intent and understanding. The Treaty parchment is but one iteration, several copies and translations further cloud contentions - to say nothing of a 34-chief **Declaration of Independence in 1831** (bolstered by 18 additional chiefs a year before the Treaty draft). In a nutshell, the British Crown (via the New Zealand Company representing a European settler cohort on the islands) wished to establish a colony in the South Pacific. The Crown accepted and acknowledged resident Māori as first settlers, thus avoiding a declaration of war and military conquest. The Treaty sought Māori

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[1] Environmental exemplar, Women's Suffrage, tourism destination, film location, innovative democracy.
[2] Signed 1840, the Treaty is NZ's founding document aligning it with the British Commonwealth; Te Tiriti o Waitangi being the Māori language version of the document. It has been deemed distinct and different from the Treaty, despite its initial claims as a direct translation.
[3] Captain James Cook (UK) is credited with the first *European* landing, Oct 1769.
[4] 1838.
[5] The Treaty of Waitangi, Te Tiriti o Waitangi (and other versions of each), signed early 1840.

permission for the Crown to govern and administer New Zealand as a colony, yet **Te Tiriti**[6] guaranteed elements of Māori sovereignty or chieftainship (over lands, villages, forests, the foreshore and traditional treasures[7]), while asserting British authority over civic administration and land purchases. There were at least nine signed non-identical documents in all. Most problematic were discrepancies between the **The Treaty**, **Te Tiriti**, and subsequent **translations of each**.

- The Context - The 182-year interim has yielded a prevailing or dominant narrative celebrating *consensus* between an ambitious Empire (and *plucky* pioneers), and the *noble savage*. It celebrates an exchange of goods and citizenship for civic authority, and has since decried Māori protest, land occupation and subversion as contrary to the agreement. By contrast, Māori narratives highlight irregularities where some chiefs outright objected to any agreement, and others conceded only "management rights" rather than **ownership and/or sovereignty**. Contemporary Māori cite countless transgressions since which ignored the protections and principles guaranteed by the parchments themselves.

For centuries, Māori was a verbal language, and a tribal society. Aotearoa's[8] early occupants established systems of civil, intertribal commerce and jurisdiction, but still engaged in occasional violence and conquest. The Māori population of 1838-1840 was neither centralised nor unified yet the Treaty effectively incorporated the entire population as a colony under a new Crown. Māori society subscribed to collective ownership rather than private or personal. At its narrowest, ownership existed at sub-tribal (community) level, and at its broadest certain elements (and treasures) belonged to all Māori people: as much to their ancestors as to their descendants to come (e.g. mountains, rivers, greenstone deposits).

- The Fallout - The 1840 transaction has given rise to 20th/21stC financial settlements, foreshore/riverbed concessions, and Māori fishing/logging rights, among others. Nor are grievances confined to Māori. "Treaty Fatigue" refers to the ongoing and unresolved settlement process. Some settlements have been denounced as discriminatory. More broadly, others bemoan an ongoing grievance settlement process as prolonging national disunity further wedging Māori and non-Māori cohorts apart.

- Consider - Three-dimensional analysis underpins any contested history research. In the first instance, consider the longitudinal context where disputed or contentious elements (and their origins) may fall beyond generally accepted or prevailing date parameters. In other words, an impetus may have its own precursor - inconspicuous by omission. This

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[6] See footnote2, above.

[7] Including prominent landmarks, areas and features with historic/spiritual significance, and pounamu/greenstone.

[8] Aotearoa (Māori lang.) "*land of the long white cloud*", remains the Māori name for New Zealand (and official alternative).

may impact the narrative timeline. Secondly, consider depth. By delving deeper, revised historiography may uncover subtle, disguised, or nuanced motives, interrogating causes-and-consequences. Historic significance is seldom superficial or surface-only. Thirdly, align subsequent narratives alongside mainstream, traditional or popular timelines. Highlighting alternatives helps promote empathy and understanding, and creates fertile and informed ground for dialogue, all crucial virtues in assuaging perceptions of injustice, disenfranchisement, frustration, and otherness. In short, include multiple points-of-view, highlight omissions, patch gaps, and strive for balanced entirety.

In New Zealand's case, the Treaty - once revered as a national birth certificate - is as much a cultural death certificate for many New Zealanders.

Appendix 4.01

Contested History in the Classroom: A Case Study

Ireland - The Great Famine
(1845 to 1849, and the present day)

<div align="right">**Teacher Preparation**</div>

Teaching & Learning Intentions

In pursuing any module under **HistEdu's** *'Contested History'* pilot project, practitioners and researchers must subscribe at all times (preparation, lesson delivery, assessment and reflection) to the following over-arching Research Question:

RQ : How may **contested histories** be positioned in a 21stC European 2L[9] classroom?

A single answer is unlikely, especially given content matter and circumstances pertinent and precious to each of Europe's 27 member states, and the myriad subcultures and ethnicities within individual countries. Content aside, consider also on one hand variability among teachers and each's delivery and assessment style… to say nothing of the disparate and diverse composition of their classrooms.

But, while uniformity and consistency elude even the most erudite and meticulous researchers, we should strive for them still when researching. Where the New Zealand **Treaty/Te Tiriti** case study (Appendix 3.01) sought only to highlight the multi-faceted

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[9] 2L = second-level, as in secondary school, high school, post-primary school;
1L = first level, as in kindergarten and primary school;
3L = third-level, as in tertiary education, higher learning, university, technical institutes, graduate schools, polytechnics, to name but a few.

and layered challenges which besiege shared histories and ongoing grievance processes, Ireland's *Great Famine* () case study shall serve a more instructive purpose within and beyond the classroom for those looking to implement a similar investigation in their own country and classroom.

The following pages detail hypothetical teaching-and-learning scenarios by way of a Scheme of Work. This Scheme of Work (or schedule) need not necessarily dictate the module's teaching timeline, but instead shall provide guidance in terms of timing, achievement markers and milestones, research recommendations and practitioner reflection. While it may be tailored to an Irish second-level setting (and Great Famine content matter), it includes contextual markers to assist practitioners and teachers beyond both the Irish secondary school setting, and the Great Famine.

Appendix 4.02.1

Robust Research – *the Role and Responsibility of Historians*

The first sub-module (Sub-Mod I) seeks to place the student in an *historiographical space* as a *young academic* dutybound to fulfil their *responsibilities and obligations as a historian*. It urges module facilitators (teachers) to stress the *distinction between second-level history student and bona-fide researcher*, thus bridging the gap between top-down "taught" history (kids in class) and ground-zero "research" (historians and their fieldwork). The distinction at this point may benefit from terminology such as:

- 'spoon-feeding' v independent research
- passive learning v active learning
- instructor-centered v student-centered
- absorption v immersion

In each instance, the ideal strategy tends toward the right-hand column (above), and teachers should only resort to those strategies on the left where more active, student-oriented strategies fall short, stumble or fail. Quite aside from the content or subject-specific (research) discoveries achieved by students, they should also discover and improve procedural proficiency as well, namely their research skillset. This is best achieved through doing (immersion) rather than watching (absorption); by understanding the research process, its responsibilities and obligations, and its returns

(active learning) rather than merely appraising and reviewing its returns (passive learning / spoon-feeding).

While students may have encountered much of the module's early content in their second-level history study, we recommend a refresher given the sensitive nature of **contested history** research.

The refresher may take the form of an empty toolkit glossary where students may add definitions upon discussion and consensus in class, or as a homework exercise comparing and collating notes in collaboration with classmates during the next lesson.

Teachers and students should explore distinctions between:
- evidence and folklore

- primary sources and secondary sources (including propaganda)

- fact v presumption (including cross-checking, corroboration, and triangulation)

- peer-reviewed v non-peer-reviewed literature (journal articles v blogs)

- official and anecdotal

- literary, tactile (artefact), oral, aural and visual sources

- footage and dramatisations

- omission and inclusion

- exceptions and norms (including sensationalism, exaggeration and mundanity)

- historians and archaeologists

- archives and museums

and should also include discussions and definitions of:
- historical consciousness (and historical empathy)

- cause-and-consequence (or "context-event-effect" by another name)

- accuracy and integrity in research, including risk of bias (or evidence of balance)

- historiography (the discipline of history)

In serving longer-term student interests, teachers may highlight how crucial academic research is to various career paths. Research-hefty industries and sectors include

(but are not limited to): writing/publishing; politics, policy analysis and economics; journalism and feature-writing; documentary and movie-making; theatre; and of course education (at all and any level).

Assessment

Completion of disciplinary terminology worksheet

Appendix 4.02.2/ worksheet

evidence   **folklore**

primary sources   **secondary sources**
(definitions should mention *propaganda*, and its risks, despite status as viable source material)

fact   **presumption**
(including cross-checking, corroboration, and triangulation)

peer-reviewed literature   **non-peer-reviewed literature**
(definitions should mention journal articles and blogs, op-eds, and editorials)

official   **anecdotal**

Sources and source variety
literary

tactile (artefact)

oral

aural

visual sources

Appendix 4.02.2/ worksheet ... continued

footage   **dramatisations**

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omission	inclusion
exceptions	norms

(definitions should include *sensationalism*, *exaggeration*, and *mundanity*)

historians	archaeologists
archives	museums

historical consciousness
(and historical empathy)

cause-and-consequence
("context-event-effect" / "cause-and-impact" by another name)

accuracy and integrity in research
(including risk of bias or evidence of balance)

historiography
(the discipline of history)

Robust Research – *What is Contested History?*

In consultation with **Contested History** (**Appendix 1.0**), **Project Fundamentals: Principles and Practices** (**Appendix 2.01.3**, **Appendix 2.01.4**) and the module's **Glossary of Terms** (**Appendix 4.0**), teachers should emphasise both the obvious and nuanced (overt and subtle) elements of **Shared** and **Contested History**[10].

By the close of this section (allow two classes), students should be acutely aware of the **Historian's Toolkit**, the academic responsibilities and obligations of researchers, the role of the historian, the various pitfalls, challenges and risks inherent in researching history, and the reconciliation challenges and grievances so often apparent

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[10] In particular, teachers and students may benefit from discussing : Competing Perceptions (2), Construction of Competing Narratives, Contested History, Historical Narrative (+ Competing, +Mainstream, +Muted, +Simplistic), Historical Narrative (as an evolutionary concept), Narrative, Narrative(s) Supporting Perceptions, Perception, and Shared History.

in shared (and contested) histories. Armed with at least a superficial or cursory understanding of what it means to research (rather than simply study second-level history), students and their teachers will likely produce more objective, inclusive and empathetic collaborations which give due diligence and consideration to multiple stakeholders within a shared (and contested) history.

The lesson should also highlight research skills including digital searches, archival searches, and peer-reviewed material not limited to *study-specific subject matter*, but (more broadly) **contested and shared histories as sub-disciplines** as well. Teachers may also wish to broach note-making/note-taking as a study skill, emphasising the value of a research question or thesis statement in streamlining the research process, and prioritising data relevance while reading.

Robust Research – Our Objective

There are two ultimate outcomes sought by this initiative. In the **first instance**, it seeks to help fortify students' disciplinary skills catapulting them into the realm of academic research before completion of second-level study, and before commencing any third. On the other side of that same coin, students should understand and appreciate, not only:

- the *higher role* of the historian (and researcher) as distinct from simply studying second-level history (school history);

but understand and appreciate also:

- that **Contested History** is an inherently sensitive subject, (peculiarly ethno-sensitive[11], culturo-sensitive[12], and era-sensitive[13] as well); and bearing this in mind when conducting their research and presenting their findings.

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[11] Where minority population cohorts (ethnicities) may feel maligned, disenfranchised, marginalised or misrepresented in a shared history or contested narrative.

[12] Where minority population cohorts (identities, beyond the bounds of an ethnicity and/or race) may feel maligned, disenfranchised, marginalised or misrepresented in a shared history or contested narrative. These identities may include (but should not be limited to) : gender, sexuality, religion/creed, way of life, philosophy or belief system.

[13] Where historical interpretations are contingent on societal practices and norms within the context of a specific time-period deemed detestable or reprehensible (as practices) by modern standards may have been acceptable,

In the *second instance*, young researchers' findings have the potential to pose serious and significant questions beyond the parameters of HistEdu's initiative, and bleed into the realm of public policy or higher academic scrutiny. **Positioning Contested History in 21ˢᵗC Classrooms** celebrates inclusion and voice, it enfranchises and validates, and seeks not so much to cancel one history for another, but construct more complete, shared histories.

Teachers should bear in mind both objectives as they advance through the module. Engaging in more robust and academic research practice earlier while adhering to loftier academic principles than second-level education normally requires, teachers and students may begin to shape (or reshape) historical narratives and shared histories.

Assessment

In terms of **lesson assessment**, students should be able to *identify instances and examples of contested history or shared histories fraught with conflict and unrest.* They may list them and summarise in one or two sentences general issues behind the conflict, and stakeholder (or affected) parties involved, (see Appendix 1.0, i - xii).

Appendix 4.03.1

Commencing Research – Determining the Mainstream Narrative

Teaching & Learning Intentions

At this stage of the module, teachers should stress their own role as a senior research colleague, rather than instructor or teacher. Where possible, demonstrate research practice **with the students**, rather than **for the students**. Young researchers should be encouraged to collaborate as often as possible from this point not only employing their own experiences outside of the history classroom but each's understanding of historiography (the discipline of history) and robust research practice as well.

Of foremost priority three lessons in, is determining a workable mainstream narrative from the available sources. Again, this should be a collaborative student effort, but some demonstrative scaffolding is recommended. As per the Irish case study, time may be devoted to instructive guidance gisting or note-taking from one source (in

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more acceptable, or less abhorrent in that time period). This would include (but should not be limited to) : slavery, marriage practices, capital/corporal punishment and criminal justice, to name a few.

this case, one of four), and the students may then fillet material facts independently from the remaining sources.

At all stages, those material facts and in particular the ordering or flow of the narrative may be discussed and debated in class. While the resulting narrative need not be 100% unanimous, this method may prove invaluable in determining points of interest, conflict, and contest where a consensus or compromise cannot be achieved.

Given the workload, this preparatory segment of the research will likely comprise both contact class-time and homework in order that a narrative be drafted in a timely fashion. In terms of presentation and dissemination among classroom participants, students may opt for devices like a flipchart (with commentary); bullet-point handouts or flashcards; a brief digital slideshow or short report. Where the presentation and subject matter lends itself to dramatisations or documentary footage, these too may be included in digital form to ensure the wider research cohort (classroom in entirety) understands the narrative order, the material facts, likely motives, and contestable omissions or inclusions.

The Irish Context

In order to determine or identify *contested elements* of an historical narrative, researchers must assemble a workable narrative. In assembling their own "evidential story" (or historical narrative) based on the prevailing literature, they may more easily navigate and scrutinise the narrative in question without jumping from one source to another, to several others. Bear in mind however, several sources will be required to draft the trunk narrative, but these sources should be simplistic.

Good options include (but are not limited to) :
- Encyclopaedia entries
- School textbooks
- Illustrated books/comics for young readers (first-level school age)

Sources such as these tend to avoid complicated contested elements (but may include them) while preserving most material facts, stitched together in story (narrative) format rather than primary source data, tables and figures.

For the purpose of this Case Study, four secondary-level (junior certificate) textbooks were reviewed. These textbooks are aimed at young secondary schoolers most likely of an age 13y-15y. Module-specific pages are included in (brackets, at right) :

- Sean Delap & Paul McCormack (2018), **Time Bound**, Folens   (10pp)
- Grainne Henry, et al (2018), **History Alive**, Edco   (15pp)
- Dermot Lucey (2018), **Making History**, Gill   (16pp)
- Gregg O'Neill & Eimear Jenkinson (2018), **Artefact**, Educate.ie   (15pp)

In addition, and in the interests of balance, **Encyclopaedia Britannica** (online) provided a fifth source, consulted only after a workable narrative emerged. For sake of consistency in this instance, researchers should opt for Irish textbooks when drafting a narrative given each would presents a distinctly local interpretation of the narrative.

Most crucially, when assembling (or deconstructing) a narrative, researchers should be encouraged to avoid a saturation of details (and, somewhat bizarrely, even evidence) focusing almost exclusively on the "story" element.

Useful questions to bear in mind at this stage of the research, are:
- How would I tell this story in two minutes?
- How would I tell this story to primary schoolers?
- How would I tell this story in 250 words?

Explanation

The ensuing pages (seven) demonstrate the gisting of second-level textbook chapters into publication-specific narratives. This is not an essential method, if the mainstream narrative construction may be adequately assembled via other means. Nor should it fall to the teacher if this method is preferred. Construction of a narrative review (or essential elements of it), may fall to the students and can commence supervised in class and be completed at home.

Other means may include (but need not be limited to):
- Class discussion and active construction;
- Allocated aspects of the history assigned as homework and assembled later in class;
- Nominating a single text or publication as representative of the mainstream/traditional narrative;
- Any other means whereby a nominated text may be used as a reference point throughout the module.

The following is an example only of how Ireland's mainstream Great Famine narrative emerged, see *The Prevailing Narrative*, , see overleaf.

Time Bound   The Great Hunger and the Growth of the Irish Diaspora
(**10pp**)

In order to establish context, **Time Bound** opens with population figures comparing Ireland's decimation to rapid population surges in France and the UK. So dramatic was the drop, Ireland's population decreased by nearly 50percent in about 100 years, citing the 1840s as primarily responsible for the change, through death and desertion/emigration.

The vast majority of the resident and native Irish population lived as poor tenants on land owned by landlords. Landowners were largely British or British-sympathising Irish. Potato was for the predominant crop given its nutrition value, high-return on minimal land, and grew well in the damp Irish climate.
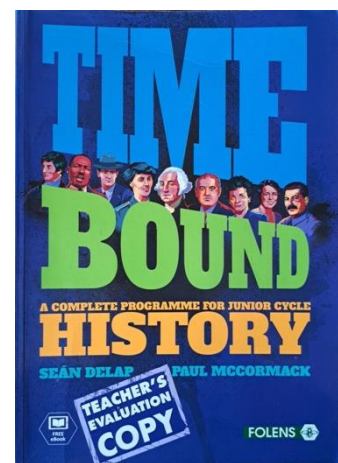
In 1840, much of the potato crop failed, plagued by a fungal blight while still in the ground. Farmers discovered crop failure on harvesting. The fungus rotted potatoes making them inedible and unfit for sale. The blight spread across the country in 1845-46 (1847 is regarded as the peak of the crisis), and more and more people died from starvation and diseases associated with malnutrition. In desperation, some starving Irish would raid grain depositories but were repelled by Crown troops.

Unable to survive on modest farm incomes or pay rent, landlords (and Crown troops) evicted defaulting households from the land. Food was not necessarily scarce though, as markets sold fish, meat and bread but the poverty-stricken could not afford to pay.

1801 legislation meant Ireland fell under Westminster jurisdiction, namely Charles Trevelyan (Secretary for Ireland). He was reluctant to enact wholesale social welfare schemes fearing it may prompt laziness and presumption. He believed the solution lay with the Irish themselves. The UK shipped in American maize (grain), but those starving deemed it barely edible. Trevelyan established 'work schemes', exchanging hard labour for food. With ever-increasing numbers of homeless and destitute poor,

and demand outflanking the job supply, many Irish left the country for opportunities in England (and Britain), America and Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Weakened by malnutrition and with limited access to fresh fruit, vegetables, and medical attention, many did not survive the sea journeys. Compounding their woes were varying degrees of persecution and discrimination in their new homes.

<div align="center">387w</div>

As impactful on Ireland's history as the famine itself, was the Irish diaspora since. As a result of mass offshore migration, significant Irish communities emerged in American cities, and suburbs and regions around the world. The Irish legacy in those places survives today, directly linked to huge numbers of inbound Irish forced from their native home to avoid poverty and starvation.

History Alive   Investigation of the Great Famine in Ireland
(22pp)

Again, for context, the narrative opens with Ireland's reliance on sustainable agriculture, and 90percent of the population lived in rural settlements beyond town boundaries. Ireland's population comprised four main groups: Around 5000 English and Scottish landowners held 90percent of the land and many lived in Britain employing agents to manage properties on their behalf. Tenant famers leased land, raised modest herds but many grew potatoes for food and income. Cottiers often rented small plots upon which they grew enough food to survive or sell and laboured for landowners. Labourers existed at the mercy of employers, which was often seasonal at best or contingent on the wealthy developing property.
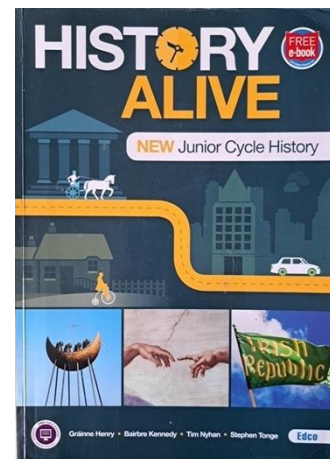
The Irish population had risen sharply to around 8million in 1841 and families tended to rear many children by modern comparisons. Farms were then partitioned or subdivided according to the children which meant plots would shrink as demand for produce grew. Potatoes were the most reliable source of nutrition, and would yield good returns from minimal land, but a Canadian-sourced fungal blight began ruining harvests in 1845 (about a third of the national yield was lost). In 1846 nearly all the harvests failed, and in 1847 famine had taken hold of the rural poor. The blight (and famine) continued in 1848. Compounding starvation was the highly contagious 'Famine Fever' which killed more people than did starvation.

Westminster's Government was initially slow to respond refusing to intervene in a 'local issue'. Maize was introduced as an emergency foodstuff in the absence of potatoes but was unpopular and reached about an eighth of the population. Public Works Schemes emerged requiring the poor to earn food but catered to around 750,000 and was not suitable for those too old, too ill or too young to work. Many workhouses had been established to offset an increasing class of destitute poor. More emerged during the famine years, families were fractured and overcrowding allowed Famine Fever to decimate occupants. The Quakers established soup kitchens which provided simple fare to offset starvation, and in 1847 the Government also weighed in setting up similar facilities. "This was paid for by the local ratepayers. Three million people benefitted from this scheme, which was very successful," (p.215). Other countries (19) also pledged assistance to the starving Irish.

The main consequences of the famine included a two million drop in population (1845-1850), roughly half died and half migrated. Cropping gave way to livestock, but demand for labour also decreased which exacerbated the unemployed poor's situation. This prompted further emigration despite the famine having eased.
By 1855 nearly three million Irish had moved away (Britain, America/Canada, and Australia), but 'coffin ships' claimed thousands of lives en route, given the overcrowding, limited fresh food and inadequate medical resources on board.

The Irish language began to dwindle (as Irish-speakers left and became reliant on English in their new homes). Anti-British sentiment soared dramatically, and many survivors held Westminster responsible for the famine (rather than the fungal blight). There was a constant stream of cargo foodstuffs sent from Ireland to Britain to feed British people (barley, wheat) despite widespread malnourishment, starvation, and death in Ireland. This ill-feeling helped fuel nationalist paramilitary movements.

<div align="center">524w</div>

High levels of emigration continued out of Ireland for up to 100 years after the famine. Pushing people offshore (aside from the famine) was unemployment, evictions, and overpopulation. Emigration was not so much an option but a demand. Pulling them to America and Australia for the most part was affordable land prices, and work opportunities. Many travelers financed passage by foreign money sent from those who had established themselves elsewhere. Work (full-time and seasonal) drew Irish to Britain. Industrialisation had given rise to an urbanised labour force. Local

populations however resented the influx of desperate Irish and conspired to make any transition and assimilation difficult.

Making History   Investigating Causes and Consequences of the Great Famine (**15pp**)

Ireland was ruled directly from Westminster, and managed by two agents in-situ, a Lord Lieutenant (Phoenix Park) and Chief Secretary (Dublin Castle). Ireland's population rose sharply (in-line with European trends) throughout the 1700s and 1800s, to 8.2 million in 1841 - largely dispersed outside main centers, only one among (Belfast, of Dublin, Cork and Limerick) was industrialised to the British standard.

Landlords of 16thC and 17thC Planter pedigree owned much of the farmland, and native Irish were small farmers, tenant farmers, labourers and cottiers (subsistence farmers who worked for their accommodation).

Poverty was rife, the result of surging population figures, prior failed harvests, and dependence on agricultural success. Emigration was already apparent from the early 1800s, predating the Famine by up to 30 years, (US, Canada, England). Social Welfare was confined largely to Church charities and workhouses (Poor Law Act, 1838).
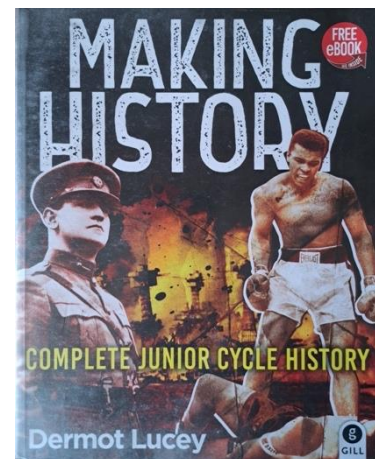
Ireland experienced the Great Famine between 1845 and 1850, the principal causes of the Famine were: 1. Rise in population, 2. The Fungal Blight, 3. Subdivision of farmland into many small plots, and 4. Dependence on the potato.

Irish population grew from 6.8 million to 8.2 million in the two decades before 1841. Some areas became very densely populated, and here the poverty scale was more extreme. As the population grew large holdings shrunk, divided up between adult offspring. Within two generations, a viable farm could have been subdivided into 30+ small plots, thus limiting the seasonal yield potential. Poorer families also depended on the potato for nutrition and modest income. "By the 1840s, the potato was almost the only food for about 4million Irish." When the blight damaged the potato yield, those depending on the potato lost both their dietary integrity and income.

Suffering was mild in 1845 as much of the produce had been harvested, and a stockpile remained from 1844. The 1846 Blight destroyed the entire crop but lessened in severity in 1847. While the Blight may have waned, Famine surged. Starvation was widespread. 1848's crop was among the most severely impacted and continued in lessening degrees of severity in 1849 and 1850. Famine Fever had begun to manifest itself as early as 1846, which rendered its sufferers unable to fend for themselves, work, cook or seek assistance.

The British Government acted swiftly, and PM Sir Robert Peel ordered a maize shipment (Indian corn) to feed about a million, sold through Government depots. Peel also set up Public Works Schemes to improve Irish infrastructure and offer modest wages to the unemployed. Government policy about turned when Lord John Russell assumed the PM office, and Ireland was deemed a "local problem" and much of the assistance dried up.

Quaker soup kitchens aimed to feed the starving poor, and the Government emulated this initiative around 12 months later (1847). More and more workhouses began to appear in Irish towns from 1848. Much of Ireland's West Coast was hit hardest by hunger (Clare, Galway, Mayo, Sligo and significant chunks of Kerry and Cork.

Overcrowding and poor sanitation in the workhouses only exacerbated problems for many who fell ill and were unable to earn while infirm. More died from Typhus, Yellow Fever and other disease than died from starvation. Starvation was a "poor" curse, whereas the Famine Fevers afflicted indiscriminately. Around 250,000 Irish left for America in 1847, and more than 200,000 each year for the next five, but the "coffin ships" also claimed considerable casualties. Many (Westminster) Government Ministers felt Ireland's landlord class should finance Famine remedies.

The Irish population fell by at least two million, between 1845 to 1851, hunger and disease claiming roughly half the figure, emigration the other. The west coast suffered the greatest losses, and such a hit to the population also impacted on the Irish birth rates given many of those dead and gone would have been in the child-bearing (and rearing) age-bracket, or approaching it in the decade or two to come.

Artefact   The Great Famine and the Irish Diaspora
(**15pp**)

The Great Famine is one of the most important events in Irish history. Up to 1.5 million people died as a result of the Famine, and millions more emigrated to Britain Canada, America and Australia.

The historical context was one of great societal change, particularly in population growth, economics, and industry. Britain, for example, surged from about nine million people in 1800 to 22 million by 1851, life expectancy began to edge upwards, farming practices improved production and food was plentiful. While many impacts were positive, the rural labour market suffered given many practices became automated and more efficient. With fewer people needed to work farmland, people sought work and security in towns and cities.

Ireland however, remained labour-intensive, where more than half the British population in 1850 lived in towns, cities, and suburbs, only 25percent of Irish (in 1841) claimed the same. Ireland's population (1841) was about 8.2 million (100percent growth in 100years), the reasons for which were young marriage ages and big families and, as with Britain, food was plentiful.

The population comprised families of landowners and large farmers (some who rented but were wealthy renters); small farmers who survived off their own land; labourers and cottiers. In 1845, there were around 4 million labourers and cottiers in Ireland which equated to about half the population when their families and dependents were factored in. In actuality, more than half the population relied on eating what they (or their masters) produced.
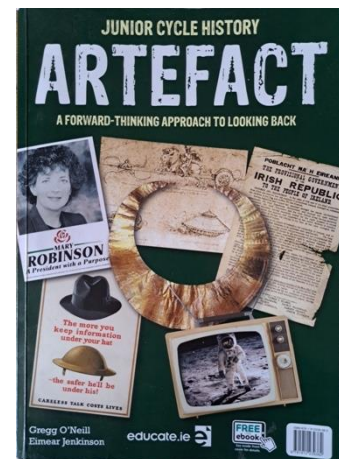
The Great Famine lasted from 1845 to 1850 and eventually accounted for the entire potato crop. In the absence of other crops to stave off starvation or finance the purchase of alternative food, labourers, cottiers, many small farmers, and their families starved, fell prey to disease or either moved off the land or were evicted for non-payment. Much of the currency in rural Ireland was labour rather than coin.

Potatoes were so popular because they thrived in the Irish climate and stored well (unlike other food), they yielded sturdy returns from small plots of land, they were nutritious and easily cooked.

Ireland, moreso than many other European countries, perhaps suffered the harshest during the Famine years because it was so reliant on it for farm income and sustenance. Other countries' potato yields failed to the blight, but other crops offset that failure. Stockpiled potatoes from1844 helped affected farmers navigate the first failed harvest (1845), two-thirds of the crop failed in 1846 and stockpiles were exhausted. As people's diet suffered from poor nutrition TB, Scarlet Fever and Measles also took hold. The blight itself appeared mild in 1847, but nothing had been sown previously, so the crop was a fraction of what it would have been in normal conditions, and starvation and poverty went hand-in-hand and more and more died from poverty-related health-conditions, homelessness, starvation and disease. As the poor and sick flooded towns, illnesses spread rapidly, and cholera and typhus killed many more. Evictions forced people from shelter and traditional community support networks, and even emigration was fraught with challenges given the overcrowding and disease on ships. Ireland's middle and upper classes however, with non-farm income and alternative food sources, navigated the Famine largely untouched.

Westminster opted for a "hands-off" policy, deeming it a local issue which would right itself in due course. While Ireland was a major potato source for British people, British people were not as reliant on the potato as Ireland's rural poor. The blight itself was initially thought a seasonal aberration, and would die with the 1845 harvest, but it affected the next harvest as well; and there appeared to be a campaign of misinformation between Ireland and Westminster where Britain continued to export other Irish produce (grain, wheat, barley) despite so many starving in Ireland.

At the end of 1845, Britain began supplying maize to Ireland, but it cost consumers to buy, and reserves would not have lasted beyond the end of the year. In 1846, Public Works Schemes were established designed to provide some income to affected Irish who could at least finance food purchase if able to work; not all were. Modest wages did not keep pace with Famine-induced food shortages and ensuing price increases.

Workhouses sprung up in affected regions which at least provided shelter for those otherwise homeless, but these two became breeding grounds for disease, dissent and further desperation.

English literature, instructions, notices often missed their mark, given so many of Ireland's rural poor spoke only Irish.

The Quakers set up soup kitchens (1846) in bigger towns and gave hot soup to those not fed in workhouses, the Government followed suit (1847) and also began feeding the destitute, no longer demanding labour nor payment. So bad was the ensuing humanitarian crisis, other countries (19) began offering aid.

Ireland's population, which had climbed so rapidly from just short of 3 million in the early 1740s to 8.2million in 1841 declined almost as starkly until 1940. By contrast, Europe's overall population climbed throughout.

Consequences include:

- significant drop in population, significant rise in migration
- change in farming practices, change in rural labour dynamic
- rise in Anti-British feeling (for doing too little, too late; and exacerbating the starvation), surge in Nationalist movements
- decline in Irish language (in Ireland and among Irish-speakers offshore).
875w

Encyclopaedia Britannica   Great Famine, Famine Ireland (1845-49)

The Irish Famine occurred when the potato crop failed in successive years. The potato was the staple diet of Ireland's rural poor, who numbered about half the 8million population. The British Government provided minimal and inadequate relief to starving Irish (small loans and soup kitchens), and new Whig Government in 1846 (Conservatives out, Whigs in) took a harder line on British intervention in Ireland and shifted the emphasis to local Irish efforts and Irish resources.

Where the peasantry could no longer afford basic foodstuffs, clothing, maintenance materials let alone pay rent, the landowner-income fell starkly and even the wealthy were no longer able to finance modest relief. Soup kitchens peaked in 1847 at the height of the famine, and these alleged to have fed up to three million in rations.

> The government's ineffective measures to relieve distress intensified the resentment of British rule among the Irish. Similarly damaging (were British) attitudes that the crisis was a predictable and not-unwelcome corrective to high birth rates in the preceding decades and perceived flaws, among British intellectuals' opinions, in the Irish national character.

The Great Famine of 1845-49 was a watershed chapter in Ireland's demographic history where around one million starved or died from famine-related illness; and as many as two million sought relief and fortune offshore as emigrants. Population

declined further and when Ireland began asserting formal independence in 1921, the population had recovered to about half its pre-Famine figure.

The Prevailing Narrative
As gleaned from four comparable chapters of basic academic integrity[14] and a British Encyclopaedia (online)

At first glance, much of the narrative appears consistency although each contrast on occasion with others in terms of completion. The historical context appears uncontested: the Irish population occupied in overwhelming numbers of small rural settlements, small villages and estates either financed by wealthy landowners (many of whom had little to no day-to-day or even quarterly/annual contact with residents upon them) or appointed agents acting on behalf of absentee owners. Towns of any significance were few and far between, and rarely comprise anywhere other than Belfast, Dublin, Limerick, and Cork. While these rural settlements would have grown into Parish communities, any locality will have been determined by population density, rather than Churches, towns, GAA clubs or towns until many years after the Famine. In terms of provincial Government, estate managers and local landowners would have had some semblance of civic authority, but any central control or public policy was Westminster's domain and implemented on the ground in Ireland by the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary (both of whom acted as extended arms of the British executive).

Given around 90percent of the population eked out an existence beyond towns, the agricultural sector accounted for as much of the population in the years approaching the Great Famine (1840s). Subsistence was the foremost priority for most, surviving (rather than thriving) one year to the next at the mercy of employers and landowners or modest harvests. A failed harvest rippled its ramifications beyond simply the tenant farmer or cottier's own household and extended to a seasonal (and sensitive) farm-labour market.

It was no surprise therefore that back-to-back crop failures (1845, 1846, 1847) impacted so heavily on so much of Ireland, given so many relied on a viable yield for both income and sustenance. The absence of a nationwide humanitarian response to such widespread hardship, poor health, poverty and homelessness had a

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[14] The four books being state-sanctioned second-level textbooks, having survived peer-reviewed scrutiny, but by no means exhaustive or authoritative histories of the Great Famine.

monumental consequence not only for those who endured (or succumbed to) it, but for their descendants.

The literature above focuses on small-scale emergency measures in the form of a short-lived and underwhelming maize reserve which fed a mere fraction of the population for a matter of months; paid-labour work-schemes which benefitted only those able to withstand the taxing physical workload; and Workhouses/Poorhouses which – during a Famine-induced public health crisis – served as a bacterial and viral breeding ground for further health issues, infirmity and mortality. The only official initiative which appeared to have survived historical scrutiny as a "positive" appeared to be the soup kitchens which at least sought to feed the undernourished majority who had little to no means to purchase food – of which there was plenty, bar potatoes.

At this point, certain narrative elements (not contained within the textbooks) deviate from an official line to several contested alternatives not so much denied by one side, but conspicuous by omission (or included as single lines in some textbooks). Within the pages of the aforementioned textbooks are scant and scarce mention of plentiful food supplies (inaccessible by cost to a starving poor); brief allusions to an isolationist, hands-off Westminster who deemed one of Ireland's most profound historical events as a 'local issue' which would fix itself; an unforgiving and inhospitable Crown; and mass-migration as a plucky and courageous solution on the part of Ireland's poor to seek opportunity offshore rather than their only option.

<p style="text-align: right">**Lessons 4 & 5**</p>

Assessment

The construction and articulation of a workable narrative:

Teachers should note this need not be literary, or entirely literary. So as to ensure multi-modal learning and learner-inclusion, the construction of a workable narrative may involve (but need not be limited to) annotated illustrations (comic/cartoon form); commented slideshow presentation; audio-visual narrative (documentary style); or digital montage of image, audio, footage.

Identification of contested elements:

Outside the established narrative, students may assemble their research options. The research options in this instance are **focal exploration avenues** to research, verify, validate, or disprove. These may take the form of a jigsaw piece poster (given they may fill a gap or replace a portion); or an audio-visual

bulletin/newsflash; or signposted detour. The research team are best advised to demarcate or distinguish somehow the contested elements from the established narrative, at least until comprehensive research is complete. The workable narrative, like a judicial Statement of Facts is sacrosanct and beyond contention, these comprise the material facts undisputed. The contested elements remain beyond this narrative until such time as they may be included.

Commencing Research – *Identifying Areas of Contest*

Ireland's Famine history is potato-centric history where the humble *spud* takes center-stage among the ripples and aftershocks. On closer inspection however, was the potato simply the spark which set off Ireland's socio-economic powder keg? Should the narrative instead be built around alternative focal elements, sharing parity with a handful of prompts?

This case study should encourage young historians to debate the possibility the potato was merely one among several elements responsible for Ireland's 19thC watershed, only partly responsible for Ireland's most prolific population upheaval and (indirectly) as important as any personality in Ireland's invigorated campaign for national sovereignty. What conspicuous elements of the period's history appear to have been marginalised, minimalised or omitted? What elements have been exaggerated or overplayed?

- **Food, food everywhere and not a bite to eat**

    How did widespread starvation occur when food was readily available and relatively inexpensive. Students should expand on the inability of those starving to secure an income (or avail of subsidised food via vouchers, for instance); what the State (Westminster) could have done to alleviate the situation; and what happened which exacerbated or worsened the plight of Ireland's rural poor.

- **In sickness and in health**

    Starvation accounted for only a fraction of the population drop, yet potatoes remain the narrative's focal element. Most likely, public health, poor nutrition

and contagious diseases impacted even more profoundly on population than extreme hunger.

– Love Thy Neighbour?

So devastating was the impact of Ireland's situation on so much of its population, foreign aid flooded in from around the globe. Up to 19 countries (and cultures) offered assistance, yet some of it appeared to have been heavily controlled (and even cancelled) by Queen Victoria. Students may investigate donations pledged by Queen Victoria (various myths surrounding the figure), and in particular a pledge promised (and part-paid) by the Sultan of Turkey. Compare and contrast donations and support made by other benefactors who wished to help alleviate suffering in Ireland (including Native Americans), explore their capabilities and motives.

– In the *Name of the Father*... (or Aim of the Famished?)

Myths of soup-ladle conversions abound where Roman Catholic Irish were promised soup, for their souls - convinced to renounce their sacraments in favour of food. Students may investigate how true, how widespread, and how many may have been affected by the practice of denominational allegiance for soup.

– Rights and Riots, when desperation prompts insurrection

Students shall investigate various protest actions and activism over food supply and demand, and the export economy of Irish-grown foodstuffs while so many starved and suffered from hunger-related illness and afflictions. What was the nature of the protest action, the scope of the protest movement, and any consequences in the years following the Famine period. Students may also investigate why agrarian unrest, so popular for almost 100 years before the Great Famine and designed to combat unjust evictions and rent-rises, appeared to evaporate after 1840, despite the surge in Famine evictions.

Assessment

Researching, Validating or Debunking Elements of Contest

Having isolated areas of dispute, students shall immerse themselves in the research process as field historians. Armed with their disciplinary toolkit and Glossary of Terms, they should apply all and any research expertise to their investigations, ensuring research integrity and academic convention govern their scrutiny.

Commencing Research – *Who are the Stakeholders?*

In this context, "stakeholder" not only pertains to those affected by the potato blight and ensuing famine, but those directly and indirectly affected (hitherto) by subsequent mass migration, as well as those researching its history. It serves researchers well to remember and include at all times not only affected parties (stakeholders) but their perspectives and grievances (stakes) as well.

Students shall debate and discuss who the affected parties likely comprise, including which (if any) groups may be organised or aligned according to similar experiences or circumstances, and/or common themes.

And, having settled on a list of affected parties, and scale of impact (positive, neutral/unaffected, mildly negative to most negatively-impacted) students shall debate and evaluate affected parties:

(i)   At the onset of harvest failure;

(ii)   Upon realisation no quick fix was coming;

(iii)   At follow-up harvest failure;

(iv)   On commencement and execution of widespread evictions;

(v)   On mass depopulation of Ireland's rural landscape.

Assessment

Stakeholder identification

Students should list and organise those Famine cohorts affected by hunger issues and income depletion.

The researched list should include:

- large farm holders, landowners and traditional employers of farm labourers;

- the long-term poor/starving;

- those already established in urban settings trying to accommodate a significant influx of rural refugees;

- the dispossessed poor;

- Westminster (and Crown) representatives in Ireland;

- dispossessed emigrants (including their passage, and new environment), and;
- descendants of Emigrants.

The students themselves should compile this list (with any additional cohorts), independently in collaboration with each other, rather than with teacher-input.

Articulating Grievances, and Rationalising Imbalances, Omissions and Objections

Cleaving the historical research process in two, one half amounts to comprehensive, responsible, **academic research**, and the other is **presentation**. In the case of **contested history**, the latter gains in gravity and import.

Paint a picture (figuratively), for your students. Reconciling contested history with the accepted mainstream narrative may raise eyebrows, may ruffle feathers, and may protest of its own – regardless of accuracy or balance, justice and visibility. Therefore, beyond the research itself, presentation is key.

Harking back to , and the **Fundamental Principles** detailed in , students should begin planning how best to articulate and present findings, and how those findings may be framed within the prevailing narrative. Students should be mindful any discoveries need not usurp or replace the status quo (in the Irish instance), but instead complement and balance it ensuring inclusion and visibility rather than substitution. The discussion agenda may still include whether discoveries should *replace* narrative elements or *complement* it as additions.[15]

You may wish to consider the following questions with your class:

1. How might we disseminate our discoveries for greatest reach?
2. How might we disseminate our discoveries for minimal objection?
3. How might we disseminate our discoveries for the most support?
4. How might we disseminate our discoveries for lasting impact?

Again, for sake of clarity, the above may be framed and simplified in the following terms:

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[15] There are of course other possibilities. Consider the investigation which debunks or disproves the contested element; where it amounts to non-history or false history. Bear in mind however, an absence of evidence need not necessarily equate to evidence of absence.

1. Most numbers, now;
2. Fewest objectors, now;
3. Most supporters, now
4. Most support, later

Great Famine points of contention (reproduced below from , above), may slot into the prevailing narrative seeking only visibility, inclusion or parity, and clarity.

5. Food, food everywhere and not a bite to eat
6. In sickness and in health
7. Love Thy Neighbour?
8. In the Name of the Father… (or Aim of the Hunger?)
9. Rights and Riots, when desperation prompts insurrection

With regard **clarity**, (previous page), some of the above feature in the mainstream but have perhaps suffered (or swelled) from embellishment, exaggeration, or sensationalism. In elevating clarity (or accuracy), students should seek to embed a defensible balance where not only are all material elements of the story included, but included only in the format and frame they deserve – and not sensationalised, embellished, nor necessarily prioritised above and beyond the status quo or generally-accepted 'mainstream' (traditional) elements.

Upon completion of this section , students should better appreciate through research, through peer-review and collaborative source interrogation, and through the drafting of historically significant narrative additions the importance of:

- academic integrity,
- the permanence of historical literature, and
- historical narrative as a flexible notion in a malleable state of flux.

These three basic concepts should form part of a class discussion or collaborative/ individual reflection.

Lesson 8

Assessment

Articulating and Disseminating Discoveries - brainstorming

Students (either as individuals or as collaborations) may present and publicise their discoveries be it micro-local (in school), macro-local (in town, parishes, local historical societies, local newspapers), or online and farther afield (with measurable analytics).

This shall comprise the fundamental production component of their assessment – the manifestation of their academic discovery and research in the public space. In showcasing their research, the students not only articulate their discovery and knowledge in tangible hardcopy form (in whatever form that may take), but extend that learning beyond the research team into the public sphere.

Throughout this component of the module, teachers should reiterate academic responsibility and the Historian's Toolkit as crucial elements in students' own personal academic improvement and positive public engagement.

Reframing Shared Histories and Balanced Narratives

On completion of the research process and drafting of narrative additions (and/or amended narratives) students should also think about how discoveries may be disseminated and shared for maximum positive return and even reconciliation of contested histories.

Here, students may pull from popular culture, streaming services, Hollywood and local film industry productions, artwork, or contemporary literary discourse (recent academic literature, for example).

They may also research incidents where the **power of personality and public profile** has raised publicity of an event, cause, or campaign. This discussion lends itself to social media's 21^{st}C scope and what we know as the *Influence/Influencer* phenomenon.

Rather than confine discussion to the selected **Contested History** study, personality, campaign or event, teachers should encourage students to identify other examples where public profile has influenced public opinion (or sought to influence public opinion).

Examples:
- Tommie Smith and John Carlos (1968)
- Sacheen Littlefeather and Marlon Brando (1973)
- Michael Moore and Fahrenheit 9/11 (2004)
- Al Gore, tobacco, and climate change (2006)

-   Sacha Baron Cohen and Borat (2006)
-   Eminem, Robert De Niro (et alia) and Donald Trump (2016, 2017)

and include history from beyond the study material as examples of historically erroneous representations; hagiography; true stories v based on true stories v highly-fictionalised stories; and ahistorical misrepresentations;

Sample questions:
-   How many dramas on NetFlix (as an example, but consider other streaming sites: Amazon Prime, Disney+, previous Oscar-nominated films), take their inspiration from actual historical events?
-   How closely do those dramatisations reflect the historic reality?
-   How do historians and critics determine error and accuracy?
-   What might motivate inaccurate or incomplete historical narratives?
-   What motivates those seeking to amend historical narratives?

Assessment

The Power of Public Profile and Influence

Using discovery and experience from your own **Contested History** learning and your recent understanding of the Power of Personality and Public Profile (and Defining Historical Integrity), explain in your own words how **reconciling contested histories** as **shared histories,** or exposing misrepresented history in popular culture **may impact positively** on affected stakeholders.

Appendix 4.06   **Scheme of Work** (recommended)

[see next page]

Contested History in the 21stC Classroom

Scheme of Work (recommended)

Lesson (L)	Key Focus	Teaching Aids	Assessment
Sub-Module I	**Key Focus : Robust Research**	**Teaching Aids**	**Assessment**
L1, L2	Robust Research - the Role and Responsibility of Historians	Appx 2.01; Appx 4.02.1; Appx 4.02.2/Worksheet	Disciplinary Terminology (worksheet)
L2, L3	Robust Research - What is Contested History?	Appx 1.0; Appx 3.01	Understanding and Appreciating Contested History
L2, L3	Robust Research - Our Objective	Appx 1.0; Appx 4.03.1	Identifying Contested Histories and their Stakeholders
Sub-Module II	**Key Focus : Commencing Research**	**Teaching Aids**	**Assessment**
L4, L5	Commencing Research - Determining the Mainstream Narrative	Appx 4.03.1/narratives	Constructing a Workable Narrative; Identifying Contested Elements
L6	Commencing Research - Identifying Areas of Contest	Appx 4.03.2	Researching, Validating or Debunking Elements of Contest
L7	Commencing Research - Who are the Stakeholders?	Appx 4.03.3	Identifying Stakeholders
Sub-Module III	**Key Focus : Presenting Research**	**Teaching Aids**	**Assessment**
L8	Articulating Grievances and Rationalising Imbalances, Omissions and Objections	Appx 4.04	Collaborative Brainstorm
L9	Reframing Shared Histories and Balancing the Narrative	Appx 4.05	Appraising the Power of Personality and Public Profile, and Defining Historical Integrity

Appendix 4.07   **Assessment Schedule** (recommended)

Lesson	Preparation	Assessment
1	worksheet of terms; Historian's Toolkit; disciplinary literature	worksheet completion (terminology and definition)
2	worksheet (single definition)	Debate and discuss how best to define both **Contested History**, and **Shared History**
3		Research and List examples of **Contested Histories**, including one/two sentence backgrounds of each conflict, focusing on 'contested' element(s), and identifying stakeholder parties
4	simple source material for reading/viewing	compile **workable mainstream narrative** of study topic, and identify contested elements for further research
5	as above	as above
6	discuss and agree contested element(s)	Explore scope of research, allocate research roles and sub-topics, commence research
7	stakeholder understanding	identify and isolate **stakeholder** parties, articulate grounds for grievance (**stakes**)
8	project agenda, timeframes of completion, required materials	showcase findings in a visible manner, discuss how best those discoveries may be showcased for optimum reach
9	reading/research list	reflection and discussion, embed the learning

Explanation

Both the **Scheme of Work** and the **Assessment Schedule** (previous pages) need not comprise a concrete agenda but should merely guide the organisation and flow of lesson content. To this end, the module may be spread over 10 to 12 (or more) lessons, rather than nine (as above).

Where the **Scheme of Work** and the **Assessment Schedule** are concerned, the recommendation suggests only that the 'next' lesson commence on completion of the previous lesson. With this in mind, the lessons need not necessarily break from one day to the next nor break on the sounding of the school bell, but may roll over from one 'lesson' to the next mid-class, perhaps.

Glossary of Terms 2022

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means putting **honesty, fairness,** and **responsibility** values into practise by being truthful in the academic work you do; being fair to others who may have done similar work before you; and taking responsibility for readers' learning in future. It is your responsibility to ensure you demonstrate academic integrity by:

- using information appropriately, according to copyright and privacy laws,
- acknowledging where information has come from,
- not presenting others' work as your own,
- conducting ethical research, and reporting truthfully on any research,
- acting in an ethical manner in all your academic endeavors.

Action Research

A form of investigation often used by teachers seeking to solve problems and improve practices in their own classrooms. It involves systematic observations and data collection which may be used by the practitioner-researcher in reflection, decision-making and the development of more effective practical strategies. In other words, study what is happening, in order to improve upon it.

Cancel Culture

The practice or tendency of engaging in mass cancelling as a way of expressing disapproval and exerting social pressure. That pressure may manifest as mass withdrawal of support from public figures or celebrities who have done things deemed socially unacceptable. This practice of "cancelling" (or mass shaming) often occurs on social media platforms. Support for Cancel Culture stems from its rapid impact potential to highlight offensive and harmful behaviour but has also been denounced as toxic and often uninformed populism.

Cancellation of Perspective

Where **cancel culture** 'calls out' and ostracizes individuals transgressing against accepted norms, the perspective or world view called into question by a watchdog majority may also fade and perhaps disappear (or shrink to the social fringe). The

perspective in this sense pertains to the philosophy under scrutiny, rather than the individuals who espouse, adopt, or amplify it.

Collaboration

Working with someone or others, to produce something; the initiative's product.

Competing Perceptions

This concept essentially equates to 'differences of opinion', where those opinions directly or predominantly contravene each other despite being based on similar or comparable data, differing largely on interpretation of that data. These differences may stem from where people align themselves on the stakeholder scale or continuum.

Competing Perceptions (fueling division / dispute)

This concept takes the above definition (see **Competing Perceptions**, above) and advances beyond simply adopting or harbouring an opinion to actively pursuing an agenda or strategy based on the perceived primacy, validity, or authority of that opinion (or perception), at the expense of another.

Compromise

Agreement or settlement of a dispute/difference reached by stakeholders making concessions. It may include expedient acceptance of standards by one party that are lower than initially sought or desirable. Also, the act of settling a dispute by mutual concession.

Construction of Competing Narratives

This is a two-pronged concept requiring students to adopt a purely objective and clinical approach to historical scholarship.

In the *first instance*: students shall determine where possible how an historical narrative originated be it 10 years ago, 100 years ago or longer. They should ask (and seek to answer) questions such as, (i) Who was likely most responsible for the proliferation of a certain narrative, (ii) Who likely benefited most from a certain narrative serve, and (iii) Who felt an alternative or competing narrative was most essential.

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In the *second instance*: students are asked to align competing narratives, one with another (or others) in order to best-construct a more complete, comprehensive and inclusive narrative. Please note, students are not asked to rewrite history, but rather mesh and merge narratives to encapsulate an entire story, rather than selected elements of it.

Contested History

Occasionally labelled 'difficult history', **Contested History** includes alternative accounts, data, statistics, and insight beyond the prevailing, popular or mainstream narrative. At its extreme, the concept has replaced or rewritten history (see cancel culture, above), whereas more moderate impacts have yielded inclusion in the mainstream or general acceptance as a viable, academic, and complementary narrative. This project purports to bring previously ignored or unknown stories to light, by examining places, people, and moments from different perspectives. In-line with disciplinary research principles, this initiative seeks to improve general understanding of the past with new evidence and insights.

Contradiction

Inconsistency or opposition; statements or ideas which disagree with other statements and ideas on the same subject. The statement of a stance which disagrees or contests an earlier or prevailing statement.

Corroboration

Evidence, fact-checking and triangulation to support or confirm a finding, statement, or academic opinion, confirmation.

Debate

As distinct from a conversation, chat or argument, a debate is a more formal and evidence-based discussion on a particular matter. While any topic may be 'argued' and/or 'contested', adequate time and consideration of raised points is given to each party in order to better understand viewpoints and encourage compromise or agreement.

Discussion (Discourse, Discursive Reasoning)

Within a history classroom or learning environment, discussion involves a sharing of ideas (mostly verbal, but can be written) with a view to airing all ideas for more comprehensive and universal understanding. While discussion and debate often overlap, debate tends toward more formal conventions, rules and parameters; and discussion is often less formal and incidental, with more serious connotations than conversation. Discourse is written or spoken communication (or debate). Discursive relates to discourse.

Disinformation

This equates to false, inaccurate, skewed, or untrue information disseminated to deceive. Its distinction from misinformation, hinges on intent – where **disinformation** is strategically managed, often for nefarious or disingenuous motives. Disinformation shares much commonality with 'fake news', the motives of each aim to influence opinions.

(See also **Misinformation** below).

Edu-system

Where an *eco-system* is a specific and defined geographical area within which various organisms co-exist, and **edu-system** is a sector-specific network and system linked by teaching and learning and includes not only the various agents involved in service delivery but the relationship dynamic between each as well.

Empathetic Consciousness

An active response developed through situational awareness of circumstance, impact, and outcome. The ability to "stand in another's shoes" and likely determine another's needs and/or responses without necessarily experiencing the circumstances first-hand.

Exit Poll

An academic survey tool which canvases opinions immediately after service delivery, be it post-class, post-lesson, post-course, or post-project. It seeks feedback on success and shortfall in order to improve subsequent iterations.

Gisting (pron. jisting)

Looking for the main or trunk idea of a passage or tract of text; isolating the material facts or most important point. Upon isolating the most salient message, it

may be reproduced in abbreviated form, as keywords, a single sentence or short paragraph.

Grievance

A real or imagined cause for complaint resulting from injustice, disenfranchisement or unequal treatment. An objection or figurative 'wound' over one's mistreatment of another.

Historian's Toolkit

In the same way a carpenter, plumber, artist, or surgeon may employ each's respective 'toolkit' to ply their trade or profession and perform in best practice mode, historians too should abide by academic convention, self-scrutiny and integrity when researching. Aside from the tangible (computer, wi-fi capability, pens, and notepads, for instance), the historian's toolkit should also comprise healthy doses of objectivity; curiosity; empathetic consciousness; historical awareness; cause-and-consequence intuition; a keen nose for what is missing, excluded or marginalised; and a turn of phrase. In addition, the research process (or toolkit implementation) should also include skeptical and inquisitive approach to bias, stakeholder subjectivity and agenda potential.

(see also, **Historiography** below).

(see Case Study: Ireland – the Great Famine),

(Appendix 3.02)

Historical Consciousness

The understanding of theoretical or imagined immersion in a time (a period, an age, or an era) despite existing in another. A degree of empathetic awareness according to the rules and norms of an historical period, where that period is removed from the modern or contemporary period occupied by the researcher. It equates to putting oneself in the zone of history or an historical period.

Historical Narrative

The practice of writing history in a story-based form, as opposed to bullet-points, numerical tables, or statistics. Ordinarily, narratives may be organised in two forms: Traditional and Modern. **Traditional narrative** focuses on the chronological order of history. It is event driven and tends to highlight individuals, actions, and intentions,

whereas the **Modern narrative** typically focuses on structures and general trends. In other words, narrative history narrates events: *when*, *where*, and *why* a certain event occurred, its larger significance or context, and who the important participants were.

- **competing narrative**: an alternative historical "storyline" detailing the same agents and/or same period, but exposing other focal elements which may not have appeared in such detail in the mainstream;

- **mainstream narrative**: the common or prevailing historical storyline, widely known among the majority;

- **muted narrative**: an interpretation or account peculiar an historical stakeholder, people, culture or minority which may have been ignored, dismissed or suppressed in favour of a mainstream alternative;

- **simplistic narrative**: an interpretation which focuses foremost on timeline elements, figures and events which excludes in-depth or fringe analysis; an incomplete or abbreviated narrative.

(See also **Disinformation** above, and **Misinformation** and **Narrative(s) Supporting Perceptions** below).

Historical Narrative (as an Evolutionary Concept)

Where an established narrative may hinge or rely on fact, evidence or general consensus, the narrative may subsequently accommodate additions, omit falsehoods and contradictions, or deviate in interpretation as new evidence emerges. In this instance, for example, the original narrative is not necessarily redacted, but grows, shrinks, or bends according to those changes. Thus, narratives may evolve to allow for historical revision, new evidence, or re-interpretation.

Historiography

The study of the writing, investigation (or construction) of history. Where history happens in real time, historiography is the disciplinary pursuit by investigators after the fact seeking to preserve history in literary, auditory, visual, or interactive format. Proficient historiography is based on critical examination of sources, selection of relevant details from those sources, and representation of those details into a narrative which survives academic scrutiny and critical examination.

Infodumping

The act of blurting with scant attention to order or organisation, all the information and data one knows about a particular subject or specialist area. With appropriate arrangement and consideration, an infodump may be constructed into an argument or essay. Infodumping is the unloading of information in crude form.

Interpretation

The action of explaining and/or appraising meaning, value or worth of something; an explanation. An interpretation explains, reframes, or otherwise shows a personal understanding of something. An interpretation is an opinion about meaning.

Lean Canvas

An efficient approach to developing a one-page business or project plan which deconstructs a broad key idea into more specific and compartmental elements. The deconstruction encourages better analysis and collaborative co-operation.

Misinformation

As distinct from **disinformation** (above), there is little to no malevolent or insidious intent behind **misinformation;** most likely the result of incompetence, carelessness and negligence, or poor attention to detail. It may mislead but does so inadvertently rather than intently. If **disinformation** and 'fake news' go hand-in-hand, **misinformation** aligns more closely to 'poor-quality or substandard news'.

See also **Disinformation** above.

Narrative

A spoken or written account of connected events; a story featuring connected elements, causes, consequences and impacts of elements on outcomes.

See **Historical Narrative** (and variations), above.

Narrative(s) Supporting Perceptions

Opinions or viewpoints based on popular and/or accepted historical accounts. Ordinarily, the more popular or accepted the narrative, the greater its proliferation among a given community or population.

See **Historical Narrative** (*mainstream*), above, and **Perception** below.

Perception

The way in which something may be regarded or understood or interpreted by someone (or by similarly minded people); awareness or comprehension of.

Programme Uniformity

The idea that a plan or project may be delivered with commonality and consistency in multiple settings despite employing different personnel in both delivery and engagement. In achieving **programme uniformity**, results and learnings from multiple project settings may be compared for universal improvement.

Reconciliation Challenges

Where reconciliation may mean the restoration of amicable or friendly relations, **reconciliation challenges** refer to difficulties or obstacles in restoring that relationship. Bear in mind, in a contested history context, **reconciliation challenges** extend also to the inability or unlikelihood of making one view compatible or agreeable with another; or the view of one stakeholder being accepted or acceptable by another stakeholder.

Reflection

In a research context, this means serious, careful, or considered thought.

Relevance

The quality of being connected, impactful or related to something. The importance or impact something has in relation to something else.

Research Question (Thesis Statement)

The question a project sets out to answer. Without necessarily answering the academic query, it does help assert parameters of research and help confine researcher focus on the task at hand. Often used interchangeably with **Thesis Statement** (below), although the concepts are not always identical.

Shared History

The concept where two different or separate entities, cohorts, peoples, or cultures may share a certain part of history with the other (or more), without necessarily occupying the same space, norms, values, or trajectory as one another. **Shared histories** may extend to local, regional, or national areas which share or partly-share events of relevance or importance with other local, regional, or national areas, and the people therefrom.

Thesis Statement (Research Question)

The sentence which states the main idea of a writing assignment and helps steer or control the ideas within. It will often hint at or indicate not only the author's intention with the paper, but their opinion or stance as well. See also **Research Question**, (above).