

# America and World Fascism

## from the Spanish Civil War to Nuremberg and Beyond

*A One-Day Professional Development Workshop for Educators in Social Studies and Spanish*



### **Tentative Syllabus**

8:30 Introduce Speakers

8:35 Why teach the history of the United States and World Fascism?

- o The essential questions

8:45 Screen 13-minute clip from *The Good Fight* (Noel Buckner, Mary Dore & Sam Sills, 1984)

- o Discussion

9:05 Introduction to the Spanish Civil War & the Abraham Lincoln Brigade

9:40 Break

9:50 **What is fascism? What is antifascism?**

- Groups of 3 - Wallace, Frankson, Katz
  - How was fascism seen and defined in the 1930s in the U.S. and elsewhere?
  - Who were the first to signal its dangers and calling for resistance against it?
  - Why was the “mainstreaming” of anti-fascism, between the 1920s and 1941, such a slow process across the West, including in the United States?
  - How did fascism and anti-fascism manifest in the U.S. between 1941 and 1945?
  - How have scholars since then defined the main features of fascism?
  - Fascism seen from the Cold War: definitions of totalitarianism; fascism and communism as defined in the West (→ Are some ideologies inherently extremist? How can one say?)

#### **Documents:**

Canute Frankson – Letter to a Friend (July 1937)	36
Franklin D. Roosevelt – “Quarantine Speech” (Oct 1937)	38
Hyman Katz – Letter to his Mother (Nov 1937)	40
Franklin D. Roosevelt – “The Greer Incident” Speech (Sep 1941)	42
Charles Lindbergh – Des Moines Speech (Sep 1941)	45
Evelyn Hutchins – Interview with Dr. John Dollard (c. 1942)	47
Henry Wallace – “The Dangers of American Fascism” (April 1944)	49
F. D Roosevelt – Letter to the US Ambassador to Spain (March 1945)	52

10:35 **Who are the victims of fascism and what does antifascist resistance look like?**

- What targets, enemies and scapegoats did different fascist movements identify?
- Who were its targets in the United States, in Europe, in Spain?
- How did the U.S. public find out about the victims of fascism and the need to resist it?
- From what ideologies did people and groups organize resistance?

#### **Documents:**

Samuel Levinger – Letter to his Mother (c. 1937)	53
James Lardner – Letter to his Mother (May 1938)	55
Jay Allen – “Hostages of Appeasement” (November 1939)	57
Alvah Bessie – “Heroes of the Pen” (Jan 1942)	61

11:20 **Judgment, punishment and prevention: (anti-)fascism, International Human Rights Law & the postwar**

- How did the Allies organize the trial of their enemies? (→ What was being judged at Nuremberg? Why did the Allies conduct the trials? Why did they approach them as they did?)
- How did the defeat of fascism in 1945 lead to changes in international law?
- What are the origins of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? What does the Declaration aim to guarantee? What is its connection to the United Nations?
- How did the awareness and memory of fascism and anti-fascism shape people's views and actions in the United States after World War II (e.g. during the Cold War, Civil Rights Movement, or Vietnam War)?

**Documents:**

Michael R. Marrus – “The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial (1945-46)”	62
Declaration of Human Rights (December 1948)	66
Crawford Morgan – Testimony Before the HUAC (1954)	74
Ray Durem – “A Gold Watch” (poem) (1964)	76
Martin Luther King Jr. – “Beyond Vietnam” (April 1967)	78
Robert Colodny – “Spain and Vietnam” (October 1967)	80

>>> **12:00 Lunch** <<<

- 1:00 Overview of ALBA resources at [resources.alba-valb.org](http://resources.alba-valb.org)
- 1:25 Select/adapt/create lesson plans [template]
- 2:00 Report back/discussion: how do we talk about fascism with high school students?
- 2:30 Adjourn