

Lesson Title: Changes in Draft Registration
Lesson Design By: Cynthia Foster, Chillicothe R-II High School,
9th grade Civics/Geography
July 2006

Teaching Traditional American History Program

Funded by U.S. Department of Education

Mike Lair, Project Director

<http://www.chillhistoryproject.com/>

Lesson Overview: This lesson plan is designed to help students evaluate the differences between the first draft registration and today's Selective Service form.

Essential Question(s): How did changes in American society and culture influence changes in the draft system?

Objectives: After completing this lesson the students will be able to:

- Describe the changing character of American society and culture.

MO Grade Level Expectations 9-12 (2a, E.5.)

- Explain the similarities and differences between draft registration in Harry S Truman's era and draft of today.

Assessment:

- Venn diagram of the similarities and differences in the two draft forms.
- Constructed Response question: How would you compare the draft registration forms of 1940 to information required on the current form?

Possible answer-

The first draft in 1940 was used as a method to provide men for military and naval service. This method was used until 1973 when the draft was suspended and the U.S. went to an all-voluntary military. The information on the Selective Servicet registration form has also changed.

Due to changes in American society and culture not all of the questions from 1940 are considered politically correct and many have been eliminated. While young men once again have to register for the Selective Service at age 18, this country still maintains an all voluntary military.

Materials:

- Copy of Harry S. Truman's registration card
- Selective Service System Registration Form (available on-line or at any U.S. Postal Office)
- Venn Diagram (attached)
- Constructed Response question

Class Time: One class period

Teacher Input: President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 which created the country's first peacetime draft and formally established the Selective Service System as an independent Federal agency. This System was meant to provide an orderly, just, and democratic method of obtaining men for military and naval services. Men were drafted from 1948 until 1973, during both peacetime and periods of conflict. This filled vacancies in the armed forces which were not filled voluntarily. In 1973, the draft ended and the U.S. converted to an all-voluntary military. Registration was suspended from 1975 until it resumed again in 1980. Today it continues as a backup system to provide manpower for the military if needed in a future crisis. Historically, the military employed conscription (mandatory military service) during war time and also during the Cold War. Harry S Truman as a part of his civil duty chose to support the draft in 1942 and registered during the fourth draft registration (known as the "old man's draft"). As you can tell from his registration form <http://archives.gov> much more information was requested at that time period than on the form today.

Activities:

- Venn diagram: students should consider the similarities and differences and complete their diagram accordingly.

Questions for review:

- After student/teacher discussion of diagrams, students should answer constructed response question.

Closure: At this point the teacher might point out additional reasons for the draft form for Selective Service being changed (ie. Truman integration of military, civil rights movement, privacy act)

References:

Draft Registration card for Harry S. Truman. Missouri State Office Registration Cards, World War II, 4th Draft Registration, April 1942. Records of the Selective Service, Record Group 147 (RG147); National Archives-Central Plains Region, Kansas City, MO

- <http://archives.gov>
- <http://www.sss.gov>
- U.S. Postal Office
- www.trumanlibrary.org
 - Harry S. Truman draft registration card
 - Registration card used today

Assessment:

- Constructed Response Question: How would you compare the draft registration of 1940 to the one you would have to complete today? How does culture influence these documents?

Possible answer-

The first draft in 1940 was used as a method to provide men for military and naval service. This method was used until 1973 when the draft was suspended and the U.S. went to an all-voluntary military. The information on the Selective Service registration form has also changed. Due to changes in American society and culture not all of the questions from 1940 are considered politically correct and many have been eliminated. While young men once again have to register for the Selective Service at age 18, this country still maintains an all voluntary military.

Complete the Venn Diagram including the similarities in the center and the differences in the top and bottom between the first draft registration card of 1940 and the one you would have to fill out today.

