

U.S. History Media Project: Overview

What is the project about? The project will examine a [supplemental digital history curriculum](#) that includes a suite of **fun, interactive online games** designed as a free resource for middle- and high-school educators and students. The supplemental curriculum highlights transformative moments in U.S. history from the era of the American Revolution to World War II. In addition to the student games, the tool includes **curricular materials and supports** for teachers, including vocabulary quizzes, discussion questions, and document-based activities. The two games used in this project focus on immigration during the Progressive Era (~1910) and the Great Depression (~1929).

Why use the supplemental curriculum? The digital games and activities are designed to help students **develop core thinking skills** that are critical to understanding U.S. history. The games and curriculum motivate students and encourage them to see historical actors as actual people. The supplemental curriculum provides teachers with learning activities, quizzes, and discussion prompts that take 1-2 hours a week, save time in lesson planning, and provide new ways of engaging students.

Why is the project important? Although the supplemental curriculum has been widely used among teachers, there has not yet been a **rigorous research study to evaluate its impact on student outcomes**. With funding from the [Institute of Education Sciences](#), the [Education Development Center, Inc.](#) (EDC) will work with producer [WNET](#), as well as the [American Social History Project at CUNY](#) and [Electric Fun Stuff](#), to conduct an efficacy study to investigate the impact of the games and curriculum on students' history knowledge and skills.

When is the project happening? The project will run from **October through December 2023**.

Where is the project happening? Teachers and students will participate as **part of their normal classroom experience**. All data collection will happen **virtually**, via digital surveys and at least one remote classroom observation.

Who can participate? We are enrolling **Grade 8, 9, and 10 history, civics, or social studies teachers**, along with their students. A [5-minute screener](#) will determine your eligibility.

| When? | How many teachers? | Where? |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| October-December 2023 | 70 | All activities are virtual |

What do teachers have to do? Half of the teachers will be randomly assigned to use the supplemental digital history curriculum with their students during the project; the rest will continue to use their standard curriculum until after the project is over, when they will receive access to the professional development, games, and curricular supports. All teachers will do the following activities.

| Supplemental Curriculum Activities |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend a one-hour PD session on using the supplemental curriculum and receive documentation of attendance Use two interactive online games focused on the Progressive Era and the Great Depression in the U.S. Use the provided curriculum materials and supports Facilitate student assessments at the beginning and end of the project |

| Research Activities |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete one demographic survey Participate in random assignment Complete 5-minute weekly practice logs Participate in at least one classroom observation via Zoom |
| <p>Schools receive \$500 for completing all research activities</p> |

U.S. History Media Project: Information Sheet

This information sheet provides an overview of research activities that will take place and all the procedures in place to protect the rights of the project participants.

Project Purpose The purpose of this project is to evaluate whether a supplemental digital history curriculum, including an online game for students, plus curricular supports and activities, helps students in Grades 8-10 to learn history and develop historical thinking skills.

Data Collection During the project, researchers will be collecting information about teachers' background and instructional practice, students' and teachers' use of the supplemental curriculum (if applicable), and students' history knowledge, related history skills, and interest in history. Data sharing agreements will be secured to obtain background information on students, including demographics, latest grades, and attendance during the project period. Students will complete assessments twice during regular instructional time, once at the beginning and once at the end of the project. Teachers will complete weekly 5-minute practice logs and a demographic survey. Teachers will also be observed virtually via Zoom during at least one class period; this session will be audio recorded for researchers' later reference. All audio recordings will be destroyed at the end of the study.

Consent We will obtain informed consent from all teachers. Parents/guardians will have the right to opt their children out of participating in the research activities, however, all students will continue to participate in their social studies classes as instructed by the teacher.

Risks We expect the risks associated with this project to be minimal, no greater than the risks associated with daily life; however, a possible inconvenience may be the time it takes to complete the project activities. Participating in any research involves the risk that information participants share could become public, but researchers will do their best to keep all information confidential.

Benefits Teachers and students may not directly benefit from participation. By participating in this project, teachers and students will contribute to important research that has potential relevance for all middle and high school students and educators in the U.S.

Compensation If chosen for this opportunity, teachers will get one hour of professional development that may count towards their state's requirements. At the end of the project, schools will receive \$500 for participating in the research activities.

Confidentiality All data will be kept in secured files. No identifying information of any kind will appear in reports or in other public documents and all personally identifying private information will be removed from the project data. All project data, including access to audio recordings, will be restricted to project staff and will only be used for research purposes. These data will not be shared with anyone at participating schools and will not be used to evaluate teachers' or students' performance in any way.

Future research All personally identifying private information will be removed from the project data. The remaining project data could be used in future research or distributed to another researcher for future research without additional informed consent from you or your legally authorized representative.

Participation is voluntary Teachers, parents, and students may refuse to participate or discontinue at any time, with no penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled.

Questions, Concerns, or Complaints Education Development Center received [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) approval for this project. If participants have any questions about their rights or feel that any harm has been done during the project, they should contact EDC's Human Protections Administrator at 1-800-225-4276 ext. 2971 or HumanProtections@edc.org. For questions about this project, participants should contact Joy Lorenzo Kennedy, Principal Investigator, at (212) 807-4233 or jlkenedy@edc.org.

Why use the supplemental digital curriculum?

Teachers tell us that the supplemental curriculum is **easy to use** and **saves them time**...and **it's fun for students!**



Evidence-based

Multiple research studies have shown that using this supplemental curriculum to teach history improves historical knowledge and skills, leads to deeper student engagement, and promotes richer classroom discussion.



Collaboratively developed

The supplemental curriculum that will be used in the U.S. History Media Project was created by a team that includes historians, educators, and a team of advisors, to ensure the games and educator materials are guided by rigorous scholarship and that they involve members of the communities portrayed to ensure they are telling their own stories.



Safe, ethical, and age-appropriate design

Developers of the supplemental digital curriculum used feedback from teachers, students, and an advisory board of experts in culturally responsive education, adolescent development, ethics, game design, and other relevant areas to help make our games safe, effective, and engaging. The games are constructed so that students explore the perspectives of historical characters, make decisions, and take risks, but maintain critical distance from the situations depicted.



Enables inclusive social studies curriculum

The games and accompanying digital curriculum highlight the role of ordinary people in making history. It includes the experiences and perspectives of diverse Americans, especially those who have been ignored or marginalized by traditional accounts.



Accessible and easy to use (in classroom and out)

The digital games and curriculum are designed for a wide range of learners and instructional settings and are available online for free. The games are accompanied by the variety of curricular supports including discussion prompts, writing assignments, vocabulary, and document-based activities.



David C. Banks, Chancellor

Institutional Review Board October 11, 2022

52 Chambers Street
Room 310
New York, NY 10007

Dear Dr. Joy Kennedy,

I am happy to inform you that the New York City Department of Education Institutional Review Board (NYC DOE IRB) or Ethics Review Committee (ERC) has completed its review of this proposed research and approved your research proposal, **“U.S. History Through Young People’s Eyes: An Efficacy Study of a Supplemental Digital History Curriculum.”** NYC DOE IRB has assigned your study the protocol number of 4200 Please make certain that all correspondence regarding this project references this number. The approval is for a period of one year:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Approval Date: | October 6, 2022 |
| Expiration Date: | October 5, 2023 |
| Review Level: | Expedited |
| Funding: | |

Approved Study Team Members: Principal Investigator: Dr. Joy Kennedy
Co-Investigator(s): DR. Jacqueline Zweig
Coordinator(s): Hai Lun Tan, Dr. Tamara Vitolo
Faculty Advisor:
Investigative Staff:
Research Staff: Alice Kaiser, Ms. Anne Huntington

Prior to contacting individual schools or principals, all designated personnel named in this protocol to conduct research in NYC public schools with NYC DOE staff or students, or using NYC public school student data, must complete the NYC DOE security clearance process. This includes but is not limited to being fingerprinted by the NYC DOE. To initiate the security clearance process, all named participants must submit scanned copies of the following required documents to IRB@schools.nyc.gov:

- Stamped IRB Approval Letter
- Government Issued State ID
- Signed Social Security Card
- Current email address and phone number

Information will then be entered into the PETS system and researchers will receive a nomination email from PETSAdminSupport@schools.nyc.gov within 7 business days that will outline all next steps in the security clearance process, including login access to Applicant Gateway where all required forms can be found. If researchers have fingerprints on file with the NYC DOE IRB and they have been active with our system within the past six years, they simply update the online forms. For researchers requiring fingerprinting, once all required forms are completed and signed, follow the directions provided to schedule the fingerprinting appointment through IdentoGo. Please note:

- Fingerprinting is no longer conducted at 65 Court Street.
- Fingerprinting is conducted on an appointment-only basis.
- The cost for fingerprinting is currently \$101.75.

Responsibilities of Principal Investigators: Please find below a list of responsibilities of Principal Investigators who have DOE IRB approval to conduct research in New York City public schools.

- Approval by this office does not guarantee access to any particular school, individual or data. You are responsible for making appropriate contacts and getting the required permissions and consents before initiating the study.
- Approval by this office does not constitute a determination of compliance with New York City Conflict of Interest Board rules, or other applicable City rules, regulations, policies, laws, or statutes. Researchers are responsible for ensuring compliance with all of the aforementioned.
- When requesting permission to conduct research, submit the Principal Informational letter approved with this protocol to the school Principal summarizing your research design and methodology along with this IRB Approval letter. Each Principal agreeing to participate must sign the Principal Informational letter. *A completed and signed letter for every school included in your research must be attached to your NYC DOE protocol by Amendment.* Principals may also ask you to show them the receipt issued by the NYC Department of Education at the time of your fingerprinting.
- You are responsible for ensuring that the research is conducted in accordance with your research proposal as approved by the DOE IRB and for the actions of all co-investigators and research staff involved with the research.
- You are responsible for informing all participants (e.g., administrators, teachers, parents, and students) that their participation is strictly voluntary and that there are no consequences for non-participation or withdrawal at any time during the study.
- You must use only the study materials associated with this protocol and bearing the IRBManager NYC DOE IRB approval stamp. Stamped documents are available in the Attachments section of this cleared protocol in IRBManager.
- You must provide all research subjects with copies of their signed consent forms; maintain signed consent forms in a secure place for a period of at least three years after study completion; and destroy the consent forms in accordance with the data disposal plan approved by the IRB.
- In the event that this research will involve non-English speaking subjects, you are required to translate all study materials to be used with this subject population and submit all translations to the NYC DOE IRB by protocol Amendment for review and clearance prior to use. All translations must be accompanied by attestations of translation accuracy from a qualified translator, or formal certificates of translation by a transcription service.
- You are required to ensure that CITI Human Subjects Research training remains valid for all research personnel designated in this protocol throughout the duration of the protocol clearance period. You must submit updated or renewed CITI training certificates by Amendment before they expire.
- In the event that contracts, external approvals, or other documents are pending at the time of this approval, they must be submitted for NYC DOE IRB review by Amendment once obtained.

Mandatory Reporting to the IRB: The Principal Investigator must report to the DOE IRB, within 24 hours, any serious problem, adverse effect, or outcome that occurs with frequency or degree of severity greater than that anticipated. In addition, the Principal Investigator must report any event or series of events that prompt the temporary or permanent suspension of a research project involving human subjects or any deviations from the approved protocol. All reports must be submitted using the IRBManager Protocol Violation, Deviation, Adverse Event, and/or Unanticipated Problem Report form.

Amendments/Modifications: All amendments/modification to this protocol require prospective IRB approval, except those involving the prevention of immediate harm to a subject, which must be reported within 24 hours to your IRB of record and to the NYC DOE IRB.

Continuation of your research: It is your responsibility to insure that an application for Continuing Review is submitted 90 days before the expiration date noted above. If you do not receive approval to continue research before the expiration date, all study activities, including, but not limited to, analysis of collected data, must stop until said approval is obtained.

Research findings/Study Closures: The NYC DOE IRB requires a copy of the report of findings from this research. Interim reports may also be requested for multi-year studies. Further, you are required to formally close this protocol by submitting a Study Closure form once all research procedures, including, but not limited to, all analysis of coded or identifiable data, have concluded.

Data Request: Note that approval of this research does not constitute confirmation of release of data requested in a Data Request form. All data requests are processed and approved by the Data Request Fulfillment Team. Please email rpsgresearch@schools.nyc.gov with any questions you may have regarding this matter.

If you have any questions, please contact IRB@schools.nyc.gov.

Good luck with your research.

NYC Institutional Review Board



Brian Carlin

Social Studies Department
bcarlin@schools.nyc.gov
917-544-8131

**New York City Department
of Education**

Room 113
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007
212-323-7829

March 12, 2021

Dr. Joy Lorenzo Kennedy
Education Development Center
96 Morton St., 7th Fl.
New York, NY 10014

Dear Dr. Kennedy,

I am the Director of Social Studies for the New York City Department of Education, where I oversee the development of curriculum resources and supervisor and professional development for teaching social studies for the over 1,800 NYC schools. We are excited about the possibility of working with you on your proposed efficacy study, *US History Through Young Peoples Eyes: An Efficacy Study of XXX*, should it be funded by the IES. Specifically, we will support recruitment of a minimum of one, but no more than fifteen, schools in the NYC School system. We understand that schools must have at least two Grade 8 history classrooms, one of which will be randomly assigned to a treatment condition and one to a control condition. All classrooms will receive access to the study materials at the end of the study. We will also support data collection from teachers and students, including measures of fidelity of implementation.

We are enthusiastic about participating in this project because the skills supported by Mission US align well with the city's *Passport to Social Studies* curriculum and the NYS standards for 8th grade history. When integrated with our existing curriculum, Mission US can provide a critical tool for the development of critical thinking and historical perspective taking skills, increase students' motivation to study history, and better prepare our students both for high school and as engaged citizens.

I believe this project is a good fit for NYC and we look forward to working with you.

Brian Carlin

Senior Instructional Specialist
Social Studies Department
bcarlin@schools.nyc.gov



Institutional Review Board
Protocol Number: 4200-NYC
Approval Date: October 6, 2022
Expiration Date: October 5, 2023

**Protection of Human Subjects
Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption
(Common Rule)**

Policy: Research activities involving human subjects may not be conducted or supported by the Departments and Agencies adopting the Common Rule unless the activities are exempt from or approved in accordance with the Common Rule. The "pre-2018 Common Rule (or pre-2018 Requirements)" was originally promulgated in 1991 and amended on June 23, 2005 (70 FR 36325). The "2018 Common Rule (or 2018 Requirements)" was originally published on January 19, 2017 (82 FR 7149) and amended on January 22, 2018 (83 FR 2885) and June 19, 2018 (83 FR 28497). The categories of exempt research are provided in Section 101(b) of the pre-2018 Common Rule and Section 104(d) of the 2018 Common Rule.

The pre-2018 Common Rule requires institutions to certify that each application or proposal for research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Section 103(f)). The 2018 Common Rule requires institutions to certify that each proposed research study has been reviewed and approved by an IRB (Section 103(d)). Institutions must have an assurance of compliance that applies to the research to be conducted and should submit certification of IRB review and approval with each application or proposal, or proposed research study, unless otherwise advised by the Department or Agency.

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Request Type <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL <input type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> EXEMPTION | 2. Type of Mechanism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GRANT <input type="checkbox"/> CONTRACT <input type="checkbox"/> FELLOWSHIP <input type="checkbox"/> COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____ | 3. Name of Federal Department or Agency and, if known, Application or Proposal Identification No. Institute of Education Sciences (DED-IES) Proposal ID #: R305A210223 |
| 4. Title of Application or Activity U.S. History Through Young People's Eyes: An Efficacy Study of XXX | | 5. Name of Principal Investigator, Program Director, Fellow, or Other Joy L Kennedy |

6. Assurance Status of this Project (*Respond to one of the following*)

This Assurance, on file with Department of Health and Human Services, covers this activity:
 Assurance Identification No. 00000038, the expiration date 01/03/2027 IRB Registration No. 00000865

This Assurance, on file with (*agency/dept*) _____, covers this activity.
 Assurance No. _____, the expiration date _____ IRB Registration/Identification No. _____ (*if applicable*)

No assurance has been filed for this institution. This institution declares that it will provide an Assurance and Certification of IRB review and approval upon request.

Exemption Status: Human subjects are involved, but this activity qualifies for exemption under the pre-2018 Common Rule, Section 101(b), paragraph _____


Exemption Status: Human subjects are involved, but this activity qualifies for exemption under the 2018 Common Rule, Section 104(d), paragraph _____

7. Certification of IRB Review (*Respond to one of the following IF you have an Assurance on file*)

This activity has been reviewed and approved by the IRB in accordance with the Common Rule and any other governing regulations.
 by: Full IRB Review on (date of IRB meeting) _____ or Expedited Review on (date) October 4, 2021
 If less than one year approval, provide expiration date _____

This activity contains multiple projects, some of which have not been reviewed. The IRB has granted approval on condition that all projects covered by the Common Rule will be reviewed and approved before they are initiated and that appropriate further certification will be submitted.

8. Comments **This activity contains multiple components. The IRB initially approved preliminary focus groups to be conducted with teachers. Additional materials covering the pilot and RCT components have since been submitted through a series of amendments and have been approved.**

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 9. The official signing below certifies that the information provided above is correct and that, as required, future reviews will be performed until study closure and certification will be provided. | 10. Name and Address of Institution Education Development Center, 300 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2010, Waltham, MA 02451. | |
| 11. Phone No. (with area code) 617 969 7100 x2971 | | |
| 12. Email: humanprotections@edc.org | | |
| 14. Name of Official: Alan Stockdale | 14. Title: Director, Human Protections Program | |
| 15. Signature:  | 15. Date February 4, 2022 | |

US Department of Education Protection of Human Subjects Clearance

From: Rodamar, Jeffery <Jeffery.Rodamar@ed.gov>
Date: Monday, April 4, 2022 at 1:38 PM
To: Metz, Edward <Edward.Metz@ed.gov>
Cc: IES Grants Team <IESGrantsTeam@ed.gov>, Kennedy, Joy L <JLKennedy@edc.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Protection of human subjects clearance: R305A210223 (EDC).

The study of "U.S. History Through Young People's Eyes: An Efficacy Study of XXX" conducted by Dr. Joy Kennedy at Education Development Center, funded by U.S. Department of Education (ED) grant R305A210223 has ED protection of human subjects clearance. ED concurs with the grantee's determination that the research includes only research that falls under exemptions 1 and 2 of the Common Rule for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (34 CFR 97).

Keep a copy of this ED Protection of Human Subjects clearance in the official file for this grant.

Jeffery W. Rodamar

Protection of Human Subjects in Research Coordinator
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Office: 5A212
Washington, DC 20202

Phone: 202-987-0066

Email: Jeffery.Rodamar@ed.gov

Email for general queries: HumanSubjectsResearch@ED.gov

Resources <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html>

Training: Department of Education: Implementing the Common Rule

For protection of human subjects in research (34 CFR 97)

<https://www2.ed.gov/rms.training/humansubjects-research/story.html>

via US Postal Service:

US Department of Education; LBJ Building, 400 Maryland Ave. SW; Washington, DC 20202-4331