Comparing and Contrasting “Jim Crow” and Emory Douglas: A Learning Activity for Grades 5-12

This activity invites students to compare and contrast images of African Americans in two periods: in the years leading up to and in the last decade of the civil rights movement. It explores how representations of African Americans changed over time. Through these changing portrayals it analyzes how images can shape identity and attitudes.

Learning Objectives
After this activity, students will be able to:
Discuss how representations of African Americans changed over time.
Analyze issues of identity and who influences identity, noting the changing portrayals of African Americans over the decades.
Recognize how African Americans took control of their self-representation.
Identify how this control helped African Americans achieve racial equality and justice.

Duration: 1-2 Class Periods.
**MATERIALS**

*For All the World to See* website  
Printouts of the following images from the site:  
The Birthday Card  
http://www.umbc.edu/cadvc/foralltheworld/section1/jimcrow.php  
Emory Douglas, *We Shall Survive without a Doubt*, 1971  
http://www.umbc.edu/cadvc/foralltheworld/section5/panther.php  
Image and Object Analysis Worksheet  
http://www.umbc.edu/cadvc/foralltheworld/education/fatwts_k12_image_analysis.pdf  
Compare and Contrast Worksheet  
http://www.umbc.edu/cadvc/foralltheworld/education/fatwts_k12_image_comp.pdf

**RESOURCE FOR THE EDUCATOR**

For additional historical background and visual analysis, teachers may also read the book:  
http://www.umbc.edu/cadvc/foralltheworld/book/

**ACTIVITY**

**WARM-UP DISCUSSION**

Ask students to discuss the Jim Crow laws and the resulting racial segregation that began in the late 1800’s and lasted well into the 1960’s. Invite them to describe how these local and state laws worked, as they examine evidence of segregation in schools, transportation, restrooms, restaurants and public places.
American culture, particularly in the South, was steeped in images and objects that reinforced “Jim Crow” segregation. These objects reinforced stereotypes of African Americans as “inferior.”

WORKING WITH IMAGES: THE LEGACY OF “JIM CROW”

As a group, examine The Legacy of “Jim Crow” section of the exhibition: http://www.umbc.edu/cadvc/foralltheworld/section1/jimcrow.php

Take time to explore the images, captions and introductions. Invite students to read the exhibition text out loud to the group.

IMAGE STUDY PART I

Distribute or display Birthday Card, c 1940 along with copies of the Image and Object Analysis Worksheet to each student.

Invite students to complete the worksheet.

Discuss the following questions:

Who do you think created this image?
What did the artist or manufacturer hope to achieve?
What impact could this item have had on the outcome of the civil rights movement?

BREAK

IMAGE STUDY PART II

This image study will examine the work of Emory Douglas, who was the art director for the Black Panther newspaper from 1967 until the party disbanded in 1980.

In the first image study, we began with a discussion of the historical period and worked our way into the images. In this image study, we will work from the image up to the larger topic of the Black Panther organization and the Black Power movement.
Distribute or display Emory Douglas, *We Shall Survive without a Doubt*, 1971.

Distribute copies of the image and Object Analysis Worksheet to each student.

Invite students to complete the worksheet.

Once they have completed the worksheet, discuss the following questions:

Who do you think created this image?
What did the artist or manufacturer hope to achieve?
What impact could this item have had on the outcome of the civil rights movement?

THE BLACK PANHTERS AND THE BLACK POWER MOVEMENT


Take time to explore the images, captions and introductions. Invite students to read the exhibition text out loud to the group.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Ask students to complete the Compare and Contrast Worksheet using the work *Birthday Card*, c. 1940 and Emory Douglas, *We Shall Survive without a Doubt*, 1971.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Ask students any of the following questions to stimulate a discussion:

What is the message from the Birthday Card from 1940?
What is the message from Emory Douglas, *We Shall Survive without a Doubt* from 1971?
In the years between 1940 and 1971, how have representations of African Americans changed?
Who is creating these images? Who is viewing them?
What impact did they have on our culture?
Where are we now? Do you see images like either of these in your daily life?
How have things changed since the beginning of the struggle for civil rights? How have they remained the same?
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