

REVISED WORKPLAN FOR THE OBJECT OF HISTORY:

Production

The production of *The Object of History* will proceed in five phases over two and a half years between January 2006 and June 2008:

Phase I: Planning and Content Development (January 2006- June 2006): Throughout its planning and implementation, *The Object of History* will draw on the expertise of a planning and advisory committee that will include curators, museum educators, historians, teachers, web designers, and programmers. This diverse group of advisors will be drawn from the staff of NMAH, CHNM, and school districts in the National Capitol area. Through a series of three planning meetings during the first six months of the grant, the committee will oversee the project and make specific decisions about the historical, pedagogical, and material cultural content of the “object lessons.” Its first job in this phase will be to make the final selection of the six objects and topics from the following tentative list of ten: 1750s Silver teapot (American Revolution); Sunstone from the Mormon Temple at Nauvoo, Illinois (antebellum reform and religion); Mary Todd Lincoln dress made by ex-slave Elizabeth Keckley (slavery and Civil War); White/colored signs (Jim Crow and segregation); Buffalo Bill Wild West Show Poster and Theodore Roosevelt’s Chaps (Western settlement and mythology); Ballot Box (Progressivism and political reform); Model T Ford (industrialization and consumer culture); NRA eagles (New Deal State); first Barbie doll (women and gender in the 1950s); Woolworth lunch counter (civil rights). Following these decisions, the committee’s second job in this phase will be to help project staff (working with educators and curators) storyboard each object lesson and develop the teaching and contextual materials to be included in each Teaching the Object of History section. This phase will also include the writing and editing of “How to Read Historical Objects,” the more general set of materials that will accompany these object-specific lesson plans, documents, links, and readings.

Phase II: Web Production and Recruitment (June 2006-September 2007): The results of this first phase will inform the more hands-on work of phase two: web development and pre-launch publicity. This production phase will make use of the considerable design, multimedia, and web-database development experience and skill of the CHNM staff. In particular, this phase will see the development of the of the six object clusters. In addition to this web and multimedia work, Phase II will also include the design and building of the interactive technology that will be used for the live Curator Chats in Phase III. Finally, this second phase of the project will include a recruitment and publicity plan that will result in registering high school U.S. history teachers who plan to have their classes participate in the interactive phase of the project. Here we will rely on the extensive contacts of CHNM and NMAH in the educational community to insure broad and active participation in the project by students and teachers both in the National Capitol area and nationwide. Recruitment will take place in two stages. First, we will register teachers for the January – June 2007 sessions. Then, over the summer of 2007, we will do a second recruitment push to attract users for the September – December 2007 sessions.

Phase III: Launch and Implementation (January 2007 - December 2007): The interactive elements of the project will take place in the third phase of the project. Since we will launch in January 2007 (spring semester), we will begin with the post-Reconstruction material. In the fall

semester of 2007, we will cover the period up to the end of Reconstruction. The results of this phase of the project will include twenty-four on-line chats (four for each of the “six object lessons”) in which NMAH curators will interact with high school students around the country.

Phase IV: Response and Revision (September 2007 – June 2008):

During this phase, the planning committee will reconvene three times to review and comment upon the effectiveness of the “object lessons.” And because the six interactive “object lessons” will be spread out over six months, we will be able to respond to these comments, address concerns in midstream, learn lessons from experience, and make changes accordingly to improve the quality and effectiveness of the project even while it continues. Thus, the feedback we gather about the first implementation of the “object lessons” (Spring 2007) will be essential not only to the revision of the second implementation (Fall 2007), but also to the planning and production of the free templates that we will distribute during the dissemination period.

Phase V: Dissemination and Evaluation (January 2008 - August 2008): The results of this phase of the project will be twofold. First, we will embark upon a series of activities designed to disseminate our framework for interactive educational programming to smaller museums. These efforts will include developing a set of downloadable object lesson templates. The creation of these templates will incorporate the lessons learned from the initial launch and implementation of the “object lessons” using material from the NMAH. Additionally, the project manager will publicize the project by publishing articles and advertisements about our experience, making conference presentations, and providing five free consultancies to other institutions. Second, we will use quantitative and qualitative evaluation techniques to assess whether we have achieved our project goals.