

MODES DE LA CONNAISSANCE | FORMAS DE CONOCIMIENTO
WAYS OF KNOWING

IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014

ROME • 16–19 OCTOBER



IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014

ROME • 16–19 OCTOBER

Nonrational ways of knowing in the history classroom

Focus on emotion and imagination

Charlotte Vale

cvale@romeinternationalschool.it



Overview

- Emotion in history as a way of creating empathy and connection with the past
- The possible dangers of personal emotion and attachment; creating objectivity and overcoming emotion
- Desensitising students to history with over use of emotion
- Imagination as a WOK in history; examples of counterfactuals
- Debate surrounding counterfactuals



IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST
REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014
ROME • 16–19 OCTOBER

Emotion and worldviews

How can journalists be objective when writing about dead children?

Being calmly rational about Gaza feels like a very particular form of madness. Journalism must convey the emotion too

Jon Snow's Gaza appeal risks reducing reporting to propaganda

Journalists have cried 'something must be done' before, but they must avoid emoting

Was it okay for U.K. journalist to make emotional, personal video about Gaza children?

Video by Jon Snow, news anchor for Britain's Channel 4 News, went viral. BBC chief says presenters must retain image of impartiality.

You can't keep emotions out of the Israel-Palestine issue, so don't try



IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST
REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014
ROME • 16-19 OCTOBER

Questions to help create objectivity

- Do you feel emotional about this event?
- What emotions do you feel?
- Why do you think you have these emotions?
- What are the positives and negatives of your emotional view?
- Are you able to OPVL all the sources of evidence with the same objectivity?
- Can you imagine how someone else may feel about this event?



IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST
REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014
ROME • 16-19 OCTOBER

Taking emotion too far



Photo by Charlotte Button

- It is possible for students to have a positive emotional attachment to the past by engaging with their present and learning about the consequences and legacy of what they are studying.
- We do not need to shock or scare students to allow them to care and use their emotions to learn more.



Imagination in history

- Creating 'primary sources' that hold a certain bias
- Counterfactuals - "It is, at the very root, the idea of conjecturing on what did not happen, or what might have happened, in order to understand what did happen" *Black and MacRaild* Studying History



Hitler's rise to power

- If the Wall Street Crash doesn't happen in 1929 how likely is it that the Nazi party still sees a huge spike in public support in the 1930 election?
- What other factors contributed to Hitler's popularity? Are these enough without the Wall Street Crash?
- How far does the Wall Street Crash affect the chronology of Hitler's rise to power?



IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST
REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014
ROME • 16-19 OCTOBER

The League of Nations

- What if the USA had not rejected the Treaty of Versailles and joined the League of Nations – evaluate the potential impact of American involvement during the 1920s and 30s



THE GAP IN THE BRIDGE.



More counterfactuals...

- What if there had been no insurrection in The Two Sicilies or Piedmont would this affect the timeline of Italian Unification?
- What if Germany had rejected the Treaty of Versailles as Turkey rejected the Treaty of Sèvres?
- What if Trotsky had succeeded Lenin – would this affect the post-war settlements?
- What if Bizone was delayed or not created?



IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST
REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014
ROME • 16-19 OCTOBER

Debate surrounding counterfactuals

'What if' is a waste of time

Counterfactual history is misguided and outdated, as the first world war debate shows



Richard J Evans

The Guardian, Thursday 13 March 2014 10.30 GMT

 Jump to comments (263)



Altered Pasts: Counterfactuals in History by Richard J Evans review – a ruthless, forensic demolition

Evans's rigorous demolition of what-if? narratives decries counterfactual history as a fundamentally reactionary pursuit



Owen Hatherley

The Guardian, Thursday 17 April 2014 07.30 BST





Emotion and imagination in history: plenary

- Emotion in history – allow and encourage students to connect with their present to develop empathy with the past
- Acknowledge emotion – allow students time to reason and create objectivity, don't shock or scare students
- Create opportunities for students to use imagination through the creation of sources and counterfactual questioning