

CURANDERA HISTORIANS

How can strategic storytelling help to heal history?

What does this quote mean?

Remember, all historians have points of view. In fact, all of us use some process of selection through which we choose which stories we consider important and interesting. Storytelling is not neutral, because storytellers are not neutral.

How might it affect a community to have their story ignored? Without their story being told, those communities might feel invisible, like their identity is not important to the world, or that they are powerless to create change.

Historians are storytellers, piecing together narratives from historical sources. Historians have the power to mend or heal the narratives of the past. We can reframe historical events, highlight marginalized voices, and challenge dominant narratives to offer a more compassionate, inclusive, and healing perspective on history. As historians we are the bridge that can connect the past with the present, helping individuals and communities make sense of roots and their place in the world today.

Curandera Historians challenge traditional narratives, and instead highlight counter narratives, which seek to focus on the stories of people whose identities have often been ignored. They do this work by asking questions, and intentionally seeking to tell stories that highlight all voices, not just those from the dominant identities and cultures.

The **Curandera Historian** seeks to heal history so that everyone can know themselves and their history. In fact, *curandera means traditional healer*.

1. How might it affect a community to not have their story told? *Without their story being told, a community might feel like...*

2. How does a curandera historian challenge traditional storytelling? *Curandera historians challenge traditional storytelling by...*

CURANDERA STRATEGY 1

Tell Untold Histories

- If history books looked like the population of the world they would be full of women, poor people, workers, children, people of color, those who have been enslaved, and the colonized.
- How can centering historically marginalized people change our view of what events are most important?

How can we make absences visible?

How do these texts make absence visible in United States history?

CURANDERA STRATEGY 2

Show Complexity

- Give up the idea that people are 100% heroic or villainous.

Contradict Misinformation

- What does that dominant narrative leave out of the story of history?
- How can telling different stories create healing & justice?

How can we embrace difficulty?

How do these sources help us uncover and reflect upon contradictions & complexities in United States history?

CURANDERA STRATEGY 3

Make History Accessible

- It doesn't do any good if history is written in a way that it is not accessible to the general public or hidden in textbooks
- Share history in ways people will choose to engage with- art, movies, podcasts, tv shows, children's books, and more!

How can we expand access & sources?

How do these sources connect people to history in accessible ways?

CURANDERA STRATEGY 4

Show Agency

- It's important to recognize that resistance takes many forms.
- Even under the most brutal conditions, people find ways to assert their humanity.

Personalize

- Using the names of real individual people and any available details of their lives, to personalize the social conditions of a group, makes those conditions far more real.

How can we humanize?

How do these sources show us that people will seek to protect their humanity, despite dehumanizing treatment?

