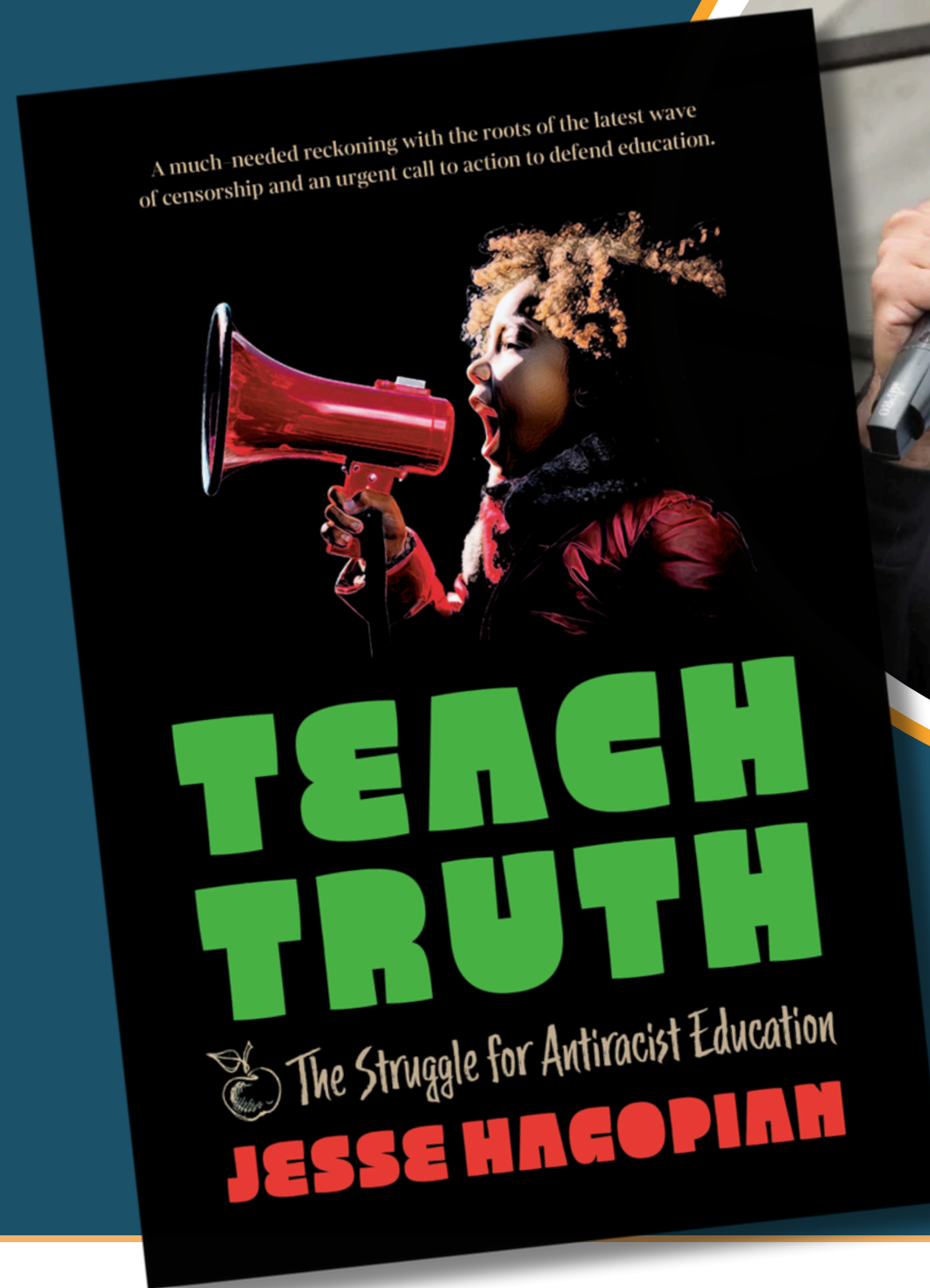


# JESSE HAGOPIAN

Zinn Education Project campaign  
director

*Rethinking Schools* editor

Author and editor of many books,  
including *Teach Truth: The Struggle  
for Antiracist Education*



# ZINN EDUCATION PROJECT

**TEACHING PEOPLE'S HISTORY**

Co-coordinated by:



**TEACHING  
FOR CHANGE**

**re**thinking  
schools

# DECOLONIZE 1776

## Teach Truth About the American Revolution

On the 250th anniversary, we offer lessons, critical questions, readings, and films to Teach Truth about the American Revolution and founding of the United States.

[ZINNEPROJECT.ORG/AMERICAN-REVOLUTION](http://ZINNEPROJECT.ORG/AMERICAN-REVOLUTION)



# **Revolution for Whom? Seven Questions to Rethink 1776**

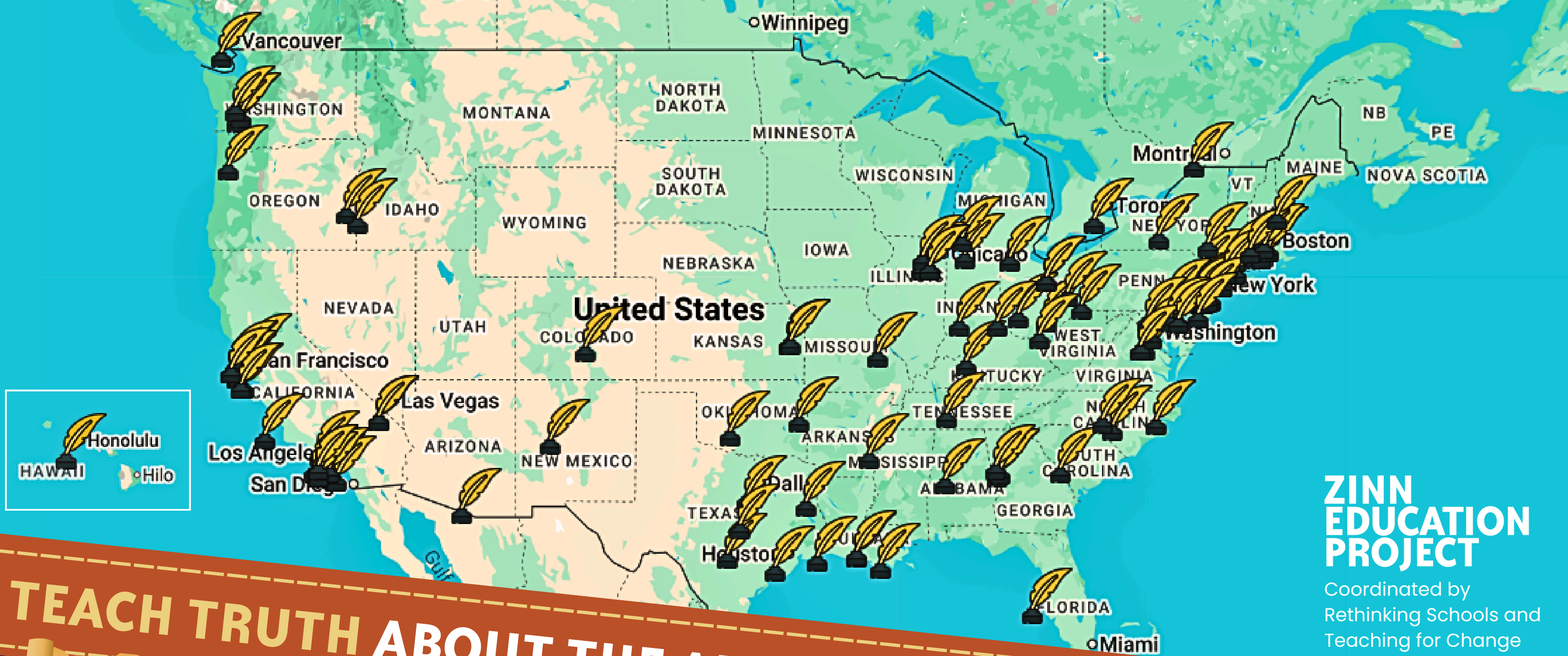
- 1. Should the American Revolution be considered revolutionary?  
What does “revolution” mean? What would constitute an actual revolution?**
- 2. How did Black, Native, poor, and colonized peoples envision freedom?  
How did they use words like “liberty,” “equality,” and “justice”?**
- 3. How did colonists’ invasion of Native lands — and resistance to it —  
shape the Revolutionary War and founding of the United States?**
- 4. How did colonists’ enslavement of Black people — and resistance to it —  
shape the Revolutionary War and founding of the United States?**

# **Revolution for Whom? Seven Questions to Rethink 1776**

**5. Which groups fought on either side of the Revolution? Who benefited, and who didn't? Why would some groups not support — or actively oppose — the Revolution?**

**6. How was the Revolutionary War part of an “Age of Revolutions” and colonial battles across the world?**

**7. What happens to our understanding of “American freedom” when we center the voices of those it excluded? What do popular stories of the Revolution claim about how history and progress are made? What do they hide? What purposes do they serve?**

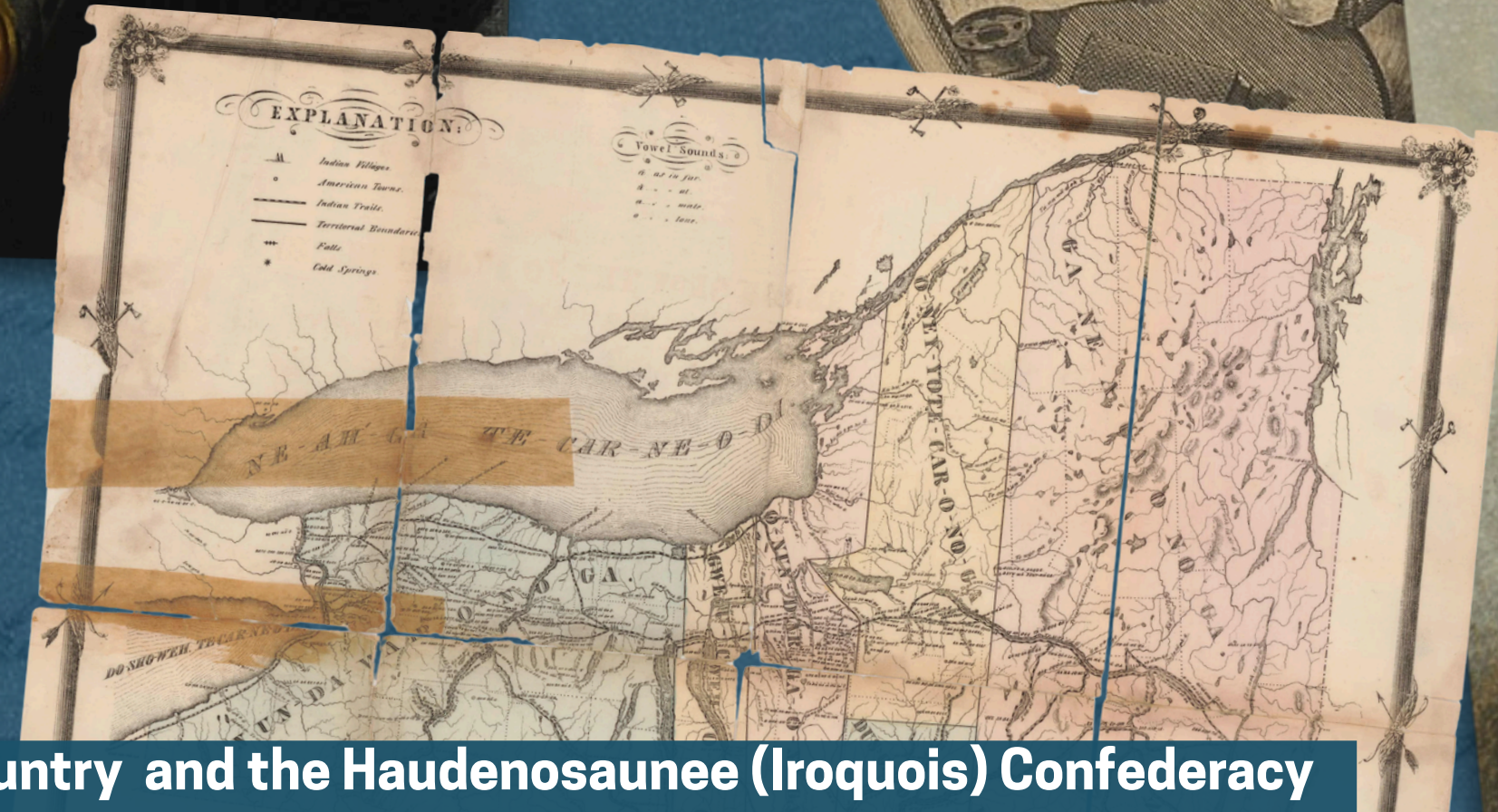
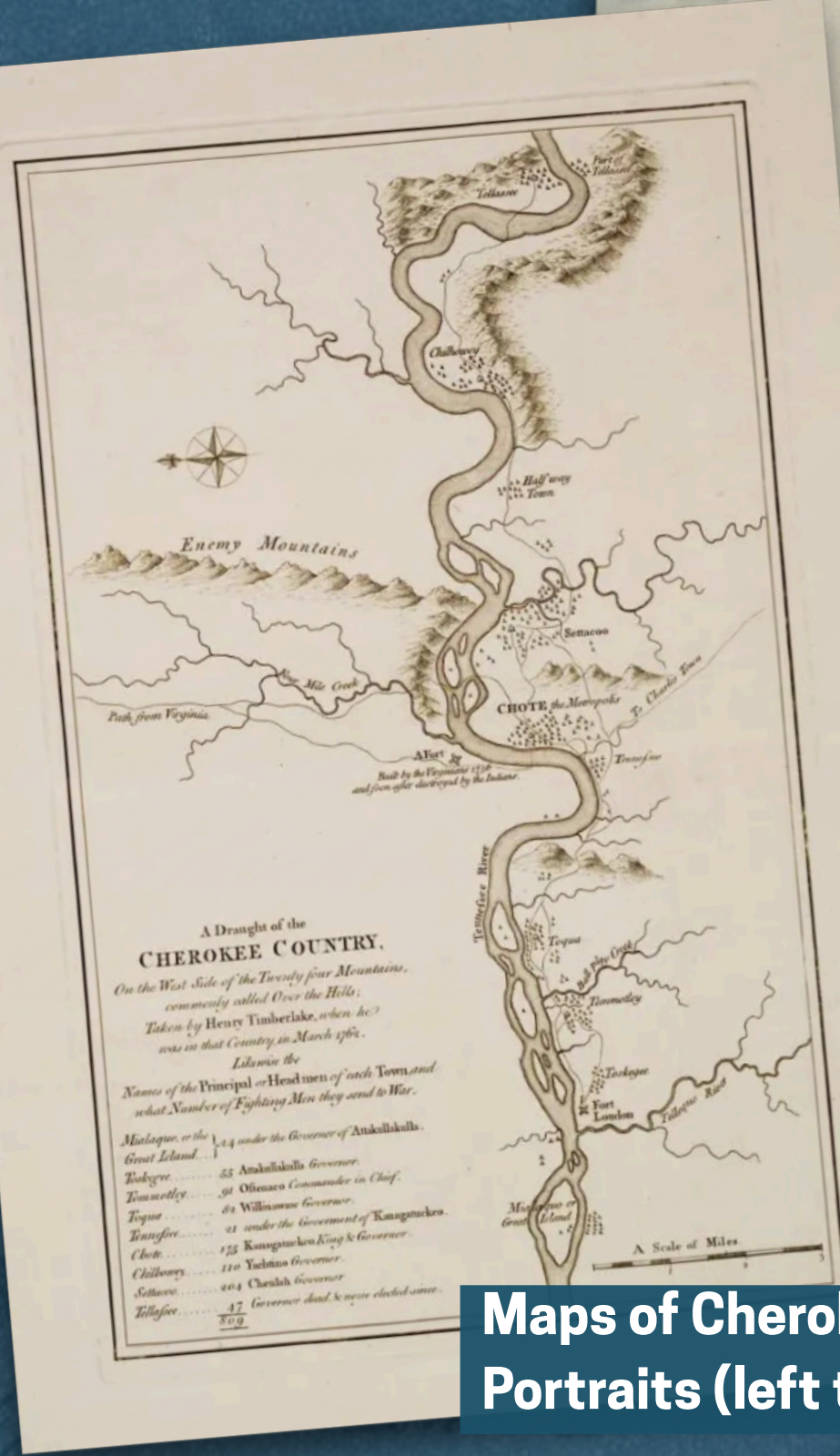


# ZINN EDUCATION PROJECT

Coordinated by  
Rethinking Schools and  
Teaching for Change

**TEACH TRUTH ABOUT THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**  
on the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

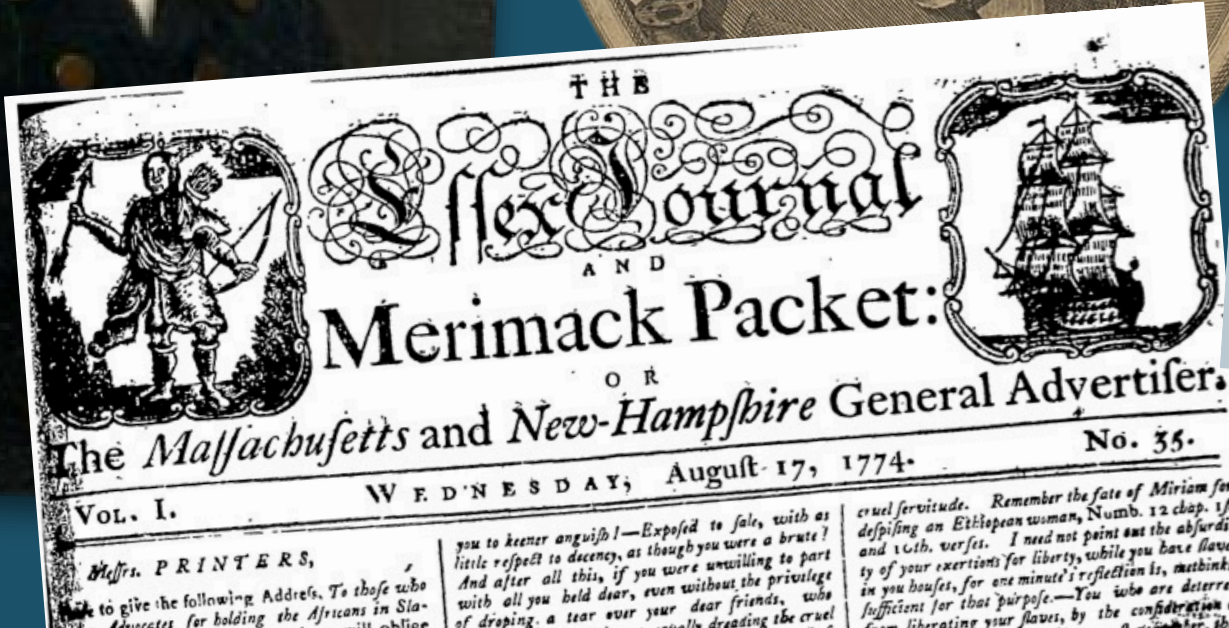
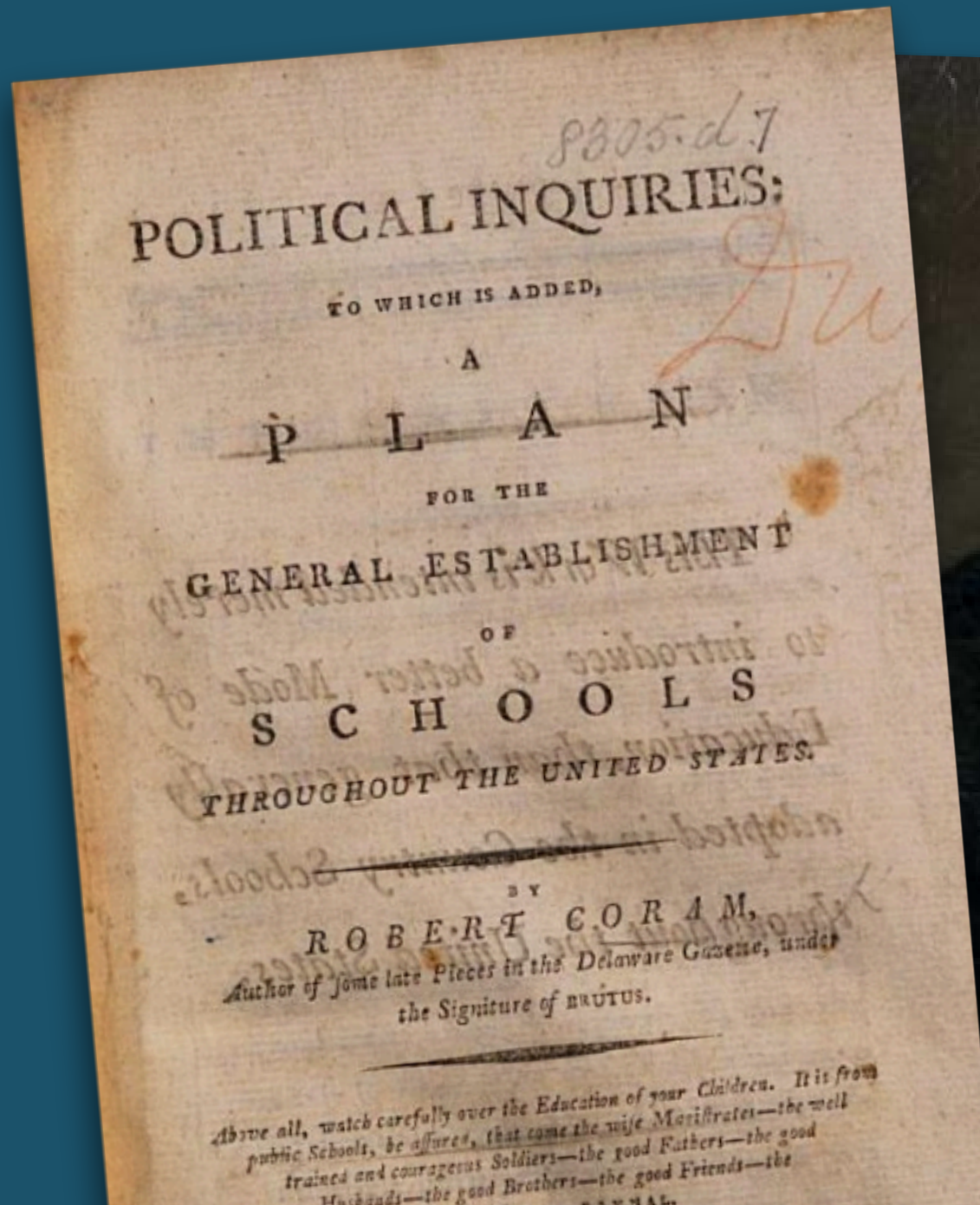




Maps of Cherokee Country and the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy  
Portraits (left to right) of Thayandagea (Joseph Brant), Phillis Wheatley, and James Forten



# “FOUNDING” DOCUMENTS WE DON’T LEARN ABOUT



ZINN  
EDUCATION  
PROJECT

TEACHING PEOPLE'S HISTORY

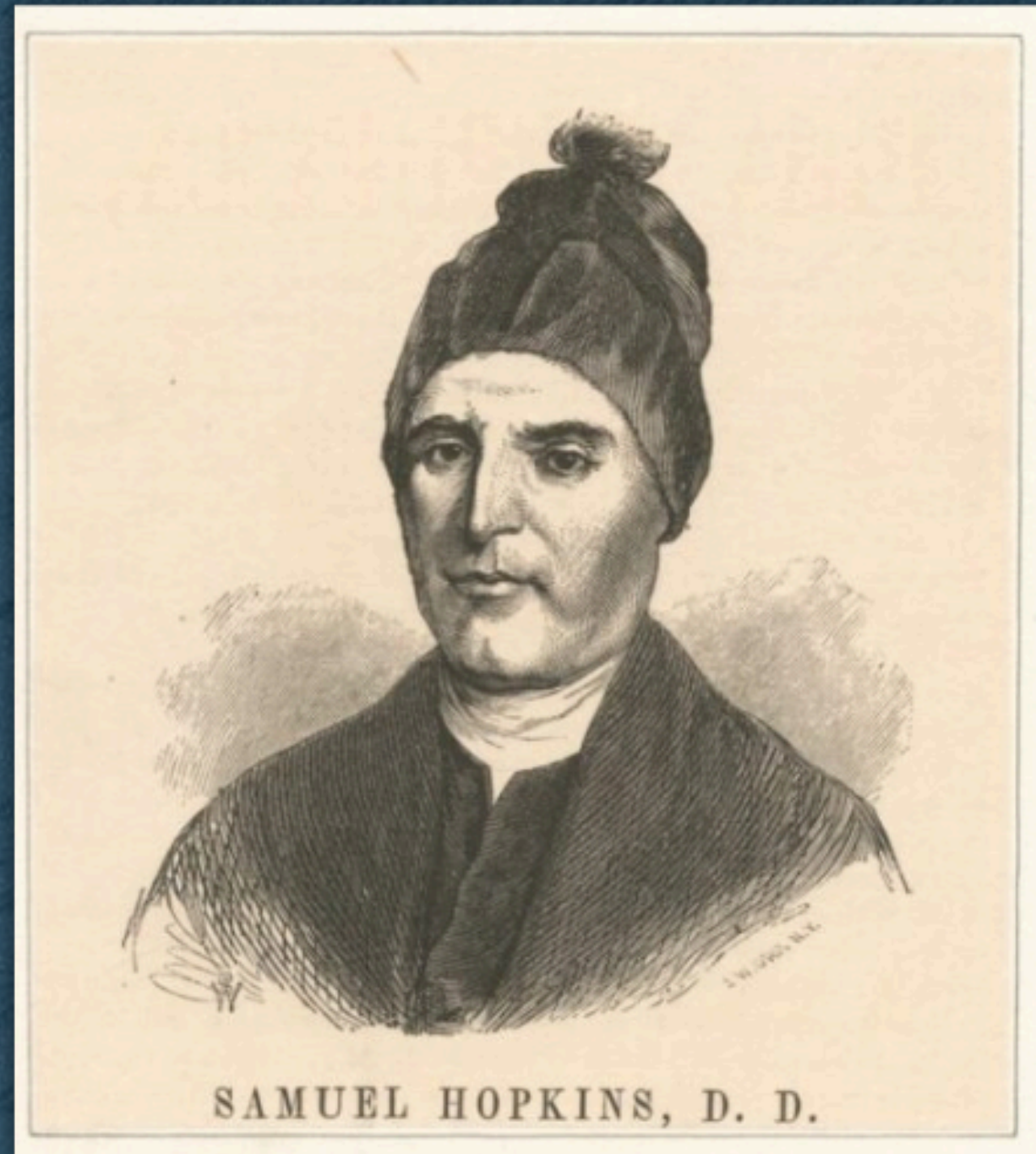
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TEACHING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION



In a letter to Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Banneker questioned the motives of Jefferson and other Founders who asserted in the Declaration of Independence that “all men are created equal,” only to weave the institution of slavery into the fabric of the new United States.

“Benjamin Banneker: Surveyor-Inventor-Astronomer,” mural by Maxime Seelbinder, at the Recorder of Deeds building in Washington, D.C., built in 1943.



In a 1787 newspaper column, theologian Samuel Hopkins observed that many Americans said they would choose “rather to die than to be slaves,” and yet continued “to hold hundreds of thousands of their fellow men in abject slavery.”

Engraving of abolitionist and theologian Samuel Hopkins, who also wrote under the alias “Crito.”

# Letter from the Year 2071

BARBARA RANSBY

**J**AMES BALDWIN ONCE URGED ACTIVISTS and revolutionaries to demand the impossible. We must not only demand the impossible — we must fight to make it real.

The following letter is written as if from the future, addressed to ourselves—the ancestors we will one day become. It is grounded in the goals of Black liberation, which we view as a quest for human liberation, and it dares to imagine a world beyond racial monopoly capitalism, heteropatriarchy, war and colonialism.

This letter is not intended as a manifesto or a pie in the sky, but as a small glimpse of impossible possibility.



Dear Ancestors,

We write to you from the east coast of Turtle Island. The landscape and built environment look different now. You would not even recognize it. There are accessibility paths and green areas everywhere. The earth can breathe and everyone can move freely, no matter how they move.

We want you to know first and foremost that you are with us every day. Your presence permeates the new history books we have written, but more importantly, we pay tribute to you in the ways in which we are repairing and acting as stewards of the land, the rivers, the birds and the wildlife. Your beauty flows through the clean skies and waterways—luxuries you were denied in your time. We have many holidays and celebrations where we remember and honor you. August 10 is Pueblo Revolt Day. December 13 is Ella Baker Day. (Just two examples.)



After discussion, debate, reflection and compromise, we have begun to develop new systems and ways of being together that reflect our shared goals and values.

The challenge we tackled, which so many of our ancestors fought for, is education. For our new society, education goes beyond the “schoolhouse” and the “campus.” And there are no barriers that exclude anyone from learning. Teaching and learning go on everywhere, with billboards, songs and television commercials that teach, rather than sell. And rather than excluding anyone from education, or labeling some of our precious children “smart” and others “not smart,” we recognize all are geniuses. It is the job of learning coaches and co-learners to help them find that genius—and to apply it to the needs of the community and society.



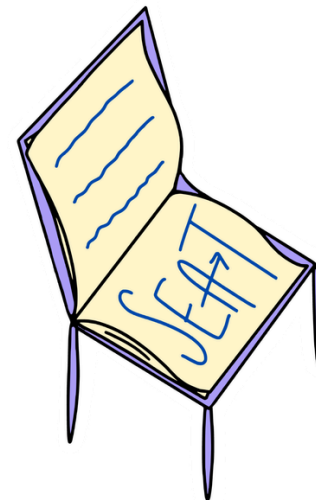
# Padlet Activity

**Respond to one or both questions:**

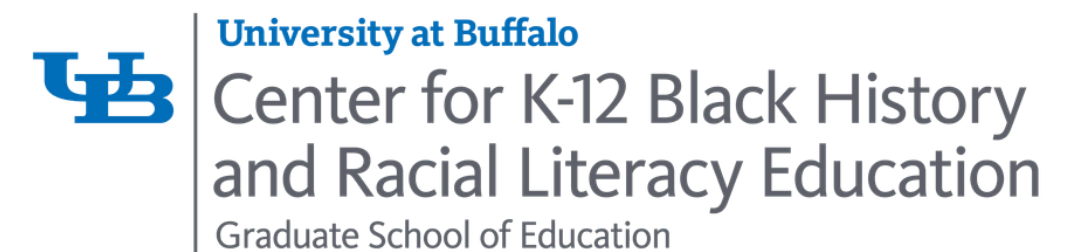
Imagine we won, what would a day look like?

What is a “glimpse of impossible possibility” in your organizing?

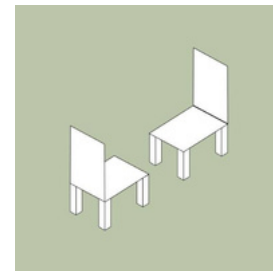
# Co-sponsors



# Co-sponsors



# Co-sponsors



# Co-sponsors

