

His Father's Namesake

Lesson 5: Statues and Symbols

Essential Questions

How was the Haymarket Affair memorialized by the various groups involved in the event? How do various groups view Haymarket today? Why has Haymarket proven so difficult to represent in a memorial?

Desired Understandings

Students will understand that different people have viewed the Haymarket Affair in different ways, from the time it occurred to the present day. They will understand that while historical occurrences are complex and multifaceted, tributes and monuments often capture only part of the story.

Knowledge

Students will know the features, locations, and history of Chicago's two major Haymarket memorials. They will know the conflicting messages conveyed by the monuments and how to express their own interpretations through a creative work.

Skills

Students will use their analytical and language arts skills to interpret primary and secondary historical sources. They will use their creative skills to make an artistic work and their writing skills to explain and support the rationale behind it.

Illinois Learning Standards

English Language Arts

- Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
- Goal 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras, and ideas.
- Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
- Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
- Goal 5: Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information.

Social Science

- Goal 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the United States.
- Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States, and other nations.
- Goal 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States.
- Goal 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

Fine Arts

- Goal 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced.

In This Lesson

After considering the symbolism and legacy of Chicago's two Haymarket memorials, students will create their own artistic tribute to Haymarket through poetry, song, sculpture, or another medium. The story element of resolution is addressed. This lesson was researched and written by Jackson Potter.



Activity

As a bell-ringer activity, have students read the handout on Haymarket Statues and Symbols at the end of this lesson. Follow up with a group discussion about why Haymarket has proven so difficult to represent in a memorial.

Next, tell students they will be creating their own Haymarket memorial. This can be a drawing, poem, collage, song, clay sculpture, or any other medium chosen at their (or your) discretion.

After students have finished their creative work, they should write a four-sentence rationale for it. This should answer the following four questions: 1) Who did you choose to honor with your memorial? Why? 2) Why did you choose the particular image or images for your memorial? 3) Why do you think so many of the past efforts to commemorate the Haymarket incident have failed? 4) Why is your creative work a fitting memorial?

Students can finish up by presenting and critiquing the work.

Materials & Resources

- **Copies of the Haymarket Statues and Symbols handout** (at the end of this lesson)
- **Drawing supplies** (optional)
- **Modeling clay** (optional)

Instructional Notes

I used modeling clay with my classes for this activity because it is relatively inexpensive and can be recycled. If you also choose to use clay, it's a good idea to create your own sculpture to serve as inspiration. (I sculpted a worker pumping his fist and holding a hammer.)

Extension Activities

Journaling assignment: On May Day in 2006, over 1.5 million people nationwide took part in a march for immigrant rights. Why did they choose to march on May Day and how does their cause relate to issues raised by the Chicago anarchists?

Journaling assignment: Compare and contrast Illinois Governor George Ryan's 2000 moratorium on the death penalty with Governor John Peter Altgeld's pardoning of the remaining Haymarket prisoners in 1893. Who, if either, was the more heroic?

Handout: Statues and Symbols

By Olivia Mahoney

Source: *Chicago: Crossroads of America*, ©2006 by the Chicago Historical Society.



Like the event itself, the Haymarket Affair created a contentious legacy. On Memorial Day in 1889, the Chicago police erected a commemorative statue to their fallen comrades in Haymarket Square. Depicting a policeman raising his right arm in a protective gesture, the statue remained in place until a streetcar damaged it in 1925. Restored and moved to Union Park, it was returned to an area near Haymarket, but Vietnam War protestors defaced the statue on May 4, 1968. The following year, the Weathermen faction of the Students for a Democratic Society, who revered Chicago's anarchists, claimed responsibility for blowing up the statue twice. In 1972, the statue found a more secure home in the lobby of the Central Police Headquarters, but it was moved again in 1976 to the Timothy J. O'Connor Police Training Academy.

Similarly, anarchist supporters dedicated a monument in Forest Park's Waldheim Cemetery in 1893 near the graves of Spies, Parsons, Engel, Fischer, and Lingg. An imposing figure of Justice, ready to draw the sword, places a laurel wreath on the head of a fallen worker. Inscribed on the base are the final words of August Spies: "The day will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you are throttling today." The remains of twenty-five supporters lie nearby, including those of Lucy Parsons; Emma Goldman, noted anarchist and feminist deported by the U.S. government in 1919; and the ashes of William "Big Bill" Haywood, founder of the International Workers of the World.

More than a century later, the Haymarket Affair remains highly controversial, capable of stirring heated debate over its meaning and place in public memory. While many view the incident as a hallowed moment in the long struggle for workers' rights, others consider the anarchists' extreme views and violent methods dangerous to a democratic society. Nonetheless, in 2004, Chicago erected a monument to free speech and the labor

Handout: Statues and Symbols (continued)



movement at Desplaines and Halsted streets, near Haymarket Square. That same year, the city named a neighborhood park after Lucy Parsons, creating anger among many members of the Chicago Police Department. A watershed event, the Haymarket Affair will undoubtedly remain a lightning rod of controversy. Unlike the Great Chicago Fire, which inspired stories about the city's survival and recovery, the Haymarket Affair surfaced troubling questions about class, economic justice, workers' rights, and the limits of free speech in America.