

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with John Silva

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Education is Key - Civics Education* Oral History project

Interview # ECE-A-L-2021-017

John Silva, Senior Director of Education and Training for the News Literacy Project, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key – Civics Education* Oral History project.

## Interview Date & Location

Date: Jun 1, 2021      Location: Telephonic interview

Interview Format: Digital

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_      Total Time: 1:30 / 1.5 hrs.

Transcript being  
processed

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on August 10, 2021.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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## Abstract

### John Silva, *Education is Key – Civics*, ECE-A-L-2021-017

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** John Silva was born in San Diego, California. He graduated from Samuel Morris High School in 1989 and while there participated in the school's Junior ROTC program and took flying lessons. After high school, John served one tour with the Marines. Upon leaving the Corps, John worked in security and in the tech field in Washington D.C. and Chicago. While in Chicago, John graduated in 1974/1994 from the University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC), majoring in History. He then taught social studies for thirteen years at Farragut Career Academy High School, part of the Chicago Public School system, then at the Lindblom Math and Science Academy, and then Disney II Magnet High School. In 2017 John joined Senior Director of Education and Training. At the time of the interview he served as the project's Senior Director of Education and Training. John earned a MA from the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign) in Education and E-Learning. In 2012, John became a National Board-Certified Teacher.

During this interview John explores how to teach media literacy using the News Literacy project model. He discusses pairing educators with local journalists, SIFT (Stop-Investigate-Find-Trace) a weekly newsletter covering misinformation, educator resources on-line, Checkology, grades 6-12, News Rooms for Classrooms, and Get Smart About the News newsletter. He covers some of the current issues in journalism, including the decline in local/state coverage, the rise of social media and its use by the younger generation, monitoring for political media bias, recognizing straw man arguments, echo chambers usage, and blurring the line between fact with opinion. He also examined the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and how the pandemic did help promote on-line resources. The formation of the News Literacy project was discussed, including the support of thirty news organizations.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** News Literacy Project; Newsrooms for Classrooms; SIFT newsletter; "Get Smart about the News" newsletter; teacher training for civics; decline of state & local coverage; social media; impact on media literacy; Checkology; news literacy during COVID-19 pandemic;

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