

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Hilary Conklin, PhD

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

Interview # ECE-A-L-2020-017

Dr. Hilary Conklin, a DePaul University professor who trains teachers in the social studies and pedagogy of civics education, 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 dates & location:

Date: Feb. 12, 2020      Location: DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

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

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

Transcript being  
processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_      Total Time: 1:25 / 1.42 hrs

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

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## Abstract

Hillary Conklin, *Education is Key-Civics*, ECE-A-L-2020-017

**Biographical Information/Overview of Interview:** Hillary Conklin was born in North Carolina. Having parents who worked in universities who often moved, Hilary lived in North Carolina, Alabama, Massachusetts and Wales while growing up. She went to high school at Amherst Regional High School in Massachusetts, and received a BA degree from Swathmore College, where she majored in sociology, anthropology, and education. Her Master of Art in Teaching (MAT) degree was earned at Brown University in 1999. She earned a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 2006 in Curriculum and Instruction. Her work experiences include the Teachers' Network, New York City, High Five Tickets the Arts, NYC, a middle school teacher at Franklin, MA and at Providence, RI, and an assistant professorship at DePaul University where she instructs on teacher education and secondary social studies methods. Her research has been in teacher preparation, pedagogy of teacher education, social studies curriculum, civic and democratic education, and middle grade education. She has written about Action Civics-Project Soapbox, Justice Oriented Teacher Education, and middle grade education.

Dr. Conklin examines how civics education, the new Illinois social studies standards, and the C3 Framework (College, Career, and Civic Life) fits into pre-teaching experiences in clinical, student teaching and social studies methods classes that are required for DePaul social studies majors. She also discusses the work done at DePaul in preparing future social studies teachers in presenting controversial topics, having well structured service projects, and in creating high level simulations. Examples include the Project Soapbox an Action Civics project along with justice oriented projects In talks about creating fun, action type activities for middle schoolers using her Joyful Learning product. Conklin also reviews the experiences novice teachers get in classroom opportunities prior to student teaching. Challenges in teaching social studies education are covered, including the decline in candidate numbers, bilingual education and the balance between content and inquiry in social studies.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** instructing teachers on how to do civics education; requirements for prospective teachers in Social Studies; new Illinois social studies standards; Project Soap Box; teaching controversial subjects; civics for middle school students; bilingual or special education; service projects in civics education; non-profit teacher opportunities

**Notes to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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# **EXCERPTS Hilary Conklin**

11-Project Soapbox activities

20-changes in social studies education at DePaul & 54 -content/inquiry

27-Joyful learning in the middle grades

34-politics of schooling

103-issues in media literacy