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## My Family, Their History: Using Exploratory Inquiry & Pragmatic Methods to Learn History

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**My Family, Their History**

**Using Exploratory Inquiry & Pragmatic Methods to Learn History**

By

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Social and Behavioral Sciences, Social History

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## **Abstract**

History education is at a crossroads. The availability of information at our fingertips has the potential to change how the non-historian sees history and the other social sciences. This capstone researched ways the non-historian can utilize the changing face of history education by implementing the pragmatic methods of John Dewey's education philosophy called instrumentalism. Principal issues discussed include the pros and cons of out-of-classroom history education, utilization of exploratory inquiry for research and the usefulness of primary sources for a historiography. To apply instrumentalism ideals and methods, I created a historiography about my ancestors and how their lives intertwined with United States' history from the Civil War to the Dust Bowl era.

## **Introduction**

History education is at a crossroads. The availability of information at our fingertips has the potential to change how the non-historian sees history and the other social sciences. The ways to obtain historical fact is changing, but how does it compare to the information received through academia? How does the historian entice the non-historian into learning history? The accessibility to history education is growing and its availability through means such as YouTube, Instagram, local history, and public library programs can be a way to lure the non-historian into this education genre. My capstone researched ways the non-historian can utilize the changing

face of history education by implementing the pragmatic methods of John Dewey's education philosophy called instrumentalism.

To understand the usefulness of this philosophy, I compared how modern academics and academic institutions are applying instrumentalism-styled teaching methods out of the classroom or through institutions open for public use. With my understanding and utilization of instrumentalism-style research, I created historiographical essay on a subject that is a growing interest of mine. A historiography is the writing of a particular facet of history, so I carefully considered my topic to write about and to whom this story will be told.<sup>1</sup> I chose to research the history of my ancestors and dwindled down my family tree to tell the story of my 2x great-grandmother Viola Moore Fox's family and how their lives intertwined with United States history during the Civil War to the Dust Bowl era.

So, how can one apply such a broad theory like instrumentalism a historiography? We can include oral histories, comparison of literature, visits to museums, and historic sites. To give a modern example, imagine how many times we use exploratory inquiry and research to google the answer to everyday questions. How old is that ghost town we pass while on a road trip or why a public park has a statue of a historic figure we have never heard of? When we go on craft beer or winery tour, the tour guide may teach the history of craft beer or mention the building they are housed in or location they sit on used to be a paper factory during the Industrial Revolution. In my household, we are notorious for frantically searching for information to tell us if the historical-based television show or movie we are watching really happened the way the show proclaims it did. With modern technology, there are new ways for the non-historian to

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<sup>1</sup> Princeton University Library, "About Historiography," December 21, 2018, <https://libguides.princeton.edu/historiography>.

unknowingly learn and enjoy history, and hopefully entice the non-historian to move towards furthering their curiosity with academically-backed history.

Research methods I used for this capstone were a combination of archival research, oral history, and the insertion of facts from historiographies written by professional historians or educators. Oral family history and primary documents such as family photographs and letters propelled the start of my exploratory inquiry. Furthermore, exploratory research about my ancestors' lives mostly derived from primary sources found through archival research using online websites like The National Archives, the Library of Congress and Ancestry.com, my local public libraries and online websites for historical institutions. As a social history student and for the purpose of this capstone, I felt it was important to understand what is needed to create a historical narrative and know where to find that family-history connection. While I am aware that there is an infinite amount of information I can gather about the life of my ancestors, I feel the inclusion of different points-of-view are constantly changing what we know about history, society, and past events. Therefore, the historiography I created may change or be added to as I uncover new historical perspectives and primary documents.

### **Literature Review**

The philosophy behind instrumentalism is large and can seem obscure. It encompasses the idea that learning, and knowledge has no real boundaries, and many academics and academic institutions have been implementing instrumentalism type of learning techniques to make education more user-friendly. At its core, this style of learning focuses on creating a hypothesis

and using exploratory inquiry and exploratory research to come to a conclusion.<sup>2</sup> In this literature review, I examined the ideology behind instrumentalism, how it is being used in education today and how instrumentalism methods can be applied to the writing of a historiography that is created for the non-historian.

The educator, psychologist and social philosopher, John Dewey was one of the proponents for social change, defender of rights for everyman and reformation of the education system. He is known as one of the founders of pragmatism, creator of instrumentalism and the philosophy of education. His ideas focused on the human experience, as well as how the experience can be improved upon. Dewey believed that man is a creature of habit that must embrace change to evolve with his environment, and that man's lack of control over change can lead to unexpected outcomes, therefore, man must abandon old habits, use creativity and critical thinking skills to adapt. Exposure to the various methods of learning such as "hand-on" methods and the freedom to explore becomes the essential tools to empower humankind. His instrumentalism theory also encompasses the idea that knowledge has no real boundaries or final conclusions, and that finding an answer does not mean it is the only answer.<sup>3</sup>

Instrumentalism ideals have been applied to many aspects of society such as education, politics, religion. For example, this philosophy and methodology has been used to update school curriculum to industry or workforce standards. Research done by Jamie Brownlee focused on promoting more equitable society through education reform, and she uses the rebuilding of elementary and secondary schools for the communities affected by the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina as an example. She argues that dominating social groups controlled education standards

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<sup>2</sup> James S. Gouinlock, "John Dewey," In Encyclopedia Britannica. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., October 16, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Dewey>.

<sup>3</sup> Biography.com Editors, "John Dewey Biography," The Biography.com website, April 2, 2014, <http://www.biography.com/people/john-dewey-9273497>; Gouinlock, "John Dewey."

and applied their own idea of instrumentalism values before and during the rebuild of the destroyed areas.<sup>4</sup> The idea in creating an a more equitable society through education reform also comes from Margaret Salazar-Porzio. She applies instrumentalism ideals to create opportunities for students to learn outside of the classroom by creating partnerships between universities and public institutions like museums. This type of education reform generates hands-on learning opportunities for college students which allows them to be better prepared for the workforce, as well as creating equity for the student and community.<sup>5</sup>

My interest in the application of instrumentalism is how it encourages critical thinking skills by using exploratory inquiry and practical learning methods to obtain information outside of the classroom. How can out-of-classroom experience aid in exploratory learning of history? What happens when exploratory learning is done at a non-academic institution or the knowledge presented is not academically backed? Instrumentalism's use of diverse types of learning methods can be beneficial to the student as much as a sponsoring institution. To bring history education outside of the classroom, various historians and educators have stepped beyond the boundaries of the textbook to utilize local history hotspots or personal subject matter for critical thinking assignments. In research done by public historian Benjamin Filene, he refers to the changing face of history-makers as "outsiders," but not in a condescending way. These "outsiders" are the genealogist, reenactors and people working at historic sites, bloggers, etc. who are passionate about history and are finding new ways of engaging the public. His research

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<sup>4</sup> Jamie Brownlee, "Elite Power and Educational Reform: An Historiographical Analysis of Canada and the United States," *Paedagogica Historica* 49, no. 2 (April 2013): 214–216, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00309230.2012.709523>.

<sup>5</sup> Margaret Salazar-Porzio, "The Ecology of Arts and Humanities Education: Bridging the Worlds of Universities and Museums," *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 14, no. 3 (July 2015): 274–92, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022215583949>.

addresses the pros and cons of the “outsiders” presentation of history versus museums and academic institutions.

Although Filene looks for statistics, he finds no tangible way to measure how engaged the public was at the time of their visit. What he does see is that there was a decline in museum attendance, and points out a few museums and programs that changed their focus to engage the surrounding community; as well as, the few museums that gives the patrons an opportunity to voice their opinion in some public forum.<sup>6</sup> While some have joined with universities to give students hands-on learning experiences, other museums are creating community partnerships by focusing on the local issues, local history or exhibits that reflect the community. The idea is to create a learning environment that is engaging to an audience, as well as providing the community with long-term equity in what the institution has to offer.<sup>7</sup> Comparisons to Filene’s work can also be made by archivist Michelle Caswell work to deter the misrepresentation of the marginalized communities in collections managed for public viewing or access. While Filene’s point is to be inclusive by representing the community, Caswell works with the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA) to include collections given from community. SAADA’s endeavor includes presenting an accurate history from the perspective of the loaner and the materials or history they provide to be archived. Their efforts also include creating access points and policy that reflect the community values. More importantly, communal archive work helps bring an identity through collective memories, and more so, avoiding misrepresentation of their

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<sup>6</sup> Benjamin Filene, "Passionate Histories: “Outsider” History-Makers and What They Teach Us," *The Public Historian* 34, no. 1 (2012): 11-12, 14.

<sup>7</sup> Brownlee, 214–216; Filene, 12-23; Salazar-Porzio, 274–92.



history because of control by outside parties.<sup>8</sup> Both Filene and Caswell's work relies directly on the community to contribute what will be archived therefore empowering the community.

The long-term effects of the collection, access to and presentation of communal archives can have positive monetary value for its community,<sup>9</sup> but in the case of public school education, how far can an educator go before being pulled back by administration because of standardized rules? Community-focused history versus standardized education is research also done by Michael Lovorn, Alexander König and Daniel Bernsen. Lovorn uses historical landmarks and local history to engage his students inside and out of the classroom. Besides his own in-classroom work, his research is based on data received from preservice teachers who tests his methods with their own students. His educational reform goal is to help his students become critical thinkers and to empower new teachers to better engage their students with history of the local community. What is worth noting about Lovorn's research is the understanding that there can be external forces, such as financial patronage or governmental standards that may be imposed on what or how history is presented.<sup>10</sup>

König and Bernsen's research goes a step further from Lovorn's work by introducing current technology into historical research. Their instrumentalism method involves students using mobile devices and other technology for exploratory inquiry, project-based learning and to promote social interaction with historical sights. They give suggestions on ways to reform research methods but admit that more research needs to be done on utilizing on-the-go research on mobile devices. Furthermore, they conclude that giving students more freedom to explore

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<sup>8</sup> Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor, and Mario H. Ramirez, "To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives 1," *The American Archivist* 79, no. 1 (June 2016): 58–59, 61.

<sup>9</sup> Caswell, 61-62.

<sup>10</sup> Michael G. Lovorn, "Historiography in the Methods Course: Training Preservice History Teachers to Evaluate Local Historical Commemorations," *The History Teacher* 45, no. 4 (2012): 573-578.

history on their terms and to communicate their findings in a community forum will promote historical consciousness.<sup>11</sup> Lovorn, König and Bernsen's methods all allow the learner to use critical thinking skills to connect-the-dots. Although the newer issues on internet and social media's influence on museums, parks and other institutions is a whole topic onto itself, it is to be seen whether out-of-classroom experience and the ease of availability can have a positive or negative effect on future history education.

After the exploratory inquiry and out-of-classroom research methods are complete, how do historians create an engaging historiography? In a 1938 article written by Carl Becker, he gives a simplified description of what a historiography is, what type of information should be included and how writers of history should analyze the information given by the sources available at that time. He described the writing of a historiography as a manual of information (knowledge) about histories and summarizations (annotations) of historians' work pertaining to a specific subject, era, or period of significance. What is also important in understanding Becker's analysis is that it can be limited to what is available at the time of information gathering. Therefore, he insists that the historiographer must acquire a sense of imaginative understanding to look past the records, personal accounts and previously written historiographies. As a result, a historiography is a cumulative history about a history that includes the facts, purpose, a past that was acted upon, and aesthetic to make it live again.<sup>12</sup>

This idea of imaginative understanding was important to the creation of my historiography. While I was only able to use the information available during the time of my

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<sup>11</sup> Alexander König and Daniel Bernsen, "Mobile Learning in History Education," *Journal of Educational Media, Memory, and Society* 6, no. 1 (March 1, 2014): 107–23, <https://doi.org/10.3167/jemms.2014.060106>.

<sup>12</sup> Carl Becker, "What Is Historiography?," *The American Historical Review* 44, no. 1 (October 1938): 20–28.

research, I am still aware that instrumentalism ideology dictates that later research may provide a different outcome. My ancestor's story can change or become more defined as documentation is uncovered or more historical accounts are revealed. Becker's analysis parallels historian John Arnold's point of view on history-telling and historical context. By engaging us with a story of the past, Arnold introduces the audience to history and historiography by telling a true story about a murder and inquisition that took place between the years 1301-1308. The primary resource and historical context he used to create the historiography entices us to ask questions about why the murder took place, thus changing what can be thought of as just a story in the past into verifiable history. Similarly, both historians emphasized the importance to including diverse documents and perspectives, as well as warns of the dangers of only using information that will lead to conclusion that writer or audience wants to hear.<sup>13</sup>

To understand how to create an engaging historiography I compared other writings that used primary and secondary sources on the topics related to my ancestors. For example, there are many comparative stories from soldiers' points-of-view and soldiers fighting on opposite sides during the Civil War. In James McDonough's article describing the last days at Stones River, he utilizes personal letters to give a vivid description of the soldier's life on the battlefields, and what is unique is the soldier's difference in tone when writing to his mother versus his wife. The same can be said of William MacLoughlin's book on the Cherokee Nation. MacLoughlin is careful to give both sides of history and uses oral histories, letters and other primary documentation to give a vivid picture of life for the Cherokee people after the Trail of

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<sup>13</sup> John H. Arnold, "Questions About Murder and History," in *History: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1–14.

Tears.<sup>14</sup> In my opinion, McDonough's comparison in the different emotion of the letters is a good example of how descriptions can effect audience's perception of the information, and in MacLoughlin's inclusion of both sides of history gives the reader a sense an accurate history through multiple perspectives.

The same comparisons can be made about the historians' approach in creating a historiography about subjects occurring in the same era. For example, both Walter Buenger and James Patterson's work relies heavily on statistical information and both authors provide well-formed divisions of how that information is presented.<sup>15</sup> Although this style can be extremely informative, it may not be the most engaging for the non-historian to take in. In contrast to Buenger and Patterson's historiographies are works by Donald Worster and James Gregory. While they also have statistical information, they both include a story-telling quality to their work. Immediately, Worster uses descriptive details to bring the reader into the challenging era called the Dust Bowl. On the other hand, Gregory includes short, interesting oral histories that follow a timeline and physical route taken by the people experiencing the effects of the same Dust Bowl.<sup>16</sup>

Interestingly, Worster and Gregory use of statistical information is blended in with their descriptive storytelling. It is to be said that Buenger and Patterson's information is relevant and can aid my understanding of life during my ancestors' time, but in order to create a historiography for my reader to enjoy; I will need descriptive storytelling to keep my audience

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<sup>14</sup> William Gerald MacLoughlin, *After the Trail of Tears: The Cherokees Struggle for Sovereignty, 1839-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 52-55; James L. McDonough, "The Last Day At Stones River — Experiences of a Yank and a Reb," 1981, 3-12.

<sup>15</sup> Walter L Buenger, "'This Wonder Age': The Economic Transformation of Northeast Texas, 1900-1930," 1995, 518-49; James T Patterson, "The New Deal and the States," 1967, 70-84.

<sup>16</sup> Donald Worster, *Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the 1930s*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); James N. Gregory, "The Limits of Opportunity," in *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 36-77.

engaged. To balance my family's history with United States' history, I want to include accurate history from multiple perspectives, the use of popular or easily accessible websites, and primary sources that may or may be familiar to various family members.

In an article by Christine Sleeter, she uses her family tree to demonstrate how the injustices from early United States' colonization can still weigh-in on the prospects of current and future populations. As she retraces her family's history, she questions how her family's proclamation of being "hard workers" does not fit in or complete the narrative of the United States' horrendous past with the Indigenous people or African slave population. Information found in primary sources, such as land grants and vital records tells the story of how her family benefited from the social injustices caused by colonization of the land and profits gained from African slave labor. She coins the term "critical family history" as a challenge for family historians to look at how institutions such as race relations and colonization fit into the narrative.<sup>17</sup> How family history caused or benefitted in these divisions may not always be apparent, so she uses exploratory inquiry to look at where her own family's wealth stems from. Sleeter's questions about her family and the results reminds me that my historiography should focus on how United States' history fits into my ancestors' lives and not try to find places to squeeze my ancestor's life's into history.

Similarly, research done by Julia Bennett looks at how genealogy and family narratives can give the present generation a sense of belonging to the past and identity in current times. Her research focused on the differences between nostalgia and authenticity. Bennett interviewed three people and were not given any real parameters on how to tell the story. Although, some interviews show no real physical connection to their ancestors, their stories were created using

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<sup>17</sup> Christine E. Sleeter, "Critical Family History: Situating Family within Contexts of Power Relationships," *Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 8, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 11–21.

primary documentation, oral histories, or finding connections through physical objects that defined the direction of the town or era. Some interviewees presented a story with a feeling of nostalgia and others created a story as if it were a testimony of past generations. Bennett concluded that a family's story can be nostalgia, authenticity, or mixture of both. It can help bring a connection between the past, present, and future.<sup>18</sup>

The purpose of the historiography I created was to show the non-historian that the door is open to new ways of learning history. Therefore, my family history serves two purposes. I obtained information using pragmatic methods that are available to any person willing to learn history, and secondly, this story will be used to teach my family (non-historians) about their ancestors. Instrumentalism methods was important to this type of research because it required me to look past the general history a student might receive in a classroom setting. Instead, instrumentalism encouraged me to utilize historical documentation available through online research, visit institutions such as public libraries and museums, and to share my findings with other interested parties. The successful creation of a historiography will hopefully lead the non-historian to actively engage in their own journey to learn more.

## **Historiography**

- Introduction: Approaching a Historiography-

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<sup>18</sup> Julia Bennett, "Narrating Family Histories: Negotiating Identity and Belonging through Tropes of Nostalgia and Authenticity," *Current Sociology* 66, no. 3 (May 2018): 449–65, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392115578984>.

When my family talks about our ancestors, they ask questions like where they are from and what hardships they had to endure, but I wanted to take it a step further by knowing who they were and understand how their lives fit into the United States they lived in. I consider myself a novice genealogist using popular sites like Ancestry.com, oral history, family mementos to learn about my family tree, so it is exciting when I uncover relatives that are long forgotten; even more so, when I find family members that we did not know existed. In the past three years some of my mother's siblings decided to apply for their Cherokee Nation's citizenship, so my genealogical research headed in that direction. Shortly after, my sister asked me to create some sort of presentation to streamline the vast amount of information I was uncovering. Conversations later changed to land ownership in Oklahoma, blood quantum, and "casino money" when the first citizenship cards started rolling in. It was mentioned a few times during my childhood that I had a relative who was an "Indian Princess" for which I put in the back burner. Even before entering higher education, I knew this misunderstanding of the indigenous culture in the United State was common and clearing up this royalty issue was important to me. What I am discovering about my ancestors is deeper and richer than having one so-called "Indian Princess."

Over the past few years of my genealogical research, I learned that my American family is just as large as my Filipino family. My maternal grandfather John Fox (Caucasian) grew up Texas, was stationed in the Pacific before and during World War II. After he was released from service, he chose to stay where he was stationed in the Philippines. Shortly after, he married my grandmother, Maria Natividad (Filipina) and they had 7 children and each of their children moved to the United States before reaching adulthood. Being born to a United States citizen granted my mother and her siblings' immediate citizenship. My parents met in San Francisco

shortly after arriving to the United States. My father is Filipino, so I grew up in a mixed-race, but culturally Filipino household. Since both of my parents grew up in the Philippines, they were both bilingual/biliterate in English and Tagalog and the only difference I noticed was that the Fox family looks like a mix of Caucasian and Asian.

As I grew up in a middle-class suburb of San Francisco, California, I learned what I now know was a very one-sided or limited history taught during the 1980s to early 1990s. Learning about United States and hearing little blurbs about my Fox family made me curious about who my Fox ancestors were. I wanted to find a connection between the people and events that happened in United States history, but it was not until I reached my late twenties that I engaged in the exploratory inquiry and did a search on my “Indian Princess” surname, Coodey. Initially, I found some online evidence that the Coodey family was related to Cherokee Principal Chief John Ross, but John and Ross are common names. It was not until the emergence of online genealogy and the massive uploads of vital government statistics that I was able to take full advantage of exploratory research into my family.

In 2014, I decided to go back to school and finish my bachelor’s degree at California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB). As my hobby of genealogical research continued, I started to feel confident that I am direct descendant of Principal Chief John Ross’s sister Jane. The combination of my academia and out-of-classroom exploratory research made me realize the importance of knowing more than just names and dates attached to the Fox family. My focus moved to understanding how the good and bad of United States history fit into their lives. During a lecture in the fall semester of 2017, Dr. Rebecca Bales instructed us about the Indigenous population known as the Five Civilized Tribes and their forced removal from the eastern section of the United States to the Oklahoma state area.



As I gazed at the map during Dr. Bales presentation, I realized my capstone topic should focus on my Fox family. I approached Dr. Bales after the session and told her of my capstone decision, and of course in Dr. Bales' fashion; she encouraged me to research what I am passionate about. After careful analysis of my family tree and understanding what my family's genealogical needs were, I decided to focus on my 2x great-grandmother Viola Moore Fox and her family during the Civil War to the Dust Bowl era of United States' history. The purpose of the forthcoming historiography is more than just a history lesson, it demonstrates my use of instrumentalism method and more importantly, it will be part of the story I tell my family about our ancestors that lived in the United States.

There is no real date I can remember or time that I realized that I was mixed-race, and it did not seem strange that I have always remembered my Filipina grandmother living in the United States, but my American grandfather was still in the Philippines. The only memory I have of him was when I was five years old and he was brought back to the United States because he was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver. The only contact I remember having with him before he was passed away was when he was laying down on the couch and he told me that I was different from my other cousins. To be honest, I do know what he meant or that if he said the same thing to any of my other cousins, or he was trying to make connections to family he was soon leaving. Sometime after he passed away, my grandmother moved in with us, and I became fascinated with this covered basket that I knew held personal documents of my grandfather and his family.

The first primary sources I got to see about my ancestors was a picture that was taken of my grandfather for some sort of identification and a hand-written card from Samuel Ray Fox (my great-grandfather) regarding the birth of his son, John Fox (my grandfather). This card was

sent to Samuel Ray's sister Maude. It is dated September 26, 1918 and it says my grandfather was eleven pounds when he was born. Over time, I started to wonder who these people were and why have I not heard any stories about them.

There are many ways to search for government documents like vital statistics and census records but to be pragmatic by utilizing means that are available to most people with a decent internet connection; I logged into Ancestry.com. This online service can be used to create your own genealogical family tree or view ones created by other users for a tiered fee. This website has simple search tools that allows you to sort through thousands of government documents from The National Archives, various state/county/city vital statistics and other pieces of information added by its users. Fortunately, my inquiries of cross-referencing the Fox/Coody/Ross family name opened the flood gates to bits of information about my ancestors during the Civil War to Dust Bowl eras. Because this is a public site, I become aware of that I was continually searching, sorting, questioning authenticity and re-sorting the information I found online.

-Nathan T. Moore and Daniel R. Coodey-

I decided to start my historiography with the Civil War because I believe this period would be familiar to majority of my family. An online search of National Archives and Ancestry.com led me to Viola's father-Nathan T. Moore. Fourteen year old Nathan was listed on the 1850 United States Federal Census living with his parents and siblings in Concord, Ohio and he later comes up again in the 1880 census in Indiana, married with children and employed as a schoolteacher.<sup>19</sup> Since there was a gap in his existence between 1860 and 1870 census, I thought

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<sup>19</sup> "Seventh Census of the United States, 1850," National Archives Microfilm Publication (Washington, D.C.: United States Census Bureau, n.d.), Record Group 29, National Archives and Records

it was necessary to check if this was due to him being a soldier in the Civil War. The partnership between the National Archives and search sites like fold3.com create easy access to Civil War pension information. Using information gathered from the census, I was able to find that Nathan T. Moore became a Union soldier for the Ohio 59th Infantry Regiment, Company I from October 2, 1861 to November 1, 1864.<sup>20</sup>

Doing a google search of Nathan T. Moore did not produce fruitful historic information, so I broadened my search to see if the Ohio 59<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, Company I were involved in any noted battles during the Civil War. The Battle of Stones River in Tennessee is a lesser known but was equally devastating fight that saw mass casualties. It started on December 31, 1862 and took thousands of lives on both sides. The amount of injured, lives lost, and incredibly low, somber morale of the soldiers prevented the movement of the armies until the summer. At a low point in the battle, the Ohio 59th was outflanked, so the soldiers panicked and retreated. Fortunately, cannon fire helped turn the battle around. After the Union's win, Colonel James Perry Fyffe of the Ohio 59th writes to his wife to expressing concerns for his soldiers' morale due to the lack of letters from home.<sup>21</sup>

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Administration; "Tenth Census of the United States, 1880," National Archives Microfilm Publication (Washington, D.C.: United States Census Bureau, n.d.), Record Group 29, National Archives and Records Administration.

<sup>20</sup> "Moore, Nathan T. Civil War Pension Index," Fold3, n.d., <https://www.fold3.com/image/5805453>.

<sup>21</sup> "The Battle of Stones River," National Park Service, February 2, 2020, <https://www.nps.gov/stri/index.htm>; "Details of the Battle: Thrilling Details of the Tremendous Struggle on Wednesday," *The New York Times*, January 8, 1863; James L McDonough, "The Last Day At Stones River — Experiences of a Yank and a Reb," 1981, 3-12.



Fig. 1 Mathews, A.E. The Battle of Stone River or Murfreesboro'. 1900. Photograph, 51.2 x 68.1 cm. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006678645>.

At first, the information about Nathan T. Moore was basic, and I discovered that the Moore family name is common in Ohio's public records. When I realized he might have fought in the Civil War, I decided to look past the census records to understand what life was like for a Union soldier. By searching online for archived newspapers, I found that *The New York Times* published historical accounts of the battle. Since I do not own a subscription to this newspaper, I used the Salinas Public Library's microfilm of *The New York Times* to email a copy the article to myself. Doing further exploratory inquiry online led me to the Library of Congress webpage which had multiple copies of a sketch by a soldier who fought in the battle (fig. 1). After understanding its grand scale, I eventually googled the National Park Service and found they offers tour, hikes, volunteer programs and living history days to better immerse yourself in this historical event and location.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> "The Battle of Stones River," National Park Service, February 2, 2020, <https://www.nps.gov/stri/index.htm>

As I contemplated the next ancestor, I asked myself if it would be just as easy finding another ancestor who fought for the Confederates. Another important question I had was whether I can find personal stories about my ancestors using exploratory research, so it was to my delight that I stumbled across Daniel R. Coodey. Besides being a Confederate soldier, I took a leap of faith and found him in a piece of documented history that led me to think of Mr. Coodey as my “renegade” ancestor. When I first looked into my American ancestry, I started with my great-grandmother Betty Coody, because she was the Cherokee “Indian princess” I heard about during my childhood. At first, I crossed referenced ancestral names of prominent Cherokee figures, and found that many were repeated. In order to have some certainty of which family line to follow, I took a step back and used the research that other genealogist and other historians had done on Betty’s family.

The Cherokee Nation is well documented, so I relied on following information taken from published books about the prominent Cherokee figures. Although I cannot always be one hundred percent confident of my family tree research, taking a careful look at the history of who I think are my ancestors is just as important to me. There is always the possibility that I am following the wrong lineage, but until I find further evidence or consult a Cherokee historian, I will tell the history I learned about the Cherokee Nation in relation to who I think are my Cherokee ancestors.

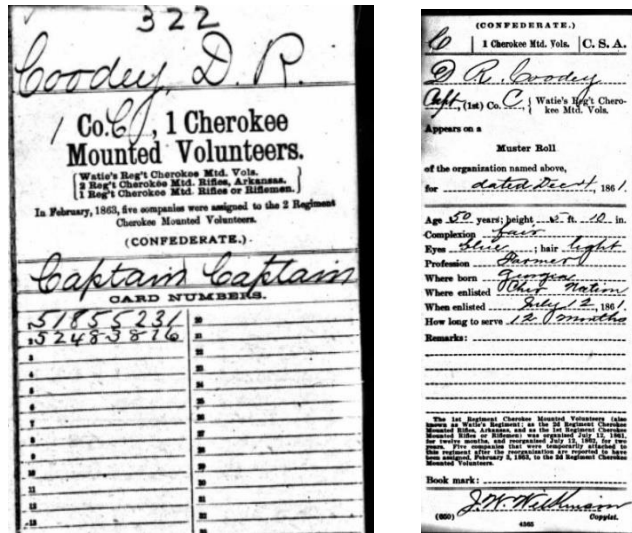


Fig. 2 Daniel R. Coodey's Confederate service record. ("Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations Raised Directly by the Confederate Government," n.d. The National Archives and Records Administration. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/22014715>.)

What I was taught in middle and high school was that the Cherokee Nation sided with the Union during the Civil War, so it was not a surprise to learn in college that not every Cherokee citizen that fought in the Civil War was on the Union side. In an extremely simplistic explanation, the split was between John Ross (Ross Party) and his current opposition Stand Watie (Treaty Party). Based on the quick search on the military record website fold3.com, I clicked on the link to The National Archives and confirmed the information. As a nephew of Cherokee Principal Chief John Ross, I assumed he would follow in the footsteps of the Ross Party during the Civil War. To my surprise, Coodey's military service record indicates that his enrollment was contrary to Ross's attempts to keep the Cherokees neutral and later with the Union side. On July 12, 1861, Coodey enlisted and joined Stand Watie's Cherokee Mounted Volunteers as a Captain for Company C (fig. 2). Watie's regiments were growing in popularity in the South and within the Confederacy, and with the continually, expanding rift between the

full and mixed-blood population, there were indications that South would quickly win the war.<sup>23</sup> Although I am curious to learn more about Watie's regiments and their role in the Civil War, I stayed focused on my ancestors.

My exploratory inquiry then centered around the possibility that Daniel R. Coodey may be a renegade or "black sheep" of the family. Could there have also been factors as to why Coodey chose to go with his uncle's opposition? Regardless, there must have been some contact or closeness between nephew and uncle, so on a whim, I decided to google search the variations of Daniel-Ross-Coodey (Coody) to find a link. Online search results were filled with genealogical and social media information that gave me no indication of who was this man, so decided to check the index of a book I checked out of the public library. Since, the book *After the Trail of Tears: The Cherokees Struggle for Sovereignty, 1839-1880* was already in my possession, I checked his name in the index.

As the Cherokee Nation struggled with their sovereignty after the Trail of Tears, the rift between the Ross and Treaty Party members kept steady with a volley violent acts between each faction and escalating to murder between Ross and Starr family members. In a letter written to his uncle John Ross in December 1844, Coodey tells the story of leading a vigilante posse to regain property stolen by Bean Starr's outlaw gang. The 1840s were filled with lawlessness this particular event stemmed from the fight between the Treaty versus the Ross Party. However, United States newspapers' account of the story shows Coodey's vigilantism as being heroic and does not include the Starr gang's point of view.<sup>24</sup> Sadly enough, I have not found easily accessible evidence on why Coodey switched to follow the Treaty Party leader Stand Watie into the Confederate side of the Civil War. Perhaps more detailed research into the Cherokee's role

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<sup>23</sup> MacLoughlin, 201-221.

<sup>24</sup> "Capture of a Desperado," *Baltimore Daily Commercial*, January 17, 1845; MacLoughlin, 49-55.

in the Civil War will result in some other historical account, documentary or newspaper article that connects Coodey to Watie.

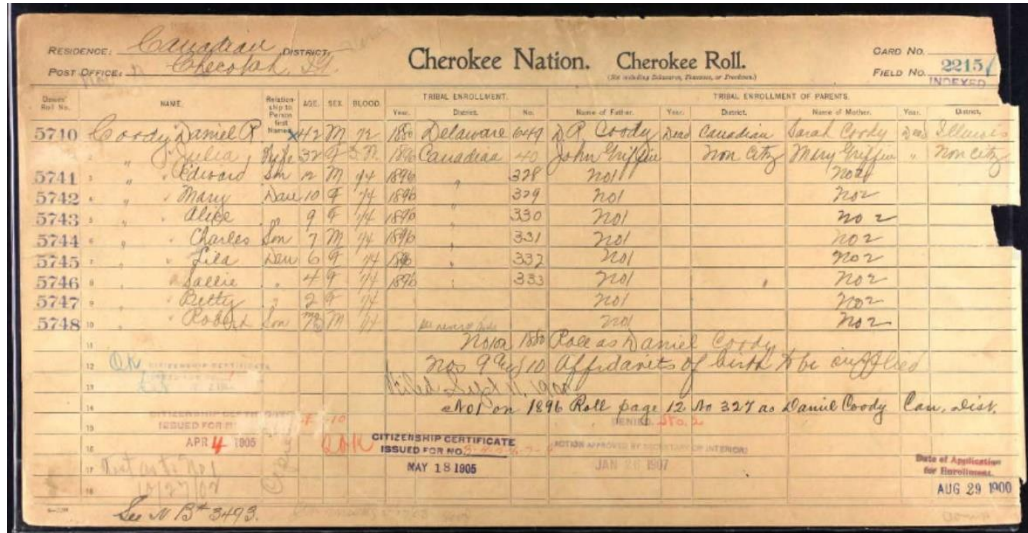


Fig. 3 Daniel Coodey, Jr. and family Cherokee census card in 1900 (“Enrollment Cards for the Five Civilized Tribes,” August 29, 1900. The National Archives and Records Administration.

In 1858, Daniel R. Coodey, Jr. was born in Tahlequah, Cherokee Indian Territory (Oklahoma), he fathered my great-grandmother Betty Coody who was also born in that area.<sup>25</sup> Interestingly, I found Coody, Jr. and his family listed on the 1900 United States Census and enrollment cards for the Cherokee Nation that dated August 29, 1900. Based on the notations of the Cherokee Nation enrollment card, Daniel R. Coody, Jr was making the transition to becoming a United States citizen. Stamped information shows that different members of the family were granted their citizenship in 1905.<sup>26</sup> When understanding my ancestor’s role in the

<sup>25</sup> In the early 1900s, I found that that my Coodey family was written as Coody in which I use to refer to the family name from this point on.

<sup>26</sup> Department of the Interior. Indian Territory Division. ca. 1898-ca. 1907, “Index to the Final Rolls of Citizens and Freedmen of the Five Civilized Tribes in Indian Territory, 3/4/1907,” Textual Records, Final Rolls of the Five Civilized Tribes, 1899 - 1914, March 4, 1907, Record Group 48, National Archives and Records Administration, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/300320>.



United States history, I noticed a piece of telling information included on this document's webpage on The National Archives:

*"'Census Cards' is the informal name for this series. Commonly called the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes, the Dawes Commission was appointed by President Grover Cleveland in 1893 to negotiate with the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Seminole tribes. In return for abolishing their tribal governments and recognizing state and federal laws, tribe members were allotted a share of common property."<sup>27</sup>*

Contrary to what I have learned at university about the Indigenous people, I am discouraged that a government institution dedicated to archiving federal documents would write as a general note that the allotment of property was part of a negotiation. As my knowledge of the Indigenous People's history grows; it is my opinion that the statement is as a misrepresentation of the truth. This is another instance where I need to apply instrumentalism methods to complete the narrative by questioning if there is historical context or reasoning behind the inclusion of this statement and reexamining the original sourced materials.

The enrollment card, in many ways, is where I lost out on understanding where Betty moves throughout history. After a ten year gap, I find eleven year old Betty and her sisters listed in the 1910 United States Census as ward of the "Cherokee Orphanage". I did not have primary source evidence point to Betty's life-changes, so I chose to rely on other Ancestry.com members to learn that both of her parents passed away between 1908-1909. To fill this gap in Betty's life, I need to do further research such as visiting museums focusing on the Cherokee after the Trail of Tears and search other historical accounts that might not be easily available for the purpose this capstone's timeline. For example, learning about Cherokee orphanages in Oklahoma may require a trip to the Cherokee cultural center in the Tahlequah.

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<sup>27</sup> "Enrollment Cards for the Five Civilized Tribes," August 29, 1900, The National Archives and Records Administration, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/251747>.

-Viola B. Moore and the Fox Family-

When I started my capstone's research on my 2x great-grandmother Viola Moore Fox and her family's place in this United States history, I chose to include ancestors during the Civil War. I remember my mother telling me that my grandfather did not want to go back to where he grew up because of the racism, therefore it was necessary for me to include the Nathan T. Moore and Daniel R. Coodey. After the Civil War ended, both men returned to their homes, professions and family. Nathan T. Moore is Viola's father, and eventually, she marries John W. Fox. Their son Samuel Ray Fox marries Betty Coody, the granddaughter of Daniel R. Coodey. Like in a documentary or story about the Civil War, two families from different sides of the conflict eventually marry to become one family. Documentation on Viola's family moves around and how they go about their particular lives is sparse and vague at this time. Based on census records and telephone directories, I learned that family settled in Waxahachie, Texas in the late 1880s.

The decision to base this historiography on Viola depended on the several pieces of evidence. First, my mother recalls my grandfather saying he corresponded with Viola while he was in the military and when he chose to stay in the Philippines after discharging from the military. Second, seeing the letters to and from my grandfather as a prisoner of war during World War II were with Viola. Lastly, pictures of Viola and her family were handed down from my grandmother and were kept in the covered basket I remember from my childhood. At the time of this research, my mother's older siblings are the caretakers of the documents, and I have only been able to scan a few for preservation.

Form 1 1906 REGISTRATION CARD		No. 228
1	Name in full <i>Samuel R. Fox</i>	Age in yrs. <i>25</i>
2	Home address <i>507 Lake Park Ave, Wapahachie Texas</i>	
3	Date of birth <i>Oct - 10 - 1891</i>	
4	Are you (1) a natural-born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which)? <i>natural Born</i>	
5	Where were you born? <i>Mountain Grove Mo.</i>	
6	If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject? <i>Citizen</i>	
7	What is your present trade, occupation, or office? <i>Carpenter 19</i>	
8	By whom employed? <i>Utah Copper</i>	
	Where employed? <i>Magna</i>	
9	Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 18, or a sister or brother under 18, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)? <i>Wife mother &amp; Father</i>	
10	Married or single (which)? <i>married</i> Race (specify which)? <i>Caucasian</i>	
11	What military service have you had? Race: <i>24 mo. ; Nation or State: Mexico - 1910-11 -</i>	
12	Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)?	
I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.		
<i>Samuel R. Fox</i>		<i>3809</i>

Fig. 4 World War I draft card for Samuel Ray Fox (Selective Service System. World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918.” Ancestry.com, n.d. National Archives and Records Administration. <http://www.Ancestry.com>.)

I am also unclear how Betty Coody reached Utah after the Cherokee Orphanage. At some point she met Viola’s son Samuel Ray Fox, and according to his World War I draft card, he was a carpenter for Utah Copper in Magna, Utah, and already married to Betty Coody (fig. 4). My grandfather John Fox was born in 1918 in Alabama. During the first four years of Samuel and Betty’s marriage, they moved from state to state finally settling in Texas where Juanita was born in 1921. At this time, the Southern Plains region saw the effects of the new railroad systems, exploitation of natural resources, population migration, experimentation of new crops and the mechanization of the farm labor. The Moore-Fox family would have been part of the move away from the homestead life to a ownership-labor relations where lands were owned by businesses or individuals away from the physical land, but the cultivated by the local

population.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps, this is why Samuel and his young family worked in various locations with different jobs.

Samuel and family may have lived with or near Viola after Juanita was born, because there were subtle indications of their families' closeness in the family keepsakes. Sometime in the 1925, Betty Coody passed away, and one year later Samuel writes a tribute letter about Betty to his children John and Juanita. It was not until I started my online genealogical research that I read this letter. My mother and I was sorting through the covered basket looking for information her siblings needed to fill out their Cherokee Nation citizen's forms. As we read the letter, my mother noted how neat Samuel's writing was, and I was amazed on how much tangible information these was in the letter that I could use in my research. Samuel writes that Betty recognized herself as member of the Cherokee nation. He also gives clues to them being married in a mountainous area around columbines, which I later uncovered to be Utah. Most importantly, the letter told me of their love and affection of their family, because Samuel writes that part of Betty's last words included his children and his mother Viola (fig 5).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Walter L. Buenger, "'This Wonder Age': The Economic Transformation of Northeast Texas, 1900-1930," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 98, no. 4 (1995): 521-22.

<sup>29</sup> This was a letter written by Samuel Ray Fox to his children, John and Juanita Fox on the one-year death anniversary of their mother Betty. This letter would have been written around February 3, 1926. The contents of this letter gives us information about their family bond, details Betty and Samuel's marriage location, and confirmation of Betty's culture and ethnicity. Besides being of personal value to my family, this letter is the only personally account from Samuel and his connection to Betty, John and Juanita.

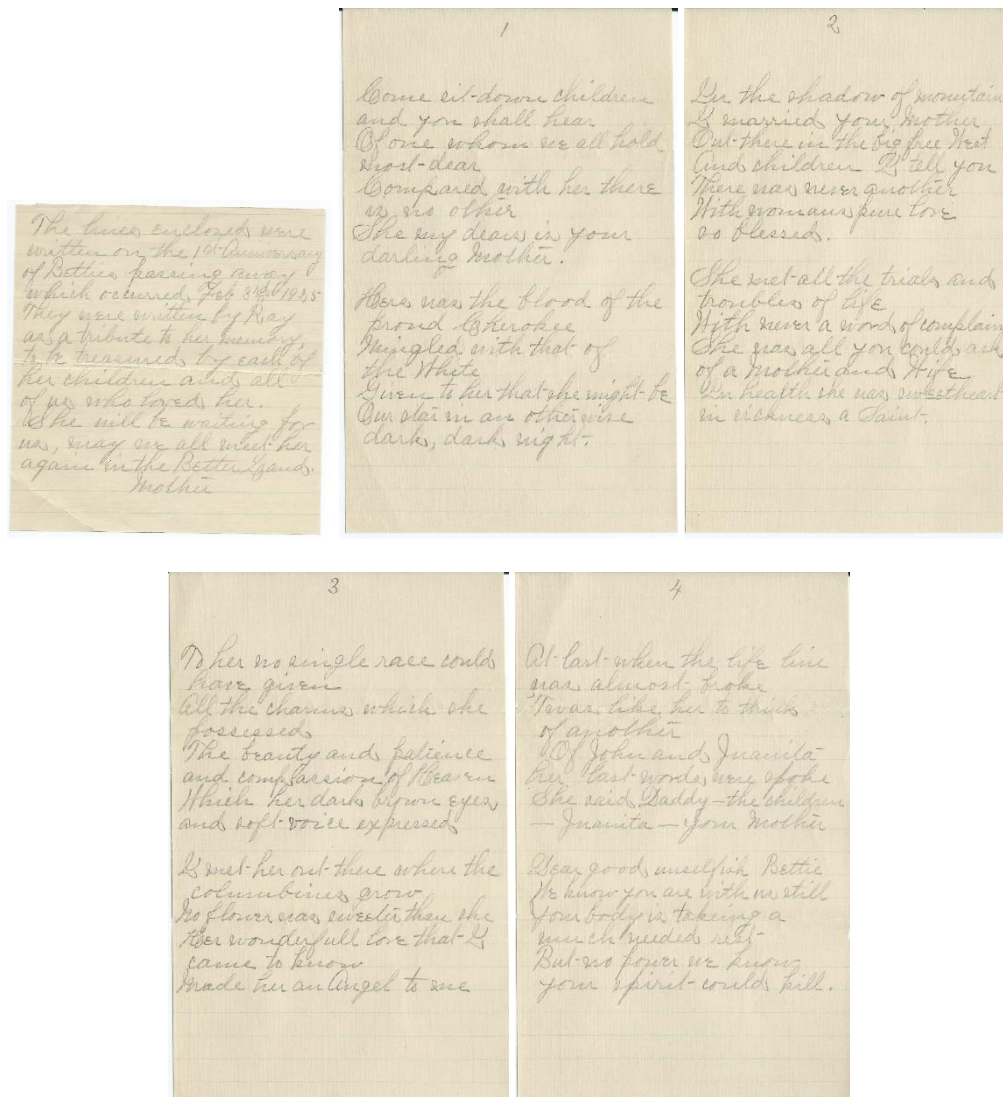


Fig. 5 Letter written by Samuel Ray Fox for his children – John and Juanita on the 1 year anniversary of their mother Betty’s death. (Fox, Samuel Ray. “Tribute to Betty Fox -Written by Her Husband Ray Fox,” February 1926.)

It did take some time to figure out exactly what happened to Betty. Slowly but surely, more documents like vital statistics and military records are scanned and uploaded online to websites like Ancestry.com, who in turn cite the original sources like The National Archives. This partnership between these two groups provides a way for researchers like the “outsider” the hints needed to move forward on their historical research. For example, the collaboration between the Ancestry.com and these government organizations gave me hints to finding

information my family needs to apply for the Cherokee citizenship. The uploaded copy of the Betty's death certificate pointed me in the direction to Pima County, Arizona in which I will later request a copy of the document. Before seeing the scanned copy, I was blindly searching for any close matches to Samuel, Betty, and Oklahoma (Indian Territory). However, there is still a large amount of the legwork that is required for the historical research, but the hints provided through the collaborations pushes me forward in my hunt.



Fig. 6 Juanita, Samuel Ray and John Fox (Unknown. "Juanita.Ray.Johnny," n.d.)

The last family owned memento I included in the historical research of my ancestors is the only known photograph of Samuel Ray Fox and Juanita Fox (fig. 6). There is nothing written on the back of the picture except "Juanita.Ray.Johnny" and was not attached to any letter or other information. When other family members see this picture, they are surprised to see the resemblance between Juanita and living family members. From the moment I saw this picture, I

wondered where it was taken and by whom. As my family approximates that age of the Juanita and John, our best guess is it must have been taken shortly after Betty passed away, and that the absence of Betty in a picture with her young children would seem odd if she were still alive. As my fascination continued, I also wondered if there was any other way to know more about this picture, so I once again used exploratory inquiry and research to figure out where this picture might have been taken.

27

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS  
STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

REGISTRAR'S NO. 22617  
53

1. PLACE OF DEATH  
STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF Collin  
CITY OF Waxahachie

2. FULL NAME OF DECEASED John William Fox  
RESIDENCE OF THE DECEASED NO. 305 STREET Jackson CITY Waxahachie STATE Texas

3. DATE OF DEATH 5-26-1928

4. DATE OF BIRTH Feb 24, 1862

5. SEX Male COLOR OR RACE White MARRIAGE Widowed

6. OCCUPATION Carpenter

7. AGE 66 YEARS 3 MONTHS 2 DAYS

8. DATE OF DEATH 5-26-1928

9. CAUSE OF DEATH Cerebral Thrombosis

10. INFORMANT W. H. Leary, M.D.

11. SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER W. H. Leary, M.D.

12. SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF REGISTRAR W. H. Leary, M.D.

Fig. 7 John W. Fox death certificate (Ancestry.com. "Texas, Death Certificates, 1903–1982." Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2013.)

When I searched Google Maps for addresses attached to Samuel, most no longer existed, were converted to newer housing projects or roadways. After hitting several dead ends, I realized this picture might have been taken by someone they were visiting, so checked on locations for Viola. My immediate guess went to look up her death certificate but was sadly disappointed that the house listed as her last known address looked nothing like the picture. That is when it occurred to me that based on the age of Juanita and John, I was looking at the wrong

death certificate. John W. Fox passed away before his wife Viola on May 26, 1938, and their listed address at the time of his death was 305 Lake Park, Waxahachie, TX (fig. 7). I checked again on Google Maps with this address and found a location, but how could I have some certainty that this is correct house. Because I am interested in pragmatic means to enhance our learning of history, I make an educated guess by using popular real estate websites to find information about when this house was built. Preliminary searches have this house being resold in 2011, therefore the date the house was built was required in the listing. The listing says the house was built as 1920. The only other evidence I have that this picture may be taken in front of Viola's home is a comparison to the Google Maps picture (fig. 7).

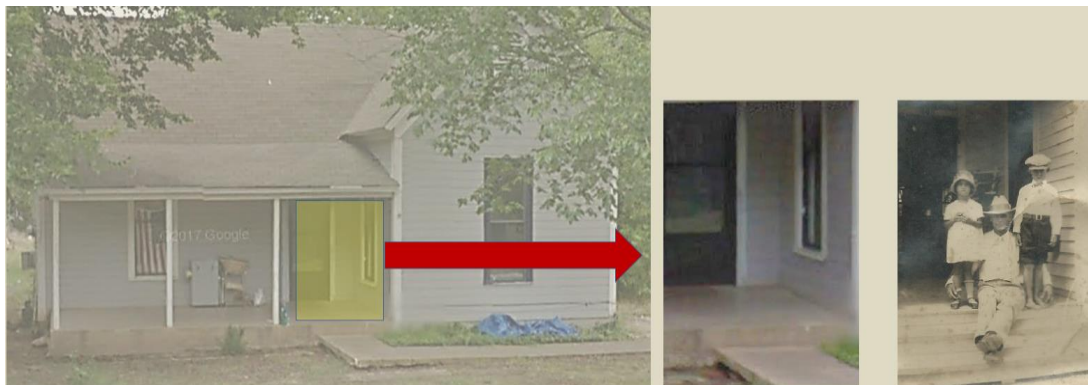


Fig. 8 Comparison picture of 305 Lake Park, Waxahachie, TX (<https://www.google.com/maps>)

Over the next thirteen years, Samuel remarries and moves to California around 1937, but so far, I do not have an exact date or know who moved to California with him. Like many other Americans, the Samuel migrated to California along with the Okies of the Dust Bowl. Factors such as the 1929 stock market crash, capitalism, ecological misuse land, and serious of droughts created an ecological devastation, and volatile economy. Many of the poor Dust Bowl migrants entered California creating squatter camps, make-shift towns, or gained housing created by the



Farming Security Association in the Central Valley or Los Angeles area.<sup>30</sup> Like the approximately 100,000 migrants, the agricultural wealth of California may have been what lured Samuel and his family to Los Angeles area during the late 1930s. Unlike most Okies who settled in rural, farming communities like the San Joaquin Valley, it seems as if Samuel first moved his family to Los Angeles area. Statistics shows that a vast amount of these migrants settled into areas similar to their previous homes.<sup>31</sup>

Could it have been the migration to California or the living conditions of the time, but at this point, I found little evidence of Samuel and his family in California. In similar fashion to exploratory inquiry methods for Daniel R. Coodey, I chose to look through non-government sources for the wall I hit with Samuel Fox during the Dust Bowl. Based on newly found living relatives, Samuel's second wife passed away in the Los Angeles area and their child(ren) was adopted out. By this time, my grandfather John had already enlisted in the military and I have yet to find any "Juanita Fox" in any official document. It was finally in newspaper articles that I found an end to Samuel Ray Fox's story. In multiple newspapers throughout California, they report that he was murdered in a violent attack in a hobo "jungle" in the Stockton area. I can only speculate that he traveled up the state of California to the San Joaquin Valley looking for work. Since Samuel Fox is a common name, I was able to connect the newspaper's Samuel to my great-grandfather by the single mention of his son John being in the Army Air Corp.<sup>32</sup> Although I can continue to do online research to fill in gaps to Samuel's life, I chose to stop here, because I am looking towards a visit to the San Joaquin Public Library's local history archives.

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<sup>30</sup> Worster, 5-10, 53; Gregory, 70-72.

<sup>31</sup> Gregory, 36-45.

<sup>32</sup> "Three Dead in Terrific Hobo 'Jungle' Fight," Santa Cruz Sentinel, June 3, 1939.

There are still so many questions to answer when it comes to my ancestors. Was Betty Coody subjected to deculturalization in the Cherokee Orphanage like the many other Indigenous children that were sent to White boarding schools? How was life in Waxahachie, TX before and after The Great Depression? Did Samuel's life during the Dust Bowl and in California resemble the picture by taken by famous photographer Dorothea Lange? My exploratory inquiry to my ancestors' lives has given me a good starting point to expand upon.

### **Conclusion**

When initial research on my capstone topic started two years ago, there were many questions that needed answering before I could start the historiography. I knew that the ideals of instrumentalism would help me uncover the answers to the questions about my ancestors, but understanding the methods, usefulness and this theory was important to creating a historiography for a non-historian to enjoy. Instrumentalism methods has allowed me to utilize old and new types of the historical research. The times when I hit a wall in my research, I was able to use exploratory inquiry to find leads that encourage my search for answers. The partnership between Ancestry.com and The National Archives was extremely helpful to searching and accessing documents that I was blindly searching for on the internet. The encouragement from my academic advisor to explore topics that interested me makes me feel that there is long-term value in the research that I have done.

By utilizing John Dewey's instrumentalism, we see that the movement to out-of-classroom methods of learning history is already happening and is changing with technology. We can utilize websites created by museums and historic hot-spots to learn about the history of

places we cannot travel to, social media platforms to allows us to share our knowledge and research with a broader audience or within a specific group. Instrumentalism methods can help educators by providing hands-on learning experiences or show communities they have a stake in what educational resources are available. For my personal goals, instrumentalism ideology has given me a peak into the lives of a family tree branch that was a mystery. I found that combining information from localized vital statistics and family documents provided a rich narrative. The information I gained when comparing various historian's research methods helped me to appreciate the importance of my ancestors' place in United States history. There are still many questions about my ancestors' lives that I would like to find answers to and the methods I learned from instrumentalism ideology encourages me to do further exploration. So, my journey does not end here.

Often during my research, I wondered if I had the correct person, date, or census record, but I realized that that is not what is always important with my capstone topic. I can always go back to retrace my steps on the walls I hit or with the ancestors I was unsure about. What I found was this journey to find my ancestors and their connection to history encouraged me to look deeper into their personal stories and the history of the United States. As a result, I want to do more detailed research to grow my historiography that this capstone project started.

Waxahachie, Texas is still on the map, the Cherokee Nation has cultural resources centers that might have the answers to Betty's years in the orphanage, the Battle of Stones River is a national park open to the public and finding where Samuel Ray Fox spent his last moments is only a local library visit away. As I continue looking through my family tree, I will teach my family that the history lessons we learned from school, observe in a museum, and watch in a documentary were

part of our ancestor's lives, and its effects on them contributed to this moment; to becoming the people we are now.

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