



## The History Channel This Is Not..

Nate Kogan's musings on teaching, history, research, and a litany of other stupefying topics

January  
1, 2010

### Vimeo Renaissance!

Posted by Nate under [Pedagogy](#), [Social Media](#), [Technology](#), [teaching](#) |

Tags: [Board notes](#), [Notes Recap](#), [Vimeo](#) |

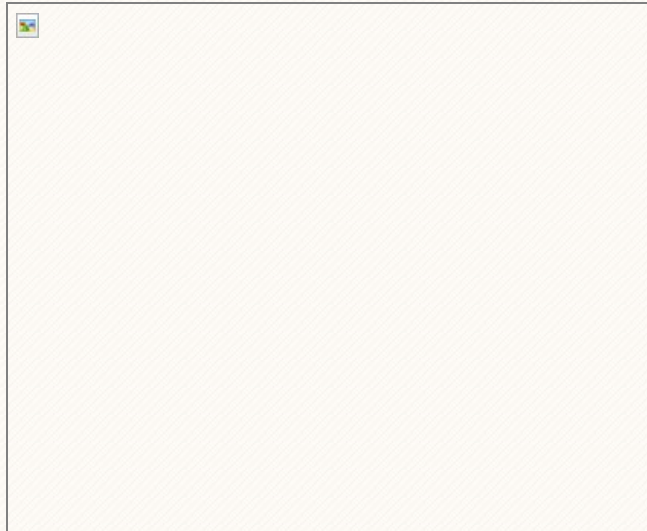
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Before the winter break I assigned my 9th grade classes a brief research project about one of three controversial topics — the death penalty, the drinking age, and health care reform — as a way to gain experience in researching, organizing, and writing an argumentative paper *and* presenting that argument orally. I selected those three topics because they were all ones that [ProCon.org](#) had substantial resources on, and in the case of the death penalty and the drinking age provided a fairly clear, straightforward set of arguments and evidence for the students to draw on.

As I've noted before, students tend to turn to the internet as their immediate research resource, so by pointing them to a centralized source of information at [ProCon.org](#), I hoped to avoid the information-vetting step, which is a skill unto itself and likely merits its own exercise or assignment. Therefore [ProCon.org](#) proved appealing because it pre-screens its sources of evidence and provides researchers with access to substantial, well-regarded reports, quotations, and the like. In this way, I structured the assignment to force my students to focus the bulk of their energies on assessing the different arguments, selecting the most persuasive ones, and then organizing the major claims and pieces of evidence into a concise, coherent essay. Ultimately, this assignment prioritized essay structure and composition above research, though hopefully my students learned something about their topic nevertheless.

So, at this point you might be wondering, "isn't this post terribly mis-titled? Where is the discussion of Vimeo?" (If you're savvy, and don't suffer from tunnel-vision, [or would it be "letterbox vision"?] you'll see just a few lines down that I've embedded a Vimeo video. Thus, the title. Or you could play along, read the next line, and avoid the spoiler alert that you just read.)

Well, let me tell you: I exhumed my [Mino Flip camera](#), which I hadn't used pedagogically since recording [this video](#) toward the beginning of the school year, and after I finished teaching my first class of the day, I decided to make a brief recording that recapped my board notes. Here's the result:



more about "Position Paper Organization", posted with vodpod

Certainly these board notes were an ideal candidate for capturing via video — they were concise, concept-based, and covered material that I've taught many, many times, which made it easy for me to recap quickly. Ideally my narration also helped clarify any confusion that the students may have had during class. By contrast, other, more content-based material would lend itself less well to being captured in this way as it would be longer, more complicated, and ultimately more time-intensive to recreate. Nevertheless, I hope to be more conscientious this next semester about using the Flip Camera to record and share this type of material with my students. Additionally, recording my class notes in this way allows me to share them with students who missed class that day, something else I [mused about previously](#).

### Archived Entry

Post Date :

January 1, 2010 at 6:18 pm

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Now, herein lies the tragic (well, that diction choice is perhaps a bit melodramatic) irony: I recorded these notes immediately, imported them onto my computer, and attempted to upload them *that very day* to no avail. For some reason Vimeo wasn't playing nice. So, only is it now, weeks after having made this video and once I'm back home from my transcontinental journeys, that I'm able to upload it from my home computer, where it works great. Oh well.

The good news is that I'm planning a follow-up assignment using the students' papers and MixedInk to help them gain further experience critically evaluating and editing their peers' writing. Therefore, this video will likely come in handy to help remind the students of my expectations for essay structure and how to marshal evidence — something they perhaps haven't been obsessing over during this break from school.

So, in conclusion, here's my very attainable New Year's Resolution: I'll be more punctual with my follow-up about this next assignment than I was in getting this particular video online.

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#### ONE RESPONSE TO “VIMEO RENAISSANCE!”

1. [“And now for something slightly lower-tech...”](#) « The History Channel This Is Not... Says:

January 9, 2010 at 12:08 pm

[...] position paper on one of three topics — an assignment described in more depth in this post. In the course of reading these papers over break, once thing became strikingly clear: developing [...]

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