Today’s training was filled with intriguing information and discussion. After a brief explanation on Primary and Secondary Sources, Catherine Allgor, Skotheim Director of Education at The Huntington, initiated an analysis of a colonial era political cartoon. The cartoon titled “A Society of Patriotic Ladies” depicted women in politics. Many folks commented on the cartoon, expressing their observations and perceptions of the illustration. Dr. Allgor led the discussion about using such powerful depictions as discussion pieces for students to elaborate on in the classroom.

Next, our focus shifted on California’s Native American and Mission history. Dr. Steven Hackel introduced the idea of natives utilizing fire for controlling the landscape, an early form of resource management. This idea intrigued me because growing up in California, I was taught to prevent wildfires with images of Smoky the Bear. However, controlled burns are now used by forest agencies to reduce the risk of major wildfires.

The idea that natives used fires to manage their environment and produce better conditions for food growth was interesting. Some facts I learned was that natives burned 20,000 square miles annually. Also, small fires were primarily set strategically in meadows and other small open areas. More importantly, the abundance of naturally occurring food eliminated the need for large scale agriculture and labor force. Without these, California Indians had no need for a centralized system of government or society commonly found in old world Europe. Thus, they were deemed “barbaric” by early Spanish missionaries.

Finally, Dr. Hackel shared some details from his newly published biography of Junipero Serra. Some of these included Serra’s birthplace, Mallorca, Spain. Serra’s upbringing in an agricultural society helped foster values of hard work and discipline that carried over to his missionary work. This clashed with the California Indian’s way of living, which was traditionally hunting and gathering.

More dramatic was Dr. Hackel’s presentation on population loss among mission Indians. Using numerical figures based on recorded data from missions, we were able to glimpse inside the horrific reality of mortality within missions. I was surprised to learn that deaths caused by Smallpox was primarily after 1830. Most earlier deaths were caused by other diseases and factors, such as measles and infections.

In conclusion, I enjoyed today’s lecture on California Natives and early Mission history. I learned a great deal of new information that I will definitely use in my classroom.
Day two did not disappoint and once again we left with our heads full of new knowledge and information! Our day began with a great discussion with David Igler who spoke on the impact of the Pacific Ocean on our society and how it has played a major role in the development of different nations industrial age. Using maps and his knowledge of this topic he guided us through the importance of this huge body of water to our world. We are very fortunate to live so close to this incredible passage way for commerce and history. The insight of the participants helped to enlighten the topics and bring to life foreign ideas to many of us.

We also heard from Raul Almada with an introductory discussion on the background and uses of primary sources. After guiding us through the definition we participated in a great activity. Using pictures from various times in American history we grouped similar pictures and shared similarities and connections. These pictures reflected a social and political climate in our national history and the discussion was so intriguing and perceptive. Primary sources are available to all educators and I want to take advantage of this amazing resource for my students.

The most exciting part of the day for me was the opportunity to visit the Conservation Lab where artifacts at the Huntington are prepared. Some are worked on for exhibits while others are repaired. We saw an artifact that was being prepared that was created on very fragile paper but our guide, Jessamy Gloor, was able to move us through her methods in repair and preparation. These scientists need a background in chemistry, art, history, and even entomology. They are true masters at their craft and it was so exciting to see their passion with these artifacts. The entire lab had such specialized tools they use and some parts of the room looked like a museum with old binding tools, presses, humongous cutters, and delicate brushes. Not many people get to see this side of the Huntington and it was such an honor to be a part of it. Day two...incredible!
**Day Three** - July 29, 2015

Fran De La Rosa
Pasadena Unified School District

Today's session included two very enlightening presentations relative to the growth of the nation and the march to the Civil War. Two questions were posed: how was California affected by the approaching hostilities (and the issue of slavery) as well as did California and the West have any effect on the issues directly? Both presentations offered insightful commentary and food for thought to us in attendance.

Dan Lynch’s presentation “California and the Sectional Crisis” provided background information through events leading up to the War, and using the painting “American Progress” by John Gast examined the role of Manifest Destiny in the growth of the West. He also reviewed the various political factions at work and the positions taken relative to the confederacy and union issues. Many of the complex political issues were made comprehensible through engaging stories of “just ordinary folks” living at the time.

Bill Deverell followed with his presentation of “Manifest Destiny, the West and the Early Republic”. Where Mr. Lynch focused primarily within California and the West, Mr. Deverell led us on a journey from early northeast U.S. across the vast continent to the west coast, with Manifest Destiny as the centerpiece. He also discussed the rapidity of the development of the country from coast to coast utilizing determination, industry, and technological inventiveness, as evidenced by the railroad which may be argued is largely responsible for the country as we know it.

Finally, both presenters made great use of resources, both primary and others. Both were great storytellers which one has to be when the historical information may be a bit dry. However, Mr. Deverell also utilized a favored strategy: the anticipatory event. He had told us that he had two “special presentations” coming at specified times. That kept our attention! As a fourth grade teacher, I find that strategy ingenious when one can pull it off. Bringing realia into the classroom is always engaging for students and can lead to increased involvement and understanding of complex issues.
Day Four - July 30, 2015

Beth Burleson  
Pasadena Unified School District

Today was yet another surprising, informative day inside the Munger – and out! Our featured historian for the morning was Professor Jessica Kim from CSUN, speaking to the “web of relationships around the national boundary” (i.e., borderlands) between southern California, in particular Los Angeles, and Mexico. She led us through the porousness of the border as established with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, through the beginnings of enforcement in the early 1900s, into the present day uber-policing of the strictly delineated boundary between the two countries. With a letter from W.C. Dunn to the investors of Quimichis Colony in Los Angeles as the primary source, she wove the story of Los Angelenos’ investments in rural Mexico and the ensuing social, political, and economic intrigue.

The amount of American capital poured into Mexico and the extraction of resources, including peonage labor, to the benefit of a few privileged families is astonishing. Yet, we in the present day are beneficiaries, willing or not, of this borderland history. For example, Thomas Bard, a leading investor in Quimichis Colony, founded Occidental College in large part with the return on his investment in the Mexican endeavor. Other infrastructure in Los Angeles was built as results of investments. Americans by the early 1900s controlled huge percentages of land, mining, oil, and railroads throughout Mexico. After the Mexican Revolution, however, American land was expropriated to small farmers and most investors lost their property by the 1940s. The investors did not succeed as well as they did for as long as they did without complicity from Mexican authorities; on the other hand, certain authorities were playing both sides of the coin by the time of the Revolution.

This participant in the ICW workshop found Professor Kim’s presentation to be highly engaging and informative. She is a wonderful storyteller, going from the broad swaths of history to the foibles of individual actors and the consequences thereof. As a result, I have deeper understanding of the contemporary, often times fraught, relationships am
ong the U.S./Mexico borderlands.

But, wait – there was more! In the afternoon, the workshop had the opportunity to accompany James P. Folsom, Director of the Botanical Gardens on a short excursion through the Huntington Ranch. We began in the Mapel Orientation Gallery with a history of Huntington’s initial acquisition of the property, the topography and historical use of the land, and its present-day configuration – the result of years of a layered landscape. Then we walked (briskly) to the orange grove, enjoying the shade of a cork oak along the way. Yes, the same cork for our wine bottles. All the while, Dr. Folsom was explaining the interrelations of land and ocean that give us our Mediterranean climate, and how our continued (mis)use of the land is to our collective detriment. In the botanical lab building, he showed us various aerial views of the property over the years and regaled us with some of his personal experiences in his 31 years of service. Ending the day with such a fount of knowledge, to say nothing of a warm engaging person, was truly delightful.

Only at the Huntington! That’s why I keep back for more.
Day Six - August 3, 2015

Jorge Quntero
Long Beach Unified School District

Today we looked at some more sources to practice analyzing using the Primary Sources Analysis Form. We started with a math journal entry. We analyzed it closely for evidence of its purpose, origin, and any other clues. I was surprised to find out it was George Washington's math journal. I was also amazed to see the content of the page to be similar to my 4th grade level content. I learned to become more analytical and careful in looking for details. Using the form was very helpful.

Another primary source we analyzed was a draft of the Declaration of Independence. It was interesting to see all the corrections made on the draft. After a few other exercises, I became confident in using the resources and the analysis form with my students. I especially liked learning how to use another form for multiple resources.

I just want to say that I really enjoyed this experience. I will definitely use these skills.
Day Seven – August 4, 2015

Vanessa Uy
Long Beach Unified School District

Today was another incredible day of learning. We began the day with a great talk about all the wonderful programs available to students. An education specialist from the Huntington explained the various programs and how schools can access them.

We then continued our learning on how to utilize primary sources in the classroom. Raul Almada shared an insightful activity using Lewis Hine photos and a photographic analysis explaining a point in time in history. Furthermore, he connected this activity to a picture book, which would make the topic come alive for students. This is an activity that I will definitely use with my students. It was highly engaging that involved collaborative discussions. Overall, I found today to be extremely beneficial. I was able to collaborate with other teachers, share best practices and plan my history lessons. This was time well spent.
Day Eight – August 5, 2015

Rick Biscocho
Long Beach Unified School District

This is going to be the last entry for this institute. This institute has been so incredible for so many reasons! It is written with sadness and excitement. First with sadness because we have met such incredibly passionate people this week: teachers, professors, curators, academic coaches and all of the Huntington staff. I want to name the people that have made this week and a half so memorable: Bill Deverell, Catherine Allgor, Dan Lynch, Jessica Kim, Allison Varzally, Steven Hackel, David Igler, Raul Almada, and Sonia Mehrmand. These individuals took time out of their busy schedules to provide a meaningful and relevant professional development (PD) to help all of us become better educators. Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

Today we had a chance to visit exhibits around the Huntington. We visited the home of the Huntington’s and saw rare paintings and artifacts that were so expertly placed on the walls and halls of the building. We had a chance to see the Chinese and Japanese gardens up close. Traveling around the gardens one cannot help but experience the grandeur of this place in light of what we’ve learned this week. Raul was an expert guide with his stories and background with the grounds. These past days with Raul were very exciting because he would show us various examples of primary sources and how he would teach them in class. His approach was so genuine and the resources he gave to us were great examples and classroom friendly. We have more tools to use for our students this year! A great indicator of an awesome PD is the conversation on the way home. We spoke of the quality of the topics and preparation and expertise of the presenters. As teachers we came with high expectations because the Huntington staff and Cotsen Foundation were sponsors. It went beyond our expectations and we are looking forward to great lessons using primary sources. Thank you for this great opportunity and we leave with full stomachs (thanks for the yummy breakfasts and lunches) and more prepared for this year.