



Devil with a blue dress on? Using primary sources and corroboration to determine the facts surrounding the capture of Jefferson Davis.

Teaching with Primary Sources Spring Event

April 27, 2021

1. One model and one process (Winburg, 1991)
 - a. Model: Historical Thinking Heuristics
 - i. Sourcing
 - ii. Contextualization
 - iii. Corroborating
 - iv. Close reading
 - b. Process: Primary Source Analysis (ORQ)
<https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/guides/>
 - i. Observe
 - ii. Reflect
 - iii. Question
2. Primary source accounts of the capture of Jefferson Davis
 - a. A “so called president” in petticoats
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2008661797/>
 - b. Jeff’s Soliloquy to be or not to be (hanged) that’s the question
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2019635451/>
 - c. Jeff’s last skedaddle off to the last ditch
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2008661833/>
 - d. How is Davis portrayed and why”
 - e. Sourcing-
Who is the artist?
What is the artist’s purpose?
Who is the audience?
 - f. Contextualizing-
When is this event?
What else is going on?
What has recently happened?
 - g. Corroborating-
Was he wearing a dress?
Check other primary and secondary sources



3. Quick context
 - a. Time
 - i. APRIL 2, 1865- Jefferson Davis and most of Confederate government evacuate Richmond, VA.
 - ii. APRIL 9, 1865- Robert. E. Lee surrenders to U.S. Grant at Appomattox
 - iii. APRIL 15, 1865- Lincoln Assassinated
 - iv. MAY 5, 1865- Davis dissolves the Confederate government at Washington, GA
 - v. MAY 10, 1865- Davis captured near Irwinville, GA
 - b. Place
 - i. Jefferson Davis Capture Site [31.6633, -83.3860](#)
338 Jeff Davis Park Road
Fitzgerald, Georgia, 31750
United States
 - ii. South Georgia
 - c. On location
 - i. How is the event characterized on the historical markers?
4. Corroboration
 - a. How is the event described or characterized in other documents (primary and secondary)?
 - b. Primary sources
 - i. The last act of the drama of secession
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2008661829/>
 - ii. Jefferson Davis account from *A Short History of the Confederate States, 1889*
 - iii. Accounts from soldiers in the First Wisconsin who were present at his capture
http://www.loc.gov/resource/lhbum.7689c_0562_0578
 - iv. General U.S. Grant
 - c. Secondary sources
 - i. On this day in history
<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/jefferson-davis-captured>
 - ii. America's Library (Library of Congress)
http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/civil/jb_civil_jeffdav_1.html
 - iii. *American Heritage*
Fall 2010 Volume 60 Issue 3
<https://www.americanheritage.com/was-jefferson-davis-captured-dress#4>
 - d. Artifact
 - i. Raglan overcoat
5. Conclusion
 - a. What are the facts we know about the capture of Jefferson Davis?
 - b. What have we learned about how history is written or presented?
 - c. How can we use multiple sources (including primary and secondary sources) to corroborate the details about historical events?
 - d. What did we learn about the reliability of primary sources?
 - e. How can you use this with your students?