

BRIA's Longtime Writer Carlton Martz

BRIA has a long history. Begun in the 1960s as a newsletter of the work and events at Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) — now Teach Democracy — BRIA has had many writers and editors. Through the decades, the writer Carlton Martz has been a consistent voice. If you have been a regular reader of BRIA, it is doubtless you have seen Carl's name attached to many of the articles and lessons you have learned from and used in your classroom. In total, he has written hundreds. I recently had a chance to speak with Carl at length about his career and his time writing for CRF.

Born in 1940 in Waltham, Massachusetts, Carl came to Pomona, California, with his family when he was 15 years old. He graduated high school in 1958 and attended Mt. San Antonio College. He transferred to Cal Poly Pomona around 1961 where he also earned his teaching credential in social studies, minoring in English. He earned a master's degree in government from Claremont Graduate University and began working as a social studies teacher at Edgewood High School in the West Covina Unified School District. Carl describes himself as "kind of a radical teacher" in the 1960s: "I was the first one to wear a mustache, which upset the principal."

In the wake of the Watts Riots of 1965, Carl had the foresight to pitch an ethnic studies elective course to his principal and school board, who agreed to Carl's vision. Carl developed the syllabus himself. He focused on African American history. At the recommendation of Black students in his class, the local NAACP chapter awarded Carl with a commendation for his work in ethnic studies.

He began using CRF's *The Bill of Rights*—A *Source Book for Teachers* in the early 1970s. "Using the *Source Book*," says Carl, "got me out of the boring textbook and helped change my teaching." He started using "seminars with lots of student discussion and debates on Supreme Court decisions and other current, controversial issues."

Carl began writing for CRF's *Bill of Rights Newsletter* in 1975 when he entered and won a writing contest developed by Todd Clark. This enabled Carl to take a two-year sabbatical from Edgewood High School to work at CRF full-time. In September 1976, the publication changed its name to *Bill of Rights in Action*, which we now call

BRIA. Todd Clark eventually became the executive director of CRF and sadly passed away this year.

Carl authored a lesson sequence to introduce young people to criminal law. In the ensuing years, CRF expanded those lessons to become its *Criminal Justice in America* textbook, which is now being revised for its 6th edition.

Carl also wrote the original *Police Patrol* simulation that has been updated and is still part of Teach Democracy's Youth and Police program.

After returning to teaching, Carl continued writing for CRF, and specifically for BRIA. He wrote everything for this magazine. Marshall Crodgy, who would later become CRF's president, was Carl's editor in 1980. Of his work with Marshall, Carl says, "We had a really great relationship."

Carl's deep sense of civic commitment has enabled him to write on countless subjects in U.S. history and U.S. government. Carl's ever-expansive intellectual curiosity has also led him to travel the world to various archaeological sites and write about diverse world history subjects, too. A voracious reader, Carl broadened his career by earning a degree in library studies from Cal

State, Los Angeles, in 1991. He then worked as a librarian at Yucaipa High School starting in 1993, where he spent the rest of his career in schools. His dual skill sets in writing and research have served him and BRIA's readers well.

In recent years, Carl has written some of BRIA's best articles and classroom activities. In particular, he has pitched and written the articles "Tlaxcalan: the Indigenous Democracy of Mexico"; "Mother Jones: 'The Most Dangerous Woman in America'"; "The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850";

"The United States, China, and Taiwan"; and a forthcoming article on the rapidly developing controversies of artificial intelligence.

We have been fortunate to have an inspired writer like Carl write for BRIA for so long and with such careful attention to Teach Democracy's mission. Please join us in appreciating Carl and his work, and we look forward to many more years of his contributions.

Author: Damon Huss is the director of publications for Teach Democracy.

