

Handout #1
Ballot Propositions and Civil Rights

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The following questions accompany the text excerpts from “*Wherever There’s a Fight: How Runaway Slaves, Suffragists, Immigrants, Strikers, and Poets Shaped Civil Liberties in California*.”

Circle your section(s) of the text below:

Rights of the Criminally Accused

Pages 396-399

- **Proposition 8:** 1982, “Victims Bill of Rights”
- **Proposition 184:** 1994, “3 Strikes”

Gay Marriage

Pages 340-343

- **Proposition 8:** 2008 Same-Sex Marriage

School Busing

Pages 152-155

- **Proposition 1:** 1979 School Desegregation
- **Proposition 21:** 1972 Student School Assignment Initiative

Undocumented Immigrants

Pages 73-77

- **Proposition 187:** 1994 Undocumented Reporting

Fair Land/Housing Laws

Pages 145-149; 53-55

- **Proposition 14:** 1964 Fair Housing Laws
- **Alien Land Law Initiative:** 1920 Restrictions on Japanese American Property Ownership

People with HIV

Pages 331-333

- **Proposition 64:** 1986 Reporting/Quarantine
- **Proposition 96:** 1988 HIV Testing for Criminally Accused
- **Proposition 102:** 1988 Reporting/Sex Partners

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1. Ballot Initiative(s): _____
Name the ballot initiative(s). What would the ballot initiative(s) enact if successful?
2. What was it about the context (the time period or the place where the events happened) that influenced the ballot campaign and/or outcome of the vote?
3. Who were the key players (individuals? Organizations?) Why were they promoting the initiative? Whose interests were favored by the initiative?
4. Who would be negatively impacted by the initiative's success? Why do you think this group was targeted?
5. Were there important court decisions in the lead-up to the ballot initiative? If yes, explain why they were important.
6. What was the outcome of the ballot initiative? Offer an analysis—what were the factors that contributed to this outcome?
7. Was there a court challenge to the initiative? (if your initiative failed, you don't have to answer this question.) Did the challenge happen immediately? Years later? What was the outcome of the initiative's journey through the court system?
8. What, in this story, was surprising to you? Why was it surprising? Or explain why nothing surprised you.