

The POINT!



E-Letter for Western Pennsylvania Social Studies Educators

Vol. 14 No. 4

April 2021

DRAW the LINES

Our friends at Draw the Lines, an annual PCSS Conference sponsor, have several timely updates for us. Yesterday, the PA House and Senate leadership **certified the formation of the Legislative Reapportionment Commission** (LRC), officially launching the state's legislative redistricting process. The LRC will be the body that draws PA's state house and senate voting maps to be used for the decade. The announcement was historic, in that both Representative Joanna McClinton (Philadelphia) and Senator Kim Ward (Westmoreland) will be the first women to serve on the LRC. Further, Leader McClinton will be the first person of color on the LRC. Congratulations to them both.

The four elected officials named yesterday are charged with choosing the fifth and final member of the commission, who will serve as Chair. The Pennsylvania Constitution gives these four members 45 days to select this individual. If they don't come to a consensus, the State Supreme Court will make the selection.

To mark the occasion, Draw the Lines PA released a video featuring David Thornburgh, son of former Pennsylvania Republican Governor Dick Thornburgh, and Jane Leader Janeczek, daughter of former Pennsylvania Democratic Governor George Leader, jointly calling on lawmakers to open the chair selection process to the public.

Watch the video and share widely!

In the coming days, Draw the Lines will announce a forum for Pennsylvanians to apply to serve as the fifth member of the LRC. We hope to have 1,001 Democrats, 1,001 Republicans, and 1,001 independents apply. Such massive interest will demonstrate that Pennsylvanians are ready, willing, and able to lead this process. **<https://drawthelinespa.org/petition>**

Draw the Lines will also work with the LRC to help identify candidates worthy of consideration. PCSS members fit that role.

Be on the lookout for the opportunity to apply!

Third... Next week, Draw the Lines will send out a letter to leaders with an eye-catching card with a QR code of the Thornburgh-Leader video, and blue and red Draw the Lines pens, making the point that Pennsylvanians are ready to grab the digital mapping pen in 2021.

Fourth... In April, David Thornburgh will be launching a tour of Pennsylvania from Draw the Lines' famed Voteswagon van. Hitting 18 stops over 4 weeks, from Erie to Carbondale to Pittsburgh to Philadelphia, the tour will publicly launch Draw the Lines' 2021 action plan around the fifth member and coming PA Voters Map Commission.

Questions? Contact: Justin Villere **Draw the Lines** Managing Director
A project of the **Committee of Seventy** **719-651-1188 (cell)**

Soldiers & Sailors Hall!

Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum houses a vast collection of primary and secondary documents and military artifacts. It is their mission to promote the use of these educational items and create an understanding for all groups who visit the museum. They provide a rich learning experience for all people by exploring the deeds and sacrifices of ordinary citizens during extraordinary circumstances.

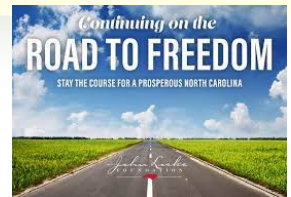


Virtual Summer Seminar for Educators Marching Down "Freedom's Road": Civil Rights to Black Lives Matter

Apply by April 14, 2021

June 13-18, 2021

Zoom | [Click here for more information](#)



Jewish Heritage Around the World Part II

with CWB scholar Avi Ben Hur and guest speakers

The Jews of France Part 1

Tuesday, April 6, 2021

2 PM Eastern Time

Zoom | [Click here for more information](#)



Tips to help teachers comply with copyright laws

US copyright and fair use laws can be nuanced, and carry potential fines and other penalties if teachers fail to comply, writes Karen Lagola, an instructional technology coach. In this blog post, Lagola explains that technology has made it easier for teachers to share materials -- and possibly violate the law -- and offers tips to keeping it legal. **Full Story:** Edutopia (3/22)



How to fight the rising tide of anti-Asian racism

Data from Stop AAPI Hate indicates that 3,795 incidents of anti-Asian American discrimination were reported from March 2020 through last month, including verbal and digital harassment, physical assault and civil rights violations. While hate crimes in general declined in the US amid the pandemic, anti-Asian hate crimes rose 150%. How can we help? Experts say that acknowledging the existence of anti-Asian racism is an important first step. You can also check in with Asian friends and colleagues, donate to support victims of anti-Asian hate crimes, shop at Asian-owned businesses and get involved with support and activist groups to help fight this disturbing trend. **Full Story:** WUSA-TV (Washington, D.C.) (3/17), Healthline (3/17), PBS (3/18), CNBC (3/18)

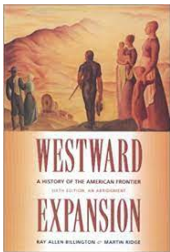


The Point

For
Western Pennsylvania
Social Studies Educators
EDITORS
Leo R. West
John Larner

The Point is the
e-newsletter
of the former WPCSS
issued monthly via e-mail.
WPCSS was a non-profit 501c
organization dedicated to promoting
the teaching and learning of social
studies in Western Pennsylvania

Leo West
11533 Clematis Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15235-3105



Westward Expansion: A New History, Second Edition

This important unit in our U.S. History Series explores how different groups in the West experienced U.S. territorial expansion in the nineteenth century. In recent years, scholars have reexamined the history of the West by focusing on Native American groups. With limited sources, they have pieced together histories that do not generalize the experiences of Native Americans, and that accurately portray the complicated interactions that occurred in the West.

Westward Expansion: A New History looks at this reexamined history from two historical perspectives. First, students explore U.S. expansion from a broad perspective by considering the major events and policies that accompanied U.S. growth in the nineteenth century. Students then explore this history on a local level using groundbreaking research on the effects of U.S. expansion on groups in southern Arizona.

Updates and additions to the second edition of this unit include:

- A new focus on the historical processes of settler colonialism during this period of U.S. history;
- More content on how U.S. government laws, policies, and practices supported settler colonialism;
- Additional information on how Native people resisted settler colonialism;
- Definitions boxes for each part of the reading;
- New primary source quotations and images;
- Updated maps;
- A restructured perspectives activity on the 1871 Camp Grant Massacre with increased emphasis on developing source analysis skills;
- A new synthesis lesson on historical memory;
- New video content added and fully integrated into lesson plans;
- An increased focus on primary source analysis and evidence gathering in the study guides and lessons.

N.Y. teachers' podcast digs into "missing" history

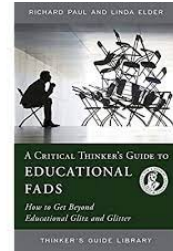
Telling a good story can help foster students' love of history, say New York high-school teachers Philip Horender and Philip Schoff, who in the fall started "The Missing Chapter: History's Forgotten Stories" podcast to share interesting stories that have been left out of history textbooks. Students are not required to tune in, but the pair says the podcast, which has attracted a worldwide audience, is a way to better engage their students during remote learning. **Full Story:** WTEN-TV/WXXA-TV (Albany, N.Y.) (3/8)



Confidence is preparation in action.
Ron Howard, actor, filmmaker

Why education succumbs to fads

Teaching appears prone to faddism, writes Jonathan Zimmerman, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania. In this interview, Zimmerman highlights a few potential causes, including the lack of consensus about what good teaching looks like and the expensiveness of practices that are known to work. **Full Story:** EdSurge (3/16)



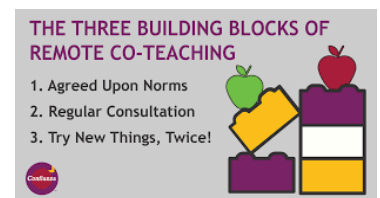
Are the wrong questions being asked about testing?

The way students are assessed -- via standardized testing -- is flawed, asserts Todd Rose, former professor at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education and head of the nonprofit think tank Populace. Rose says in this podcast that even though there is no "average" student, today's assessments measure students against an "average." **Full Story:** EdSurge (3/9)



Educators re-imagine co-teaching for remote learning

Tom Whisinnand, a fourth-grade teacher at Reagan Elementary School in Nebraska's Millard Public Schools, writes that he worked over the past year with his student-teacher to fine-tune their co-teaching model. In this commentary, Whisinnand describes how their approach supports students and helps develop future teachers. **Full Story:** EdSurge (3/11)



Charades-based app teaches about Black culture, history

Black software developers are creating mobile apps to teach about many topics, including social issues and Black culture. This article highlights 12 Black application developers, including Teddy "Stat" Phillips who created "For the Culture," a charades-based game that teaches about Black history and pop culture. **Full Story:** BET (3/10)



Is "learning loss" real?

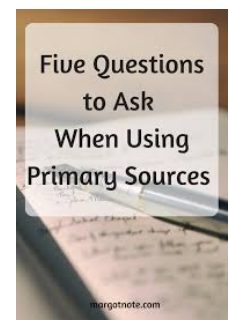
Some researchers are questioning whether "summer slide" or pandemic-prompted "learning loss" truly exist. In this commentary, Rachael Gabriel, associate professor of literacy education at the University of Connecticut, asserts that learning "is never lost" and points to lessons learned about lean teaching, collaboration, creativity and resilience. **Full Story:** The Washington Post (tiered subscription model) (3/10)



Educators share ideas for using primary sources

Students research more effectively, says Florida high-school social studies teacher Kevin Thomas Smith, who along with three other educators share their ideas for lessons that use primary sources, such as the Library of Congress. In this blog post, California eighth-grade history teacher Sarah Cooper cautions that documents from earlier centuries can be hard for students to parse. **Full Story:** Education Week (3/14)

Learning how to tell the difference between primary and secondary sources can help





Teacher: 3 goals to consider when teaching civics

Edutopia (3/11)

Democracy, it's been said, has always been a contact sport. Political parties disagree on policy issues, and this conflict, mediated by shared ideals, is a useful tension that drives democracy. But today, partisanship has become mistaken for patriotism, and Democrats and Republicans fear that the other will destroy the country if they attain power.



Educator: Why students need to learn "ugly" US history

Democracy depends on tolerance, respectful disagreement and intelligent debate based on evidence, rather than demonization, asserts Pedro Noguera, dean of the Rossier School of Education at University of Southern California. In this commentary, Noguera writes that controversial topics can make history lessons "more compelling" to students, while addressing the "ugly" sides of US history will help students learn and grow from hard lessons of the past. **Full Story:** Newsweek (tiered subscription model)

9-year-old BFFs separated by Holocaust reunite at age 91

Betty Grebenschikoff and Ana Maria Wahrenberg were 9-year-old best friends in 1938 Berlin, with each living the rest of their lives thinking the other had died during the Holocaust. Four months ago, with the help of an indexer from the USC Shoah Foundation, the women were reconnected and have rekindled their friendship via weekly phone calls. **Full Story:** The Washington Post (tiered subscription model) (3/9)



Yousafzai to create TV content for students

Activist Malala Yousafzai who in 2014 became the youngest winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, is working with a television streaming service to create comedies, documentaries, dramas, animated shows and series for students. In this Q&A, Yousafzai, who was shot in the head at age 15 by the Taliban in Pakistan, discusses helping other girls become activists and identifies who she views as her heroes. **Full Story:** The Associated Press (3/8)



Student's nonprofit promotes Black geographers

Francisca Rockey, a geography student at York St John University in the UK, has started the nonprofit group Black Geographers to promote Black voices in geography and diversify the geography field and curriculum. This article features a Q&A session with Rockey, who talks about why she chose geography and what can be done to make progress. **Full Story:** Forbes (tiered subscription model) (2/26)

Mankind will endure when the world appreciates the logic of diversity. Indira Gandhi, first female prime minister of India

N.J. students use tech to share local history

Three students at Bayonne High School in New Jersey, under the guidance of social studies faculty members Kelly Sweeney and Dan Ward, have developed "Bayonne: An Interactive History and Heritage Tour," a project marking key locations in the city's history. For each site, the students made QR codes that connect users to text, visuals and voice-overs explaining how each site is related to the community's diversity and resilience. **Full Story:** TAPinto/Bayonne, N.J.



Teacher's campaign for office puts elections on display

A voter wears an "I voted" sticker. (Courtney Pedroza/Getty Images)
Fifth- through eighth-grade students in a Maine school got a taste of the inner workings of political campaigns and local government when social studies teacher Lance Harvell ran for -- and won -- a seat on the county commission. Harvell, who previously served in the state's Legislature, recently took the oath of office at a school assembly. **Full Story:** Sun Journal (Lewiston, Maine) (tiered subscription model) (3/19)



Tips for teaching, using sketchnoting

Educators recommend sketchnoting -- a form of visual note-taking -- to help keep students' attention and help them organize and retain information. Visual note-taker and educator Wendi Pillars suggests several strategies to help teachers and students begin sketchnoting. **Full Story:** KQ



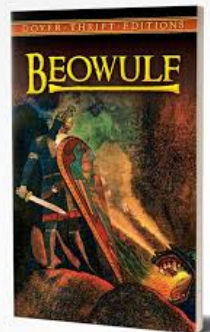
Should teachers address QAnon, conspiracy theories?

Some college professors are diving deep into the history of conspiracy theories in classes, but the topic can be difficult to address with high-schoolers who may believe things they've heard about QAnon, the deep state and conspiracy theories. Teacher Anthony Roy, president of the Connecticut Council for the Social Studies, says it is best to focus students on examining the credibility and possible bias of information sources while understanding that teenage brains are learning how to reason. **Full Story:** The Hartford Courant (Conn.) (3/22)



"Beowulf" translation offers contemporary view of tale

A modern translation of "Beowulf" -- universal in its take on heroes and villains -- substitutes "Bro!" for the original opening "Hark!" or "So!" and is designed to improve connections to the tale, translator Maria Dahvana Headley says in this interview. A novelist, Headley says the 1,000-plus-year-old story's dive into humor, bravado and mourning for individual and societal losses relate with current events. **Full Story:** PBS/



*This nation will smile again. This nation will know sunny days again.
This nation will know joy again. US President Joseph Biden, Speaking
at a memorial ceremony for the 500,000 Americans claimed by
COVID-19*

Federal Reserve Teacher PD: \$HOW ME THE MONEY!

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAVBA/bulletins/2c3cfb0>

April is Financial Literacy Month and the Federal Reserve wants to help educators get a head start with a series of #FinLit webinars for K-12 educators, homeschool networks, after-school programs and families looking to teach kids about money.

These sessions will highlight the FREE educational resources available from the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland and across the Federal Reserve system which include:

- Publications & classroom supports
- Interactive apps & games
- Curriculum & lesson plans
- Programs for students and teachers

Whether you're teaching in-person or in a virtual classroom, this session is for you!

There will be a 30-minute resource session for each grade band. Registrants can attend more than one session, but must complete a separate registration for each event/time slot.

Session Dates & Times:

Elementary (K-5th grade): Wednesday, April 7 at 11am

Middle School (6th-8th grade): Wednesday, April 7 at 1pm

High School (9th - 12th grade): Wednesday, April 7 at 12pm

Registration closes 24 hours prior to the event start date/time.

Cariss T. Smith FEDERAL RESERVE BANK of CLEVELAND

Regional Education and Museum Outreach Coordinator ~ Northern Ohio & Western Pennsylvania

Office: 216.774.2603 ~ Mobile: 216.402.5489

[@CleveFed LC](http://www.ClevelandFed.org/learningcenter)



Students have not been on vacation, professor says

As students return to their school buildings, educators should remember that students are not coming back rested from a vacation but weathered from a year of traumatizing events, and instruction should be adjusted accordingly, says Diana Arya, education professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Arya will participate in a panel discussion about student emotional wellness and reading instruction Thursday with reading specialist Donell Pons and Nevada Teacher of the Year 2021 Juliana Urtubey. **Full Story:** SmartBrief/Education (3/24)

Why students need to learn how to learn from videos

Video lessons have become an important teaching tool for remote education, but not all students know how to make the best use of them, writes educator Avra Robinson. In this article, Robinson shares tips for teaching students how to approach video lessons and urging them to pause and rewind as needed to get the most out of video presentations. **Full Story:** Edutopia (3/23)