

The POINT!



E-Letter for Western Pennsylvania Social Studies Educators

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Who Needs Social Studies?"

Many people complain that they never learned much about history in school. As a social studies teacher for 38 years, I found my job often hampered by parents, especially males, who exclaimed that they didn't give a damn if their son got a "D" or "F" in social studies, but he better get an "A" in math.

This same attitude was voiced by many leaders who curtailed funding for social studies materials as well as refusing to let teachers attend conferences that provided pertinent professional development programs. Attitudes of adults affect how students view schooling and students often see social studies as unimportant.

Social studies has often been sacrificed when budget restrictions arose and when the 21st century began, preparation for tests often replaced social studies classes, particularly in elementary schools.

This is not meant to excuse the teacher whose lesson consisted of assigning the end of chapter questions in the text book. Text books can provide an outline for a history course but it in no way replaces discussion, debate, and reflection, about ideas, events, and people.

Math and science help prepare students to make a living. Social studies aims to help them learn how to live.

In the light of the recent attack on the National Capital, it is imperative that more attention **MUST** be given to the teaching and learning about history and government.

Leo West

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

Civil War Summer Reading Camp

August 9th-13th

Registration is open for 5th-8th graders

Visit our Web site for more information.

<https://www.soldiersandsailorshall.org>



Learn How Pittsburgh Helped Shape Our Democracy

American Democracy: A Great Leap of Faith | Exhibits | Heinz ...

<https://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/exhibits/american-democracy>

Examine the bold experiment to create a government “of the people, by the people, and ... A Great Leap of Faith, open now at the Smithsonian's home in **Pittsburgh**.....history have **helped shape our democracy**, including the Whiskey Rebellion, ... engages visitors through public programs, special exhibitions, **digital learning** ...

Compete in the Civic Season Challenge

The intuitive and easy -to-use **Citizen You mobile app** is designed to foster civic engagement by gamefying. Everyday civic actions. Download this free app today on the App Store or Google Play and earn points for bragging rights against users across the country While competing in the “Civic Season Challenge.”



New Exhibit at Carnegie Museum of Art

Visit *The Fabricated Landscape* in the Heinz Architectural Center! In this new exhibition, take a trip around the world - no passport needed! - and experience representations of cutting-edge spaces from Japan and Scandinavia to Zimbabwe and Latin America. *The Fabricated Landscape* showcases the work of ten international architectural practices led by some of the most innovative minds working in architecture today. Saturday at noon, join us for [In Conversation: Architects Respond to The Fabricated Landscape](#), a virtual panel discussion featuring architects in the show moderated by Raymund Ryan, Curator-at-Large, Heinz Architectural Center.



The Point

For
Western Pennsylvania
Social Studies Educators

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Cheating at School Is Easier Than Ever—and It's Rampant -

<https://todaysdough.com › full-loaf › cheating-at-schoo...>

A year of remote learning has spurred an eruption of cheating among students, from grade school to college. With many students isolated at home over the past year—and with a mass of online services at their disposal—academic dishonesty has never been so easy.

Websites that allow students to submit questions for expert answers have gained millions of new users over the past year. A newer breed of site allows students to put up their own classwork for auction.

“Consider hiring me to do your assignment,” reads a bid from one auction site. “I work fast, pay close attention to the instructions, and deliver a plagiarism-free paper.

Teachers become researchers on teaching, learning

Teacher-led A/B tests are among the approaches being used to help a group of teachers experiment, gather data and identify the most successful teaching and learning approaches for their students. Illinois teacher Krystal Clifton, who studied in-person teaching versus Zoom teaching versus self-paced instruction, is among 30 US teachers participating in the Learning Agency Lab's Teacher Run Experiment Network, which is modeled after Maine middle-school math teacher Bill Hinkley's A/B homework experiment. **Full Story:** The Hechinger Report (6/14)

District leader: Actively recruit male teachers of color

Bringing more male educators of color -- particularly Black male teachers -- into the classroom requires active and intentional recruiting efforts, along with mentoring and professional development, says Baron Davis, superintendent of Richland School District Two in South Carolina. In this Q&A, Davis explains the district's Premier 100 initiative to increase these numbers in classrooms and shares what data says about the teachers and student outcomes. **Full Story:** K-12 Dive (6/22)

1887 time capsule will be removed from Va. statue's base

An 1887 time capsule built into the pedestal that once supported a 21-foot-tall Robert E. Lee statue in Richmond, Va., will be removed, says Governor Ralph Northam. The time capsule's contents -- said to include a photo of President Abraham Lincoln in his casket, an 1887 copy of a newspaper and mementos of the Confederacy -- will be sent to a conservation lab for evaluation, says Janice Underwood, the state's chief diversity officer. **Full Story:** Richmond Times-Dispatch (Va.) (6/22)

Students research lives of slaves for "witness stones"

"Witness stones" on the ground along a street in Old Lyme, Conn. -- markers that identify 14 of the estimated 200 enslaved individuals who lived in the area -- were created by seventh-graders from Lyme-Old Lyme Middle School. As part of a history and English project, students -- including some who said they were unaware of slavery in their community -- used primary documents, such as the 1790 census, to research each person's story and write poems about them.

 **Full Story:** WTNH-TV (New Haven, Conn.) (6/14)



Honor as Power: The Practical Keys to Antiracist Teaching

An important first step toward antiracist schools is recognizing the codes of power that operate in the classroom, writes educator Andratesha Fitzgerald in ASCD Express. Culturally responsive teaching distributes teachers' traditionally held power and releases students' freedom to shine.

Okla. district integrates Tulsa massacre in lessons

Tulsa, Okla., public-school students in third- through 12th-grade social studies classes in May began learning about the race massacre in the city's Greenwood District -- around the same time state lawmakers passed legislation aimed at restricting antiracist instruction. Deputy Superintendent Paula Shannon said the district worked to develop a curriculum to address the "hard history."

Full Story: The 74 (6/1)



Novel helps Okla. teacher with lessons on race massacre

The story of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, which left as many as 300 Black people murdered in an area of the Oklahoma city known as Black Wall Street, is told in flashbacks in the historical novel "Dreamland Burning," which Oklahoma high-school teacher Amie Harrison uses for an honors English class. Harrison says teachers have a responsibility to bring history to light, even if that history will be painful to hear, because when "you know better, you do better."

Full Story: The Joplin Globe (Mo.) (tiered subscription model) (5/28)



Teacher: Historical truths should be uncontroversial

Now the headlines in North Carolina, the state where I live and teach U.S. history, civics, and economics, read: My reaction this time is different: This cannot and will not continue.



State Republicans try to limit teaching about race, racism –

NBC10 Philadelphia

Pennsylvania News Today

The National **E**ducation Association and the National Council for the **S**ocial Studies oppose laws that limit the ideas that can be presented in the ...



Tribal members' canoe trip celebrates languages, salmon



About 40 members of the Spokane and Colville tribes communicated and celebrated the survival of their languages as they started a six-day, 60-mile journey in hand-carved canoes along the Columbia River in Washington state. Devon Peone, who teaches at the Spokane Language House in Wellpinit, says the fifth-annual event offers an opportunity to reconnect with water, land and elders while calling for salmon to return to the river after 80 years since dams prevented movement of fish. **Full Story:** The Spokesman-Review (Spokane, Wash.) (tiered subscription model) (6/16)

Haaland: US to look for graves at Native American schools



The US will use records of former boarding schools for Native American students to uncover possible burial sites; examine intergenerational trauma; and promote healing, US Interior Secretary Deb Haaland announced at the National Congress of American Indians. The Indian Civilization Act of 1819 began 150 years of US boarding schools designed to force the assimilation of Native children. **Full Story:** The Associated Press (6/23)

■ **Can a social studies road map promote compromise?**

The Hechinger Report

“You can’t tell the whole story of the United States without telling the story of slavery or discussing the Black experience,” said Tims, who teaches courses on U.S. and African American history.



Seven Questions That Guide the Work of Inspired Teachers

Carol Ann Tomlinson shares the questions that highly effective teachers should begin their back-to-school planning with on the ASCD blog.

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Zombie Ideas in Education

Why are there so many dispelled research theories out there that keep coming back to life, even after they've been proven false? Education researcher Bryan Goodwin takes a look at some popular "zombie" ideas, why they are still popular, and what



Why the Southwest is becoming drier

Researchers have detected decreasing humidity in the Southwest in recent decades, a trend that has accelerated since 2000. The shift is linked to lower soil moisture in the region, and, when coupled with extreme heat, it contributes to wildfire risk, according to lead author Karen McKinnon of the University of California, Los Angeles. **Full Story:** The New York Times (6/24)



If it weren't for the last minute, nothing would get done.

Rita Mae Brown, writer, screenwriter

••CHOICES••

IMPERIAL USA

How did the United States become a global imperial power? The latest curriculum unit from the Choices Program explores the history of U.S. imperial expansion at the turn of the twentieth century and shows how the United States' acquisition of overseas colonies after the War of 1898 was part of a much longer history of U.S. imperialism. In *Imperial America: U.S. Global Expansion, 1890-1915*, students explore the historical connections between the United States' creation of a settler colonial empire in North America and the nation's acquisition of an overseas colonial empire.



Students learn about the history of U.S. colonial rule in the territories acquired at the turn of the twentieth century and examine the various ways U.S. imperial power continued to expand in the early twentieth century. Resistance to U.S. imperialism is a key theme, and students examine various forms of political, legal, social, cultural, and armed resistance movements to U.S. imperialism in North America, the nation's overseas colonial territories, and beyond.

Explore Imperial America

Why some districts are keeping a virtual option

Some school districts, including Houston, Las Vegas and Los Angeles, are taking steps to open virtual academies to accommodate students who preferred online learning during the coronavirus pandemic. The online option is appealing for students who found they thrived with remote instruction, as well as students who need flexible schedules because of jobs and those with certain medical conditions. **Full Story:** EdSurge (6/9)



Lee's former home shifts attention to slaves

Arlington House, also known as the Robert E. Lee Memorial, reopened this week outside Washington, D.C., for the first time since 2018 with the completion of \$12.5 million in renovations that has included a pivot to add the forgotten history of the slaves who built and worked at the home, says Charles Cuvelier, of the National Park Service. Located within what is now Arlington National Cemetery, the house's representation in the logo of the government of Arlington, Va., is coming to an end amid a reckoning about racism. **Full Story:** National Public Radio (6/8)



9/11 project helps students overcome learning loss

Teachers can combat learning loss following a pandemic year by focusing on project-based, student-driven learning, writes Rose Reissman, director of the Writing Institute at the Ditmas Education Complex in Brooklyn, N.Y. In this article, Reissman shares how her students engaged in a project to mark the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Full Story:

••The June 3rd ASCD Smart Brief highlights our Brooklyn partner in the PCSS 9/11 Project which is featured at <https://pcssonline.org/pcss-9-11-twentieth-anniversary-project/>



How wonderful, how very wonderful the operations of time, and the changes of the human mind! Jane Austen, writer



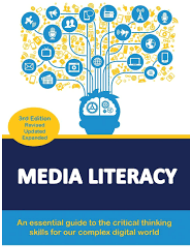
Pa. students get animated with lessons via comic books

Comic books and graphic novels draw in students and keep them engaged in key topics, says social studies teacher Tim Smyth of Wissahickon High School in Ambler, Pa. A writer of a graphic-novel curriculum and teacher guides, Smyth offers six ideas for incorporating comics, such as creating a superhero team to solve an environmental problem. **Full Story:** eSchool News (6/1)

Media literacy is more than news, social media

For decades, most American public schools treated media literacy as optional – something good to teach “when time allows.” With the advent of high stakes testing, pacing guides and power standards, time seldom did.

Now change is in the air. The rampant expansion of largely unfettered social media and its impact on society in the past several election cycles are finally stirring some serious conversation about making media literacy a curriculum priority.



Canada's Indigenous day honors complex history

The former Kamloops Indian Residential School in Canada was the backdrop for a National Indigenous Peoples Day celebration with performances, poems and remembrances of the students and generations of families affected by the now-defunct, abusive boarding school system. Meanwhile, a memorial at the Saskatchewan Government House designed to encourage sharing of Indigenous stories will be completed in the fall. **Full Story:** Global News (Canada) (6/22)



Art students help restore longstanding mural

York Middle School teacher Danielle Day volunteered with 10 of her former art students to restore a Revolutionary War mural in a historic area of the Virginia community that depicts silhouettes of soldiers with bayonets against a vivid landscape. High-school students created the mural years ago, and community donations made the restoration possible, Day says. **Full Story:** The Virginia Gazette (Williamsburg) (6/24)



Ohio court strikes down gun policy for school staff

The Ohio Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled against an Ohio school district's policy that permitted some employees to carry concealed firearms on campus. In a 4 to 3 decision, the majority justices said the policy violated state law, which requires completion of an "approved basic peace-officer-training program" or "20 years of experience as a peace officer" to carry the weapons. **Full Story:** The Cincinnati Enquirer (tiered subscription model) (6/23)



Tenn. teachers urged to document limits on lessons

The Education Trust in Tennessee recently held a webinar focused on how legal restrictions on teaching about race and racism will affect classroom teaching and learning. Teachers were encouraged to document when lessons have been limited, share feedback on the restrictions with state leaders and to track if students say they feel silenced by limited discussions. **Full Story:** Chalkbeat/Tennessee (6/21)

