

The POINT!

E-Letter for Western Pennsylvania Social Studies Educators

Vol. 15 No. 9

September 2022



Apocalyptic Warnings

They're back. The "*prophets of doom*" again pointing out the signs of impending disasters... This bad old world is about to end. If we ignore warnings about Climate Change it well may be but apocalyptic predictions have been around for eons. I recall one in the fall of 1945 that led to the loss of a football game and doomed a team to score 14 points over the entire season but win two games.

The world was about to end at 6:00 p.m. on the first Friday of September. All week the newspapers and radio repeated the story about the group in Colorado retiring to a mountain top to await the end. And all week long, members of a football team scheduled to play Friday night kept joking "We don't need to worry about Friday's game because the world's 'gonna end' an hour before the game .starts."

Friday came and a cloud burst post-poned the game until the next night. That game ended: home team 0, visitors 33. In addition, the home team, of which I was a member. lost three key members for the season due to injuries. Apocalyptic predictions can affect people.

As a world Cultures teacher, I recall several incidents where some students were traumatized by end of days predictions they had heard and were having problems in school. Prehistory offered a way to address the problem. Students were asked to find out how long human beings have been on earth. (300,000 years.) How long were dinosaurs on earth? (165,000,000 years) If we avoid blowing ourselves up and get the climate under control, we still have a future if we examine the past.

December 2022: NCSS in Philadelphia

As a novice teacher in 1960, I attended the NCSS Conference which was held in Pittsburgh at the William Penn Hotel. This was the last time NCSS met in Pennsylvania which gives new meaning to the meeting in Philadelphia. If history is any preface to the future, it may be a long time before they return. This is an opportunity to participate in a variety of sessions on social studies education that feature the latest in techniques and sources available. The exhibit hall in itself is well worth some time to browse. Time to think about attending. As I reminisce about my first NCSS experience in Pittsburgh, I'm hoping to have the opportunity to attend this one in Philadelphia.

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 extraordinary circumstance

Education Department 412-621-4253-Ex.210

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To learn about Soldiers & Sailors sponsorship opportunities,
please contact Sarah B. Galiotto
VP, Director of Development & Community Relations
at sarah@soldiersandsailorshall.org



Holocaust Museums and Memorials Around the World:

Our September Event in this Series: Remembering the Holocaust
 in the United Kingdom Thursday, September 29, 2022
 2:00 PM Eastern Time Zoom | [Click here for more information](#)

CWB HAS A NEW WEBSITE!

We are thrilled to announce that we have launched a new look to our website! All the same educational information, event listings, digital resou etc. all in one place and easier to locate than ever before.

CWBPGH.org new site for all new event

Jeducational information, event listings, digital resources, etc. all in one
 All new content is ONLY available on our NEW Site. Our OLD site is sill functioning, but please see our new site for all new events.



We are social creatures to the inmost centre of our being. The notion that one can begin anything at all from scratch, free from the past, or unindebted to others, could not conceivably be more wrong. -Karl Popper, philosopher and professor (28 Jul 1902-1994)

Pearson turning textbooks into NFTs

Students who buy their textbooks from Pearson will be buying their textbooks as non-fungible tokens, commonly referred to as NFTs. The digital tokens will allow the textbook publisher to track ownership and profit from secondhand sales, which was impossible when books changed hands

Secret Service offers guidance on safety in schools

Two school districts in Texas recently hosted attendees from across the state for a safety summit that was planned before the mass shooting in Uvalde that left 21 people dead. With staff from the US Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center in attendance, the safety event included materials addressing active shooter responses, recognizing red flags and how to harden campuses. **Full Story:** KHOU-TV (Houston) (7/26)

Most Americans Support Raising Teacher Pay. But There's a Partisan Rift

Support for teacher pay raises is at its highest level in at least 15 years.

[Read More](#)

In Uvalde, Pain Where There Once Was Pride

There's a deeper story of Robb Elementary—one that began years before the shooting

Tribal leader concerned HB 1775 affecting how native history is taught in classroom

Tribal leaders are concerned that Oklahoma House Bill 1775, which bans the teaching of critical race theory and the superiority of any one race, will affect the ability of educators to teach Native American history. Chuck Hoskin Jr., principal chief of the Cherokee Nation, says it is important to learn the entirety of history, even if some of it makes people uncomfortable. **Full Story:** Public Radio Tulsa (Okla.) (8/14), KTUL-TV (Tulsa, Okla.) (8/15) **Will Okla. bill limit Native American history lessons?**

Students build boats, learn history of Detroit River

A place to mark the end of a five-week program run by the University of Michigan's Detroit River Story Lab. In partnership with the Green Door Initiative, the program teaches the skills needed to build boats as well as exploring the Detroit River's cultural and historical role in the Underground Railroad and US history to tween and teen students. **Full Story:** Detroit Free

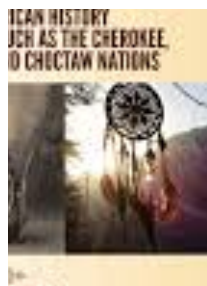
The Point

For
Western Pennsylvania
Social Studies Educators
EDITORS
Leo R. West

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

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or (4 Aug 1913-1980)

What a child doesn't receive he can seldom later give. -P.D. James
(Phyllis Dorothy James), novelist (3 Aug 1920-2014)

Mining has changed Appalachia's landscape and flood risk

A long history of mountaintop coal mining has forever altered central Appalachia's landscape and has made the region more susceptible to catastrophic flood events like the 1,000-year event that recently ravaged parts of Kentucky. The situation likely will worsen as climate change intensifies, because "you're just getting a ton more water vapor in the atmosphere that reaches the saturation point -- it has to come down. A long history of mountaintop coal mining has forever altered central Appalachia's landscape and has made the region more susceptible to catastrophic flood events like the 1,000-year event that recently ravaged parts of Kentucky. The situation likely will worsen as climate change intensifies, because "you're just getting a ton more water vapor in the atmosphere that reaches the saturation point -- it has to come down



NYC seeks to expand maritime school

Urban Assembly New York Harbor School, on Governors Island, which focuses on maritime and environmental education, will expand from two to four buildings. Officials say there is a large waitlist to enroll in the school, and they hope the expansion will allow enrollment to rise from 520 students to nearly 900. **Full Story:** Chalkbeat/New York (8/16)



Report: 250% spike in restrictive teaching bills

There was a 250% increase in legislation aiming to restrict teaching about topics such as race, gender, sexuality and US history in 2022, according to a report released Wednesday by PEN America. The report found that more than 55% of the legislation introduced this year included punishment for those who violate the law -- up from 44% the previous year. **Full Story:** K-12\



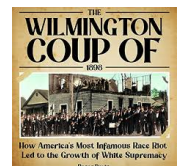
Fla. Stop WOKE Act blocked, called unconstitutional

Florida's new Stop WOKE Act, which limits what can be taught about gender and race, has been blocked by a Florida judge who ruled that the law violates the First Amendment. In a separate case, the constitutionality of the law is being challenged by a college student and seven professors. **Full Story:** WJXT-TV/WCWJ-TV (Jacksonville, Fla.) (8/19)



N.C. 4th-graders to learn about city's 1898 coup

A North Carolina school district will update its fourth-grade curriculum to include lessons about 1898, the year in which white supremacists completed what historians say is the only successful coup d'etat in US history. Instruction about the event, also known as the Wilmington Race Riot, will be modified to account for students' ages to address the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's revised social studies standards as an example of revolution, reform and resistance in state's history. **Full Story:** WWAY-TV (Wilmington, N.C.) (8/17)

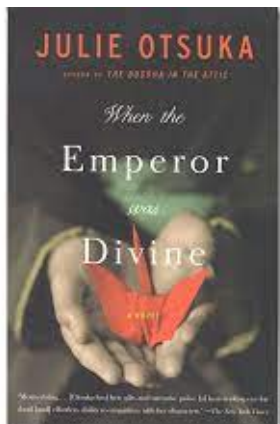




Coraopolis social studies teacher PA History Teacher of the Year

A Coraopolis social studies teacher Amy Palo, was named Pennsylvania History Teacher of the Year by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Amy has taught history and civics at Cornell High School for 15 years,

“I want my students to understand that history isn’t passive,” she said. “It isn’t just someone reading names and dates at you. It’s something you actively do.” READ MORE Visit the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette article online. Via Google



"Teach-in" held to protest book's exclusion from class

Educators, students and others in the Muskego-Norway Schools district in Wisconsin participated in a Monday "teach-in" to protest the exclusion from classes of "When the Emperor Was Divine" by Julie Otsuka, a novel about the incarceration of Japanese people and Japanese Americans during World War II. Organized by the Asian American Pacific Islander Coalition of Wisconsin, the event offered free copies of the book and was needed, said Kabby Hong, the 2022 Wisconsin Teacher of the Year, to drive visibility for books written by Asian Americans, who are underrepresented among the books studied in US schools. **Full Story:** NBC News (7/19)



Ariz. desert garden focuses Native American heritage

The Verde Valley Archaeology Center in Camp Verde, Ariz., recently opened its Native American Heritage Garden to showcase dry farming crops as well as indigenous plants and species. The desert garden, located on the site where several ancient pit houses were excavated, includes corn, beans and squash, crops known as the "three sisters." **Full Story:** JournalAZ (Cottonwood, Ariz.) (7/17)

Librarians face increased scrutiny, online attacks

School librarians and their peers in public libraries have faced closer examination and criticism of their book collections amid the passage of laws restricting access to titles, particularly in Texas, where Lucy Podmore has been a school librarian for 16 years and chairs the Texas Association of School Librarians. Podmore says librarians have been attacked online even though they should feel safe when they have been "following your district policy and you are curating materials that reflect your community.



reflect your community

Cardona: States should use federal funds for teachers

US Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said on "Face the Nation" Sunday that money from the American Rescue Plan is available for states to help shore up a longstanding teacher shortage by recruiting retired educators and providing salaries for student-teachers. A lack of educators has prompted some districts to make tough decisions, including moving to four-day weeks.



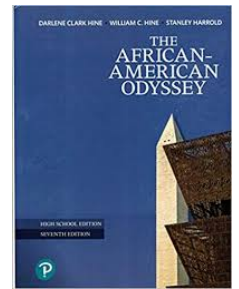
How nations are bracing for sea level rise

Coastal flooding from rising sea levels due to climate change could affect up to 410 million people globally by the year 2100, according to a study in Nature Communications. Countries are preparing in various ways, including the use of a digital twin to direct policies in New Zealand, the construction of floating homes in the Maldives and the installation of wooden stakes on shorelines in Senegal. **Full Story:** World Economic Forum (8/22)



CAP African American Studies ready to welcome students

The College Board is piloting Advanced Placement African American Studies in 60 US schools this year, with the course covering topics from the history of the African continent and to the contributions made to the US by Black people, including novelist Toni Morrison and Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. Among those teaching the AP course, the 40th offered by the College Board and first new one since 2014, will be Peekskill, N.Y., teacher Sharon Courtney, who expresses appreciation to the organization for its move to "standardize the curriculum and put it out there for everyone." **Full Story:** TIME (tiered subscription model) (8/22)



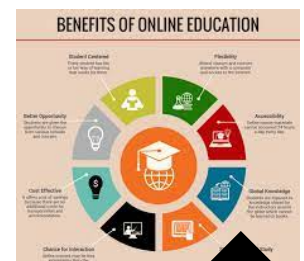
Google expands technology toolset for education

Google has introduced instructional technology using artificial intelligence with the expansion of its Google for Education toolset. The updates include adaptive learning technologies and ways to reduce the burden on administrative duties.



Students share 5 advantages of online learning

Online learning has benefitted many students -- including those with certain disabilities, notes Karen Powell Sears, an assistant sociology professor at Denison University in Ohio, who queried her students for insights. Virtual classes also put all students "on more equal footing," felt more inclusive and gave students more agency when it came to their health and learning, Sears writes. **Full Story:** Inside Higher Ed (7/14)



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Most Parents Don't Want Their Kids to Become Teachers, Poll Finds

- DK International's poll showed record high trust in local schools and teachers. B sit...



I speak two languages, Body and English. -Mae West, actress, playwright, singer, screenwriter, and comedian (17 Aug 1893-1980)



SOCIAL STUDIES SYMPOSIUM **MONDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2022**

Join your peers for the third biennial Social Studies Symposium at the AIU Central Offices in the Waterfront Complex in Homestead, PA! The morning features a selection of Powertalk sessions on the topic of engaging students in Social Studies learning given by social studies teachers, organizations, and thought leaders. Avail yourself to organizations and vendors who wish to partner with you to make your work more engaging.

[Register HERE](#)



CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022**

The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. Not surprisingly, it is one of the most studied and well-documented events in modern U.S. history. In this seminar, we will use a selection of primary sources related to the crisis to address key questions and to examine the decisions and actions of U.S., Soviet, and Cuban officials.

[Register HERE](#)



THE KENNYWOOD ARCHIVES! **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2022**

The Kennywood archives are open! Explore ways to energize your students' learning history through our iconic regional and beloved institution: Kennywood! Participants will have access to historical records of the park and engage in a discussion of the history of the park itself.

[Register HERE](#)



WESTWARD EXPANSION **FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 2023**

This seminar will focus on America's westward expansion and its "Manifest Destiny" to expand from sea to shining sea. This seminar will consider the purposes for westward expansion, Jackson's Indian Removal Policy and westward expansion's impact on slavery.

[Register HERE](#)



HARLEM RENAISSANCE **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2023**

Harlem became the hub of African-American culture in the 1920's and 30's, and the extraordinary writing that developed during this time continues to influence American literature and culture. This seminar will explore the literature of the Harlem Renaissance in relation to its history as well as its social and cultural context. We will also examine the competing theories about race and racial identity that defined the Harlem Renaissance's intellectual culture.

[Register HERE](#)



WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY **FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2023**

Women's political, social and economic status has undergone several transformations in American history. This seminar will explore readings and documents in three of those stages: Women of Reform and Revolution, Women in the Progressive Era and Voting Booths and Is Suffrage Enough – the Lasting Impact.

[Register HERE](#)