

# **THE REVIEW**

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**OHIO COUNCIL  
FOR THE  
SOCIAL STUDIES**

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**Summer 2001  
Volume 37, Number 1**

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***OCSS Review***  
**Editorial Board**  
**2001**

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## Notes on Contributors

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**Rebecca Begley** is a graduate of Wright State University with BS in Education (Social Studies comprehensive). She also received her MS in Education from WSU in curriculum and supervision. She just completed 15th year of teaching, the last four of which have been at Troy High School. She is a past member of OCSS Executive Board.

**Will Fitzhugh**, a graduate of Harvard College, founded *The Concord Review* in 1987. He is a member of the Board of the New England History Teachers Association, and he started the National Writing Board in 1998.

**Dale Gripenstroh** has taught for San Diego City Schools for the past 7 years. He has credentials in History, English, Business, ESL and Gifted and Talented Education. This year he has been selected to participate in Project Harmony, a partnership program with the Armenian Education Department. This summer he will be helping teachers in Armenia to get the most out of the Internet and connect with classrooms here in the USA.

**Ronald G. Helms** has taught social studies for thirty-five years and is currently the Social Studies Director for Wright State University. He is also active as an NCSS/NCATE program Review Evaluator.

**Mark van 't Hooft** is a former high school and middle school social studies and language arts teacher. He currently works as the technology specialist in the Ameritech Classroom at Kent State University while finishing a PhD with a dual major in Curriculum and Instruction, and Evaluation and Measurement.

**David Huston** teaches World History and Philosophy at Laurel School in Shaker Heights. He is a past recipient of the Hostetler Chair for Teaching Excellence.

**Donna Nesbitt** is a National Board Certified Teacher in History/Social Studies. She works as a social studies consultant at the Ohio Department of Education where she is facilitating the development of academic content standards in social studies.

**James Sheehan** is an Assistant Professor of Education at Cleveland State University. His research interests include social studies education and the history of American teacher education. He will become the editor of the *OCSS Review* with the 2002 issue.

**William Wilen** is Professor of Social Studies Education at Kent State University. His doctorate is from Penn State University and he regularly teaches an oral history workshop for area high school students. Bill is active with NCSS and OCSS, and is a former president of the OCSS.

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# OHIO COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES REVIEW

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## Editor's Page

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**Timothy C. Connell**

Laurel School

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In February of 1992 Laurel School sponsored a conference on the teaching of world history and at the end of the day, Bill Shorrock, then the editor of the *OCSS Review* asked me about the possibility of making the presentations the basis for an issue of the *Review*. Before I knew it, I was working with Bill, and getting a taste of what the editing process was all about. A few years later when he decided to step down as editor, I offered to replace him. Mark Stewart, then OCSS president, was very supportive and in 1995 I began my tenure as editor. It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to play a small part in spreading the good news about social studies education. This issue, though, will be my last editor, as I will hand over the reins to Jim Sheehan of Cleveland State University.

If anything has guided me in the last few years it has been two things: to publish more articles by pre-college teachers, and to publish things that are eclectic, or at least a little off-beat. I hope that I have been able to give OCSS members access to articles that they might not come across in other journals. Getting teachers to publish has been one of my greatest frustrations and I would encourage more teachers to write to share their wonderful ideas with others.

The goal for this issue is to focus on the theme of “challenging our best students.” The Ohio Proficiency Tests in their various manifestations have consumed an enormous amount of attention, and continue to demand our attention, but given that they are basically minimum competency tests, what about the curriculum for our best students? Are they being ignored? What are we doing to serve their needs?

We begin with a look at an innovative program that encourages students to write research papers which are evaluated by an outside group according to what amounts to a national standard. As Will Fitzhugh, who spearheads this program says, “when it comes to the Middle R -- reading -- we may have lost the battle.” Social studies teachers can help to fight the battle to restore expository writing to our classrooms. Creative writing is an insidious evil. We follow this

article with one by my colleague at Laurel School, David Huston, as he explains how a little known program sponsored by Kenyon College offers some options and advantages over the AP approach. The next article in this section, from one of our Canadian colleagues, Michael Barbour, shows how AP programs can be carried to remote classrooms in rural areas. A final article in this section by Bill Wilen and Mark Van t'Hoorst of Kent State offers us a look at a classroom of the future in which the computer is a driving force in challenging our students to do work that they have never done before.

In the section second of the *Review* we offer a wide variety of topics. Dale Griepenstroh, who teaches in suburban San Diego, California, discusses a lesson that he uses with world history students that gets them to understand the nature of prejudice and how easy it is for people to be taken in and follow the crowd, as most Germans did under Hitler. Becki Begley of Troy High School explains how her district underwent a very methodical change from teaching U.S. History at the junior year to teaching it to freshman. She notes the challenges, but on the whole she feels that the change has been a successful one. James Sheehan of Cleveland State University presents an interesting look at a World War I pilot and his training for war. Donna Nesbitt brings us up to date with the Ohio Department of Education focus on content standards asks for our help in making them a success. Ron Helms, a frequent contributor, concludes this edition with a look at the national and state standards and how he has prepared preservice teachers for success in teaching these standards.

As with all efforts of this sort, there are many people who deserve thanks. I have had a terrific group of people serve on the Editorial Board during my tenure. Mara Oess and Matt Stowell have been with me from the beginning. Jack Ahern served as a mentor in more ways than he knows. Mark Nadler and Paul Filio served for several years, and recently Alexa Sandmann and Bill Wilen have joined as thoughtful supporters of the *Review*. Martha Newberry taught me the PageMaker program and offered me many suggestions in my first few years as editor. Thanks to all of you. Far in the past, two teachers helped to get me where I am and I will extend public thanks to them. My high school U.S. History teacher, Mr. William Garvey, now of Mercyhurst College in Erie, Pa., first made history come alive in the classroom for me. At Edinboro State College Dr. Donald Swift took me to my first history conference where I presented a paper that I had written for his class on Colonial U.S. History. They were mentors whose support has served me well over the years.

As careful readers know, this section always ends with a plea for submissions. I would like to encourage our readers to submit manuscripts that might be appropriate for publication. Articles dealing with any aspect of the social studies - key issues in economics, history, sociology, political science; book reviews; and curriculum and instructional matters - will be considered for publication. The theme for the next issue will be "American Presidents and the Political Process." We encourage submissions on this theme, and we particularly hope to hear from classroom teachers. To encourage such submissions, the Ohio Council for the Social

Studies pays an honorarium of \$100 to any pre-college classroom teacher whose manuscript is accepted for publication in the *Review*.

The deadline for submission for the Summer 2002 issue is May 1, 2002. Manuscripts received after that date will be considered for subsequent editions. All submissions should include a hard copy as well as a copy that is saved on a computer disk. An alternative is to send an e-mail attachment.

Address manuscripts and make all inquiries to:

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**Part I**



**Challenging Our Best Students**

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# The Middle 'R'

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**Will Fitzhugh**

*The Concord Review*/National Writing Board

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**T**he old song about School Days and Golden Rule Days said that the K-12 curriculum consisted of Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic, also known as the three "Rs." Of the three "Rs" these days, reading is getting a lot of attention, as it is the foundation of literacy. People have discovered the damage done by "whole language" programs and pushed successfully for a return to phonics, so that, for instance, California, which after several years of "whole language" had slipped to near the bottom in the country on tests of reading, has started teaching kids phonics again and seen their reading scores rise steadily. 'Rithmetic, as the foundation of numeracy, and as the skill perhaps most necessary to begin training to work in a world of high technology, has also drawn a large share of attention and effort, such that the new "fuzzy math," which was introduced by the usual educrats and which did not give students the basic tools they needed to do calculations, is being beaten back. With the help of a number of Nobel Prize winners and other senior mathematicians, the basic skills of arithmetic are once again being taught in the schools.

When we come to the middle 'R,' however, the story is different. There the battle is about over and it may very well have been lost. Writing, in most of American K-12 education, has come to mean creative writing, not expository writing or term papers. Creative writing requires no reading and is very difficult to hold to any sort of standard. Personal stories about emotions and experiences are often enough to satisfy writing requirements in our schools, up through the high school years in too many instances. When Francis Bacon, in 1625, wrote: "Reading Maketh a Full Man, Conference a Ready Man, and Writing an Exact Man," he was not talking about creative writing. Meanwhile, the computer has allowed many teachers to substitute slide presentations and the like for the old history research paper. One head of the history department at a New Jersey high school recently said he does not have his students do term papers any more; he has them write historical fiction instead. The result is, for too many students, that they are told in high school that they will learn to write term papers for the first time in college. A further issue is

that students who excel in mathematics and science can participate in numerous competitions that bring their skills to the attention of college admissions officers, but that has been less true in the humanities.

Some students, with the support of their teachers, are still writing serious history research papers anyway. The International Baccalaureate program requires a 4,000-5,000-word Extended Essay for the diploma in history. Since 1987, *The Concord Review* has published more than 500 research papers by high school students of history from 40 states and 33 other countries in a quarterly journal. These papers average 5,000 words, with endnotes and bibliography. This has provided an opportunity to publish the work of diligent history students, and there is now another option to evaluate the research papers of such students. The National Writing Board offers an independent assessment of academic writing by high school students. Last year it evaluated research papers from students in 15 states and sent three-page reports, at the request of the authors, to deans of admission at 26 colleges and universities. An example of the support for this program comes from William R. Fitzsimmons, Harvard University's Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid. "The humanities are very important to us," he said. "This gives us a way to see an additional piece of information to identify people who might be unusually promising humanists. I hope this... will stimulate students to think about careers in the humanities," he added, "but also just simply fall in love with the idea of writing and analysis because it will help them throughout their lives."

Students can submit papers in two categories: short (around 2,000 words) and long (around 5,000 words) with endnotes and bibliography. Each paper is read by two senior high school history instructors and evaluated according to criteria developed by the Board. The papers are rated on the use of historical sources; thinking and understanding; elaboration or use of evidence; writing or use of language; and the overall success of the paper. Each paper receives two sets of written comments and an overall score of 1 to 6, from "very poor" to "superior." If there is a difference of more than 1 point in the two readers' ratings in any category, a coordinator adjudicates. The scores and comments are sent to the student, who then decides which colleges should receive them. Both the authors and the colleges receive both sets of scores, in addition to the overall rating. Students pay \$65 per paper, which includes the cost of sending the reports to three colleges.

This project was begun to provide another external incentive to encourage teachers and kids to spend time on research papers. Students also can take Advanced Placement courses and tests or participate in International Baccalaureate program, but the National Writing Board provides another option. All students should have this experience before they leave high school. My dream is a 'page-per-year plan,' so by the time they are seniors, every single high school student has written at least one 12-page research paper about something, where they have to read, write, and rewrite. Tackling the challenges of a research paper shows them that they can do scholarly work.

As has so often been stated and even occasionally remembered, students rise to the level of the expectations we have of them. Students appreciate the chance to improve their expository writing skills and will do the necessary work if asked. Some public school teachers, those with 150 students for example, simply are not allowed time to work with students on major term papers, given their current teaching and duty schedules. For too many others, however, the lure of creative writing, which is so easy to correct, and their own ignorance of subject matter in history and literature, leads them to deprive their students of the opportunity to do the reading and writing necessary to produce a good academic paper, even as a junior or senior in high school. If we do not begin to give the level of attention to the Middle 'R' that we have rightly begun to give to the other two, we will continue to burden colleges with students in need of remedial writing instruction before they can write the necessary term papers, and to deprive students of the practice they need to become full from their reading, exact in their thinking and comfortable with the tools of written expression.

For more information please contact:

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# Challenging Our Best Students: The SCAP Alternative

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**David Huston**

Laurel School

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One of the more interesting developments of recent years has been the expansion of the College Board's Advanced Placement Program. The AP program was originally introduced in the 1950's to allow students at elite East Coast boarding schools and some of the more ambitious suburban high schools to take college-level courses during their senior year and, depending how they did on a national examination, receive some sort of college credit. The scheme was attractive and the AP program has grown from its original, small-scale audience to a prestigious and prominent feature of many high schools. Indeed, so aware has the general public become of AP that the first thing many prospective parents, contemplating a move, ask of high school administrators or real estate agents is, "How many AP courses do you offer?" AP has become the universal measuring stick of the quality of a high school's academic program.

Over the years, the AP program has grown enormously. In 2000 AP sponsored thirty-three courses and administered 1.2 million tests to 750,000 students. And there are plans to offer an additional ten courses in the near future. But the size and scope of the AP program has become a mixed blessing—especially for those of us in history and social studies departments. Starting in 2002, there will be AP courses offered in the following social studies disciplines: U.S. History, European History, World History, U.S. Government, Comparative Government, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Geography, and Psychology. In no other discipline is there a similarly wide array of courses. In schools that pride themselves on the challenging nature of their course offerings and that have a parent clientele who have high college expectations for their children, the "AP game" has become very tough to play. At some schools, a teacher who offers an honors level course in an AP discipline is often implicitly expected to offer it as an AP course. In fact, so pervasive has the AP curriculum in social studies become, that it is not unthinkable

that a high school student could take an AP social studies course every year of high school, from the 9th grade to the 12th grade!

While the AP program has much to recommend it, I would like to raise a couple of questions and propose an alternative. Although the prestige which redounds to those schools who have a high percentage of students earning 4's and 5's on their AP tests is enviable, I wonder whether the model of evaluating a student's work in a year-long course on the basis of a single, high-stakes test is the best available? This is a particular difficulty for the AP tests in social studies. The AP internet list-serves for the social studies and history courses are always full of the laments and complaints of teachers of AP courses about preparing their students to do well on these tests. Contrastingly, AP teachers of calculus or chemistry experience much less frustration. Why? Because there is much more agreement in math and science than social studies about what constitutes the core body of knowledge in their disciplines. Teachers, students, and test developers are all in basic harmony. Not so in social studies. We all know there are at least ten different ways to teach a U.S. History course, depending on the periods emphasized, the themes featured, the readings assigned, or the methodology utilized. It is not difficult to imagine the frustration of a teacher and her students who have participated in a rigorous Modern European History course emphasizing political and diplomatic history when they find themselves confronted with a three-hour test emphasizing social and cultural issues! Is that one-time test an accurate measure of their abilities? Or, is it a measure of their teacher's ability to "psych-out" the minds and intentions of the test-writers at ETS when she was developing her syllabus and year-end course review?

### **Replicating a College Course?**

One of the explicit goals of the AP program is to replicate the experience of a college freshman taking an introductory course on a college campus. With this in mind, we might well ask ourselves if the College Board has come as close to succeeding here as they might wish? What college freshman, after all, wonders what themes or issues her professor is likely to emphasize on the final exam? After a semester or two, it is usually inescapably clear to most students what their instructor regards as important. Students know what they should study. But as long as there are such disparate ideas about how to teach social studies, a single, high-stakes test will never be the ideal measure of a student's level of achievement.

My second question is related to the first. Since there is such a wealth of material to study, and no universal agreement about what parts of it deserve most attention, teachers naturally hedge their bets and try to teach a little of everything, just so nothing gets "left out". The upshot of this was not anticipated by the original architects of the AP program. They imagined a test that would be a simple validation of the excellence of a student's work. Little did they imagine that students (and teachers) would be consulting "test-prep" books and that teachers would be tailoring their courses to maximize the performance of their students on the test. So dominant has the AP test become that many teachers find themselves dropping important

features and assignments of their courses so that they can “cover” more material. One of the most common assignments teachers forego is the history research paper. Often the centerpiece of an introductory U.S. History course (and taught in conjunction with English departments), many AP History teachers believe they cannot spare the time which this assignment requires. “After all,” they reason, “the AP test asks students only to write short essays and does not ask them to demonstrate any of the skills necessary to write a research paper, so how will writing one benefit them when they take the test? Better to use that time to cover more material that might be on the test.” This result, I submit, is the test-tail wagging the course-dog! I don’t believe this was what the founders of the AP program had in mind, and that they would be sorely disappointed if they could but see it.

## **The SCAP Alternative**

So what is my alternative? Granted that these are real problems, how can they be addressed? While I endorse and applaud the goals of the AP program, I am afraid the rigidities of the program are inevitable given its national (even international) scope. In attempting to address so large an audience, AP must try to accommodate as many different points of view as possible. But in history and the social studies, at least, this leaves far too much in doubt. The solution, I believe, is to work on a smaller, regional scale.

There are a number of programs of this sort around the country that are also trying to challenge our best students with college-level work. Many of them have joined forces in a fledgling association called the national Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP; [www.nacep.org](http://www.nacep.org)) I have been associated with one member of this group of current enrollment programs—the School-College Articulation Program (SCAP; [SCAP@ Kenyon.edu](mailto:SCAP@Kenyon.edu))—for the past 21 years, both as a high school teacher and, for the past 18 years, as one of its co-directors. SCAP works as a consortium of 20 Ohio high schools and Kenyon College. The participating high schools range from private schools in suburban Cleveland to rural high schools in central Ohio to urban high school in Cleveland and Columbus. It is a uniquely flavored public/private, urban/rural/suburban partnership.

Most of the members of NACEP enjoy a similar partnership of high schools clustered around a college or university. From a purely administrative perspective, SCAP’s organization is simple: students take SCAP courses at their local high school, taught by a highly qualified member of their high school faculty. The grades they receive are recorded on a Kenyon transcript and sent to whatever college they designate. These courses are designed to be the same as Kenyon offers on its own campus. In order to take the classes under SCAP’s auspices, students submit an application, including their high school transcript and a recommendation from a high school teacher. If that student is in the top half of her class and is recommended for the course, she receives a letter of acceptance from Kenyon College. In addition, to help defray the administrative costs of the program and support teacher

development, students pay a \$75 fee. Currently, SCAP offers participating high schools 14 courses in the disciplines of history, science, languages, English, math, and social science. In 2001, 1,020 students participated in the program.

But those are just the factual externals of SCAP. The real value lies in its execution. Given the vastly smaller scale of SCAP than AP, it is possible to develop a level of professionalism and collegiality amongst the participating high school and college faculty which would be the envy of any serious educational endeavor. SCAP faculty meet in course committee meetings for single days several times every year in order to discuss all the issues relating to their courses. They discuss syllabi, collateral readings, compare tests and grading standards, and all other matters of concern to dedicated teachers.

Over the course of the year, the Kenyon faculty will visit each school where their courses are being taught. Often they will serve as a guest-lecturer on a topic agreed upon with the high school faculty member. These meetings on the high school campus allow the Kenyon faculty to get a better feel for the challenges facing the high school teachers and to permit more “one-on-one” communication between college and high school faculty.

Some schools—usually those closest to Kenyon—arrange to take their students to the Kenyon College campus for special activities: a performance related to their course, or to see experiments in a science class that could not be performed at their high school. This gives many students a chance to see a small liberal arts college in a more natural, personal, and educationally meaningful setting. Kenyon does not actively recruit these students, so these visits are not sales-pitches in disguise.

## **High School/College Collaboration**

These same course committees, composed of all the high school and college teachers who teach the same subjects, gather at Kenyon for one-week workshops every other summer. All teachers—high school and college—are paid stipends for the time they spend at meetings and workshops. Modeled on the successful NEH Summer Seminars for Teachers, these workshops often tackle a particular theme of the course in-depth. For example, during a recent gathering of the U.S. History course committee, teachers read the novel “M.A.S.H.” before meeting. They conducted an evening seminar on how the novel did (and did not) portray the Korean War. Then, following up on their conversation, they generated a research agenda of questions relating to the post-war/Korean/McCarthy period of American history. Teams of two or three teachers chose which questions most interested them, and they proceeded to meet and research these issues for the next two days, discussing their results within their groups as they proceeded. On the fourth day, the groups came together to present and discuss their findings and further questions. And on the fifth day, there was a concluding discussion focusing on how these issues could best be dealt with in classroom setting and integrated into the

curriculum. These sessions were extremely energizing for all the teachers concerned. Many said they felt the same kind of excitement they had in their college and graduate school history classes, and they were grateful for the opportunity to work so closely with such a talented and dedicated group of teachers.

The role of the Kenyon College faculty was key to all of this, of course. Programs such as SCAP succeed because they are genuinely collegial. The high school teachers feel they are full and equal participants in the proceedings. They help shape the course syllabus at course committee meetings and make essential contributions to the direction and themes of the summer workshops. SCAP teachers keep their enthusiasm for the courses and for what they contribute to the professional development of the participating faculty and to the intellectual achievement of the students who take part.

## **Conclusion**

SCAP has a very straightforward solution to the two serious problems with AP I raised above. Because the grade a student receives in her SCAP course is based on an entire semester's body of work, there is no one-time, high-stakes test driving the curriculum. In that way, SCAP more faithfully achieves the original goal of AP than AP does itself. Another important feature of SCAP history courses is that they are less textbook driven than AP courses. Students typically read 4-5 collateral books each semester. This allows time to explore an issue in depth, just as the best college history courses. There is much less pressure to plow through all of the facts and more time to think like historians. When students sit for their exams, they are well aware, as their college counterparts are, of what their teachers will be emphasizing. They can devote their energies to matters of substance, instead of trying to play pointless (and anxiety-driven) games of divining the test-makers' minds. Even more importantly, their focus is not on a single test. Rather, it is on their developing body of knowledge and understanding, acquired over the course of a semester or a year. This allows teachers to retain such invaluable assignments as the history research paper. Teachers can take the time necessary to coach students through this challenging task since they know that their students will not be "penalized" by disappointing results on a year-end test.

The Kenyon-SCAP partnership is just one of many high school-college consortiums around the country. There are efforts afoot here in Ohio to establish similar partnerships between Ohio colleges and high schools clustered in their regions. The success and longevity of the SCAP program indicate that there are definite benefits from working toward the original goals of the AP on a more local or regional basis. The benefits for the most able and willing students of doing college level work (and receiving college credit for it) in high school are undeniable. And the invigoration of teaching and scholarship that a high schools-college partnership makes possible is equally desirable. These are goals that are better met by taking a grass roots, do-it-yourself approach than by creating a national testing bureaucracy.

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# **Enrichment Opportunities for Gifted Students in Rural Areas: Online AP Social Studies Courses**

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**Michael K. Barbour**

Centre for Advanced Placement Education

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**T**he province of Newfoundland and Labrador is located on the far east coast of Canada. It has a long and rich history, being Britain's oldest colony and Canada's youngest province. The region which Vista School District serves is a large geographic area covering about 7,000 square kilometers. The region has a population of about 35,000 located in 24 municipalities and about 80 unincorporated communities.<sup>1</sup> The district has approximately 4500 students being taught by 350 teachers in 18 schools.<sup>2</sup>

As with most schools in rural areas, many of the schools in the Vista School District do not have the required number of students to offer Advanced Placement courses (or do so to the disadvantage of other students and teachers, who find larger class sizes to accommodate the few students taking these AP courses). In this closed environment,<sup>3</sup> rural schools cannot compete with their larger, urban counterparts. To remedy this situation the Vista School District embarked on a program of online AP initiatives.

The movement to add Advanced Placement programs was also given impetus by several government commissions. A Royal Commission on Education was appointed in 1990 and the major focus of its final report sought to address the inequity that existed between the number and variety of courses that large, urban schools were able to offer, compared to the number and variety of courses at smaller, rural schools. The Royal Commission also argued against amalgamation of smaller school districts. In one of the commissioned studies for the Royal Commission, Garfield Fizzard posed the question "Do we have to continue to worship at the altar of the Goddess of Proximity?"<sup>4</sup> An earlier report, the Report of the Small Schools Study Project stated that "the delivery of courses by correspondence,

computers, videotapes or a combination of these appears to be a most desirable way of ensuring that a greater variety of subjects are available to those who attend the small high schools.”<sup>5</sup> Building on this idea, the Royal Commission recommended the creation of a School of Distance Education and Technology which would “seek to deliver full credit senior high courses that meet provincial learning objectives.”<sup>6</sup>

As the year 2000 dawned on the Newfoundland and Labrador school system, a Ministerial Panel on Educational Delivery in the Classroom, made the exact same recommendation when it called upon the Government to create a Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation. At the time of the Ministerial Panel report, the Department of Education offered most of the high school French, mathematics and science courses through distance education. However, during the same seven year period between these similar government recommendations many school districts, individual schools and educational organisations have made other significant advances in the field of distance education. The Vista School District is one of the organisations which has been involved in making many of these advances, in particular online course initiatives involving the Advanced Placement curriculum.

## Advanced Placement in Newfoundland

The Advanced Placement (AP) program was first introduced to the province of Newfoundland during the 1992-93 school year. (As a grade 12 student, the author was member of the first class of the AP European History ever offered in the province). Table 1 indicates several significant trends. For example, only one AP Social Studies course, European History, was ever offered on a consistent basis. There were instances where other AP Social Studies courses were offered, for example during the 1998-99 school year ten students enrolled in the Comparative Government and Politics, but these courses were usually discontinued after a year or two, largely due to low subscribership.

Another trend is that AP Mathematics and Science courses did not experience the same problems on their introduction to the province. Courses such as AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Mathematics, AP Physics have not experienced the same growing pains that any of the AP Social Studies courses have. This has largely been due to a general push in the subjects areas of Mathematics and Science began in May 1989, with the Task Force Report on Mathematics and Science Education, *Towards an Achieving Society*, which recommended that “some courses be at a more advanced level than typically found in high schools and that there be some provision for advanced credit at the post-secondary level for such courses.”<sup>7</sup>

**Table 1 - Number of Newfoundland Schools Offering AP Courses (by course)**

<b>Courses</b>	<b>92-93</b>	<b>93-94</b>	<b>94-95</b>	<b>95-96</b>	<b>96-97</b>	<b>97-98</b>	<b>98-99</b>	<b>99-00</b>
<b>Art History</b>	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	1
<b>Biology</b>	1	1	3	7	7	8	11	11

<b>Chemistry</b>	4	2	3	5	6	12	10	15
<b>Comp Gov/Pol</b>				1				
<b>Computer Science</b>						1	1	
<b>European Hist</b>	1	4	1	4	3	3	2	3
<b>French</b>					1	3	3	
<b>Lang and Comp</b>	1	2	1	1	2	1		
<b>Lit and Comp</b>	2	2	2	6	7	8	6	9
<b>Macroeconomics</b>						1		
<b>Mathematics</b>	8	11	17	20	25	24	22	17
<b>Microeconomics</b>						1		
<b>Music Theory</b>						2	4	4
<b>Physics</b>	2	5	3	5	6	10	8	8
<b>Psychology</b>			7	6	6	3	6	8
<b>Studio Art</b>			1			1		4

## **Development of the Vista School District Intranet**

The development of the Vista District Digital Intranet (VDI) was a step towards creating open schools within the school district; that is, “schools academically and administratively integrating with one another for at least part of a school day.”<sup>8</sup> The Vista District Digital Intranet, or by its full name “The Vista District Digital Intranet: The Delivery of Advanced Placement Courses to Young Adult Learners in Rural Communities,” was a project of the Vista School District and the Centre for Tele-learning and Rural Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland. The project, which was funded by a federal government grant in 1998, saw the school district and the Centre develop four Advanced Placement courses for online delivery to students throughout the entire school district.

The VDI project allowed any student in the district to enrol in AP Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics, however, the courses were offered over the World Wide Web and were taught at different locations. Prior to the creation of the VDI, only two or three of the ten schools with secondary grades were able to offer AP Science and Mathematics courses to their students. The VDI allowed students from all ten schools to take advantage of these courses. Two years later, a second initiative was launched to offer the AP Social Studies curriculum, this second initiative was the Centre for Advanced Placement Education.

## **Creation of Centre for Advanced Placement Education**

The Centre for Advanced Placement Education (CAPE) was the creation of a teacher and an administrator, both with social studies backgrounds, at Discovery Collegiate in Bonavista (the district’s largest school). Within the Vista School District and for the most part, all throughout the province, the social studies curriculum had taken a backseat to mathematics and sciences. To illustrate this fact, while there were six AP social studies, during the 1998-99 school year only the European History course was offered. This occurred in two different schools: both of these schools were urban schools. During that same period there were four different mathematics and science courses offered in thirty-two different schools: Biology -

13; Chemistry - 15; Mathematics/Calculus - 22; Physics - 10.<sup>9</sup> The online AP social studies course offer by the CAPE were largely a two person crusade to address this inequity.

Unlike the VDI, courses offered by the CAPE were offered in a totally asynchronous environment. This means that the instructor is not online at the same time that the students are online (although there can be some real-time sessions to provide the students an opportunity to discuss issues with the instructor). This removed the need for schools to synchronise the timetabling to accommodate students' distance learning experience. In its first year of operation, the CAPE offered the AP European History course as a pilot to three students attending two different schools. These students took the online course as an overload to their regular schedule. The fact that the course was asynchronous was useful, as these students simply did not have time allocated in their timetable for their AP course. All three of these students went on to take the AP exam and all three were successful in obtaining the level necessary to achieve university transfer credit (with one student obtaining a level 5).

Building on this success, the CAPE offered four different courses during the 2000-01 school year: the AP European History and AP Human Geography in an asynchronous format and the AP Comparative Government and Politics and AP United States History as an independent study courses. Over this two year period, the online course being offered by the CAPE have been taught as an extra-curricular or volunteer initiative. The teachers that have been involved have maintained a regular in-class teaching load and have taught the online courses in their spare time.

The students who are involved in this asynchronous instruction make use of two different sites on the World-Wide Web. The first site is a publicly-available course homepage. This site contains textbooks information, review activities, and an online resource centre. The online resource centre, which is the most used of these particular items, is basically a collection of links to other WWW sites on a topic by topic, chapter by chapter basis. The online resource centre acts as an online library, in order to relieve the pressure for individual schools to have to purchase their own resources for a traditional library/resource centre.

The second site is a password protected site that uses the Web Course Tools (WebCT) software for the actual course delivery. WebCT is one of the most popular pieces of Internet software for the purposes of course delivery. In terms of available applications, almost anything that can be done in a traditional classroom can be simulated within the WebCT software. For example, there is a section for course content, test taking facilities, assignment submissions, a discussion forum, private e-mail, an electronic whiteboard, a real-time chat area, and a way to track student usage. The CAPE makes use of three of the main WebCT components.

Obviously, as these courses rely heavily upon a wide range of technologies, along with a number of different servers, there exists the concern as to whether all

of this will work on a consistent basis. To date, the technology used by the CAPE is fairly reliable. The publicly available site is hosted by the National Capital Freenet, an non-commercial Internet service provider based out of Carleton University. The WebCT servers that the CAPE uses are hosted by STEM~Net. STEM~Net, or the Student Teacher Educational Multimedia Network, has provided Internet access to students and teachers all across Newfoundland since September 1993. STEM~Net is based out of Memorial University of Newfoundland and is much more reliable than a server based out of the school district office or an individual school would be. The only negative feature of this partnership is the fact that as STEM~Net is not a part of the CAPE, when technical difficulties arise or when regular maintenance is required, the CAPE does not have a say in when things will take place and does not have that direct line of communication that one would have if the WebCT servers were hosted internally.

### **Advantages**

Many of the advantages of the CAPE are self-evident. The ability to share resources among a large number of rural schools which would not be able to offer these enrichment courses being among the most evident. In addition to the sharing of resources, the ability for students to have the same level of access to these as their urban counterparts has been one of the overriding goals of most of the distance education initiatives in rural Newfoundland.

As stated earlier, the method of delivery for these online courses is asynchronous in nature. The fact that the delivery is asynchronous allows the CAPE to accommodate the fact that individual school schedules may begin before Labour Day or conclude prior to the second last week of June. In addition, the asynchronous nature accommodates for the drastic time difference which could occur (as when we begin our school day, it is 4:00am on the west coast and when we conclude our day, it is 10:30am on the west coast).

Using this method, the teacher can place lectures into a "Course Content" area which the students can access. A weekly discussion question is posted and the students have the ability to reply to these weekly question at their leisure throughout the week. Finally, there is also one piece of evaluation each week which is available during the entire week. These evaluations can take many forms: essay style quizzes (document-based and free-response), multiple-choice quizzes, book reports, mapping activities, and WWW-based projects. In most of its courses, the CAPE presents a full schedule of quizzes and assignments at the beginning of the year to accommodate the asynchronous nature of the instruction.

As evidenced by these numerous features, the asynchronous method of delivery is also one of the main advantages of the CAPE.

## Challenges

However, the asynchronous nature of delivery also presents some challenges for the CAPE as well. The need to include a full schedule of quizzes and assignments at the beginning of the year precludes the ability of an instructor to add surprises to the evaluation. For example, pop quizzes are difficult to manage with students on different timetables as four students may have class today, another two students tomorrow, and five more students two days later. Not only is it difficult for the instructor to manage, students would be able to communicate the content of a pop quiz, creating the need for the instructor to have multiple versions of the quiz.

The other challenge in creating evaluations, particularly quizzes, is the knowledge that each piece of evaluation is an open-book evaluation. One thing that the teacher can do to accommodate this is to create evaluations with this in mind (in a traditional classroom an open-book test would look quite different than a closed-book test). The ability to time the students' access to the evaluation, for example the instructor can direct the system to close access to the evaluation after it has been open for a specific amount of time, can minimise the students' reliance upon textbooks and other materials. If a student only has 30 minutes to type an answer to a free-response question, he or she does not have the ability to spend large amounts of time looking for the answer before beginning to type. However, the typing ability of some students does permit them to make use of any resources that they have available to them.

Finally, as all these courses are taught using more than one school, each student generally has two teachers, an electronic teacher and a mediating teacher. The relationship that each of these teachers have with the student can present a tremendous challenge in this distance education model. The electronic teacher is the content-based teacher who is responsible for teaching the students. The mediating teacher was available to supervise, track attendance, and provide technical trouble-shooting should the need arise. The experience of the CAPE has been that the mediating teacher should be a technical individual and not a content based individual. This was clearly indicated in a recent pilot project that the CAPE entered into with a school in Massachusetts.

For the first few months of the pilot project, the students in MA were supervised by the school's learning resource teacher, who was also responsible for the school's technology. This individual had little formal training or background in history. The students would go to their learning resource centre during their AP slot, login to their course and were taught by the e-teacher. During this period, the students did very well in the course, participating regularly in the online discussion forum, staying up-to-date on their readings, classwork, assignments, and homework.

However, later in the pilot project, the students began to spend more time with a history teacher from their own school who had an open period during their AP slot. While they still participated in the course, their level of participation

decreased dramatically. In addition to this decreased participation, they began to submit work to the content-based teacher in their own school, which meant that classwork and assignments were submitted late, if at all. The change from a technical-based mediating teacher to a content-based mediating teacher had a negative effect upon the students' experience in their online course.

From the students' perspective, it was entirely understandable. The students had two choices. They could receive instruction and support from a teacher that they already know, who is available within their school to them, and someone they can actually see and talk to. Or they could receive instruction from a teacher who they have never seen, who may take hours to reply to their queries, and who is not readily available to them (due to the asynchronous nature). Many secondary school students, who do not have the required maturity and independence to excel in an online environment, would have made the exact same decision.

This shows that the selection of mediating teachers can be a significant determining factor to the success of any school's adoption of the online courses offered by the CAPE. The selection of a mediating teacher who can trouble-shoot any problems that arise in the technology, while the primary content-based teacher remains the electronic teacher, is the model which appears to have the best success.

## **Plans for the Future**

For the 2001-02 school year, the CAPE has received funding in the form of an allocation of a half-time teaching unit in order to teach four to six AP Social Studies courses within the Vista School District. This allocation has also allowed the CAPE to extend courses offered beyond the borders of our own school district. This is done on a pay-per-use basis. This will provide schools that may only have two or three (or even ten or twelve) students who would like to take a particular AP course, the opportunity to still offer these AP courses without having to worry about allocating a teacher to such a small number of students. The cost will be \$300 per student. This amount does not include the cost of the AP exam or the cost of the textbook(s). It does include the cost of a reading package created by the instructor for supplementary purposes. It should be noted that these fees are a not-for-profit venture. Fees collected by the CAPE will be used for teaching units or the development of new online courses.

## **Conclusion**

The success of initiatives to bring online AP opportunities to students in the Vista School District speaks for itself. During the 1999-2000 school year 2.5% of all students in the Vista District were taking at least one AP course. This figure also represents the approximate number of students who are taking AP courses the metro St. John's area which has the highest concentration of large, urban schools in the province. It also has about ten times the student population of the Vista School District, with approximately 30,000 students. If the underlying goal of these AP

initiatives was to create some form of equity between the large, urban schools and the small, rural schools, then these initiatives have achieved this goal. The equal proportion of students enrolled in AP courses in both districts indicates that equal opportunity for students to take advantage of these higher learning opportunities does exist.

This fact was particularly apparent when it came to AP social studies courses. During the 1999-2000 school year, the only AP social studies course that was offered was the AP European History. Excluding the online AP European History course offered by the CAPE, this course was only available to student attending urban schools. During the 2000-01 school year, excluding the course offered by the CAPE, only two AP social studies courses were offer throughout the province (AP European History and AP Human Geography). However, students in the Vista School District had twice that selection, with the CAPE offering four different AP social studies courses. This trend will continue into the 2001-02 school year, when students in the Vista School District will have the opportunity to take six different AP social studies courses, providing them with a greater number of AP social studies courses than students in any other educational authority.

However, this opportunity will not be restricted to students in the Vista School District. Other school dsitrics will find themselves able to offer a wide variety of AP Social Studies courses without having to worry about student subscribership or teacher allocation.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>*About the District - The Region/Location.* Vista School District. 26 December 1999 <<http://www.k12.nf.ca/vista/aboutus/regionlocal.html>>.

<sup>2</sup>Vista School District, *A Handbook of Essential Information: Designed for New Teachers with the Vista School District.* (Vista School District: Clarenville, NF, 1999), cover.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. Ken Stevens, "A New Model for Teaching in Rural Communities - The Electronic Organisation of Classes As Intranets." *Prism - Journal of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.* 6 1 (1999), 25.

<sup>4</sup>Garfield Fizzard. "Distance Education" *Our Children Our Future: Commissioned Studies.* (St. John's, NF: Queen's Printer, 1992), 87.

<sup>5</sup>Frank Riggs. *Report of the Small Schools Study Project.* (St. John's, NF: Queen's Printer, 1987), 28.

<sup>6</sup>Government of Newfoundland. *Our Children, Our Future.* (St. John's, NF: Queen's Printer, 1993), 321.

<sup>7</sup> Government of Newfoundland. *Towards an Achieving Society*. (St. John's, NF: Queen's Printer, 1989), 170.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Ken Stevens, "Two Approaches to Teaching Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics to Senior High School Students in Virtual Classes" (a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Australasian Science Education Research Association, Rotorua, New Zealand, 1999) p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Taken from a telephone call on 28 August 1999 with Ms. Brenda Wheeler of the Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland.

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# **Technology and the Social Studies Classroom: The Future Is Now**

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**H**ow do you see yourself? If you are a traditional social studies teacher you should be able to easily see yourself presenting information to students who are sitting in neat rows of desks with their notebooks and/or textbooks open. Certainly you ask some questions to get students involved with the content, but the environment is clearly teacher-centered. If there is a computer in your room, it is probably on a table in the back, perhaps covered. Now close your eyes and picture your role as a teacher in a very different classroom, one that is student-centered, inquiry oriented, collaborative, and accommodative of a variety of learning styles and intelligences. I forgot to mention that your classroom is now a computer lab. Does this make your futuristic vision a little more realistic? Welcome to the cyber century, strap yourself in and let's go for a ride into the future.

## **Futuristic Perceptions**

Two views of the future school and social studies classroom fit our perception of what is coming, and in some cases is already here. A radical new role for the school is envisioned by Schank (2000): "Schools will become much more connected to the community around them as activities bring students more and more into contact with their community" (p.44). In this scenario the social studies classroom seems like the logical bridge to the community. While the future social studies classroom could be a cornucopia of "... sophisticated computer simulations, instant access to experts, online research and publication, cross-cultural communication, and access to a plethora of resources ..." (Eaton 1999, 139), it is not utopia. That's the problem with the future, we can never be sure until we get there. The ride to the future is bumpy, but it is straight away and the speed is unlimited. How do we get there and what will be driving us?

The answer is simple, but complex at the same time: constructivism + technology = the social studies classroom of the future. The underlying basis for this new classroom dynamic is a theoretical framework that emphasizes teaching for understanding, rather than simply knowing. It has been labeled as "constructivism". Understanding develops through the active construction of knowledge or when students connect new information to existing knowledge. This is facilitated by the teacher through the encouragement of in-depth reflection and social interaction on topics issues and problems, and the application of learning in authentic situations (Brooks and Brooks, 1993). For example, a teacher involving his or her students in a simulation on understanding and solving a community-based environmental problem would likely be accommodating several constructivist ideals.

Strengthening the constructivist framework is support from the "best practices" generalized research and project report findings. From these sources we find that there is an almost unanimous call for "... schools that are student-centered, active, experiential, democratic, collaborative, and yet rigorous and challenging" (Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde 1998, viii). Application of these different perspectives on innovative teaching and learning to the field of social studies began with the statement on powerful teaching published by the National Council for the Social Studies. Specifically, teaching and learning are powerful when they are meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging and active (NCSS, 1993). While the power of most of these elements is generally understood and will be examined later, the integrative element has particular relevance; in addition to calling for integration across curriculum and topics, and time and space, integrated social studies teaching and learning needs to include the effective use of technology. Student-centered classrooms and digital technology seem to create a synergy that is the essence of our perception of powerful teaching and learning.

Particularly within the last decade, discussions concerning changes in teacher practices have begun to include technology. In this respect, Solomon (1992), has described technology as holding "the promise of new ways of learning, or learner empowerment" (327). Even skeptics agree that technology has this potential, although they rightfully caution educators that there is a danger in some of the ways technology is currently employed. These dangers include shifting the locus of control from teacher to software developer, removing teachers from the instructional loop, reinforcing old models of important knowledge, and even validating bad teaching (see e.g. Callister and Dunne, 1992).

In any event, there is agreement that technology has the potential to enhance learning, and can be a factor in changing the ways in which we teach and learn. While changes range in level from the classroom (micro) to changes in educational systems (macro) (see e.g. Becker and Ravitz, 1999), the obvious practical question for teachers is: "what can I do to effectively integrate technology in my social studies classroom?"

Since technology has the potential to enhance learning and empower

learners, it is important to consider how teachers are going to continue to integrate it into their curriculum and expand its use. What would a future social studies classroom look like, integrating a wide variety of available technologies into the curriculum to accommodate a constructivist framework? Consider the following scenario which is based on a virtual museum project that could or may possibly exist somewhere. The future is here, and while many teachers will still be catching up to what a few are doing today, it is interesting to speculate what the future may hold for those teachers who continue to be on the cutting edge of technology usage. Let's start our ride into the cyber century with a visit to Kathy Harris' social studies classroom!

## **Scenario**

It was about 8 a.m. when Kathy Harris unlocked her classroom door. Flipping the switch that powered up the equipment in her room, she heard the familiar sounds of computers and peripherals starting up. She glanced at the clock and figured she had about an hour before her ninth grade geography students were coming in. "Where to start?" Kathy thought as she connected to the building's main server. She had made it a point to check the different communication channels used in her classroom, including email, web-based discussion, and online chat rooms at the beginning of every school day, during her conference period, and sometimes even on the weekends and holidays.

After scrolling through some of the electronic memos concerning everyday business, such as upcoming faculty meetings and assemblies (and deleting most of them), a few other e-mails at the bottom of the screen caught her eye. One was from the director of the local historical society, Gary Roberts, informing Kathy that he had found a box of old pictures of the hotel downtown. He believed them to be at least one hundred years old, but was not sure. Since he knew some of Kathy's students were researching the architectural history of downtown's Main Street, he wanted to know if Kathy wanted to pick them up, or if he should drop them off at the school. Since Kathy was going to take her fourth period students on a walking tour of the main parts of town later that week, she replied she would stop by and pick them up then, as students were taking digital pictures and shooting video during their walk, as part of their work on the virtual museum of local history.

Hitting the "send" button on the screen, she pondered the plight of the historical society and its director. There was not much money, and many of the materials deposited had not been cataloged or organized. She and her students would have to meet with Gary later that day in the chat room to discuss how the students could get involved in going through the resources. The ultimate goal was to create an interactive and searchable online catalog that would make it easier for patrons to access the materials quicker and more efficiently.

The other email was from Henry Garcia, a geography professor at the local college, to discuss his upcoming visit. He told Kathy her students might be interested

in looking at his class website, which contained student projects on the latest developments in cartography, such as improved satellite imaging and the latest mapmaking software, allowing users to create a wide variety of maps, including historical ones. Kathy knew her ninth graders would be interested in the latter, as they had been struggling to figure out how to create a set of historical maps using ten-year intervals to show the development of the town and its effect on the immediate environment. Following the link to the website, she was pleased to find that all projects contained the names and email addresses of their creators. Thus, her ninth graders would be able to ask questions about the mapmaking software, as well as download a demo of it. She would also have to check out the demo for herself. If it looked promising, she could consider purchasing it for her school with some of the grant money that was left over from the beginning of the year.

After replying to Henry Garcia, Kathy knew she had to get ready for her classes. Her first period students were slowly starting to enter the room, even though it was still another fifteen minutes before classes started. Some of the students were already in their groups, checking their messages on the bulletin board or adding materials to their electronic portfolios, which Kathy now used to evaluate student performance. Her classroom had become virtually paper free, now that improved server protection and back-up systems had eliminated the need to keep hard copies of work, and students could use a variety of storage devices to save their work and take it with them. As she helped one group hook up with Henry Garcia's site and another to upload some video files, she thought the bulletin board would have to wait, and the chat room was probably empty anyway.

As first period was ready to start, Kathy looked around the room. Even though she had made sure that there were areas for group work and individual study away from the computers, they sure had changed her classroom. Besides the seven computers which were networked with the school server, she had a variety of peripherals at her disposal, such as a scanner, photo and digital video editing equipment, and a CD-burner. In addition, students could use digital cameras and a laptop to collect and store data in the field. Finally, all classroom computers were equipped with digital cameras and hooked up to the site of the latest archaeology dig, the town's first settlement, believed to date back at least 5,000 years. The project was coordinated with the local university, whose archaeology/history department was supervising the dig and had set up a camera at the site. As a result, students in Kathy's room could keep up with the latest discoveries and talk with the archaeologists, without having to go out to the site. Besides all the hardware, her students had access to a variety of software, including Internet browsing and authoring packages, productivity software, and simulations.

A student question brought Kathy's attention back to her first period class. It also reminded her that even though she now had a substantial amount of technology in her classroom, it had not replaced her and never would. In fact, students needed her more now than before, maybe not as much as a central authority figure in the classroom, but more as a guide or coach. She crossed the room to help the group that had been struggling with the map software, and was now looking at

Henry Garcia's website. She showed the group how to download and decompress the demo. In addition, she asked them to evaluate it to help her determine if the program would be worth the money. She figured the best critics were the people who would use the software most, her students.

Other groups in the room were working on different aspects of the community maps. One group was busy organizing digital pictures fourth period students had taken in town, as well as historical pictures of the same sites, and were trying to figure out a way to catalogue them in a database with all the relevant information. This was fairly complicated, as the database to be created would have to be interactive and searchable in a variety of ways, e.g. by year, site, and neighborhood. This would save a tremendous amount of time when the community maps would be linked to a virtual tour of the town, the culminating product of this class project.

While first period students focused on the physical geography of the town, the second period world cultures class concentrated on the town's inhabitants, more specifically their heritage. Through interviews with locals, students discovered that the town's heritage could be linked to a variety of cultural groups and countries; and were now trying, with varying rates of success, to contact relatives overseas using email, chat, and videoconferencing. In addition, using Internet research (which they had evaluated for credibility, reliability, and the like) and the help of people in the community, students were creating interactive web pages on the various cultures represented in the community, including their customs, traditions, language, history, and geography.

Kathy's first two periods flew by. Now that classes were more student-oriented it seemed like they went much faster, and while the room was usually noisier and looked less organized than traditional social studies classes, she knew that students were learning more and better. State test scores were up, and the electronic portfolios showed her that students were doing more higher level thinking and independent problem solving, skills she deemed crucial for them to become competent citizens in a fast-changing society.

While she waited for her independent study students to arrive, Kathy connected to the school's social studies chat room. She had e-mailed Gary Roberts to let him know that she would try to hook up with him during the day, and soon he arrived. Her two independent study students had arrived as well, and the four of them got engaged in a lively conversation about organizing the historical society's collections into a searchable database, and putting some of the resources online. The students would provide expertise in using the technology; Gary and Kathy would be teaching them some of the skills required of historians and archivists, such as working with primary sources, dealing with issues of copyright, and maintaining an archive with a wide variety of historical documents and artifacts.

After about fifteen minutes, Kathy excused herself from the conversation as the students continued to chat with Gary. Kathy knew she could read the recorded

transcript of the conversation later on; she had to do some planning for her fourth period history/government class, which was the most demanding class she had, due to the wide variety of student activities. In addition, this was the class that had been working on the overall design of the virtual museum website, trying to assemble all the pieces into a coherent whole. Up to this point, most of the students had been out in the community, researching, mapping, and photographing buildings in the downtown area, and interviewing their residents. This research would be integrated into the virtual tour and database the first period students were constructing. It was up to the fourth period students to organize the information they had collected so that the first period students could fill in the database framework with it. Kathy realized that at some point she would have to try to get first and fourth period students together to do this.

Checking the clock on her computer screen, Kathy noticed she had worked well into lunch. In fact, some of her fourth period students were entering the room to get an early start on their work. It was amazing how much more motivated students were now. Granted, Kathy still had problems with some students, but she spent more time on teaching and less on discipline. In addition to the activities she had worked on during her planning period, Kathy's fourth period students were researching the history of the town's major businesses, transcribing interviews conducted, and documenting the progress of the archaeological dig using the web cameras in the classroom. Also, several groups were starting to work on connecting the local history they had uncovered to the larger contexts of national and world history. In the long run, all this would be put together on the website as well, and would be a project that would engage students for years to come.

As the day drew to a close, Kathy's fourth period students shut down the equipment. Some continued to work for a little while after school, doing research on the internet or reviewing their portfolios. Kathy was tired but satisfied. She knew that technology and a more student centered approach enabled her students to go far beyond content. In fact, students learned a variety of skills including written, oral, and technological skills, discussed societal values, and were involved in community service, thereby leading her students on the road to becoming competent and active citizens.

## **Analysis and Connections**

We hear the words "citizenship competency" over and over in educational circles as the purpose for social studies. What does it mean, though, and why should Kathy Harris feel good about her role in increasing the probability that her students will become competent citizens? Jefferson was right when he visualized that democracy depends upon the education and participation of its citizens. A more specific and current interpretation is that democracy depends upon informed and rational citizens who are humane and motivated to get involved in civic and community life for the common good (NCSS, 1993). And, there is no better place to begin preparing students to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to

civic competency than the social studies classroom of today.

A careful analysis of the scenario clearly indicates that Kathy applied a variety of powerful teaching approaches as she created a student-centered and technology-oriented learning environment conducive to achieving the purpose of social studies. Just imagining what the concept of a virtual museum of local history might be like strongly suggests the elements of powerful teaching and learning in action. The scenario of Kathy Harris' day validates this and provides us with a view of a social studies classroom in the future that is committed to making social studies come alive through the direct involvement of students in all aspects of the teaching and learning process.

Kathy's four sections of integrated history, geography, and government classes were challenged and active while dealing with content that was meaningful, integrative and value-based. Planning, designing, implementing and evaluating the virtual museum of local history is one massive inquiry learning project. Learning is value-based because students are developing a commitment to social responsibility as they engage in service learning within their local community. This relates to meaningfulness since they are becoming physically intimate with their community through taking walking tours, researching local history, mapping and photographing buildings, and interviewing residents on their cultural backgrounds. In addition, the students are creating portfolios reflecting the best of their efforts and communicating with each other and community based people via electronic bulletin boards. Being active with the content plays a big role within and outside the classroom. Students are socially constructing knowledge as they work in cooperative groups at their computers creating an online catalog of historical artifacts, linking community maps to the virtual tour of the town, viewing the archaeological dig of the town's first settlement, and evaluating map making software. It goes without saying that the students are continually challenged throughout the project because the essence of creating the virtual museum is problem solving and decision making. Integration is also a big part of the project, with students working on historical maps to show the development of the town at 10 year intervals and connecting local history to the larger contents of national and world history. Finally, we must highlight the role of integrating technology and especially the computer into all aspects of their work - data collection, word processing, e-mail and bulletin boards, digital imaging, video conferencing with relatives in foreign countries, working with map making software, etc., and the list goes on. The teaching and learning environment Kathy Harris has created for her students truly reflects the application of powerful and social constructivism principles designed to achieve the citizenship competency goal of social studies.

### **Using Technology in the Classroom: Current Examples**

The scenario above is an attempt to describe what an average social studies classroom may look like at some point in the future. However, in some schools,

technology has already made a substantial impact on social studies education. The future is here! Consider the following examples.

In Rocky Gap, Virginia, students of the local high school are actually maintaining the Bland County Historical Archives. The collection includes over 200 oral interviews, cemetery catalogues, photos, maps, and artifacts, most of which can also be found on the website (<http://www.bland.k12.va.us/bland/rocky/gap.html>).

A similar situation exists at the Sutton Junior and Senior High School in Sutton, Massachusetts. Students have created and maintain the Sutton Virtual Museum, which can be found at <http://www.mec.edu/sutton/hs/Museum/VMMMain/VirtMusm.html>. The project, directed by a social studies teacher, combines social studies, technology, and community service in order to recreate the town's history. The site includes various topics, including photographs and some video.

Students in Pasco, Washington grouped their projects around the theme "Our Community Shaped by the Desert." Topics include the building of the railroad, farming, and immigrant stories, and can be found at <http://users.owt.com/rpeto/cyber98/town.html>.

Finally, two oral history projects that were done by English students at South Kingston High School in Rhode Island deserve mention. Each project, one focusing on Rhode Island women during World War II, the other on the Civil Rights Movement and 1968, consists of approximately 30 interviews, including photographs, transcripts, and audio. They are located at <http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/WWII-Women/tocCS.html> and <http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/1968>.

There are also several web sites that provide useful information regarding the creation of virtual museums. Some examples are available at the Binghamton Public Schools website at <http://www.bham.wednet.edu/museum.htm>, and at Jamie McKenzie's website <http://www.fno.org/museum/museum.html>. The latter includes a list of virtual museums around the world as well.

## **Conclusions and Implications**

We initiated this article with a reflective question regarding how you might instructionally perceive yourself. After presenting a rationale for the technologically-oriented and constructivist social studies classroom, we described one day of Kathy Harris' very student-centered and technologically-dependent virtual museum unit taking place sometime in the cyber century. But is it really that far into the future? We also presented several brief descriptions of similar units being implemented in today's social studies classrooms to support the idea that the future is now.

You obviously have an interest in using technology in your social studies classroom or you would not have read this article up to this point. Now it is time for another reflective question - to what extent do you currently integrate technology

into your instructional approach and what are you planning for the future? Whether we want to or not, it is a question we need to address as conscientious social studies teachers. Perhaps it would help to think in terms of where you would place yourself on a continuum of developmental stages of computer adoption. Here's one theoretical application of this concept (see also Sandholz, Ringstaff, and Dwyer, 1997; Pahl, 1996).

Stage #1 - If you are at stage one, you recognize basic computer operations such as Kathy Harris's and her students' use of e-mail, going to web pages for information and consulting on-line documents. If you have a computer at home, you might even regularly use these operations for your personal use;

Stage #2 - At this stage you recognize some other operations, such as electronic bulletin boards, video-conferencing and digitized pictures and have begun to use the computer for instructional purposes, if you have one or more in your classroom;

Stage #3 You're advanced at this stage because you are integrating technology into your daily lessons and have begun to teach your students, just like Kathy Harris, how to create electronic portfolios, interactive web pages and on-line catalogs, for example;

Stage #4 - You have arrived in the cyber century because computer technology is an essential and inclusive part of every unit you "teach" - or should we say that your students teach and learn themselves as you facilitate their inquiry investigations. In terms of Kathy Harris's sophisticated and futuristic virtual museum unit, technology has truly transformed what is to be learned, how it is to be learned, and where it is to be learned.

Placing yourself on the continuum is the easy part. Moving to the next level is difficult and every teacher will have a different degree of commitment and different approach to doing it. This is as it should be. However, we can almost predict that the direction of social studies learning and teaching during the first decade of the new millennium will increasingly continue to come under the influence of constructivist principles. Through the futuristic scenario and examples of technological impact in today's classrooms, we have tried to show how technology has the potential to make social studies instruction more student centered, collaborative and powerful. Are you ready to hop on board and go for a ride into the future? We hope so because you are the pilot now!

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**Part II**

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**Social Studies Issues**

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# A Few Minutes Wearing Their Armbands

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**Dale Griepenstroh**

Mira Mesa (California) High School

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I have to admit, I have suffered from various forms of politically correct guilt. I am white, male, and of German heritage. At present, there is ethnic diversity in my hometown back in Southern Indiana, but when I grew up the two group distinctions were German Protestant or German Catholic. That is what constituted a mixed marriage in our world. Many of my relatives remembered German phrases and there was great interest in knowing about our German heritage and keeping in touch with relatives still in Germany. In grade school, I had no problem identifying with the Germans or the hero named Hogan in one of my favorite after school shows. It was not until I had a terribly naive third grade experience with my friends when we donned green armbands with homemade swastikas that I realized I could not identify with that side of my family tree.

I teach now in a middle class, ethnically diverse school. Mira Mesa High School has no imposed busing; its largest population is Filipino, followed by Whites, Vietnamese, Hispanics and African Americans. It is because of this diversity that I love my job. We are a neighborhood school with few of the well-publicized, inner-city school problems.

When I started teaching about the Holocaust, I struggled with how to get these first, second or third generation Californian students, who only think of Indiana as a middle square state to realize that the German people were more than the German stereotypes of TV and movies. I wanted them to know that the German people of the 1930's were not automatons who blindly followed Hitler and who simply gave up their civil rights, nor were they forced at gun point to start this process. I felt I owed this to my relatives and to my students to show that they also could give up their rights, and those of others, under the wrong circumstances. There is humanity in studying the German side of the equation.

You may remember the series of lessons developed in the 1970-80s by a woman who taught grade school children, and later businessmen, the effects of discriminating by eye color. This particular exercise would not work for me in my 1990's classroom of sophisticated and mostly brown-eyed students, but I remembered that the lessons seemed effective. I wanted to duplicate them in a way that would work for my classroom, year after year if possible.

I cannot say it will work every year, but so far so good. This was my seventh year of teaching this lesson in my ninth grade world history class, and my students from the first year have told me that they still remember it and its impact. The lesson only lasts one period and is engineered to put the students in the place of the German people at their 1933 democratic-fascist crossroads. I start the lesson before we get to the unit on World War II, so the students are not suspecting anything. The lesson follows three stages of progression. The first stage is the Promise stage. The second is the Scapegoat stage, and the third stage begins the Persecution.

### **Promise Stage**

In the Promise Stage, after calling the roll I begin by telling them that we have work to do for the school board which is interested in making improvements. In my district, this is an easy sell. I state to the class that the teachers were told at a lengthy meeting the night before that we have been given good news and bad news for funding of school projects. The good news is that we have \$500,000 to spend on making the school better and that we as a class need to make a list of improvements. I tell them that all teachers are making this list during that period to ensure that everyone's voice is heard.

The students work for 5-10 minutes discussing ideas. I then bring their attention to the board and ask someone to keep track of the class's ideas on a preprinted form marked:

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT LIST  
San Diego City Schools  
Mira Mesa High School  
ROOM \_\_\_\_\_

We spend 10-15 minutes discussing the various ideas on the board and then vote on the 5 ideas we, as a classroom, would like to submit to the board for improvement at our school.

### **Scapegoat Stage**

The Scapegoat Stage begins with my telling the students that it is now time for the bad news. I state that of the \$500,000 slated for Mira Mesa High School, half of that must be spent on one major problem our school has.... I give them time to guess. If they do not guess, I tell them it is to clean up graffiti and vandalism. Our

school is relatively clean, but they all know of examples and I let their own minds exaggerate the problem.

I tell them that the particular graffiti that has the school police officer worried is of a racial nature. The poker face I use while acting my part is given some credibility by constantly reassuring them that "I personally am sure there is nothing to worry about," and that "I feel kind of silly talking to this particular class about something that is obviously some other teacher's problem."

"Nonetheless," I tell the students, "as long as every teacher follows through with what the school police have asked of us, we should get to the bottom of the problem."

I tell the students that the graffiti that is showing up, even in the staff bathroom, is from a white supremacist group and that some of it has involved threats. I do not elaborate on the threats, I allow their imaginations to work for me. I continue to assure them that nothing is wrong, and no one in the class is suspected. But, on the advice of police security, I am to keep a close eye on my white students and look for any symbols on their backpacks or notebooks.

A further suggestion to aid in keeping order and finding the guilty participants is to have all the white students move to the front of the room. As they begin to argue, I keep assuring them it is only for a few days and that I am just doing it so that I can keep the school security happy and all of us can feel safer... as long as all the teachers are doing their part in all the other classrooms. And those teachers' trust me to follow through in my classroom. I also gain the students' trust by trying to keep a sense of humor about the whole thing.

## **Persecution Stage**

Now the Persecution stage begins as I slowly take away their classroom/civil rights. After segregating the white students in the front, I tell them the other things we, as teachers, are supposed to do to gather information. We are to search backpacks and notebooks; this is where I really push some buttons for the students and some constitutionality issues. I negotiate with the students and limit the search to notebooks (something I would feel comfortable looking through anyway).

I search for items on the outside and make it into a game at first. I do not pick on students whom I may have to fight later in court, and in most cases I choose students whose parents I know. I start to look inside the notebooks and ultimately I will find some notes or other "teenage" things that I claim look suspicious. I do not read these things; I simply set them aside for our school security to look at later. Of course, the students complain at this. I explain that if the students have nothing to hide they have nothing to fear, and that the officer will know if it is not important, and he won't care about personal notes to boys or girls.

If a student has a problem and makes a big scene, something that has only happened once, I would set him/her in the hall to be disciplined later. Actually, he or she would be congratulated.

When I have a few student items to satisfy the lesson, I ask a student to take them and the "improvement" list to be examined by the officer. Before he or she leaves the room I ask if anyone wants to make any more statements or can we assume that our class is done with our school district's assignment? I emphasize this later during discussion; most were already used to the arrangement and its circumstances and had no further complaints. I then tell the student not to leave and to have a seat.

I tell them they have just been through a very mild societal transition and it only took an hour to get the majority to adjust. Most of the class were unaffected observers and were fine with the transition.

## **Discussion**

Now begins the discussion. I have several questions for my class: How did you feel when you were promised \$500K? When you got to rank the choices? What went through your mind when I mentioned a school problem? When I mentioned it would take half of the promised money? When you thought it was a racist or white supremacist group? How did the white students feel? How about the non-white? Anyone feel revenge? What rights did you give away? Why? Do you live in an authoritarian environment? Are you used to it? Is it easier to accept some things than fight them? Did anyone feel safer? Did anyone feel threatened? Helpless? Could you have handled things differently?

During the discussion there are many disappointed questions and comments like: "Are we still going to get a pool for the school?" "Do I still have to sit in the front row?" but my favorite and the most common is "I can't believe I fell for this." It is that sense of disbelief and shame that I am aiming for in recreating Nazi Germany. There are other emotional sides that students admit to experiencing during discussion of the lesson. Helplessness, anger, revenge; the latter is most interesting in our school, for although it is mostly Filipino, the students know they are not the majority everywhere and are a little excited to see white students stereotyped. Most students will admit feeling that they knew something was intrinsically wrong about the treatment of their classmates but felt it was not their place to say anything, because the teacher is always right. I compare this to the authoritarian governments Europeans had been used to for centuries. Realistically, some students admit they are thinking "If I ride this out, can I sue the school district when I get home?" I compare this reaction to those intellectuals who felt that the injustice would be corrected before any serious harm would be committed; that calmer minds would prevail. The reaction to the lesson can mirror Nazi Germany in some ways, but of course it cannot be duplicated and I discuss with them that most of their emotions would have been intensified a thousand fold if what they felt for one hour could be

multiplied times several years. Also I point out that after moving seats, some students admit they were already used to the new idea and ready to start class and that most students admit they knew it was just a matter of time before they got used to it. Below is one of the student's opinions of the lesson a year after she experienced it. Virginia does not mention Nazi Germany; she applies the lesson to the world in general.

One day during my freshman year of high school, I was taught a history lesson in a very unexpected way. No books were used, no lectures given, but the effectiveness of the lesson was in no way diminished by the absence of these things. The lesson began the minute the bell rang and our class got settled into their seats when Mr. Griepenstroh announced that he had to address an important issue concerning us. First, he began by informing us of the threat posed by a white supremacist group on our campus. This took us by surprise because we had heard nothing of the group before and wondered what on earth they had been doing. Mr. G. continued by explaining hate crimes committed by the group and the importance of precautionary measures against any further crimes. He then informed us that all the white people (the minority) in our class would, from now on would have to sit in the front row. He then continued to search our binders, even while we protested. Many of the students being persecuted were furious with the treatment but wanted to cooperate anyway to help authorities eliminate the problem. After much emotional trial (even a few tears) Mr. G. confessed that it was all a clever lie. The lesson was only to demonstrate how gullible the public in general is and how easily they are swayed by the authorities.

## **Conclusion**

I have a good relationship with my students and they have never told the in coming history classes what to expect. The secret has been well kept. With the ever-changing environment of California schools and our district's constant "improvement" techniques, I have an added advantage when implementing the first two stages of the lesson each year.

My third grade learning experience of identifying with Nazi Germany succeeded in making me feel shame. I was forced to stay in at lunch for wearing my armband for three days. I didn't fully appreciate why I should feel so ashamed until years later, but I blush as I write about it today. I hope that when my students think about the Holocaust they realize that they could relate to the persecuted, the persecutor and those who watched, and that they realize they have the power to never let it happen again.

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# **The Troy Experience: Moving U.S. History to the Ninth Grade**

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**Rebecca L. Begley**

Troy High School

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**A**s Troy High School, in Troy, Ohio, a community of about 20,000 located just north of Dayton, approached its five-year curriculum cycle revision year; it was evident that it would be no usual process. Changes in the Ohio Proficiency Tests, the imminent retirement of nearly one-half of the eight members of the social studies staff, and a changing student clientele all were convincing factors that a major overhaul was in order. With the approval and financial support of administrators, THS began the revision one year early and would implement an entirely new curriculum scope and sequence over a three-year period.

The first decision that was made was influenced by the new Ohio Graduation Test. With the emphasis on both U.S. and World History objectives and the placement of the test at the end of the sophomore year, THS decided to reorder the sequence of courses. American History would be moved from the junior to the freshman year. A new course, World Studies, would be slotted for the sophomore year, replacing the old college-prep Western Civilization courses. In addition, a course for freshman and sophomores who had not yet passed the proficiency test and/or were vocational school bound would be eliminated. American Government would remain at the senior level and new electives would be created for the junior and senior year. The chart on the following page outlines the old and new sequences.

## **Advantages**

THS believes that there are several advantages to the new scope and sequence besides those listed above. One is a hope that students will become attached to the idea of having a social studies course in their schedule each year. In

OLD SEQUENCE

7th GRADE:

- Cultural Geography

8th GRADE:

- U.S. History (1750-1875)

9th GRADE:

- Some students (mostly those who had not passed the proficiency test or who were possible JVS candidates) took Principles of Social Studies
- Most freshman did not take social studies

10th GRADE:

- College bound sophomores took Western Civilization (divided into two courses, I or II) (students chose one)
- Some sophomores took Principles of Social Studies
- Some students took no social studies

11th GRADE:

- Juniors took 20th Century American History
- One section of Advanced Placement American History was also offered
- Pre 11th grade summer school option was offered for limited students

12th GRADE:

- Seniors took American Government
- Pre 12th grade summer school option was offered for limited students
- A few seniors took Western Civilization

ELECTIVES:

- Juniors/seniors could choose Sociology and/or Psychology

NEW SEQUENCE

7th GRADE:

- Cultural Geography

8th GRADE:

- U.S. History (1750-1875)

9th GRADE:

- All freshman will now take American History (1875 – Present)
- Will build on 8th grade American History (1750 – 1875)

10th GRADE:

- All sophomores will now take World History (1750 – Present)
- Will expand on knowledge of world history presented in American History sequence

11th GRADE:

- Juniors will now be able to choose from an assortment of electives
- A 9 – 12 survey was taken this year to determine the most popular choices
- Some students choose JVS
- Hopefully electives can compete with Post Secondary Educational Options
- AP options will also be considered for American History and European History

12th GRADE:

- Seniors will take American Government
- AP section also offered
- Electives will also be available for senior choice

SUMMER SCHOOL: Will be offered for 9th and 10th grade remediation and 12th grade enrichment

the past, the first real contact with students came in the sophomore or junior year. If students are "hooked" on social studies early, increased interest in upper level electives should follow.

Obviously, in the old scope and sequence, intervention for proficiency was haphazard at best until the junior year. In the new system, the social studies department will be able to begin intervention as soon as freshmen arrive and will guarantee that all students will have been exposed to Graduation Test objectives before the test is first given. Another concern involving intervention is the increased graduation requirement to three units of social studies. Having two of the three required courses taught during the first two years of high school will allow for earlier intervention and time to make up failed required courses during the school year or during summer school.

An additional reason involves building a bridge between the junior high and high school with the American History courses now being taught back to back. The hope here is that the continuity will build a better base knowledge of American History. In planning for next year we hope to coordinate the eighth and ninth grade programs.

## **Course Development**

Writing the curriculum for the new U.S. History course enveloped an entire school year. Working in a team of 3, with teaching experiences of 30 years, 15 years and 5 years, the new course was designed from the bottom up. The old course was scrapped and literally every word of the new course of study was debated in the 200 person-hours needed to finish the document. The new course of study has nine units, covering the Industrial Revolution through the 1990s. Each unit contains historical unit objectives, specific performance objectives for each unit objective, correlations to both the Ohio Model Social Studies Curriculum and the Ohio Graduation test objectives and activities for each performance objective. In order to ensure that THS teachers drove the curriculum, textbooks and materials were not examined at all until the entire course of study was completed. In addition to writing the course of study, a planning calendar was designed to plan the time to be spent on each unit.

After the decisions to reorder the curriculum were made and the new curriculum written, the next decision was how to implement the new program. The three-year implementation decision was made to spread the costs of the textbooks and materials and to ensure a thorough implementation of all new courses by only implementing them one at a time. The new American History course began during the 2000-01 school year, World Studies will begin in the 2001-02 school year and elective choices will begin during the 2002-03 school year. The class of 2004 will be the first class to completely move through the new scope and sequence.

Several major changes occurred with the implementation of the first course – Freshman American History. It was decided that the classes would be heterogeneously grouped, as opposed to the vocational / college division of the old curriculum. This in fact did occur, with all but about 20 of 350 freshman taking the course. Those twenty were either developmentally handicapped or in the CBIP (Career Based Intervention program), sponsored through the Upper Valley Joint Vocational School. A second decision, to limit class size to 21, was accomplished after the junior and senior teachers agreed to much larger class loads (approximately 30) while the course was piloted. The result was 17 sections of the course. The number of teachers teaching the course was limited to 3 – to ensure that common planning time could be arranged. THS social studies teachers believe this has been the key to the success of the freshman course. Two of the teachers were first year teachers and taught the course along with their mentor teacher. The first period common planning time was of major importance for unit building and presentation planning. The curriculum is coordinated with all teachers teaching the same material at the same time, common classroom rules and expectations. Continuity was thus provided across the new program. An additional, and totally unexpected, bonus has been the voluntary cooperation of the freshman English teachers to coordinate reading assignments with the units being taught in American History. Meetings are being held this spring and summer to further coordinate between the two departments for both the freshman and sophomore courses.

The new program is not just a course of study; it is an entire action plan. Students are given standards to meet for assignments, including notebook, style requirements and grammar and spelling rules. Homework is a vital element of the new curriculum. Much of it focuses on repetition of skills in the areas of reading, writing, answering questions and analyzing primary source documents. Even class participation is demanded in each course, with ten percent of each quarter's grade being determined by class participation. Quarterly oral presentations are also required of each student. Test taking skills are a daily focus, from the use of the TPQ (test preparation questions) several times per day, continuity in structure in unit exams, to requirements to keep exams for the entire class period for double-checking and proofreading of answers. In addition, before each unit exam, three review sessions were held for students from all classes. Each American History teacher conducted one session, run as student-driven Question-and-Answer sessions lasting 20 minutes the three mornings before the exam. Our research showed that attendance at the three sessions raised exam scores about 15%. Attendance was recorded for use at quarter's end to help determine borderline grades.

Other techniques to help guarantee success in the classroom were also employed for the first time for an entire class of students. Syllabi were distributed to each student at the beginning of each unit, one for the student and one to take home for the refrigerator. The syllabus was also posted on the American History Website located on the Troy City Schools website. The website later was used to post all written assignments so that absent students or parents could access the work being done in class. These uses of technology have been very effective in removing the "I didn't know" and "I wasn't here" excuses.

The second very successful use of technology was the use of parent e-mail. (About 70% of the parents had e-mail accounts). Each teacher compiled a master list of e-mail addresses and sent a weekly e-mail informing parents about upcoming assignments, whole class concerns and other pertinent information. Parental response was 100% positive and most parents wished all teachers would do the same thing. Parents loved the immediacy of the communication and that "phone tag" was eliminated. From a teacher perspective, it is easier to be blunt with e-mail. It was also instrumental in reducing parental complaints to nearly zero. Of course, it was not a foolproof method of communication. E-mail address changes were an ongoing problem and many of the at-risk students do not have computers or e-mail, making traditional forms of communication necessary still.

A final use of technology was a first week PowerPoint presentation that focused on how to use the textbook. All freshmen, along with their textbooks, were gathered in the small auditorium to follow the presentation that described the features of the textbook and to introduce the outlining procedure to be used in notetaking from the textbook. This proved effective in informing students where information could be found.

### **Teaching 9th graders vs. Teaching 11th graders**

It was surprising how little change there was in the quantity and quality of discussion between freshman and juniors. An advantage was that freshmen seemed to recall more facts from their 8th grade American History course. Probably the greatest difficulties were that they do not read or follow current news nearly as much as juniors and that they have a much more difficult time expressing their thoughts in writing. They have not yet developed the essay writing skill that juniors typically possess. They have problems with both analysis and synthesis of ideas, which come much easier for juniors.

However, the freshman seem to have a little greater interest in learning about new things. The cynicism has not come out in full force yet, although it did become a greater problem as the year progressed. We were able to have some very sophisticated discussions on issues. We did a lot on economics during the Great Depression unit with the Keynesian theory of economics and inflation and price issues. They seemed to grasp them very well and retain understanding. They also handled sensitive race issues very maturely in our discussion of Civil Rights. We were able to discuss ethnic slurs without anyone acting foolish. Another interesting thing that happened was that the students began to use Cold War terminology to describe Civil Rights issues. For example, "containment" was the idea of not letting black equality spread through the South; "brinkmanship" was the situation between Native Americans and the government at Wounded Knee and Alcatraz. I think these examples proved a grasp of the concepts even in a different context.

We do not believe that we have "dumbed down" the curriculum to teach the freshman. We moved a little slower and had to do more explanation, but they

were fine with most of the material. In fact, we used some of the exact same assignments with the freshmen that had previously been used with juniors with similar results.

### **Future Plans**

As the 2000-2001 school year came to a close, the World History course of study had been completed and textbooks and materials were being considered for July purchase. Four teachers will begin to pilot the course in the fall of 2001, with common planning time and coordination, following the pattern that has proven successful with the implementation of the Freshman American History course.

THS social studies teachers have no illusions that they have created something new or radically different. What was done was to try to maintain the scholastic integrity of the department while dealing with the realities of both a changing clientele and the demands of the state standards. Only time will tell if the changes were successful, with the final phase of implementation, the elective courses, going into effect in the 2002-2003 school year. If nothing else, THS social studies teachers feel that they have a quality, educationally sound program that should withstand whatever the Ohio Department of Education might throw at them in the next few years.

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# **U.S. Army Pilot Training During World War I: A Violinist's Perspective**

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**A**s social studies educators, we often view historical events from the perspectives of presidents, dictators, and other heads of state. However, it is often the person who is directly involved at the grass roots of an historical event that has the most penetrating insight. This article features the poignant reflections of an individual who was directly involved in World War I, specifically the United States Army pilot training program. It provides a glimpse into the training of a young American aviator and violinist named DeForest Ingerham and also provides a broad overview of the major components of the United States Army pilot training program. This article hopes to illustrate the richness of combining both a general overview of a subject area with specific human experiences.

## **U.S. Army Pilot Training: Origins**

During World War I, the United States harnessed manpower and material to fight against the German, Austria-Hungary, and Turkish powers. In order to effectively train its troops to fight in Europe, the Americans needed to select and sort men to lead and follow. One facet of this selection was the specialized training of young American men to become pilots.

Orville and Wilbur Wright's first flight in December 1903 revolutionized a new technology that has changed the manner in which humankind travels. The United States ordered its first airplane and in 1909 the Wright brothers began training army officers to become aviators.<sup>1</sup> Several were given the rating of pilots, however, the training was neither structured nor extensive in that one of the pilots graduated "after three hours aloft even though he had never taken off or landed the plane."<sup>2</sup>

The Signal Corps was given the responsibility to oversee the adoption, utilization, and application of airplanes (as well as balloons) for the United States Army. At first this may seem to be an odd choice, however, it was logical in that, historically, the Signal Corps dealt with such technological innovations as the telegraph and telephone. The role of the aircraft would be, as was the general consensus of the time, a tool for communications.<sup>3</sup>

After several years of slow but steady progress and development, the First Aero Squadron was created and stationed in Texas City, Texas. In early 1917, Brigadier General John Pershing ordered this particular squadron into active service during the military expedition against Pancho Villa. The contribution of the First Aero Squadron was ineffectual at best. Several months after the conclusion of the Mexican expedition, the United States entered World War I.<sup>4</sup>

### **Development of the U.S. Army Pilot Training Program: Ground Training**

In April 1917, the United States Army was ill prepared to train the many pilots it would need to wage an air war in Europe. Under the guidance of Dr. Hiram Bingham, a Yale history professor and pilot, ground training programs at several of the country's leading colleges and universities were established. By May, the army had established five ground schools of aeronautics at Cornell University, Princeton University, the University of California, the University of Illinois, and the University of Texas.<sup>5</sup> There was an avalanche of applications for the air service. American men showed a keen interest in applying for several reasons such as extra pay, increased rank, and patriotic zeal.<sup>6</sup> However, solely wanting to become a part of the air corps did not necessarily mean acceptance.

During World War I, the United States Army adopted on a wide scale the use of intelligence tests. In the fall of 1917, the Army tested 85,000 men. The testing enabled the Army to sort and classify personnel. By the end of the war, the Army tested 1,750,00 men. With the use of intelligence testing, the Army had the mechanism to identify men with superior academic ability to pursue further training as well as sort out those who were mentally unfit for military service.<sup>7</sup> Interestingly enough, one of the influential psychologists behind the development of these tests, Robert Yerkes, was later a strong advocate for promoting educational equity through the tracking and ability grouping of students in American public schools.<sup>8</sup>

The preparation of American pilots was based on the Canadian model that sought to emphasize three distinct components of training – ground, primary, and advanced. The ground training lasted between eight to twelve weeks. Reveille was at 5:30 a.m. and flying cadets were kept busy until 9:30 p.m. taps. The student received intensive instruction “in the principles and theory of flight, radio, codes, and photography, in the operation and maintenance of aircraft engines and machine guns, and in the care of the airframe itself...in addition, he was given primary instruction in meteorology and astronomy; he devoted considerable time to learning

discipline, military law, and some idea of officer behavior.”<sup>9</sup> Essentially, ground training sought two major outcomes: the creation of Army officers as well as the teaching of the rudiments of flight.

### **Development of the U.S. Army Pilot Training Program: Primary Flight Training**

Once again this was a rigorous and intense program with the primary purpose to instill in the prospective aviators the methods of actual flight. Essentially, this was a six to eight week course where the cadet received forty to fifty hours of flying time. The following is the basic level of competency that American World War I pilots had to demonstrate to receive their wings:

- “(1) Climb out of a field 2,000 feet square and attain 500 feet altitude, keeping all parts of the machine inside the square during the climb.
- (2) Glides at normal angle, with motor throttled. Spirals to right and left. Change of direction in gliding.
- (3) At 1,000 feet cut off motor and land within 200 feet of a previously designated point.
- (4) Land over an assumed obstacle 10 feet high and come to a rest within 1,500 feet of the same.
- (5) Cross-country triangular flight of 30 miles, passing over two previously designated points. Minimum altitude 2,500 feet.
- (6) Straight-away cross-country flight of 30 miles. Landing to be made at a designated destination. Both outward and return flights at minimum altitude of 2,500 feet.
- (7) Fly for 45 minutes at an altitude of 4,000 feet.”<sup>10</sup>

The requirements for graduation seem to be rather straightforward and logical: the ability to take off, navigate, and land – all essential components for a safe flight. However, it should be kept in mind that students were given a very limited amount of actual flying time to attain this level of proficiency and students were aware of the inherent risk associated with aircraft at the time. The training of cadet pilots was hazardous due to lack of skill of the new pilots as well as the use of antiquated equipment, because the newest air models were being used in the war and could not be spared for training purposes. Perhaps in spite of all of the perceived glory of being a pilot or a modern day “knight” – pilot training posed grave concerns: “[m]en died in training accidents...in combat a pilot did not carry a parachute...[t]he planes, which were by and large painted fabric, burned quickly if hit by air or ground fire and the pilot had no way to escape the flames. Some jumped from the aircraft, preferring that type of death to being incinerated in hellish agony.”<sup>11</sup> Flight training was quite perilous at this time.

## **Development of the U.S. Army Pilot Training Program: Advanced Flight Training**

Advanced training was primarily conducted in Europe. Perhaps the most famous of these schools was Issoudun in France. The advanced schools taught specialty skills such as pursuit, observation, and bombardment. In addition, there was mock dogfights with seasoned combat pilots.<sup>12</sup> The purpose of these schools was to refine aerial skills of pilots to further improve the chance of survival in combat. H.A. Toumlin, the Chief of the Coordination Staff for the American Air Service, noted that the advanced schools in Europe provided the finishing training that American pilots needed to be effective in combat.<sup>13</sup> In sum, flight training for United States Army pilots during World War I encompassed groundwork that emphasized the theoretical aspects of flight, primary training that included the basics of aviation, and finally advanced training that included principles of military flight.

### **DeForest Ingerham: A Biography**

One of the American pilots trained in the air service of the United States Army Signal Corps was DeForest Ingerham. In an article entitled, "Ingerham Was Once Ace Pilot", by Forest Hopkins, DeForest Ingerham is described as "[a] crack air pilot during the World War, an adventurer on foreign soils, a master of the violin...that is DeForest W. Ingerham, a teacher at Ohio University who is helping to bring to students in his suave, careful manner, a part of his worldly learning and experiences through the medium of his instruction in music."<sup>14</sup> This description encapsulates several salient points of this rather interesting individual.

DeForest Wilbur Ingerham was born in Oneonta, New York on June 10, 1892. He studied at the Ithaca Conservatory of Music and spent several formative years in his youth studying the violin under the masters in Berlin. For a short period of time, he privately taught the violin around the country.

When the United States entered World War I in 1917; Ingerham chose to enlist. He heard that the air service was seeking college graduates, but found initial resistance when attempting to enlist. However, he was ordered to report for both physical and mental examinations. Ingerham knew he was underweight so on the morning of the physical he ate "as many pancakes as I could possibly stuff down" and underwent a battery of tests. Several weeks later he presented himself in front of a board for a "cross-fire examination...where questions seemed to come from all directions at once."<sup>15</sup> He was notified afterwards that he passed the examinations.

Ingerham attended the ground school, the first step in pilot training. On April 6, 1918, he was stationed at the School of Military Aeronautics at Cornell University with his class group. In the foreword of his signed, *Regulations: U.S. Army School of Military Aeronautics* he was immediately confronted with the non-sense attitude of the ground school: "The main objects of this school are (1) to make good soldiers (2) to eliminate poor officer material as possible, (3) to discover

exceptionally good officer material, and (4) to give theoretical training to future air pilots and observers.”<sup>16</sup>

Ingerham took copious handwritten notes relative to the ground-training program that clearly reflected the ground school’s purpose. His extensive notes included topics on military law, military correspondence, army paperwork (organization and structure), the British Lewis gun (parts, functions, usage, problems, and remedies), diagrams of military formation (trench and artillery), and modern warfare. He also took notes on special topics such as the components of planes and tools of repair.<sup>17</sup> In great detail, Ingerham painstakingly took class notes about military law and included a host of technical terms and several drawings related to mechanical features of the Lewis gun.

Ingerham took notes related more directly to the practical matters of flight. He included topics such as map reading, compasses, instruments, radio lecture, cross-country flying, reconnaissance, and methods of reporting. He also included topics that were basic skills needed by a military pilot – essentially, the ability to navigate as well as the ability to report actions of the enemy. In regards to the latter, Ingerham noted the cooperation of aircraft with the artillery and cavalry, types of ammunition (artillery, fuses, and bombs), photography and meteorology.<sup>18</sup>

Ingerham also commented on the bitterly cold weather at Cornell that year, the uncomfortable living conditions in the barracks, the difficulty of the examinations, and the friends he made. His class graduated from ground school in May of 1918 and was then stationed in Dallas, Texas. His graduating class did not go directly to primary training because the students did not have airplanes to train with. His military time in Texas included marching (they coined themselves marching cadets) in the “hot sun”, breaking coal, and cleaning a barn. However, as a young man of twenty-five, Ingerham found the time to attend social gatherings and even met a young lady.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, Ingerham was ordered to Montgomery, Alabama to receive his primary flight training. This program of study encompassed six to eight weeks where students received forty to fifty hours of flying time.<sup>20</sup> Ingerham’s cadet copy of *Notes and Rules for Pilots of the Signal Corps: Aviation Sections* listed nineteen basic rules of the air “that will be strictly observed in that with several machines flying, there is a great danger of collision, unless due care is exercised. It is mandatory that all pilots should observe the utmost vigilance.”<sup>21</sup> These strict rules also included notes for pilots, cross country notes, inspection of aeroplanes before flight, instruction to crews of aeroplanes, and methods of aligning aero planes.<sup>22</sup>

Ingerham retained several handouts pertaining to instructions for radio air tests, navigation, and a handout dated July 22, 1918 that addressed rules of navigation. Also, he kept four quizzes on navigation where he received perfect scores.<sup>23</sup> In addition to practical flight training, Ingerham received further class instruction that addressed methods of flight. In a confidential folder dated October 10, 1918, he included notes on aerial observation and photography. According to

Ingerham, this training was to further enhance the development of reconnaissance skills in pilots.<sup>24</sup> It is interesting to note that the folder was labeled “Lt. D.W. Ingerham” which meant that he had been commissioned from sergeant to lieutenant and that he successfully passed his reserve military aviator test.<sup>25</sup>

Ingerham noted that one of the most frustrating aspects of primary flight training in the beginning was the unavailability of airplanes for the flying cadets to use. The flying cadets continued to be a “marching unit”. However, he enthusiastically remarked, “[w]hen the planes finally came in their crates, we assembled them and doped the canvas covering, installed the engines, and were ready for our first lessons in flight.”<sup>26</sup> Ingerham described the instruction as learning by doing and admitted he made progress in this type of instruction. He related a story about the inherent danger of air training as follows: “[the airplanes] had a tendency to burn up in mid-air, and many of my friends were lost in this way. We had no parachutes as they had not as yet been perfected; hence, if the plane burned or other trouble developed while in the air, there wasn’t much chance of getting down safely. I remember one day particularly. One of my friends burned up, and I was the next one to go up. While I was circling the field the black wagon drew up, but I had no choice but to go on.”<sup>27</sup> While Ingerham’s memoirs showed a sense of adventure for the air service; it also illustrated his intimate awareness and acknowledgment of the danger associated with flying.

With an instructor, Ingerham practiced the maneuvers of tailspins and landing, but then came the time to do the maneuvers on his own. He described this experience as follows: “They tied a white rag to the tail, which I suppose was to tell the other planes to keep out of the way, and up I went to circle the field and make a landing. It was a feeling I cannot describe. You knew you were all alone; no one could help, and it was all up to you to make good.”<sup>28</sup> After this, he refined his piloting skills by practicing loops and barrel rolls.

Ingerham described several interesting flying practices during this period. “In those days we handled the stick with the left hand in order to have the right hand free for the wireless, for photography, and for map drawing. We were sent out to draw a map of a railroad siding using a pad on our knees. Piloting the plane, looking over the side, and at the same time trying to draw, brought forth some strange pictures.”<sup>29</sup>

Upon completing primary training, Ingerham became a flight instructor at Taylor Field. He trained incoming cadets in primary flight. He continued in this capacity until the armistice was signed November 11, 1918. A short time later, Ingerham left the service. He never went overseas or received any advanced flight training. In 1923, Ingerham took a music position at Wittenburg University. In 1927, he became an assistant professor of violin as well as the conductor of the Ohio University orchestra. He retired from this institution in 1962 and died on August 16, 1986 at the age of 96.

As social studies educators, we teach about sweeping historical, economic, and political events. Often we overlook the human conditions and responses of the time. Here we see a facet of World War I not only from a broad perspective (describing the milieu of the time and providing an overview of military training), but also from the human perspective (featuring an individual's reflections and insights as he lived through the experience). Incorporating the human factor certainly enhances our students' understanding of the richness of the subject matter.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>James J. Cooke, *The U.S. Air Service in the Great War, 1917-1919*, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1996), pp. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>5</sup>Gene Gurney and Michael P. Friedlander, Jr., *Five Down and Glory: A History of the American Air Ace*, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1958), p. 45.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.* In addition, some volunteers from both side of the war sought to "escap[e] the hell of the trenches", Lee Kennett, *The First Air War, 1914-1918*, (New York: The Free Press, 1991), p. 115.

<sup>7</sup>Clarence S. Yoakum and Robert M. Yerkes, *Army Mental Tests*, (New York: Holt, 1920), pp. 8-14.

<sup>8</sup>Robert Yerkes, "The Mental Rating of School Children", *National School Service*, February 15, 1919.

<sup>9</sup>James J. Hudson, *Hostile Skies: A Combat History of the American Air Service in World War I*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1968), pp. 27-28.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>11</sup>Cooke, *U.S. Air Service*, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup>H.A. Toulmin, Jr., *Air Service: American Expeditionary Force, 1918*, (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1927), pp. 277-283.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>*DeForest W. Ingerham Papers, Record Group 99, Ohio University Libraries Archives and Special Collections*, Box 1, Folder 1. This was taken from an interview in the student newspaper, *The Green and White*, January 28, 1935.

<sup>15</sup>DeForest W. Ingerham, *Memories by a Violinist*, (Published Privately), pp. 51-52.

<sup>16</sup>*Regulations: U.S. Army School of Military Aeronautics*, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, 1918), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup>*Ingerham Papers*, Box 3, Folder 8.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, Box 3, Folder 9.

<sup>19</sup>Ingerham, *Memories*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>20</sup>Hudson, *Hostile Skies*, p. 29.

<sup>21</sup>*Notes and Rules for Pilots of the Signal Corps: Aviation Sections*, (Montgomery, Alabama, Taylor Field, 1918), p. 3.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 5-32.

<sup>23</sup>*Ingerham Papers*, Box 4, Folder 2.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Box 4, Folder 1.

<sup>25</sup> Hudson, *Hostile Skies*, p. 28. In addition, “[h]e enlisted, technically, in the Signal Enlisted Reserves Corps at a salary of \$30 per month with quarters, uniforms, and food allowance of 60 cents daily provided by the government.” *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Ingerham, *Memories*, p. 54.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

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# **The Process of Developing Academic Content Standards in Social Studies**

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**Donna Nesbitt**

Ohio Department of Education

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**O**hio has begun to draft academic content standards for social studies. The content standards are being written under the direction of the Joint Council of the State Board of Education and the Ohio Board of Regents. This initiative continues the work begun in 1998 when the Common Expectations for social studies were drafted. The new academic content standards will serve as the basis for a new curriculum model and new assessments. It is important that Ohio educators understand their role in the process of standards development.

An advisory committee consisting of representatives from the field of social studies, the Office of the Governor, the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR), and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) met throughout the winter and early spring. Tom Shreve, then president of OCSS, represented the Ohio Council for the Social Studies on this committee. This group completed the preliminary planning, set the course for the writing team and made policy recommendations to both OBR and ODE.

## **Selection of the Writing Team**

On January 6, 2001, the Advisory Committee was asked to identify the representation necessary for a balanced writing team for the social studies content standards. The members of the original writing team that developed the Common Expectations were invited to continue to participate in the development of the standards. This group consists of higher education faculty in the various social studies disciplines, K-12 educators, parents, and members of the business community.

The Advisory Committee followed the recommendations of the Governor's Commission for Student Success and included teachers at every grade level K-12 on the writing team. The committee sought teachers who were representative of

Ohio's school districts, geography, and ethnic diversity. It was decided that the group should also include teachers who work with special needs students, gifted students, and career technical students. A representative of teacher preparation programs in higher education was also included.

Schools and professional organizations were asked to nominate teachers who exhibit exemplary classroom instruction, have experience with curriculum development, and are aware of current issues in the field for membership on the writing team. During the week of January 16, 2001 a call for nominations was sent electronically to the superintendent of every school district and the dean of every college of education in Ohio. Regional Professional Development Centers and Educational Service Centers were contacted as well. The cover letter and nomination form were also mailed to the following social studies organizations: Buckeye Council for History Education, Ohio Geographic Alliance, Ohio Council for Economic Education, the Ohio Center for Law Related Education, and the Ohio Council for the Social Studies. Forms were sent to teachers who are National Board Certified in social studies, as well as teachers who had previously contacted ODE to submit their names as volunteers. Organizations representing chartered non-public schools, the Ohio Education Association, and the Ohio Federation of Teachers were also contacted. The deadline for submission was February 15.

Fourteen teachers were selected from the nominations received. The list of writing team members was presented to the Advisory Committee for their approval. (For a full list of both the Advisory Committee members and the Writing Team, see the Ohio Department of Education website at <http://www.ode.state.oh.us/ca/ci>.) Nominees who were not selected for the writing team will be asked to review drafts of the standards or to serve on committees associated with later phases of the work such as the development of the curriculum model and assessments.

### **Advisory Committee Work**

The Advisory Committee recommended a philosophy statement and a scope and sequence to be used by the writing team. It also approved a format for presenting the best in state and national standards to the writing team so that the writers would have available the best thinking of others who had gone through a similar process. The Advisory Committee also approved the draft schedule of meetings for the writing team.

### **Work of the Writing Team**

The team chosen to write the standards met for the first time in Columbus on April 25, 2001. The first writing team meeting consisted of an orientation and work on transforming the Common Expectations into over-arching standards. When the draft document is complete it will include indicators of progress at each grade level as well as benchmarks that will serve as checkpoints at key grade levels. Work will continue during the summer and early fall.

## **Opportunities for Input**

A period of public engagement this fall will allow everyone in the field of social studies to read the draft standards and give their opinions. Focus group meetings and electronic feedback via the web page (<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/ca/ci>) will allow all stakeholders to comment on the standards, benchmarks, and indicators. The writing team will meet to consider the feedback and make revisions. Senate Bill 1 stipulates that the draft content standards for social studies must be adopted by the State Board of Education by December 2002. Once the draft standards are adopted by the State Board of Education, information will be provided to assist local districts in curriculum alignment. The social studies curriculum model will be adopted by the State Board of Education by June 2004.

The social studies content standards will shape the future of social studies instruction in Ohio. They will give teachers more clarity about what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. When the content standards are adopted by the state board of education, they will serve as the basis for all future work in social studies curriculum and assessment.

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# **A Study of the National and State Social Studies Standards**

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**T**he Ohio Council for the Social Studies, working in concert with colleagues at the Ohio Department of Education, carefully crafted the Ohio model social studies program (Social Studies: Ohio's Model Competency Based Program). Following the adoption of the model, ODE social studies specialists spent several years in meetings with faculty from institutions of higher education to prepare the professors for the alignment of social studies methods courses for preparing future Ohio social studies teachers.

Shiveley (1999) carefully matched the Ohio Strands to the NCSS themes. Shiveley's chart on page 34 of the 1999 *OCSS Review* has become a classic example for all Ohio social studies educators. In addition, NCSS has published three companion texts for social studies educators (National Standards for Social Studies Teachers, Program Standards for the Initial Preparation of Social Studies Teachers, and Guidebook for Colleges and Universities Preparing Social Studies Teachers).

## **Study Background**

The NCSS series of standards publications together with the ODE model has the potential to coalesce social studies as a subject matter area for Ohio social studies educators. The study was made possible by funding from a Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to use Technology or PT3 grant. The author is a Co-Principal Investigator of a PT3 grant, as well as a trained NCSS/NCATE Program Review Evaluator. The dynamics of methods courses and public school social studies instruction may be forever changed by the infusion of technology-based preservice education and by the NCSS standards and ODE social studies standards. The new

technology standards (National Education Technology Standards for Teachers) were central to the implementation of this study.

The participants of this study were college students who were enrolled in an elementary social studies methods course, one of several methods courses required for state certification or licensure. Unfortunately, it cannot be assumed that elementary methods students have a content-rich background in the social sciences. Nor can it be assumed that these students have a rich background in social studies teaching methods.

Although these elementary preservice teachers may have taken U.S. history courses at fifth grade, eighth grade, and eleventh grade, and further as part of the general education course requirements at the university, there is no guarantee of content mastery. Student knowledge of the social sciences varies. Some preservice elementary educators do not have a passion for social science subject matter; some are not interested in current events; and some did not have good educational experiences in the social studies. This is a long-standing problem. In the 1960's some studies found that public school students had little or no interest in social studies (Herman, 1963, 435-436). Other studies called for improvement in the social studies method courses (Dewitt, 1958, 522). Other studies called for more social science content for elementary social studies teachers (Hahn, 1965, 2986-89). A central task of the university social studies methods professor is to assist the students in learning the national and state social studies standards. A second central task is to provide the skills, resources, and dispositions which will assist these new teachers in making the social studies a creative and important part of the school curriculum.

## **Procedure**

This study is based on the NCSS National Standards for Social Studies Teachers and on Ohio's Social Studies Model of Competency-Based Program. The study was administered to preservice social studies methods educators. A post assessment was administered to the students on the last day of class.

The students were asked two questions

- (1) As an education student I currently have the following knowledge, skill, or ability to write objectives, lesson plans, and appropriate student activities to teach the following social studies standards and themes and
- (2) As an education student I currently have the following knowledge, skill or ability to locate World Wide Web resources to teach the following social studies standards and themes.

Please complete the following survey by selecting one of the choices (indicating your best estimate of your skill or knowledge level) about each of the technology or social studies related indicators.

=====  
Survey Key:

- A = Strongly Agree
- B = Somewhat Agree
- C = Neutral
- D = Somewhat Disagree
- E = Strongly Disagree

1. Culture and Cultural Diversity/People in Societies
2. Time, Continuity and Change/American Heritage & People in Societies
3. People, Places and Environment/World Interactions
4. Individual Development and Identity/People in Societies
5. Individuals, Groups and Institutions/Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities & Democratic Processes
6. Power, Authority and Governance /Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities & Decision Making and Resources
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption/Decision Making and Resources
8. Science, Technology, and Society/ [No direct Ohio theme]
9. Global Connections/World Interactions
10. Civic Ideals and Practices/Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities & Democratic Processes

### **Social Studies Standards – Findings**

In the composite tally, students reported the following rates of competence for each question:

- Question #1 - 43.7%
- Question #2 - 23.5%
- Question #3 - 23.5%
- Question #4 - 23.5%
- Question #5 - 23.5%
- Question #6 - 29.4%
- Question #7 - 23.5%
- Question #8 - 29.4%
- Question #9 - 17.6%
- Question #10 - 23.4%

By the end of the course, however, students reported 100% competency for each question. How was this accomplished? First, the course was based on the idea that a primary function of the social studies methods course is to assist future teachers in conceptualizing the NCSS's Ten Thematic Strands in Social Studies and the appropriate Ohio social studies standards. It would seem essential that the methods professor align the course syllabus with the NCSS/ODE themes. Multiple technology examples and student centered activities at age appropriate levels must demonstrate the instruction of these themes. The following research questions

provide insight into the success of this course.

### **Research Question 1: Technology**

Will a technology rich methods course assist students in conceptualizing national and state social studies standards? Students selected for this methods course had not taken the two technology courses that were prerequisite for course entry. I provided a rich array of technology resources and in the methods course. My website at <http://www.ed.wright.edu/~rhelms/home.htm> contains numerous examples of student Power Point Presentations on the NCSS/OCSS standards. The website also provides hundreds of social science and social studies links that have significant instructional value.

Finally as an assessment, each student was required to make a Power Point presentation on each of the NCSS/ODE standards. The study found that a professor proficient in technology skills can greatly assist student learning both in technology skills and in the NCSS/ODE standards.

### **Research Question 2: Multiculturalism**

Will a methods course infused with multiculturalism assist students in conceptualizing national and state social studies standards? Care also should be taken to actually define and provide a variety of examples of each of the social studies themes. The study found a low pretest percentage of 17.6% in understanding global connections to a high percentage of 43.7% in understanding culture and cultural diversity. This high percentage might be explained because the university requires a multicultural education course, and the university does require an infusion of multiculturalism in all education courses. I have taken care to construct a multicultural website that can be found at <http://www.ed.wright.edu/diversity>. Students were encouraged to visit this site to obtain information as they were completing several assignments. In addition, the students were assigned reading and activities in *Quick Guide to the Internet for Multicultural Education*.

### **Research Question 3: National and State Standards**

Will a methods course designed to blend state and national standards assist students in conceptualizing national and state social studies standards? Many states have aligned their own social studies standards with those of NCSS (Social Studies: Ohio's Model Competency-Based Program). The study found that students were able to conceptualize both national and state standards by the end of the course.

### **Research Question 4: Objectives, Lesson Plans**

Will a methods course that provides consistent examples and a variety of examples of learning resources assist students in conceptualizing national and state social studies standards? The study found that consistently there was a positive relationship in using a variety of social studies objectives and lessons (both online and in print) and in students conceptualizing national and state social studies

standards.

### **Research Question 5: WWW Resources**

Will a methods course that consistently emphasizes appropriate WWW resources assist students in conceptualizing national and state social studies standards? The study found that 100% of the students could by the end of the course use WWW resources and in students conceptualizing national and state social studies standards.

### **Conclusion**

A primary function of a methods course is to assist future teachers in conceptualizing the ten Thematic Strands in Social Studies as developed by NCSS and the six Ohio social studies themes.

It may seem that educated preservice teachers might be able to understand these themes/strands. Social studies methods professors realize that this is simply not the case. The social studies methods professor will have to serve as an effective model in translating these themes/strands to preservice educators. Care also should be taken to actually define and provide a variety of examples of each of the themes/strands. The study found a low pretest percentage of 17.6% in understanding global connections to a high percentage of 43.7% in understanding culture and culture diversity. This high percentage might be explained because the university requires a multicultural education course, which has long been an NCSS/ODE mandate, and both multicultural education and technology education are NCATE mandates. In addition there are numerous WWW resources and other resources for teaching about Multicultural Education.

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