I’d like to take this opportunity in my last column as president to offer a very public and very heartfelt thank you to every member of the CCSS Board who has helped make my three plus years as president so wonderful. I marvel at each of our meetings about how much good each of you do to help the students of our state gain understanding about the world around them. Your tireless energy for this organization and our goals, your strong commitment to moving us forward, and your patient and gentle friendship, especially as my father went through some medical issues, will always be an inspiration to me. I step down as president humbled by your work to improve the lives of every student, and I thank you.

As an organization, CCSS is poised to do great things. We’ve been active this year in implementing our new strategic plan. Public outreach and advocacy are two important elements of that plan, and our recent meetings in Hartford with the Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education, along with meetings with the Secretary of the State and legislative leaders, have shown that we are moving in the right direction, but we have a long road ahead. Spurred on by the marvelous efforts of Gene Stec and one of our newest Board members, Carolyn Ivanoff, we have been making inroads into the shaping of policies that affect the students we care about so much.

Have a great summer, John

Editors’ Note

This will be the last editors’ note for the next several issues where two of us share the masthead as editors of Yankee Post. In a rash moment, Dan Coughlin has agreed to take on the responsibilities of CCSS president for the term 2013-2015 – reprising a role he completed some 20 years ago. Dan’s decision was made easier with the knowledge that out-going president John Tully has left the CCSS in very good shape. John’s leadership has demonstrated confidence, good humor, creativity, energy and the ability to build a team spirit. As he takes on a new role as legislative liaison, John will continue to push the CCSS agenda. Connecticut social studies teachers owe John a hearty “thank you” for both his past accomplishments and his continuing commitment.

We should also note Steve Armstrong’s rise to the presidency of NCSS this June. Steve’s efforts for Connecticut social studies as well as NCSS have been tireless. We all wish him the best of luck as he takes on STEM, the emerging debate over Common Core standards and an educational reform “agenda” that often appears to challenge many of the long-held traditions of “public” schools.

In that context we would call your attention to our efforts in Connecticut to secure support for the appointment of a social studies consultant at the SDE as well as formal adoption of some form of the Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks. As we have noted in previous editors’ notes, our professional understanding of government surely makes us aware of the importance of advocacy. If you do nothing else, urge your school administrators to speak out on behalf of social studies in their contacts with the SDE and the State Board of Education. John Tully, Steve Armstrong, and David Basso have begun that effort; but three people are not enough. Make the case for your field, whenever and wherever and to whom ever you can.

Be sure to check Page 3 - Steve Armstrong has important information about the C3 Social Studies Common Core standards. You will find pictures and commentary inside on the recent NERC and the CCSS Annual Dinner. Attendance at the annual dinner was way up – a tribute to the efforts of the planning committee led by Emily Dunnack, Elyse Poller and Dan Coughlin. The awardees were incredibly impressive in both their accomplishments and their eloquence. We (continued on page 2)
Who are these people? We call them winners. Turn to page 10 and find out what makes them special.

Who are these people? We call them leaders. Go to page 11 and learn more.

Editors’ Note (continued from page 1)
say it every year but it bears repeating: the annual dinner honors our best and they were truly inspiring. See pictures from both NERC and the Annual Dinner on pages 10 and 11.

We have an interesting array of articles. Did you know that some in Connecticut claim that CT is the birthplace of flight? (see page 5). We found a fascinating article on the map that made America – it’s on page 6. William Fitzhugh offers yet another challenge to history teachers – not all may agree with him, but in this age of “standards” Fitzhugh sets a high bar (page 7). Those seeking ideas on how to get along in the age of “common core” may want to read some suggestions on page 8. And just about the time you might think the USA was the only country where history and social studies teachers get flogged, we have information about a hot debate in England. (page 12)

Finally, we wish all of you a summer that provides refreshment, new experiences and a chance to reflect on this past year. And if you have the time and are so inclined, write up your best lesson, teaching experience, travel experience or thoughts about the future of social studies and send them in. And get ready to come back in September and stand up for our field.

Dan  danielcoughlin@charter.net
Tim  thomas.weinland@uconn.edu

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There is some important new information about the C3 social studies standards that affects all of us. For political reasons, the CCSSO group has decided not to publish the C3 social studies standards. As you are aware, CCSSO is a major backer of the common core standards, and they are taking some major political blowback against the common core (including a recent decision by the Republican National Committee to come out against the common core). The CCSSO’s big task, in their view, is to get the common core through this political minefield. What they don’t want to do is to add additional issues that might hurt support. CCSSO has decided that the C3 document might be one of the diversions that would further dilute support for the common core, and has decided to drop support for C3 for this reason.

The decision of CCSSO to drop their support of C3 has nothing to do with the document itself; it is being done to preserve support for the common core. There have been over 3,000 comments about the C3...they are almost exclusively positive.

Where does this leave our document? The C3 document is now going to be published by National Council for the Social Studies. NCSS and the other sponsoring organizations believe in the document as much as they ever have. There will be a slight delay until August in the official document’s release. However, there are three states (Connecticut being one of them) that have expressed interest in using C3 as a focus for reviewing state standards this summer. The C3 committee has suggested that we go ahead with that work, and if there are changes (either substantive or small) to the C3 document in the final edits this summer that they would be forwarded to appropriate individuals in those states working on curriculum reviews this summer. Inasmuch as I will be president of NCSS starting July 1, I am certain that any changes will be forwarded to us.

So, any work looking at the state standards this summer should continue, the only difference being that the document being utilized will be officially sponsored by NCSS instead of CCSSO. We believe in the C3 document as much as we ever did; actually, it is somewhat liberating to be away from the political minefield of CCSSO and the battles over the common core. This move allows social studies to stand on its own merits, and not be as tied to the common core as it had been under CCSSO. I hope that we can begin work on the important task of getting an “official” version of the state frameworks out to our social studies teachers.

Steve Armstrong, President-Elect
National Council for the Social Studies

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Yankee Post is Available Only Online
To receive Yankee Post via email, and notification of a new issue . . . please join CCSS and send your email address to:
ctsocialstudies@yahoo.com
URGENT ACTION NEEDED!

State Board of Education & the Future of Social Studies

On May 1, members of the CT Council for the Social Studies and the Secretary of the State, Denise Merrill, talked to the State Board of Education about the importance of Social Studies. I know, it is hard to believe that we had to do this, but our students have gone far too long without resources and support from the state about the most important subject in the school day.

We explained what all of you know to be true. Social Studies is the class that teaches students to be effective and engaged citizens. Our future depends on that, it goes to the heart of what education is about, and it is in peril.

Take a moment now to call your CT representative and senator and tell them that Social Studies has to be protected!

• Tell them that our students need a Social Studies Consultant at the State Department of Education and explain that the position has been vacant for almost four years! (Funding for the position is now in limbo at the legislature. It is included in the Academic Office section of the Department of Education budget.)
• Tell them we need the State Board of Education to adopt the Social Studies Framework.
• Tell them you are going to count on them to stand up for our students’ right to learn about their state and their world. Ask them to vote for the consultant and to stay in touch with the Department of Education about the importance of social studies.
• You can find out all the contact information right here: http://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/CGAFind-Leg.asp

After you call, please drop me a note (jdtiphone@gmail.com) so we can find out the responses and coordinate our efforts.

It was a great day at the Board standing up for our students. Other members of CCSS were right there with me: Carolyn Ivanoff, Gene Stec, Steve Armstrong, Dave Bosso, and Mary Skelly. Of course everyone nodded in agreement to what we said, but the real test will be how much they stand up and fight for our students.

Here’s a part of what I said:

“We simply cannot let the fates determine if our future generations understand the duties and freedoms associated with being members of a democratic society, gain perspective on the world, or appreciate the sacrifices our parents made. All of us, as citizens of the state of Connecticut, and you, as stewards of our state’s schools, need to work actively to give our students the learning experiences they need to join our ranks as educated and skilled members of our society.

And while I’m sure that nobody in this room would disagree with any of this, history will judge us, as we will surely judge ourselves, by how much effort we make to align our actions with our values.”

Thank you for your support,  John Tully, President, CCSS

CALL NOW, PLEASE.
Historian Propels Connecticut To Claim ‘First In Flight’

by NEENA SATIJA     March 19, 2013 3:17 AM

The ongoing battle between historians over who was really first in flight was rekindled last week. New research advances the theory that a German immigrant in Connecticut is responsible for the first powered and controlled flight, rather than the Wright brothers in North Carolina. But historians at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum are saying “not so fast”.

Finding The Evidence
You can now order a “No. 21” breakfast at Chip’s Family Restaurant in Connecticut. It’s named after the airplane model that Gustave Whitehead allegedly flew for half a mile at an altitude of 50 feet on Aug. 14, 1901. That’s more than two years before Orville and Wilbur Wright’s famous run in Kitty Hawk. And the No. 21, an omelet with hamburger filling alongside German apple pancakes — in honor of Whitehead’s heritage — is just the beginning. “Our license plate should say ‘firster in flight,’ ” says Bill Finch, the mayor of Bridgeport, Conn., where the flight supposedly happened. Historians have known for decades about an article in the Bridgeport Herald describing Whitehead’s 1901 flight, but they haven’t seen the original photo that should have accompanied it.

John Brown works at an aircraft construction company in northern Germany. He’s also a hobby historian. While rummaging through a dusty museum attic in Bavaria, Brown came across a picture from a 1906 exhibition on flight innovation. On display in the background of that picture was a photo of what looked like Whitehead’s No. 21 airplane in flight. He also found dozens more newspaper articles describing the 1901 flight. “I found out such stunning stuff about Mr. Whitehead. But really I’m not the highest authority in aviation. I sent all of the stuff that I found to the highest authority, which is Jane’s All the World’s Aircraft in England,” he says.

And Paul Jackson, editor of that internationally renowned publication, has ruled that Whitehead deserves the honor of first in flight — not the Wright brothers. Jackson says it’s not likely the Bridgeport Herald writer and dozens of others lied in 1901. And now there’s the original photo to prove it. “The evidence cannot be shaken off anymore, thanks to John Brown’s researching,” Jackson says.

Questions Arise
But Peter Jakab, associate director of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, finds it “a little puzzling.” He says the photo is too blurry — after all, it was enlarged by 3,500 percent. “To my mind, it’s really trying to see what you want to see in the image,” Jakab says. “Again, it’s a picture of a picture on the back wall of an exhibition. It’s very, very indistinct.” Jakab and his colleagues at the Smithsonian firmly believe that the Wright brothers were the first to fly. There are clear and crisp photos to prove it. And he discounts the numerous newspaper stories about the Whitehead flight. “An AP story is written, and it goes out, and it appears in many, many publications. That doesn’t mean that every one of those is a separate, eyewitness account,” he says.

But Whitehead supporters have a darker explanation for why the Wright brothers have dominated the story. The Smithsonian, they say, has built an empire around the Wright brothers. If you walk into the National Air and Space Museum, the first thing you see is the Wright airplane — which was sold to the Smithsonian for $1 in 1948. Jane’s editor Paul Jackson says there were other conditions. “They had to agree with Orville Wright that they would never say that anybody else had flown a powered, manned aircraft before they had done,” Jackson says. He thinks the Smithsonian is in a difficult position: Admit that Whitehead was first in flight, and lose one of its most valuable exhibits. But Jakab says he would never let a contract stand in the way of a historical fact. “If that’s some sort of personal sanction to how I interpret the evidence, of course not,” he says. If he decides Whitehead flew first and the Smithsonian loses the plane, then so be it, Jakab says. For now, he isn’t budging.

But whoever is right, there are sure to be new monuments, museum exhibits and dishes like “Whitehead sausage” served in Bridgeport. And maybe even new license plates.

http://www.npr.org/2013/03/19/174634237/historian-propels-connecticut-to-claim-first-in-flight
A DECADE AGO, the Library of Congress paid $10 million to acquire the only known original copy of a 1507 world map that has been called “the birth certificate of America.” The large map, a masterpiece of woodblock printing, has been a star attraction at the library ever since and the object of revived scholarly fascination about the earliest cartography of the New World. The research has also rescued from obscurity a little-known Renaissance man, the 16th-century globe maker Johannes Schöner, who was responsible for saving the map for posterity.

We call ourselves Americans today because of the map’s makers, Martin Waldseemüller and Mathias Ringmann, young clerics in the cathedral village of St.-Dié, France. By incorporating early New World discoveries, their map reached beyond the canonical descriptions of Old World geography handed down from Ptolemy in the second century. On a lower stretch of the southern continent, the mapmakers inscribed the name “America” in the mistaken belief that Amerigo Vespucci, not Columbus, deserved credit for first sighting a part of that continent, South America. Or possibly they favored Vespucci because he held more firmly to the growing consensus that this was indeed a New World, not the Indies (as Columbus so wanted to believe), and because he wrote more colorfully than Columbus about the people he encountered.

The map is also the source of an abiding mystery. How did Waldseemüller and Ringmann already know so well the configuration of South America, before any recorded Spanish or Portuguese voyages around the horn to the west coast? How did they know of the Pacific before Balboa made his sighting in 1513? Hard to believe it was just a guess or futuristic vision of what world geography would come to be. Were the cartographers themselves dropping a hint when they wrote on the map that “if you are not familiar with the new discoveries, do not be afraid of what it is you see on this map, for it is how you will come to see your world in the future”?

Five years ago, John W. Hessler, a historian of cartography at the library, published “The Naming of America,” an account of the map’s importance in post-Ptolemy geography, its disappearance for centuries and its rediscovery in a castle near the Black Forest in southwestern Germany. Now, Dr. Hessler has dug deeper into the dynamic of the years between Columbus, in 1492, and Copernicus, in 1543. Science and exploration were stretching minds to distant horizons, once unknown. Copernican astronomy was about to dislodge Earth from the center of the universe, a start to the Scientific Revolution.

His new book, “A Renaissance Globemaker’s Toolbox,” is not able to solve the mapmakers’ enduring mystery. But it is a richly illustrated delight to the eye. I advise a slow tour of the maps, drawings, marginal notes and other material remains of Schöner’s wide-ranging mind. Read the informative captions, then begin the text. General readers will find the accounts of Schöner’s place in history and the preservation of the map lucid and fascinating. Parts of more technical chapters, like the instructions on making a terrestrial globe, appear to be written more for the author’s academic peers than for many laypeople. And of necessity, this is hardly a flesh-and-blood biography, as the archives are largely silent about Schöner’s personal life.

We do see a print of a bearded, heavyset man and read a brief diary entry about him as a young Catholic cleric with a relaxed view of celibacy: he entered into a relationship with a woman that produced three children. One can thus understand his conversion to Protestantism in Martin Luther’s Reformation. That led him to the professorship in mathematics at Nuremberg, which he held to his death in 1547.

Dr. Hessler leaned heavily on Schöner’s personal archive of correspondence and manuscripts, books and maps, including corrections and comments in the margins. He was into everything in science: completing two world globes in his prime, drawing celestial maps and globes and preparing horoscopes, one even for a Hapsburg emperor. Not another Leonardo da Vinci, but who was?

“Rather than a producer of theories,” Dr. Hessler observes, Schöner “was instead a disseminator, a compiler and a transmitter of the new science and mathematics.” Yes, something of a pack rat, but one with a sharp eye for what was likely to be of importance in the future. This attribute cast Schöner as savior of the 1507 world map. His practice was to gather and bind portfolios of his compiled materials. One of these, now called Schöner Sammelband (meaning “gathering”), preserved the “America” map. There it passed from hand to hand, all the other original prints disappeared, and Schöner’s was lost for more than 300 years. Most of the bound portfolios wound up in a Vienna library, but one languished in a German castle, unrecognized, until a Jesuit priest found it in 1901 — thence to the United States in 2003.

Nothing in the book points up more clearly Schöner’s pivotal place in a world in transition from the medieval to the modern than his residual interest in astrology and his awakening curiosity when he apparently heard reports of a new theory being formulated by a Polish Catholic cleric. A brilliant young student of Schöner’s, Georg Joachim Rheticus, went to see Copernicus in 1539 and learned more about the Earth orbiting the Sun. Rheticus then composed a short treatise, written in the form of a letter to his teacher, “most illustrious and learned” Johannes Schöner. The publication, widely circulated in Europe, was the first definitive account of the new Copernican system of the heavens.


Note: See copy of map on page 7
Good morning, and thanks for this opportunity.

Tens of thousands of adults are teaching U.S. history in our schools. However, most of our students are not learning U.S. history in our schools. The huge old Brontosaurus of our education bureaucracy, with its hangers-on, is giving its attention to minimum competency tests in math and reading and to teacher evaluations...

In the meantime, almost no one is paying any attention to the actual academic work of our HS students—such as asking whether they are reading history books or writing term papers. Indiana University does a regular survey of high school student engagement and the most recent results I saw were of a survey of 143,000 U.S. high school students which found that 82.7% spend five hours a week or less on homework (for all their subjects), and 42.5% spend an hour or less a week on all their homework. The average Korean student spends 15 hours a week on homework, not counting 2 hours a night at a tutoring hagwon.

A few years ago we [TCR] did a study of history term papers and found that the majority of HS teachers do not assign them. I am convinced that if we were to look into it, we would find that the majority of our high school students are also never asked to read one complete history book (cover to cover, as we used to say) in high school. I have said that I think every U.S. high school Junior should read Battle Cry of Freedom, for example. In general we are paying more and more attention to what teachers are doing and no attention to the academic work of students.

When you read about education, and see edupundits talk and write about history in the schools, see if you won’t find, as I have, that they say nothing about the actual academic work of students. I realize that the adults in our education systems are very important, but I have come to the view that the actual academic work of our students is at least as important, and probably more important for student academic achievement, as the quality of their teachers which gets all of the attention.

I am a serious outlier in all this because without serious history papers by diligent high school students The Concord Review would have nothing to print. We have published more than a thousand serious history research papers (average 6,000 words, with endnotes and bibliography) by students from 46 states and 38 other countries in 97 issues over the last 26 years, but the high school students did the work—often as an independent study.... Our goal has been to surprise, challenge and inspire HS students with the exemplary academic work of their peers.
In Common Core, Teachers See Interdisciplinary Opportunities
By Liana Heitin

Educators around the country are exploring innovative ways to teach the new common-core literacy standards, and some are calling attention to an approach they say is working well: interdisciplinary thematic units. Whether they’ve had these types of units in their repertoires for years or are just now jumping into such cross-curricular work, educators say the new standards support this type of teaching in several ways.

First, one of the key instructional shifts associated with the Common Core State Standards in English/language arts is the requirement that students, starting in 5th grade, read more nonfiction than fiction. Some English teachers have lamented the prospect of replacing Shakespeare and Sandra Cisneros with informational texts. But proponents of the common standards point out that, as a footnote in the introduction to the standards explains, the required percentages for nonfiction “reflect the sum of student reading, not just reading in ELA settings.” That is, informational texts are expected to be the shared responsibility of teachers “across the grade,” potentially creating new opportunities for cross-curricular projects.

In addition, the common standards lay out specific literacy requirements for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects, and they emphasize research and synthesizing skills. Rather than tackling these new objectives in subject-area silos, some teachers are choosing to address them by integrating real-world themes and social issues into projects, and by reaching across hallways to do this work with colleagues.

One Theme, Many Standards

The common core “certainly lends itself to integrated interdisciplinary units,” said Bobbi Farrell, a veteran teacher at Messalonskee Middle School in Oakland, Maine. Several years ago, she and her colleagues began moving to a standards-based approach to teaching, in which students go at their own pace and do not receive grades. Instead, kids are responsible for attaining proficiency in each standard. The group built this new approach, which Farrell calls “mass-customized learning,” on the common-core standards, which were finalized in 2010.

Farrell, who teaches both social studies and language arts, often organizes her instruction around a theme. “For example, we may do a unit on identity,” she explained. “Within that, we can look at immigration or social classes within social studies. We can look at such literature as The Outsiders within the framework of characterization or point of view.” Through the structure the theme provides, she said, students are able to hit a variety of standards, depending on their individual goals. “In a short span of five to six weeks, kids get a massive amount of teaching and learning in that one unit.”

While some language arts teachers are simply adding a nonfiction unit to fulfill the new reading requirements, others have found pairing fiction and nonfiction texts under a thematic umbrella to be a more effective way to teach critical reading. “In order to integrate the core in a way that doesn’t overtake your class with isolated discrete lessons, this is the way to do it,” said Sarah Brown Wessling, the 2010 National Teacher of the Year and a high school English teacher in Johnston, Iowa. “This is the way to get kids deeper into their analysis.” By organizing around “a concept or principle or theme or quest,” teachers force students to engage with texts more deeply and compare them to one another. For instance, she said, “instead of thinking about teaching To Kill a Mockingbird, I’m teaching the concept of courage. To Kill a Mockingbird is one text I use. So is a [PBS] Frontline piece, a speech, an article. Putting those texts together in a bundle helps us to work toward conceptual understanding. That’s the spirit of the core.”

Rob Meza-Ehlert, a 10th grade social studies teacher at the Kearny School of Digital Media and Design in San Diego, explained that his small public high school is centered around interdisciplinary project-based learning. Teachers at the 450-student school, created through a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, work in grade-level teams to have students produce semester-long projects on topics of their choice. Tenth graders pick a social issue—genocide, environmental degradation, or human trafficking, for example—and read selected articles about it in social studies class, using the annotation skills they’ve learned in English. Then they continue the “research from my class with Socratic seminars in English,” Meza-Ehlert explained. “The walls between the two disciplines are broken down. We’re developing similar skills with a similar approach.” Eventually, students create a project—for instance, a video, brochure, or online game—to demonstrate what they’ve learned and offer something to the community.

Meza-Ehlert suggested that a strength of this approach is that it helps students see the natural fluidity between subjects. “I hear kids in my class talking about connections to English and science. As soon as kids are doing that on their own without being asked, you know what you’re doing is working,” he said. A nine-year veteran at the school, Meza Ehlert says the common-core standards mesh well with the school’s project-based learning model. “We actually have a pretty good foundation because a lot of what we’ve already been doing matches [the common core]. When I look at the common core … there are no shocks.”

Continued on Page 9
Logistical Barriers

Even so, Kathy Glass, a curriculum and instruction consultant in the San Francisco area, and author of books on mapping curriculum units to the common core for both primary and secondary grades, emphasizes that such units are not in-and-of themselves aligned with the common core. Teachers still need to do the hard work of adaptation. “I did interdisciplinary units 20 years ago,” she said. But, to teach them today with the common core, “I’d have to say, ’Hmm. … Let me look at the resources I used. Were they appropriately complex? Let me look at the questions I had. Were they text dependent? It’s all very specific to how rich the interdisciplinary unit was.”

In addition, there are, of course, logistical barriers to this kind of teaching. For Farrell, teaching thematically often forces her to teach historical events out of order, “which, particularly in social studies, has been difficult,” she said. “You think of history more in terms of chronology. One of the issues we’re facing is how to know if we’re filling in all those gaps.”

The cross-subject-area, collaborative aspect can be tough to pull off as well, especially at the high school level. In elementary schools, where teachers are responsible for multiple disciplines, or in middle schools that are organized around teams, there are often more opportunities for teachers to collaborate on units. “If a school is organized for it, it makes a lot of sense,” said Wessling. “My school doesn’t happen to be organized for that. … Certainly the ways that high schools are traditionally organized makes it more difficult.”

While his high school has the luxuries of a small staff and flexible scheduling, however, Meza-Ehlert argues that all teachers can implement interdisciplinary work to some extent. “The product doesn’t have to be some project. For us what makes it work best is having big questions and topics that cross multiple disciplines.” He suggests that teachers “start small, where they’re comfortable. Unpack one quote that is a challenging quote to unpack, starting in English and finishing in history class. … If the structures aren’t in place, look for natural places of connection. If one other teacher has 10 to 15 shared students, try one reading together on one theme. The little things grow into something larger.”

Finding Units

Resources are also available to help teachers create such thematic units across disciplines. Facing History and Ourselves, a civic-learning organization, has been offering free curricular support to teachers for almost four decades. The Brookline, Mass.-based nonprofit provides units and lessons on themes such as racism, democracy, and prejudice on its website. “Our model has always been to teach a piece of literature situated in a historical context,” said Jocelyn Stanton, senior program associate for special projects. “To understand the world around that piece of literature, you bring in primary sources, graphs, first-hand accounts”—all of which can count toward the common standards’ nonfiction reading requirements.

“On the flipside, we’ve also pushed history teachers to not only look at primary sources and textbooks but to bring in works of poetry and short stories to complement the time period,” Stanton said. “By reading a poem from a Holocaust survivor, you deepen your understanding. I think the common core is basically asking teachers to do that.”

While many of Facing History’s units were written before the common standards existed, Stanton said they are philosophically and practically in line with what the core requires. “The idea of putting a text in front of students and asking them to deconstruct and find meaning, to read closely, to ask questions, that’s how we started. It’s somewhat ironic that we’ve been sort of set up for this [ie., the new standards] for a long time.” The group is now working to directly align its units to the standards.

Emily Chiariello, a teaching and learning specialist with the Southern Poverty Law Center’s Teaching Tolerance program in Montgomery, Ala., is in the midst of writing a “literacy-based anti-bias curriculum” for both language arts and social studies teachers, which should be finished by the fall. Chiariello describes theme-based interdisciplinary units as “the best for every number of reasons.” She said that these units mimic the kind of learning through reading students will do as adults—for instance reading the newspaper to learn about politics, or looking at maps and magazine articles to learn about gardening. “Maybe this is also what the common core is trying to get us to realize—that these boundaries between disciplines are false,” Chiariello said. “They’re not in the real world. I hope people can embrace those walls are coming down.”

http://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2013/03/13/ccio_interdisciplinary_units.html
From Left: David Foss, Stedman Award; Michelle Meyers, Excellence in K-8 Social Studies; Jennifer Gembala, Excellence in High School Social Studies, Kate Steinway, Frazier Award, William DeGrazia, Addazio Award, David Knapp, CCSS Service Award

Every day I get to hear stories about the drama surrounding the lives of young adolescents. Every day I get to share in the laughter and heartache of being a middle school student, searching for identity and navigating the difficult world of friendship. Every day I get to see the proverbial light bulb go off over students’ heads when they make a connection or realization.

Michelle Meyers

David Foss (l), from Newtown High with Tom Allen, from Senator Blumenthal’s office

I began this nomination speaking about how he has helped me through this tough time in my town because I believe that it is more important for teachers to show their compassion and care for students than it is to teach. Although Mr. Foss has shown both of these requirements for successful teaching far more than average, what I will never, ever forget is how he guided me towards a mindset of moving forward through history and through kindness. If you ever read this, Mr. Foss, thank you for everything. You have truly changed my life.

Newtown High School Student

Walt Woodward, Program Speaker

“You can’t teach math and the achievements of early mathematicians without first addressing Ancient Greece or early Egypt. You can’t teach about science and the impact of atomic energy without addressing the ramifications of the use of that energy on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. You can’t teach about Steinbeck, or Fitzgerald, or Shakespeare without first addressing their place in history and the relevance their stories have to the human condition. Understanding history and social studies must come first in order to properly understand all the rest”

Jen Gembala

CCSS President, John Tully with Secretary of the State, Denise Merrill

“This award (Addazio Honor Award), named in honor of a working class immigrant’s son who pursued his dream to learn history, means so much to me. I too was the son of working class immigrants, a father who worked in a steel mill and a mother who was a seamstress. Addazio’s love of being a Social Studies educator, traveler, and mentor continues to instill in this longtime member of CCSS and advocate for geo-literacy the passion to continue teaching and sharing with our young.”

Bill DeGrazia
NERC 44 - “Turning Points: In Social Studies . . .for Social Studies”
Sturbridge, MA April 8-10, 2013

NCSS Leaders: Past and Present and Future- fr. left
Former President, Tedd Levy;
Executive Director Susan Griffin;
President (as of July 1) Steve Armstrong

NEHTA Kidger Award Winner
and Luncheon Speaker Paul Kennedy
How children learn history is as controversial as what they are taught
April 13th 2013  From the print edition The Economist

FEW school subjects are so divisive. When Michael Gove, Britain’s education secretary, released draft changes to the country’s national curriculum in February it was his plan for history that created headlines. Mr Gove’s proposal called for history to be studied “as a coherent, chronological narrative,” beginning with the early Britons and ending with the cold war. Opponents said the syllabus overstressed the deeds of “posh white blokes” and underplayed those of minorities. “Unteachable, unlearnable and un-British” blasted a campaign group on April 10th. Rival camps of historians have published petitions and rowed on television. That shoot-out will last beyond the official consultation period, which closes next week.

Politicians with an axe to grind have often twisted history books, lionising characters they admire and tainting ones they do not. In March Dmitry Livanyov, Russia’s education minister, promised a new textbook to replace the 80 or so in use. That looks like an effort by Vladimir Putin’s government to commandeer Russian history and partially sanitise Stalin (though Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s The Gulag Archipelago is also taught in schools [if anyone reads it—WF]). But the rumpus in Britain reflects a deeper and more subtle argument dividing school staff rooms around the world—one with broader consequences. As well as tussling over the content of courses, parents, teachers and politicians are now discussing the techniques by which history is taught, and debating what the discipline is for.

For 40 years history teachers in most of Europe have favoured concepts over chronology. Rather than tackling history as one long narrative sweep, schoolchildren dip in and out of periods in search of topics thought appropriate for their age. Close analysis of historical sources—such as cartoons, photographs and contemporary accounts—emphasises that history is slippery and subjective. In Britain this approach emerged from the Schools History Project (SHP), a review of teaching methods launched in 1972. Its boosters proclaimed that history “is not a body of knowledge” but “a heap of materials which survives from the past.” That thinking influenced the syllabuses now followed by most British schoolchildren.

The model has fans elsewhere. Schools in Germany’s 16 Länder (states) employ several exam boards and more than 400 different textbooks, but evaluation of historical sources makes up the “core of the teaching” across the country, says Sylvia Semmet, the president of the European Association of History Educators. The history syllabus of post-apartheid South Africa, also influenced by the SHP, makes “applicable” learning the priority. Schools in Australia take the same approach.

Some teachers in these countries are growing weary of this method. At its most extreme, source-based history and skill-based teaching can seem to devalue knowledge for its own sake. Peter Kallaway, a professor at the University of the Western Cape, points out that South African children learn about America only through the prism of capitalism (in the Grade 11 topic, “Capitalism and the USA 1900-1940”). European history feels disjointed—children may learn a little about the second world war but then wait two years to learn more. Grumblers in Britain fret that pupils’ historical knowledge is narrowing. Under one exam board, students can earn 40% of a history GCSE (a standard qualification for 14- to 16-year-olds) by learning about cattlemen and cowboys in the American West.

Interesting times

Critics look to countries such as France and Poland for the antidote. Students there must study history until the final year of school. Teachers lead their charges through chronological summaries of important events. Pupils still sift fact and fiction from contemporary sources, but not until they are older. They also learn to be good citizens. Children in France learn about their country’s revolution, and how the republic has fared. The curriculum helps consolidate national identity says James Cathcart, of the Lycée International de Saint Germain-en-Laye, a school near Paris.

These methods can sometimes be stodgy. Indian schoolchildren complain about learning dates by rote. Yet teaching full of fact-filled narratives can help bright sparks focus. Chloé Blanchet, a 14-year-old high school student in Quebec, enjoys learning about Canadian history, which her studies have covered in depth. Her teacher uses an activity book to test the class’s knowledge of key dates. Facts are tangible and near at hand. Across the Atlantic in northern England, Alice Grierson, in her penultimate year of school in Yorkshire, is glad that she is not being taught in a strictly chronological fashion. Nevertheless, the elements that she enjoys most about her course—economic history, British social reforms—are those that place her learning within a larger narrative context.

Perhaps politicians overestimate their ability to influence the classroom, whichever approach they favour. Henning Hues of the Georg Eckert Institute in Germany has studied the curriculum in South Africa, where teachers are hard to corral. “Textbooks do not have an impact there,” he says. In America a broad range of teaching styles and syllabuses have survived government efforts to unify them. In Germany some teachers have avoided teaching the history of the German Democratic Republic, says Ulrich Bongertmann, president of the country’s History Teachers’ Association. That problem remains, but it is now fading as younger teachers enter the profession and those years grow more distant.

Better teacher training, an extension to the compulsory age at which history is taught and more time for history lessons would help young Britons’ education as much as innovation in the curriculum. Richard Evans, a historian who opposes Mr Gove’s plans, says that “history is an unmanageably large subject in many ways.” A better sense of chronology can help young minds make sense of a sprawling discipline. An enthusiastic teacher matters more.

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Sincerely,
Jordan Grote
Program Manager, External Relations & Council Communications

Professional Opportunities

Link social studies standards with the Common Core Standards
“Teaching Reading with the Social Studies Standards: Elementary Units that Integrate Great Books, Social Studies, and the Common Core Standards,” the latest bulletin from NCSS Publications is now available. This new publication includes class activities that help teachers to achieve learning expectations of the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies as well as specific objectives outlined in the Common Core Standards for Reading Literature.
Go to Socialstudies.org

ANNOUNCING
NERWHA’s Autumn Symposium
26 OCTOBER 2013

Hispanic America in World History,” featuring a keynote address by Felipe Fernández-Armesto, William P. Reynolds Professor of History, University of Notre Dame, will be the theme of NERWHA’s 2013 Fall Symposium, Saturday, 26 October 2013, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, at the Dudley H. Davis Center, the University of Vermont, Burlington, VT. The symposium will have a dual focus on teaching and research. Accordingly, NERWHA warmly invites participants from the entire world history community, including K-12 educators, public historians, students, university professors, museum curators, and independent scholars.

Full details regarding the symposium, registration materials, directions to Burlington, Vermont, and a campus map will soon be available at our website at <http://www.nerwha.org/>. Please contact Nick Russell at <nicholas.russell@tufts.edu> if you have any questions.
Summer Institutes

2013 PIER Institutes July 8-12

Global Youth in the Digital Age The 2013 summer institute “Global Youth in the Digital Age” will highlight the way in which technology is transforming educational practice and opportunity the world over. More than ever, young people are actively engaged in civil society. Using technology that was once unimaginable, students around the world are becoming change agents and advocates for their generation. These tools are also enabling cross-cultural exchanges that are opening the world to what is perhaps the first generation of truly global citizens. The summer institute will explore the promise and potential pitfalls of these trends, as well as offer practical tools for teachers who want to globalize their own classrooms through intercultural exchanges and international communication.

Echoes of Egypt: Conjuring the Land of the Pharaohs The summer institute “Echoes of Egypt: Conjuring the Land of the Pharaohs” will examine the content of the ground-breaking new exhibit opening at the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History. The exhibition, opening on April 13, 2013, will explore over two millennia of fascination with ancient Egypt in both the Western world and the Middle East. From a re-creation of a mummy unwrapping event in 1850 to the mystery of Egyptian hieroglyphs to fascination with Egyptian wisdom and magic, “Echoes of Egypt” will examine the ancient Egyptian concepts that have underpinned and even fueled cycles of Egyptian revivals through the ages and around the world. This year’s summer institute will expand upon these concepts and provide educators practical tools to teach their students about ancient Egypt and its influence in world history.

Indigenous Cultures of the Americas and their Response to European Contact Across Time The summer institute “Indigenous Cultures of the Americas and their Response to European Contact Across Time” will focus on a number of indigenous American cultures in the context of the extensive exchange of goods and ideas that took place with the European settlers. We’ll also explore the contemporary lives of indigenous peoples in the Americas, and consider the relationship of indigenous Americans today to those of the past. Our institute will feature first-hand explorations of Yale Peabody Museum collections, participation in seminars led by world-class scholars, and in-depth exchanges on select indigenous ethnic and tribal peoples, while offering practical tools to assist teachers in developing innovative approaches and resources for effective classroom teaching.

Submit On-line Application http://www.yale.edu/macmillan/pier/SI_Application.htm
Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program Short Term Projects

Application Deadline: June 13, 2013

CFDA Number: 84.021A  Funding Opportunity Number: ED-GRANTS-041713-003

The U.S. Department of Education and the International and Foreign Language Education (IFLE) office is pleased to announce a Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program opportunity. Under the Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad (GPA) Program, the funds will support overseas projects in training, research, and curriculum development in modern foreign languages and area studies for teachers, students, and faculty engaged in a common endeavor. Projects may include short-term seminars, curriculum development, or group research/study.

Duration: Applicants may apply for a maximum grant performance period up to eighteen months in duration for short-term projects; proposed start and end dates should be September 1, 2013-March 31, 2015. Educator groups may travel abroad anytime during this eighteen month period. The minimum time abroad is four weeks total.

Eligible Applicants: (1) IHEs, (2) State departments of education, (3) Private nonprofit educational organizations, and (4) Consortia of these entities.

Eligible Participants: An individual is eligible to participate in a Fulbright-Hays GPA Short Term Project if she/he is: (1) A citizen, national, or permanent resident of the United States; and Currently employed full-time in a United States school system, institution of higher education, local education agency or state education agency (not applicable to students); (2) And at least one of the following: a) A teacher in an elementary or secondary school (please see note below); b) A faculty member who teaches modern foreign languages or area studies; c) An experienced education administrator responsible for planning, conducting, or supervising programs in modern foreign languages or area studies at the elementary, secondary, or postsecondary levels; d) A graduate student or junior or senior in an institution of higher education, who is a prospective teacher in the areas of social sciences, humanities and foreign languages. The student should meet the provisions set by his or her local and state education agencies.

Project Types: Short-Term Seminars, Curriculum Development, and Group Research or Study

Financial Provisions: The institutional award will pay for group travel and host country expenses, including: maintenance stipends based on fifty percent of the amount established by the U.S. Department of State; round-trip international travel; a local travel allowance for necessary project-related travel within the host country; purchase of project-related artifacts, books, and other teaching materials in the country of study; rent for instructional facilities in the country of study; clerical and professional services performed by resident instructional personnel in the country of study; and other expenses in the country of study deemed necessary for the project’s success and approved in advance by the U.S. Department of Education.

Please note that the grant does not provide funds for project-related expenses within the United States. The GPA program will not provide funds for: 1) U.S.-based salaries and fringe benefits; and 2) U.S.-based activities such as pre-departure orientations and post-travel follow-up, although these activities are required.

The application package will be available starting April 18, 2013 at http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=dYkcRxyYrlCfvkKLDQikZy0nh7nZQ6y2PkpGcjgYQZvpzgmjBdc!-189593869 For more information, please go to http://www2.ed.gov/programs/iegpsgpa/applicant.html

NCSS Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

The Catherine B. Reynolds Civil War Washington Teacher Fellows Program

Teaching With Documents and Works of Art: An Integrated Approach

Powerful and Authentic Social Studies (PASS): Teacher Training Institute
July 22-26, 2013 - Brandman University , Monterey, CA, USA

Strengthening Social Studies Learning and Excellence in the Common Core
July 31-August 2, 2013 – University of Wisconsin, School of Continuing Education Conference Center, Milwaukee, WI

Conducting Socratic Seminars: Focus on Primary Source Documents from US History
August 5-7, 2013 - American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC

registration information http://members.socialstudies.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/events/ConferenceList.html?Action=Find_Events
International Exchange and Research Opportunities for U.S. Classroom Teachers

The U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs offers Fulbright grants for U.S. primary and secondary classroom teachers, guidance counselors, curriculum specialists, curriculum heads, Talented and Gifted coordinators, Special Education coordinators and media specialists/librarians to participate in professional development opportunities abroad through the Fulbright Classroom Teacher Exchange (CTE) Program.

Teachers may apply to the CTE Program in one of six countries: the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, India, Mexico and the United Kingdom. Teachers may apply to the DA Program in one of eight countries: Argentina, Finland, India, Mexico, Morocco, Singapore, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

For more information about eligibility requirements, benefits and impact of these programs, please visit the program website, www.fullbrightteacherexchange.org. Teachers interested in applying to the CTE Program can find more information here: http://www.fullbrightteacherexchange.org/application-te2.

The application deadline for the CTE Program is October 15, 2013.

American Antiquarian Society: Workshops for K-12 Educators

The American Antiquarian Society is pleased to present its latest series of professional development workshops for K-12 teachers! These workshops are open to all K-12 educators and professional development points will be available for participation. K-12 Educator Workshops are programs that allow participants to interact closely with scholars and AAS library materials.

- Saturday, June 22 “Mining for Minerals: The Pull of the West” Lead scholar: Kathryn Morse, Middlebury College
- Thursday, June 27 “Picture Perfect: Nineteenth-Century Women in Words and Images” Lead scholar: Laura Smith, University of New Hampshire
- Monday, August 19 “Writing History” Lead scholar: John Demos

For more information or to register visit: http://www.americanantiquarian.org/k12workshop

SAVE THE DATE
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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2013
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• Opportunity to meet colleagues and develop a network of professional friends and associates
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If you have always wanted to become a member of NCSS, now is the time to act. New membership subscriptions to NCSS will also give you membership benefits from Connecticut Council for the Social Studies for one year—a $20 savings. This offer applies to only new NCSS Regular or new Comprehensive members only who send in their form to CCSS. Joint member benefits include:
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• Regular and Comprehensive membership in NCSS includes a subscription to Social Education or Social Studies and the Young Learner
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Please complete membership form. Make checks payable to CCSS and mail this form to CCSS, P.O. Box 5031, Milford, CT 06460.

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