

Editor's Notebook

In this issue, *Social Education* introduces a new column, offers features and lesson plans that cover the range of social studies, and looks forward to a new Framework for state social studies standards.

Our new column, Sources and Strategies, is edited by Lee Ann Potter, and utilizes the resources of the Library of Congress, where she has become the director of education outreach. This follows her many years of service in educational outreach at the National Archives, during which her regular contributions to our journal have been much appreciated and enjoyed by our readers. The inaugural feature for her new column shows how teachers can use the title pages of books by famous political philosophers to pique the interest of students and engage them in the ideas presented by the philosophers and the times in which they lived. She invites teachers and students to submit their suggestions about “Books that Shaped the World” on the Library’s website.

Our Teaching with Documents column, which was previously edited by Lee Ann, continues as a regular feature in *Social Education*, and is now edited by Maria Marable-Bunch, director of education and public programs at the National Archives. Joel Walker’s contribution to this issue reviews the problems arising from racial discrimination in defense industries in World War II, and examines President Roosevelt’s anti-discriminatory Executive Order 8802 of 1941, which was issued to induce A. Philip Randolph, the labor and civil rights leader, to call off a planned March on Washington. Walker’s case study of attempts to deal with discrimination at the Alabama Dry Dock shipyard, and his suggested teaching activity, will help teachers bring this important historical episode to the classroom.

Our Looking at the Law column re-examines the espionage trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, which Bruce A. Ragsdale describes as “one of the defining moments of the Cold War era.” (180) Ragsdale discusses the new light shed by documents that have become available through the opening of the Soviet archives, and suggests resources and discussion questions that will facilitate class understanding of the conduct and legacy of the trial.

The question of whether the words “under God” should be included in the Pledge of Allegiance has stimulated many debates. Americans are often unaware that the words were only included in the Pledge as late as 1954. Eric C. Groce, Tina Heafner, and Elizabeth Bellows describe the circumstances and the sermon by Rev. George MacPherson Docherty that led to the change of wording, and present a timeline and lesson plan that can foster student understanding of the issues raised by the change.

Kerry A. Dunne and Christopher C. Martell examine the challenge of teaching U.S. history to immigrant students, especially those enrolled in ESL classes, who often need special attention to their language capabilities in addition to their content knowledge and skills. The authors present tested strategies and teaching tips that can help these students succeed in and enjoy U.S. history classes.

In this issue’s Research and Practice column, Roland Case critiques the widespread misapplication of Bloom’s taxonomy. He argues that the taxonomy has been widely interpreted as meaning that “lower order” tasks should be accomplished prior to tackling “higher order”

tasks, but that this assumption is misleading and can have negative consequences; there are, for example, many cases where “so-called ‘lower order’ outcomes may best be taught through ‘higher order’ activities.” (199)

A whale hunt by the Makah tribe in Washington State in 1999 provoked a great deal of controversy. Matthew Bornstein-Grove and Fred L. Hamel suggest methods of discussing and evaluating the controversy in the classroom through a symposium in which students assume the roles of Makah tribal members, environmental protestors, state officials, and other citizens with different perspectives on the whale hunt.

Ayo Magwood and Krista Fantin Ferraro share their experience of developing the critical thinking skills of students by introducing them to the sets of “constitutional, political, or philosophical conceptual tensions” that lie “at the root of every public policy issue that we wanted our students to understand.” (206) When their high school students used this framework to examine Supreme Court cases, they were able to produce “writing, discussions, and presentations [that] rival those of law students.” (207)

C. Frederick Risinger’s Internet column examines the challenges of teaching about terrorism. While acknowledging the complexities of the topic, he recommends a diverse set of Internet sources that can support balanced and accurate study of its different dimensions.

Jack Schneider and Michael Fuerstein articulate a vision for civic education that anchors it in the “moral and deliberative” experiences of students. (213) The combination of these experiences with the ability to understand different perspectives could, they argue, transform civic education into a lively and meaningful experience for students.

Peter Levine and Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg also focus on civic education in an article that emphasizes that many students are deprived of rich civic learning opportunities. They urge a renewed commitment to the principle that *all* students should have opportunities to discuss current, controversial issues. The authors present results from a CIRCLE survey of the political knowledge and civic education of thousands of young Americans that also investigated the teaching methods and goals of 720 high school teachers of civics and government.

The final pages of this issue look ahead to the upcoming release of the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards. In a Q and A feature, NCSS President-Elect Michelle Herczog presents important fundamental information that social studies educators need to know about the C3 Framework. The issue concludes with two interviews. In the first, NCSS Executive Director Susan Griffin describes the process by which the C3 Framework was developed. In the second, C3 Project Director and Lead Writer Kathy Swan discusses the significant implications of the Framework for social studies education. Keep tuned to the NCSS website this month for more information about the C3 Framework and its impending release!

As always, the editors of *Social Education* welcome the comments of readers on any of the contributions to this issue at socialed@ncss.org.