

This issue of *Social Education* offers a rich set of articles that cover a wide range of challenges facing social studies educators. Our contributors show how the study of history can enhance students' understanding of current events, how social studies classes improve the literacy skills of young people, and how to implement some excellent methods of inquiry-based instruction in the social studies classroom.

The assault on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, by rioters protesting the certification of the 2020 presidential election sent shock waves through the nation. Alysha Butler-Arnold suggests that teachers should take the opportunity to compare this event with occasions in U.S. history when white rioters used violence to contest elections in which the votes of African Americans were decisive. In her view, it is important to examine the bigotry underlying the riot of January 6 so that our country can “come closer to being a true democracy for all its citizens.” (10)

A distinctive feature of the Trump presidency was its extensive use of executive authority. Steven Schwinn's *Lessons on the Law* column describes the unitary executive theory that justifies actions of this kind, and analyzes the Supreme Court decisions that have either confirmed or limited specific presidential executive powers. He emphasizes the need to take a position on the use of executive authority that applies both to “presidents whose policies we like and presidents whose policies we don't.” (15)

During the coronavirus pandemic, it has become clear that scientific views on preventing the spread of the virus are rejected by part of the population. This problem is not new. In our *Sources and Strategies* column, Michael Apfeldorf examines three newspaper features written between 1913 and 1963 that dealt with the prevention of the spread of the deadly childhood disease of measles in this country, and suggests ways in which classes can study the challenge of disseminating scientific knowledge to promote public health.

At the start of 1921, the Greenwood District of Tulsa was a prosperous community known as Black Wall Street until it was destroyed in a race riot later that year. In our *Teaching with Documents* column, Netisha Currie examines the Tulsa massacre using a report and photographs by the Red Cross as primary sources. Her teaching suggestions highlight the racism that both caused the destruction of the Greenwood District and impeded its recovery.

Our *Teaching the C3 Framework* column introduces a new resource for social studies teachers who take the plunge into inquiry-based instruction—a set of films offered by the Making Inquiry Possible Project that are accessible free of charge to teachers and demonstrate recent efforts in Kentucky to implement inquiry-based approaches in the classroom. The authors (Kathy Swan, Ryan Crowley, S.G. Grant, John Lee, Gerry Swan, Callaway Stivers, and Gates Sweeney) point out that “a healthy inquiry culture can grow

from the bottom up beginning in teachers' classrooms and it can grow by district leadership building out an inquiry infrastructure for teachers to adopt.” (28)

For many years, educational policymakers have assumed that increasing the amount of class time given to English Language Arts will increase students' reading skills. One result has been a reduction in time allocated to social studies instruction. Adam Týner and Sarah Kabourek show the fallacy of this approach as they present important results from a study they conducted, which was published by the Fordham Institute. The authors analyzed the reading scores of thousands of elementary school students recorded in the nationwide federal Early Childhood Longitudinal Study of the Kindergarten Class of 2010–11. Their study showed that “social studies is the only subject with a clear, positive, and statistically significant effect on reading improvement. In contrast, extra time spent on English Language Arts (ELA) instruction has no significant relationship with reading improvement.” (33)

Asking the right questions is a skill that students need to acquire, but Joan Brodsky Schur observes that “class discussion usually revolves around teacher-generated inquiries.” (40) She recommends ways in which teachers can guide students through the process of learning to formulate their own investigative questions so that they can improve their ability to conduct research and communicate its results.

This year marks the Centennial of NCSS, which was founded in 1921. During the year, *Social Education* will offer a series of articles contributed by the Friends of NCSS Community in conjunction with the NCSS Archives Committee. In the first such article, Rozella G. Clyde and Jeremiah Clabough examine the historical context and educational developments that led to the founding of our association to promote an effective education for citizenship through the social studies.

Joel D. Cohen and Jessica S. Cohen point out that “quantitative literacy, the ability to interpret numerical information ... is a well-documented weakness for many students and adults.” (50) In an article that identifies the specific skills needed for students to understand information presented in graphs, they show how an interpretation framework that they introduced in a unit on government in Joel's eighth-grade U.S. History class resulted in an improvement in students' skills.

Social studies education plays a vital role in educating students for active democratic citizenship. The opening feature of this issue is the address made by NCSS President Stefanie Wager at the NCSS Virtual Conference held in December 2020, in which she calls for more effective advocacy of the importance of social studies in our schools. She introduces the new Advocacy Toolkit that is available on the NCSS website at socialstudies.org/advocacy.

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