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## Current Trends and Topics in U.S citizenship, law-related and economic education. Report from the National Council of the Social Studies 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference 2010

The National Council of the Social Studies (NCSS) serves as one of the world's largest professional communities. The 90<sup>th</sup> annual congress 2010 took place at Mile High City in Denver/Colorado. What is going on in U.S. civics, law-related and economics education? The following congress report presents an overview on educational policy, research and curriculum projects, to facilitate the reader outside the U.S. a quick information about the state-of-the-art.

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### 1. Educational policies

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) was founded in 1921 and has grown to be the largest association in the country (and worldwide) devoted solely to social studies education. The NCSS Membership today is about 17,600 educators but has decreased (1990: 26,000). To European social studies teachers this still seems to be an incredible number of members. But taking the number of social studies teachers into account, the percentage of membership seems to be average.

The Conference program can be looked at <http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/images/Preview2010.pdf>. During the conference even a local "Social Studies TV" was broadcasted!

The aim of NCSS is to engage and support educators in strengthening and advocating social studies. NCSS members come from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 69 foreign countries. Organized as a network of more than 110 affiliated state, local, and regional councils and associated groups (<http://www.socialstudies.org/local>), the NCSS membership represents K-12 classroom teachers, college and university faculty members, curriculum designers and specialists, social studies supervisors, and leaders in the various disciplines that constitute the social studies.

NCSS serves as an umbrella organization for elementary, secondary, and college teachers of history, geography, economics, political science, sociology,

psychology, anthropology, and law-related education. It is under constant discussion between NCSS as a "liberal East Coast organization" and the more discipline-orientated associations, how the social sciences disciplines are represented and integrated in the curriculum (Fallace 2008). There might be a swing of the pendulum from social studies to history teaching<sup>1</sup>. Not letting NCSS split apart!

The history of NCSS has always been shaped by its presidents. Their annual speeches give an excellent insight into the development and struggle for social studies to become one of the core subjects in curriculum (Previte/Sheehan 2002). This year, Steven Goldberg reported that curricular narrowing is most severe since federal focus on achievement in reading and math – and, to a lesser degree, science – has caused schools to reduce the amount of instructional time devoted to non-assessed subjects, including social studies. While most Americans agree on the importance of preparing young people for citizenship in a democracy, civic education has received less and less attention in schools over the past few decades.<sup>2</sup> During that time, schools have focused their attention on preparing students for college and jobs firstly, secondly and more recently, on responding to increasing accountability demands, primarily in mathematics, reading, and writing. Experts believe a decline in civic engagement – such as the decline in voting rates among young voters since 18-year-olds were given the

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1 National Council for the Social Studies and the National Council for History Education are working together to gather information on the state of world history education, and have developed a brief survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ncssncheworldhistory>.

2 A study of McEachron (2010) looked at the development of allocated social studies time in elementary classrooms in Virginia over more than two decades (since 1987!). The research method is based on written timetables provided by elementary classroom teachers to students completing internship requirements in a teacher education programme. A total of 72 students' field placement schedules were analyzed; 50 students were in primary classrooms (K-3) and 23 in upper elementary classrooms (4-5). The time allocated to social studies averaged less than two hours per week!



right to vote in 1972 – may be a direct result of the decrease in emphasis placed on civics.

“Mr. President, where is citizenship education?” asks Frederick Risinger, Indiana University/Bloomington and former president of NCSS in 1990. He addressed an open letter to President Obama, published in *Social Education* (vol. 74, 2010, no. 6, 338-339) to express his concerns about the increasing emphasis on mathematics and science education along with the continued emphasis on reading/language arts, whereas a fourth major curriculum area, social studies, is being marginalized by a lack of funding and (reduced) interest on the part of the U.S. Department of Education, state departments of education, and the movement towards national common educational standards. “I have never seen such unwillingness to enter into discussions of issues and agree on policies that are in the best interests of all Americans. I believe that a major factor in this deterioration of what I term as pluralistic citizenship behaviour is the marginalization of social studies/citizenship education in the pre-K-12 curriculum throughout the nation.” (Risinger 2010, 338)

During its 90<sup>th</sup> annual meeting keynote speaker Maya Soetoro-Ng was warmly welcome by the audience as a colleague, as she worked as a social studies teacher in history classes. She did her PhD in international comparative education and is a highly reputed peace educator. Barack Obama, 44<sup>th</sup> and current President of the US, is her half-brother, whom she supported in the campaign for President. Maya Soetoro-Ng wrote a picture book for children (“Ladder to the moon”, 2010) recently. This leads to the topic of her keynote, which sets up “imagination” against “standardization”. She distinguished three kinds of collective imagination: empathetic imagination, moral imagination (How to imagine “peace”?) and narrative imagination with a strong focus on story-telling. We cannot foster global commitment without local engagement. Peace education is not a separate subject but has to be included in every single social studies lesson.

The final keynote was given by famous basketball hero Kareem Abdul-Jabbar who uses his legacy to boost two causes: the study of history and the education of young people. The documentary film “On the shoulders of giants. My journey through the Harlem Renaissance” chronicles the all-black Harlem Rens basketball team from the 1920s to the late 1930s. The film on African-American history will be at the movies in February 2011. Teaching materials include eight one-minute video-clips accompanied by questions and activities which follow Bloom’s taxonomy to encourage higher level thinking ([www.kareemabduljabbar.com/studyguide](http://www.kareemabduljabbar.com/studyguide)).

NCSS is an event with a lot of motivating awards (<http://www.socialstudies.org/awards>) as for example “Outstanding Social Studies Teacher of the Year”. Annually, the “Spirit of America” award recognizes an indi-

vidual who exemplifies the American democratic spirit. This year, the award was given to Da Chen who grew up in a tiny village in the deep south of China. During the Cultural Revolution, his family was beaten, his father thrown in reform camp, and at age nine, he was threatened with imprisonment. His first memoir (“Colors of the Mountain”) became a best-seller. His second memoir (“Sounds of the River”) continues his story as a teenager leaving the farm to his university life in Beijing.

American public and private education policies are always widely discussed in public (Ravitch 2010). *Waiting for Superman* (<http://www.waitingforsuperman.com/>) is a new powerful and alarming documentary by David Guggenheim. To an international audience the filmmaker is best known for his environmental documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), featuring former nominee for President and environmental activist Al Gore. *Waiting for Superman* raised a debate why American educational system failed where the nation is near the bottom of advanced countries in math and reading scores and where the slogan “No child left behind”<sup>3</sup> has become a cynical punch line. The film analyzes the failures of American public education by telling the emotional stories of five children – Bianca, Francisco, Anthony, Daisy and Emily – following them through the educational system and exploring the roles that charter schools<sup>4</sup> and education reformers could play in offering hope for the future. However, the deeper changes in American society that have led to the crisis are not explored. Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and one of the “villains” in the documentary, has written about the flaws she finds in the film’s generalizations. “Are teachers the problem?” the TIMES is asking (Sep. 29, 2010: <http://www.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,2021951,00.html>). A lot of teacher bashing as well as union busting can be heard in the film. Compare the critical online forum *Not Waiting for Superman* (<http://www.notwaitingforsuperman.org/>) launched by the nonprofit educational publisher Rethinking Schools or the critical comment in the New York Magazine about “disaster schools” (<http://nymag.com/news/features/67966/>). We have to wait and see, if the film will be perceived by the European audience.

In times of forced school reform when it is flogged down to death, educational scientists tend to look back what they can learn from previous efforts. Widely ad-

3 Educational policy and public controversy is shaped by educational programs like „No child left behind” ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No\\_Child\\_Left\\_Behind\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No_Child_Left_Behind_Act)). For criticism see CIRCLE newsletter (Winter 2009): Has “no child left behind” narrowed school curricula? <http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/Newsletter/v6.i1.01.pdf> Here: recommendations No. 1-4, p. 3 and p. 12. Current program by the Department of Education is “Race to the Top” (RTT).

4 Charter schools are public schools that are granted autonomy from many district policies.



vertised were books by Ronald W. Evans, professor of Teacher Education at San Diego State University. In his study *The Social Studies Wars: What Should We Teach the Children?* (Evans 2004, compare Evans 2011) he looks at the (potential) failure of new social studies. With regard to the origins of the Cold War, the movement sought to develop critical thinkers through "inquiry" and "discovery." The „New social studies“ was a 1960's attempt to transform the teaching of history and social sciences. Although it led to a veritable treasure trove of innovative materials, the "revolution" envisioned by its proponents never materialized. Evans situates the 40 federally funded curriculum projects that altogether came to be known as the 'new social studies' in historical context, drawing attention to their conservative origins, the many ways in which they were pedagogically progressive, and the reasons why they did not have the long-term impact so many educators hoped for and expected.

Public visibility is perceived as a severe problem of social studies, the NCSS is apt to change that. "We are the foundation about everything other builds" (Sue Blanchette at Social Studies TV). Some critical voices could be heard (by former presidents in the Jean Fair Memorial Symposium) if "having a national event is not the way of professional development". Nevertheless, the next five years are already scheduled. NCSS Congress 2011 will be held in Washington on "Dimensions of Diversity", followed by Seattle (2012), St. Louis (2013), Boston (2014), New Orleans (2015), and Washington again (2016).

## 2. Standards and Testing

There has been a long discussion whether to launch standards in the field or not. But there is always the pressure if you are not part of the activity the subject will disappear. How can you have powerful understanding and testing at the same time?

On the one hand, there is this constant struggle of the social studies to be a part of the curriculum and to be seen as one of the "big 4" on the other. Social studies seem to be a marginalized area. All resources are focused on often de-contextualized reading skills. "Lets go back to teach the kids some science and social science, perhaps they like them and start reading!" was the critical note of a teacher to these programmes whose efficiency can be doubted.

### 2.1 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (U.S.C.I.S.) Naturalization Test

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.749cabd81f5ffc8fba713d10526e0aa0/?vgnnextoid=982a309186e89210VgnVCM10000025e6a00aRCRD&vgnextchannel=c242df6bdd42a210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD>.

In order to get an idea of US testing culture in general, have a look at the U.S.C.I.S. Naturalization Test and its civics items (Schneider 2010).

### 2.2 National Standards Social Studies

National Council for the Social Studies's Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/stitle.html>

On Constitution Day, September 17, 2010, NCSS published the revised national curriculum standards for social studies. They are judged as much better, more comprehensive, more understandable. The aim is to lead social studies back to become one of the "big four" in the curriculum (maths, science, language and - social studies). Developed by a task force of the National Council for the Social Studies, and approved by the NCSS Board of Directors in March 2010. In short, the ten themes of social studies are: Culture, time, continuity and change; people, places and environment; individual development and identity; individuals, groups, and institutions; power, authority, and governance; production, distribution, and consumption; science, technology, and society; global connections; civic ideals and practices.

Here an excerpt:

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#### Civic ideals and practices

Social studies programmes should include experiences that provide for the study of ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic.

... Questions faced by students studying this theme might be: What are the democratic ideals and practices of a constitutional democracy? What is the balance between rights and responsibilities? What is civic participation? How do citizens become involved? What is the role of the citizen in the community and the nation, and as a member of the world community? Students will explore how individuals and institutions interact. They will also recognize and respect different points of view. Students learn by experience how to participate in community service and political activities and how to use democratic processes to influence public policy.

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Other content standards have been published for geography, history, economics, psychology, education technology standards.

### 2.3 Standards Civics and Government

<http://www.civiced.org/stds.html>

Center for Civic Education's National Standards for Civics and Government. Free download. But they lack actuality as they date from 1994 (!), and therefore should be revised.

### 2.4 Council for Economic Education (CEE)

Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics (VNCSE)

2nd Edition New York 2010

Full download: <http://www.councilforeconed.org/ea/standards/standards.pdf>



Online lessons related to each of the 20 standards:  
<http://www.councilforeconed.org/ea/standards/>

*Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics* was first published by the CEE in 1997 and quickly became an essential tool informing economic education. Each standard is an essential principle of economics that an economically literate student should know and a statement of what the student should be able to issue according to that knowledge in the 4<sup>th</sup> 8th grade, and until graduating from high school. This knowledge includes the most important and enduring ideas, concepts, and issues in economics. According to the original publication, there are the following 20 economics content standards presented: scarcity, decision making, allocation, incentives, trade, specialization, markets and prices, role of prices, competition and market structure, money and inflation, interest rates, income, entrepreneurship, economic growth, role of government and market failure, government failure, economic fluctuations, unemployment and inflation, fiscal and monetary policy.

## 2.5 National Council for the Social Studies:

Programme Standards for the Initial Preparation of Social Studies Teachers

[http://downloads.ncss.org/NCATE/NCSS\\_NCATE\\_STDS-04rev.pdf](http://downloads.ncss.org/NCATE/NCSS_NCATE_STDS-04rev.pdf)

The document contains the actual standards, all of which appear in a more detailed version in the *National Council for the Social Studies* document *National Standards for Social Studies Teachers*. The standards are intended to assure (1) that teachers who start to teach social studies possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions associated with the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines that make up the social studies, and (2) that they are able to create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for learners.

In addition, there are local content standards on history, geography and civics. The following report highlights selected state standards and/or curriculum frameworks with an explicit link to civics or citizenship education (September 2010): <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/CitEd/2-Stds.pdf>.

Compare in addition: <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/71/30/7130.pdf>.

Each of the 50 states and the district of Columbia in the United States requires at least one course in civics or government for graduation from high-school. Forty-nine states and the district of Columbia have civics and/or social studies standards describing what students should „know and be able to do.“ (Avery 2007, 5)

The standards tend to focus on knowledge to the exclusion of skills and dispositions.

“In a national survey conducted in 2006, current high-school students and recent graduates (ages 15-

25) report that their civics-related coursework focused on traditional themes, such as the US constitution, the branches of government, and great American political and military heroes ... There are differences in what young people recall about their experiences. African-American and Latino students are more likely to recall learning about social injustices in their civics classes than are white and Asian-American students, and college and college-bound students (a rough proxy for socioeconomic status) are more likely to recall studying traditional topics than are their peers.” (Avery 2007, 5)

In one response to the decline in civic engagement, most states developed content standards in civics or government in the 1990s and early 2000s to ensure that students acquired a basic understanding of how government works, of the documents on which American democracy is based and of basic democratic values. Unlike state efforts to improve instruction in the core academic disciplines, however, most states have not established statewide assessments aligned with their civics standards. A number of states recently have established legislative committees or task forces to examine their civic education practices and make recommendations to the legislature, the state education agency and their public schools.

(<http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/projects.asp?am=7>)

## 2.6 National Alliance for Civic Education (NACE)

[http://www.ecs.org/html/offsite.asp?document=http://www.cived.net/req\\_guid.html](http://www.ecs.org/html/offsite.asp?document=http://www.cived.net/req_guid.html)

NACE was launched in 2000 and now has more than 200 groups and individual members committed to advance civic knowledge and engagement. While 31 states currently test civics topics, only Missouri, Ohio and Utah have a separate test on civics topics. Today, 29 states require high-school students to take a course in government or civics. Five states (Alabama, Arizona, California, Idaho and New York) require students to take a senior year „capstone“ civics or government course. Nearly every state and the District of Columbia have also instituted standards that in some way incorporate civics content. Twenty-three states and the district of Columbia present their civics standards as explicit standards within their social studies standards, and three states (Arkansas, Colorado and Vermont) have separate civics standards. Another 18 states integrate civics topics into their social studies or other subject standards. However, there is great variation in the extent and quality of state standards. The revision of Texas’ social studies standards is generating a hot debate and strong opinions (see: [http://www.socialstudies.org/state-social\\_studies\\_standards\\_development](http://www.socialstudies.org/state-social_studies_standards_development)).



## 2.7 American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

Making Standards Matter (2001)

<http://www.aft.org/newspubs/periodicals/ae/winter2001/standards.cfm>

The AFT was an early advocate for standard(s)-based education. In 1992, in response to national concerns that students in the US were not learning enough to compete in a global economy and that there was an intolerable gap between the achievement of whites and blacks, the late Albert Shanker, then president of the AFT, urged states to take a lesson from other high-achieving countries and set clear and rigorous academic standards for all students. ACT found that while standards continue to improve in the states, most continue to have difficulty in setting clear and specific standards in social studies as compared to other core subjects such as math and science. The AFT specifically recommends: „Social studies standards need to be focused and explicit about the U.S. and world history students should learn at each of the three educational levels.“ The *Policy Research Project on Civic Education Policies and Practices* found that on average civics content in states' social studies standards overemphasize lower-order thinking of identifying and describing positions, stating that „civic statements requiring students to evaluate, take, and defend positions – the highest-order level of thinking – are the least prevalent in most state standards.“

## 2.8 National Center for Learning and Citizenship (ECS)

[http://www.ecs.org/QNA/docs/Civic\\_Competency.pdf](http://www.ecs.org/QNA/docs/Civic_Competency.pdf)

QNA (questions and answers) is an online search database that can be used to construct your own assessments of civic knowledge, skills and dispositions, and school citizenship climate. The database contains questions categorized by national civics students that have been juried by civic learning experts for their clarity and meaningfulness in relation to the competencies of civic knowledge, skills and dispositions. Item and instrument sources are listed here: [http://www.ecs.org/QNA/docs/More\\_about\\_sources.pdf](http://www.ecs.org/QNA/docs/More_about_sources.pdf)

## 2.9 Report of Maryland's Social Studies Task Force

[http://marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/FCB60C1D-6CC2-4270-BDAA-153D67247324/23710/Social\\_Studies\\_Taskforce\\_Report\\_2010.pdf](http://marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/FCB60C1D-6CC2-4270-BDAA-153D67247324/23710/Social_Studies_Taskforce_Report_2010.pdf)

In a survey carried out in 2005, half of the surveyed Maryland elementary teachers noted a reduction in social studies time, as one-quarter of middle school teachers did. Additionally, 7 in 10 elementary school principals and nearly 9 in 10 elementary school teachers said social studies is not a high-priority subject in their schools.

## 2.10 Journell, Wayne 2010.

Standardizing Citizenship: The Potential Influence of State Curriculum Standards on the Civic Development of Adolescents. In: *Political Science and Politics*, vol. 43, no. 2, 351-358

The rise of state-mandated standards in public education have allowed legislators to answer the question of what constitutes a proper civic education, a debate that has existed in the United States since the turn of the twentieth century. Through the content employed in their standards, states may indirectly influence the type of citizenship education students receive in the classroom. The study focuses on the *Virginia Standards of Learning* for two courses: civics and economics, and US and Virginia government, which are usually taught to eighth-graders and high-school seniors, respectively. A content analysis of the essential knowledge found in the standards for these courses can be categorized into seven forms of citizenship: civic republicanism, character education, deliberative, social justice, participatory, transnational, and cosmopolitan. Although the results are specific to the *Virginia Standards of Learning*, the nature of how citizenship is portrayed within the standards may transfer to other states with similar forms of standard(s)-based education within their social studies curricula. (quoted from ERIC database)

Many American critical voices on standardization seem quite familiar to continental European discussion. If we define success through statistics only, we will use an incomplete picture of student success in learning. As social studies educators, we must strive to provide policy makers with a picture of learning accomplishment that takes into account a variety of learning facets. Therefore, this is a more accurate way to measure success. Sue Blanchette, president elect of the NCSS, says: "Social studies is the foundation of the core curriculum, it is not the stepchild."

## 3. Curriculum

NCSS annual congress as a premier social studies professional development community is a rich source for presenting and reflecting curricula by teachers from all around the states. There is a strong attempt to bridge the gulf between college teacher educators and classroom teachers. Evaluating curricula takes place on a high professional level. This chapter can highlight a very few selection only. Access to more material see chapter 6 and 7.

### 3.1 Civic Mirror (CV)

<http://civicmirror.com/>

The Civic Mirror (CV) is a microsimulation that turns classrooms into countries, students into citizens, and teachers into 21st century educators. This material has to be charged. But you can sign up for a free trial. There is an instructive video on the start page and another one on Youtube.



### 3.2 Virtual congress

The Center on Congress at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

[www.tpscongress.org](http://www.tpscongress.org)

This is a free teaching tool. One of the units deals with „Critical Thinking: Analyzing Congressional Floor Debates“. Students can examine the main components of an effective, thoughtful argument in Congress, analyze examples of Congressional debates, and learn how to present a case on a particular issue. Or they can delve into consensus building in the legislative process by examining historical examples and experience the process first-hand by taking on the role of Members of Congress within a virtual Congress environment. In another unit, students can explore the roles citizens have played in key 19th and 20th century social movements by getting involved, working through the policy process, and helping to bring about important change. Contains a lot of videos and interactive material. Corresponding lesson plans that have been designed for students in grades 8 through 12.

### 3.3 Understanding fiscal responsibility. Teaching the National Debt.

Teachers College, Columbia University/New York

<http://www.tc.columbia.edu/news/article.htm?id=7347>

At the beginning of 2010, the federal government had borrowed nearly \$8 trillion, including a \$1.42 trillion added in the last fiscal year. The total debt including debt the government owes itself exceeded \$12 trillion. During the recent fiscal crisis many of the student's parents have lost their jobs and their houses. Most young Americans do not have an adequate understanding of the ever-increasing national debt, budget deficit, or of the budget process itself. Questions in the curriculum material, granted with \$2.45 million from the Peter G. Peterson Foundation, are: Can the federal budget survive the "graying" of America and the rising cost of health care? Does political philosophy influence how we view the federal budget process? Does foreign debt create a dangerous imbalance of power between creditor and debtor nations? How would ending the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts affect the United States economy? The curriculum includes a inter-cultural sensitive unit "Views of borrowing and lending in world religions". The curricula will incorporate books, primary sources, simulations, films, videotaped lessons and other digital media. It will be appropriate for students ranging from grade seven through college, and for teaching in five subject areas: Civics/Government, Economics, U.S. History, World History/Global Studies, and Mathematics. The curriculum will be field-tested in a nationally representative sample of 25 schools in three cities (Austin, TX, Pittsburgh, PA, and New York City). It will then be revised for full national distribution free of charge to

more than 100,000 schools in 2011. "In light of recent research showing that children possess the ability to understand specific economics topics such as banking, possessions/ownership, prices/profits and savings by the time they reach the age of eight, we expect that adolescents with a more informed perspective about the national debt, federal budget, and budget deficit from our Curriculum will be able to make more knowledgeable and responsible decisions about their own finances and demand better decisions from their elected leaders." (Anand R. Marri, Assistant Professor of Social Studies and Education at TC <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/faculty/index.htm?facid=arm2104>)

### 3.4 Current issues approach

Close Up Foundation

[www.closeup.org](http://www.closeup.org)

Published annually, this student text and accompanying teachers' guide identifies 10 domestic and ten international issues and provides an overview of each. Current Issues 2010-11, the 34th annual print edition, is a great way to stimulate classroom discussions with students about the key policy issues the U.S. faces today.

The Choices Program

<http://www.choices.edu/>

The Current issues series includes seventeen contemporary issues titles – seven focused on specific regions and ten focused on global issues.

The Public Issues Series

<http://www.soc-sci-ed-consortium.org/publications.html>

The famous "Public Issues Series" was originally conceived by the Harvard Social Studies project in the 1960s and 1970s. The purpose of the series was to help students analyze and discuss persisting human dilemmas related to public issues. In the late 1980s, the SSEC published the series. Two booklets in the series, with accompanying teacher guides, are online on the Social Science Education Consortium SSEC homepage. There is a possibility that these materials may be revised and re-released.

## 4. Research

Subject matter didactics, which is firmly rooted in many countries in continental Europe like France, Germany, Russia, is not a university discipline in its own right in the English-speaking countries. The questions and topics are dealt with under different disciplinary labels such as curriculum&instruction or teaching methods. However, NCSS opening keynote speech by Sam Wineburg (Director Stanford University History Education Group) focused on a core question of subject matter didactics – the processing and status of knowledge in teachers' and students' epistemolo-



gies and in classroom practice (textbooks, sources). Wineburg exemplified his findings within the domain of historical thinking. How do historians know what they know? An actual case was reported in the Washington Post on Wednesday, October 20, 2010 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/19/AR2010101907974.html>). A history textbook for fourth graders in Virginia elementary school with the title *Our Virginia: Past and Present* claimed that thousands of African-Americans fought as Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. The author, Joy Masoff, who is not a trained historian but has written several books, said she found the information about black Confederate soldiers primarily through Internet research! Scholars are nearly unanimous in calling these accounts of black Confederate soldiers a misrepresentation of history. Wineburg shifted the conversation from what is being taught to how it is being taught. "In its deepest forms, historical thinking is neither a natural process nor something that springs automatically from psychological development. Its achievement goes against the grain of how we ordinarily think, one of the reasons why it is much easier to learn names, dates and stories than it is to change the fundamental mental structures we use to grasp the meaning of the past ... Mature historical knowing teaches us to go beyond our own image, to go beyond our brief life, and to go beyond the fleeting moment in human history into which we've been born. History educates ('leads outward' in Latin) in the deepest sense. Of the subjects in the secular curriculum it does the best in teaching those virtues once reserved for theology – the virtue of humility, in the face of our limits to know; and the virtue of awe, in the face of the expanse of human history." (Wineburg 2001 cover) This critical thinking approach in the tradition of liberal education is still important to U.S. "positive" and text based teaching and learning culture!

#### **4.1 College and University Faculty Association (CUFA)**

<http://www.ncsscufa.org/>

Research is located within the College and University Faculty Association (CUFA) of NCSS. CUFA consists of higher education faculty members, graduate students, and others interested in working with social educators such as social scientists, historians, and philosophers. As well as being an advocacy organization for social studies education, CUFA members provide a forum for communication among professional educators, and examine social studies from a theoretical and research perspective. Grants for research and classroom applications are distributed through the fund for the Advancement of Social Studies Education (FASSE, <http://www.socialstudies.org/fasse>). A National Study on the state of social studies teachers is under way.

Research findings are published in the various journals (compare chapter 5). *Theory and Research in Social Education*. Volume 39, Number 1, Winter 2011 contains among others the following studies:

The Complex and Unequal Impact of High Stakes Accountability On Untested Social Studies (Judith L. Pace, University of San Francisco)

The author presents complex findings from a qualitative study in five California classrooms spanning grades four through seven. Different from previous accounts of social studies under high stakes accountability, teachers in these middle and higher performing, middle class settings were generally satisfied with their social studies teaching. Yet observations revealed that in combination with other factors, accountability did influence social studies gatekeeping, or teachers' curricular-instructional decision making, in both direct and indirect ways. Its impact varied according to school performance status and student demographics, combined with other factors. A few teachers embraced the goals of raising test scores and developing skills in literacy, but in the lowest performing school with the most students of color, academic literacy skills training interfered with exploration of history.

A Social Studies Teacher's Sense Making of Controversial Issues Discussions of Race in a Predominantly White, Rural High School Classroom (Elizabeth A. Washington/Emma K. Humphries – University of Florida)

In this qualitative study, we first explore the "sense making" of co-author Emma, a former high school teacher, with regard to discussion of issues around race that became controversial in her social studies classroom. Her student population comprised predominantly white, rural, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, many of whom expressed racist views – on both "open" and "closed" issues – either privately with her or in classroom discussions. In our findings, we discuss Emma's views on teaching controversial issues, disclosure of personal viewpoints on controversial issues, the definition of "controversial issues", the importance of building strong relationships with students before approaching controversial issues, and how to plan for controversial issues discussion. Our findings have potential implications for social studies educators in teacher education programs who seek to prepare their preservice teachers for potential controversial issues surrounding race that may come up in their future classrooms.

#### **4.2 The Social Studies Inquiry Research Collaborative (SSIRC)**

Authentic Intellectual Challenge in Social Studies Classroom

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/societies/ssirc/>

The Social Studies Inquiry Research Collaborative (SSIRC) is a group of college and university researchers in diverse settings across the United States who



have joined together to study the effects of challenging, authentic social studies instruction on student learning and performance. The website invites colleagues to join in on-going research. The project is inspired by the authentic pedagogy of Fred Newmann et.al. (1996, 2001). Authentic instruction is a model for high-quality instruction and lists five major components of the teaching process which are: Higher-order thinking, Depth of knowledge, Connectedness to the world beyond the classroom, Substantive conversation and Social support for student achievement. (<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/leadshp/le4auth.htm>).

The research is organized in a way that individual researchers or small teams from all over the U.S. can join in collecting quantitative data and qualitative observation for structured analysis. This organization of research could be highly recommended to European researchers! Qualitative examples of classroom observation are reported. For example, the minimal quartile is characterized as follows: "... when lessons included writing or the analysis of political cartoons, photographs, or other examples of historical evidence, the emphasis was often on gathering and reporting information, not going into deeper forms of interpretation or knowledge production. Several teachers did engage students in projects, such as group newspapers on the civil war, videos, or plans for an American Revolution theme park. Although likely engaging, the activities were not structured to involve students in depth or substantive conversation and were again largely focused on gathering and reporting information and not producing new interpretations or knowledge – or in the case of the theme park project, a fun exercise without real ties to making clear connections and illustrating knowledge attainment. There was little to no 'connectedness' to the real world in these lessons ... Most of the examples of connectedness were informal references to a recent event to help students connect to a past one, such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq or current foreign policy issues with Cuba or Russia tied back to previous times." (from the preliminary report: [http://auburn.edu/ssirc/SSIRC\\_CUFA10.pdf](http://auburn.edu/ssirc/SSIRC_CUFA10.pdf), page 16) Here the factual "positivism" can be found which Sam Winburg criticized in his opening speech.

Critical analysis of progressive teaching and learning methods are rare. Here one example:

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Lorrei DiCamillo 2010: „Fun“ Pedagogy Curtails Intellectual Rigor in a U.S. History Class. *The Journal of Social Studies Research* Volume 34, 2

This case study examines a U.S. History class where a veteran teacher uses challenging primary source documents and a debate to encourage his students to think critically about history. The teacher is knowledgeable about the subject matter and articulates a clear purpose for teaching. Surprisingly, the author

finds that the teacher's methods, which include the use of competitions and games, contradict some of his espoused teaching goals and some students' engagement in the class. The ambitious four-week competitive debate the teacher enacts creates an adversarial classroom climate where students focus on competing with each other. Additionally, the teacher's jokes and sense of humor encourage students' attention during lessons, but limit students' abilities to discuss issues intelligently. The findings add to the research base about teachers who use entertainment and gamesmanship, and illustrate how a teacher's beliefs and pedagogy undermined the quality of lessons and the students' experiences in the class.

URL: <http://www.thejsr.com/>

### 4.3 Education Commission of the States (ECS)

Education Policy Issue Site: Citizenship Education, selected research & readings

<http://www.ecs.org/html/IssueSection.asp?issueid=19&s=Selected+Research+%26+Readings>

Here a few results from readings and research from this site:

#### *A Five-Year Evaluation of a Comprehensive High School Civic Engagement Initiative*

In September 2003, Hudson High School in Massachusetts launched two new civic development efforts – clustering and school-wide governance – providing an opportunity to study the influence of school-wide democratic deliberation on students' civic knowledge and participation. Clusters of 100-150 students met for one hour a week to discuss governance and other school-related issues. Successive classes of twelfth graders have shown improvements on measures of community service and political knowledge and the improvements have been widespread in the student body.

(The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, March 2010).

#### *Democracy for Some: The Civic Opportunity Gap in High School*

In a study of high school civic opportunities, the authors found that a student's race and academic track, and a school's average socioeconomic status (SES) determines the availability of the school-based civic learning opportunities that promote voting and broader forms of civic engagement. High school students attending higher SES schools, those who are college-bound, and white students get more of these opportunities than low-income students, those not heading to college and students of color.

(Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement)





### *Paths to 21st Century Competencies Through Civic Education Classrooms: An Analysis of Survey Result From Ninth-Graders*

Interest is high on the part of business leaders, as well as the general public, in the competencies that young people will need to thrive in an economy that is rapidly changing, global in scope and technology driven. Educators are urged to ensure that young people acquire 21st century skills and competencies by the time they leave school. Students who experience interactive discussion-based civic education score the highest on 21st century competencies, including working with others and knowledge of economic and political processes.

(Judith Torney-Purta and Britt Wilkenfeld, American Bar Association Division for Public Education, October 2009).

### *High Schools, Civics and Citizenship: What Social Studies Teachers Think and Do*

This study revolves around the essential question: What are teachers trying to teach our youth about citizenship and what it means to be an American? The findings are based on a national, random sample survey of 866 public high school social studies teachers, an over-sample survey of 245 Catholic and private high school social studies teachers, and three focus groups. Social studies teachers are in the trenches and can report not only on their own attitudes, priorities and behaviors but also on what is actually happening in high schools and school district.

(American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, September 2010).

## **5. Journals**

NCSS itself provides a series of journals for practitioners and professionals.

### **5.1 Social Education (SE)**

<http://www.socialstudies.org/socialeducation>

The NCSS flagship journal, Social Education contains a balance of theoretical content and practical ideas for classroom use. Their award-winning resources include techniques for using teaching materials in the classroom, information on the latest instructional technology, reviews of educational media, research on significant topics related to social studies, and lesson plans that can be applied to various disciplines. The "Research and Practice" section, established in 2001 and currently edited by Walter Parker, features educational research that is directly relevant to the work of classroom teachers.

### **5.2 Social Studies and the Young Learner (SSYL)**

<http://www.socialstudies.org/ssyl>

For K-6 teachers, NCSS offers Social Studies and the Young Learner, a journal which meets teachers' needs for new information and creative teaching activities. The teaching techniques presented are designed to stimulate the reading, writing, and critical thinking skills vital to classroom success.

### **5.3 Theory and Research in Social Education (TRSE)**

[http://www.ncsscufa.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=54:about-trse&catid=41:trse&Itemid=57](http://www.ncsscufa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=54:about-trse&catid=41:trse&Itemid=57)

Theory and Research in Social Education is designed to stimulate and communicate systematic research and thinking in social education. Its purpose is to foster the creation and exchange of ideas and research findings that will expand knowledge and understanding of the purposes, conditions, and effects of schooling and education about society and social relations

### **5.4 Journal of International Social Studies**

<http://iajiss.org/>

The International Assembly of the National Council of the Social Studies announces the inaugural issue of a new open access, peer reviewed electronic journal. The purpose of the journal is to serve as a forum for social studies scholars from around the world to present and discuss common concerns in global, international and transnational issues in social studies education. The first issue in September of 2010 for example contains Singapore teachers' perspectives of diversity "Between self and state" (Li-Ching Ho, Theresa Alviar-Martin).

The CUFA website ([http://cufancss.org/index.php?option=com\\_weblinks&view=category&id=55&Itemid=69](http://cufancss.org/index.php?option=com_weblinks&view=category&id=55&Itemid=69)) lists further social studies journals. Here a selection with focus on citizenship education/civics and economic education. There are separate journals on history and geography teaching, for example "The History Teacher" (published by the Society for History Education) and "The Journal of Geography" (published by National Council for Geographic Education).

In addition, "Harvard Educational Review" or "Teachers College Record" are journals which should be accessible at each European educational library.

### **5.5 Social Studies Research and Practice (SSRP)**

<http://www.socstrp.org>

The Social Studies Research and Practice journal is an open access, peer-reviewed, electronic journal that focuses on providing a venue for P-16 social studies research and practice manuscripts, lesson plans, reviews, and issues related to higher-level learning outcomes. Current issue (2010, 3) contains a qualitative study on "Review, reflect, and react: A culturally



responsive model for pre-service secondary social studies teachers" by Paul G. Pritchett, Tehia V. Starker and Amy J. Good (<http://www.socstrp.org/issues/PDF/5.3.2.pdf>). Or read on "Hmong Adolescent Conceptions of Citizenship" (Annette M. M. Simmons, 2010, 2). There will be a special issue on economic education in 2012 (call for papers).

### **5.6 Learning for Democracy (LFD). An international journal of thought and practice.**

<http://www.siu.edu/lfd/>

The journal recently (2008) completed his transition from the United Kingdom location to Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, School of Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction (Prof. Caroline R. Pryor). The journal is premised on the idea that learning—informal and formal, at home, in school and in the workplace is central to any solution. The journal includes two sections. Section One is devoted to articles reporting theoretical, historical and philosophical perspectives on learning for democracy. Section Two, Theory into Practice, is devoted to articles reporting empirical research, as well as articles, discussions, reports or notes about ways democratic thought might be applied in a variety of settings, such as schools or cities. Motto: "I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer to the truth." (Karl Popper: *The Open Society and Its Enemies*)

### **5.7 Democracy and Education (D&E)**

[http://www.lclark.edu/graduate/publications/democracy\\_and\\_education/about/](http://www.lclark.edu/graduate/publications/democracy_and_education/about/)

Seeks to present examples of the successes and struggles of educators working to merge democratic teachings and principles with real-world practices; a forum for sharing ideas, highlighting research, and discussing the bond of democratic educators to their students, communities, each other and the world.

### **5.8 Canadian Social Studies (CSS)**

<http://www2.education.ualberta.ca/css/>

Canada's national (formerly: *The History and Social Studies Teacher*) Indexed, refereed social studies journal. Published quarterly on-line at the University of Alberta/Canada. It is a journal of comment and criticism on social education and publishes articles on curricular issues relating to history, geography, social sciences, and social studies. Current issue contains Aviv Cohen: A theoretical model of four conceptions of civic education (2010, 2, 17-28).

### **5.9 International Journal of Social Education (IJSE)**

<http://ijse.iweb.bsu.edu/>

The IJSE is the journal of the Indiana Council for the Social Studies. The journal first appeared in 1945, when Robert La Follette produced what was originally known as the *Indiana Social Studies Quarterly*, serving as the official journal of the Indiana Council for the Social Studies. Last issue (2008, 2) contains an interesting study: "Susie Burroughs, Peggy F. Hopper, Key Brocato, and Angela Sanders: „Teaching for and About Citizenship in a Democratic Society: Comparative Views of Selected Civic Educators in the United States, Europe, and Latin America"

### **5.10 The Journal of Social Studies Research (JSSR)**

<http://www.thejssr.com/>

JSSR is the official peer-reviewed publication of The International Society for the Social Studies (ISSS). The International Society for the Social Studies (ISSS) is a non-profit, professional society devoted to the social studies, based on University of Central Florida, College of Education.

### **5.11 IJED Inter-American Journal of Education for Democracy**

<http://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/ried/issue/archive>

The Inter-American Journal of Education for Democracy is a refereed academic publication that aims to foster intellectual discussion and exchange about efforts to promote education for democratic citizenship across the Americas. The IJED is a plural forum that diffuses knowledge on a wide array of topics, disciplines, theoretical perspectives, and methodologies in the field of citizenship education for democracy.

<http://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/ried/article/view/615>

### **Economic Education**

#### **5.12 Journal of Economic Education (JEE)**

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/00220485.asp>

Department of Economics, Indiana University This site offers abstracts and tables of contents for JEE articles from 1984 to the present. The articles cover innovations in and evaluation of teaching techniques, materials and programmes in economics, and is aimed at instructors of introductory to graduate-level economics. Archives until 2008 can be seen here: <http://www.indiana.edu/~econed/anrpts.htm>

#### **5.13 The teaching economist**

<http://www.cengage.com/economics/meachern/teachingeconomist/about.html>

This is a complete on-line archive of the semi-annual electronic newsletter edited by William McEachern of the University of Connecticut. Through news items and reviews of web sites, new books and research, he



examines economics teaching from a surprising number of angles.

#### **5.14 ERN educator: courses, cases and teaching**

[http://www.ssrn.com/update/ern/ern\\_ern-educator.html](http://www.ssrn.com/update/ern/ern_ern-educator.html)

This is an online journal for works in progress, containing working papers which include papers awaiting review for the Journal of Economic Education. The mission of this journal includes the publication of descriptions of innovative courses and course materials. This is part of the US-based Economics Research Network.

#### **5.15 Journal for Economic Educators (JEE)**

<http://frank.mtsu.edu/~jee/>

Published by the Tennessee Economics Association, this peer-reviewed journal covers economics education at all levels. Published roughly twice a year, it is available on open access with issues going back to the first in 1999.

### **6. Links**

Selection. Extended list see <http://www.ecs.org/ecs-main.asp?page=/html/projects.asp?am=7>

#### **6.1 CIRCLE**

The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement  
[www.civicyouth.org](http://www.civicyouth.org)

Excellent information on current research on topics like civic knowledge, community participation, concepts of citizenship, group membership and social networks, higher education, K-12 civic education, news & entertainment media, non-college, youth race, gender, and immigrant status, service learning, youth attitudes and beliefs, youth demographics, youth voting/political participation. By providing a stream of reliable data and analysis CIRCLE has begun to change public discourse and press. Research has been cited in most national newspapers, including The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Los Angeles Times, and on CNN, NPR, PBS, MTV, and Fox News. Useful newsletter.

[http://www.civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/V8.i1\\_final.pdf](http://www.civicyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/V8.i1_final.pdf)  
containing a study on (p. 6)

#### **6.2 Carnegie Foundation**

National campaign for the civics mission of the school  
<http://www.civicmissionofschools.org/>

The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools is a coalition of 40 organizations committed to improving the quality and quantity of civic learning in American schools. The Campaign's goal is to increase and improve civic learning in grades K-12 by working for

policies that implement the recommendations of the Civic Mission of Schools report.

#### **6.3 Center for Citizenship Education (CCE)**

<http://new.civiced.org/>

The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, non-partisan educational corporation dedicated to fostering the development of informed, responsible participation in civic life by citizens committed to values and principles fundamental to American constitutional democracy. The Center specializes in civic/citizenship education, law-related education, and international educational exchange programs for developing democracies. Programs focus on the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights; American political traditions and institutions at the federal, state, and local levels; constitutionalism; civic participation; and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. The principal goals of the Center's programs are to help students develop (1) an increased understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy and the fundamental principles and values upon which they are founded, (2) the skills necessary to participate as effective and responsible citizens, and (3) the willingness to use democratic procedures for making decisions and managing conflict.

#### **6.4 Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI)**

[www.youthleadership.net](http://www.youthleadership.net)

The motto is: "Politics is a good thing!" The Youth Leadership Initiative at the University of Virginia Center for Politics is dedicated to increasing civic engagement by providing teachers with the best civics education materials and programs. Research shows that quality civics education programs are essential to creating lifelong citizenship and YLI programs empower students to take responsibility for our democracy. In 1998 UVA professor and Center for Politics Director Larry J. Sabato founded the Youth Leadership Initiative to combat the apathy and cynicism that he saw in his politics students. Professor Sabato believed that by creating quality civics education programs students would be energized to accept the responsibilities of citizenship and become lifelong participants in American democracy. Activities such as the yearly Mock Election, E-Congress, Democracy Corps, and YLI lesson plans do more than just teach about civics and government. Each program is infused with simulations and hands-on projects that connect students with the political process. Free lesson plans (<http://www.youthleadership.net/learning-programs/lesson-plans/>) include a "political ideology survey", "debate watching guide", "What is government and do we need it?".

#### **6.5 Deliberating in a democracy (DID)**

[www.deliberating.org](http://www.deliberating.org)



An International initiative designed to improve student understanding of democratic principles and civic deliberation skills. For a democracy to thrive, citizens must be able and willing to express and exchange ideas among themselves and with their representative government. Free speech ensures that conflicting views can be heard and understood. The Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago (CRFC), The Constitutional Rights Foundation in Los Angeles (CRF) and StreetLaw, Inc. are conducting a major six year teacher-based initiative, *Deliberating in a Democracy (DID)*, designed to improve teaching and learning of democratic principles and the skills of civic deliberation. Eastern Europe lessons are translated into various languages like Russian, Romanian, Serbian, Ukrainian, Spanish (-> Haiti).

### **6.6 Powerful and authentic social studies (PASS)**

<http://www.socialstudies.org/pass>

Partnering with National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) in the professional development of staff. Materials and Resources in PASS sets consist of videos, manuals, handouts, and transparencies. The resources include sample curriculum units, assessments, and videotaped instruction. In the interactive sessions of PASS workshops and seminars, participants compare their evaluations of these resources with the evaluations by the writers of the manuals. What role do the videos play in the sets? The videos provide examples of classroom instruction on a variety of social studies subjects. Different subjects are dealt with at each of the three levels (elementary, middle, and high school). videotaped excerpts of classroom instruction in the PASS sets include topics like Freedom of the Press in School, The Demand Curve, Where Do You Live? (A kindergarten classroom is organized into streets), Slavery and the Declaration of Independence, Sloppy Sally (A community persuades a messy neighbor to reform) – elementary school; Middle School: Reconstruction and African American Migration, Immigration, Driver's License: At What Age, Life in Africa; Population in China; High School: The Atomic Bombing of Japan, Political Cartoons of the Progressive Era, electing Federal Judges, School Dress Code, Fair Labor Standards. The teaching on the videos had to meet a sufficient level of quality to be featured in the PASS sets, but it is not presented simply as a model for direct imitation. Outside the NCSS professional development workshops and seminars, the price for each set is \$279.00.

### **6.7 Social Science Education Consortium (SSEC)**

[www.soc-sci-ed-consortium.org](http://www.soc-sci-ed-consortium.org)

The Social Science Education Consortium, founded in 1963, is a not-for-profit educational corporation dedicated to strengthening the social science content

in social studies education. The members of SSEC include leading social scientists and social science/social studies educators throughout the United States and Canada. In 2003, SSEC signed a cooperative agreement, affiliating with the National Council for the Social Studies. NCSS manages the membership of the SSEC, handles the organization's finances, sells SSEC publications, and collaborates with SSEC on projects.

### **6.8 American Political Science Association (APSA)**

Teaching Political Science

[http://www.apsanet.org/content\\_3799.cfm?navID=6](http://www.apsanet.org/content_3799.cfm?navID=6)

Education for civic engagement and responsive governance were founding objectives of the political science profession at the beginning of the 20th century and remain essential for the 21st century. Supporting and sustaining quality civic education has been an important theme throughout the history of the American Political Science Association. The APSA Teaching and Learning Conference in February 2011 is a unique meeting in which APSA strives to promote greater understanding of cutting-edge approaches, techniques, and methodologies for the political science classroom. The conference provides a forum for scholars to share effective and innovative teaching and learning models and to discuss broad themes and values of political science education—especially the scholarship of teaching and learning.

### **6.9 National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC)**

Education Commission of the States (ECS)

[http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=Qna/splash\\_new.asp](http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=Qna/splash_new.asp)

Projects supported by grants from foundations, corporations and the federal government constitute a major portion of ECS' work. The National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC) assists education leaders to promote, support and reward citizenship education and service-learning as essential components of America's education system. NCLC identifies and analyzes policies and practices that support effective service-learning and citizenship education; disseminates analyses of best practices and policy trends; and convenes national, state and local meetings and networks to share information about service-learning and citizenship education. NCLC also works closely with other national, state and local advocacy groups to contribute to a collective public voice in support of the civic mission of schools. NCLC complements the ECS mission with a unique level of expertise and collaboration within the fields of citizenship education and service-learning. NCLC provides information about service-learning and citizenship education. Most of our publications can be downloaded at no cost. Resources include case studies highlighting



successful K-12 programs linking service with learning; research findings about the impact of service-learning on students, schools and communities and the related importance of developing and nurturing citizenship competencies throughout the K-12 experience.

- The issue of The Progress of Education Reform: Citizenship education (<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/87/95/8795.pdf>) examines research on what constitutes citizenship education, how citizenship education contributes to the acquisition of 21st century skills and civic learning opportunity and achievement gaps. (Jennifer Piscatelli, Education Commission of the States, October 2010)

- The Progress of Education Reform – Service Learning (<http://www.ecs.org/docs/PER2009-Dec8x11.pdf>): The term service-learning is used frequently these days, but confusion remains as to what it is and why it matters. More importantly, are there any measurable benefits? This issue of The Progress of Education Reform looks at four research studies that explore the impact of service-learning on student achievement and civic engagement. (JoAnn Henderson, December 2009)

## Law-related education

### 6.10 American Bar Association (ABA)

<http://www.abanet.org/publiced/youth/home.html>

The American Bar Association develops, promotes, and supports law-related education (LRE) programs that prepare elementary, middle, and secondary students for effective and responsible citizenship, committed to liberty, justice, equal protection, and the rule of law. „[T]he term ‚law-related education‘ means education to equip non-lawyers with knowledge and skills pertaining to the law, the legal process, and the legal system, and the fundamental principles and values on which these are based,“ according to the Law-Related Education Act of 1978. For those new to LRE, the ABA’s Essentials of Law-Related Education and the videotape „A More Perfect Union“ with its Presenter’s Guide provides an excellent overview. A sampler of one-shot LRE lessons for all grade levels can be found in Sure-Fire Presentations. For those beginning an LRE program, a more thorough understanding of LRE is provided by the LRE Toolkit: The LRE Resource Center in a Box.

### 6.11 Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago (CRFC)

<http://www.crfc.org/>

Compare Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF)

<http://www.crf-usa.org/>

The Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago (CRFC) works with elementary and secondary schools to develop critical thinking skills, civic participation, and commitment to the rule of law among young people. Nonprofit and nonpartisan, CRFC is a national

leader in the design and implementation of quality law-related education (LRE) programs for local, national, and international projects. CRFC was founded in 1974. The website provides lessons for all grades and on current topics. Specialized on law-related education: Law-related education (LRE) about the founding documents of the United States, including the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence. A basic premise of the movement was the need for students to study not only the documents themselves, but the legal cases and controversies that have given them meaning and relevance.

### 6.12 Streetlaw

[www.streetlaw.org](http://www.streetlaw.org)

Nearly four decades Street Law, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing practical, participatory education about law, democracy, and human rights. Through its philosophy and programs, people are empowered to transform democratic ideals into citizen action. Street Law began in 1972, when a small group of Georgetown University Law Center students developed an experimental curriculum designed to teach District of Columbia high school students about practical aspects of the law and the legal system. Because of its practical nature, this course was called Street Law, a name so popular with young people that it has continued as the name of the organization.

The Street Law curriculum evolved from a loose-leaf binder of lessons to a unique textbook, Street Law: A Course in Practical Law. The text, now in its eighth edition and published by Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, is the nation’s leading high school law text. Its publication played an important role in adding law to the curricula of school systems around the country. “The Response” is a recent curriculum on “Guantanamo”.

## Economic Education

### 6.13 Council of Economic Education

<http://www.councilforeconed.org/>

There is an informative video on the starting page. The Council for Economic Education offers many programs promoting economic literacy in the United States and across the globe. All of the Council for Economic Education’s programs fall into three core areas, EconomicsAmerica, EconomicsInternational, and EconomicsExchange.

### 6.14 Federal Reserve

[www.federalreserveeducation.org](http://www.federalreserveeducation.org)

The Federal Reserve System (also known as the Federal Reserve, and informally as The Fed) is the central banking system of the United States. The FED education section provides free lesson plans, some of them in Spanish. Furthermore games (e.g. FedVille) and simulations as well as videos.



## 7. Textbooks

The complete editions consist of complex media packages with teachers guide, audio material etc. The teacher's textbook includes the students textbook and adds commentaries, links and so on. Each of these textbooks are widely spread in the U.S. The textbook market is dominated by three states, Texas, Florida and California.

### 7.1 Civics. Government and Economics in Action

Davis, James E.; Fernlund, Phyllis Maxey; Woll, Peter. Civics. Government and Economics in Action. Needham, Mass.: Pearson. Edition 2009. (<http://www.pearsonschool.com/index.cfm?locator=PSZu4y&PMDbSiteId=2781&PMDbSolutionId=6724&PMDbSubSolutionId=&PMDbCategoryId=815&PMDbSubCategoryId=&PMDbSubjectAreaId=&PMDbProgramId=55284>).

### 7.2 Civics Today. Citizenship, Economics & You

Remy, Richard C. et al. Civics Today. Citizenship, Economics & You. New York: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill Education. Edition 2008. (<http://glencoe.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0078746310/>).

### 7.3 Civics in Practice. Principles of Government and Economics

Holt McDougal. Civics in Practice. Principles of Government and Economics. Edition 2011. (<http://holtmcdougal.hmhco.com/hm/detail.htm?ID=1007500000078692>).

### 7.4 Some recent textbook research

Champliss, Marilyn; Richardson, Wendy; Torney-Purta, Judith; Wilkenfeld, Britt. 2007. Improving Textbooks as a Way to Foster Civic Understanding and Engagement. CIRCLE working paper 54, April 2007. (<http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/WorkingPapers/WP54Chambliss.pdf>).

"In this paper we describe a recent study in which tenth graders who had parent permission were randomly assigned to read one of three types of passages about direct and representative democracy. After reading, all students responded to the same tasks to measure their understanding and their motivation to engage in civic-related activities. Students came from regular classes in two middle class high schools, one from a West Coast state and the other from a state in the Mid- Atlantic region. We chose to collect data on two sides of the country, believing that often, research conducted in one location has been generalized too widely."

Myers, John P.; Stocks, Jessica L. 2010. Fostering the Common Good: The Portrayal of the Social Economy in Secondary Business and Economics Textbooks. In: The Journal of Social Studies Research 2010, 2.

„In this research study, we undertook a content analysis of thirteen economics and business textbooks were examined for their coverage of the social economy, which encompasses a range of nonprofit and social enterprise organizations that put "people before profits." The goal was to understand the ways that these textbooks represent official knowledge of the economy that is passed on to secondary students and how that knowledge is valued and organized in society. The findings show that the social economy is weakly represented in our sample although three did contain some content about the topic. There were two key dimensions to this finding. First, there was little recognition of the social economy as an economic sector. Second, there was fairly consistent coverage of social economy organizations in the textbooks although it lacked depth and little attention was paid to their social purpose. Comparing business and economic textbooks, our analysis showed that the business textbooks had broader overall coverage of the social economy and, significantly, more recognition of it as an economic sector." (<http://www.thejssr.com/>)

## 8. References

### 8.1 Bibliographical instruments

ERIC – the world largest educational library, especially journals.

<http://www.eric.ed.gov/>

ERIC provides unlimited access to more than 1.3 million bibliographic records of journal articles and other education-related materials, with hundreds of new records added multiple times per week. If available, links to full text are included. There is although a helpful list of journals in the field of education.

“Deep Blue” at the University of Michigan

<http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/>

Most research in the U.S on the level of doctoral dissertations remains unpublished. But there is the “deep blue” at the University of Michigan. Deep Blue provides access to the work that makes the University of Michigan a leader in research, teaching, and creativity. See for example: Shreiner, Tamara L. 2009. Framing a model of democratic thinking to inform teaching and learning in civic education. University of Michigan . ([http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/2027.42/62338/1/tlknowlt\\_1.pdf](http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/2027.42/62338/1/tlknowlt_1.pdf)).

National Center for Learning and Citizenship

[http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=Qna/splash\\_new.asp](http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=Qna/splash_new.asp)

In August 2004, the ECS National Center for Learning and Citizenship started collecting, judging and coding existing assessment instruments. The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools and the Center for Civic Education have contributed resources to support the creation of this draft database. The database contains questions categorized by national civics standards that have been juried by civic learning experts for their clarity and meaningfulness in relation to the competencies of civic knowledge, skills and dispositions. Some items were simplified (often to make them useable at lower grade levels). This database is intended to help research and design officers, administrative supervisors, school district officials, evaluators or researchers (including graduate students) and state and district leaders assess how their schools or districts are performing in terms of civic knowledge and skills, the dispositions that students are developing, and the students’ views of their schools and classrooms. Teachers also could use these instruments to assess individual classrooms on civic knowledge, skills or dispositions. The database was designed for use in the United States, but some items may be appropriate for international use as well.

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5 From the text: "Stop that teenager before he votes!" (Rosenberg). This rather unusual plea caught my attention several years ago, since I'm more accustomed to hearing appeals for programs designed to increase voting by young adults. This contrarian perspective argues that Americans should re-examine the use of voting patterns as the ultimate criteria of civic participation. Despite the popular perception of voting as the pinnacle of civic behavior, the author suggests that voting without careful analysis of issues and candidates contributes little, if anything, to democracy. The transparent futility of uninformed voting may, in fact, enhance a sense of alienation and estrangement from the political process. Voting is a minimalist expression of citizenship, and voter education should promote behaviors beyond merely punching a card and dropping it in a ballot box."





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