



# Ohio Academy of History

## Newsletter

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OHIO ACADEMY OF HISTORY NEWSLETTER

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### EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM ISSUE

This Winter issue of the *Newsletter* is, as was its predecessor, devoted to a particular topic. The Ohio Academy of History has been concerned over the years not only with encouraging scholarship but also with promoting history and the teaching of it. These concerns are most clearly manifested in the Academy's annual teaching award and standing Committee on Standards. The first two articles in this issue reflect these interests.

A year ago the Ohio Valley World History Association became affiliated with the Ohio Academy. This interest in the subject and teaching of world history is the essence of the third article, written by George Beelen, who is Chair of the History Department at Youngstown State University.

Finally, there appears the first response to the latest Academy initiative—that of teaching-networking. Ronald Lora of the University of Toledo gives some insights on how he handled the immediate concerns of his students over the Gulf War.

### VIEWS ON TEACHING

In the belief that it is healthy for us to consider, from time to time, what we think we are doing and how we do it, all of the Academy's Teaching Award winners were asked the following ten questions:

1. What is your basic philosophy of teaching?
2. What are the marks of a good teacher? e.g. traits, characteristics, etc.
3. Do you feel that it is necessary to strike a balance between entertaining students and providing them with substance? If so, what is the balance?
4. Is there a difference between education and training?
5. What are the main goals you hope to

accomplish as the end result of teaching any history course?

6. Do you adapt your teaching style to different size classes? If so, how?
7. How would you weigh the relative importance of attitude of the teacher vs. that person's knowledge of the subject matter?
8. Do you think that your examinations add to or detract from your teaching?
9. Is there a proper teaching style? If not, why not?
10. Please add any other comments or ideas that you feel pertinent to the issue of good teaching.

The natural starting point seemed to be, what is one's basic teaching philosophy? Teaching is an act of faith in which one must believe that s/he is making a positive difference in students' lives. An act which helps students to grow intellectually and makes them better persons—ones who can go out into the world and continue learning because of what has been presented in the classroom. Further, there is the need to instill motivation in students which is the keystone to success in life. A final belief is the need to provide students with an enlightening experience in which they grasp new insights into the workings of history, and to do so in ways that suggest that the habit of learning is good in itself and is transferable to other areas. All of the respondents seemed to agree with the old maxim that in teaching you touch the future.

The answers to the question of what makes a good teacher run the gamut from the general to the specific. The general was expressed in such different ways as enthusiasm, knowledge of subject, knowledge of students, care for their growth, love of subject and a passion to communicate it; a good teacher is both serious and conscientious, seeing his/her work as a vocation in the true sense of "calling;" a good teacher makes learning fun and easy through enthusiasm and an effective structure while also meaningful by challenging students to think and work hard; and, a good teacher is compassionate in his/her dealings with students. More specific comments included the need for a sense of humor, being friendly,

drawing out comments and questions, learning the names of students, and occasionally stopping to ask "What is it that you want to know?"

The responses to question three on striking balance between entertaining students and providing substance and question six of adapting to different class sizes overlapped sufficiently to look at them as a piece. In response to whether there was a need for a balance between entertaining students and course substance several replied absolutely, there is such a need. There probably is some inherent tension between the two. Without balance, one may end up at the extremes of entertainer in a frivolous sense or of pompous bore. In reality, however, history is full of human interest and humor, so that one ought to be able to popularize, seek relevant applications to students own lives, and even entertain without distorting or trivializing. One risk, or imbalance, on the entertainment side of the tension is caricaturing people in the past. Another respondent asserted that a truly artful teacher knows how to pace his/her presentation and make it interesting,—not necessarily entertaining. He cautioned that no one wants a wiseacre for a teacher; adding that such a person may be tolerated and be the subject of amusement, but that person will never have the student's respect, let alone that of his/her colleagues. The overall view of the respondents was summarized by the statement that we don't know the appropriate balance between entertainment and substance, but substance is, finally, the key.

The question of balance and technique was the heart of the answers on adaptation to class size. Most agreed that the larger the class, the more difficult it is to teach, and that the methods are different for a large class than for a small class. The general consensus was that lecturing was the norm for large classes, while discussion and reports were more common with small classes. All agreed that variation was important, but that the most essential element was not technique but liveliness and purpose in the learning.

The various responses to the difference between education and training were both interesting and insightful, and so will be given at some length. This is the easiest question to answer. "Education" involves literally "leading" students to knowledge about the subject and about themselves. It is as much about encouraging students to develop abilities to reason and judge as it is about imparting a specific body of information. We educate historians; we train assembly line workers. Yes, but training has become so much a part of higher education that it's hard to maintain the distinction except in a rather abstract sense. In the quest for students, dollars, and

"relevance," we have gotten well into "training" for careers, as, for example, in public history.

For me the difference between education and training relates to "opening the windows of the mind." Genuine education should leave a lasting effect on students in terms of generating true curiosity to seek deeper knowledge and understanding long after a particular course of study has been completed. Training, on the other hand, might be defined as the transmission of defined skills without simultaneously deepening the student's intellectual curiosity. Training focuses on learning to perform a specific task or to respond to situations in prescribed manners. Training lacks context. Education demands context. It moves from the specific to the general and culminates in a philosophic overview of an important subject. One important caution to those who think their pontifications are education—one has to master the facts, the building blocks, before one is ready to generalize and philosophize and see the big picture. One last thought, education and training are not mutually exclusive. It is a matter of balance.

The next question dealt with main goals that one hopes to accomplish as the end result of teaching any history course. Let us look at the goals suggested. I want students to reassess how they observe the world in which they live, how they perceive human motivation, how they understand why historical events unfold as they do. Students are so busy growing up before they come to college that they have not stopped to see themselves as part of an unending roll call of human generations who respond to crises in life and society, and go on to make ends meet and enjoy a measure of happiness until death comes. Life on what William James called this dream-visited, moonlit planet is an arresting drama. By studying the historical process we gain a new appreciation of the existential situation in which we find ourselves. As an added bonus, students might develop a sense of caring and concern for the world. I try to get students to think about ethical consequences of historical actions. I hope as a result of having been in my course they leave with a desire to work for social justice throughout their lives.

The goal of any history course should be to: 1) enhance the student's intellectual curiosity to know more about the topic after the course is ended; 2) strengthen the students' skills in oral and written communication, organization, analysis, synthesis, and research; 3) broaden the students' perspectives by helping them place issues in context; and, 4) deepen the students' awareness of historical causation. Or, I try to convince students that just as it pays to "know one's self," so it pays to know one's environment, past and present. History's

chronological method and modes of analysis are useful in organizing one's life generally. In essence the goal is to convey an appreciation for the sweep and flow of history; an understanding of the ways in which the past informs and influences the present; a love of the past for its own sake.

All respondents agreed that attitude in teaching is vital. They differed somewhat in the strength of their feelings. Let's listen. Knowledge is a *sine qua non*. Attitude is very important. A teacher might have the best knowledge of anyone in the state of Ohio, but if the attitude is one of "who cares," "I hate students," "I have more important things to do," this knowledge will not be transmitted to the student. Attitude of the teacher is extremely important. If statistical input is needed, I would give sixty percent to attitude and forty percent to knowledge. Having said this, it still remains that without mastery of the subject, all the rest is mostly entertainment and chasing the wind.

Some of the replies showed considerable depth of feeling on attitude. Knowledge of the subject is of course, a *sine qua non*, but we all know so much more than virtually every student we will ever encounter that subject matter competence is really not an issue. Because attitude is not stressed in graduate training or in our professional socialization, it is an issue. Because we value their subject mastery and scholarship, we tolerate teachers who dislike teaching, neglect it for publication, give students little help, and do not really believe in students. In hiring, merit reviews, and tenure decisions, I would reward those whose devotion to teaching (and that means to students) is primary. I would neither hire nor advance those who give it low priority. As another stated, attitude toward students is important in nearly all cases. If you do not really like college students, get out! Quit boring generation after generation of unhappy victims.

The general response to the question, do examinations add to or detract from teaching was, that while they do both they are necessary. Examinations should be learning devices which serve to reinforce motivations and encourage not merely the accumulation but the appropriate arrangement of data. Good examinations present students with choices. By forcing them to assimilate large amounts of information, organize it, express it in acceptable English, we are doing them a service that will benefit them whatever the future holds. Most respondents recognized that examinations are never fun, they often cause jitters and nervousness, and often cause students to worry more about them than about learning.

Because of the mixed nature of examinations the

suggestion was made that time can be well spent in helping students to learn how to study for and take examinations. All seemed to agree that no matter what the attitude toward examinations might be, the ultimate essential is that they be fair.

The responses to question nine—Is there a proper teaching style?—elicited many interesting answers. Among them were:

There is a proper teaching style which is one of showing competence with the subject, showing authority in the classroom (not dictatorship), being pleasant but demanding, thorough and all the while in touch with the students. This is a big order that will not come right away or even in the first several years of teaching. But, over time, if the teacher is interested in the students, and wants to see them progress, it will evolve.

Each teacher must experiment and develop his/her own personal and individual style which best accords with the personality makeup of the teacher. The very best teachers—the artists—can not describe what they do or why. Much is intuitive and spontaneous. One must keep in mind that whatever the style used, it should motivate the students to make the effort that learning requires. A good teacher is a good motivator.

What matters is the quality of knowledge and caring. Many different styles work and what works with one student may not work with another. It is important to be flexible in approach, but, above all, just be yourself.

Differences of personality and temperament proscribe any uniform style. A variety of styles is a strength of the higher learning, and probably is good for students. Virtually all of us are capable of more spontaneity and should learn to do less talking at students. Many might profit from scrapping their wonderful written lectures in favor of cruder, but incredibly valuable, class discussions.

There is no single style. Each instructor should develop a style most comfortable for him/herself. The test is effectiveness. What is proper depends on subject matter, size of class, a teacher's talents, and the preparation and motivation of students enrolled in class.

The final phase of the questionnaire asked for comments or ideas that seemed pertinent to the issue of good teaching. The following are some of the observations made by these experienced teachers.

I feel that there is some good to have others (peers) observe a person teaching—but I do not feel that teaching

is something which can be "taught." I am afraid that I have come to the conclusion that excellent teachers are born and not taught. If a teacher has confidence in him/herself, knows the subject, is not afraid to admit they do not know answers to everything, know how to get along with students, and not set up an adversarial relationship, then this teacher will be a good—working toward excellent—teacher. Students turn off those of us who drone on, have little humor or lightness about their lectures or themselves, and seem to feel—"here it is, take it or leave it." Students can read demanding material, can do library work, and can do written assignments regularly. But once you set these demanding expectations, you must be prepared to help them meet your standards. We must remember that we were not born knowing how to research and write or to read critically and analyze effectively, and neither were our students. Challenge their minds—but then help them develop the abilities to meet your challenges.

Teaching is partly a craft that can be learned. Departments should urge their less successful teachers to take remedial measures. These are readily available on most campuses where one can be televised. The TV tape can be reviewed in company with persons known for their teaching excellence and some practical hints given. This can be most helpful if one is dealing with technique—communication skills, etc. It can be painful if one is dealing with a person who is fundamentally unsuited to the classroom due to personality traits.

Education involves, not only information and its interpretation, but also the development of thinking about values. This is not to make history a means of moral indoctrination or the passing of judgments about historical figures. It is simply to say that when we interact with the past, we are necessarily bringing our moral and ethical perspectives to bear. That being the case, we ought to be more self-conscious about what we are doing.

While I have had success as a teacher, I have also experienced many failures. The reasons for that are not always clear; sometimes a class just does not click. I often think of a statement Amy Lowell once made, that paraphrased, goes like this:

Teaching is like dropping ideas into the letter box of the human subconscious. You know when they are posted, but you never know when they will be received or in what form.

Two final bits of advice. There can be a tendency on the part of an experienced teacher to deprecate out of laziness or arrogance the flow of literature in his field.

The "good" teacher should keep abreast of his field and use the findings of other scholars in both enlivening and informing his/her classes.

The second bit of advice came in a cover letter. It said: "I enjoyed the opportunity to respond to the questions on teaching that you have posed. . . . I've always been glad I chose to become a university professor. When I contemplate some of the grades I must hand out, especially to freshman students, I am reminded how often I fall short in meeting my own goals."

The above responses to the questionnaire are a combination of direct quotations, paraphrasings, and composite statements. The *Newsletter* hopes that they reflect accurately the views expressed. The editor would be remiss if he did not thank the following Academy Teaching Award winners for their cooperation and thoughtful responses: Roberta Sue Alexander (Dayton), Cynthia Behrman (Wittenberg), Jacob H. Dorn (Wright State), Gifford B. Doxsee (Ohio University), Lawrence G. Kaplan (Kent State), George Knepper (Akron), Ronald Lora (Toledo), and David C. Riede (Akron).

### HISTORY IN THE SCHOOLS AND THE OHIO ACADEMY OF HISTORY

This report and recommendation was prepared by David W. Robson, John Carroll University, on behalf of the Standards Committee of the Academy. It expresses certain concerns that might pose threats to the teaching of history at the secondary school level.

Have you been disturbed by the political apathy and ignorance of many young adults and wondered what they were being taught in the schools? Have you as parents discussed current affairs with your children and wondered if they have knowledge of anything that happened before the advent of MTV? Have you as educators been dismayed by the lack of historical background that many of your students demonstrate on tests, in assignments, and in discussion? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then be aware that now is the time to act on your convictions, for history education in Ohio's schools is at a crossroads. The decisions made about the form and content of that education over the next few months will affect the way history is taught to our young people for many years to come. You can imagine the current decision-making process as a threat or an opportunity, but either way it calls for action if you, as a professional historian, want to influence what Ohio's children know about history.

## The Problem

The first of the great decisions has been made. Proficiency exams are one of the challenges that every Ohio high school student must now face. In order to graduate with a diploma of basic competency, every student must pass ninth grade exams in writing, reading, mathematics, and citizenship. Starting this academic year, any student who wants to graduate with a diploma of distinction or commendation must also pass the twelfth grade proficiency exams in these subjects.

As historians, we are most concerned with the citizenship exams. They are the only ones that have history components. A brief consideration of the learning objectives of the ninth and twelfth grade exams tells us that history is slighted. The ninth grade exam has seventeen desired learning outcomes tested by fifty questions. Two, perhaps three, of the learning outcomes involve history, the knowledge to be sought through a maximum of seven questions. Those learning outcomes are: (1) Identify the major significance of the following historic documents: Northwest Ordinance, Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights; (2) Know that many different peoples with diverse backgrounds (cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic) make up our nation today; and (3) Identify various symbols of the United States: flag, national anthem, Pledge of Allegiance, Independence Day.

The twelfth grade exam lists twenty-one learning outcomes, many of which are more sophisticated renditions of the ninth grade outcomes. Perhaps four of these are designed to test historical knowledge: (1) Understand the rationale, consequences, and applications of the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights and other amendments, as the supreme law of the land; (2) Identify factors which have contributed to America's cultural pluralism, including historical, racial, ethnic, religious, and linguistic backgrounds of this nation's people; (13) Understand that the evolution of democratic principles can occur through civil disobedience, e.g., civil rights, widening franchise; and (20) Recognize that local/national issues can be related to those confronting the global society. What emerges clearly from these outcomes is that there is short shrift paid to the history of the United States and even less attention devoted to the history of any other part of the world.

To repeat; these exams have been adopted. At least until they have been administered a few times, there is nothing that can be done to alter them. But the greater danger than the exams themselves is the way they will influence curriculum formation, certainly for middle and

high schools, perhaps for grades K-12. Parents of children who face these exams, and perhaps have already failed one administration of them, are putting great pressure on the schools to teach to their content, and many schools are succumbing to that pressure. In an increasing number of schools, time is being taken from the normal social studies curriculum, including instruction in history, to teach solely to the learning outcomes of these exams. (Witness a story in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, November 18, 1991, which describes efforts by the Lake and Geauga County schools to prepare students for the exams, including in-school sessions.) Even if one grants that these outcomes are bits of knowledge that should be possessed by a high school graduate, to teach to them in a fragmented way, devoid of the context that makes them meaningful, makes little pedagogical sense other than to pass a test. Yet, even though we professional historians have lost our chance to influence the makeup of the exams, we may be able to help the schools avoid the detrimental effects of teaching to them.

## The Opportunity

Currently, the process is under way for revising the Ohio High School graduation requirements in social studies. The State Board of Education has recommended that minimum state requirements in social studies for high school graduation be raised from two units to three. It also recommends that citizenship education require school/community service as defined by the local board of education.

Where professional historians have an opportunity to make an impact is on the content of those three units of social studies. The state board proposes one unit of United States History, including the integration of U.S. geography, with at least one-half unit devoted to the study of the twentieth century. In this unit the state board proposes that students come to understand the historical, geographic, economic, social, religious, and political structures that have come to make up our nation, and gain an appreciation of the multicultural society in which they live. The state board also proposes one unit of world studies, which will integrate geography, history, and international studies, with the object of acquiring the background knowledge necessary to understand today's interdependent and complex international relationships. Finally, the state board proposes one unit of American government and economics, including the integration of participatory citizenship, the free enterprise system, leadership development, critical thinking, decision making, citizenship, entrepreneurship, employability, and balancing work and family components.

## What Can Be Done

The Ohio State Board of Education may be amenable to our influence. Informed advice on our part, whether communicated directly to the board or offered through the medium of the Ohio Academy and other organizations, may make a difference. How can we become informed about the school curriculum? There are several options. One would be to join and participate in the deliberations of the Ohio Council for the Social Studies. This group includes professionals from many social studies disciplines, not all of whom agree about the place of their respective disciplines in the school curriculum. Nevertheless, they present for consideration several plans for the integrated, evolutionary study of the social sciences from K-12, in such a way that the learning outcomes of the Ohio Proficiency Exams would naturally be included. Their debates are lively and informative, and as a lobbying group with the State Board, they have clout. Another possibility would be to become active in the National Council for History Education (NCHE). This group is the evolutionary successor to the Bradley Commission, and it is in touch with school curriculum reform movements of all types, but especially those centering on history in the schools. Whether one endorses it or not, reading the Bradley Commission's report, Building a History Curriculum: Guidelines for Teaching History in the Schools is edifying. Here, too, is a plan for integrated, developmental history education that will naturally lead to the results the state board (and the legislature) seeks. No matter what plan we take, we must become informed and make our voice heard.

## A Final Plea

The Ohio Academy of History has seldom seen itself as an active promoter of issues with even vaguely political overtones. It has properly been devoted to the life of the mind by promoting the sharing of historical knowledge and collegiality among the professional historians of the state. But when we consider the way in which the discipline of history is taught in the schools, we face an issue that is charged with self-interest. Who among us does not want better educated young people to live in our communities, to vote in elections, to work in and run businesses with which we interact? More to the point, who among us does not want young people better educated in history to inhabit our classrooms or workrooms, to become our colleagues, and eventually our successors? It is that desire which has motivated the Standards Committee of the Academy to become involved in this issue. We won't presume that our fellow Academy members share all our particular views, but we do hope they share our conviction that to work for the improvement

of history education in the state of Ohio at all levels is a major responsibility of the Ohio Academy of History.

Respectfully submitted,

J.D. Britton, Chair  
 Jeanne M. Kish  
 George Beelen  
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 John Kesler  
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## SAMPLE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULA

For those unfamiliar with proposed social studies curricula for grades K-12, here follow some recommendations from various national social studies organizations. These are presented in their barest outlines. For more information about them, contact a member of the Ohio Council for the Social Studies or the National Council for History Education.

- I National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools
  - Scope and Sequence
  - K-3 Set foundation for social studies to follow
    - Excite student interest in social studies
    - Balance of local, national, and global information
    - Capitalize on child's growing sense of time and place
  - 4-6 United States history
    - World history
    - Geography, physical and cultural
  - 7-8 Study of the local community
    - Study of the nation
  - 9-11 World and American history and geography to 1750
    - World and American history and geography, 1750-1900
    - World and American history and geography since 1900
  - 12 Government/Economics
    - Other options
- II Report of the National Council for the Social Studies Task Force on Scope and Sequence

- K Awareness of self in a social setting
- 1 The individual in primary social groups: understanding school and family life
- 2 Meeting basic needs in nearby social groups: the neighborhood
- 3 Sharing Earth space with others: the community
- 4 Human life in varied environments: the region
- 5 People of the Americas: the United States and its close neighbors
- 6 People and Cultures: representative world regions
- 7 A changing world of many nations: a global view
- 8 Building a strong and full nation: the United States
- 9 Systems that make a democratic society work: law, justice, and economics
- 10 Origins of major cultures: a world history
- 11 The maturing of America: United States history
- 12 Electives: one year courses
  - Issues and problems of modern society
  - Introduction to the social sciences
  - The arts in human societies
  - International Area Studies
  - Social science elective courses
  - Supervised experience in community affairs

### III Bradley Commission on History in the Schools

#### Pattern C

- K Childrens' adventures: long ago and far away
- 1 People who made America
- 2 Traditions, monuments, and celebrations
- 3 Inventors, innovators, and immigrants
- 4 Heroes, folk tales, and legends of the world
- 5 Biographies and documents in American history
- 6 Biographies and documents in world history
- 7 World history and geography to 1789
- 8 U.S. history and geography to 1914
- 9 Social studies electives
- 10 World history, culture, and geography since 1789
- 11 U.S. history and geography, 20th century
- 12 American government; social studies elective

## REFLECTIONS ON MULTICULTURALISM

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Multiculturalism has become a buzz word that all but the patently chauvinistic accept as a positive development in the age of mass and instant communication. Yet the

same term has evoked sharply contrasting interpretations and has become embroiled in controversies ranging from the approach to the Columbus Quincentenary, to the development of a national cultural literacy, to the origin of western culture, to feminist concerns and to the issues dealing with "political correctness."

How do we escape from the confinements of the extremists who represent those controversies and issues and implement in our schools and colleges the beneficial elements of multiculturalism, i.e., the world beyond our parochial vision? As the world grows smaller and its interdependence becomes more real, how do we teach about that broader vision?

The Bradley Commission report, "Building A History Curriculum" provides appropriate guidelines which posit:

"... that every student should have an understanding of the world that encompasses the historical [and literary, philosophical, etc.] experiences of peoples of Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe,"

and

"that history can best be understood when the roles of all constituent parts of society are included; therefore the history of women, racial and ethnic minorities, and men and women of all classes and conditions should be integrated into historical instruction."

William H. McNeill, professor emeritus of the University of Chicago, said recently in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* that "it is high time that our schools and colleges take on the task of preparing the young to live in an intensely interactive global society [by teaching] world history ... that incorporates geography, economics, religion, race, demography and other critical factors of the contemporary scene, into a suitably sophisticated political narrative."

World History courses are returning to our high schools and a growing number of colleges are offering such classes, too. New texts are appearing; a World History Association was organized in 1982; and a new *Journal of World History* started publication in 1990.

However, many impediments to effective World History courses, at both the secondary and college level, remain. Among these impediments are the paucity of properly conceptualized world history courses in written form or in classroom presentation. Whose world history do we teach, after all?



Historians are far from blameless; indeed, we have been part of the problem. We busy ourselves with comparatively tiny, even trivial, questions. And the more prestigious the institution, the more indifferent its historians are to the paramount issue: how do we organize the known past so that world history may emerge as an intelligible whole, something that captures the totality of the human experience and finally something that can and should be taught?

Instead of the esoteric, trivial, narrow, micro-history that is often published [or one perishes] and taught, McNeill argues that macrohistory utilizing new concepts need to be employed: "new concepts applied to new data from the past—data collected on the basis of old documents, archaeological remains, and other evidence in response to questions put to the past by historians who are no longer content merely to purge old texts of apparent or probable errors, paraphrase the residue and call the result scholarly." He laments that little has been done in moving toward macrohistory.

In an *Atlantic Monthly* article (November, 1988), Paul Gagnon, et al., "Why Study History," one reads that even American history must be taught by placing the U.S. in its global setting, past and present, because self-understanding requires global understanding.

While all but the extreme protectionists and the xenophobic agree that the need for global multicultural education is vital, not all agree upon how to accomplish that goal. The approaches to teaching and learning world history and to developing multiculturalism (or empathy for other cultures) may be reduced to three alternatives: (1) traditionalist, (2) multiculturalist (particularist/destructive), (3) multiculturalist (pluralist/constructive).

1. The traditionalist approach is variously termed DWEM culture (dead, white, European, male); hegemonic culture; culturally conservative driven; Great Books/Great Men thrust; the killer B's (Bloom, Bennett, Bellow) standard. Another associated with the traditionalists is Lynne V. Cheney, National Endowment for the Humanities Director, who argues that humanities enrollments in universities are down because so many departments have undertaken "new approaches to the humanities that treat great books as little more than the political rationalizations of dominant groups."

Many of this group believe that every student should study Western culture and non-Western culture and women and blacks and other elements of American culture. Cheney asserts "I have the conviction that

great literature, no matter whom it is written by, speaks to transcendent values that we all share, no matter what our time and circumstance." She also contends, as do Alan T. Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, and E.D. Hirsch, *Cultural Literacy*, that the real question revolves around what everybody should study—a core curriculum. Among the traditionalist's notions are those which argue that American history and values derive primarily from the great thinkers of Europe, and not Asia or Africa thus "the first responsibility is to ground students in the culture that gave rise to the institutions of democracy." The detractors to this approach contend that the non-Western interest is only peripheral. Indeed, they assert that the traditionalists are ill-equipped to offer world history classes, in terms of their preparation and perspective. And such courses would merely tack on "non-DWEM" elements as an afterthought.

2. The multiculturalists (particularist/destructive) espouse a version of history which certainly challenges DWEM history, for openers. They argue that everyone is the descendant of either victims or of oppressors. By so doing, Diane Ravitch of Columbia University asserts, ancient hatreds are fanned and recreated each generation. This particularist approach can be seen most vividly in ethnic studies programs whose goal is to raise the self-esteem of students by providing role models. The advocates demand a revision of the curriculum to include separate studies of black history, women's studies, Chicano studies, Native-American studies, gay and lesbian studies and more recently men's studies. Each group sets forth demands and organizes along similar lines. And these lines generally divide rather than bind. Chester Finn, Jr., from Vanderbilt, asserts (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 6/13/90), it is "the 'pluribus' in American society rather than the unum." We have all seen these lines develop and often have spawned intolerant behavior, even on our college campuses. the question is whether we at the colleges should aid and abet this process.

This brand of [destructive] multiculturalism yields a hundred different curricula, each designed to tell the members of a particular group about themselves, their ancestors, their unique qualities, how superior they are, how oppressed they have been and how suspicious they should be of people and cultures unlike theirs.

Under this banner of multiculturalism, revisions have been made in many innercity public schools. Among those that are being developed or implemented are in Portland, Oregon; Atlanta; Prince



George's County, Maryland; Washington, D.C.; and New York. (See *U.S. News*, 11/12/90).

Albert Shanker, long-time American Federation of Teachers President, sees problems with the New York State Regents' model for global education: "Each student will develop the ability to understand, respect, and accept people of different races; sex; cultural heritage; national origin; religious and political, economic and social backgrounds, and their values, beliefs and attitudes." This sounds good, but how about "respect, and accept" all ideas and actions of others: massacre dissenting students? death sentence on Salman Rushdie? female circumcision?, etc. (See Shanker, *NYT*, 1/9).

Another Shanker article revealed that the N.Y. Board of Regents also adopted Afro-centric courses designed to denigrate DWEM's and glorify (create new myths) African culture (See "On Society" *U.S. News and World Reports*, pp. 25-26). After arguing that Greek culture was largely derived from blacks, Rameses and King Tutankhamen were black, Ten Commandments, Olmecs, etc. were all derived from black culture, etc., John Leo cites in *U.S. News and World Reports*, Leonard Jeffries, Jr., chair of black studies at the City University of New York, who dismisses whites as "the ice people," whose endless savagery is due to lack of melanin, the all-important skin chemical that turns blacks into benign "sun people" and gives them intellectual advantages over whites as well. In substantial agreement, Martin Bernal, a professor of government at Cornell University, argues in *Black Athena* that the roots of classical Greek civilization reach back into ancient Egypt and Phoenicia, and that racist tendencies in 19th century classical scholarship have ignored or denied those influences ever since. Bernal asserts too that ancient Egyptian civilization was fundamentally African and black.

In the same article, Leo tells how, after a visit of an Iroquois delegation to the New York State Education Department, the state's school curriculum was amended to say that the political system of the Iroquois Confederacy influenced the writing of the U.S. Constitution. Although a century-old myth, no good evidence exists to support it.

3. The multiculturalists (pluralist/constructive) concentrate upon history and literature that reflect the different strands in our society and in the world. They contend that a focus upon women, Black, Hispanic, Asian and other minorities can enrich us all.

Catherine R. Stimpson of Rutgers University has called this focus "cultural democracy"—a recognition that we must listen to a "diversity of voices" to understand our culture, past and present.

Diane Ravitch (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 10/24/90) argues, "of course students should still study Western Culture and they should learn about the emergence of the democratic ideology and the concept of individual freedom 'that have affected the world'. But they must also learn about the cultures of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. They all represent complex civilizations, containing many cultural groups and different languages."

The cultural pluralist point of view, then, accepts diversity as fact. It recognizes that each culture/people has had a significant or a high culture at some time, but that not all cultures achieve this status simultaneously. In terms of American culture, they recognize the development of a common culture derived from the many groups of immigrants, Native Americans, Europeans, and African Americans.

The pluralist approach urges students to study many cultures with a critical eye, i.e., the object of learning about Confucianism or Islam or Judaism is to study its history and philosophy, not to become an adherent of the faith. Similarly, studying black studies, women's studies, gay studies, men's studies, or any cultural studies is legitimate as long as they are taught as critical studies and not as doctrinal faiths.

The pluralist approach, Ravitch argues, sees the school, and particularly the university, "as a citadel of doubt, skepticism, non-conformity, unorthodoxy, and dissent; a place where young people learn to question the faith of their elders; a safe haven for those who criticize the conventional wisdom."

Some have suggested that multiculturalism (or at least constructive multiculturalism) draws ideas, customs, and historical contributions from the many groups and heritages and then places them into a unified curriculum that everyone studies. It shows the differences among them but emphasizes the commonalities—the ideas, institutions and norms that we share, whatever the color of the skins or birthplace or grandparentage.

Chester Finn agrees that colleges should promote such multiculturalism that convey our diverse culture's unifying themes rather than separated themes—the former leading to "the Peaceable Kingdom, the latter to Beirut".

Most of us, I suspect, recognize that multiculturalism must be part of our curricula. Few of us wish to usher in yet a new isolationism. But we disagree upon how to effect this change and to what extent we should change.

Questions we must ask and problems we must resolve are:

1. Do we exchange the DWEM canon for one that is Afrocentric? politically correct?
2. Will the history taught in our schools and colleges be the work of the best and most honest scholarship, or will it be politicized and controlled for the uplift and propaganda effect by various ethnic groups?
3. Can a nation long endure that promotes disunity and separatism? An essential difference between multiculturalism-pluralist and multiculturalism-particularist (DWEM, Afrocentric, or P.C.) is that the former is designed to combat ethnocentrism and the second to teach and embrace it. Ethnocentrism tells people to trust and accept only members of their own group. It tells them to immerse themselves in their own culture and to close their minds to others. It says to members of the group that they have nothing in common with people of different races, religions and cultures. It breeds hatred and distrust.
4. Or are we all viewing the approaches in extremists terms? Indeed, some have framed the controversy in yet another way. Gary Nash of U.C.L.A. argues that most people who speak of Afrocentrism are not extremists, rather they call for more study of a group that has heretofore been ignored. Mary Frances Berry, Organization of American Historians president, says critics are jumping the gun. She calls for a positive approach which studies the "neglected" cultures and for scholars to help develop error-free materials for the new curricula. She and others contend also that history which raises self-esteem is not necessarily "distorted" history and antithetical to critical thinking.

However we proceed, our schools must possess an intellectual understanding of the new global agenda and learn to communicate it. Or as Claire Gaudiani, President of Connecticut College, said, schools, must start "meeting the needs of people who will operate in an increasingly international environment even if they never leave Duluth." Global education/multicultural education is no longer a question of having a fiesta or two to celebrate another culture; our universities and schools must do better.

### TEACHING NETWORK

Two years ago the Ohio Academy initiated the organizing of a teaching network. Under the leadership

of Dick Ortquist of Wittenberg some progress has been made. One of the aims of the network was to have individuals share with others what they are doing in the classroom. The first contribution has come from Ronald Lora of the University of Toledo. He describes how he dealt with the issues that were raised by the outbreak of fighting in the Persian Gulf.

When an event so enormous as the Persian Gulf War occurs, those of us who teach American history wonder how current events should be handled in our classes. We find it convenient enough to study historical roots, underlying factors and so forth. How in a state university that enrolls 25,000 students who represent many faiths, do we work in ethical, even religious, perspectives that bear on the issue at hand.

On January 17, the day after the American bombing began, I walked into a freshman class in American history with the following list of topics:

1. Why did President Bush decide on war?
2. Would Bush be bombing Baghdad if the Cold War with the Soviet Union had not ended?
3. The First World War and the breakup of the Turkish Empire. Arab resentment of Western colonialism.
4. The Israeli-Palestinian issue.
5. The concept of the "national interest."  
—Are our borders secure?  
—Is our political system threatened?  
—Economic considerations.  
—Secure resources: oil.  
—More time for economic sanctions?
6. The many wars of the United States.
7. "Just War" theory. The position of the historic peace churches: Mennonite, Quaker, Brethren.
8. Consequences of the Gulf War—several scenarios.

Anyone could speak, and for two hours many did. The war enjoyed majority support, but a sizeable minority expressed serious reservations. Most doubted that the United States would have chosen war had there been no oil in the Gulf. Whereas the United States had once gone to war to make the world safe for democracy or to rout Nazism, now the call to arms appeared to be on behalf of cheap oil and the American standard of living. Alas, few were well informed on "Just War" theory and the concept of the "national interest." I introduced Secretary of State John Quincy Adams' 1821 Fourth of July address in which he argued that America goes "not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all, [but] she is the . . . vindicator only of her own."

Amidst the devastation of the one-sided war, flags and yellow ribbons appeared everywhere in Toledo. Prayers asking God's blessing on American troops were ubiquitous. We saw the early dawning of political retribution against those who had favored continued reliance on economic sanctions.

Letters to the editor appeared in many newspapers denouncing those who were reluctant to travel yet again the well-worn war road.

Two weeks into the war I scheduled a second teaching, this time on the meaning of patriotism. Among the better points made was the idea that patriotism is similar to good citizenship. Good patriot-citizens keep informed about public affairs, are active in civic organizations which seek the public rather than private interest, and participate in the sweat work of democracy. That includes volunteer work for churches, schools, hospitals, government programs like Head Start, and dozens of other programs.

Respect for the Bill of Rights is good patriotism. Free speech is necessary so that we can offer instruction to our elected leaders, especially during wartime when nationalistic fever threatens to bury truth with the casualties.

True patriotism recognizes that a nation's greatness lies less in military might than in the kind of people it produces. Persons working to reveal what Lincoln called the "better angels of our nature" exemplify good patriotism because through their quiet lives they nourish humankind's deepest and healthiest values.

After two hours, the class had not achieved closure, yet a clear majority agreed that waving the flag and displaying ribbons, while appropriate expressions of concern, represent the easy road. Alone, they suggest emotion more than reflection. What counts for most is civic virtue and what Christians call the special work of pilgrims—the reconciliation of broken human relationships.

### NOTICE

The Ohio Valley World History Association will sponsor in conjunction with the Greater Cleveland Council for the Social Studies a World History Colloquium for pre-college teachers on Saturday, February 15. Several morning sessions for both elementary and secondary teachers will be devoted to the teaching of world and global history. The featured luncheon speaker will be Marvin Lunenfeld of SUNY-Fredonia. For more information have teachers you know contact Timothy C. Connell, Laurel School, 1 Lyman Circle, Shaker Heights, OH 44122.

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