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**ASSESSMENT GOVERNANCE:
STANDARDS, RUBRICS AND SELF-MANAGEMENT**

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**Assessment Governance:
Standards, Rubrics and Self-Regulation**

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There has emerged a web of exogenous forces emanating from national and regional accreditation associations, particularly a satellite professional association involved in teacher preparation called the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). The reality of this web contradicts the implicit idealist sentiment in John Ishiyama's report on the "Assessment of Student Outcomes" meetings at the 2004 TLC where he describes "assessment as a voluntarist/bootstrapping "bottom up" effort of individual faculty members. [PS.27: 3, July 2004, 483-85.] Faculty are increasingly bombarded by outside agencies for standards inventory matrices, evaluation rubrics, and course maps.

More specifically accreditors riding the circuit for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) attack APSA as the most laggard of the discipline-based professional associations in responding to the movement for "assessment of student learning outcomes." And as a result of benign neglect regarding this issue--rather than delegation--by the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians, NCSS has created a national assessment regime that amounts to a top down process instituted by less than two handfuls of experts who not only create the standards and rubrics, but who also provide increasingly necessary consulting visits to advise history and political science faculty.

Reviewing lessons learned here by American historians, this paper seeks to present reality checks in building an APSA working group on assessment of student learning outcomes. The issue of state-mandated "beginning teacher standards" in history, government, civics, social studies needs to also be considered.

Emergent assessment governance processes are an application of a simplistic rational choice institutionalism bent on overcoming the embedded retarded practices discerned by the social institutionalism studies of the 1980s and 1990s (e.g. DiMaggio and Powell). Yet scarce attention is paid to discourse and argument; in this case that of historians and political scientists in their discipline-based professional associations (e.g. AHA, APSA).

In such analysis, the paper uses the approach of Günther Teubner to studying the "polycontextuality" of autonomous non-state regimes that legislate, adjudicate, and enforce: how they relate to each other; to non-state regimes like universities; and to overarching state-mandated public policy guidelines. Specifically, such an approach studies the contextual space between such regimes as a space for the collision of discourse, language games, textualities and projects--both in terms of their intended outcomes and the feasible misunderstandings generated in their unintended consequences.

History Standards/Social Studies Standards

The debate over standards-based education and governance since 1983 has frequently been intertwined with debates over history and culture in the United States. The stakes over public education policy are frequently high and these debates enable the various political factions vying for the upper hand to anchor their positions utilizing arguments over the transmission of history and culture in the public schools. The debates over history and culture wars in the United States have a long history that has been well documented by historians such as Jonathan Zimmerman, Gary B. Nash, and others.¹ For example, charges leveled in the United States Senate that the historical standards created by the National Center for History undermined the common national history of the country in January of 1985, resonate with charges made against the historian David Saville Muzzey in the 1920's.² The Muzzey textbook for secondary history education was attacked in the wake of nativist sentiment following World War I for its supposed pro-British bias that sullied the "true account" of the American Revolution.³ In both cases debates over citizenship and history education fell prey to debates over civics and the patriotism of our forefathers, rather than valuation of the discipline. The vitriol that characterizes these debates creates a set of false binaries that only serve to create chaff that occlude the real debate at hand regarding issues of governance and professional standards set by the various guilds.

History as a profession in the United States came to the fore with the establishment of the American Historical Association in 1884 and the advent of the "New Historians" that included Charles Beard and Muzzey who brought professionalized standards of methodology to their work.⁴ Professionalization of history was accompanied by an interest in the preparation of public school students and called for the establishment of a history curriculum in secondary schools that would stimulate students to engage in inquiry methodology rather than engage in rote learning in order to "apply the lessons of history to current events." A four year curriculum was promoted that included the study of the ancient past, European history centered on the study of France, English history, and culminated with the study of United States history accentuated with an emphasis on historical thinking skills.⁵ The curriculum was meant to show the development of western civilization with the United States as the epitome of this process.

No sooner had this curriculum been established than it was challenged by progressive historians and those social scientists interested in finding ways to utilize history in the teaching of civics. In their view, social sciences would have an important role in training children to become a responsible part of the citizenry. The National Council of Social Studies was established in 1921 with the help of the AHA and the National Education Association and marked a split between those historians interested in a more utilitarian curriculum and those who felt it was the duty of the profession to teach inquiry and the valuation of the subject matter at hand, not the teaching of civics. NCSS started as a group within the National Education Association (NEA), which for a century operated more as a professional society rather than as a trade union--a turn taken in the 1960s. NEA itself was founded in 1857, and grew by the turn of the 20th century to have as its leaders President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia (President, 1894-95), President Charles Eliot of Harvard (President, 1902-03) as well as Presidents William Rainey Harper of the University of Chicago, and Andrew White of Cornell. There was in NEA no separation of K-12 and higher education. Leaders and members worked together on what is now faddishly labeled "K-16 education."

Charles Beard actively promoted teaching modern history in the schools to accommodate this new curriculum. Beard, along with former APSA President Charles Merriam and Columbia intellectual historian were appointed by the NEA and the American Historical Association to the Commission on the Social Studies funded by the Carnegie Foundation to make curricular recommendations regarding teaching social studies in the public schools. By 1934 the commission had compiled a 17-volume report on social studies education. Recommendations from the Commission on Social Studies in the 1932 report concluded that “the development of the activist citizen [was] the central moral responsibility of social studies.”⁶ This sentiment was reflected in 1936 in a publication entitled *The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy* produced by the Educational Policies Commission of the NEA and written by Beard. According to Beard, “the leaders of society must work under the immediate impacts of society,” later stating that “the maintenance of democratic society swing into the center of educational interest.”⁷ The AHA decided not to endorse the conclusions of the Commission on Social Studies. According to Nash and his associates this led to a “drifting apart” between the AHA and the NCSS.⁸ As Diane Ravitch points out, history was no longer a relevant subject in a social studies construct that underscored “immediate social betterment.” For example, history was left out of social studies curriculum produced in the wake of Sputnik because the “case was never made” for its inclusion.⁹ The central mission of the social studies has remained unchanged to this day as exemplified by the 1992 definition of social studies adopted by the Board of Directors in 1992 “Social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence.”¹⁰

The National Council of Social Studies was left with the primary responsibility of advocating and monitoring history and social studies in the public schools until 1983. The 1983 report *A Nation at Risk* claimed that, “the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people.”¹¹ The alarming nature of the report that purportedly demonstrated the failure of public education to properly educate its citizenry had the effect of raising educational policy to the center of public concern. According to a survey conducted by the Public Policy Analysis Service 70% of Americans agreed that erosion of public education threatened the future of the nation. A May 1983 Gallup Poll showed that 58% of Americans would support tax increases to help raise the standard of education in the United States.¹² The National Council of Social Studies Executive Board accepted the recommendations made by their House of Delegates that proposed four years of social studies as a high school graduation requirement in November of 1983. Concurrently, large states such as California and New York proposed revising high school graduation requirements to include four years of social studies from their previous three-year requirements.¹³ In spite of the NCSS proactive response to the Department of Education, the crisis in education provided for a reopening of one of the old arguments regarding history and social studies.

Historians were able to re-capture the course of social studies education, at least temporarily, because of the stress that was placed on the dismal performance of American students in regard to their knowledge in the humanities. In a volume of essays that evolved from two conferences sponsored by the Educational Excellence Network of Vanderbilt University’s Institute for Public Policy Studies and supported by the National Endowment of the Humanities, Chester E. Finn, Dianne Ravitch, and Clair Keller, educator and historians respectively, argued forcefully for a social studies curriculum dominated by the study of history taught by teachers with the proper

scholarly credentials. Clair Keller, former President of the NCSS Special Interest Group on History and member of the NCSS Executive Committee, claimed that social studies had pushed history aside in favor of a “curriculum organized around social roles,” for example as a “citizen, consumer, or member of a social group.” According to Keller, emphasis on inquiry method had led to an abandonment of the survey approach in favor of case studies, leaving students without the context to properly understand the history surrounding the case study. Using the American Revolution as an example Keller claimed that an inquiry into the concept of loyalty had replaced understanding the root causes of the event. History teaching at the high school level was furthered plagued by specialty courses such as “minority history” and social science electives that were unsupported by survey courses providing the facts and context that would help ensure that the student would understand the topic at hand.¹⁴

Reminiscent of John Dewey, Keller advocated for coupling inquiry with guided disciplined learning. He advocated forcefully for a high school curriculum that would begin with a one-year course in world history that would trace the development of the western heritage, followed by two years of United States history that placed “our” history in the context of the first year’s course. The senior year would be free for history and social science electives. Keller argued that an American perspective would include many viewpoints, but emphasize what is common in order that student’s would understand the “common present and shared future.” Keller concluded that professional historians and history departments had an important role to play in reforming social studies in a way that would restore history’s central role in secondary education.¹⁵ Dianne Ravitch and Chester Finn concluded that integral to reforming public education was an emphasis on professionalizing high school history teachers that would include: requiring that teachers minimally had an undergraduate degree in the courses they taught and a “reorientation of teacher licensure and certification standards.”¹⁶

Assertions made in the crisis atmosphere of the 1980’s and early 1990’s did not go unchallenged. One of the central assertions made by a *Nation at Risk* and subsequent reports claimed that there had been a general decline on SAT scores. These claims were contradicted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress in a 1990 report that demonstrated student achievement over the past twenty years had remained stable with modest growth in achievement among minority students aged 9, 13, and 17.¹⁷ The report also warned that American workers were less productive than other industrial democracies although by 1993 it was estimated that American productivity was 10-15% higher than that of Japan. Though American industry spent 45 to 60 billion a year on training less than 10% of the total was spent on the remediation of unprepared workers.¹⁸ In spite of the evidence that would help ameliorate the crisis mentality that had gripped the nation, Lamar Alexander, Secretary of Education under the Bush administration, asserted that stable scores were not sufficient for the 1990’s.¹⁹ Chester Finn and Diane Ravitch, who both held positions as Under- Secretaries of Education, echoed Alexander’s assertion in regard to results from the NAEP exam that demonstrated that too few seventeen year olds knew enough history. For example, only 30% of the students understood the significance of the Magna Carta.²⁰ Historian, Michael Henry tried to assuage fears of a history education crisis in a 1992 article for the *OAH Magazine of History* by demonstrating that anxieties regarding the teaching of history extended to the beginning of the twentieth century, but this was unimportant to Finn and Ravitch, as the data provided ammunition in the debate regarding history and social studies in the schools.

The educational summit assembled by the Bush administration with the National Board of Governors in Charlottesville, Virginia in 1989 formalized many of the recommendations outlined by the Educational Excellence Network that included history and geography among the recognized disciplines in the humanities. Strongly influenced by the business community and “visionary educators in school reform” strategic planning was to be premised on the creation of goals and assessments based on standards established by the disciplines within the humanities, math and science.²¹ The NCSS failed to gain recognition for social studies as a discipline and ultimately became one of the focus groups organized by the National Center for History that had been founded at UCLA with strong funding and support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the United States Department of Education in 1992.²² Standards based education that would provide accountability were the rallying cry of the Goals 2000 agenda that was the product of the education summit. The National Center for History was charged with writing standards for students in grades K-12.

NCSS Leverages the Social Studies Standards

On January 26, 1994 Goals 2000 Act was passed into law with full support of the Clinton administration. It’s chief purpose stated in section 2 was to “promote coherent, nationwide systemic educational reform, and equally as important, to “assist in the development and certification of high quality assessment measures [that would be linked to performance standards set by the various academic guilds].²³ The National Standards for History created Standards for United States and World History for K-4 and 5-12. Importantly, they set Standards in Historical Thinking that centered on five areas: Chronological Thinking, Historical Comprehension, Historical Analysis and Interpretation, Historical Research Capabilities, and Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision Making. The standards periodized history in a fairly traditional schema recognized by most in the profession, and in addition to setting a baseline of what students should know, attempted to integrate historical thinking skills with historical understandings of the various Eras under study. For example, under United States History Era 3 Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820’s) Standard 1 centers on:

“The causes of the American Revolution, the ideas and interests involved in forging the revolutionary movement, and the reasons for the American victory. The student is able to: Explain the consequences of the Seven Years War and the overhaul of English Imperial policy following the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Thinking skill: Marshal evidence of antecedent circumstances.”²⁴

How could standards framed in this way become problematic to many and ultimately face censure in the United States Senate?

The problem lay primarily with teaching strategies that were included with the standards under the title Examples of Achievement. Many of these strategies centered on providing a more inclusive narrative drawing on examples from the work of social historians and a new wave of historians who advocated setting the history of the United States in a global context, were in large part responsible for bringing a much more complicated narrative of American history to the fore. Like the Muzzey text these strategies and curricular suggestions stood at odds with the standard fare of social studies texts that included narratives informed by what sociologist, Seymour Martin Lipset, identified as the ethos of American exceptionalism.²⁵ Critics, such as former NEH

Director, Lynne Cheney, who as head of the NEH had strongly supported the creation of the National Center for History took great exception to these strategies alarmed that the standards promoted a “politically correct” narrative informed by multiculturalism. Cheney and others asked why great figures of the United States been left out of the story or minimized such as Ulysses S. Grant in favor of a narrative that focused on more peripheral figures such as Harriet Tubman. Instead of calling for a separation of the teaching strategies from the standards, a suggestion ultimately accepted by the National Center for History in a new draft of the standards issued in 1996, the issue became a political vehicle for those politicians who attached their legitimacy to “traditional American history.”²⁶ According to Nash and his associates the assault on the History Standards was part of a larger agenda to abolish the NEH and Department of Education in favor of an agenda promoted by groups such as the Christian Coalition that included more local control over educational policy, privatization and school choice.²⁷ Federalist concerns expressed by members of the National Board of Governors had already informed the Goals 2000 legislation and ensured that the States would maintain control as to how they would meet the federal benchmarks set in act. In making his case for reauthorizing the Higher Education Act of 1965, Title II, Section 207, Rod Paige, Secretary of Education’s emphasis is placed on state control of teacher preparation in order that all teachers meet the same standards set by the various states.²⁸

As the historian Clair W. Keller warned in an article for the *History Teacher* in May of 1995 the backlash against the history standards created an opportunity for the National Council for the Social Studies to move their agenda forward.²⁹ NCSS came out with their own standards entitled *Expectations for Excellence* in 1994. Though criticized by Keller and others for their lack of a “coherent body of content,” they provided teaching objectives that could be implemented by any of the content areas embraced by social studies. Perhaps this generalized approach with its mission rooted in civic education demonstrated the most non-threatening approach to creating assessment standards.

On April 1, 1994, the NCSS Board of Directors approved the *Expectations for Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* without any consultation with discipline associations like AHA and APSA. In leveraging the writing of the social studies standards and its supervision for itself, NCSS leadership moved with little membership mandate and without any membership vote. NCSS created a body of six classroom teachers, four professors from well-known colleges of education, and a state education administrator. In less than two years, the NCSS body produced a document promising standards “that specify what students should know and when they should know its.” By the NCSS 1996 convention, another eleven-member task force on standards was created: three were K-12 teachers, the remainder college professors or school administrators. There was little debate regarding the different kinds of students for which the standards should be designed. NCSS leaders used the threat of state examinations for teachers, teacher candidates and students to gain acquiescence with standards as the lesser of two evils in protecting their jobs.

Interestingly The NCSS Task Force appears to have not done any formal survey of the students, teachers or parents in the working public. Significantly, the task force did survey the business community and discovered that, for their purposes, the virtues of good citizenship were akin to those of the good employee involved in a managerial scheme like Total Quality Management (TQM). Indeed, compliant state education administrators see themselves as not representing government, but as facilitating the “enterprise” of education. Sinclair Lewis redux.

NCSS had always served as the SPA, “specialized professional association” for the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which itself was established in 1952. By 1997 new standards were created by NCSS/NCATE based on the *Expectations for Excellence*. As Charles B. Myers’ stated, the new standards were intended to meet previous deficiencies in the standards by centering on content knowledge and the ability of the teacher candidate to teach content effectively in the classroom.³⁰ According to the *Program Standards for the Initial Preparation of Teachers of Social Studies*, the NCSS standards that center on history, Thematic Standard Two, Time, Continuity, and Change, and Disciplinary Standard One, History are informed by the *National Standards for History*. Myers’ underlined the seriousness of the new standards by underscoring the sanctions that would be leveled against institutions of higher education that prepared teachers in regard to the loss of federal funding and being labeled “not nationally approved” as a motivation for historians and others involved in these programs to pay attention. By May of 1999 when his article was published, 26 states had agreed in their Partnership Agreements with NCATE to make their state standards consistent with national standards [NCSS standards].³¹

From Standards to Exogenous Scoring Rubrics

NCSS is a private dues “umbrella” organization of social studies teachers, college professors and professionals in curriculum design based in Washington, DC and Silver Springs, Maryland. There are state “councils for the social studies” with parallel annual meetings and workshops. All told, there are over 110 affiliated state, regional and local councils and associated groups. Following a practice of most professional organizations, NCSS and its state affiliates draw upon corporate donations and advertisements to support its meetings and workshops--e.g., textbook publishers like Harper Collins; media producers like Disney; and test and measurement companies like Educational Testing Service. A site visit by a member of the NCSS executive board on social studies standards to consult and endorse a college’s history/social studies content major in teacher education costs \$1000 plus airfare, hotel, per diem. Further review of drafts and rejoinders go for \$300 a shot. There are NCSS tee shirts hawking the rallying cry “defining social studies; as well as templates that must be used in the initial report, the program report, the rejoinder and the follow-up report.”

Cooperation between the NCSS, AHA, and OAH in regard to such projects as the History Network and conferences such as the Innovations in Collaboration held in Washington in June of 2003 are extremely positive outcomes in regard to the improvement of teaching history K-12. Another positive consequence has been the recognition of the importance of the interplay between divisions of education and arts and sciences in the production of qualified social studies teachers. The real problem lies with assessment and governance. As Clair Keller points out the National Standards for History are specific and provide an outline by which curriculum and assessment measures can be constructed to meet the various benchmarks set in the document. Further, these standards were written as benchmarks for K-12, not as standards by which to assess history programs that produce social studies teachers. The NCSS standards are more amorphous and are based on standards initially designed for K-12 students. Indeed, prospective teachers should have a good understanding of these benchmarks, but are these the same standards that should be used to evaluate history programs that produce K-12 social studies teachers?

One of the unintended consequences of advocating for close cooperation between divisions of education and arts and sciences has been the inroads made by NCSS/NCATE in the assessment of history departments. As outlined in this paper benchmarking and assessment governance have been informed by strategic planning advocated by the business community, standardization in this light supposedly creates efficiency. One of the critical problems with this type of planning is that of ends and means. NCSS is correct in advocating for student preparation programs that thoroughly prepare a history major intending to teach K-12 that includes more than a peripheral understanding of cognates such as geography and economics. But the proscriptive nature of standardized assessment tends to occlude what is unique and innovative about individual programs within colleges and universities that is a hallmark of American higher education. Further, what is the role of peer review in this process?

What is missing from this process is an appreciable valuation of the profession and the process by which we pass this down to history/social studies students. Standards should emphasize how knowledge of the profession is constructed not abstract themes and concepts. An explicit acknowledgement that history is contested, underscoring the skill of seriously examining multiple perspectives rather than reducing them to false binaries set between civic patriotism and the politics of identity would serve to ameliorate much of the noise that informs debates over history/social studies standards. Finally, standards linked to history/social studies programs should be linked to the content studied, not to benchmarks established for K-12 students. Keller's survey approach when coupled with the historical thinking skills outlined by the National Standards for History would provide context for the study of history and the social sciences embraced by social studies. Historical thinking skills are transferable skills and critical for any serious evaluation of civil society. Program assessment using these simple ideas as a baseline would be easy to construct. Understanding the impact of this preparation would be easier to measure as it would be based on content.

One of the key problems ignored by "reformers" is the division of labor and allocation of resources for program review. For example, Rhode Island College must submit program reviews for NCATE, the Rhode Island Department of Education, and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Each of these institutions has their own discreet set of practices, assessment rubrics, and data requirements that require a tremendous amount of faculty time. A key complaint about education has been cost. What kind of return are we getting for our money? The burden for the collection of data and the production of these reports frequently falls to the faculty.

In order to demonstrate compliance with a various standard one must demonstrate that program outcomes identified by the various departments are congruent with the particular accreditor's standards. For example, in order to demonstrate that a course meets the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standard centered on content knowledge and link it with the NCSS standard: Power, Authority, and Governance, it must be demonstrated through a course chart that the topics of the course include a serious engagement with the standard. Further, questions, assignments, and ultimately, grades for these assignments must be included. The course chart is then linked to a curriculum map that shows how all courses in the history department meet this standard. Both the course chart and the curriculum map will show how the history department's programmatic outcomes are linked to the standard. In order to demonstrate that the course is in programmatic compliance with the standard, a syllabus that identifies the areas of the course that engage the

standard is provided. Under the rubric of testing evidence grades are listed from the various assessments within the course that address the standard. These assessments would be staked against the Praxis II social studies section of the content exam that addresses this standard. Finally, the student's ability to demonstrate competence in this standard is measured in a classroom performance during student teaching under the rubric entitled Performance Evidence. All assessments require rubrics in order to standardize measurement and in instances where portfolios are required (Rhode Island Department of Education), it is necessary for the faculty reviewing the to engage in "norming exercises" to ensure that all faculty understand the rubric.

Separate reports are required for each of the assessment regimes and there has been very little communication between them. Not surprisingly, these various accrediting agencies can differ as to what they view as a quality program/school as in the case of NEASC and RIDE and programs that were at one time considered high quality programs by NCATE were viewed as problematic under their new regime. Requirements for assessment change rapidly and the report required by NCSS will be different from the one submitted this year. For example, programs must now demonstrate what kind of impact the student candidate's teaching has had on the students under their care. What is really being measured? In making the case for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Rod Paige stated that, "Reporting progress in teacher preparation fail to provide useful evaluations of the [various] institution's effectiveness...as each state has differing testing practices."³²

The consequences of these types of assessment regimes result in a tremendous strain on faculty time with responsibilities that include teaching, research, and service to the department, college, and community. The actual costs associated with assessment are enormous, as Theodore Raab has pointed out, the paucity with which NCLB has been funded has had the unintended consequence of leaving schools scrambling to meet benchmarks for reading and math while actually cutting time for the teaching of history [social studies] in the public schools, one of the priorities of Goals 2000. The noise of the history debates between those on the right and the left make history a topic "too sensitive for Washington."³³ It is interesting to note that assessment regimes that are premised on efficiency, instead, create discrete hierarchies that do not always speak to one another and create a duplication of effort that is more akin to command systems of Central and Eastern Europe, prior to 1989. The historian Paul Gagnon asserts that "Advanced nations find no need to 'teacher proof' schools" Ideological orthodoxy, standardized methodology, and "ceaseless tests with published scores" are among the obstacles to real change.³⁴ Conversations regarding assessment governance are taking place within the various historical guild associations, but it remains to be seen to what effect they may have.

Assessment and accreditation are invaluable tools for refining curriculum and reaffirming the importance of the college or university within the broad community that it serves. Guild associations such as the Organization of American Historians, American Historical Association, American Political Science Association, and the National Council for History Education are key in this process as they help establish the norms of professional competence and scholarship. These norms are critical in the assessment of institutions of higher learning by such organizations as the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. As mentioned earlier NCATE partnership agreements with the states stipulate that content areas, in this case social studies, be regulated by a specialized professional

association (SPA). As this section has shown NCSS can play a very opportunistic role. What is the role of the guild associations in all of this?

Political Science: Civic Education, Historicity and the “Talent for Valuation”

In 1939, the American Political Science Association (APSA), in an effort “to ferret out support of the most active and important associations in citizen education,” formed an alliance with the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). The APSA authorized the Committee for cooperation with NCSS (CCNCSS) to help focus secondary school curricula on legislation, administration and judicial decision-making as well as to review procedures for teacher certification in social studies. A year later, CCNCSS was renamed and institutionalized as the APSA Committee on the Social Studies.

The strategic outcome the APSA alliance with NCSS secured was the institutionalizing of American government courses in teacher certification programs in colleges and senior level government courses in high schools. (Ironically in states like New York during the McCarthy era of the early 1950s, government courses were converted into courses called “problems in American democracy” focused on cold war context of American civil liberties and civil rights movements.) NCSS secured its own goals in the alliance: (1) APSA support for teacher preparation and certification; and (2) APSA solicitation or authorization of articles by college based political scientists for the NCSS publication *Social Education*.

The APSA/NCSS alliance was supported by a \$2300 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation arm, the General Education Board. APSA President Grieve Laines came to argue for “direct responsibility for cooperating actively in the task of developing more effective training for citizenship at the secondary school level. “[APSA 1939 CCNCSS Report/General Education Board Collection G032/Rockefeller Archives, p.3. Reported in Ahmad, 2003a]

Citizenship/civic education/civic literacy persists as an APSA theme with regard to teacher preparation and secondary school curriculum; for example, in the 1951 APSA CAT Report (Commission for the Advancement of Teaching). That report was severely criticized by intellectual historian/political theorist Louis Hartz who argued that the issue of citizenship as holding certain values, required processes of indoctrination. The job of the political science teacher was not to produce a good citizen, but to produce an intelligent person--not to give students certain values, but to develop their “*talent for valuation*.” Another political theorist involved in APSA leadership, John Hallowell, agreed, arguing that the purpose of political science is to impart knowledge, and not to prepare intelligent citizens or give practical training in politics.

The 1971 APSA Report on the Commission on Pre Collegiate Education stressed that preparing teachers learn: (1) how normative judgments affect political decisions and policies; (2) the context of politics and government in terms of social science and global perspectives, as well as in terms of behavior and processes; and (3) the historical-cultural origins of political practices in values as well as *the capacity to critically analyze valuation and the social implications of alternative values*.

More recently, the 1999 Articulation Statement of the APSA Task Force on Civic Education minimized the study of government-centered institutions and stressed the teaching of basic democratic *values from a society-centered perspective*.

Participants in the debate over history/social studies can be categorized as follows. [Here we adapt and modify a taxonomy suggested by Gaudelli in 2002.]

Patriotic Perennialists (a.k.a. Nationalists)

* those who contend that there is an organized body of history/social studies knowledge that coheres around common identity or cultural heritage that can be communicated in a totalizing master narrative (what Jean-François Lyotard in *The Post Modern Condition* referred to as *grand récit*).

Cultural Studies Constructivists (a.k.a. The Politically Correct)

those who focus on an appreciation of how a dominant culture represses expressions of diversity, and how such appreciation needs to be infused throughout the history/social studies curriculum as a plurality of particular peoples' narratives (*petit récit*).

Functional Essentialists (a.k.a. Productivists)

those who stress the essential specialized skills vital to the emergent globalized division of labor and related projections regarding productivity, investment and trade.

We can add

Historicists

those whose the social sciences, social studies and all knowledge as rooted in the temporal and spatial context, who see events and practices in history as contested before they are condensed for a moment and then contested again.

Historicists - - following the lead of Nietzsche, Rickert, Windelband, Dilthey, Weber and Foucault - - comprehend a history of knowledge cultures and modes of practical reasons that can be appreciated genealogically as a texture of memory and the unconscious. That texture can be deconstructed as haunting and ghosting the future, and as revealing discourse deserving to be adjured to, rather than be eclipsed.

Political science of all the social sciences/social studies appreciated most its rooted in history and historicity of institutions, movements, law and institutions, movements, law and institution-building.

And an historicizing "talent for valuation" involves

1. understanding the impact of ideas and values'
2. understanding the clash of ideas and values over controversial issues;
3. appreciating the context of time and space, including the context of interpretation;
4. finding relevant precedents;
5. tracing path dependency;

6. establishing causal patterns and sequencing;
7. appreciating multiple viewpoints and the web of multiple group affiliations;
8. the study of decision-making;
9. problem-solving; and
10. critical thinking.

Such valuation meets the NCSS standards as presented by past NCSS president Susan Adler (2002, 2003). It is also what Hartz and Hallowell would mean as the “talent of valuation” needed to prepare citizens in the participation, discourse and argumentation of community and civic life.

Such an approach to student learning assessment is endorsed in the 1995 “Statement on Outcomes Assessment [OA]” by the American Philosophical Association, (APA) which notes that in outcomes assessment we as scholar/teachers must appreciate what cannot be measured, and must be sensitive to the historical and social limits of knowledge, competing arguments, differing moral theories. Further, OA cannot be grasped or gauged in a reductionist mechanical manner.

The historian R.G. Collingwood - - like the contemporary philosopher Jürgen Habermas and Emile Durkheim -- before him stresses the *inside* as well as the *outside* of historical emergence:

- the *external* morphological pattern of acts, practices and structures; and
- the *internal* level of desires, intentions, beliefs, ideas, and arguments.

The inside and the outside are internally related. And historical and social scientific conclusions are not appreciated as closed in perpetuity, but accepted only according to their particular moment in time, and in their particular spatial place.

Historicizing the social studies bridges the distance between the patriotic perennialists and the cultural studies constructivists; and gives context to the reductionist functional essentialists. Historicizing, historicity and historicism provides a firm intellectual approach that transcends the tendency to create un-necessary binaries - - or mechanistic charts of non-contextuated numbers and equations. Historicity and valuation are better supports for teaching and learning social studies than enumerated check-listed themes.

Historians and political scientists need to educate both preparing teachers and in-service teachers in “the historic turn” (McDonald, 1996). Such a historicizing turn is evident in sociology (e.g. Margaret Somers, Arthur Stinchcombe); philosophy (e.g., Quentin Skinner, Domenico LoCapra); and anthropology’s ethnohistory (e.g., Clifford Geertz, Marshall Sahlins, Nicholas Dirks). There is the historically oriented new institutionalism in political economy (e.g., Peter Hall, Ira Katznelson). And the new historicism in literary and legal theory (e.g., Hayden White, Steven Greenblatt); as well as the influence on historiography of Foucauldian genealogy (e.g., Jan Goldstein) and Derridian deconstruction (e.g., Geoff Eley). There is also the revival of interest in the historicism of Collingwood and Michael Oakshott. And add the sociologist Arthur Stinchcombe’s work on the “future of the past.” To quote Dirks, (1996: 32),

To historicize is to accept that the past is constructed, that things are not given but made and made sense of. The historicizing operation probes the way

categories and identities become formed and fixed, and in so doing it must be necessary to be reflexive, framing its own interpreting movement as part of the historicizing field.

Institutions and historical practices become regimes of truth and of possibility. Order/Orders are seen as constructed rather than mythic or providential.

POLITICAL ECONOMY/MORAL ECONOMY

When we go back deep into history, we discover that an assessor was the person who sits besides the sovereign, and provides technical advice as to how to value – in particular how to identify the value of things which need to be taxed, what future resources need to be allocated, and what institutional priorities and improvements need to be inferred.

While assessors and assessment have long been a part of education administration. Its increased emphasis on standardization of curriculum and learning outcomes is unique and historically situated in the globalization of market-driven forces. Its increased emphasis is linked to a new globalized division of labor and trade, and the associated needs of standardized skills/standardized job descriptions and their qualifications.

In the past two decades there has been much reflection on the limits of both command-and-control regulation as well as market-based approaches to governance. There is an attempt to devise organizational systems approaches that displace the aforementioned limited models with obligational networks. These new coordination forms stress relationships of “Learning by Monitoring” - - reflexive negotiation and mutual learning - - reproducing themselves over time through references to a structure of internal rules, dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and collective problem-solving. (Niklas, Luhmann, Günther, Teubner, Charles Sabel).

Actors within the organization develop the standards by which they regulate themselves. International standards-based self-regulation have become critical in commerce and environmental management. The ISO 14000 series of standards are used to certify products and processes that a global system of disparate peoples can treat as having specific size, dimension and quality in relationally contracting with each other. And the Geneva-based ISO 14000 model has become for the relational contracting and mutual engagement of non-economic organizations as well. This is the increasingly emerging New Regime of Learning by Monitoring Social Accounting succeeding the hierarchy of welfare state practice or the rampant ad hoc quality of privatized enterprise.

In pushing colleges to standards-based outcomes assessment, accreditation agencies are being pressure on colleges to systemically relate to the agency as a subsystem - - a self-sustaining data and knowledge subsystem in the interest of quality control and continuous improvement in higher education. With such a subsystem, a regional accrediting system like NEASC (the New England Association of Schools and Colleges) seeks to guide its particular region as a whole. This is part of the accreditors audit and certification function.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes begins with the simple realization in respective disciplines that students may not be learning the skills and content faculty deem important,

especially among students with high GPA's. Assessment's primary purpose is demonstrating empirically that our teaching techniques and curricular structures work, and how they need to be modified.

The application of standards based assessment regimes to higher education goes further than earlier voluntary "total quality management" projects. This new regime aims at embedding data collection for mutual analysis and mutual reflection within and between organizations. The goal is on going periodic assessment of the performance of organizational limits, not the fulfillment of behavioral objectives that characterized 1960s vintage assessment programs. As a result, sequencing, mutual engagement, collective reflection and bootstrapping follow.

"Benchmarking" is the process of comparing and measuring an organizational unit's internal processes against cognate and ideal performing units within a professional community. This leads to comparing "actual" performance outcomes to "targeted" and "ideal" outcomes. The key issue in this Regime of Learning by Monitoring is how an organizational unit sets its targeted and ideal outcomes in its commitment to continuously sustain and improve its performance, as well as to understand both internal and external variables that affect its performance.

A contentious issue in benchmarking is the extent that benchmarks (mutually agreed to standards and targets) can be clearly and easily measured qualitatively and quantitatively. Organizations must be alert to a unit's temptation through guile to select variables that are easily manipulated and fudged. Data collection must be done in a sensible and reliable manner. Data reliability councils - - within the layers of units are helpful in the "social accounting."

At a college, faculty must see assessment as discipline based, faculty owned, and supported institutionally as the basis for faculty, student, staff, administration participation in developing regular feedback loops. These loops affect the planning of the college and how it relates to its accreditors as well as to its trustees both in the Legislature and on the Board of Governors.

For this new regime to succeed, there needs to be mutual engagement in standards-based regulation and benchmarking; sensible data collection and the reliability of the knowledge presented; faculty buy-in a more participatory role in the organization and its units; assurance that the organization's leadership takes this mutual engagement and reflection seriously.

The unintended consequences of the exogenous forces generated by the corporatist context of professional associations, contradict the implicit idealism in the movement for "assessment of student learning outcomes." As does the proliferation of fee consultancy and a cottage industry of assessment and accreditation advisors. AHA/APSA institutional design affects the interest organizing and rent-seeking conduct of a smaller well-positioned intermediate organization like NCSS.

Interest group politics draws attention away from matters of moral prescription and vocational calling toward issues of what Harold Lasswell referred to as the "politics of who gets what, where and how." As the previous section demonstrates, APSA President Haines was not immune from this politics, nor was NCSS.

Accreditation agencies like NEASC and NCATE, as well as “specialized professional associations (SPAs)” like NCSS instituted their own autonomous internalized common normative system with its own associated common language or jargon, its own rules of the game, so to speak. Such additional exogenous institutional pressures of compliant practice leads to college faculty and their administrators to figure out shortcuts to rid themselves from the hassles of the assessor - - almost like calling up H. and R. Block to help us with the IRS.

The word *vocation* has signified a sacred calling. By the 15th and 16th centuries, the term increasingly came to refer as well to the activities of guilds and professions in our everyday life as the Reformation devalued ascetism; and increasingly emphasized the sanctity of worldly acts and commingled the secular with the sacred. Vocation has come to signify a summoning to the substance a professional commits himself/herself to practice, as well as the convictions, sensibilities and qualities of thinking and feeling that his/her guild calls for.

The challenge of modernity is “Who does the calling?” Martin Heidegger has written that the calling is not the call that has gone by, but one that has gone out and as such is still calling and inviting.

In the social sciences, different disciplines are characterized by differing theories about how people act. *Political economy* focuses on the way practical deliberation is concerned with discovering the most efficient means to realize specified ends, such as dialing up NCSS consulting services to help meet NCSS reported assessment checklists. *Moral economy* - - a term used by historians like E.P. Thomas and Joan Wallach Scott - - refers to the culture of normative commitments and norm-conforming assertions that impact on an organization’s information gathering and planning, here an institution of higher education and its preparation of teachers in history/social studies.

How do we build an appropriate culture of self-governed assessment of student outcomes, where we do not simply kneel before our assessors, or find gimmicks and recipes with which we simply accommodate our assessors’ rubrics? Rather we need to build a culture of self-governed assessment that responds to our guild calling to organizations like APSA and AHA, and engages the assessors and their rubrics, their suggestions about course mapping, their suggestions about portfolios.

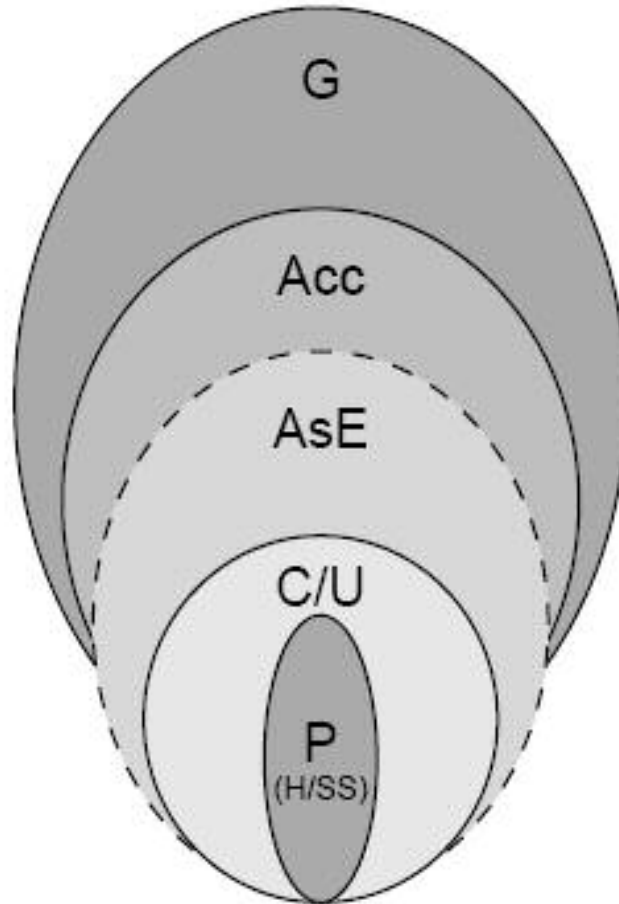
Rational choice theorists following Mancur Olson know that interest group politics does not necessarily generate counter-interest balancing or countervailing force. NCSS as an interest group of a size Olson referred to as an “intermediate group” which acts like “a small oligopolistic industry seeking a tariff or tax loophole” regardless of the vast majority of scholar/teachers in history and the social sciences (Olson, 1966: 49-50; 127-128).

NCSS has the capacity to act, even without group agreement, and to incur costs in bargaining tactically and tactfully, and in seizing opportunity, particularly here in leveraging social studies standards out of AHA’s neglect – benign or myopic. NCSS joins with a host of assessment experts to build a cottage industry of *assessment entrepreneurs* in the H. and R. Block mold (See Kohn and Shannon, 2002; Maki, 2002, 2004). In doing so, NCSS adds a further tier in the negotiating game between accreditation agencies and college academic programs. It is a tier that approximates a *protection racket* milking colleges of resources and shaking down the colleges for

assured accreditation and certification decisions – Princeton Review and Stanley Kaplan promising early college admission decisions for anxious high school seniors and their parents. (See Hoijer, 1998; Levi, 1988).

The network of relationships we have described can be visualized below in Figure 1.

Figure 1



G = guild-like academic discipline association ("learned society")

**Acc = regional or teacher education
accrediting association**

AsE = assessment entrepreneurs

AsE = assessment entrepreneurs

C/U = college/university

**P(H/SS) = academic preparatory program
(here "history/social studies")**

The traditional accreditation game involves (1) a college's academic program leaders; (2) the college's top administrators; and (3) the accreditation agency assessors. This amounts to the three level hierarchy game described by the late economic theorist of contracting, Jean-Jacques Laffont (1990). [Cf. Faure-Grimaud, Laffont, and Martimort, 2000]. Levels 1 and 2 are further complicated by resource allocation limitations; where program leaders at Level 1 often use recommendations from assessors at Level 3 to force Level 2 top administrators to release further

funds. This is yet another example of the “muddy waters” of interest group politics of assessment, with regard here to budgeting.

In history/social studies teachers preparation programs NCATE since 1988 has the franchise to mete out through unsatisfactory ratings that can result in sanctions that affect federal funding decisions for such programs not nationally approved. Such sanctions are reinforced with the 2001 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. NCATE delegates certification/decertification of these history/social studies programs to its SPA, the NCSS.

This paper infers a four tier four level game - - with the AHA/APSA as a guild-like academic discipline “learned society” as a fourth tier, or the NCSS as a fourth or fifth tier.

NCSS is aware of the consequences to its image and its internal working that have resulted from the interest group politics opportunism of its leadership and the rent-seeking consulting services it provides. In the summer of 1999 moved to find a more responsive governance system of its own with a Governance Task Force Initiative that reported back its recommendations by February 2003. One critical recommendation pertinent to our study is one that would transform the House of Delegates into an *Affiliates Council* which would add to its constituent groups as stakeholders “discipline-based organizations” like APSA and AHA, as well as “discipline-based and interdisciplinary-interested individuals...researchers and scholars”...whose perspective would add value and enrich the level of discussion and dialogue (NCSS Governance Task Force Initiative Report, 2003: 12).

Functionally, NCSS has come to recognize the “colliding rationalities” and autonomous subsystems of governance that impact it. There is a complex pluralism of self-producing autonomous contextures without a sense of prestabilized order. There are multiple orders. The legal theorist Günther Teubner (1996, 1998, 1999) describes these collisions and emergent network linkage in organizations and professions as “hetarchy.” A multiplicity of subsystemic governance constitutions are constrained to take formal cognizance of its diverse social systemic context. This contextual network Teubner labels *polycontextuality*. (The term derives from Gottfried Gunther, 1976. “Life as Poly-Contextuality” in Gottfried Gunther, ed. *Beiträge zur Grandlegung einer Operationsfähiger Dialektik*. Hamburg: Meiner, pp. 283-306.)

For Teubner , we need to reciprocally recognize the private law (constitution, rules and regulation, bargaining agreement) of heteronomous subsystems whose rational plans, objectives and interest intersect and collide. This is similar to the need to transcend or mediate *conflict of laws* in the federalism of the United States or now the European Union. It is a reciprocal recognition that there is a conflict of private laws among civil society organizations that has become more and more of a problem in everyday commercial and professional life. It is also a recognition that a significant organization in its actions may have *externality* effects on polycontextual stakeholders in its network. And that these externality effects should make that organization legally responsive to the multiplicity of social stakeholder interests and perspectives affected.

We conclude with four queries about a four tiered game, where each query begins with “can?”

1. Can APSA assume more of a guild-like role as an active fourth tier regarding assessment practices in history/social studies?

2. Can we develop a four tiered game that we scholar/teachers participate in as “deliberate practitioners” (John Forester, 1994) acting intersubjectively rather than merely individually and atomistically as so-called “reflective practitioners?” *Deliberate practitioners* signal and disclose information in open communication loops not shaded by shortcuts posed by assessment entrepreneurs feeding off the sanction mentality. A four tiered game of openly communicating and mutually nurturing program assessors can mitigate misalignments of information, incentives and “milking opportunities.”

3. Can NCSS be clearly delineated as part of a tier 3 as a partner with the accrediting agency? Or do we allow it to create a screen between the agency and the college: a veritable fifth tier?

4. Can we develop a moral economy approach rooted in the substance of normative commitments and valuation talents that are the substance of APSA and AHA practices? This substance would

- serve as a medium of shared enterprise; and
- serve as a larger “covering” professional authority wherein the embedded shared normative signifiers can deliver on their promise of order.

Endnotes

¹ See: Gary B. Nash, Charlotte Crabtree, and Ross E. Dunn, *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (New York: Alfred K. Knopf, 1997) and Jonathan Zimmerman, *Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002).

² The Senate voted 99-1 that the National Education Goals Panel not accept or certify the history standards as outlined by the *National Standards for History* produced by the National Center for History in the Schools and to allot no more monies for the production of standards based on the Center’s current work. Nash et. al., 231-235.

³ The attack on Muzzey’s textbook was spearheaded by Charles Grant Miller, a syndicated writer for the Hearst newspapers, who claimed that Muzzey’s account of the Revolution was treasonous. Unlike earlier texts that provided a celebratory narrative, the Muzzey text included a more complicated version of the story in which public opinion regarding the Revolution was mixed on both sides of the Atlantic with colonists demanding the rights of Englishmen prior to the revolt. Zimmerman asserts that in the climate leading up to World War I historians were inclined to agree with Muzzey’s analysis in a bid to solidify America’s alliance with England. However, after the war ethnic groups interested in demonstrating their role in the founding of the United States sided with Miller. The Knights of Columbus claimed that the text threatened to “de-Americanize” United States history by downplaying the achievements of other ethnic groups in the founding of America in favor of a narrative that glorified England. In the charged climate of debate the Oregon legislature passed a bill banning textbooks that defamed the Revolution. Ultimately, Muzzey was able to withstand the assault on his textbook not only because of strong backing from the AHA, but because of powerful supporters among Protestants hoping that Muzzey’s interpretation would “diminish the non-English heroes” of the Revolution. See: Zimmerman, 16-28 and Nash et. al., 28-30.

⁴ Nash et. al., 33.

⁵ This curriculum stemmed from recommendations made by the Committee of Ten created by the National Education Association to examine public school curriculum in 1893. See both Nash et. al., *History on Trial* and Diane Ravitch, *The Schools We Deserve: Reflections on the Educational Crises of Our Times* (New York: Basic Books, Inc, 1985) 119-123.

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- ⁶ Nash et. al., 34-37. See also Charles A. Beard, *A Charter for the Social Sciences* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932) especially "The Supreme Purpose," 93-117.
- ⁷ *The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy*, Educational Policies Commission (Washington: National Education Association of the United States, 1937) 66-67, 90-91.
- ⁸ Nash et. al., 38-39.
- ⁹ Ravitch, *Schools We Deserve*, 129-130.
- ¹⁰ *Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies*, National Council for the Social Studies, Bulletin 89 (Washington: National Council for the Social Studies, 1994) 3.
- ¹¹ *The Nation Responds: Recent Efforts to Improve Education*, United States Department of Education, May 1984 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1984) 5.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 12.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 31, 97, 202.
- ¹⁴ Clair W. Keller, "Improving High School History Teaching," *Against Mediocrity: The Humanities in America's High Schools*, Chester E. Finn, Jr., Dianne Ravitch, Robert T. Fancher, ed. (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1984) 80-83.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 84-90.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 251, 256.
- ¹⁷ David C. Berliner and Bruce J. Biddle, *The Manufactured Crisis: Myths, Fraud, and the Attack on America's Public Schools* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1995) 26.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 92-95.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.
- ²⁰ Michael Henry, "A Fifty-Year Perspective on History Teaching's "Crisis," *OAH Magazine of History*, 7 (Fall, 1992): 1. Reprint found at <http://www.oah.org/pubs/magazine/geography/henry.html>.
- ²¹ Diane Ravitch, "Developing National Standards in Education," (paper presented at the American Sociological Association Meeting, August 22, 1992), 2-4.
- ²² See introduction: *National Standards for History*, National Center for History in the Schools, University of California (Los Angeles: National Center for History in the Schools, 1996), Diane Ravitch, "Developing National Standards in Education." 1-8, and Clair W. Keller, "A Method Instructor's Review of the National Standards for History," *The History Teacher*, 28, 3 (May, 1995): 396.
- ²³ <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/Goals2000/TheAct/sec2.html>.
- ²⁴ *National Standards for History*, 52-53.
- ²⁵ Seymour Martin Lipset, *First New Nation* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1960) 110-112, 203-204.
- ²⁶ An excellent overview of the Traditional vs. Revisionist debate was commissioned by the Executive Board of the Organization of American Historians entitled, "History, Democracy, and Citizenship: The Debate over History's Role in Teaching Citizenship and Patriotism" (2004) <http://www.oah.org/reports/tradhist.html>. See also: David M. Kennedy, "A Vexed and Troubled People," *The History Teacher*, 28, 3 (May, 1995): 417-422 and Nash, 3-7, 160-164, among others.
- ²⁷ Nash et. al., 215-221.
- ²⁸ <http://www.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearalemaking/2002/reauthhearing/c-terry.hartle.html>.
- ²⁹ In addition, see articles by Clair W. Keller, "Comparing the Original and Revised Standards for History," and James Hill, "Whatever Their Merits, the National Standards Will Not Be Widely Implemented," *The History Teacher*, 30, 3 (May, 1997): 323-324, 341.
- ³⁰ Charles B. Myers, "New Standards for the Preparation of History Teachers," *Perspectives*, 37, 5 (May, 1999): 45.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 48-49.
- ³² The problems with models of standardized assessment are problematic. Historian, Theodore K. Raab, points out that the evidence of success stemming from the Houston Schools that served as the model program for the No Child Left Behind Act could well have been "improved," "NCLB: Leaving History Behind?" *History Matters*, 16, 8 (April, 2004): 1.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ³⁴ Paul A. Gagnon, "History Teacher Stress," *History Matters*, 17, 1 (September, 2004) 1, 7.

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