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The adjustment of social studies subject matter to fit the needs of high school students in Windham, Connecticut

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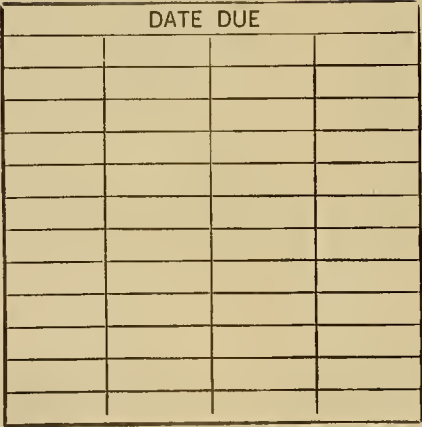


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THE ADJUSTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES SUBJECT MATTER
TO FIT THE NEEDS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
IN WINDHAM, CONNECTICUT

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SUBJECT

The Adjustment of Social Studies Subject Matter
to Fit the Needs of High School Students
in Windham, Connecticut.

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Thesis submitted for the degree of
Master of Science in Education.
Massachusetts State College,

AUTHOR.

June 1937

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I

INTRODUCTION

According to the findings of the American Historical Association's Commission on the Social Studies, more than any other division of the school curriculum the social studies "are concerned immediately with the life, the institutions, the thought, the aspirations, and the far-reaching policies of the nation in its world setting." (1) Finney says in discussing the principle of social parallelism that one of the gaping neglects in the curriculum is the social studies. (2)

To quote again from the Commission's report; the social science program should not be a separate and isolated division of the curriculum but closely integrated with other activities and subjects that the whole curriculum of the school become a united attack upon the complicated problem of life in contemporary society. "In the selection and organization of social science materials, the teaching staff of the country co-operating with the social scientists and the representatives of the public, should assume complete professional responsibility and, resisting the pressure of every narrow group or class, make choices in terms of the most general and enduring interests of the masses of the people." (1)

(1) American Historical Association, -- Conclusions and Recommendations, Report of the Commission on the Social Studies. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1934.

(2) Finney, Ross L., -- A Sociological Philosophy of Education, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1932.

"The program of social science instruction is derived in the main from the following systematic bodies of knowledge and thought: (a) physical and cultural geography, (b) economics, (c) cultural sociology, (d) political science and (e) history."(3)

"The science of ethics, when it does develop, will be a social science. From which it follows that the social studies in the curriculum furnish teachers with the best source of cognitive material for moral education, and the best opportunity to render such instruction implicit, objective, and convincing. This is probably the most important objective of the social studies on the secondary level."(4)

The Commission is in agreement with this where it states, "the main function of the social sciences is the acquisition of accurate knowledge of, and informed insight into, man and society."(5)

On these points the authorities seem to agree.

The method for teaching social studies should be based upon logical or rational order to arrive at a clear conception of man's social relations. The Commission reports "the method of teaching is conditioned by the organization

(3) American Historical Association, --Conclusions and Recommendations, Report of the Commission on the

(5) Social Studies, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1934.

(4) Finney, Ross L. --A Sociological Philosophy of Education. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1932.

of the materials of instruction. Indeed a decision concerning the general pattern of the organization of the course of study in the social sciences is at the same time a decision in method."(6) These may be conditioned by many factors, such as age of the pupils, environment and mental ability of the group.

One of the first things that confront the teacher of social sciences is the need of fitting pupils to meet the problems of the civic life in the community. The problem which presents itself has possibly no defined solution.

The problem is one which arises in every town or city irrespective of size. In most places the burden has been handed to the teacher to mold citizens out of a heterogeneous group of students. It is the teacher's tendency to depend on a general text, which has been written in such a fashion as to sell, and which deals with social problems so generally that the value originally placed on the course is lost.

The result in many communities is that social studies which were intended to suit the needs of the community in a better way, has become a "cut and dried" course, taught from a general text. The subject has been spread over a wide field and lacks careful discrimination of essentials.

(6) American Historical Association, -- Conclusions and Recommendations, Report of the Commission on the Social Studies, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1934.

This still leaves the problem of selecting the most suited matter for instruction. Instead of dealing with the major needs of the pupils, it merely orientates in many fields.

In order to readjust this situation, this study is following the emphasis on proper selection. We must first evaluate present circumstances.

That the need of social education has been felt is expressed in the writings of many teachers and commentators. A stated purpose of the social studies is "to make history more inclusive in scope and more vital in content." (7) It did not originate in this country, but was started in Germany by Rieth and Freytag to arouse interest in the past by reconstructing the social life and customs of medieval and modern Germany. It was a step in advance by those who attempted to give greater space and attention to the social factors in the history of people. The more significant is the social history which attempts to indicate the general pattern of social development as generated and modified by the interaction.

With this background, studies were made concerning the development of a curriculum. These must lead to the problem of including those things in the course which are pertinent.

It has been my experience in discussing this matter with social scientists that they have not favored the

(7) Levin, Sam S., -- Content Terminology in the Terminology of the Social Studies in the Elementary Schools, Education, September 1933, Vol. XLIV No. 1.

adoption of such a course, because they felt that so little was really known of its content that time was wasted which should be devoted more profitably to applied sciences. Another point which has retarded the widespread acceptance of social studies has been because of the fact that the brighter intellects have been assigned to the college preparatory courses and only the medium and duller pupils are allowed in such general courses as the social sciences. With the latter group, it is more difficult to measure results.

Before arousing the student's interest and sense of value of the subject, it has first been necessary to educate authorities to its worth.

The general aim of the course applies to a range of materials and activities in the study of geography, history, economics, and civics. The latter should include such studies as health, safety, character education, institutions, school organization and sources of supply. Only by such a knowledge can we comprehend the development of modern life and our responsibility as contributing members of society.

It is the author's purpose to study the present course in the light of student needs, to see whether a readjusted curriculum is necessary in order to bring about the desired results.

Before such judgment can be arrived at, it will be necessary to know some definite things about the community and the people living in it. The first approach to such

study for details may well be forecast by some general observations indicating the trend of the search. The community from which these pupils are drawn is made up primarily of an industrial city and secondarily of its rural outskirts. The percentage ratio is about 60-40.

The industrial center is of long standing. The first silk mill in the United States was built in Mansfield in 1810 and not long after one was opened in Millimantic. The successor to the latter is still in operation. The first cotton mill was opened by Percy Richmond in 1824 and today the Millimantic cotton mills are the largest of the state, producing the best sewing thread in the world.(8) About fifty million dollars worth of cotton is produced in a year.

As can be seen later, in the first questionnaires, many of the pupils from each division are of foreign born parents and many of those listing American born parents are of recent foreign extraction.

Quite naturally the foreign element was attracted during the early years by these mills and most of the parents of these pupils are in some way connected with them: either directly employed by the mill or in related occupations of the community.

Since social studies is non-college preparatory course, it is evident that the students would be drawn from this class of people. Therefore, for this class should the

(8) Mills, Lewis -- The Story of Connecticut, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1937.

greatest interest be developed. Under the present scheme only those pupils not taking ancient history, which is in the college preparatory curriculum, are permitted to take social studies. This fact means that the pupils are either mentally or financially doubtful college material. The more reason this course should fit them into their place in the immediate community which seems likely to be their lot.

Outline of Present Social Studies Curriculum

Unit I Community Welfare

- A. Means of protecting the health of the community
 - 1. Importance of good health
 - 2. Health work financed
 - 3. Health work administered
- B. Means of protecting the food of the community
 - 1. Public markets
 - 2. Bureau of standards (weights and measures)
 - 3. Cold storage
 - 4. Local, state, and Federal Administration
- C. Means of providing recreation
 - 1. Playgrounds
 - 2. Parks and other facilities
 - 3. Administration
- D. Care of Dependents
 - 1. Sick and injured
 - 2. Aged
 - 3. Handicapped
 - 4. Orphaned

Unit II Community Safety

- A. Protection against fire
 - 1. Prevention
 - 2. Regulations
 - 3. Organizations for fighting
 - 4. Forest fires
- B. Police Protection
 - 1. Training of police
 - 2. Organization and administration
 - 3. The National Guard
 - 4. Federal Police Force
- C. Correction
 - 1. Crime and criminals
 - 2. Reformatories and prisons
 - 3. Administration
- D. Building regulations
 - 1. Congested areas
 - 2. Types of apartment houses
 - 3. Zoning

Unit III Community Services

- A. Water supply
 - 1. Source of supply

2. How purified
3. Water supply system
4. Administration

- B. Lighting, Heating and Power
1. Methods of street lighting
 2. Manufacture of light and power
 3. Federal power projects
 4. Central heating plants
 5. Control of public utilities
- C. Disposal of wastes
1. Street cleaning
 2. Sewage disposal
 3. Disposal of refuse
 4. Administration

Unit IV Community Improvements

- A. Planning
1. Civic centre
 2. Attractiveness of community
 3. Future planning projects
- B. Transportation
1. Passenger transportation
 2. Supplies to the community
 3. Regulation of Commerce
 - (a) land
 - (b) air
 - (c) water
- C. Communication
1. Development of Postal Service
 2. Telephone, telegraph, and radio
 3. Newspapers, periodicals, and books
 4. Public gatherings

Unit V Learning and Working

- A. Education
1. Necessity of education
 2. Public school system
 3. Administration
- B. Employment
1. The family
 2. Budgeting
 3. Choosing a vocation
 4. Problems of industry
 5. Regulations of business and commerce

- C. Special problems of agriculture
 - 1. Production and business of the farm
 - 2. The problem of surplus
 - 3. Government aid to the farmer

Unit VI Government

- A. Community finance
 - 1. Source of income
 - 2. Collection of revenue
 - 3. State income and expenditure
 - 4. Federal income and expenditure
- B. Legislation
 - 1. Representation for law making
 - 2. State laws
 - 3. Town and city laws
 - 4. Federal laws
- C. Execution
 - 1. Town officers who carry out laws
 - 2. County officers
 - 3. Local government
 - (a) mayor--council type
 - (b) commission plan
 - (c) city manager plan
 - 4. Federal executive officers
- D. Interpretation and enforcement of laws
 - 1. courts
 - 2. Criminal cases
 - 3. Civil suits
 - 4. Local and state courts
 - 5. Federal courts
 - 6. Judges
- E. Foreign Relations
 - 1. International problems
 - 2. Settlement of international disputes
 - 3. Foreign representation
 - 4. Immigration
 - 5. Naturalization
- F. Summary
 - 1. Rights of the people
 - 2. Types of government
 - 3. Voting
 - (a) Ballots, primaries, etc.

The Constitution of the United States

From teaching experience, it has been found that the present course set-up is too long and involves too much to cover adequately all topics. Much of value must be sacrificed because of lack of time. The question immediately arises, what shall be taught, and what shall be skimmed or left out? Is the teacher to be the sole judge?

If the text were followed implicitly, too much emphasis would be placed on topics that do not really pertain to this environment. Although the function of state and national governments is important, this can be studied in the light of local organization and then expounded to include differences and additions which may be present. The local government is not at present dealt with as a single unit.

Many of the present units seem almost too trivial upon which to devote a whole unit of work when much of major importance must be slighted. For example, current means of transportation and communication occupy a great deal of time, though self-evident, while the problems of industry are hardly touched upon. Since the care of the handicapped has been assumed by governmental agencies, the problem is not what to do with these unfortunate but to instill a spirit of independence into all those capable of providing their own living, and thus relieve the government of a greater burden.

As well as the material to be included, the idea of placement of units is also important. It is my belief that

a unit on vocations can better fit the needs of the student after the whole survey of the course has been made. It would seem that some understanding of political and social institutions must be had before choosing a vocation to which one is really suited. This necessitates the study of vocations being placed after all previous units had been discussed.

Another feature open to criticism is the appended position of The Constitution. If all government is derived from it, The Constitution should be studied before the functions of government. Especially is this true of a locality made up largely of foreign born who do not understand our form of constitutional government.

These in brief summarize reasons why I believe the present course is not satisfying the needs of the community.

PROCEDURE

Before the task of amending the course in social studies in the Windham High School could take on any definite plan it was necessary to determine the social conditions or circumstances under which these young people were growing up. The reason this move was unusually important is that the great majority of the young people now in high school will be of this community. A careful examination of the whole social set-up of the community had to be made, and through the analysis of the facts disclosed by it a definite catalog of factors determining the social background could be made. The attempt to determine their factors was made through a fairly complete questionnaire filled out in school by each pupil of the social studies classes of the High School. The condensation of these 138 returns gave the basis for the next inquiry.

A second questionnaire was submitted to a hundred of the town's people in the hope of getting a cross section of opinion in regard to community needs. A list of several hundred names was made out by the clerk of the High School in the hope of contacting as many types of people as would be representative of the community and including as many professions, trades, and occupations as possible.

In setting up the adjusted course two things must be kept in mind, or two scales of value must be followed, that of the pupils' social background as determined by the first

questionnaire, and that of public opinion as expressed by the second questionnaire. A third phase might be considered, that of public opinion as to what should be included. It may be noted, this was alluded to in the first questionnaire, but most students failed to give a definite answer to this question. If this should be repeated at the end or during the course, the author felt that it would be invalid.

For this reason, in the teaching of social studies one must be careful in giving the social content, and in digging out the principle which applies to the situation. The adjusted course does not conclude the teacher's job, which must be continued in watching for contacts and keeping records of continual change.

The topics in the first questionnaire were determined by consulting similar forms sent out by The Lincoln School, Teachers' College, and those of other schools. It was the aim to make the sheets as brief as possible with the hope of getting more significant results and the forms were filled out in school so that only pupils' opinions could be included. It was the purpose to include only those topics which would be truly indicative of the social background of the pupil but on some of these points the answers were not satisfactory. Tabulations of some of the more significant points will follow.

The topics for the second questionnaire were taken from

the units of the present course, a survey of texts in social science and civics and suggested subjects for the social studies course. The idea was to find which topics had the highest frequency and then to arrange these in logical order as suggested by the background of the pupils. The townspeople were asked to weight ten units, but since many of these did not weigh all ten the frequency appeared to be the only means of scoring.

III

DISCUSSION OF DATA

To consider the information compiled by questionnaire method, careful examination of the facts point to definite comprehensive statements enlarging upon the data. Tabulations were first made of some of the more predominating factors shown by the questionnaires.

The totals obtained by tabulating the returns from the questionnaires filled out by the students of Lindam High School are most interesting. Taken item by item in the light of the problem of what content can be justified in the social science course, they become good indicators for content selection. The problem is not to compose a topical ^{syllabus} content for the course in this high school but to try to justify the selection of those things which seem most profitable to these students.

The first item of importance is the place of birth of the parents. For consideration of this item, it seemed best to combine nationalities into groups that carry somewhat similar ideals and experiences in social institutions. Outside the United States two groups were made. One includes the British Isles and northern Europe; the other middle and southern Europe. If the selection of social science content runs parallel with the best ideas of living in this American community, some weight must be added in favor of those items that emphasize the American ideals for the benefit of any group of nationalities that are lacking the knowledge or view

point of that ideal.

For example, children of American stock or of parents born in this country will have absorbed a great many things American and will not need to be taught these in school. On the other hand, items not included in the content for them must appear for the children of foreign born parents, at least to some extent. The most important things are probably those relating to the folkways and mores of American life. Much of the very apparent matter of folkways and mores has been absorbed as these children have been growing up to high school years, but some items in community life, such as the use of banks, the influence of the newspaper, and so forth, will need to be taught by direct attack upon the item.

In view of this, an examination of the tabulation of facts in the student questionnaire furnishes the following data to take care of in making up the final judgment of what items are justified in the social studies course in the light of the social background of the students.

American born parents-----534

British Isles and northern Europe---505

Middle and southern Europe-----273

There is nearly a balance in the home influence so far as social studies are concerned, and indications are at once evident that emphasis must be given to some items such as the government of this country, voting, politics, standards

of living, business codes, social institutions and the like.

The education of parents is likewise indicative of the intellectual resources of the home. Children bear evidence of the lack of formal schooling, or of the limited education of their parents. Society is so made up of all classes that the children of such a group must compete socially and in industry with those of a more fortunate background. It seems that the school in some way should try to compensate for such a deficiency.

The author asked the question with this in mind. No explanation accompanied it, and the wording of the reply was left to the student with the hope of obtaining unprejudiced answers. Because of this, the results can not all be catalogued by definite groups. Pupil background is shown by the fact that the outstanding majority of parents have only a grammar school education. Those pupils coming from homes of the better educated have some understanding of the types and value of education. Pupils of poorer educated families need to study such topics so that they, too, may have the benefits of understanding.

TABLE I

PLACE OF BIRTH
(either or both)

Group A	American born parents
	United States 101
Group B	British Isles and northern Europe
	Canada 26
	England 4
	Finland 2
	Sweden 2
	Scotland 1
	Ireland 1
Group C	Middle and southern Europe
	Italy 17
	Poland 15
	Czechoslovakia 7
	Russia 4
	Syria 4
	Hungary 1
	Austria 3
Total	188

TABLE II

EDUCATION OF PARENTS

Grammar school-----	134
Grade school-----	57
Little-----	57
Unknown-----	47
High school-----	45
College-----	8
Pretty good-----	7
Good-----	6
Normal school-----	3
Business college-----	3
Boarding school-----	2
Much-----	1
Studied to be a priest-----	1

The next outstanding factor was the class of occupations within the family. It is natural that pupils drawn from a community both industrial and agricultural should be the sons and daughters of laborers. The majority of occupations connected with the mills require skilled or unskilled workers, while the farmer and his helper also come in this group.

A man's occupation should in no way determine his place in the community, but it can not help but bear upon his relation to others. It is the type of worker that he is which labels him a good citizen or bad. The question which dealt with the number of years of employment revealed little because the pupils were uninformed. Definite results would have been more indicative of the type of worker because the poor worker is transient and may become a poor citizen.

Observation causes me to believe that because of the occupation and the accompanying low wage of these laborers, the standard of living is comparatively low, on the other hand, this is not true of professional men and tradesmen. For the benefit of the children of the first group, units in vocational guidance and industrial economics might keep the pupil from following the line of least resistance in the choice of vocation and lead to a higher standard of living in the community. All units dealing with the study of home life, community life, and the position of the employer and employee have a place in the course to enable pupils to fill the niche, which he later must, in the community.

TABLE III

OCCUPATIONS WITHIN THE FAMILY

Professional-----	4
Semi-professional-----	24
Tradesmen-----	57
Laborers-----	205
Total	290

The other topics of the questionnaire did not contribute particularly noticeable features. All the pupils were born in this country; the families were inclined to be large; and nearly all the parents were citizens and voters in this locality. These facts seem to require no additional units of study along these lines, but the rights of the citizen should be taught to the American born; family health is important to its well-being and present pupils should be instructed in the intricacies of voting. A good citizen is a good voter, therefore, these units are justified ⁱⁿ as a social studies course.

Some few families owned their own homes; most pupils had an automobile within the family; the number of telephones was limited; and the number of radios and victrolas was somewhat greater. All these points merely tended to show the standard of living of the pupils. A unit on economics would help the pupil to know their worth.

Most of the pupils read nothing at all; other reading was limited; and their amusements included movies and athletic activities. Very few had visited places of interest, however, some had been to Saratoga, Niagara Falls, New York City or Boston. The knowledge of these facts has been invaluable to the teacher and the class as a source of material for reports on institutions and their functions.

On the last two points of the first questionnaire, the

pupils made little real contribution, although a great variety of vocations was listed. As has been previously mentioned, the author would hesitate to repeat the last two topics at the end of the course because it would be colored by teacher opinion. However, I feel that the range of vocational selections would be more narrow after the present course of study, since a whole unit was devoted toward a better understanding of the qualifications of vocations. It would lead to self-analysis which should color selection. When interpreting background and financial status, we can see that not all pupils would be able to follow anticipated occupations.

TABLE IV

ANTICIPATED VOCATION OF PALESTINE PUPILS

Professions

Nurse-----	26
Draftsman-----	1
Artist-----	2
Cooking teacher-----	2
Airplane designer-----	1
Teacher-----	10
Civil engineer-----	3
Journalist-----	1
Dancing teacher-----	1
Coach and physical educator-----	2
Fun-----	1
Lawyer-----	1
Missionary-----	1
Musician-----	4
Writer-----	2
Dietician-----	2
Interior decorator-----	1
Doctor-----	1
Electrical engineer-----	1
Actress-----	1

Total 63

Trades

Office--indoor desk or receptionist	
Stenographer-----	15
Reporter-----	3
Clerk-----	5
Bookkeeper-----	5
Stock broker-----	1
Cartoonist-----	1
Secretary-----	10
Newspaper agent-----	1
Air-hostess-----	2
Dress-designer-----	2
Salesman-----	1

Total 46

Trades

Mechanical--artisan--factory	
Mechanic-----	1
Aviator-----	13
Aviatrix-----	2
Airplane mechanics-----	2
Electrician-----	5

Textile dyer-----	1
Printer-----	1
Mill worker-----	1
Railroad engineer-----	2
Carpenter-----	1
Sailor-----	3
Diesel mechanic-----	1
Radio-operator-----	2

Total 35

Trades

Handicraft--small trades	
Hair-dresser-----	13
Grocer-----	2
Dressmaker-----	6
Store manager-----	2

Total 23

Domestic

Cook-----	3
Waitress-----	1

Total 4

Civil Service

State Police-----	1
Police-----	1
Fireman-----	2
Mail-carrier-----	1

Total 5

Trades

Unclassed	
Baseball player-----	3

Total 3

In review of the second questionnaire many currents of thought are immediately apparent. More important than the outstanding selections of topics, at first, are the occupations of those returning the questionnaire. Classification of these can be found in Table V. Of the approximately one hundred questionnaires sent out, seventy-six were returned. It was felt that the persons, who so kindly returned the forms, had spent much time and consideration in filling them out. Enough of these were done by personal interview to show that there were no noticeable differences in the quality of returns.

The results were most gratifying and evidenced that there was much public opinion in regard to units that citizens should like to see included in a social studies course. The occupations reveal the types of people contacted in an attempt to get more or less of a cross section of the community.

These occupations are, in many cases, the positions which present social studies pupils will later fill. Let us compare tables IV and V. Sixty-three pupils designated a choice of professions. Twenty-one questionnaires were returned by professionals. The number of returns was about forty percent of the pupil questionnaire; the number of professionals returning questionnaire II was thirty-three and one-third percent of the number of pupils designating professional choice of vocation.

The comparison between handicrafts returned and the anticipated vocation of pupils in handicrafts was thirty-nine percent. Such close comparison would seem to indicate that the prediction

regarding present pupils is true, and, if so, selections of units by these people should be a basis for prognostications of what these pupils should be taught to satisfy future needs in the community.

In the consideration of selected units the weighting had to be more or less disregarded because some did not complete the required number (10) of choices. However, these were considered, since any selection expressed an opinion. But, because of this, the units were decided upon total frequency. Every topic with a frequency of twenty or over, approximately one-fifth of the number returned, should be regarded as significant. Below that frequency, if related to other units having a higher vote, they were worthy of including. Nothing with a frequency below ten except the function of state government, which cannot be left out in arriving at an understanding of local and national governments; workmen's compensation, a part of our industrial set-up; the judiciary and the executive were included.

The first ten selections based on frequency appear in Table VI. These formed the basis from which to build the adjusted course. Many of these units have already been justified by the results of questionnaire I, and other units without apparent justification in questionnaire II were added to the set-up because of the first questionnaire. These would be such subdivisions as family health--mental, moral and physical; and the place of education. A division on the protection of food supplies seemed necessary for the best understanding of community health.

Other subdivisions could be included in the adjusted course for similar reasons.

The major units of the revised course were justified by the frequency of the citizen vote, but the arrangement was left entirely to the author. It was more logical to begin with a unit on home life than with community welfare as in the present course. This was justified by the vote on family life (24) and the greater frequency of units which should be included under this general heading such as courtesy (40), health (29), and safety (17). All these topics received high enough vote to be included in the new course but were not dealt with as such at present.

From this beginning, the next logical subject was the community, to be dealt with as two complete units; the first to cover education and its types, business from the consumer's viewpoint (or buying in the community) with a discussion of utilities, churches, recreation, social welfare and insurance, community health, and the protection of life and property; the second to cover local government, its function, the effects of public opinion upon it, and taxation. The second questionnaire vote did not justify the study of school organization, beauty, the community newspaper, nationalities, property, wealth, relations with other communities, and the care of the handicapped.

The placing of the citizen in this environment should be the next step. This would include the rights and liberties of the people (with a frequency of 39), the place of politics in our community, and the principles of voting.

This should be followed by the citizen in the state, its relation to the community, and its function and laws. The national government is the systematic order for the sixth unit. In this should be included the careful study of The Constitution, (frequency 36) and the three branches of government.

Unit seven should be devoted to the conservation of our natural resources, and the eighth to industry and economics. Included in this are standard of living with the problems of housing and the distribution of money, the position of the employer and employee, and labor and its relations with workmen's compensation and labor unions.

Beyond the national government is the study of our international relations and a consideration of the effect of war on government.

The last unit may well be devoted to vocations as justified by questionnaire I with the hope of placing the pupil in his proper position in society.

TABLE V

OCCUPATION OF CITIZEN RETURNING U. S. CITIZENSHIP II

Professions

Educational Advisor C. C. C.
Chairman of School Committee
Superintendent of Hospital
Clergymen (3)
Religious worker
Director of Athletics
Professor of Pomology--Connecticut State College
Teacher of Piano
Teacher of Latin
Public Health Nurse
Doctor
Executive
Principal, Training School--State Normal School
Training Teacher (2)
Chemist
Banker
Nurse
Industrialist

Total 21

Trades

Trades--Office
Office Manager
Clerical work in business office
Assistant Comptroller--Connecticut State College
Reporter
Salesmen (2)
Traveling salesmen (2)
Railroad agent
Manufacturer
Insurance agent
Insurance salesman
Secretary (2)
Chain store manager
Real estate agent
House manager
Clerk with public utility company

Total 18

Trades--Mechanical, agricultural
Employee (So. N. E. Tel. and Tel. Co.)
Farmer (3)
Stone mason
Laborer (2)
Mill hand (2)

Truck driver
Spinner
Mechanic (2)
Plumber

Total 14

Trades--Handicraft, small business
Tailor
Hardware merchant
Merchant (3)
Business man
Florist
Restaurant operator
Butcher

Total 9

Civil Service

Civil Service--Public office
Assistant Postmaster
Town Selectman
Letter Carrier
Fireman

Total 4

Unclassed

Undesignated (10)

Total 10

Grand Total 76

RESULTS--QUESTIONNAIRE II

	Weights															Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Frequency					
1. Courtesy--(etiquette, General manners, etc.)	22	3	2	4	1		1	1	1	5	40	(1)				
2. School organization		1	3				1	1		1	7					
3. Community organization--(local government)	5	5	1	4	1		3	1	1		21					
4. The Constitution of the United States	9	9	10	1		5				2	36	(3)				
5. Beauty in the community		1			2	1			3		7					
6. Buying in our community	2	3			1	2	1	3			12					
7. Churches in the community	2	4		3					2	1	12					
8. Crime	2	2			1	2	1		2	1	11					
9. Types of education in the community			1	3		2	1	2	5	1	15					
10. Family life	7	5	7	1	1			3			24	(9)				
11. Government in our community	2		3	5	1		1			1	13					
12. Health in our community	4	9	3	6	4	2				1	29	(7)				
13. Housing in our community		1	5	3	1	1					11					
14. The place of the newspaper in our community						2	1	3		1	7					
15. The people of our community--(nationalities)		3	1		1				3		8					
16. Politics in our community		3		3	10	5	4	3	2		50	(6)				

	Weights										Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Frequency
17. Workmen's Compensation		2	1				1				3 7
18. Labor unions--(their organization and function	4	1	2			1					3 11
19. Insurance			1			7		5			2 15
20. Power--(water, gas, light, etc.)				1	1	1	4	2	1		10
21. Property--(value, by whom owned)		1			1	1			1	1	5
22. Effects of public opinion on local government	2	6	1		3	3		2	5		22 (10)
23. Recreation in the community--(types, value)					3	5	5		1	1	13
24. Safety	3	3	1	1	1	3					2 17
25. Social welfare--(by whom treated)		5	1	5	1	4	1		4		21
26. Taxes		3	1	5	5	5	6	1	1		31 (5)
27. Transportation and communication in our community (telephone, telegraph, buses)			1			1		3	6	1	12
28. Voting in our community			2	1		6	1	1	1		12
29. Wealth in the community--(what it means and where it lies)											
30. Relations with other communities								1	1		2
31. State Government					1		1			1	3
32. Big business		3		3				1	2		9
33. Labor and its relations					1						2
34. Money--(its value and distribution)	1			3	1	7	1		4		17
	3		6				1	1		1	12

	Weights										Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Frequency	
35. National and International politics				1	1		3	1	5	1	12	
36. Standard of living---(how it can be maintained)	3		4	6		5	3	9	3		33 (4)	
37. War---(its effects on the community, state, and nation)	1			8	3	5	1	1	1	11	31 (5)	
38. Protection of life and property		3	2	3	1	1	1	1			12	
39. Conservation of our national resources			3	1	2	7	3	9	3	3	31 (5)	
40. Care of the handicapped				1	2			1	1	3	8	
41. Laws of town, city, state, and nation	4	3	3	1	5	1	3		3	3	25 (8)	
42. How the government is financed				2	5	3	1	4	4	1	31	
43. Rights and liberties of people	7	2	4	1	4		0	6	8	1	39 (2)	
44. The political party---(tendencies of our major and minor groups)							1	3		7	11	
45. Further suggestions	1	1										

(Because all people did not weight all ten units some columns will not equal the total number of questionnaires returned. Numbers in parentheses indicate rating of units.)

TABLE VI

PLACEMENT OF UNITS BASED ON TOTAL FREQUENCY

1. Courtesy--(etiquette, general manners, etc.)
2. Rights and liberties of the people
3. The Constitution of the United States
4. Standard of living--(how it can be maintained)
5. Taxes
War--(its effects on the community, state, and nation)
Conservation of our national resources
6. Politics in our community
7. Health in our community
8. Laws of town, city, state and nation
9. Family life
10. Effects of public opinion on local government

IV

CONCLUSION

In using the survey method, which attempts to reach some conclusion by means of the organization of data and the reporting of these findings in orderly arrangement, one does not need to solve a problem; but the arrangement and interpretation of results is of real value.

In view of this investigation, I am more than ever convinced of the value of social studies as a course, and its relation to citizenship. This community bears evidence of the need of developing in the pupil civic pride, as evidenced in their care of the building, lockers, desks, and the like. The hope of adjusting this course to satisfy community needs becomes uppermost.

No matter how scientific a method might be employed in a study of this sort, one element is still beyond the control of the person making it. The teacher's opinion, in so far as placement of items and logical groupings are concerned, must enter in. The study is not a decisive factor; it is merely a method of covering a broader range in determining those things which might be placed in the course and based on more opinions than the teacher's and with the idea of fitting the needs of the community more than by following a general text.

The pupils are too young and inexperienced to express their needs, but by stating those things which they have, or have not, a good picture of the manner in which they live is unfolded. It gives somewhat of the social background on

which to base a social studies course. Conclusions drawn from it must be general and purely informative. All topics with any bearing to the first questionnaire can be justified by referring to one or more of the seven cardinal principles of education---citizenship training, worthy use of leisure time, worthy home membership, and so on. The units of a social studies course must all bear directly to these.

The second questionnaire served as a means of knowing what the townspeople felt the students needed, perhaps expressing what they themselves felt the lack of. It definitely showed the proper place for emphasis because of the great number who voted for certain units. This does not mean that those units which received a low vote should be eliminated.

With this in mind, I present the adjusted curriculum.

ADJUSTED CURRICULUM OF SOCIAL STUDIES

Unit I Home Life

A. Family

B. Courtesy

C. Health

D. Safety

Unit II Community Life

A. Education

1. Types in the community

B. Churches

C. Businesses

1. Consumer viewpoint

D. Recreation

E. Social Welfare

F. Health in the Community

1. Protection of food supplies

G. Protection of life and property

1. Crime

Unit III Community Organization

A. Local Government

B. Effects of public opinion

C. Financing the government

1. Taxation

D. Ordinances

Unit IV The Citizen

A. Rights and liberties of the people

B. The political party

C. Voting

Unit V State Government

A. Relation to the community

B. Function

C. Laws

Unit VI National Government

A. The Constitution

B. Legislation

C. Judiciary

D. The Executive

Unit VII Conservation of Natural Resources

Unit VIII Industry

A. Standard of living

B. The employer and employee

C. Labor and its relations

1. Workmen's compensation

2. Labor unions

Unit IX International Relations

A. War and its effect on government

B. Our work with other countries

Unit X Vocations

A. Fitness

1. Physical

2. Mental

B. Interest

In the selection of topics for the adjusted course, the units having the greatest frequency were considered. Many of these could better be combined into one unit, and other units received sufficient vote to justify their appearance as a subdivision of a unit.

After selecting the units for an adjusted course, the most logical arrangement was to begin with the individual and unfold his environment from him. For this reason, some of the topics having the highest frequency must be important sub-topics of a large unit. The Constitution should logically be studied before the functions of the national government since their powers are derived more or less directly from this document.

The presentation of such units as courtesy, which received the greatest vote on the second questionnaire, might be done through case studies, or the laboratory method. It should be done before habits are formed, since knowledge helps in the formations of habit. It should result in emotional guidance through social activity.

Since courtesy was considered of such importance, it should be included in other units as "co-operation", "customs", "personality development", and the like. It would seem best to include this topic in as many units as possible, since this quality was most evidently lacking in Indian High School pupils.

In dealing with industrial units, the matter should be handled, as many educators agree, by exploring man's world of work.

For instruction in the institutions of the community, the laboratory method may again be resorted to. The teacher can bring in a banker to explain the banks, or an insurance agent to explain insurance. In the interest of business, most public spirited citizens will co-operate with the schools to this extent.

We need the social studies to comprehend such social institutions as banks, newspapers, and industry, or business, church, school and community relations. These may be determined by the social station, but some understanding is essential to all. For social behavior, the course becomes an intellectual resource for social participation. The teacher must analyze the daily life of the pupils in relation to future activity. In this way, the student will be put in possession of utilities after school, since understanding is necessary to do the simplest things.

Every available suggestion should be used to enable the teacher to be democratic or sympathetic with the pupils' point of view. Only in this way can conviction and independence on the part of the pupil be developed. It is all part of the drive toward a more practical course to satisfy the present democratic urge.

The aim was to include in a course of this type as many units as possible and only those utilities as drawn by the preceding questionnaires.

Many of these utilities were already included in the present course but such topics as courtesy, or taxation had been entirely disregarded. A review of literature showed nothing done in curriculum materials except in a general sense. Very likely others have been confronted with the same problem but whatever their set-up, it is unannounced and unavailable for the average teacher.

The purpose of this study has not been to discard the regular text but to enlarge upon it so as to function to the satisfaction of expressed needs. The question has continually arisen, what shall be taught? The answer is, that which is determined from a study of pupils and the community from which they are drawn. The curriculum must be suited to this level.

It was advisable to build the topics into ten units, since this number can best be fitted to the school year. The placement of these units is also important. Work must be developed gradually and must reach some conclusion before the end of the year. It seemed most logical to start with the smallest social unit and work up. Each associated unit being fitted into its proper place.

RECOMMENDATION

This study has proved interesting and helpful to the author in many ways. The first questionnaire was a quicker method of becoming acquainted with the individual pupil than by means of conferences and could be done with less embarrassment. The questionnaires were filed and often referred to when problems concerning the pupil came up. Knowledge of some of these points made the reticent pupil contributing member of the class. For example, the new boy who had been to Washington often told his class about the mint, the Capitol, or some other place he had visited. While the boy whose parents had been educated in Russia told us of their schooling. Such items alone made the first questionnaire worthwhile, and I would recommend such a form to be used.

The second questionnaire revealed the interest of the general public in the work of the school. It was interesting to note what particular topics these people felt should be taught in such a course. It would be more interesting, no doubt, if we could know what prompted these choices. It is evident that the choices were more or less colored by current social and economic problems. This, however, does not cause them to be invalid, since the course should represent a study of social and economic problems.

For this reason, the subject matter must be flexible, and the arrangement for one year should not be the final arrangement for a second or third. For the teacher who

wishes to tie the course to the community more closely than by depending upon voluntary reports of the pupils both questionnaires furnish a storehouse of information. I feel that each teacher of social studies following this method of adjusting the course to the needs of the community would find the procedure worthwhile and interesting.

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VI

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE I

Pupil's Name _____

Home Address _____

Place of birth _____

Parent's birthplace _____

Education of father _____

Education of mother _____

Citizens of what country? _____

Do they vote in this community? _____

Number in family _____

Occupation of parents _____

Other employment in family _____

How long employed here? _____

Do parents own your home? _____

Do you have an automobile? _____

Do you have a telephone? _____

Do you have a radio, piano or victrola (underline which)? _____

What magazines do you read? _____

What amusement do you enjoy most? _____

Where have you spent most of your vacations? _____

What do you expect to be your vocation? _____

What do you believe in a social studies course would help you most in this line? _____

CHAPTER II

Dear Sir:

In order to revise the civics course at Windham High School to better fit the needs of the community, we are asking you to cooperate with us by checking ten (10) topics which you think most important according to weight. That is, the most important as number one, the next as number two, and so on.

Because of the position which you hold, we feel that you will contact pupils of our school, and we want them to be better qualified to carry out the duties which you may expect of them.

You need not sign your name, simply indicate your profession, trade or occupation.

Yours very truly,

1. Courtesy--(etiquette, general manners, etc.)
2. School organization--(local school set up for administration)
3. Community organization--(local government)
4. The Constitution of the United States
5. Beauty in the community
6. Buying in our community
7. Churches in the community
8. Crime
9. Types of education in the community--(vocational training, night schools, business courses)
10. Family life
11. Government in our community--(federal relief, etc. see 2)
12. Health in our community
13. Housing in our community
14. The place of the newspaper in our community
15. The people of our community--(nationalities, backgrounds)
16. Politics in our community--(part played, graft, organization, etc.)
17. Workmen's compensation
18. Labor unions--(their organization and function)
19. Insurance
20. Power--(water, gas, light, etc.)

21. Property--(value, by whom owned)
22. Effects of public opinion on local government
23. Recreation in the community--(types, value, location)
24. Safety
25. Social welfare--(by whom treated)
26. Taxes
27. Transportation and communication in our community--
(telephone, telegraph, buses)
28. Voting in our community
29. Health in the community--(what it means and where it
lies)
30. Relations with other communities
31. State
32. Big business
33. Labor and its relations
34. Money--(its value and distribution)
35. National and International politics--(work with other
countries)
36. Standard of living--(how it can be maintained)
37. War--(its effects on the community, state, and nation)
38. Protection of life and property
39. Conservation of our national resources
40. Care of the handicapped
41. Laws of town, city, state, and nation
42. How the government is financed

43. Rights and liberties of people

44. The political party--(tendencies of our major and minor groups)

45. Further suggestions

VII

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Monroe

Approved by

Cary
Julian

W. S. Wells

Harold W. Cary

Arthur H. Julian

Graduate Committee

Date *May 29, 1937*

