

CivicsAlliance

from NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of SCHOLARS

# DISOWNED YANKEES

How Connecticut's Social Studies  
Standards Shortchange Students



# Disowned Yankees

How Connecticut's Social Studies  
Standards Shortchange Students

## CivicsAlliance

*from* NATIONAL ASSOCIATION *of* SCHOLARS

420 Madison Avenue, 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10017

Cover design by Chance Layton  
Interior design by Chance Layton  
Published February 2024  
© 2024 National Association of Scholars

# About Us

## The Civics Alliance

The Civics Alliance is a national coalition of organizations and citizens dedicated to preserving and improving America's civics education and preventing the subordination of civics education to political recruitment tools.

We believe American students should comprehend aspects of American government such as the rule of law, the Bill of Rights, elections, elected office, checks and balances, equality under the law, trial by jury, grand juries, civil rights, and military service. American students should learn from these lessons the founding principles of the United States, the structure of our self-governing republic, the functions of government at all levels, and how our key institutions work.

The Civics Alliance works at whatever level of government offers the opportunity for constructive civics education reform. We provide model legislation and social studies standards for policymakers and informative materials to help grassroots activists and citizens push for civics education reform. We inform the public about why civics education needs to be reformed and how it should be done.

Learn more by visiting [civicsalliance.org](https://civicsalliance.org).

## Author Biography

David Randall is Director of Research at the National Association of Scholars and Executive Director of the Civics Alliance. He served as Publication Coordinator for *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards* (2022). His academic publications include *The Concept of Conversation: From Cicero's Sermo to the Grand Siècle's Conversation* (2018) and *The Conversational Enlightenment: The Reconception of Rhetoric in Eighteenth-Century Thought* (2019).

# Contents

Introduction.....	6
The Standards Critique .....	8
Recommended Revisions and Conclusion.....	24
Appendix 1: Miscellaneous Politicized Items .....	27

# Introduction

Americans' birthright is freedom. We teach our children social studies, above all history and civics, so they can know what freedom is, where America's ideas of freedom come from in the long history of Western civilization, how our ancestors achieved their freedom, how our laws, republican institutions, and limitation of the scope of government preserve our freedom, and what they need to do to preserve their country's liberty. We also teach our children social studies so they can learn why their country deserves to be loved, and to learn what we owe to our ancestors—the heroes of the American past who deserve our gratitude because they created a free and prosperous country and bequeathed it to us, their posterity. We teach our children social studies so they can learn to understand the enduring character of the American nation and to love the customs that should define and unite us as a people.

Our children should learn who we Americans are—and then they should be taught about the nations, the faiths, and the history of the world. They should also learn America's common language of liberty, patriotism, and national memory. We must instruct our children so they may become worthy of their ancestors by becoming full members of the American republic and the American nation, self-reliant citizens who respect the dignity and the rights of their fellow Americans, who love their country, and who cherish our liberties and our laws. *Love, liberty, and the law*—these are the touchstones of American social studies instruction.<sup>1</sup>

Connecticut's new *Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards* fails entirely to achieve these fundamental goals.<sup>2</sup> The *Standards* was produced by misguided legislation and a secretive bureaucratic process, and they have produced a document that is bloated, vague, riddled with distortions and absences, subordinated to action civics, and animated

1 These first two paragraphs originally appeared in *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards*, p. 18, <https://civicsalliance.org/american-birthright/>. For the civic purposes of social studies instruction, see also Wilfred M. McClay, *National Expert: Minnesota's Academic Standards Among the Nation's Worst: Review of the 2021 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies, Draft Three* (Center of the American Experiment, 2022), pp. 7-9, <https://files.americanexperiment.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Among-The-Nations-Worst.pdf>. The structure and some of the language of this critique follows that of *Taken for a Ride: How Rhode Island's Social Studies Standards Shortchange Students*, <https://www.nas.org/reports/taken-for-a-ride/full-report>. Connecticut's Department of Education deformed its Standards in much the same way as Rhode Island's Department of Education.

2 *Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards, Approved Draft* (2023) [hereafter *Standards*]; earlier draft available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Board/BoardMaterials100423/Adoption\\_of\\_the\\_Connecticut\\_Elementary\\_and\\_Secondary\\_Social\\_Studies\\_Standards.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Board/BoardMaterials100423/Adoption_of_the_Connecticut_Elementary_and_Secondary_Social_Studies_Standards.pdf).

throughout by a radical identity-politics ideology (sometimes known as Critical Race Theory) that permeates the *Standards* with hostility to groups such as whites, men, and Christians—and, above all, with hostility to America. Social studies instruction should teach students to love America for its liberty; the *Standards* teaches them to hate America because it has not yet achieved the ideological nightmare of equity.

Connecticut will suffer many different ways from the *Standards*' degradation of K-12 social studies instruction. Of course it will have an immediate and harmful effect on classroom social studies instruction, by inducing school districts and teachers to adapt their curriculum to the *Standards*. They also will distort textbook creation and professional development, since these too will have to meet the *Standards*' requirements. In the long run, Connecticut will suffer most because its children will have been educated to hate their society, their state, and many of their fellow citizens.

This isn't a good recipe for helping children grow up to be voters, taxpayers, and law-abiding citizens. The implicit goal of the *Standards* is to foster alienation of the students from each other and from their broader communities. Of course the people who drafted it probably did not mean to promote such negative outcomes. More likely they saw themselves promoting constructive activism among students. But in reaching towards that goal, they inadvertently have planted the seeds of group animosity and resentment.

This report outlines both how the Department of Education produced these *Standards* and the substantive result. The *Standards* were produced by bureaucratic means, drafted in a difficult-to-read format, suffused in radical jargon, and pedagogy, and teach a tattered caricature of history and civics, which will produce radical activists who hate their country rather than self-reliant citizens who love it. We conclude with recommendations for how to fix the adoption process and the substance of Connecticut's social studies instruction, by means of substantive revision of the *Standards*.

# The Standards Critique

## Adoption: Unaccountable and Politicized Procedures

Connecticut authorizes the Department of Education, under the State Board of Education, to “adopt state-wide subject matter content standards, provided such standards are reviewed and revised at least once every ten years.”<sup>3</sup> Connecticut statute makes no provision for public hearings or public input; the manner by which these standards are to be created is left to the Department’s discretion.

The Department used its discretion to choose a process that practically ensured the production of a substantially radicalized curriculum. The Department’s explanation is worth reproducing in full:

Developing Connecticut’s first set of social studies standards was initiated by Public Act 21-2ss, which called for a K-8 model curriculum; the legislation required the model curriculum to include and integrate the subject matter prescribed in section 10-16b of the general statutes for (B) Native American studies, (C) Asian American and Pacific Islander studies, (D) lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and other sexual orientations and gender identities studies, (E) climate change, (F) personal financial management and financial literacy, (G) the military service and experience of American veterans, (H) civics and citizenship, including instruction in digital citizenship and media literacy that provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to safely, ethically, responsibly and effectively use digital technologies to create and consume digital content, communicate with others and participate in social and civic activities, (I) the principles of social-emotional learning, and (J) racism. The standards reflect this requirement.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> CT Gen Stat § 10-4. (2022), <https://law.justia.com/codes/connecticut/2022/title-10/chapter-163/section-10-4/>.

<sup>4</sup> *Standards*, p. 4.



Connecticut’s legislature authorized a K-8 model curriculum including the pedagogies of the radical identity-politics coalition and the climate activists. The Department determined that the K-8 model curriculum required social studies standards crafted along the same principles. “It was determined that new social studies standards were necessary to support the design and development of high-quality model curricula. This need for standards was supported by teachers, social studies curriculum leaders, and district administrators across the state.”<sup>5</sup> *It was determined* means that Connecticut’s Department of Education decided on its own discretion to create state social studies standards along the lines prescribed by the legislation for creating the K-8 model curriculum.

This legislation not only prescribed the radical pedagogical content described above, but also a procedure guaranteed to create further radicalization: “In developing the model curriculum, the Department of Education and State Education Resource Center (1) shall consult with persons and organizations with subject matter expertise in developing the model curriculum.”<sup>6</sup> “Persons and organizations” in this context means, as the *Standards* puts it, “input from advocates.”<sup>7</sup> While “Opportunities were offered for the public and teacher review of the final draft standards document,”<sup>8</sup> these opportunities do not seem to have been terribly important.

The *Standards*, moreover, were written within the constraints provided by the *Social Studies Steering Committee’s Guiding Principles for Standards Development*.<sup>9</sup> These *Guiding Principles* made “diversity & representation” as important as “content & knowledge”—and while that “diversity & representation” was to “use an intersectional lens,”<sup>10</sup> “content & knowledge” actually reduced the four core disciplines of history, civics, economics, and geography, to be no more the one of five categories. Three other “content and knowledge” categories that articulate radical ideological imperatives included:

Principle 8: Social Studies standards promote democratic values, agency, and civic engagement.

Principle 9: Social Studies standards include global perspectives and issues through multicultural and multinational lenses.

Principle 10. Social Studies standards recognize the rich, diverse, and complex history of the United States.<sup>11</sup>

5 Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education, to State Board of Education, October 4, 2023, [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Board/BoardMaterials100423/Adoption\\_of\\_the\\_Connecticut\\_Elementary\\_and\\_Secondary\\_Social\\_Studies\\_Standards.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Board/BoardMaterials100423/Adoption_of_the_Connecticut_Elementary_and_Secondary_Social_Studies_Standards.pdf).

6 Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-25b, <https://casetext.com/statute/general-statutes-of-connecticut/title-10-education-and-culture/chapter-164-educational-opportunities/part-i-general/section-10-25b-model-curriculum-for-grades-kindergarten-to-grade-eight>.

7 *Standards*, p. 4.

8 Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education, to State Board of Education, October 4, 2023.

9 *Standards*, pp. 4-5; *Social Studies Steering Committee, Guiding Principles for Standards Development* (2022), [https://ctsocialstudies.org/images/downloads/Connecticut\\_Elementary\\_and\\_Secondary\\_Social\\_Studies\\_Frameworks/guiding\\_principles\\_final\\_1.pdf](https://ctsocialstudies.org/images/downloads/Connecticut_Elementary_and_Secondary_Social_Studies_Frameworks/guiding_principles_final_1.pdf).

10 *Guiding Principles for Standards Development*, p. 6.

11 *Guiding Principles for Standards Development*, pp. 7-8.

This last principle in particular specifies that,

The standards must acknowledge, examine, and interrogate the historical roots and contemporary manifestations of systemic racism. This requires the exploration of diverse topics related to power and bias (e.g., sexism, gender bias, issues of disability, immigration, or religion) by representing the contributions and experiences of diverse individuals and groups in the teaching of United States history.<sup>12</sup>

This language alone would guarantee that Connecticut's *Standards* failed to provide a guide to actual education, since *systemic racism*, *power*, *bias*, and *diversity* are the vocabulary of radical polemics, sometimes known as Critical Race Theory, designed to create activists hostile to America and its history, and which cannot coexist with openminded inquiry into truth—much less affection for America. But the *Guiding Principles* in general make actual disciplinary instruction only one principle in 15, submerged under a farrago of Skills, Structure, Diversity & Representation, and “content & knowledge” defined as instruction in “systemic racism.” Tellingly, the six Social Studies Content Themes included Justice, Representation, Inclusivity, Global Context, Agency, and Local Connections—but not themes such as Liberty, Civic Virtue, Republican Self-Government, Faith, or America.

The *Guiding Principles* included Skills—and Connecticut's *Standards* have been pervasively weakened by their dependence on the National Council for the Social Studies' *College, Career & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards*<sup>13</sup> and on the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects*. Of these, the *C3 Framework's* gravely misguided enthusiasm for “inquiry-based learning,” tied to the radical activism of “informed action,”<sup>14</sup> has had the most deleterious effect on Connecticut's *Standards*.<sup>15</sup> The *C3 Framework's* emphasis on hollow skills and “inquiries” has come at the expense of student instruction: students are given questions, but no knowledge with which to answer these questions. The focus on “inquiries” also gravely reduces the practical use of the *Standards* as a guide to teachers, in classes, assessments, and professional development: the *Standards* is also supposed to tell teachers what they need to know, and the emphasis on “inquiries,” which cannot be understood without prior knowledge of the subjects of the inquiries, renders the *Standards* useless for that purpose. Furthermore, as will become apparent from the analysis below, “inquiries” serve as a means for ideologues to ask arbitrary questions that forward their activist agenda, rather than to provide a coherent survey of knowledge. Inquiry-based pedagogy is an essential means to turn social studies education into a series of arbitrary inquiries that indoctrinate students into radical ideology.

12 *Guiding Principles for Standards Development*, p. 8.

13 National Council for the Social Studies, *College, Career & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards*, <https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/c3/C3-Framework-for-Social-Studies.pdf>.

14 For the *Standards'* enthusiasm for “civic engagement,” see *Standards*, p. 10. For the actual nature of “civic engagement,” otherwise known as “action civics” or “protest civics,” see Stanley Kurtz, “Action Civics Replaces Citizenship with Partisanship,” *The American Mind*, January 16, 2021, <https://americanmind.org/memo/action-civics-replaces-citizenship-with-partisanship/>; Thomas K. Lindsay and Lucy Meckler, “Action Civics,” “New Civics,” “Civic Engagement,” and “Project-Based Civics”: *Advances in Civic Education?* (Texas Public Policy Foundation, 2020), <https://www.texaspolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Lindsay-Meckler-Action-Civics.pdf>.

15 *Standards*, pp. 7-8.

Connecticut’s Department of Education designed a procedure to create *Standards* guaranteed to substitute radical activism for rigorous depoliticized social studies instruction.

## Format

The Connecticut Department of Education cast the *Standards* in a bureaucratic format that substantially reduces their clarity. The *Standards*’ clotted Introduction includes an explanation (p. 13) of how to understand the *Standards*—and where such explanations are deemed necessary, that is a sign that bureaucrats have created an incomprehensible piece of writing. Each grade band within the *Standards* includes pages of near-identical material recapitulating the Inquiry *Standards* of the *C3 Framework*; only about half of the *Standards* is solid content. The *Standards* presents that content relatively straightforwardly—once you have found it within the surrounding mass of empty verbiage.

## Language

The *Standards* indulges in offputtingly complex, jargon-laden language, which tends toward euphemistic abstractions and vague generalities. Consider the introductory sentence of Modern World History: “In the high school Modern World History course, students study both change and continuity as they investigate diverse perspectives and the interconnectedness of people and ideas over time.” (p. 72) This says nothing more than, *Students study Modern World History in the Modern World History class*. Other items are virtually incomprehensible, such as “Analyze the relationships and interactions between growing industry and physical systems to explain reciprocal influences that occur among them” (MW.Geo.4.a., p. 77).

Where the *Standards* is not focused on irrelevancies in service of diversity ideology, or polemically assuming interpretations by characterizations such as *exploitative* and *oppressive*, it is pedantically banal: for example, “Develop questions relevant to self, family, and school community” (K.Inq.1.a., p. 17) and “Analyze the complex and interacting cultural, religious, and racial factors that influenced perspectives of imperialist policies” (MW.His.4.a., p. 78; and see US.His.4.a., p. 87). The pedantry is only interrupted by the impression of semi-literacy given by the *Standards*’ pervasive use of *impact* instead of *affect*, *effect*, or *consequence*.

Such euphemism and generality aligns with reluctance to describe human motivations, causations, and actions—the fabric of history. An item such as “Analyze how access to resources resulted in imperialist policies that had a range of costs and benefits for different groups” (MW.Eco.1.a., p. 78) not only is grammatically incoherent but also gives causative weight to the reified abstraction *access to resources* rather than to what specific people thought and did—and fails to consider how the same *access to resources* could result in profoundly different beliefs and deeds. The *Standards*’ pedantic banality underwrites economic determinism that actively degrades historical understanding.

If the reader applies the Gunning Fog Index<sup>16</sup> to the *Standards*, that rough-and-ready calculator of readability finds far too many sentences where you need a graduate education to figure out what you're supposed to teach to second graders. *Standards* should be written to be easily comprehensible by every citizen—and it does teachers no favors to require them to read prose written for PhDs with a taste for polysyllabic mush.<sup>17</sup> Clearer language also would promote clearer thought, which the *Standards* sorely needs.

## Arbitrary Inquiry

The *Standards* uses the “inquiry-based learning” championed by the *C3 Framework* (pp. 7-9)—focused on “compelling questions” rather than content knowledge. This pedagogy suffers many different flaws. Some of these already have been identified by critics of inquiry-based learning—that the *C3 Framework*'s version of inquiry-based learning fuses the pedagogy with the pedagogy of action civics, and that the focus on questions rather than answers practically replaces content rather than supplementing it. With inquiry-based learning, teachers and students are taught questions without answers, and action without knowledge, but teachers and students learn little or no actual social studies content.

The *Standards* makes clear several further problems with inquiry-based learning. In the first place, instruction based on inquiries leads to arbitrary, incoherent study. Consider this unpoliticized question in the *Standards*: “Classify a series of historical events and developments in a region as examples of political change and continuity (e.g., Fall of Rome, Korean Demilitarized Zone, Fall of Saigon, Partition of India).” (6.His.2.a., p. 57; and see 7.His.2.a., pp. 63-64) The question itself is so vague that, as the examples indicate, it allows one to choose any political event in human history—and to say nothing of more note than the tautological observation that it is an example of political change and continuity. This provides no guidance to a teacher who does not already know history—or, indeed, to one who does. The same could be said of other, more politicized items: “Analyze how human-environment interactions influence movement and settlement (e.g., Floating City of Ganvie, The Dry Corridor, Tenochtitlán, Silk Road, trans-Saharan caravans).” (7.Geo.8.a., p. 62; and see 7.Geo.9.a., p. 62).

These inquiries, both by polemically shaped questions and by equally polemically shaped examples, facilitate highly politicized, selective study of history. Consider the entirety of the high school United States History questions on World War II (p. 89).

US.His.1.c. Evaluate the role of economic and political developments that created the conditions leading to WWII and the Holocaust (e.g., Great Depression, nationalism, militarism).

US.His.16.c. Develop arguments about the juxtaposition between the United States' founding ideals and actions of the Federal government during World War

<sup>16</sup> Gunning Fog Index, <http://gunning-fog-index.com>.

<sup>17</sup> Tapioca.

II using evidence from multiple relevant sources (e.g., Japanese-American Internment, Holocaust intervention, Braceros Program, Fair Employment Practices Act, segregated regiments, women in the military).

US.His.16.d. Describe the achievements and contributions of diverse individuals and groups during World War II using evidence from historical sources (e.g., Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, Tuskegee Airman, Navajo Code Talkers, 442 Japanese-American regiment, 158th Regimental Combat Team).

US.His.1.d. Evaluate how the demand for labor on homefront in World War II shaped gender roles (e.g., mobilization, victory gardens, rationing, War Production Board).

US.His.1.e. Evaluate the United States government's complex responses to the Holocaust while recognizing the history of antisemitism in both historical and contemporary contexts (e.g., Voyage of the St. Louis, lack of response to the Final Solution, Nuremberg Trials).

These questions include *nothing* about the actual conduct of World War II, save for “the achievements and contributions of diverse individuals and groups,” defined by the canon of identity-group politics. Neither teachers nor students will learn from this who we fought, why we fought, where we fought, or how we fought. They will not learn that our president during World War II was Franklin Delano Roosevelt, its notable commanders such men as Dwight Eisenhower, Douglas MacArthur, and George Patton, that Lend Lease existed, America's role as Arsenal of Democracy, or that Americans liberated Dachau.

The *Standards'* compelling question about America's founding ideals doesn't mention the Four Freedoms or the G. I. Bill, the compelling question about labor doesn't mention wartime migrations or labor unions, and there are no compelling questions about the patriotic culture that united Americans during World War II (e.g., *Captain America*, “Boogie-Woogie Bugle Boy,” *Casablanca*, *Up Front*), the economic system that underpinned American victory (e.g., Henry Kaiser and Liberty Ships, the Inch Pipelines, the growth of employment-based benefits, the creation of the nuclear industry)—and the *Standards* strangely lacks compelling questions about achievements and contributions of the white men who were 80%+ of the American armed services during World War II.

The *Standards* compelling questions are only compelling if your only interest is to marry identity politics ideology with a sustained desire to accentuate the negative in American history. But the most important point is that inquiry-based learning makes it easy to create polemical, selective history. This is not inquiry-based learning, but inquisition-based accusation.

Inquiry-based learning is arbitrary, incoherent, and polemical. But even more fundamentally, it is not a guide to social studies knowledge, but a commentary on a real digest of such knowledge. To use inquiry-based learning fundamentally misunderstands the role of such *standards*. They are meant explicitly to tell teachers what their students need to know—and, implicitly, to tell teachers, and the educators of teachers, what teachers must know. A standard composed on inquiries assumes this basic knowledge, when it should be providing it. As these *Standards* fully demonstrate, inquiry-based learning makes it impossible for a standard to fulfill its basic purpose.

## Absent Reading and Writing Expectations

The *Standards* provides no writing expectations at all; none of the inquiry-based skills it prescribes include the ability to read or write. Social studies instruction should include reading and writing expectations that build toward students capable by graduation from high school of reading a 200-page history book and writing an intellectually and stylistically sophisticated 10-page history paper. Students who met these expectations would demonstrate that they are prepared for an undergraduate history course. The *Standards*, by contrast, would allow Connecticut high schools to graduate students who cannot write a paragraph on a social studies topic.

## Substance

### Structural Absences

The *Standards* badly misserves Connecticut students and teachers by what it omits. Connecticut students will suffer as much from what they have not been taught as from what they have. Of course no social studies standards can or should attempt to include every topic. There are limited hours of social studies instruction. We will confine our catalogue of absences in the *Standards* to broad categories.

### K-3 Patriotic Content

The *Standards* radically truncates content that teaches K-3 students to love America and know its symbols, its traditions, and its history. The *Standards* neither reinforces nor builds upon the brief Grade 1 instruction in the Pledge of Allegiance and America's symbols (1.Civ.8.a., p. 24; 1.Civ.8.b., p. 24). Instruction in the Pledge of Allegiance does not actually mention the flag or the country to which the Pledge is directed; moreover, it bizarrely reduces the Pledge's importance by making it nothing more than a tool, along with "classroom procedures," to "promote democratic principles." The symbols of the United States likewise are taught to

“illustrate democratic principles” rather than to encourage affection and reverence for America. Such potential patriotic instruction as is implied by “Generate questions about significant individuals or groups from the past in our community or nation” (1.His.3.a., p. 25) is immediately compromised by the identity-politics stipulation “significant individuals determined by gender, race, and/or religion” (and see 2.His.3.a., p. 31). So too is the direction to “Generate reasons about why national and state observances and celebrations have been established to honor individuals, groups, and events in the United States,” where the examples are largely confined to identity-group celebrations: “National Hispanic Heritage Month, Veterans Day, Black History Month, Women’s History Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Memorial Day, LGBTQ Pride Month, Juneteenth” (2.His.14.a., p. 31) Grade 3’s coverage of Connecticut government and history (pp. 36-38) is severely compromised by identity politics ideology and action civics commitments and includes minimal coverage of the United States (3.Civ.5.a., p. 36). The very titles of the first four grade bands make clear the excision of America from basic social studies instruction: Kindergarten (Understanding My Communities), Grade 1 (Society and Ourselves), Grade 2 (Contributing to Society), Grade 3 (Connecticut and Local History). The *Standards* avoids instruction in *American* history, traditions, celebrations, and stories, save where they can be subordinated to identity politics and action civics.

### Economics

The *Standards* provides no Economics standards, although Economics, along with Civics, Geography, and History, is one its four core domains. Different states frame economics instruction as a required course, an elective course, or instruction to be integrated in other courses—but the *Standards* provides no dedicated sequence of Economic instruction.

The items the *Standards* labels as Economics are a selective and polemical hodge-podge of more-or-less economics-related queries. The *Standards* does include one item that asks students to “Explain how economic fluctuations and cycles affect individuals and groups in a region (e.g., deflation, inflation, unemployment, depression, recession)” (7.Eco.12.a., p. 64). Yet their examples omit employment, prosperity, and economic growth—everything positive in the free-market economic cycle. The *Standards*’ choice of examples gives the impression of anti-free-market polemic camouflaged as economics instruction.

The *Standards*’ more tangentially economic inquiries that comprise the bulk of the Economics items also give the impression of polemical distortion. The study of “the role of supply and demand within and among regions” includes a variety of primary goods, including the “Tulip mania” so often used as a polemic against free markets, while including no industrial goods or services (6.Eco.3.a., p. 58); yet the benefits of free trade centrally include the development of sophisticated manufactures and services. The examples for “how economic decision-making in a region can affect the true cost of goods or services” consist of the negative and environmentalist catalogue of “carbon emissions, child and forced labor, strip mining, global waste trade” (6.Eco.8.a., p. 58). Some items contain oddly specific progressive

concerns: “Compare the benefits and costs of neighborhood gentrification in the United States” (4.Eco.1.a., p. 45).

Within economic history, the *Standards* asks students to discuss “exploitation” of colonies, without considering the possibilities of investment, trade, defense, mutual benefit, or consent of any sort. (5.Eco.14.a., p. 50) Likewise it gives examples of “indentured and slave labor” as aspects of the colonial American economy, but not the fundamentally important free labor (5.Eco.3.a., p. 50). Then, it specifies that students should “Analyze how the abilities and expertise that individuals from the African Diaspora brought with them to the colonies contributed to economic specialization and trade”—but never inquires about the natures and the effects of the abilities and expertise of America’s European settlers (5.Eco.4.b., p. 50)

The *Standards* provides minimal Economics instruction, and what they provide is frequently subject to partisan distortion.

### Geography

The *Standards* reshapes geography as “study [of] the human-environment interaction and movement of people and ideas” (p. 39), with steady emphasis on *climate change*, *deforestation*, *human-made disasters*, *pollution* (4.Geo.12.a., p. 44; 4.Geo.12.b., p. 44; 4.Geo.5.a., p. 44; 6.Geo.2.c., p. 56; 6.Geo.4.a., p. 56; 7.His.9.a., p. 63), but provides no basic instruction in geography. These three items provide the closest approach to actual geography instruction.

Use both local and state maps of Connecticut to describe location of cultural and environmental characteristics over time (e.g., civic spaces, economic centers, place, population density, settlement patterns, waterways) (3.Geo.3.a., p. 37).

Demonstrate spatial awareness by creating maps to illustrate regions within or extending beyond the political boundaries of the United States (e.g., Grand Canyon, Great Lakes, Standing Rock Indian Reservation, Pacific Northwest) (4.Geo.1.a., p. 43).

Demonstrate spatial awareness by constructing maps to represent spatial patterns and environmental characteristics of a region (e.g., absolute location, built environment, natural features, population density, relative location) (6.Geo.1.a., p. 56).

A great many inquiries ask students to use maps, but they never stop to ensure that students possess basic geographical knowledge—that Hartford is the capital of Connecticut, that Washington, D.C. is the capital of the United States, where precisely is the Connecticut River, that Connecticut borders upon the Long Island Sound, which is part of the Atlantic Ocean, or the names of the world’s continents, oceans, major rivers, deserts, and mountain



ranges. Students are expected to conduct geographical analysis without ever having learned the fundamental facts of geography.

### United States History

The *Standards'* instruction in American history, in Grade 5 United States History I, Grade 8 United States History II, and High School United States History III, greatly minimizes the histories of America's *liberty, faith, culture, technology, wars, and prosperity*. It also greatly diminishes the distinctive English heritage of America and its enduring influence upon the country.

The absence of military history is especially striking. After a Grade 5 sequence on the American Revolution (pp. 51-52), the *Standards* provides no inquiry about the actual conduct of the Mexican-American War (8.His.14.a., p. 70), the Civil War (8.His.2.a., p. 71), World War I, (US.His.14.a., p. 87), World War II, save for "the achievements and contributions of diverse individuals and groups" (US.His.16.d., p. 89), the Korean and Vietnam Wars (US.His.1.f., p. 89), or our wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (US.His.15.b., p. 91), and makes no mention of the War of 1812 or the Spanish-American War. The *Standards* virtually erases how Americans fought, or even that they did fight.

To focus upon Connecticut's own extraordinary contribution to these histories, the *Standards* does not mention *Puritan, Yankee, or Connecticut Yankee*—icons of Connecticut's centuries-long contribution to America's liberty, faith, culture, technology, wars, and prosperity.

The *Standards* repeatedly enumerates Indian tribes and various immigrant nationalities, while remaining almost wholly incurious about the Puritans and Yankees who founded Connecticut and were the large majority of its population in the centuries since 1635 (1.Geo.3.a., p. 25; and see 3.Geo.4.b., p. 37; 3.His.2.a., p. 37; 8.His.5.a., p. 69). It takes the time to ask students to "Explain the significance of the sovereignty of Northeastern Woodland Native American tribes of Connecticut" (3.Civ.4.a., p. 36), but asks no similarly precise questions about Puritan and Yankee worldviews. Vague questions only hint at the fabric of Yankee life: "Describe ways in which families and communities in early United States History were organized to promote mutual benefit and address challenges (e.g., familial and social structures of Indigenous, European, and Black communities)" (3.Civ.6.b., p. 37). It only hints at the existence of Connecticut's extraordinary contribution to American history by the brief mention of the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut (5.His.9.a., p. 50) and the equally brief citation of a scattering of individuals including Thomas Hooker and Nathan Hale, subsumed under the activist rubric, "Generate questions about individuals and groups who represented communities committed to change in Connecticut" (3.His.3.a., p. 37; and see 5.Civ.6.a., p. 50). When it does mention *town hall meetings* and *juries*, it blandly brackets them with Indians' *tribal councils*, so that students have no sense of Connecticut's distinctively English heritage of liberty and self-government. (5.Civ.4.a., p. 50)

Notable excised inhabitants of Connecticut include:

Dean Acheson (American statesman), Ethan Allen (pioneer and Revolutionary War hero), Joseph and Stewart Alsop (journalists), P. T. Barnum (entertainment entrepreneur), Henry Ward Beecher (abolitionist clergyman), William F. Buckley, Jr. (public intellectual), George H. W. Bush (president), Al Capp (cartoonist), Vinton Cerf (internet pioneer), Anthony Comstock (anti-vice reformer), Ann Coulter (public intellectual), Jonathan Edwards (theologian), Josiah Willard Gibbs (scientific polymath), Charlotte Perkins Gillman (feminist), Charles Goodyear (technological entrepreneur), Dorothy Hamill (athlete), Katherine Hepburn (actress), Charles Ives (composer), J. P. Morgan (financier), Ralph Nader (political activist), Roger Sherman (Founding Father), Alfred P. Sloan (automotive executive), Wallace Stevens (poet), Eli Terry (mass production innovator), and Elihu Yale (education philanthropist).

The absence of these individuals is not a happenstance of the examples given in the *Standards*. The *Standards'* inquiries barely touch upon the fields these individuals excelled in; their structural absences render it virtually impossible that such figures would be discussed in class. The *Standards* excises the heart of Connecticut's past, and with it the heart of America's past.

### World History

The *Standards* substitutes World History (Grade 6 World Regional Studies I, Grade 7 World Regional Studies II, High School Modern World History) for dedicated instruction in the history of Western Civilization. The *Standards* therefore cannot provide a coherent presentation of Western Civilization's ideals and institutions of liberty, which Connecticut students need if they are to understand the philosophical sources and political background for the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

The *Standards* instead provides a disjointed and vague World History sequence that proceeds from incoherent, brief snippets of modern world history in Grades 6 and 7 to a high school course that briefly covers the development of early modern world empires (1492-1800) and sketches largely European world history from the Enlightenment to the present. World History provides virtually nothing of Western history before the Enlightenment, from Sumer to the Glorious Revolution—and provides equally little of the histories of Japan, China, India, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.

The *Standards* mentions the Soviet Union twice, but never mentions Russia (MW.His.2.c., p. 79; MW.Civ.14.b., p. 79). It mentions the "imperialist policies" of Japan, Great Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, but provides virtually no information about those countries' history (MW.His.1.d., p. 78). It mentions "the persecution and murder of millions of Jews" during the Holocaust, but says nothing about the prior history of the Jews and Judaism, save by the bizarre circumlocution "Abrahamic religions in Israel and Palestine" (6.Geo.5.b., p. 57). The

*Standards* provide little or none of the background knowledge that would allow students or teachers to make sense of the fragments of world history it does provide.

### Excised Individuals

The *Standards* generally includes remarkably few individuals, save for identity-politics purposes. The *Standards*' treatment of the Age of Discovery barely alludes to the importance of individuals: "Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by the movement of individuals and groups during maritime exploration (e.g., Treaty of Tordesillas, Seven Voyages of Zheng He, Columbian exchange)" (MW.His.1.a., p. 76). It does not mention actual discoverers such as Columbus, much less Magellan and Vasco de Gama.) The only individuals mentioned in reference to the Civil War are "individuals [who] challenged gender roles in the Civil War Era." The *Standards* does not mention Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, or Robert E. Lee, but they mention Loreta Janeta Velázquez, simply because she claimed in an 1876 memoir, without corroboration, to have served in the Confederate army disguised as a man (8.His.5.b., p. 71).<sup>18</sup> The *Standards* mentions Washington, D.C., but not George Washington; the Emancipation Proclamation, but not Abraham Lincoln, "military strategies [that] shaped the Civil War (8.His.2.a., p. 71), but not Ulysses S. Grant; appeasement, but not its prophetic opponent Winston Churchill. The pervasive excision of individuals underwrites a quasi-Marxist, determinist interpretation of history, shaped by social and economic forces rather than individual choices. It is a history for passive subjects rather than for free citizens.

### Distortions

#### General Politicization

The *Standards* includes a great many politicized items. (See **Appendix 1: Miscellaneous Politicized Items**.) These generally forward the politicization of Connecticut's social studies instruction. The different politicizations register different aspects of the *Standards*' radical ideology.

Within this general politicization, the *Standards* focuses especially on several individual distortions.

#### Ideological Vocabulary

The *Standards*' word choice consistently replaces words whose concepts it apparently wishes to erase from social studies instruction. So the *Standards* consistently substitutes

---

<sup>18</sup> The entire memoir may be fiction. William C. Davis, *Inventing Loreta Velasquez: Confederate Solider Impersonator, Media Celebrity, and Con Artist* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2016).

“gender” for “sex,”<sup>19</sup> and equally consistently substitutes “societies” for “countries” (p. 59), including in the titles of Grade 1, “Society and Ourselves” (p. 21) and Grade 2, “Contributing to Society” (p. 27). The *Standards* likewise uses the weak locution “local, national, and global communities,” rather than phrases such as *America* or *our country*. (pp. 21, 27)

The *Standards* also substitutes “democratic principles” for *American principles* or *principles of liberty*. (pp. 21, 27). In Grade 1, it subordinates “equality, justice, liberty, republicanism” as subsets of “democratic principles.” (1.Civ.8.a., p. 24); American symbols likewise only “illustrate democratic principles” (1.Civ.8.b., p. 24) The phrase persists throughout the *Standards* (2.Civ.8.a., p. 30; 5.Civ.8.a., p. 51; p. 65; 8.Civ.10.a., p. 69; 8.Civ.10.b., p. 69; CG.Civ.8.b., p. 98). The *Standards*, moreover, uses the oddly Foucaultian phrase “access to political power” to talk about our founding principles of liberty (8.Civ.8.b., p. 69).

Examples could be multiplied: the *Standards* relies extensively on progressive distortions of vocabulary such as *alderperson*, *enslaved*, *enslavement*, *identities*, *Indigenous*, *selectperson* (1.Geo.3.a., p. 25, 3.Civ.1.a., p. 36; 5.His.14.b., p. 49; 6.Geo.6.a., p. 57; 8.His.6.a., p. 68; MW.Geo.1.a., p. 77). Generally, the *Standards*’ vocabulary serves their general radicalization.

### Identity Politics

The *Standards* pervasively subordinates social studies instruction to identity politics.

- In Grade 1, it instructs teachers to “Generate questions about ... significant individuals determined by gender, race, and/or religion.” (1.His.3.a., p. 25) Elsewhere, the *Standards* specifies study of “diverse communities,” “diverse perspectives,” “diverse cultures,” “cultural diversity,” “cultural enclaves,” “cultural characteristics of communities,” “lived experiences of diverse cultural groups,” “diverse individuals or groups,” “population distribution,” “population diversity,” and “business investments in worker training and diversity,” generally defined by identity group politics.<sup>20</sup>
- A standard on “nation and state observances and celebrations” largely includes identity group celebrations: “National Hispanic Heritage Month, Veterans Day, Black History Month, Women’s History Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Memorial Day, LGBTQ Pride Month, Juneteenth” (2.His.14.a., p. 31).
- The instruction to “Compare how individuals and groups have affected change in a region using historical and contemporary examples” uses a progressive catalogue

19 1.His.3.a., p. 25; 4.Civ.12.a., p. 45; 5.Civ.6.a., p. 50; 7.Geo.4.a., p. 63; 8.His.5.b., p. 71; US.His.10.a., p. 87; US.His.1.d, p. 89; US.Civ.5.b., p. 90; CG.Civ.13.a., p. 99.

20 1.Geo.6.a., p. 25; 2.His.3.a., p. 31; p. 33; 3.Geo.4.a., p. 37; 3.His.2.b., p. 37; 4.Geo.5.a., p. 44; 4.Geo.6.a., p. 44; 4.His.5.a., p. 44; 4.Geo.5.b., p. 44; 4.Eco.6.a., p. 45; p. 46.

for its examples: “World Wildlife Fund, Malala Yousafzai, Mohandas Gandhi, women’s rights in Saudi Arabia, Free Thai Movement” (6.Civ.14.a., p. 57; and see US.His.6.a., p. 88; US.Geo.3.a., p. 91).

- One item simply recapitulates the identity-rights movement’s goals: “Evaluate the effectiveness of individuals, groups, and institutions in addressing issues of civil rights and justice in the post-World War II era (e.g., disability, education, environmental justice, LGBTQ+ rights, poverty, racial and gender equity, voting access).” (US.Civ.5.b., p. 90)
- The study of the American Revolution carefully separates out the question, “Explain why members of the Northeastern Woodland Native American tribes and Black communities held conflicting views regarding support for the American Revolution” (5.His.4.b., p. 51), and adds to this the note to “Describe how people’s perspectives of the American Revolution are documented in historical records while noting representation of marginalized voices” (5.His.6.a., p. 51; and see 8.His.10.a., p. 68)
- The *Standards* even combine prompts to action civics with the identity politics imperatives: “Explain how people have worked and are working to change laws related to communities, inclusive of religion, ethnicity, and gender, within and across United States regions.” (4.Civ.12.a., p. 45)

The identity politics imperative not only subordinates social studies instruction but also reduces some items to complete incoherence. The *Standards*, for example, instructs students to study “cultural universals” as an example of “how cultural characteristics vary among regions and shape diversity of local communities” (7.Geo.10.a., p. 63). The definition of a cultural universal, of course, is that it does not vary, and that it unites mankind. The *Standards* could make sense of this item only by discarding identity politics ideology or—as we may fear they will do in their next revision—by removing the last vestiges of social studies instruction in our common humanity.

### Action Civics

The *Standards*’ commitment to action civics goes back to kindergarten, where it turns classroom life itself into a forum of action civics: “Use listening, consensus-building, and voting procedures to take action in the classroom” (K.Inq.4.f., p. 18). The *Standards* repeatedly uses the words *community* and *community leaders* instead of civic leaders, with the explicit notes “not just official leaders” and “advocacy” as early as kindergarten. (K.Civ.1.a., p. 19; K.Civ.2.a., p. 19; and see 3.Civ.2.a., p. 36) The *Standards* hints at yet more action civics by associating

“working together” with “volunteer organizations” (3.Civ.6.a., p. 36). These circumlocutions orient students’ definitions of civic activities toward protest non-profits from the very beginning. The recourse to *community*, never rooted fundamentally in town, state, or country, persists. (1.Geo.2.a., p. 25) The *Standards* continues to refer to “advocacy” and “protest” (3.Civ.12.a., p. 37; 7.Civ.2.a., p. 63; 7.Eco.9.a., p. 64; MW.His.3.a., p. 80; US.Civ.2.a., p. 88). The *Standards* tells students how to “work together,” but never says that individual effort and the pursuit of private interest also forward the common good (K.Civ.6.a., p. 19; and see 2.His.1.a., p. 31).

*Community*, of course, possesses politicized valences: examples of a “community issue” consist of environmentalist priorities such as “park improvements, water use, recycling” (2.Civ.10.a., p. 30), rather than (say) lower taxes, better policing, or rezoning to promote economic growth. The *Standards* similarly conflates the “needs of the community” with progressive policy preferences: “education, land use, safety, transportation, housing” (2.His.4.a., p. 31; and see 3.Civ.13.a., p. 37; 4.Civ.14.a., p. 45). Even more explicitly, it imposes the ideology of “equity” and progressive policy preferences: “Describe how people have tried to improve communities to meet the needs of and create more equity for residents both past and present (e.g., greenspaces, safety laws, zoning, affordable housing, support for immigrant families)” (2.Civ.14.a., p. 31).

The *Standards’* commitment to action civics receives progressively more intense articulations:

- “Use a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to evaluate and implement strategies to address problems in classrooms and schools” (4.Inq.4.f., p. 41).
- “Assess individual and collective capacities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of strategies, and potential outcomes” (6.Inq.4.f., p. 55).
- “Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in classrooms, schools, and out-of-school civic contexts” (8.Inq.4.f., p. 67).
- “Evaluate and implement strategies for individual and collective action to address global problems in classrooms, schools, and out-of-school civic contexts” (MW. Inq.4.f.; p. 75).
- “Evaluate and implement strategies for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems in classrooms, schools, and out-of school civic contexts” (CG.Inq.4.f., p. 95).

The high school Civics and Government standard, of course, receives an especially heavy dose of action civics. Here the *Standards* incorporates “civic engagement” and “communication of civic knowledge through deliberation and informed action about political events and issues” (p. 93). It adds to this both, “Analyze advocacy and activism in the United States related to a contemporary human rights issue using the United States Constitution and other historical sources (e.g., youth activism, journalism, social media, whistleblowers, protestors, strikes, boycotts, petitions, resistance)” (CG.Civ.14.b., p. 98) and, “Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies used by an individual, group or institution in addressing a social problem at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level (e.g., social protest movements, get-out-the-vote campaigns, conscious consumerism)” (CG.Civ.5.b., p. 99). Connecticut’s Civics and Government is a prompt for vocational training in progressive activism.

Action civics, heavily politicized, permeates the *Standards*. The *Standards* subordinates study of the American Revolution to action civics: “Illustrate how individuals and groups in the Revolutionary Era and today have and can effect change (e.g., school, community, and state issues)” (5.Civ.14.a., p. 52). High school Modern World History includes a typical incorporation of action civics within a putatively historical curriculum: “Analyze how individuals and groups advocate for economic, political, and social change in international contexts (e.g., legislation, courts, resistance, protest, boycott, conscious consumerism)” (MW.Civ.12.a., p. 80).

*The Connecticut Standards’* commitment follows the framework established by the C3 *Framework*. This is an explanation, not an excuse.

# Recommended Revisions and Conclusion

Our first recommendation, of course, is simply to use *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards*,<sup>21</sup> which focuses upon the ideals and institutions of liberty, as the model for Connecticut's social studies standards. Yet if Connecticut's Department of Education were to engage in detailed reform of its existing *Standards*, we believe these should be the priorities.

Process Reform: The Connecticut Department of Education should adopt a process of well-publicized public comment and public hearing for its academic content standards. The Connecticut Department of Education also should draw its content advisors from parents, citizens, and teachers whose political and ideological views represent, in rough proportion to the population, the full range of beliefs held by Connecticut citizens.

Simplify Format: The *Standards* should adopt a straightforward bullet-point format; use lucid, everyday language; remove skills instruction; remove supporting questions; and generally remove all components of the *Standards* except the core content.

Improve Language: The *Standards* should remove all jargon, particularly jargon that forwards politicization and jargon that has become popular in the last generation. The *Standards* should replace vague euphemism with precise, concrete statements.

Remove Inquiry-Based Learning: The *Standards* should remove the inquiry-based learning format drawn from the *C3 Framework*, which facilitates arbitrary politicization, and replace it with statements of factual content to be learned.

Reading and Writing Expectations: The *Standards* should include reading and writing standards in each grade that build toward the expectation that twelfth graders demonstrate that they are prepared for an undergraduate history course by reading a 200-page history book and writing an intellectually and stylistically sophisticated 10-page history paper.

---

21 *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards*, <https://civicsalliance.org/american-birthright/>.



Remove All Politicization: The *Standards* should remove all politicization, especially politicization that forwards identity-politics ideology. The *Standards* should make sure to avoid ideological vocabulary that forwards politicization.

Remove All Action Civics: The *Standards* should remove all action civics prompts and requirements.

K-3 Patriotic Content: The K-3 standards should be revised to include substantial age-appropriate coverage throughout of America's symbols, stories, heroes, history, government, and freedom.

Include Dedicated Economics Instruction: The *Standards* should include dedicated coverage of Economics, which explains how free markets work and how they complement political liberty.

Revise Geography: The *Standards* should reform Geography instruction to focus on learning the map of the country and the world, and not on politicized topics such as climate change.

United States History: The *Standards* should recenter United States History upon the linked narratives of its *liberty, faith, culture, technology, wars, and prosperity*. It also should include proper coverage of the distinctive English heritage of America and its enduring influence upon the country.

Connecticut History: The *Standards* should recenter Connecticut History upon its role in these same linked narratives of *liberty, faith, culture, technology, wars, and prosperity*, and teach students the history of Connecticut's exceptional Puritan and Yankee accomplishments.

Western Civilization: The *Standards* should provide discrete, sustained coverage of Western Civilization throughout K-12 instruction, to teach students the coherent narrative of the ideals and institutions of liberty contained within the histories of the ancient Middle East, Israel, Greece, Rome, Medieval Christendom, the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, and medieval and early modern England.

World History: The *Standards* should contain discrete coverage of World History, to introduce students to the histories of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Restore Individuals: The *Standards* should restore individuals and their accomplishments, above all the individuals who made American history and the history of liberty, including Christopher Columbus, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Winston Churchill.

Historical Documents: The *Standards* should be framed around instruction in primary sources, above all in America's documents of liberty.

Licensure Requirements and Professional Development: The Department of Education also should update its licensure requirements and professional development to ensure that its teachers are equipped to teach curriculum that aligns with these suggested revisions.

## Conclusion

Connecticut's citizens deserve excellent social studies standards. The Department of Education's *Standards* fails entirely to achieve this goal; it teaches students to hate their country, its history, and its ideals, and to know only distorted tatters of the history of the world. Connecticut citizens and policymakers should work at once to make all the statutory and administrative changes necessary to make sure that the Department of Education crafts proper social studies standards for their children—standards that educate Connecticut's children to know and to love their American birthright of liberty.

# Appendix 1: Miscellaneous Politicized Items

This Appendix includes a broad selection of quotations from the *Standards*, which illustrate the varied impositions on social studies instruction of politicization.

## Grade 1

- The *Standards* specifies that one should “Describe how human actions can affect the cultural and environmental characteristics of the community,” but never asks students to describe how (for example) private investment can improve the economy (1.Geo.5.a., p. 25).
- The *Standards* casually amalgamates “catastrophic disaster” and “environmental hazards.” (1.Geo.12.a., p. 26)

## Grade 5

- Students are to learn about “Connecticut’s connection to the transatlantic slave trade,” but little else about the colonial Connecticut economy (5.His.14.d., p. 50). Two of the three examples of significant details in colonial history in Connecticut are negative: “Pequot War, Connecticut Witch Trials, Charter Oak” (5.His.16.a., p. 51)
- The *Standards* asks students to discuss “bias”—a word that presupposes an unbiased observer, and is simply a prompt for selective dismissal of points of view (5.His.10.a., p. 51; and see MW.Inq.4.c., p. 74).

- The *Standards* focuses discussion on *oppression* and *resistance*, without considering such alternatives as *free consent*, *decent life*, *cooperation*, and *accommodation*: “Describe resistance movements, both individual and group, against oppression in the Colonial Era (e.g., Stono Rebellion, Pontiac Rebellion, *New English Canaan*).” (5.His.14.c., p. 50; and see 8.His.3.a., p. 69) It should be noted here that Thomas Morton’s *New English Canaan* (1637) was the unhappy Thomas Morton’s brief against the New England colonies, and that the *Standards* conspicuously fails to provide a matching defense of the New England colonies.
- When the *Standards* actually discusses the foundational love of liberty that led to the American Revolution, it uses the most anodyne phrasing possible: “Explain how political and economic beliefs shaped the perspectives held by Patriots and Loyalists leading to the American Revolution (e.g., individual rights, liberties, representation, sovereignty, trade and taxation).” (5.His.4.a.; p. 51 and see 8.His.4.a., p. 68)

## Grade 6

- The *Standards* includes odd locutions such as “Abrahamic religions in Israel and Palestine” (6.Geo.5.b., p. 57)—a phrase that oddly abstracts away the individual religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, yet which insists on the formal equality of Israel and the would-be state of Palestine.

## Grade 7

- The *Standards* implies that human rights override America’s sovereign right to secure its borders: “Identify the powers and responsibilities of individuals, groups, and media in addressing human rights issues in both governmental and nongovernmental contexts (e.g., Declaration of Human Rights, International Refugee Assistance, United States Border Security, United Nations).” (7.Civ.1.a., p. 63)
- The *Standards* mentions “gold inflation related to Mansa Musa’s Hajj,” but not that Musa was accompanied by large numbers of his slaves on his Hajj—or that Mansa Musa’s wealth depended significantly on the slave trade. (7.Eco.6.a., p. 64)

## Grade 8: United States History

- The *Standards* describes the Three-Fifths Clause as an example of “laws that institutionalized slavery in the Colonial Era and in the Constitution,” without mentioning the vital point that it *reduced* the power of slave states within the new federal government (8.Civ.5.a., p. 68).
- The *Standards* oddly refers to “work resistance” by slaves, presumably to refer to slow or bad work (8.His.3.a., p. 69).
- The *Standards* tells students to “Analyze how secession sought to preserve the social, economic, and racial hierarchies throughout the United States (e.g., domestic labor, manufacturing, slavocracy, textiles)” (8.His.1.d., p. 70). This not only fails to introduce students to the Southern argument that they fought for states’ rights, but it also obscures what the North was fighting for—Union first, and the extension of liberty rather than the destruction of “hierarches.” This phrasing removes the central issue of the Civil War, the nature and the scope of liberty.
- The *Standards* oddly refers to the fight about slavery as “historical means used by individuals and groups to promote, sustain, and dismantle discrimination”—a conflation that removes the ability to distinguish between slavery and discrimination (8.Civ.14.c., p. 71).
- The *Standards* uses the polemical abstraction of racism: “Explain multiple causes and effects of racism both during and after Reconstruction (e.g., Page Act, Ku Klux Klan, Black Codes).” (8.His.14.c., p. 71; and see US.Civ.14.a., p. 86; US.His.4.c., p. 88)

## High School: Modern World History

- The *Standards* uses the word “decolonization” (p. 72; and see MW.His.1.g., p. 79; MW.His.2.c., p. 79)—which no longer can be taken to refer specifically to the European retreat from empire between roughly 1945 and 1980, but now includes events such as the Hamas mass-slaughter of Israelis in October 2023 and the hints that similar behavior should be directed toward Americans.

- The *Standards* casually uses the slanderous phrase “Indigenous genocide” in reference to the early modern world, without hinting at the fundamental fact that lack of disease resistance caused the vast majority of Indian deaths in that time period (MW.Geo.6.a., p. 76).
- The *Standards* includes among the “causes and effects of industrialization” items such as “exploitative foreign policies” and “environmental degradation”—which polemically assume conclusions for the matter under discussion. The list of causes and effects, meanwhile, does not include notable items such as *law, liberty, entrepreneurialism, the gold standard, and unprecedented rise in living standards for the entire world* (MW.His.14.a., p. 77).
- The *Standards* anachronistically and polemically inserts the term *social justice* into its historical analysis: “Investigate how different groups have struggled to gain freedom, equality, and social justice at the national and international levels (e.g., Nelson Mandela, Ho Chi Minh, Kwame Nkrumah, Indian National Congress).” (MW.Civ.12.a., p. 78) It is unclear whether these standards are meant to camouflage the mass murders of Vietnamese ordered by Ho Chi Minh as he imposed Communist dictatorship on North Vietnam and sought to extend it to South Vietnam, or to identify social justice with mass murder.
- The *Standards* says that the victims of the Holocaust included “LGBTQ+ individuals”—a locution no one used in the 1940s, and will only serve to provide a date for the *Standards* in the progression of the radical identity politics movement’s alphabet soup (MW.His.1.f., p. 78). The *Standards* also uses the modern locution “bystanders” to refer to the Holocaust (MW.His.9.a., p. 78).
- The *Standards* invokes the calumny of “Stolen Generations in Australia” (MW.Civ.14.a., p. 79).

## High School: United States History

- The *Standards*’ item on Reconstruction fails to include its role in the economic modernization of the South (US.His.16.a., p. 86).
- The *Standards* includes the oddly ahistorical and polemical item, “Explain how contemporary perspectives of Reconstruction are shaped by political and social attitudes.” (US.His.7.a., p. 86) This is not historical analysis, but an attempt to short-circuit it. So too is the directive to “Analyze the impact of personal

perspectives in public debates about national security and individual liberties (e.g., 2nd Amendment, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, Sanctuary Cities, Dakota Access Pipeline)." (US.Civ.10.a., p. 91)

- The *Standards* imports transgenderist fixations by mentioning "We'wha," who is apparently the Zuni "two-spirit" that ideological pedagogues are deciding to mention (US.His.10.a, p. 87).
- The *Standards* oddly reduces the Progressive Era's causation to "immigration and industrialization"—and, as they laud the Progressive Era, fail to note its connection with eugenics and Jim Crow (US.His.1.a., p. 87; US.His.4.c., p. 88).
- The *Standards* lends the impression that Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were one man named "Sacco Vanzetti," and that "racism and nativism" had something to do with them—rather than outrage at them for being anarchist murderers (US.His.4.c., p. 88).
- The *Standards'* item on late nineteenth century imperialism includes "dispossession of Latino American lands in the American West," which underwrites the delegitimization of America, as deserving of *decolonization* (US.His.4.b., p. 87).
- The *Standards'* leitmotif is carping criticism: "Evaluate the juxtaposition between celebration of wartime service in World War I and the discrimination faced by individuals and groups using evidence from multiple historical sources (e.g., European, Latino, Indigenous, and Black service members, *Thind v. United States*)" (US.His.16.b., p. 88; and for similar treatment of World War II, see US.His.16.c., p. 89).
- The *Standards* takes the time to discuss "how the demand for labor on homefront in World War II shaped gender roles", but not (for example) the effects of the vast wartime migrations, the effects on labor unions, or the delayed benefits that would accrue to the American worker after the war (US.His.1.d., p. 89).
- The *Standards* discusses the Holocaust as if it were an American failure, not a German crime (US.His.1.e., p. 89).
- The *Standards* uses the slanderous term "racial terrorism" in regards to "the causes and effects of the Great Migration"; they also oddly refer to the "resurgence of Islam," presumably as a reference to the Black Muslims, whose relation to actual Islam was quite tenuous until many decades later (US.His.14.c., p. 88).

- The *Standards*' discussion of the Great Depression includes the phrase "inequitable access to benefits" (US.Eco.8.a., p. 88).
- The *Standards* dismisses the Communist threat to the United States, and the reality of Communist espionage, as "perceived threats to democratic values" (US.His.5.a., pp. 89-90).
- The *Standards* incorporates modern progressive obsessions and vocabulary, such as "housing access" and "redlining" (US.Eco.13.a., p. 90; US.His.16.e., p. 90).
- The *Standards* takes culture only to reflect select social trends: "Evaluate how popular culture in the 1970s and 1980s promoted and reflected hyper-consumerism, racial tension, women's empowerment, and the Cold War." (US.His.1.h., p. 90)
- The *Standards* includes an item into psychological states rather than historical facts, "Analyze the effectiveness of individual and group responses to public policies that they deem to be discriminatory" (US.His.2.c., p. 91). Whether policies are deemed discriminatory of course has no necessary relation to whether they are; the *Standards* should focus on reality, not perception.
- The *Standards* discusses how 9-11 shaped "views of Muslims and Sikhs" without mentioning that the 9-11 attacks were perpetrated by radical Islamists, in the name of Islam (US.His.14.f., p. 91; US.His.5.c., p. 91).

## High School: Civics

- The *Standards* confines its discussion of the intellectual sources of the founding documents to "interpretations of the social contract theory of government" (CG.His.5.a., p. 97).
- The *Standards* implicitly endorses a "living Constitution" judicial interpretation: "Explain how the United States Constitution has been adapted and interpreted in response to societal changes in both historical and contemporary contexts" (CG.Civ.4.c., p. 97).
- The *Standards*' discussion of civics imports the constitutionally irrelevant and undefinable phrase "societal needs," alternating with "the well being of society" (CG.Civ.2.b., p. 98; CG.Civ.5.a., p.989).



- The *Standards* imports the “systemic” polemics of modern critical (race) theory: “Evaluate how a regulation or law can create or eliminate systemic inequalities involving race, gender and sexuality, ability, socio-economic status, belief systems, or access to resources” (CG.Civ.13.a., p. 99)
- The *Standards* imports the ultimately Marxist belief that social forces determine individual beliefs and actions: “Analyze how social contexts shape personal political beliefs and voting behavior” (CG.His.5.c., p. 100).
- The one time the *Standards* mentions the Pledge of Allegiance, it diminishes it to something no more important than “classroom procedures”: “Describe how the Pledge of Allegiance and classroom procedures promote democratic principles.” (1.Civ.8.a., p. 24)

