



# JOURNAL OF SOCIAL STUDIES AND HISTORY EDUCATION (JSSHE)

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## Letter from the Editors

*Sarah M. Straub and Bernardo Pohl*

Dear Readers,

We are excited to present the latest volume of the *Journal for Social Studies and History Education* (Volume 8). As always, our mission is to transform the teaching and learning of social studies and history by disseminating critical and scholarly research. This volume, supported by contributions from scholars, educators, and students both from the United States and abroad, offers a rich collection of articles that speak to the evolving landscape of education, civic engagement, and global understanding. The topics in this issue highlight the dynamic intersections between pedagogy, critical inquiry, and practical classroom application.

In this volume, we begin with a powerful and timely contribution from **Pang**, whose article, "Deciphering the South China Sea Leviathan: A Reflexive Response," explores how educators can approach one of the most contentious geopolitical issues in Asia. Using a historical lens, Pang examines China's assertion of power in the South China Sea and considers the implications for smaller Southeast Asian nations and Singapore. The article provides a reflexive rumination that offers historical depth, contextualizing contemporary Chinese

nationalism in the region.

Next, **Shepherd, Adams, and Yeon** examine the impact of elementary social studies courses on pre-service teachers in their study titled "The Impact of an Elementary Social Studies Course on Student Attitudes." Their research uncovers the significant shift in pre-service teachers' perceptions of social studies, highlighting the transformative power of instructional methods courses that engage students and foster a supportive community. The study's positive results are a reminder of the importance of preparing future educators to value and teach social studies effectively.

In a moving tribute to civic engagement, **Morris** shares "Field of Honor." This piece showcases a service-learning project where high school students took ownership of organizing a Veterans' Day assembly, learning about the importance of civic participation. The study offers insights into the power of community collaboration and student agency in meaningful civic projects.

**Sweet, Amador, Batarse, and Lillie** contribute a timely literature review on "Exploring the Challenges and Recommendations Currently Affecting

Technology Integration in Educational Settings." As technology continues to play a significant role in modern education, the authors examine key challenges such as digital equity, teacher competence, and resistance to change. They offer practical recommendations to address these challenges, making this article particularly valuable for educators navigating the post-pandemic digital landscape.

Geographic literacy is the focus of **Augustin and Hodge's** research in "Geographic Literacy Among College Students: An Analysis of Sport Fandom in U.S. State Identification." Their study presents a unique angle, exploring how sports fandom correlates with geographic literacy. Through surveys of over 1,400 students, the authors reveal intriguing findings about the intersection of geographic knowledge and cultural engagement with sports, raising important implications for both K-12 and higher education.

In a different vein, **Lafleur** offers an experiential inquiry in "Fostering Interconnected Perspectives: An Experiential Inquiry into Humane Education Through Three Field Experiences." By engaging in hands-on projects such as volunteering at an animal shelter and participating in community cleanups, Lafleur illustrates how humane education can be a powerful tool for fostering empathy, social justice, and environmental stewardship in future educators. This study calls to incorporate humane education more fully into teacher-preparation programs.

Finally, **McParker, Harnisch, and Wagner** close this volume with an elementary-focused investigation in "An Elementary Student-Centered Investigation of the Three Branches of Government." Their research highlights how preservice teachers utilized research-based approaches to help elementary students understand the balance of power among the three branches of the U.S. government. The authors provide practical examples of fostering civic understanding in the classroom and emphasize the importance of an open, relevant learning environment.

We are proud to share this diverse collection of articles that not only contribute to academic discourse but also offer practical applications for educators in the classroom. As always, we thank our contributors, reviewers, and readers for their continued support of the *Journal for Social Studies and History Education*. We hope this volume inspires further inquiry, reflection, and transformation in the teaching and learning of social studies and history.

With immense gratitude,



Dr. Sarah M. Straub



Dr. Bernardo Pohl

The Editors