



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
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Introduction

The ten curriculum units that constitute this volume all grow out of a belief that local history is worthy of study for at least three reasons. First, but in our highly mobile society perhaps not foremost, teenagers about to enter adult society can gain greater control over their own destiny if they understand the historical and cultural roots of the world that immediately surrounds them. Second, the proximity of the materials discussed and the availability of nearby illustrative sites provide excellent motivational and interesting resources to enliven, dramatize, and make concrete classroom lessons. Third, and perhaps most important is the fact that much of Connecticut history is American history in microcosm. The episodes and themes that constitute the substance of the units included here illuminate national, and in some cases, world events. Each can be used as a springboard to study of a significant theme or tendency of American history.

The authors of the units are all practicing secondary school teachers drawn from public, parochial, and private secondary schools across the state. They spent five weeks of research, conference, seminar discussion, writing, and rewriting on the Yale campus in July and August of 1981. Teaching strategies suggested in each unit were developed by the authors individually and refined after presentation and discussion within the seminar. They are intended to be suggestive only; most readers of this volume will wish to adapt the units to their own classroom purposes and approaches. Obviously, nearly every topic presented here has been the subject of a considerable historical literature; no claim to exhaustiveness is made. Nevertheless the substantive essays are intended to provide sufficiently thorough discussions so that teachers may use the units without research on their own part.

Each unit consists of an introductory statement; a long substantive section with citations; discussion of teaching strategies, three or more sample lessons or other activities; lists of citations; and a bibliography that includes works for both students and teachers. In some cases extensive documentary and graphic material is included in appendices. Some of the bibliographies are keyed for read appropriateness as follows:

* junior high school

** senior high school

*** popular treatment

+ scholarly, but readable

++ scholarly and difficult

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