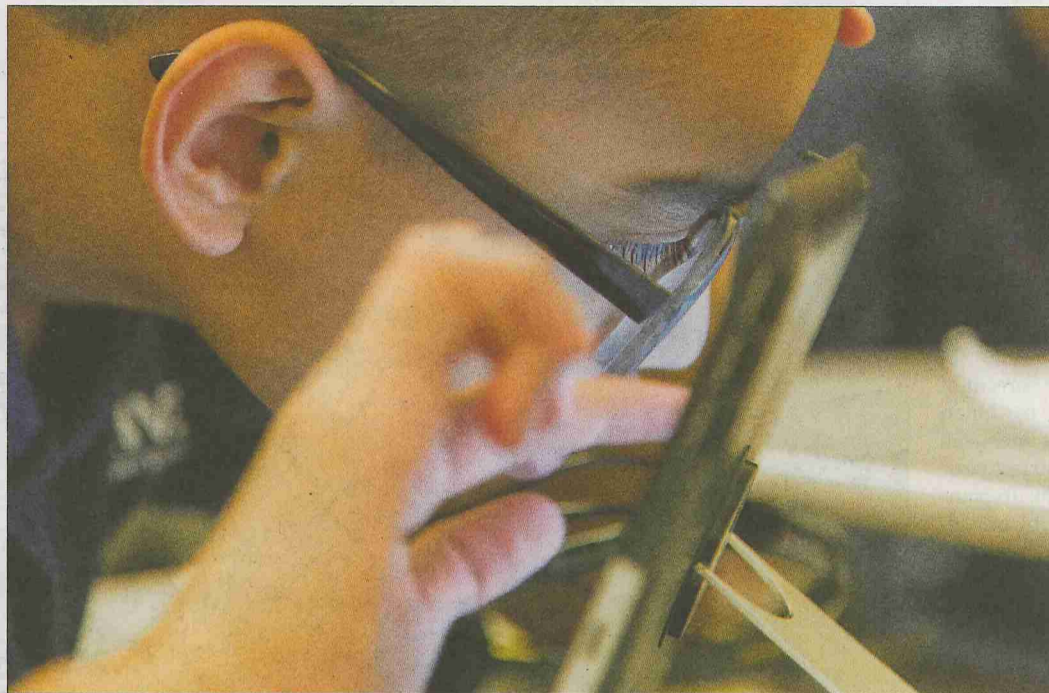


EDUCATION WEEK

VOL. 35, NO. 13 | DECEMBER 2, 2015

NATIONAL

- 1 Days Could Be Numbered For No Child Left Behind
- 1 For Some Immigrant Students, Culture Bears on College Choice
- 1 Charters, District Partner On Spec. Ed. in Denver
- 1 DIGITAL DIRECTIONS: Big Progress, Hurdles Outlined in New Report On School Connectivity
- 6 PARCC to Let States Buy Parts of Tests And Select Vendors
- 6 Gates Foundation Turns Attention To Teacher-Prep 'Transformation'
- 8 College Scout Mines Below-the-Radar Schools For Talent



Victor Jarron, an 8th grader with visual impairments who attends STRIVE Prep-Federal, a Denver charter school, uses his specially formatted iPad during class. STRIVE Prep-Federal is among several charters in the city that are partnering with the Denver district to serve more students with disabilities.

PAGE 1

Nathan W. Arnes for Education Week

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

- 13 Pa. Districts Anxiously Awaiting End to Budget Standoff
- 13 Ed. Dept. Touts Race to Top's Impact, Tiptoes Around Stumbles
- 17 New Data Paints Mixed Picture Of Turnaround Program
- 18 White House Corrals Financing For High School Redesign
- 18 With New ESEA Likely, State Chiefs Pledge Better Accountability

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 News in Brief
- 5 Report Roundup
- 7, 14 Blogs of the Week
- 22 Letters
- 24 TopSchoolJobs Recruitment Marketplace

COMMENTARY

- 20 JEFFREY AARON SNYDER: Social Justice Is Not the Most Compelling Reason to Teach Race
- 20 SCOTT GOLDSTEIN: What Mexico Gets Right About Adult Education
- 21 OPEDUCATION BLOG: On Scaling Back Testing
- 28 SCOTT STERLING: Extinguishing a Burnout Actionable Ideas to Keep Teachers Engaged in Their Careers

edweek.org

>> BREAKING NEWS DAILY

MULTIMEDIA

Common Core's Big Test

The 2014-15 school year marked a big change for many states because they switched to tests that for the first time reflect the Common Core State Standards. *Education Week* is gathering the scores from the state-mandated mathematics and English/language arts tests given in 2014-15 and in 2013-14 (or the most recent previous year available) and displaying them in one place. The new tests brought high-profile warnings that proficiency rates would drop.

Type of Assessment:
1 PARCC
2 Smarter Balanced
3 Other
4 2014-15 Scores Reported
Click to see test results



View a map outlining which states gave which types of assessments. See individual states' latest proficiency scores side by side with other recent test results.



Getty

FOUNDATION SUPPORT: Coverage of specific topics in *Education Week* is supported in part by grants from the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, the California Endowment, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the GE Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Hope Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, the NoVo Foundation, the Noyce Foundation, the Panasonic Foundation, the Raikes Foundation, the Wallace Foundation, and the Walton Family Foundation. The newspaper retains sole editorial control over the content of the articles that are underwritten by the foundations.



www.facebook.com/edweek



@EducationWeek



www.edweek.org/go/google+



www.edweek.org/go/instagram



www.edweek.org/go/youtube

Social Justice Is Not the Most Compelling Reason to Teach Race

By Jeffrey Aaron Snyder

Let's talk about race. This is the clarion call voiced by educators dedicated to social justice. But you don't have to care about fighting the good fight to heed this command. It's more than enough to just want students to be able to understand the world around them. From Ferguson, Mo., to Charleston, S.C., voter ID laws to Donald Trump's build-a-wall immigration-policy platform, students will never make any sense of the United States today, so long as teachers adopt a colorblind approach.

One hundred years ago this fall, Carter G. Woodson, the "father of black history," incorporated the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in Washington. His work affirms the centrality of race to American society and the U.S. history curriculum, but also challenges the assumption that the best way to teach race is through a social-justice lens.

Woodson was passionately devoted to racial justice, an active member of the NAACP's Washington branch. He was equally committed to the pursuit of truth through rigorous historical research. The NAACP, in Woodson's view, was a "propaganda" organization that used "fire-eating agitation" tactics to pursue vital policy initiatives such as anti-lynching legislation. In contrast, Woodson saw his own association as an educational enterprise, offering, in his words, "no special brand for the solution of the race problem except to learn to think."

Woodson founded the association at a time of unprecedented popular and "scientific" racism. The film "Birth of a Nation"—D.W. Griffith's paean to the Ku Klux Klan and white suprem-

acy—was completing its record-breaking opening run at theaters across the country. Best-selling history textbooks damned blacks as eternally inferior and railed against the criminal outrages of "Negro rule" during Reconstruction. Woodson's own former professors at Harvard, where he had earned his Ph.D., turned out publications that referred to blacks as savages, strangers to the nation, and natural slaves.

As the only professional historian whose parents had been born into slavery, Woodson was determined to correct the historical record's grotesque racial caricatures and biased accounts. The failure to "fathom the Negro mind" was the fatal flaw of the standard American-history narrative, according to Woodson. His association set out to show what African-Americans had "thought and felt and done," with the ambitious goal of formulating a new U.S. history free of "bias, race-hate, and religious prejudice."

From a small row house in Washington, Woodson spearheaded a movement that reached all the way from the campus of Howard University to one-room schoolhouses in Alabama. The cause was greatly advanced by the creation of an academic journal in 1916, the publication of the flagship textbook *The Negro in Our History* in 1922, and the advent of Negro History Week (today's Black History Month) in 1926. Black educators—including college presidents and professors, elementary school librarians, and high school history teachers—formed the backbone of the movement. They all shared Woodson's conviction that the study and celebration of black history's "cold-blooded facts" could reconfigure the racial landscape by building black pride and reducing white prejudice.

We can thank Carter G. Woodson and his colleagues for changing the tone and complexion of our history textbooks.



They inducted black figures such as Harriet Tubman into our pantheon of national heroes and banished the most egregious racial stereotypes, such as the happy-go-lucky slave. The real power of Woodson's movement, though, was the insistence that black history was *our* history. With the incorporation of African-American experiences into the nation's history, the color line emerged as a principal theme. Following stringent scholarly standards, Woodson and his colleagues painstakingly revealed the racial divide that has prevented African-Americans from full participation in the social, economic, and political life of the country.

The "Negro history" movement gave us a more accurate portrait of U.S. history, one that did not shy away from exploring the darkest corners of our past. Woodson and his colleagues wrote the first textbooks that addressed the history of racial

What Mexico Gets Right About Adult Education

By Scott Goldstein

We're just 30 minutes outside the city of Oaxaca, Mexico, when the pavement ends. In the back of a pickup truck, we travel three hours down a series of dirt roads through bumpy but gorgeous mountainous terrain to the town of Santiago Huaxolotipac, home to fewer than 1,500 people. The surrounding mountains are dotted by crumbling homes without electricity or running water, without fortified roofs to protect them from rainstorms, which on occasion can lead to mudslides that literally rip homes from the ground.

But the 130 residents of this small, southern Mexican pueblo who attend literacy and adult education classes in the town's plaza two or three times a week aren't deterred by those conditions, or by the hour-and-a-half hike many of them take through difficult terrain to reach their classroom. These *abuelitos*, or grandparents, many of whom are in their 70s and 80s, walk (or run) with rugged shoes down the surrounding hills to learn from four amazing young people who had the chance to receive the education they never had, and who have decided to give back. When some of their elderly students can't make it down the mountain for class, the young teachers go up to make sure they don't fall behind. It's yeoman's work, and it's part of a Mexican tradition.

Oaxaca is one of the poorest states in all of

Mexico, with the third-lowest literacy rate and one of the highest percentages of indigenous people of any state in the country. Those factors add to the enormous task for the Instituto Nacional de la Educacion de Adultos (National Institute of Adult Education), or INEA, and more specifically, for the state counterpart here in Oaxaca, known as the Instituto Estatal para la Educacion de Adultos (State Institute for Adult Education), or IEAA. Many of the people working out of a four-story building in the Colonia Reforma neighborhood in Oaxaca city, dedicating their careers to this cause, are paid little. And their counterparts, providing the direct assistance and teaching to these adults, are paid even less.

Among 25- to 64-year-olds in Mexico, a staggering 63 percent have not completed secondary education. This problem demands reform to the education system that goes beyond new standards for teachers and more frequent evaluation to a heavy investment in expanded access to free public education for all ages. Amazingly, Mexico seems to be doing much more in the realm of adult education than for K-12. While Mexican schools are technically free and public, in reality 93 percent of Mexican families have had to pay supposedly voluntary *cuotas*, or school fees, that can often be prohibitive for poorer families. Many say the *cuotas* have gotten worse since President Enrique Peña Nieto's 2013 education reforms, which included some vital changes to teacher licensure protocols toward a more merit-based approach.

But for adults throughout Mexico, more than 140,000 local learning circles brought to bear by INEA provide guided instruction in basic

literacy, reading, math, Spanish language arts, and even targeted instruction in a dozen native languages for indigenous communities.

INEA was founded in 1981 to address the challenge of adult education, and the nationwide system it has put into place since then is breathtaking. From cities to small towns to the insides of prisons, INEA seeks to educate Mexico's adults on only 1 percent of the national education budget. As of March, INEA had nearly 78,000 facilitators throughout the country working with circles of study, each circle averaging 10 learners. The state-funded INEA boasts some impressive results, especially considering it spends only an average of \$750 a year per learner (and that's a high estimate including all of the institute's expenses). INEA lists its costs per learner on materials alone at just \$198. Currently, over 1.5 million adults are enrolled nationwide, 63 percent of whom have reported occupational advancement thanks to their studies.

The Plazas Comunitarias, which serve as the venues for these adult education classes in Mexico, were established in 2001. In 2004, the United States and Mexico, by joint agreement, established roughly 400 such community centers, mainly in public libraries and community colleges, in the United States. Here in the United States, they serve a high-need Hispanic immigrant community, offering both adult education and English-as-a-second-language classes.

While this offers a big leg up for one population, it leaves a huge swath of our adults in need out of the picture. A patchwork of state-by-state programs does its best to serve this



violence, including the subjection of enslaved black women “to the whims and desires of white men” and the “abysmal horror of lynching.” Woodson himself used the word “terrorism” to describe the brutal measures used to keep blacks in their place.

From Woodson’s point of view, race was an essential element of U.S. history. To ignore it would be like teaching biology without mentioning carbon. Even so, he would have some serious reservations about attaching the study of race in schools to the struggle for social justice. Woodson lived through a time when black activists and intellectuals had fierce debates about how to address the “race question”; answers ranged from Marcus Garvey’s call for African-Americans to “go back to Africa,” to exhortations to join the Communist Party’s proletarian revolution. One individual’s dream of social justice was another’s dystopian nightmare.

Competing visions of social justice aside, Woodson was acutely aware of the threat that partisan views posed to academic scholarship. He used the term “history made to order” to characterize the use of facile or shoddy historical arguments to prop up polemical positions. His worry was that history’s nuances and ironies would be lost in the rush to achieve a particular political objective. Taking sides, Woodson understood, would make the already elusive quest for truth downright unattainable.

Did Woodson want his students to go out and change the world? Absolutely. But he was convinced that they first had to grasp the “facts underlying their present situation.” And he was even more adamant that the primary job of an educator was to illuminate rather than to advocate. If the American public concludes that teaching race is merely an extension of left-wing social activism, it will never gain any real traction in our public schools. It will be to the right what creationism is to the left: propaganda masquerading as a curriculum. The most compelling reason to teach race, then, is not to make a difference in the world, but to understand it. ■

JEFFREY AARON SNYDER is an assistant professor of educational studies at Carleton College, in Northfield, Minn. He is completing a book, *Making Black History: Race, Culture, and the Color Line in the Age of Jim Crow*.

demographic, but a national commitment to adult education could transform the American economy.

The adult education system in the United States is in critical condition. With over 30 million adults lacking high school diplomas and more than 20 percent lacking basic literacy skills, we are failing to meet this critical need. In fact, our adult education system serves only 2 million adults a year—leaving tens of millions more without services and waiting on long lists

“[A] national commitment to adult education could transform the American economy.”

to enter available programs. We spend an average of \$10,000 a year per K-12 pupil, but only about \$800 on each adult. Yet, we actually spend a larger percentage of our education budget on adults than Mexico does.

There is also a downside to the Mexican program, impressive as it is in reach: its dependence on armies of volunteers and low-paid workers who often work near full-time hours with no benefits. In the United States, however, we could build a mixed team of well-paid professionals and volunteer-educators to address this need. Adult learning centers in every community would provide a gratifying and empowering opportunity for successful young people with community-service hours to fulfill, to share their learning with less fortunate adult peers.

Education funding often gets short shrift partly because it’s hard for politicians to see

the political benefit of an investment that won’t show dividends in the workforce for years. But not so with adult education, where trained adults immediately enter or re-enter the workforce ready for more-challenging work. In his 2015 budget, California Gov. Jerry Brown made a massive investment in adult education that is sure to yield big results, an effort that should serve as a model for other states. Educating adults is proven to boost children’s academic success, improve health, make communities safer, and increase voting.

We talk a lot about a transitioning economy that is moving away from traditional manufacturing, and the resulting need for job training and retraining. However, too many adults who have lost the professions that sustained them for decades still feel left behind by political lip service that has yet to translate into a broad and effective commitment. While a few cities around the country, including Minneapolis and Austin, Texas, have started adult charter schools, as reported by education reporter Kavitha Cardoza, Washington is a “national leader” with more than 10 such schools in the city.

We need this kind of investment on a national scale. I believe the same spirit that drives elderly Mexican men and women to learn and progress against the odds exists for Americans all over the country who simply can’t access the education they deserve. It’s a political season, and if candidates running for president in 2016 (and for every other office) want to restore economic opportunity and truly leave no one behind, this issue is waiting for a champion. ■

SCOTT GOLDSTEIN is an eighth-year English-as-a-second-language and social studies teacher at Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School in Washington. He spent the last year training teachers in Indonesia, Togo, and Mexico.

“From [Carter G.] Woodson’s point of view, race was an essential element of U.S. history. To ignore it would be like teaching biology without mentioning carbon.”

On Scaling Back Testing

For Education Week Commentary’s OpEducation blog, editors asked seven education thought leaders to respond to the following prompt:

This fall, the U.S. Department of Education released a “Testing Action Plan” recommending that states and districts administer fewer—but higher-quality—assessments in schools. Coinciding with this announcement, the release of a comprehensive study from the Council of the Great City Schools on testing in 66 urban districts raised alarms about the frequency and efficacy of mandatory school tests. These two attention-grabbing releases added fuel to the already passionate national debate about what many see as overtesting in the nation’s schools.

As educators, scholars, and members of the K-12 community, how significant is this recent shift in the national dialogue around testing? And where do we go from here?

Our contributors offered a diverse range of opinions, excerpted below. To read the full essays, please visit www.edweek.org/go/oped.

Standardized Test Scores Do Not Predict Student Success

While Hampshire College has always been skeptical of standardized testing—we opened as test-optional in 1970—in 2014, our skepticism was validated when our institutional research team led a study to identify the attributes of students most likely to succeed here. ... We didn’t intend to look at the SAT or ACT in particular, but it quickly became obvious: There was no correlation between high SAT or ACT scores and success at Hampshire. The test scores were poor predictors of success.

Since our decision in 2014 to stop accepting test scores in admissions, we have heard from families and educators nationwide about the unintended consequences of testing. High-stakes testing has become overwhelming, a source of intense anxiety for countless students. The tests have become a major distraction for teachers and students, who have no time or incentive to innovate when they’re being evaluated against test scores.

Meredith Twombly is the dean of enrollment and retention of Hampshire College, in Amherst, Mass.

Political Leadership, Not Overtesting, Is Our Real Challenge

[D]espite President Barack Obama’s admission that we are “overtesting,” the real challenge facing the teaching profession is a lack of leadership in Washington, D.C. It is now up to potential presidential candidates such as Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders, if elected, to make the change of new leadership in

the nation a reality by appointing a public-education advocate—and preferably a former educator—as the next secretary of education. The newly appointed Cabinet secretary’s first legislative act as education secretary should be to diminish the role of high-stakes testing in the nation’s public schools and to restore the dignity of the teaching profession.

In light of the early endorsement given to Hillary Clinton by both the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, is it too much to ask Hillary Clinton—as well as other presidential candidates—about her views on the use of standardized tests in our public schools?

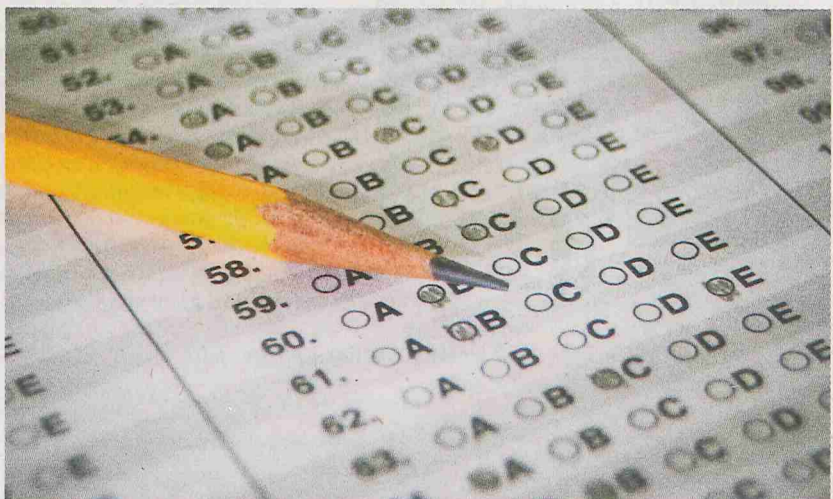
Joseph A. Ricciotti is a retired public school educator. He served as an elementary teacher, principal, and the director of the Teaching Internship Program at the Graduate School of Education, Fairfield University.

It’s Time to Kill the Department Of Education

How long will we keep doing this? For 50 years, bureaucrats and social scientists have used our schools as laboratories for their latest theory and incubators for a more egalitarian society. Standardization is now the goal. Real excellence is thought to be elitist and undemocratic. The educationalists have taken the P out of the PTA and reduced our schools to a cinderblock-and-linoleum gulag of mind-numbing mediocrity. ...

By profiling students as victims who are somehow “at risk” because of their

PAGE 23 >



iStockphoto