

A STUDY OF THE CONSTITUTION AND SOCIAL CIVICS COURSES  
IN KANSAS HIGH SCHOOLS

by

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## INTRODUCTION

The present study was attempted to find out the present status of the teaching of government in the high schools of Kansas and to construct in the light of the information received, a more adaptable arrangement of the course. The investigation was further motivated by a desire to determine the use Kansas school administrators were making of the compulsory law of the 1925 legislature requiring that one half unit of constitution be taught before graduation in all Kansas schools.

By means of a detailed questionnaire the following points were studied:

### I. Organization of the government courses in Kansas High Schools.

1. Text books approved.
2. Extent to which the Social Civics course is being offered.
3. Time of offering the courses in the school program.

### II. The use of the Current Event period.

1. Type of publication used.
  - a. Special current event paper.
  - b. General library publications.

2. Providing the magazine for study.
  - a. By pupil.
  - b. By school.
3. Method of teaching current event material.
  - a. Special assignment.
  - b. Entire periodical assignment.
4. Periodicals used for current event study.

III. The use of text-book material in the course.

1. Extent of the material duplicated.
2. Arrangement of the books to avoid duplication of subject matter.

IV. Evaluating some teaching methods.

1. Use of note books.
2. Outside reading references.
  - a. Scope of reading.
  - b. Material used.

V. Relation of history to the government course and the teaching of Kansas Civics.

The questionnaire was constructed so that replies might be made briefly and definitely. After a few replies had been received, some improvement could have been made, but in most aspects the questionnaire form proved satisfactory. It was felt that the form should cover one page and not present too great a problem for the school administrator or teacher who receives a great many such claims upon his time at the

present.

From an alphabetical list of all Kansas high schools, sixty-five of the larger schools were selected. These schools included community high schools, rural high schools and high schools located in first and second class cities. Each of these larger high schools had an enrollment of at least two hundred. To the principal of each of these high schools a letter was sent which had enclosed a self-addressed government postal card with the form given below and a letter to the principal which is also reproduced.

The postal card enclosed was as follows:

The name of our Constitution and Social Civics  
teacher is \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
Yours Sincerely \_\_\_\_\_ Principal

Copy of letter sent to the principal of the sixty-five larger high schools:

(Printed school stationery was used.)

Goff Public School System

C. C. Holmes Supt.

Goff, Kansas.

Sept. 24, 1927

Prin. J. J. Vineyard  
Paola High School  
Paola, Kansas.

Dear Sir:

I am making a study of the teaching of Constitution and Social Civics in Kansas high schools. In order to get a short questionnaire which I have prepared in the hands of those qualified to answer, I am asking for the name and address of your Constitution and Social Civics instructor. Thanking you in advance, I remain

Yours Sincerely,

C. C. Holmes.

Goff, Kansas,

Dear Fellow Teacher:

I am making a study of the teaching of Constitution and Social Civics in Kansas high schools. In seeking your cooperation I have tried to make the questionnaire given below short and definite. If you desire a copy of the tabulated results of the study, please write your name and address at the end of the list. Your early reply in the enclosed self addressed envelope will be appreciated.

Please make a check in the square before the statement which is correct for your school. Leave others blank.

- 1 Social Civics by Munro and Ozanne is taught in our high school.
2. In the Constitution course we use  Norton's Constitution,  Guitteau's Government and Politics in the U. S.,  Magruder's American Government.
3. Constitution is taught during the  first semester.  Second semester.
4. Students are required to subscribe for the following periodicals for use in Constitution:
- Weekly News Review.  World News.  Current Events.  \_\_\_\_\_
- None.
5. Students are required to subscribe for the following periodicals for use in Social Civics:
- \_\_\_\_\_  None.  Same as for Constitution.
6. The school furnishes free of charge the above publications.
7. In case the periodical is taught:
- A certain period each week is given and the entire publication is assigned.
- Special assignments are made in advance.
- The entire periodical is assigned along with special assignments.
- \_\_\_\_\_
8. No regular publication is taken but magazines from the library are used.
9. Magazines most used for this purpose are: \_\_\_\_\_
10. The entire text is covered in Constitution.
11. Munro and Ozanne is completely covered.
- 12 If both texts are studied completely there is too much duplication.
13. The material covered by both texts is too little for a year's work.
14. The material covered by both texts is toomuch for a year's work.
15. A note book is required, handed in and graded.
16. Outside reading is regularly required.
17. American History should be taught before Constitution and Social Civics.
18. Constitution and Social Civics should be taught before American History.
19. About \_\_\_\_\_ weeks is given to the study of Kansas Civics.

Yours Sincerely,

C. C. HOLMES

The questionnaire was sent to four hundred schools. In the case of the larger schools it was sent direct to the teacher whose address had been ascertained. To the teachers in the remaining three hundred and thirty-five schools the questionnaire was enclosed with a stamped envelope and addressed in the manner of the example given below:

Teacher of Constitution & Social Civics

Linwood Rural High School

Linwood, Kansas.

The smaller high schools were selected from an alphabetical list by selecting alternate schools after the larger schools had been eliminated. In this manner schools from all sizes and kinds of organizations were used as well as schools from all geographical parts of the state. The promise to give the results to those who desired them was fulfilled. The letters carrying the questionnaires were sent on November 15. Replies continued arriving up to February 12. In some few cases the schools were not teaching Constitution this year but were alternating it with American History which they were then teaching. Besides this fact the discrepancy between the totals for each question and the total number of replies is accounted for by the fact that many schools failed to answer all the questions. A list of all high schools replying could not be tabulated because the name of the school was not asked for. A total of two hun-



dred and fifty replies was received. It is felt that this is a significant number upon which to base conclusions since the sample was quite comprehensive.

## A HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT INSTRUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES AND EXPECIALLY IN KANSAS

### First Attempts at Instruction in Government

The development of Government as a recognized study in the public schools of the United States has coincided with the evolution of the liberalized curriculum. According to Inglis (1918), in 1827 Stanbury's "Catechism on the Constitution of the United States" was studied in the English High School of Boston. In 1842 the Salem English High School offered a course in "The City Charter, Constitution of Massachusetts, and the Constitution of the United States", Sullivan's "Political Classbook" and Bayard's "On the Constitution" were two books in common use in the early high school.

The emphasis in these early text-books was placed on the form rather than the practical activities of the government. In their time the government of the United States had not assumed the many responsibilities with which it is now burdened. A course such as these early manuals followed was essentially rather academic and must have been most unattractive to the students. Such a study would certainly be unattractive to high school pupils of the present time.

These earlier constitution manuals later expanded into a study of the state and local government in which the names of the various officers were memorized. Unfortunately this feature of government instruction is emphasized in some schools at the present time. As the study of government progressed, more attention was given the local units in which the student is primarily interested.

### The Relationship of Government to History

According to the report of the committee on instruction of the American Political Science Association (1916), the close relationship between government and history early prompted the combination of the two subjects with no very clear understanding as to how the combination would be taught. This combination resulted generally in three procedures of teaching. First, a combined course would be announced and no attention paid to government on the ground that the study of American History was in itself practical civics. Second, American History was taught with an elaboration upon certain parts which were considered necessary for an understanding of the government involved. Third, the class and teacher would hurry through the American History outline, and if any time remained, the pupils would study some outline of civil government. The relation of government and history is vital, but on this account one should not be neglected at the expense of the other. Teachers of

government long were hampered by the teaching of history and government in the same unit. Chief among the faults of this system was the necessity of teaching the form or the anatomy of government rather than its function. When the study of government began to be taught from the standpoint of the community in which the students lived, life was breathed into it and no longer was it the memorizing of uninteresting facts soon to be forgotten.

It was with the utmost reluctance that school administrators were convinced that government should have a place of its own in the curriculum. It was argued that it would be sufficient to incorporate the civic program into the general school assembly or that the various teachers could hint here and there at the importance of the state and its organization.

To the National Education Association goes the credit of being the one to emphasize first the study of government on an equal basis with other courses in the curriculum. Until 1893, an occasional address at teachers' meetings was as far as school men had gone in the direction of organizing the teaching of government on a definite basis. In 1892 the Madison Conference of Social Science Teachers was held in which the status of history, civil government and economics was discussed. The emphasis of this conference was evidently on history, for four years of history were recommended

for the grade school and a like amount for the high school. Concerning civil government it said: "While they are of the opinion that political economy should not be taught in the secondary schools, they urge that in connection with United States history, civil government and commercial geography instruction should be given in the most important economic topics...The subject of civil government they would associate with both history and geography." It was recommended that the teaching of American government should be comparative by a study of American and European history. With few exceptions the teaching of government received little attention until 1911. In July of that year a committee on the articulation between high school and college met. This committee proposed that there should be one year of social science including history offered in the high school. However, it was recommended that the history be taught so as to include some instruction to the student concerning the structure of his government and community. A more recent committee of the National Education Association went farther and proposed an outline of five units of social science which included a course in community civics and a survey of vocations

#### Early Objectives in the Government Course

In addition to the pioneer work in the field done by the National Education Association we have some incidental work in the recommendations of the American Historical As-

sociation. Their work is given in three reports (1) the committee of seven in 1898, (2) the committee of eight in 1909 and (3) the committee of five in 1911. Since these conferences were primarily concerned with history, little consideration was given to government. In the latter committee a year's study of combined history and government was suggested to be divided on the basis of three-fifths history and two-fifths government. The following resolutions, unanimously adopted, were the significant results of the latter conference relating to government instruction. They are here given in full for their historical significance:

1. The order of teaching should be from the functions to the machinery of government, with special emphasis on function rather than machinery.

2. The work should be based on the pupil's experience and immediate surroundings.

3. There should be a continual connection of civics with current events, and the student should be made to form the habit of keeping up with the news.

4. The keynote of the course should be the obligation of the citizen to serve the community.

5. Means should be found for the actual participation of the student in civic activities. This means more than the usual visits to courts and public buildings. They should do something to help, either as individuals or through civic

associations.

6. Civic training should be secured through the organization and discipline of the school. If the organization is such as to develop in the pupils personal responsibility, initiative, a social conscience, and high ideals of conduct, the best civic lesson has been learned.

7. Civics should be given a place of its own and separate from history.

8. This association should take steps to secure separate examinations for United States history and civics and examination questions for civics which call for something besides a knowledge of the machinery of government.

Since 1900 the National Municipal League has been more or less active in encouraging the study of government, especially municipal government. A number of conferences and contributions to the cause have been made from this source.

#### Report of the American Political Science Association

Undoubtedly the most important contribution to the cause of teaching government was that of the American Political Science Association. Its committee of five reported its findings in 1908. In this report it was asserted that the minimum amount of time given should be one half year with five recitations per week. Some schools, it was asserted, were profitably giving an entire year to the subject. It was thought that the course should be offered in the fourth

year after the student had completed his work in American History. This is an important recommendation, for the background gained there is necessary for a thorough understanding of the problems of our government.

Five years after the above report was made it was decided to appoint a new committee to make further investigations. A committee of seven members was appointed. The report of this committee is quite thorough and will be given in some detail as it affects the high school civics course. The purpose of instruction in government was discussed in some detail and the substance of this instruction is of, at least, historical importance. First, there is the responsibility of the individual to his government of which he is a most important part. Second, the citizen should realize the duty of those in office to him. He should know how his government works so that he may know whether it functions properly.

### The Necessity for Civic Training

A great deal has been said about training our pupils to become future voters and inspiring them with the responsibilities of citizenship. Meanwhile political bosses are manipulating our elections apparently to as great an extent as ever. Certainly, in a democracy, such training is necessary but it is largely futile to train pupils of high school age to become intelligent voters. Since the pupil cannot use the

voting privilege for some time he will find his information overshadowed by negative influences with which he comes in contact later on. Broadly speaking, the most important single thing our future citizens can realize is their obligation to service. The busy citizen is generally a good citizen, although we find exceptions in which men are so engrossed in their business that they forget their obligations to society. If our public servants were filled with a desire to serve their constituents, much of our difficulty in government would disappear. A danger in teaching government, which has become more imaginary than real, is that superficial knowledge of government is worse than none at all. This objection is not valid to a significant extent because teachers of civics will caution pupils against that danger. Perhaps those more ignorant would pretend more knowledge than those who have studied the subject in school.

#### Efforts to Motivate Interest

In the report, emphasis was placed upon teaching devices which would secure interest from the pupils and motivate the study. Self-governing associations where practical were recommended. Community surveys, the enactment of convention and court room scenes with visits to the county seats were mentioned. The wisdom of studying our American government through comparison with European governments was doubtful for students of secondary school age.



### The Bureau of Education Questionnaire

In order to study more definitely the exact status of civics teaching, a questionnaire was sent out in cooperation with the United States Bureau of Education to civics teachers in each state asking for some definite information on the subject. Such factors as the time allowed, emphasis on local and national government were asked. Briefly we shall enumerate some of the more significant replies. Most schools gave a whole or half-year to the civics course usually in the fourth year of the high school. Various text books were used. Some began with local and some with the national government. Hinsdale, Guitteau, James and Sanford, Ashley, Beard, and Forman were the authors of the texts most widely used. Many of the texts used had supplements in which the local and state government was described. Supplementary books by Bryce, Munro, Willoughby and Beard were mentioned but not often used on account of a lack of time. The textbooks were given some criticism because of their dryness and their inadequate treatment of current problems and local government.

Most of the teachers questioned favored increasing the time allotted to the work in government. In regard to time emphasis a majority of the teachers questioned believed that from fifty to seventy-five per cent of the time should be given to national government, the remainder being left for

local and state government. Some of the teachers placed emphasis on the organization and operation of the government, while many of the apparently more modern teachers emphasized the community functions and duties of the citizens. Devices listed as being helpful in teaching were (1) civics scrap book, (2) current events drill, (3) debates, (4) periodicals, (5) talks by local officials. Such periodicals as the Outlook, Pathfinder, Current Events, Literary Digest, Review of Reviews, World's Work, etc. were mentioned as suitable publications for this work. A lack of time prevented a much further use of these devices. Many schools had student participation in government as an aid in teaching, Some taught the use of department reports as a basis for determining the efficiency of city or county departments.

Perhaps the most deplorable causes for the inefficiency of civics instruction are the inadequate preparation of the civics teacher who often is primarily a history teacher, and the reluctance of the colleges to give entrance credit for civics.

#### The Status of Civics Instruction in Kansas

For more than ten years prior to 1925 Kansas had maintained a civics course varying from one to two terms. This course was required for graduation. In the Normal Training course set up by the state board of administration an entire Year's course or two credits were required. Guitteau's

"Government and Politics in the United States" was the basic text book. A supplement describing the government of Kansas was attached to the book. Some schools offered it as a one credit course covering a period of eighteen weeks while others offered it as a two credit course covering an entire school year. This latter plan was probably used largely so as to articulate with the requirements of the normal training course then common in Kansas high schools. Where a year's work was given more time was spent on current events, surveys and reference work. Generally this course was offered in the junior year as required by the normal training course. In addition to this course a course in community civics was offered in some of the larger high schools. This course was very elementary in nature and dealt largely with the functions of local community government. In some cases it was also used as an exploratory course in which the high school's possibilities were opened to the pupil. In the eighth grade of all Kansas graded schools is taught a course called civil government. This course at present consists largely in memorizing names of officers, length of terms, salary and qualifications for officers, both local and national. This course except from the time standpoint, is of little consequence to the pupil since the information is of such a nature that it is barely retained until the current bi-monthly examination is over.

During the World War and the years immediately following, attention was directed to the general lack of knowledge of our government and the things for which it stood. Members of the Ku Klux Klan, the American Legion and perhaps other fraternal organizations were making much of Americanism and more of their particular brand of Americanization. It was frequently stated that our schools were not teaching anything about our government and that insidious agencies were at work undermining the patriotism of our Kansas boys and girls. Although it was pointed out that the state board of education required one unit of work in an approved textbook before graduation from high school, the alarm was taken up by a legislature desirous of doing something patriotic and a law was passed requiring that a course in the United States Constitution be taught in our schools. In the face of such conditions the Kansas law requiring constitution to be taught in high schools was enacted. In carrying out the desire of the legislature the state board of education has inserted in the course of study the new course in constitution. This course consists of a one credit course in the study of our United States Constitution. The law itself, amended by the legislature of 1925 relating to the teaching of government, is as follows:

Sec. 616a. Courses Specified. (72-1103) All schools, public, private or parochial, shall provide and give a com-

plete course of instruction to all pupils, in civil government, and the United States History, and in patriotism and the duties of a citizen, suitable to the elementary grades: in addition thereto, all high schools, public, private or parochial, shall give a course of instruction concerning the government and institutions of the United States; and no student shall be graduated from such school who has not taken and satisfactorily passed such a course. (L. 1919, ch. 247, sec.2; L. 1925, ch. 224, sec.1.)

The state board of education evidently construed this law to mean that a course in the United States Constitution was intended. Accordingly, with the opening of the school year of 1925 high schools were instructed to discontinue Guitteau's civics and offer in its place Norton's "Constitution" for the first semester. During the second semester a course in Social Civics by Munro and Ozanne was to be offered to complete the unit although it was not required for graduation. Teachers and administrators soon saw that Norton's "Constitution" was very impractical to use in the class-room and the meeting of the history and social science teachers round table at the Kansas State Teachers' Association in the fall of 1925 was largely devoted to a recitation of the grievances of the state adopted text-book. The Social Civics text-book by Munro and Ozanne, however, proved to be quite satisfactory. In the following year the state text-book commission made both Norton's "Constitution and

Guitteau's "Government and Politics in the United States" adopted text-books in the Constitution course. In the year 1927 Magruder's "American Government" was adopted, making three adopted text-books for the constitution course. In the same year social civics was cut from the list of required subjects in the normal training course making it possible for schools to drop the social civics. Therefore, it will be seen that in following out the demands of the legislature of 1925 the amount of time required in teaching government has been reduced in many cases fifty per cent.

In addition to this reduction in time, the efficiency of the course has been cut down fully as much more. In the law nothing was said about the state constitution or local government which are of more importance from the ordinary citizen's standpoint. If the United States Constitution were studied thoroughly from Norton during the first semester, there would be considerable duplication in the study of Munro and Ozanne during the second semester. The material in Munro and Ozanne is largely a duplication of any of the texts used in constitution. It is the purpose of this study to determine the best arrangement of these courses, together with their articulation with the American History and sociology courses offered in our high school. Since it was found in conversation with school people generally that a variety of schemes were being used to evade the necessity

of duplicating the material it was thought best to conduct a survey of the problem as it is now being handled by school men of the state. Other elements in the course were studied along with this problem since they were related to it in many ways.

#### PRESENT ORGANIZATION OF THE CONSTITUTION AND SOCIAL CIVICS CLASSES IN KANSAS HIGH SCHOOLS

##### Adopted Textbooks in the Constitution Course

At the time the questionnaire was prepared, teachers had to choose for their text-book in Constitution from the following three texts:

"The Constitution of the United States; Its Sources and Applications", by Thomas James Norton. Little, Brown and Company.

"Government and Politics In the United States", by William Backus Guitteau. Houghton Mifflin Company.

"American Government" by Frank Abbott Magruder. Allyn and Bacon.

The Norton book was used by all schools offering the course the first year. It can best be described as a constitution manual in which the constitution of the United States is taken up bit by bit and explained. The explanations are for the most part interesting and complete. The failure of

the text in the classroom was assured from the fact that there is no dramatic or narrative interest engendered in the pupil. It is extremely dry and uninteresting in itself and must remain so unless the teacher is quite resourceful in introducing outside readings and special class activities to enliven the bare shreds of information given. It is the type of manual used in the beginnings of civics instruction. In the hands of a very skilful and resourceful teacher it may be made an interesting basis for study. Because of its complete index it may become a valuable reference text in schools where one of the other texts is used. Since it was the first book adopted for the constitution course by the state text-book commission it has had a wide usage throughout the state. Many teachers have said they did not know of the adoption of new texts besides Norton's. The fact that many Norton used texts are available in most communities may cause a reluctance on the part of the instructor to change text-books.

Guitteau's "Government and Politics in the United States" has long been an adopted Kansas civics text-book. This book is completely outlined in its table of contents. It begins with a discussion of local government and describes very completely the town, township, municipal, county and state governments. After finishing a discussion of the structure of the state government, the author gives several



chapters over to discussion of special state powers such as the police power, crime, public charities and state finance. Then the Federal government is discussed in detail, beginning with the colonial government and the historical significance of the constitutional convention. After the structure of the federal government is discussed, a series of distinctly federal functions is described. Such functions as international relations, military functions, and commercial functions are here studied in some detail. The high points in this text-book are its extremely logical arrangement and complete information given. Few outside references need be given if this book is used. Numerous interesting photographs, facsimilies, diagrams and maps are used, an important factor in creating interesting teaching material.

Magruder's "American Government", in contrast to Guitteau's text-book, begins with a study of the federal government. The author gives a most excellent, if not complete, story of the constitutional convention. The various departments of the federal government are then discussed after which the state government is considered. General civic problems such as suffrage, education and state finance are discussed in the end. This book has all the good points of the Guitteau text. Copious helps in the form of questions and material for discussion are to be found at the end of every chapter. Illustrations, facsimilies, diagrams and maps

are used as in Guitteau.

The comparative instructional merits of the three books may be briefly summed up in the following table:

TABLE I.

Showing a Comparison between the Three Text-books with Respect to Some Fundamental Characteristics.

	Norton	Guitteau	Magruder
Number of pages	262	484	427
Number of illustrations	None	54	100
Number of maps, diagrams and facsimilies	None	18	38
Are there questions for study?	No	Yes	Yes
Are there suggested topics for discussion?	No	Yes	Yes
Rank in bibliography completeness	3	1	2
Is there a Kansas supplement?	No	Yes	Yes
Starting point	Federal Constitution	Local gov't	Federal gov't
Pages in appendix	30	23	33
Pages devoted to state government	30	206	187
Pages devoted to national government	232	278	240
Pages in index	23	36	18

### Extent to Which Social Civics is Taught

The first problem attempted in the study was to find the extent to which schools were teaching social civics. All schools presumably teach constitution or its equivalent. Of the two hundred and fifty schools questioned one hundred and sixty-four or sixty-four per cent were teaching social civics. Apparently nearly one third of the school administrators thought the civics requirement was cared for in the one semester constitution course. It is probable that a larger percentage of schools offered a year of government before the specific requirement of one half unit of constitution was made. It is difficult to see that one semester's work in a subject so important as government is adequate.

It may be reasonably supposed that the hesitancy to teach social civics after the constitution course is due to a fear of duplicating some of the material covered in the latter course. This problem of duplication is considered elsewhere in our study. This thought is evident in some of the postscripts written in the margin of the questionnaire. Two schools reported teaching the Magruder text for the entire year. One school used Norton the first term and followed it with Magruder for the second. One school used the Munro and Ozanne text the entire year to fulfill both

the constitution and social civics requirements. Another used Hepner for the social civics course. On the margin of one questionnaire was found the following statement, "In my opinion, of all the texts used in the past three years it would be better to use Munro and Ozanne as a year's course meeting the constitution requirements and also giving an adequate civics course". Another wrote, "Personally I should prefer to teach Guitteau the entire year". The same might be said for Magruder. Some teachers indicated that they used Magruder for the constitution course and studied the federal government and constitution including its origin and history. In the second semester these teachers said they made an exhaustive study of municipal, state and local government from Munro and Ozanne. This arrangement is quite a logical one, for Magruder has an unusually good discussion of the constitutional convention, especially of its characters, while Munro and Ozanne are particularly strong in the field of local government. However, there is not sufficient difference in the content of any of these texts to justify requiring a student to purchase two books for the year's course in government. Either Guitteau or Magruder could best be used for the entire year. The Social Civics of Munro and Ozanne is quite involved in economics and sociology, a fact which makes it an impractical duplication where these two subjects are taught

elsewhere in the curriculum.

In finding the relative popularity of the three text-books used we find the following results:

Book Used	Number of schools reporting its use.	Per cent of schools reporting
Norton's "Constitution"	104	45.
Guitteau's "Gov't & Politics In U.S."	50	21.64
Magruder's "American Government"	65	28.00
Magruder and Norton	5	2.60
Guitteau and Norton	5	2.60
Guitteau and Magruder	2	0.90

The use of the Magruder text in sixty-five schools in its first year of adoption is an excellent recommendation for its adaptability as a constitution text. More than half of the teachers saw fit to change from the Norton text as soon as another became available. If this trend away from Norton continues, it will not long be an important factor in the constitution course in Kansas high schools.

#### Time of Teaching the Constitution Course

It was desired to find by the study the term used for constitution instruction. It will be noted that many schools did not answer this part of the questionnaire. As was expected a great majority taught the course the first semester. The results for this part of the study follow:

	Number of Schools	Per Cent of Schools
Schools teaching the constitution course the first semester.	142	79.32
Schools teaching the constitution course the second semester.	37	20.68

Some of the larger schools had classes in constitution both terms.

It will be seen from the foregoing study that Kansas constitution and social civics teachers are attempting to organize their course to the best advantage. They are trying out new approved texts and attempting to organize the text-book content with a view of making the course worthwhile.

A summary of the data obtained on the present organization of the constitution and social civics classes.

	Number of Schools	Per Cent of Schools
Schools teaching the social civics course	164	64.
Schools using Norton's "Constitution"	104	45
Schools using Guitteau's "Gov't & Politics In the U.S."	50	21.64
Schools using Magruder's "American Government"	65	28.00
Schools using both Magruder and Norton	5	2.60
Schools using Guitteau and Magruder	2	0.9

Schools teaching constitution the first semester	142	79.32
Schools teaching constitution the second semester	37	20.68

#### USE OF THE CURRENT EVENT IN THE CONSTITUTION AND SOCIAL CIVICS CLASSES

##### Importance of the Current Event Study

Because of the intimate relation of a course on government and the everyday happenings of events throughout the country and in the local community, many teachers take advantage of these current events in their classroom. All forces of government are operating every day. Scarcely an occurrence worthy of publication takes place but that some portion of the machinery of government is called into action. Events of the business world continually call one's attention to the restraining or guiding influences of the government in that direction. No criminal news is published but that an opportunity is given the police department to get into action. Progress in business, science or politics is of utmost importance to some department of our government. By keeping closely in touch with these events a most excellent opportunity is taken in intimately watching the practical functioning of our government both state and nation. Local and state events are no less evident as showing the intimate relation of every happening to government authorities. No

material richer in teaching value is found in any course than the current event in government instruction.

In the present study it was desired to find out the following information concerning current event work as conducted in the constitution and social civics courses:

1. What publications, if any, were used for the constitution course?
2. What publications, if any, were used for the social civics course?
3. From what source the publications were furnished.
4. To what extent publications from the school libraries were used.
5. What methods were used in studying the publications?
6. Magazines which were most commonly used in the above course.

#### Publications Used in the Current Event Study

In the constitution course one hundred and thirty-six teachers made use of the current event by requiring each student to have access to a copy of a specific periodical.

The periodicals used and the number of schools making use of it follow:

Name of periodical	Number of schools using it
Literary Digest	41
Weekly News Review	40



Current Events	26
World News	24
World Review, Time, Outlook, Current Science, Looseleaf current topics, one each	5
Total number of schools making use of this type of current event work in the constitution course.	136

It is thus shown that fifty-four per cent of the teachers used some form of regular publication for current event study in the constitution course. As will be shown later, others provided current study by different methods. The advantages found in studying magazines of the type mentioned above are plain.

An acquaintance is formed with such a magazine enabling one to find quickly the various departments and get the information for which he is looking. This advantage is apparent to the average person who looks for a specific piece of news in a strange newspaper. All of the publications mentioned are models in this respect. After making the acquaintance with one of these publications, students are loathe to leave them for the study of miscellaneous magazines.

When a group of magazines is used for this study, the teacher faces the task of becoming familiar with a large number of publications. It is impossible to do this to an extent that will make her familiar with the contents of all. Consequently misunderstandings are likely to occur, for young

people are not to be trusted to report accurately all details of an article.

The use of a magazine of this kind enables the class and teacher to follow a specific line of news to its completion without intermission and with a uniform type of reporting. The route of the recent farm legislation through Congress during the last two years has been an example of a movement which has been remarkably well developed by these magazines. Enough recapitulation is given in the opening paragraph to bring the reader up to date before the current discussion is begun.

The magazines reported by the teachers are of two types. The type most commonly used is the special class paper written and designed for use in high school classes. They usually have no advertisements. Questions and directions are furnished teachers for their use in class. Questions are furnished the student and frequently the main articles are outlined for his use. They make a special effort to follow certain important items as long as they retain a public interest. Little or no attention is given to big criminal cases and sensational crime news. Each issue usually contains one or more editorials on the significance of certain current news developments. They are usually weekly publications and are mailed so that they reach the school on Monday. Examples of this class are the "Weekly News Review",

"Current Events", "World News" and "World Review".

The outstanding publication of this group is undoubtedly the "Weekly News Review". Although it is a relatively new publication the present study showed it to be the leader of its class in the number of schools using it. This paper consists of six pages. The last two pages are on a single loose sheet and contain material for special assignments. The remainder of the paper consists of about four major articles which follow the most important projects in which the federal government is interested. Frequent photographs of men prominent in the current news are featured along with photographs of places and events of major importance. The photographs are excellent. Another feature worthy of mention is the weekly editorial on the front page in heavy faced type in which some problem of interest to youth is discussed. Editorials on such subjects as cheating in examinations, the importance of athletics in high school and morals of the present generation are frankly discussed. At the end of each month a very efficient test is furnished. The test is objective in nature having completion tests, matching tests and true-false examinations on the previous four week's news. Sometimes a series of photographs appear for the student to label. A complete key is furnished the instructor to facilitate grading. This magazine is the most highly developed from a teaching standpoint of any of the magazines

used. The cost of this magazine is fifty cents per semester. Other magazines of this type are similar in content and cost.

The other type of magazine used for this purpose is represented best by the "Literary Digest" and the "Outlook". It is claimed by the publishers of this type of magazines that they should be used by the class because they are of the type available when they leave school. The publishers also assert that the advertisements have a great deal of educational value in making contacts with life for the pupil. Magazines of this type likewise offer instructions for teachers, and sometimes tests over the news covered. Their expense is usually about twice that of the special class magazine. This item may be important in some cases. Sometimes an attitude of distrust has been created in a community for one of these papers, a fact which makes it a dangerous thing to have pupils purchase. A magazine of this sort may have been identified with some movement such as prohibition or one of the prominent political parties. This connection makes enemies in every locality. Where an attitude of this sort is known to exist against such a publication, it should not be used for study assignment. The publishers of the "Literary Digest" in particular have entered the field as solicitors of school business in Kansas. Their agents have rather thoroughly canvassed Kansas school men in an effort to get their publication in the schoolroom.

Another objection to the use of such a magazine in the constitution class of the high school lies in its method of presenting its subject material and its breadth of news stories. The "Literary Digest", for example, writes up little of its own news but gives articles both for and against certain subjects. This breadth of discussion makes the subject so big that time cannot be afforded for all of it in the present constitution curriculum. Emphasis is also often misplaced from the standpoint of the educator. If the "Literary Digest" were to be studied to an extent sufficient for the student to become familiar with its contents, the entire class time would be required. This amount of time could scarcely be justified from an educational standpoint. A summary of the leading magazines mentioned in the study follows with a brief summary of their characteristics:

Magazine	Size in pages	-Advertisements	Lesson plans	Purpose of publication
Literary Digest	65	Yes	Yes	General
Weekly News Review	6	No	Yes	School
Current Events	4	Yes	No	School
World News	8	Yes	Yes	School

In the social civics course it was found that one hundred and twenty-one teachers continued to use the same type of current events study as outlined above for the constitution course. Since approximately one third of the

schools did not teach social civics, we have a higher percentage of schools which offer the course giving this type of current event study. The amount of work covered in social civics is much greater in point of pages studied if the complete text is used. However, current events study could be more readily related to the work taken because of its economic and sociologic character. We might reasonably conclude that Kansas teachers of both constitution and social civics are making large use of the specialized current events magazine as a teaching tool.

#### Source of Publication Used

Of the hundred and thirty-six schools using the current event paper in constitution and the hundred and twenty-one using it in social civics, in only sixteen cases was the expense of the publication borne by the school. We should conclude from this evidence that it was by far the commoner practice to require the student to furnish his own subscription.

#### Publications Used From the School Library

Another source of material frequently used for current events study is the regular magazine of the school or home library. This type of study has an advantage in making students familiar with several different publications giving different interpretations to the same news. It is known

that students are not good magazine readers while attending school and this method would tend to open up this field of pleasure to them. **This plan offers the objection that it requires the teacher to read a great variety of magazines in order to keep informed sufficiently to assign and grade reports.** The results of the study with respect to this phase of the current event showed that eighty-seven schools or thirty-four per cent of the teachers used the above method of presenting the current events study.

#### Methods Used in Publication Study

Three prominent methods were used in studying current events, (1) assignment of the entire publication for one day's study as if it were text-book material, (2) assigning special articles to individuals for special oral or written report and (3) a combination of the two methods. As indicated by the replies to the questionnaire the following preference for method was noted:

	Number	Per cent
Schools in which the periodical was assigned to the individual class entire	36	33
Schools in which special articles were assigned to individual students.	35	31
Schools in which a combination of the above methods was used.	40	36

A combination of the first two methods appeared to be the most popular procedure. The fact that so large a number

of schools gave no one of these three methods indicates that in some cases perhaps little regular system was used in conducting the study. The value of such a study lies not only in the information gained by following the news and thus explaining the use of government but also in reporting the events to the class orally or in making a written report when required.

Where a smaller, well organized magazine is used the entire issue may easily be covered in one period's recitation. In using the "Weekly News Review" a special sheet is available which contains special articles for report. One of these may be assigned in addition to the regularly assigned lesson. Where the entire publication is divided up in special assignments, the student does not have enough responsibility in preparing his assignment. Most of the special articles may be prepared in not more than fifteen minutes. Where the "Literary Digest" or "Outlook" is used, special articles become almost imperative in order to get over the material available. In such cases, so great a variety of topics is attempted that it is difficult to get the class as a whole to follow them. In whatever method used, the teacher should give a definite assignment for each issue studied. When magazines from the library or home are used the student is often assigned one magazine for which he is responsible as reporter. These assignments are frequently



changed so that every student becomes familiar with the entire group of magazines available. Such an assignment as just mentioned is too general for the average student. He cannot be expected to report all the articles in a publication and would not have time to do so if he could. Special articles should be assigned in each issue for each student. Sometimes a general topic is assigned and the student gets his information from whatever source he can and makes weekly reports concerning its progress. Such topics as the prohibition problem, Mexico, Europe, crime, farm relief and others may be assigned and the pupil made responsible each week for their reporting.

A plan devised to secure best results with the pupil's interest stimulated to the highest degree, consists in using the specialized publication for the first semester. In these magazines the articles are so written that reports may be made quite easily. The entire magazine is to be studied by the class at first. Then reports may be required from the students at various times throughout the week. During the second term the students are assigned topics in the school library magazines which are to be reassigned every month. By this method the student is gradually trained in reading not only magazines but in selecting the important part of the articles studies.

A great variety of magazines are found to be used by

the teachers who used the library magazine as a basis for their study. The publications mentioned are all well known. A complete list will be found at the end of the data given below.

Magazines used by individual students in current event study	Number of schools	Percentage of schools
Literary Digest	41	30.1
Weekly News Review	40	29.4
Current Events	26	19.1
World News	24	17.6
World Review, Time, Outlook, Current Science, Looseleaf, Current Topics one each	5	3.7
Total number of schools making use of this type of current event work in the constitution course	136	54.4
Classes in which students subscribed for a periodical in social civics	121	74.17
Schools which furnished the periodical used free to the pupil	16	11.76
Schools in which the periodical was studied as a whole in one period each week	36	33.00
Schools in which special articles were assigned to individual students	35	31.00
Schools in which a combination of the above methods were used	40	36.00
Schools in which no magazine was required of the individual but in which special reports were required from magazines from the library or home	87	35.00

Schools requiring students to have individual magazine for study	136	54.00
Schools requiring no current event study	27	11.00

Library magazines used as references in current event study.

Magazine	Number of Schools in which used	Magazine	Number of Schools in which used
Literary Digest	70	American Magazine	3
United States Daily	35	Atlantic Monthly	2
Review of Reviews	24	Nation	2
Pathfinder	18	Saturday Even. Post	1
World's Work	18	Readers' Digest	1
Time	16	Annals of Academy of Political Science	1
Outlook	11	Mercury	1
Daily paper	7	Collier's Weekly	1
World News	7	Manchester Guardian	1
Forum	6	The World Tomorrow	1
Century	5	Congressional Record	1
Kansas City Star	4	Social Science	1
New Republic	4		
Weekly News Review	4		
Independent	4		
Current Events	4		
Topeka Daily Capital	3		

## USE OF TEXT-BOOK MATERIAL IN THE CONSTITUTION AND SOCIAL CIVICS COURSES

### A Statement of the Problem

If a class in constitution completes either of the three adopted text-books, it has studied the form and function of the federal government quite thoroughly. If the constitution class has completely covered the course in either the text by Guitteau or Magruder he has studied in detail, not only the details of the federal government but has quite thoroughly studied the form and functions of the state and local government. To follow a constitution course such as this with the social course from Munro and Ozanne must necessarily result in a practical duplication. Munro and Ozanne's "Social Civics" is itself a detailed description of both local and federal government. The problem in this study is to eliminate this duplication of subject material by arranging the material used in the most advantageous manner.

### The Present Arrangement of Subject Matter in the Course

The situation as it exists at present in Kansas high schools may best be shown by the answers to a portion of the questionnaire given below:

	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
Schools in which the entire text in constitution was completed	184	73.60

Schools in which the social civics text was completed	102	62.00
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	Number of teachers	Percentage of teachers
Teachers who thought there was too much duplication if both texts were completed	85	34.00
Teachers who thought there was too little material in both texts for a year's work	20	8.00
Teachers who thought the material covered in both texts was too much for a year's work	93	37.60

From the above results it will be seen that many teachers did not complete the text-book studied in either course. Over one third thought there was a duplication of material in the two courses. Remarks were found on the margin indicating that although there was duplication, it was a desirable duplication and was a good thing. According to the replies received, the amount of material offered in the two books is a little too much for a year's work.

#### Constructing an Adequate One Year Course of Government in Kansas

In order to comply with the Kansas law requiring the teaching of constitution, at least one half year's work must be done in one of the adopted constitution texts. To secure adequate training in government it is surely necessary to spend at least one year. From a pedagogical standpoint,

duplication of identical work is fatal if in different courses. Especially is this true when one course immediately follows the other. Two plans suggest themselves as a relief from this situation in our study. The course in constitution, according to the law is limited to the United States Constitution. There is sufficient interesting and valuable material in any of the adopted constitution text-books on the federal government for eighteen weeks of study. Especially is this fact true where current events are studied at least one day each week. The social civics course can then begin with local and state government and can be studied from the social civics text-book the second semester. Some teachers indicated that they were using that arrangement already. Another arrangement which was found satisfactory is to use either the Guitteau or Magruder book as the basis for the entire year.

#### EVALUATING SOME COMMON TEACHING METHODS

##### Two Common Methods Used as Aids in Civics Instruction

It was desired to ascertain the extent to which teachers made use of a regular note-book in the constitution and social civics courses. The questionnaire gave the following results:

	Number of teachers	Percentage of teachers
Teachers who required a note book which was handed in and graded	73	29.20

Teachers who required outside reading regularly	120	48.00
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#### Use of the Notebook in Civics Instruction

From the foregoing results it is seen that almost one third of the teachers regularly required a notebook in their study of government. Notebook work in all high school courses is hardly as universal as it once was. Too often is such work made the end rather than one of the means employed. A variety of work may well be included in a notebook in government. An abstract of the outside reading required is kept along with outlines of the text-book material and short abstracts of the current event study. Supplementary class notes are also included sometimes in the notebook. It is doubtful whether a high school student will profit sufficiently by the notebook requirement in such a course as constitution or social civics to warrant its use as a teaching tool. Notes and references alike will be copied in spite of the teachers' best efforts to discourage the practice. It is supposed that notes on such matters as the current public officers will be taken voluntarily and that the student will be held responsible for them. However, the subject matter found in the adopted text-books for both courses is so well organized that supplementary lecture information is seldom necessary.

### Use of Outside Reading in the Civics Course

It will be further noted that almost half of the teachers teaching both courses regularly require outside reading from the students. This requirement is made for three reasons, (1) to supplement the work of the author in many cases, (2) to bring the course down to date and (3) to give different views on certain somewhat disputed questions. There is an abundance of reference material available which is suitable for this work. Supplementary reading is especially desirable at the point where the making of the United States Constitution is studied. A danger may be suggested in regard to supplementary reading by the fact that some teachers overdo this part of the work in requiring an excessive amount of reports and thus spoil the effect upon the student.

### RELATION OF THE AMERICAN HISTORY COURSE TO THE CONSTITUTION AND SOCIAL CIVICS COURSES

#### Results of the Study

Experience in teaching government to high school students has emphasized the desirability of their having a background of American history as a prerequisite to their courses in constitution and social civics. It was felt that the reaction of the teachers in constitution and social



civics should be taken in regard to this plan in the study. Consequently two items were enclosed in the questionnaire to secure definitely their opinions.

	Number of teachers	Percentage of teachers
Teachers who thought American history should be taught before constitution and social civics	95	49.22
Teachers who thought constitution and social civics should be taught before American history	98	50.78

It is encouraging to note that almost half of the teachers replied that they thought the American history course should precede the year of government study. These replies were given in spite of the fact that in Kansas we have always offered the civics study in the eleventh and the American history in the twelfth year. Several emphatically indicated in the margin that American history should precede the Government course by all means. Some fifty teachers did not answer this question at all. It was found later that in many cases they knew that the course of study placed American history in the fourth year and did not think of going contrary to the course.

#### Reasons for Teaching American History as a Prerequisite to Government

The American system of government is essentially based on a new conception of peoples' rights. Few people realize

to what extent this conception differed from governments existing at the time of the beginning. Our national Constitution was built around ideas projected from new methods and conditions of life. In beginning to study its formation, one must review the colonial charter and a history of early local government. He must study the history of the period which produced men with such ideals as the framers of the Constitution had. These ideals reach their culmination in the Constitutional Convention. But at the end of that convention the Constitution was not yet a live document. It remained for John Marshall and other jurists of his time to breathe into it the life which it now has. With the slight knowledge of history possessed by the high school junior such development of the Constitution is impossible. Much time is spent in setting up historical backgrounds in the constitution course which should be spent on a study of the document itself. The study of constitution would be in a large measure an interpretation of history if it were taught after the American history course.

#### TEACHING KANSAS GOVERNMENT IN THE CONSTITUTION AND SOCIAL CIVICS COURSES

##### The Present Status of Teaching Kansas Civics

Great variation was noted in the amount of regular class time allotted to the study of Kansas Civics. The following

table will show this variation as reported in reply to the questionnaire.

Number of weeks spent on Kansas civics	Number of schools using this amount	Percentage of schools represented
0	1	.06
1	3	2.00
2	51	34.00
3	41	27.15
4	25	16.55
5	4	2.64
6	22	14.57
8	2	1.32
12	2	1.32

#### Adequate Provision for Teaching Kansas Civics

It is probable that in many cases Kansas civics is taught along with the text-book material. For example, in a study of the organization of the county, the local Kansas county is set up as an example. However, it is apparent that the Kansas Constitution should be at least read if not carefully studied by all. In no other course could this project be taken care of more appropriately than in the high school course in government.

Specific topics of importance which it is desirable to

take up are (1) the working of the Kansas Road law, (2) how the dependent poor of the county are cared for, (3) the district court system, (4) the public education system and (5) the work of the public service commission. These institutions may best be used as projects for original research by the class, as little definite information may be found in the supplement or the text-book. It is not the purpose of the course to teach law but some common Kansas laws should be studied to serve as a sample. Simple facts concerning the school laws, marriage and divorce laws, and the inheritance laws should be studied.

The local town and township officers do so little that their function is often neglected in the civics class study. One's rights and privileges in the local courts should be known to every citizen so that he may not be unjustly convicted of minor offenses because of his ignorance of the court procedure.

The Kansas supplement furnished free with the regular text-book furnishes suitable material for the Kansas study. The current edition of "Kansas Facts" may also be used to advantage. A tendency to slight local government is evident in some cases. County officials are glad to explain their work to the public, and schools in particular are welcomed at the county court house for study of the county's business.

## SUMMARY

Increased instruction in government has not resulted from the action of the state legislature in 1925 which required high schools to include one-half unit of constitution in their list of required subjects. On the other hand civics instruction has probably declined because of the tendency of schools as shown in the study to offer only the constitution course in place of the year of civics formerly required.

Norton's Constitution appears from the replies received to be losing popularity as a constitution text-book in favor of Magruder and Guitteau. Schools quite uniformly offer the constitution course in the second semester of the junior year.

A great number of Kansas high schools use some form of current event study in connection with their government course. Some use one of the small publications published especially for classroom work. A smaller number use the regular publications of the home and library for their current event study.

Most teachers covered the entire text-book in both the constitution and social civics courses. Many considered the duplication where both texts were completely covered too great.

A small number of teachers required their pupils to keep a notebook. This notebook was handed in at intervals and graded. Almost half of the teachers required outside reading regularly.

There is a large amount of opinion among constitution teachers to the effect that American history should be a prerequisite to civics instruction.

A great variation occurs in the amount of time allotted to the study of Kansas civics. Perhaps a large number of teachers teach Kansas civics as incidental to the text-book study.

From general results of the questionnaire one gets the impression that our civic instruction would be stronger if a single unit from a single text-book were required in the senior year after American history was studied in the junior year. There is under the present system a great amount of variation in the amount of time spent and a great difference in system used in arranging the courses as they now stand.

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