Taking a Stand in History

A selection of topic suggestions for the 2016-2017 Connecticut History Day

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Agriculture

Literacy Tests and the Right to Vote
In 1855, Connecticut became the first state to require a literacy test to vote, with the goal of preventing Irish immigrants from voting. The test was later used to keep Puerto Rican laborers and other groups of people from voting, until civil rights activists made the literacy tests illegal.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Windsor Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/literacy-tests-and-the-right-to-vote/

Architecture & Preservation

Emily Holcombe: Preserving Connecticut’s Colonial Past
Emily Seymour Goodwin Holcombe was an activist and preservationist who took pride in the state’s history, particularly its colonial past. From the 1890s through the early 20th century, Holcombe organized numerous preservation efforts, including the restoration of Hartford’s Ancient Burying Ground and the preservation of Connecticut’s Old State House.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut’s Old State House
Ancient Burying Ground (Hartford)
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/emily-holcombe-pioneered-to-preserve-connecticuts-colonial-past/

Saving Hartford’s Amos Bull House
The first building in Connecticut nominated to the National Register was the endangered Amos Bull House at 350 Main Street, the oldest brick house in downtown Hartford. The story of its survival and transformation has many twists and turns, and the involvement of many committed individuals.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Amos Bull House
Butler-McCook House
Connecticut Landmarks
Links:
http://ctexplored.org/saving-hartfords-amos-bull-house/
The Forlorn Soldier
The c. 1860s Forlorn Soldier is a weather-beaten brownstone statue depicting a Union soldier. For years he stood, truly forlorn, by the side of Airport Road in Hartford. Yet he is a unique representative of both Hartford and Connecticut, their connection to the Civil War and especially the Battle of Antietam, and to one of the city’s and nation’s most prominent businessmen, James G. Batterson, the founder of Travelers Insurance and builder of monuments, including the state capitol.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:
http://ctexplored.org/the-forlorn-soldier/

The Genius of Connecticut: Give Her Wings!
Randolph Roger’s Genius of Connecticut statue once stood at the pinnacle of the state’s capitol building in Hartford. Today, historian Matt Warshauer is leading an effort to have the statue returned to its rightful place on top of the capitol dome.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Capitol
Links:
http://ctexplored.org/the-genius-of-connecticut-give-her-wings/

Arts

Artist Roger Tory Peterson, a Champion for the Natural World
Artist, author, and conservationist Roger Tory Peterson pioneered the modern age of bird watching with his breakthrough 1934 book, A Field Guide to the Birds. He testified before Congress against DDT and related pesticides and advocated for protecting the environment.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Griswold Point Preserve in Old Lyme
Roger Tory Peterson Estuary Center
Roger Tory Peterson Institute (Jamestown, NY)
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/artist-roger-tory-peterson-champions-for-the-natural-world/
Art Young, Radical Cartoonist
Art Young was a political cartoonist whose criticisms of U.S. involvement in WWI resulted in a trial for espionage -- punishable by 20 years in prison.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Art Young Gallery, Bethel
Bethel Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/art-young-radical-cartoonist/

The Political Fires that Fueled the Courant
In recent years the Hartford Courant, the oldest continuously published newspaper in the United States, has taken a centrist, non-partisan approach to the news. However, the paper was once considered one of the country’s preeminent Republican journals, staking its claim as the conservative voice of Connecticut.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:

Aviation

The Lafayette Escadrille
Named after the Frenchman who helped the United States earn its independence from Great Britain during the American Revolution, this French squadron was composed of American pilots who helped the French fight the Germans before the United States entered World War I in 1917.

Field trip and research possibilities:
New England Air Museum
Links:
http://www.neam.org/lafayette-escadrille/americansinfas.html

The Kosciusko Squadron
This unit was made up of American volunteer pilots who helped the Polish fight for their independence from the Soviet Union between 1919-1921. The unit was named after a Polish patriot who helped the Americans during the Revolutionary War.

Field trip and research possibilities:
New England Air Museum
Links:
http://web.ccsu.edu/kosciuszko/history.htm

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**The Flying Tigers**

Officially known as the American Volunteer Group, these American aviators went to China to help the Chinese fight the Japanese before the United States declared war on Japan after its attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
New England Air Museum

*Links:*

**Belief**

**Reverend James Pennington: A Voice for Freedom**

After growing up as a slave in Maryland, James Pennington escaped to the north and became a pastor, educator, and political activist in Hartford. He became a strong advocate for African American education, black suffrage, and the abolition of slavery, and believed that educating his students would give them the skills to become truly free.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
Faith Congregational Church in Hartford
Connecticut State Library

*Links:*
http://connecticuthistory.org/reverend-james-pennington-a-voice-for-freedom/

**Hartford’s First African American Church**

In 1819, a group of African Americans in Hartford grew weary of being assigned seats in the galleries and in the rear of churches and decided to begin worshipping on their own in the conference room of the First Church of Christ, now Center Church, in Hartford. This would become the first black Congregational Church in Connecticut, the third oldest in the nation.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
First Congregational Church
Center Church

*Links:*
http://ctexplored.org/faith-congregational-church-185-years-same-people-same-purpose/
**Jews in Early Connecticut**
By the early 1840s, Connecticut’s Jews, a group that was predominantly German before the 1880s, had successfully established themselves in the social and business life of both Hartford and New Haven but were not allowed full religious equality in Connecticut.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
ACES Educational Center for the Arts  
Charter Oak Cultural Center

*Links:*
http://ctexplored.org/site-lines-gaining-religious-equality/

**Business and Industry**

**Blacksmith Isaac Glasko Challenges the State Constitution**
Isaac Glasko was an African American/Native American blacksmith from Griswold who petitioned the CT General Assembly to change the state constitution: in 1823 he argued that since black men and women were not allowed to vote, African American businesses should not have to pay state taxes.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
The Indian and Colonial Research Center in Mystic  
Glasgo village in Griswold

*Links:*
http://connecticuthistory.org/blacksmith-isaac-glasko-challenges-the-state-constitution/

**The Danbury Shakes: Mercury Poisoning and Workers Rights**
Danbury’s hat-making business had the negative consequence of causing the "Danbury Shakes" (mercury poisoning) in people who worked in the felt-making factories. Medical professionals and a local labor union worked to end the use of mercury in the felt-making process, as well as to protect the individuals and families affected by the "Danbury Shakes."

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
Connecticut Historical Society  
Danbury Museum & Historical Society

*Links:*
Vivien Kellems Takes On the IRS
Vivien Kellems, an advocate for female equality and women’s suffrage, was best known for a decades long battle with the IRS, throughout which she refused to pay income taxes as a protest against the IRS's graduated income tax rate.

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/vivien-kellems-takes-on-the-irs/

Civil War

29th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers: CT's First Black Regiment
Midway through the Civil War, Connecticut created the state’s first African American regiment, the 29th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers. The regiment won many important battles and became one of the first Union regiments to march through the Confederate capital of Richmond.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
29th Colored Regiment Monument in New Haven

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/the-29th-regiment-connecticut-volunteers-fought-more-than-one-war/
http://connecticuthistory.org/connecticuts-black-civil-war-regiment/

John Brown: A Portrait of Violent Abolitionism
John Brown, born in Torrington, was an abolitionist known for his role in Bleeding Kansas (the struggle to determine whether Kansas and Nebraska territories should be free or slave states) and for leading the slave revolt and raid on Harpers Ferry.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
John Brown Birthplace
Torrington Historical Society
Amistad Center at Wadsworth Atheneum

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/john-brown-a-portrait-of-violent-abolitionism/
The First Battle of Bull Run: Connecticut Troops Stand Firm
Three Connecticut regiments took part in the First Battle of Bull Run. While the battle was a disaster for the North in general, Connecticut's troops fared relatively well, and were later praised for their poise and bravery.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:

The Peace Movement in Litchfield
While most northerners supported the Civil War, some people in Connecticut opposed it. Numerous families in and around Litchfield showed their opposition to the war, standing up for what they believed in even when it was unpopular to do so.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Litchfield Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/the-peace-movement-in-lichtfield/

William Eaton, a Peace Democrat and Civil War Opponent
William Eaton of Tolland served in the state House of Representatives during the Civil War as a "Peace Democrat." He opposed popular support for the Civil War, arguing that individual states had the right to govern themselves the way they wanted, and that seceding from the United States was not a punishable or treasonous act.

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/william-eaton-a-peace-democrat-and-civil-war-opponent/

African Americans Take a Stand During the Civil War
Joseph O. Cross was one of many African Americans to fight for the Connecticut and the North in the Civil War. Connecticut took longer than Massachusetts to accept the idea of recruiting African American soldiers, but men like Cross eagerly took up arms to defend the Union and provide for their families.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:
http://ctexplored.org/fighting-for-freedom-joseph-o-cross/
Crime and Punishment

Capital Punishment in Connecticut: Changing Views
Starting in the 1600s, people who committed serious crimes in Connecticut were put to death, first by hanging, and later by electric chair and lethal injection. Citizens argued against capital punishment numerous times throughout the state’s history, but the death penalty was not abolished until 2012.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Wethersfield Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/capital-punishment-in-connecticut-changing-views/

Connecticut Lawyer Prosecutes Nazi War Criminals at Nuremberg
Thomas Joseph Dodd was the 2nd highest-ranking U.S. attorney in the Nuremberg Trials that held Nazi war criminals responsible for the atrocities of WWII. Dodd was key in accumulating evidence of Nazi war crimes.

Field trip and research possibilities:
UConn Library Archives and Special Collections
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/connecticut-lawyer-prosecutes-nazi-war-criminals-at-nuremberg/

Zebulon Brockway: A Controversial Figure in Prison Reform
Zebulon Brockway advocated a program designed to educate and reform prisoners rather than punish them, but his unorthodox and brutal administrative style ultimately brought an end to a 50-year career full of innovation. Brockway also developed a program that was a precursor to the parole system.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Wethersfield Historical Society
Links:
Education

Weaver High School Students and the 1st Amendment
Marcus Manselle, an African American student at Weaver High School, was suspended in 1969 for publishing and distributing a student newspaper that criticized the education system and advocated student rights. When administrators, city government, and a state judge refused to overturn Manselle’s suspension, his fellow students went on strike. Their protests led to a resolution that allowed students to continue distributing non-sanctioned student newspapers.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/a-first-amendment-lesson-weaver-high-students-teach-their-elders/

Avon’s Educational and Cultural Pioneer
Yung Wing was the first Chinese-born student to graduate from an American college. After earning his degree from Yale, he set up a program that sent Chinese students to American colleges to receive their education and advocated for education reform.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/avons-educational-and-cultural-pioneer/

The Ill-Fated Campaign to Found an African American College in New Haven
In 1831, a group of black and white abolitionists from across the eastern seaboard launched a campaign to build the nation’s first black college.

Field trip and research possibilities:
New Haven Museum
Links:
The Black Law in Connecticut
Prudence Crandall made the controversial decision in 1833 to allow African American students to attend her school. She faced community backlash, and the Connecticut General Assembly passed a law that forbid out-of-state black students from moving to Connecticut -- an attempt to shut down Crandall's school. Prudence refused to close her school, and instead fought for the education and equality of African Americans.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Prudence Crandall Museum
Connecticut's Old State House
Connecticut State Capitol

Links:
http://teachitct.org/grade-8-the-black-law-in-connecticut/

Connecticut Education Reform: Project Concern
In 1966, Connecticut launched "Project Concern," a student busing plan that placed randomly-selected Hartford Public School students in surrounding suburban schools in an effort to desegregate schools in and around Hartford. The project was met with mixed reviews -- while some students who participated achieved higher success than their peers, critics argued that it did little to actually end segregation.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/connecticut-takes-the-wheel-on-education-reform-project-concern/

Simon Bernstein and the 1965 Conn. Education Amendment
Until 1965, Connecticut did not guarantee its citizens a constitutional right to an education. Legislator Simon Bernstein was given only five minutes to write an amendment that would guarantee an education for CT's students. The amendment he wrote passed through the legislature and became a law, leading to significant changes in Connecticut's education system.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library Archives
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library

Links:
Henry Barnard Advances State and National Education Initiatives
Henry Barnard, a Hartford native, believed that the public education system of the early 19th century was not inspiring students to success. He spent his career in education reforming the way schools worked, focusing on a home-like atmosphere that emphasized moral education. He eventually became the first Commissioner of Education for the United States.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Litchfield Historical Society
Links:

Maria Sánchez, State Representative and Community Advocate
Maria Sánchez successfully advocated for bilingual education in Hartford schools and served on the Hartford Board of Education. She founded the Puerto Rican Parade Committee in 1964 (a parade that the Latino community still celebrates each year in Hartford), and in 1988 she became the first Latina elected to the Connecticut General Assembly.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library
Links:

The Northern Student Movement
The Northern Student Movement was a civil rights group founded by Yale students in the early 1960s. The group soon grew and spread across the northeast. The organization advocated for African American equality and worked to tutor thousands of grade school students throughout the region.

Field trip and research possibilities:
CCSU Library Special Collections
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/the-northern-student-movement/

Sheff v. O’Neill Settlements Target Educational Segregation in Hartford
In 1989, Milo Sheff -- a fourth grade student from Hartford -- and his parents, along with 17 other students and their parents, filed a lawsuit against the State of Connecticut, arguing that Hartford students did not have equal access to quality public education. This group of students and parents won their lawsuit, resulting in the establishment of the Open Choice program that created more magnet schools and encouraged suburban students to attend Hartford schools, and vice versa.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library
Links:
I Called Him Mr. Hurley
Walter J. “Doc” Hurley worked in Hartford Public Schools for several decades, serving as an advocate for education in the capital city. In 1975 he established the Doc Hurley Scholarship Fund to promote higher education, a fund that has provided scholarships to hundreds of Hartford students.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library

Links:
http://ctexplored.org/i-called-him-mr-hurley/

Benjamin Spock: Raising the World’s Children
Dr. Spock wrote The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care in 1946. The book encouraged a more nurturing approach to parenting, and the book remained a top-seller for 50 years after its initial release. His advice contradicted popular beliefs about child-rearing, and his book’s success made him an authority in the medical field.

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/benjamin-spock-raising-the-worlds-children/

Environment

Morton Biskind Warned the World About DDT
Physician Morton Biskind was one of the first medical professionals to discover the negative impact of the pesticide DDT in human patients. Along with a colleague, he published an article warning the public about the dangers of DDT. While his work was originally ignored, researchers eventually determined that Biskind was right, and the U.S. banned DDT in 1972.

Links:

Law

The Charter of 1662
The Charter of 1662 combined the Connecticut and New Haven colonies, and granted the Connecticut colony land rights stretching from Narragansett Bay to the Pacific Ocean. More importantly, it also established a clear and unprecedented system of self-governance in Connecticut -- its citizens could elect their own governor, choose representatives for each town, create new laws (as long as they were not contradictory to England’s laws).

Field trip and research possibilities:
Museum of Connecticut History at Connecticut State Library
Connecticut Historical Society
Connecticut's Old State House

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/the-charter-of-1662/
**Taking on the State: Griswold v. Connecticut**

The Barnum Act of 1879 banned the use of birth control in Connecticut. Estelle Griswold, a women's rights advocate and Executive Director of the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, helped women leave the state to get information on contraceptives, defied Connecticut law by providing women with birth control, and successfully argued in U.S. Supreme Court that the Barnum Act was unconstitutional.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
Connecticut Supreme Court

*Links:*
http://connecticuthistory.org/taking-on-the-state-griswold-v-connecticut/

**Connecticut and the Comstock Law**

In 1879, Connecticut legislators passed a law that banned the use of contraceptives. This followed a national movement restricting the sale and advertisement of birth control, as men feared that women choosing to delay childbirth to pursue their careers would take jobs away from men and decay the moral fiber of the country. Connecticut’s anti-contraceptive laws were by far the strictest in the country, and were not repealed until 1965.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
Connecticut State Capitol
Connecticut State Library

*Links:*
http://connecticuthistory.org/connecticut-and-the-comstock-law/

**Thomas J. Dodd and the Gun Control Act of 1968**

Thomas Dodd was one of the strongest advocates for gun control in the history of the U.S. legislature. He proposed numerous bills restricting access to firearms for minors, criminals, and the "mentally impaired." While many of his proposals did not pass, his Omnibus Crime Control Act of 1968 regulated the sale of firearms more stringently than any previous law. Dodd was committed to culling violent crime in the U.S.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
Archives & Special Collections of the University of Connecticut Libraries

*Links:*
The Connecticut Constitution of 1818
Connecticut did not adopt a modern constitution until 1818 after a torturous political debate. The constitution is important for, among other things, establishing the three-branch system and disestablishing the Congregational Church.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut’s Old State House
Connecticut State Library

Links:
http://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/law/connecticut-constitutional-history/1818

Connecticut Ratifies the U.S. Constitution
On January 9, 1788, Connecticut became the fifth state to ratify the U.S. Constitution. In addition to ratifying the Constitution, the state also contributed a significant component of the Constitution: the Connecticut Compromise. The Connecticut Compromise dictated that there should be two houses within the legislative branch, one with a variable number of representatives based on population (House of Representatives), and the other with a fixed and equal number of representatives for each state (Senate).

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut’s Old State House
Connecticut State Library

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/connecticut-ratifies-us-constitution-today-in-history/

Noah Webster: Father of American Copyright Law
Noah Webster was a political activist, a newspaper editor, a founder of Amherst College, and an early antislavery advocate. But it was his work as a teacher and an education reformer—work he realized in large part through his best-selling “Blue-Backed Speller”—that also earned him his reputation as “father of American copyright law.” Connecticut played a role, too, in establishing the law that served as the basis for today’s copyright standards.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Noah Webster House & West Hartford Historical Society
Connecticut’s Old State House

Links:
http://ctexplored.org/noah-webster-father-of-american-copyright-law/
**Native Americans**

**Medicine Woman Gladys Tantaquidgeon and Mohegan Cultural Renewal**

Gladys Tantaquidgeon, a Mohegan medicine woman and anthropologist, dedicated her life to preserving and promoting indigenous cultural practices, as well as advocating for women. Her efforts to document Mohegan births, marriages, and deaths ensured that the Mohegan tribe received federal recognition. Her commitment to maintaining Mohegan cultural traditions have allowed tribal members to carry on their traditional practices and customs today.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
Tantaquidgeon Museum
Mashantucket Pequot Museum

*Links:*
http://connecticuthistory.org/gladys-tantaquidgeon-preserves-the-states-native-past/

**Samson Occom and the Brotherton Indians**

Samson Occom was a Mohegan educator and Presbyterian minister who advocated for indigenous education reform. Traditional practices were important to indigenous cultures, and Occom argued that Mohegan students should learn from indigenous teachers, rather than Anglo-American teachers who saw Native traditions as dangerous. He gathered a group of Christian Indians from across southern New England relocated to New York, where they joined Christian Mohawks to found the Brotherton Indian Nation.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
Tantaquidgeon Museum
Connecticut Historical Society
Mashantucket Pequot Museum

*Links:*
http://connecticuthistory.org/samson-occom-and-the-brotherton-indians/

**Causes of the Pequot War**

In the 1600s, the Pequots -- through war and diplomacy -- built a fragile coalition with neighboring tribes to ensure control of the region's Native-Dutch trade. When the English arrived, tribes began to defect from the Pequot confederacy and ally with the English colonists. While the war is remembered as a conflict between colonists and Indians, it was also a battle between indigenous nations as the Pequots fought to maintain control of the region's other tribes.

*Field trip and research possibilities:*
Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center

*Links:*
http://connecticuthistory.org/causes-of-the-pequot-war/
Fidelia Hoscott Fielding: Preserving the Mohegan Language

Fielding stood against racism and modernism. She preserved the Mohegan language and culture despite prejudice against Native American culture and pressure to modernize. She was also a mentor to Gladys Tantaquidgeon.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Tantaquidgeon Museum
Cornell University Archives in Ithaca, NY

Links:
http://www.cwhf.org/inductees/education-preservation/fidelia-hoscott-fielding/#.V8RLHvkrK70

Politics and Government

Richard Lee’s Urban Renewal in New Haven

Richard Lee, as New Haven’s mayor, set out to revitalize the city through urban renewal. While his efforts put 8,000 people out of their homes and lost 2,200 businesses, he was also widely celebrated for turning New Haven into a model city by nearly eliminating slums -- housing without adequate access to running water, electricity, and other vital utilities.

Field trip and research possibilities:
New Haven Museum
Church Street in New Haven

Links:

Roger Griswold: A Governor Not Afraid To Challenge Authority

Roger Griswold of Lyme served Connecticut as a U.S. Representative, a state judge, and governor. Perhaps best known for attacking Rep. Lyon of Vermont with his walking stick on the House floor, he also stood firm in his beliefs by refusing to commit Connecticut’s militia to the War of 1812 (a war which he personally opposed).

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut’s Old State House
Connecticut Historical Society
Yale University Library

Links:
A Strong Mayor for Hartford
In 2002, the voters of Hartford approved an amendment to the city charter, effective January 1, 2004, which fundamentally altered the form of government in the city. The primary change provided for the direct election of a “strong” mayor, replacing a supposedly nonpartisan, apolitical city manager as the operating head of the city.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library

Jasper McLevy: Bridgeport Votes for a Change
Jasper McLevy ran for the office of mayor in Bridgeport as a third party candidate. McLevy, a socialist, exposed the corrupt dealings of both of the major political parties he ran against and, once elected, helped many unemployed city residents find work.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Bridgeport Historical Center at Bridgeport Public Library
Links: http://ctexplored.org/bridgeport-votes-for-a-change/

Revolutionary War

Caleb Brewster and the Culper Spy Ring
Caleb Brewster joined Nathan Hale, Benjamin Tallmadge, and others in the Culper Spy Ring. As a Long Island whale ship captain, he transported vital information from New York City to Tallmadge in the Bridgeport and Fairfield areas of Connecticut. The British discovered that Brewster was a spy, but he managed to evade capture and continued the important work of transporting information between Connecticut and NYC.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Brewster Street in Bridgeport
Benjamin Tallmadge House in Litchfield*
Connecticut’s Loyal Subjects: Toryism and the American Revolution
Many of Connecticut's citizens -- particularly in the southwestern portion of the state -- remained loyal to England at the start of the Revolutionary War, due in part to Connecticut churches being funded by the English Missionary Society. As the war waged on, some loyalists (Tories) were imprisoned, others fled to Canada, and many eventually pledged loyalty to Connecticut as the patriots won decisive battles in 1777.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Yale Center for British Art
Links:

The Rise and Fall of Silas Deane, American Patriot
Silas Deane was a prominent member of the Continental Congress at the dawn of the American Revolution. On a diplomatic mission to France, Deane played a key role in obtaining the military supplies that made possible the victory at Saratoga in October 1777, leading to an alliance with the French the following year. However, he quickly fell out of public favor as his questionable financial dealings and criticisms of American independence earned him the reputation of a traitor.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum in Wethersfield
Yale University Art Gallery
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:
Slavery and Abolition

The Amistad
In 1839, U.S. naval forces found the schooner Amistad floating in Long Island Sound, with a large number of Africans seen walking around the deck of the ship. Two Cuban men aboard the ship told the U.S. ship's crew that the Africans were slaves who had taken over the Amistad and killed its captain. The Africans were arrested and charged them with murder and mutiny. This led to a complicated court case that eventually determined that the Africans aboard the ship had been kidnapped from their homeland and should be allowed to return to Africa.

Field trip and research possibilities:
- Freedom Schooner Amistad at Mystic Seaport
- Connecticut's Old State House
- Connecticut Historical Society
- Riverside Cemetery in Farmington
- New Haven Museum
- New London Custom House

Links:
- [http://connecticuthistory.org/the-amistad/](http://connecticuthistory.org/the-amistad/)

Early Anti-slavery Advocates in 18th Century Connecticut
While slavery was not fully abolished in Connecticut until the mid-19th century, many Connecticut citizens spoke out in opposition to slavery. Ministers and citizens argued that maintaining slavery while demanding freedom from England was hypocritical. Others argued that not only was slavery unethical, but that Africans were equal in every way to whites.

Field trip and research possibilities:
- Connecticut Historical Society
- Yale University Art Gallery

Links:

Jackson v. Bulloch and the End of Slavery in Connecticut
Nancy Jackson, a woman enslaved by James Bulloch of Georgia, asked Connecticut's courts to grant her freedom in 1837. Bulloch split his time between homes in Georgia and Connecticut, and had left Jackson enslaved in Connecticut for two years while he travelled. Connecticut law forbade slave owners from "leaving" slaves in the state, and ruled that Jackson should, indeed, be free.

Field trip and research possibilities:
- Yale Libraries -- Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
- Loomis Chaffee School Archives
- Connecticut's Old State House

Links:

Asterisk (*) denotes private property. Please do not enter the property without the owner’s permission.
James Mars’ Words Illuminate the Cruelty of Slavery in New England
James Mars was born into slavery in Connecticut during gradual emancipation. When he turned 21 he successfully petitioned the state for his freedom, becoming an advocate for free men and women in the state. In his later years, he wrote a memoir of his experiences because he wanted to make sure that people remembered that slavery had once existed in Connecticut.

Field trip and research possibilities:
James Mars Gravesite in Norfolk
Links:

Social Movements

The Black Panther Party in Connecticut: Community Survival Programs
While the Black Panther Party existed in Connecticut for only a short time (1969-1972), their activism did a tremendous amount of good for the people of Connecticut. The party provided free breakfast to school children, successfully advocated for victims of the Park River flooding in Hartford, and protested against racism and police brutality. But the federal and state governments saw the group as a threat to national security and illegally spied on thousands of Black Panthers and their supporters.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library
UConn Library Archives and Special Collections
Links:

Education/Instrucción Combats Housing Discrimination
Three people from different backgrounds joined together to form Education/Instrucción, Inc. -- a group that investigated unfair real estate practices in Connecticut in the 1970s. The group discovered that real estate insiders were steering minorities away from predominantly white neighborhoods, while encouraging white homeowners to sell their homes when minority neighbors began moving in.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/educationinstruccion-combats-housing-discrimination/
The Ku Klux Klan in Connecticut
While the KKK's stronghold was always in the South, Connecticut was once home to as many as 18,000 Klan members in the 1920s. The group quickly dwindled, but splinter Klan groups continued to protest in Connecticut. These protests were revived in Meriden in the 1980s when dozens of Klan members and their supporters protested in defense of a police officer who shot and killed an African American man accused of shoplifting.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Meriden City Hall
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/the-ku-klux-klan-in-connecticut/

The Language of the Unheard: Racial Unrest in 20th-Century Hartford
Throughout the early- and mid-1900s, racial tensions simmered in Connecticut as African Americans found themselves living in substandard housing, facing high rates of child mortality, and struggling to find work from prejudiced employers. White leaders did little to address these complaints. By the 1960s, these tensions boiled over across the U.S. leading to riots in the streets of Connecticut cities.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library
Links:

“Negroes Who Stand Up and Fight Back” – Paul Robeson in Hartford
Paul Robeson was a musical artist and social activist who was often tied to the communist movement. In the 1950s, racism towards African Americans and the "Red Scare" (fear of the spread of communism), made Robeson a very controversial figure.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Paul Robeson House in Enfield*
Links:

Hartfordites Fight Fascism in Spain
The rise of Communism in Europe created numerous conflicts throughout the continent, including the Spanish Civil War. Francisco Franco led a Communist revolt against Spain’s Republican government. Franco expected to take over the country easily, but the revolt lasted several years. Americans, including men from Hartford, joined the Spanish crown in fighting against the rebel fascist forces.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
Links:
http://ctexplored.org/hartford-labor-militants-fight-the-spanish-civil-war/
Connecticut’s Black Governors
Before African Americans had many rights in Connecticut, they elected their own leaders. A group of students researched their stories and erected a monument in their honor.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
Links: http://ctexplored.org/history-day-2017-idea-bank/

The Bemans: A Family of Reformers
The Beman family rose to prominence in Middletown’s African American community, leading the A.M.E. Zion Church and fighting for black rights leading up to the Civil War. The family includes Caesar Beman, who had been a slave in Colchester before being emancipated in 1781, Jehiel Beman, who was a pastor who spoke in favor of abolition and assisted runaway slaves on the underground railroad, and his son Amos, who also fought for abolition alongside his father.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Beman Triangle in Middletown
Links: http://beman-triangle.research.wesleyan.edu/2012/05/07/introduction/

Taking a Stand Against the Evils of Drink
In 1784, Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, treasurer of the United States Mint, and nationally recognized physician, published an article titled An Inquiry into the Effects of Spirituous Liquors on the Human Body and the Mind. The article was expanded into a book in 1790 and widely published throughout the United States. His findings galvanized local ministers, medical professionals, and ordinary citizens to publicly advocate for the restriction and even complete abolition of the manufacture, sale, and use of alcoholic beverages.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Litchfield Historical Society
Links: http://ctexplored.org/re-collections-flying-the-banner-for-temperance/

Protesting the Income Tax
On October 5th, 1991, Connecticut citizens gathered for an Anti-Income Tax Rally on the grounds of the State Capitol. Official estimates placed attendance at 40,000, while rally organizers claimed 70,000 citizens attended.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Capitol
Museum of Connecticut History
A Life-long Communist and Community Activist: Al Marder
Alfred Marder (b. 1922), life-long resident of New Haven, World War II veteran, and University of Connecticut graduate, came to adulthood during the turbulent times of the Great Depression. He joined the Communist party as a teen in 1938, served as the chairman of the Connecticut Young Communist League, and was one of the organizers of the campaign for the first evening college in the state.

Field trip and research possibilities:
New Haven History Room at New Haven Free Public Library
Links:
http://ctexplored.org/al-marder-a-life-of-conviction/

Vietnam Protests

Vietnam Protests in Connecticut
Connecticut citizens -- led by college students from around the state -- protested U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. The Vietnam Moratorium protest on October 15, 1969, spread across 35 communities and had almost 100,000 participants.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library
UConn Library Archives and Special Collections
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/vietnam-protests-in-connecticut/

War of 1812

The British Raid on Essex
In 1814, a British naval raiding force consisting of relatively few men in small boats made its way up the Connecticut River and burned 25 ships in Essex. The ships' owners had been using these boats to attack British war ships and capture them for the United States -- a lucrative endeavor called "privateering." The British forces managed to burn the ships and escape with only two deaths, making it one of the most successful small boat raids in military history.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut River Museum
Connecticut Historical Society
UConn Library Archives and Special Collections
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/the-british-raid-on-essex/
Defending Connecticut: Fortifying New London Against the British in 1812
As the War of 1812 began, Fort Trumbull in New London was rebuilt to withstand a British attack. While Connecticut’s smaller forts were attacked, the British never attacked Fort Trumbull.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Fort Trumbull State Park

Links:

Stonington Repels the British
During the War of 1812, the local militia banded together to face down the British Imperial Navy and succeeded against all odds.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Stonington Historical Society
New London County Historical Society
Stonington Point

Links:
http://ctexplored.org/war-of-1812-stonington/

The “Notorious” Hartford Convention
From December 15, 1814 through January 5, 1815, delegates from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and representatives from counties in New Hampshire and Vermont, met at the State House in Hartford to discuss the problems the region faced as a result of the ongoing War of 1812. The delegates considered seceding from the United States.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut’s Old State House

Links:
http://ctexplored.org/the-notorious-hartford-convention/
Women

19th Amendment: The Fight Over Woman Suffrage in Connecticut
Leaders in Connecticut's women's suffrage movement such as Isabella Beecher Hooker and Frances Ellen Burr, along with countless women from across the state, urged state lawmakers to give women the right to vote. When several state lawmakers blocked their efforts, these women wrote to Woodrow Wilson and (along with similar letters from other states) won the right to vote in 1919.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Harriet Beecher Stowe Center
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/19th-amendment-the-fight-over-woman-suffrage-in-connecticut/

Constance Baker Motley: A Warrior for Justice
Motley was born in Connecticut, and became the first black woman to attend the Columbia University School of Law. Throughout her career she worked with civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, and James Meredith. She wrote the first legal brief in Brown v. the Board of Education, and represented the "freedom riders" and others from across the South who fought for equality for African Americans.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Constance Baker Motley House in New Haven*
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/constance-baker-motley-a-warrior-for-justice/

Hartford's City Mother, Josephine Bennett
Josephine Bennett was a women's suffragist from Hartford. She helped launch Hartford's local American Labor Party branch in 1919 and fought tirelessly for women's rights and for free speech.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library Archives
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/hartfords-city-mother-josephine-bennett/

Hilda Crosby Standish, Early Proponent of Women's Reproductive Health
Dr. Hilda Crosby Standish was a Hartford physician who advocated for women’s reproductive rights. In the 1930s she ran Connecticut's first birth control clinic, even though promoting contraceptives was illegal in the state during that time. She devoted her life to protecting women's reproductive health and rights.

Links:
**Ida Tarbell: The Woman Who Took On Standard Oil**
Ida Tarbell, who spent her retirement in Easton, was one of the most famous investigative journalists in U.S. history. Her exposé of John D. Rockefeller’s Standard Oil Company is one of the most famous examples of "muckraking" journalism, and the article (published in 19 installments) was pivotal in a 1911 Supreme Court decision that determined Standard Oil was a monopoly, forcing the corporation to split apart.

**Field trip and research possibilities:**
Twin Oaks/Ida Tarbell House in Easton*

**Links:**
http://connecticuthistory.org/ida-tarbell-the-woman-who-took-on-standard-oil/

**Katharine Houghton Hepburn, A Woman Before Her Time**
"Kit" Hepburn, mother to actress Katharine Hepburn, lived much of her life in Hartford, CT. She dedicated her life to feminist causes, fighting first for female suffrage, then birth control for low income women, and finally the Equal Rights Amendment.

**Field trip and research possibilities:**
Connecticut State Library Archives

**Links:**
http://connecticuthistory.org/katharine-houghton-hepburn-a-woman-before-her-time/

**A New Source of Farm Labor Crops Up in Wartime**
During World War I and World War II, the Womens Land Army in Connecticut placed women in farms throughout the state, helping farmers tend to their crops while their male employees were off at war.

**Field trip and research possibilities:**
University of Connecticut Libraries

**Links:**
http://connecticuthistory.org/a-new-source-of-farm-labor-crops-up-in-wartime/
Marietta Canty, a Hartford native who began working in local theater productions in the 1920s and went on to a career in Hollywood, appeared in 50 motion pictures alongside stars Marlene Dietrich, John Wayne, Elizabeth Taylor, Spencer Tracy, Mickey Rooney, Katharine Hepburn, Marlon Brando, and James Dean. As an African American actress, Canty initially struggled to find work as an actor but eventually spent more than ten years in Hollywood.

**Field trip and research possibilities:**
Marietta Canty House (61 Mahl Avenue in Hartford)*

**Links:**
http://ctexplored.org/site-lines-marietta-canty-2/

Abby and Julia Smith of Glastonbury were active in some of the most contentious political debates of their times. Following in the footsteps of their mother, who penned one of the earliest anti-slavery petitions, the Smith sisters fought for slave emancipation until the United States finally abolished the institution. When their parents died, the Smith sisters inherited their family's farm, the most valuable property in Glastonbury. The elderly sisters refused to pay property taxes after town officials raised their taxes, resulting in a three year legal struggle.

**Field trip and research possibilities:**
Connecticut Historical Society
Historical Society of Glastonbury
Kimberly Mansion in Glastonbury*

**Links:**

Olympia Brown served as the first female minister for the Universalist Church in Bridgeport. She was active in women’s suffrage and abolition, and her sermons were highly acclaimed. Her opponents, however, eventually forced her out of the church in Bridgeport.

**Links:**
**Women of the Prison Brigade**

Edna Purtell of West Hartford, along with more than 20 other women, arrived in Hartford by train in February 1919 as part of the "prison brigade" -- a group of women who had been arrested outside the White House for protesting in favor of women's suffrage.

**Field trip and research possibilities:**
Union Station in Hartford

**Links:**
http://connecticuthistory.org/women-of-the-prison-brigade/

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**Suffragettes at War: Standing Up for the Vote with Liberty Loans**

The suffrage movement in America had been gaining strength for years, but WWI gave women a unique opportunity to prove their mettle. Women from the suffrage movement found themselves taking on leadership roles in the Liberty Loan campaigns to raise funds for the war effort. Their hard work and proven leadership helped pave the way for the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920.

**Field trip and research possibilities:**
Connecticut State Library
Local historical societies

**Links:**
http://ctstatelibrary.org/RG101.html

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**Fannie Briggs Bulkeley: Standing Up for Women Rights**

Fannie Briggs Houghton Bulkeley was the wife of Senator and ex-Governor Morgan Bulkeley and one of the most formidable leaders in the war effort in Connecticut. Mrs. Bulkeley led the Liberty Loan campaigns in Connecticut and encouraged women, from socialites to factory girls, to take a stand and support the war effort.

**Field trip and research possibilities:**
Connecticut State Library
Local historical societies

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**Before Rosie the Riveter: Factory Girls Stand Up for the War Effort**

Rosie the Riveter is the poster girl for women working in factories during World War II, but women took a stand during WWI and entered factories all over Connecticut to help the war effort then.

**Field trip and research possibilities:**
Connecticut State Library
Local Historical Societies
New Britain Industrial Museum
Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
Hello Girls: Taking a Stand for Women in the Army
During WWI a group of women served in the Army as bilingual switchboard operators nicknamed "Hello Girls". These women, some of whom served on the front lines, wore Army uniforms, received Army pay and were even awarded Army medals, but were denied status as veterans upon returning home. The Hello Girls fought for 60 years to have their service recognized. By 1979, when they finally received recognition, only 18 were still alive.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
National Archives (D.C.)

Pauline Sands Lee: Standing Up for the French Wounded
In 1916 New Yorker Pauline Sands Lee traveled to France to work for the American Fund for French Wounded, an aid organization founded and based in Paris. She was a tireless advocate for the soldiers and people of France who demanded access to the front lines and wrote of the plight of the French for American audiences.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
Links:

Mary Townsend Seymour Takes a Stand
In early 20th-century Hartford, Mary Townsend Seymour helped found the local NAACP chapter and worked for labor rights. She fought battles and formed daring alliances to promote the cause of local African Americans.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
Links:
http://ctexplored.org/audacious-alliance-mary-townsend-seymour/
Girls Can Play, Too!: Women’s Basketball in Connecticut
Basketball was invented by Dr. James Naismith of Springfield, MA in the late 1800s as a sport for boys to promote physical fitness. While women had previously been largely excluded from sports, changing ideas on health and fitness and the growth of physical education classes in schools made sports more accessible to women at the turn of the 20th century. Basketball quickly became a popular women’s sport in Connecticut and beyond.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Choate Rosemary Hall Archives
J. Robert Donnelly Husky Heritage Sports Museum
Links:
http://ctexplored.org/girls-can-play-too-womens-basketball-in-connecticut/

Ella Tambussi Grasso: The United States’ First Elected Female Governor
Grasso stood against those who said a woman could not and should not be governor. She became the first female governor in the United States elected in her own right.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Capitol
Mount Holyoke College Archive in South Hadley, MA
Links:
http://www.cwhf.org/inductees/politics-government-law/ella-tambussi-grasso/#.V8RLUPkrK70

Helen Keller: Taking a Stand for Disability Rights
Helen Keller, who moved to Easton at the age of 56, stood for disability rights. She became the first deaf-blind person to receive a bachelor’s degree. She also became an author and advocate for people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act was a direct result of her lifetime of advocacy.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:
http://www.cwhf.org/inductees/reformers/helen-keller#.V8ROjPkrK71

Maria Miller Stewart
Born to African American parents in Connecticut, Miller stood up and spoke up for the abolition of slavery as well as the advancement of civil rights and women’s rights. She was the first African American woman to address a mixed race and mixed gender audience on abolition.

Links:
http://www.cwhf.org/inductees/reformers/maria-miller-stewart/#.V8RQ6PkrK72
Barbara Hackman Franklin
Barbara Hackman Franklin worked in the White House under President Nixon to open new ground for women in the federal government. She also served as Secretary of Commerce under George H.W. Bush, and it was Franklin who opened trade relations with China.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Contact Connecticut Women’s Hall of Fame for interview possibilities

Links:
http://www.cwhf.org/inductees/politics-government-law/barbara-hackman-franklin/#.V8RSSfkrK71

Dr. Alice Hamilton
Hamilton pioneered industrial medicine, changing the way industrial waste and chemicals are handled. Her work formed the foundation for OSHA. She took a stand, refusing to believe she was wrong about the connection between workplace hazards and significant health issues in workers.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Radcliffe Institute Archives at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA
Miss Porter’s School

Links:
http://cwhf.org/inductees/science-health/alice-hamilton#.V8RTR_krK70

Work

A Feeling of Solidarity: Labor Unions and Suffragists Team Up
The intersection of union workers and female activists created a powerful team to fight for women’s suffrage. While many suffragettes were in the upper and upper-middle classes, working class women in factories also played a significant role in the suffrage movement.

Field trip and research possibilities:
State Archives at Connecticut State Library
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/a-feeling-of-solidarity-labor-unions-and-suffragists-team-up/
How the Wobblies Won Free Speech
Through the 1930s, the definition of "free speech" in the United States was fairly limited. Protesters were thrown in jail for speaking about controversial issues, such as communism, in public places. The Industrial Workers of the World (or Wobblies, as they were called) set out to change this. They would gather in large numbers and speak freely, forcing police to arrest them and overrun the local prisons. The cost to arrest and hold these free speech advocates forced the court to widen its interpretation of free speech.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/how-the-wobblies-won-free-speech/

“Something to Show for Our Work”: Building Brainard Airport
During the Great Depression, the city of Hartford decided to develop Brainard Airport. To keep labor costs low, they hired out-of-work locals to do the work for food and rent vouchers. The city went further, saying that the jobs were compulsory to everyone offered work -- if they turned down this job offer, they would not get any others. This forced labor without monetary compensation angered many city residents, and citizens eventually convinced the mayor to pay employees in cash, rather than vouchers.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut Historical Society
Brainard Airport
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/something-to-show-for-our-work-building-brainard-airport/

The Newsies Strike Back
Newsies -- young boys usually aged 10 and under -- delivered newspapers in Hartford to earn extra money for their families. When competition between two New York papers resulted in a reduction to the Newsies' pay, the children unionized and went on strike. They successfully convinced local businesses to stop carrying the New York papers and created problems for the local newspaper distributor.

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/the-newsies-strike-back/
World War I

Health Department Fights Unseen Enemies During World War I
In the early 20th century, polio and Spanish Influenza killed millions of people around the world. Greenwich was one of many Connecticut communities to be struck by both epidemics. Dr. Alvin Klein and the Greenwich Board of Health passed measures and restrictions that helped stop the spread of these diseases.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Greenwich Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/health-department-fights-unseen-enemies-during-world-war-i/

The “Red Scare” in Connecticut
In November of 1919, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (a new agency at that time) launched the Palmer Raids, with several raids taking place in Connecticut. In these raids, federal agents arrested Russian immigrants suspected of making bombs and plotting against the United States. Often, those arrested were union organizers and supporters of socialism. Several hundred Russian immigrants were jailed without trial or representation and were deported to Russia.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Lozada Park, Hartford (former site of Seyms Street Jail)
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/the-red-scare-in-connecticut/

World War I Flying Ace Raoul Lufbery
Raoul Lufbery, a French-born U.S. citizen who spent several years in Wallingford, served as an American pilot in the French military as part of the Lafayette Escadrille. He became America's first ace, credited with downing 17 planes during WWI.

Field trip and research possibilities:
New England Air Museum
Lufbery Ave & Lufbery Park in Wallingford
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/world-war-i-flying-ace-raoul-lufbery/
Standing Up for Readiness: The Preparedness Movement in Connecticut
In the run-up to WWI a group of prominent Americans, led by Theodore Roosevelt, advocated for being prepared to go to war at a moment’s notice. Connecticut Governor Marcus Holcomb was a leader in this advocacy who took concrete steps to be sure Connecticut was ready for the coming conflict.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
Greenwich Historical Society
Local Historical Societies

German Americans: Fighting the Fatherland for America
Despite growing discrimination on the homefront, many German-Americans fought their fatherland for their new home.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library

Links:
http://digitalcollections.ctstatelibrary.org/islandora/object/30002%3A533331kwl

Cristobal Rodriguez Hidalgo: Puerto Ricans Standing up for Citizenship
In 1917 President Wilson signed into law the Jones-Shafroth Act granting U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans born after April 25, 1898. With this act came mandatory conscription into the U.S. military just as the U.S. entered WWI. Cristobal Rodriguez Hidalgo, a Bridgeport resident, became the first Puerto Rican soldier to die in the war.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library

Links:
http://digitalcollections.ctstatelibrary.org/islandora/object/30002%3A2255

Connecticut Home Guard: Standing up on the Homefront
The Connecticut Home Guard was a civilian force created to protect the homefront while the more able-bodied men fought on the Western Front. Middletown was the first to establish a home guard in 1916 and the state followed in March 1917.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
Standing Up for Veterans: The Creation of Disabled American Veterans
The horrors of trench warfare during WWI left a generation of soldiers disabled from gas attacks, shrapnel wounds and shell shock. There was no government agency to care or advocate for these soldiers so the Disabled American Veterans of the World War was created.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Local DAV chapters
Local Historical Societies
Links:
https://www.theworldwar.org/explore/exhibitions/online-exhibitions

Standing Up for Veterans: The Creation for the American Legion
Major Morgan G. Bulkeley Jr. and Lt Colonel James L Howard were among committee members who attended a caucus in St. Louis in May 1919 to create the American Legion. Before the caucus was convened soldiers across the state gathered to establish their own camps (later called Posts) of the American Legion. These posts, and the veterans who founded them, took an active role in standing up for veterans in their communities and became a lifeline for many trying to readjust to civilian life.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
Local historical societies
Local American Legion Posts
Links:
http://web.ccsu.edu/vethistoryproject/?redirected

Standing Up for Those We Lost: Monuments and Memorials to Fallen Soldiers
During WWI, towns, churches and businesses across Connecticut erected Honor Rolls to honor the men and women who were serving in the military. These temporary boards gave way to permanent monuments and memorials, some funded by veterans groups, some by towns and some with pennies raised by schoolchildren. These monuments stand today as a reminder of the sacrifices made during the war.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
Local historical societies
Local American Legion Posts
Joseph Papallo and the Italians of Meriden: Standing Up for America
Meriden saw a growing influx of Italian immigrants between 1880 and 1910. Many of these recent immigrants came from small villages on the east coast of Calabria, Italy's poorest region. Yet many of these men, who barely spoke English, were ready and willing to cross the ocean again to fight for America.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Connecticut State Library
Local historical societies

Women in World War I
Before the U.S. entered the war in 1917, many women in Greenwich, as elsewhere in the United States, publicly supported refugee relief and related charities. Once the United States formally joined the conflict, women began to take on a wider range of new roles. The experiences of individual women and girls in Greenwich illustrate the political ramifications of even the most commonplace activities during World War I.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Greenwich Historical Society
Choate Rosemary Hall Archives
Connecticut Historical Society

Links:
http://ctexplored.org/greenwich-women-face-the-great-war/

World War II

A Godmother to Ravensbrück Survivors
During World War II, female prisoners who were sent to the Ravensbrück concentration camp were subject to medical experiments. The women who underwent these experiments were called "Lapins" (rabbits). Caroline Ferriday of Bethlehem reached out to these women after the war. With the help of U.S. physicians, she helped the Lapins get surgeries to repair the damage done by the Nazi experiments.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Bellamy-Ferriday House & Garden
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (D.C.)

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/a-godmother-to-ravensbruck-survivors/
A New Source of Farm Labor Crops Up in Wartime
During World War I and World War II, the Womens Land Army in Connecticut placed women in farms throughout the state, helping farmers tend to their crops while their male employees were off at war.

Field trip and research possibilities:
University of Connecticut Libraries

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/a-new-source-of-farm-labor-crops-up-in-wartime/

A Woman Who Developed Tolerance: Leila T. Alexander
Leila T. Alexander served as the director of the Pearl Street Neighborhood House (now the Hopkins Street Center) for 20 years. The Waterbury branch of the NAACP was founded in this building while it was under her direction, and she was recognized by state leaders for her work in bringing people from different racial and social backgrounds together.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Hopkins Street Center in Waterbury
Mattatuck Museum

Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/a-woman-who-developed-tolerance-leila-t-alexander/

The Debate Over Who Could Occupy World War II Public Housing in West Hartford
During World War II, Hartford drew hundreds of laborers from across the country who were looking for jobs in the defense industry. The state used federal funding to build Oakwood Acres housing tract to shelter the influx of laborers. However, the people of West Hartford refused to allow African Americans to move in to the units, finding loopholes in the federal laws that protected minorities from discriminatory housing practices.

Field trip and research possibilities:
UConn Library Archives and Special Collections
Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library

Links:
Hiram Bingham IV: A Humanitarian Honored for Saving Lives during WWII
Hiram Bingham IV, whose father has been credited with discovering Machu Picchu, served as vice consul at the U.S. Consulate in Marseilles, France in 1940-41. Jewish individuals and families from across Europe fled to France to escape the Nazis, but France fell to Germany in 1940. Bingham secretly smuggled thousands of refugees out of Europe during this time, going against official U.S. policy.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Bingham Family Papers at Yale University Library
Links:

Southbury Takes On the Nazis
In the 1930s, the German-American Bund (an American extension of the Nazi party) attempted to set up a camp in Southbury. When the town's residents found out about this, they banded together and forced a vote to change the town's zoning laws, restricting the area of the proposed camp for agricultural and residential use only.

Field trip and research possibilities:
Kettletown State Park
Southbury Historical Society
Links:
http://connecticuthistory.org/southbury-takes-on-the-nazis/