

CONNECTICUT

HISTORY
DAY

Connecticut Topic List

2019-20 School Year

National History Day 2020

Breaking Barriers In History

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Arts

The Wadsworth Atheneum Breaks the Barrier of Art for the Public

The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art was founded in 1842 by Daniel Wadsworth, one of the first major American art patrons. Founded with a vision for infusing art into the American experience, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art is home to a collection of nearly 50,000 works of art, spanning 5,000 years and encompassing European art from antiquity to contemporary as well as American art from the 1600s through today. The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art is the oldest continuously-operating public art museum in the United States, opening its doors to the public in 1844.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Alexander Calder Breaks the Kinetic Art Barrier

One of the most acclaimed and influential sculptors of the 20th century, Alexander Calder is most renowned for his invention of the mobile, an abstract sculpture that moves. In addition to mobiles, Calder made wire sculpture, static sculpture called stabiles, toys, theatrical sets, and paintings in oil and gouache, as well as jewelry and numerous household objects. The artist, who owned a home and studio in Roxbury, Connecticut, for more than 40 years, created over 22,000 works in the course of his life and is considered a pioneer of kinetic art.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Links:

<https://connecticuthistory.org/a-world-in-motion-artist-and-sculptor-alexander-calder/>

Sol Lewitt Draws a Barrier Meant to be Broken

An innovator, Sol Lewitt is probably best known for his wall drawings—a radical concept in the art world at the time as they were temporary, site-specific works meant to be painted over and destroyed. To emphasize that the idea, rather than its execution, represented the artist's true creation, Lewitt often turned the implementation of the wall drawings over to assistants who followed his written instructions but had some freedom in their interpretation and execution. By the time of LeWitt's death in 2007, he was internationally regarded for his visionary work. LeWitt's wall drawings currently occupy prominent, permanent spaces in the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford and the New Britain Museum of American Art.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Links:

<https://connecticuthistory.org/painter-muralist-sculptor-sol-lewitt-born-today-in-history/>

<https://massmoca.org/sol-lewitt/>

Marietta Canty

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/>

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>

Connecticut's Tuskegee Airmen

During World War II hundreds of African-American pilots broke racial barriers by joining the 332nd Fighter Group and the 477th Bombardment Group. These Tuskegee Airmen provided vital support to the Allied war effort.

Field trip and research possibilities:

New England Air Museum

Links:

<https://www.ctexplored.org/tuskegee-airman-i-wanted-to-fly/>

Igor Sikorsky and his Flying Machines

On January 14, 1942, after designing a craft with a single main rotor (complimented by a smaller vertical rotor on the tail), Sikorsky piloted the first successful test flight of a helicopter in the United States. Today, his Sikorsky Aviation Corporation (based in Stratford) is one of the leading helicopter manufacturers in the world.

Field trip and research possibilities:

New England Air Museum

Links:

<https://connecticuthistory.org/igor-sikorsky-and-his-flying-machines/>

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
Glasko village in Griswold

Links:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/blacksmith-isaac-glasko-challenges-the-state-constitution/>

The Farmington Canal

The advent of the Farmington Canal foretold coming prosperity for towns along its route. In fact, the Canal came through early Avon (then Northington) in 1828 and spurred town fathers to break off from the 'mother town' of Farmington to incorporate into a separate town in 1830. The Canal was an engineering marvel of its time going from New Haven, CT to Northampton, MA. Canal barges moved massive amounts of freight (coal, molasses, lumber, farm produce, dairy products as well as passengers) but met with financial difficulties. In addition, it was a seasonal operation (frozen canal was skated on in winter) and fraught with problems of sabotage, freshets, and muskrats!

Field trip and research possibilities:

The Avon Historical Society
Stanley Whitman House
Connecticut Historical Society Waterman Research Center
Plainville Historical Society
Simsbury Historical Society
New Haven Historical Society Whitney Library

Links:

<https://connecticuthistory.org/the-farmington-canal/>

Horace Wells and the Discovery of Anesthesia

In the early 19th century Hartford dentists Horace Wells and William Morton played instrumental roles in the development of anesthesia for dental and other medical applications.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Hartford Medical Society – UCONN Farmington
Hartford History Center

Links:

<https://connecticuthistory.org/horace-wells-discovers-pain-free-dentistry/>

Charles Goodyear – Inventor

Charles Goodyear was on a mission to make rubber a viable material. If the temperature was too cold, the substance would harden and shatter, but if it was too hot outside, it would melt. Goodyear dedicated his life to figuring out the vulcanization process, how has that impacted us today?

Field trip and research possibilities:

New Haven Museum
National Archives
Library of Congress
US Patent and Trade Office

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/>

Electric Boat: Breaking Barriers in the Nuclear Age

The 1960s cemented Electric Boat as America's premier designer and builder of nuclear-powered submarines. EB's dominance would be challenged in the decades ahead, but by the end of the 1960s, it had established itself as a truly modern nuclear shipyard. Today its only real competition is Newport News Shipbuilding—whose primary work is construction of aircraft carriers.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Electric Boat

Links:

<https://www.ctexplored.org/electric-boat-full-speed-into-the-nuclear-age/>

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/>

Dorence Atwater

Born and raised in Terryville, Dorence Atwater joined the Union army at age 16. Atwater was captured during the war and spent time at the notorious prison camp, Andersonville. He kept a list of the dead and defied the Department of War regarding publication of the list of Union Soldiers buried at Andersonville.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Connecticut State Library

Links:

<https://connecticuthistory.org/death-and-mourning-in-the-civil-war-era>

https://www.nps.gov/ande/learn/historyculture/dorence_atwater.htm

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:

<http://ctexplored.org/cast-down-on-every-side-the-ill-fated-campaign-to-found-an-african-college-in-new-haven/>

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/>

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/henry-barnard-advances-state-and-national-education-initiatives/>

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/maria-sanchez-state-representative-and-community-advocate/>

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/sheff-v-oneill-settlements-target-educational-segregation-in-hartford/>

Ebenezer Bassett

Ebenezer Bassett became the first African American student to graduate from the New Britain Normal School – now Central Connecticut State University, in 1853. After graduating, Bassett became a noted educator, abolitionist, and the first African American ambassador to a foreign nation for the United States when he was stationed in Haiti.

Field trip and research possibilities:

New Haven Museum

Central Connecticut State University Special Collections

Links:

<https://connecticuthistory.org/ebenezer-bassetts-historic-journey/>

Establishing the American School for the Deaf

Established in 1817 by Thomas Gallaudet, the American School for the Deaf (ASD) was the first permanent school in the United States for students who are hearing impaired. The school allowed students to learn new forms of communication and inspired many other schools to open.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Connecticut State Library

American School for the Deaf

Hartford Courant

Links:

<https://www.asd-1817.org/about/history--cogswell-heritage-house>

<https://connecticuthistory.org/gallaudets-vision-advances-deaf-education/>

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/morton-biskind-warned-the-world-about-ddt/>

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/>

Law

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/>

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/thomas-j-dodd-and-the-gun-control-act-of-1968/>

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/>

Connecticut’s First Female Attorney: Mary Hall

Mary Hall, an important Hartford reformer, broke the professional barrier against women serving as lawyers in a decision by the Connecticut Supreme Court of Errors in 1882. Hall went on to become the first female lawyer and notary in Connecticut, and served as a lawyer for about 40 years.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Connecticut State Library
Harriett Beecher Stowe Center

Links:

<https://connecticuthistory.org/mary-hall-connecticuts-first-female-attorney/>

Connecticut’s First Female Justice: Ellen Ash Peters

Ellen Ash Peters served as a lawyer after graduating from Yale Law School in 1954 and served in the U.S. District Court for Connecticut starting in 1965. Peters eventually went on to become not only the first woman lawyer appointed to the faculty of Yale Law School in 1956, but also became the first female Justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court in 1978.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Connecticut State Library
Connecticut Supreme Court Historical Society
Yale Law School

Links:

<https://www.cwhf.org/inductees/politics-government-law/ellen-ash-peters#.XUrpmuNKi70>

Native Americans

The Mohegan Cultural Renewal

Fidelia Hoscott Fielding and Gladys Tantaquidgeon, both Mohegan woman, dedicated their lives to preserving and promoting indigenous cultural practices, as well as advocating for women. Tantaquidgeon's 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. Fielding stood against racism and modernism. She preserved the Mohegan language and culture despite prejudice against Native American culture and pressure to modernize.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Tantaquidgeon Museum
Mashantucket Pequot Museum

Links:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/gladys-tantaquidgeon-preserves-the-states-native-past/>
<http://www.cwhf.org/inductees/education-preservation/fidelia-hoscott-fielding/#.V8RLHvkrK70>

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/>

Politics and Government

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/roger-griswold-a-governor-not-afraid-to-challenge-authority/>

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*

Links:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/caleb-brewster-and-the-culper-spy-ring/>

Slavery and Abolition

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/jackson-v-bulloch-and-the-end-of-slavery-in-connecticut/>

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/james-mars-words-illuminate-the-cruelty-of-slavery-in-new-england/>

Isaac Glasko

Isaac C. Glasko (1776-1861), a man of mixed Native American and African American heritage, purchased land in 1806 and established a blacksmith shop in what is now the center of Glasgo. When the whaling industry was at its height, Glasko specialized in whaling implements for which he held several patents. Glasko and his friend Pero Moody refused to pay taxes in 1823. They unsuccessfully petitioned the Connecticut General Assembly for an exemption from state taxation due to the fact that, as blacks, they were barred from voting.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Connecticut State Library
Kinne Cemetery

Links: <https://connecticuthistory.org/blacksmith-isaac-glasko-challenges-the-state-constitution>

The Life of Venture Smith

Venture Smith was kidnapped from a royal family in Africa and placed in slavery in Connecticut. He had many horrible interactions with slave owners, but he eventually persevered, purchasing his and his family's freedom, and acquiring property and the respect of his local community. Venture Smith was able to pass on his story so that generations of Connecticutans and American readers can learn the horrors that he endured.

Field trip and research possibilities:

East Haddam Historical Society

The Jackson Family and Northern Slavery

John Jackson was given his freedom and eventually his wife Joan received hers although she had to leave her young children behind in slavery. Joan was later returned to slavery and her husband worked to free her and their "free" children.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Connecticut State Library

Hempsted Houses

New London County Historical Society

Social Movements

Gay Rights Bill of 1975

Freshmen state senator, Betty Hudson from Madison, introduced a gay rights bill in 1975. The bill cleared the Senate, but not the House. The governor at the time, Ella Grasso, indicated she would not sign the bill if it passed. The bill finally passed both the House and Senate in 1991 and was signed into law. It bans discrimination against gays and lesbians in housing, employment, and public accommodations. Sen. Hudson began her career as a selectman in Madison before being elected Connecticut State Senator of the 33rd District. She became Governor Grasso's advisor on Human Affairs, State Director of Welfare Offices and a member of the state's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women.

Links:

<http://www.courant.com/courant-250/moments-in-history/hc-250-gay-rights-where-we-are-now-20140628-story.html>

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/the-black-panther-party-in-connecticut-community-survival-programs/>

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 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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/the-language-of-the-unheard-racial-unrest-in-20th-century-hartford/>

“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 controversial figure within Hartford and Connecticut.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Paul Robeson House in Enfield

Links:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/negroes-who-stand-up-and-fight-back-paul-robeson-in-hartford/>

Breaking the Barrier 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/>

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/>

Gerard Peterson Breaks Barriers with the Midway Golf Club

In 1963 a young business professional and avid golfer named Gerard "Gerry" M. Peterson sought membership in the Keney Park Golf Club at the municipal course in Keney Park in Hartford. He was refused the opportunity to submit an application. After taking his fight to the City of Hartford, the Keney Park Golf Club accepted Peterson.

Links:

<https://www.ctexplored.org/the-midway-golf-club/>

Women

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

NOTE: This home is a private residence

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/hilda-crosby-standish-early-proponent-of-womens-reproductive-health/>

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 Women's 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/>

America's First Ordained Woman Minister: Olympia Brown and Bridgeport's Universalist Church

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/americas-first-ordained-woman-minister-olympia-brown-and-bridgeports-universalist-church/>

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/>

Suffragists at War: Breaking the Barrier to 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>

Mary Townsend Seymour Breaks the Down Race

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>

Maria Miller Stewart

Born to African American parents in Connecticut, Miller 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 broke the barrier of workplace dangers by 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

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/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/>

Emily Dunning Barringer: The First Female Ambulance Surgeon

Long-time New Canaan resident Dr. Emily Dunning Barringer was the first female ambulance surgeon in New York City and the first female physician to work as an intern in a New York City hospital. Her achievements even captured the attention of Hollywood filmmakers, who adapted her 1950 autobiography into a major motion picture.

Links:

<https://www.cwhf.org/inductees/science-health/emily-dunning-barringer/#.XUrv0-NKi70>

<https://connecticuthistory.org/new-canaans-pioneering-female-physician/>

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/>

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/>

Cristobal Rodriguez Hidalgo: Puerto Ricans Breaking the Barriers to 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>

Breaking Barriers 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>

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 wide 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/>

Seicheprey: The First American Battle of World War One

On April 20, 1918, 650 fresh American doughboys from Connecticut who served with the 102nd Infantry, 26th "Yankee" Division faced off against 3500 seasoned German troops. The battle lasted more than 24 hours and both sides endured heavy losses despite the lopsided numbers. The American troops recaptured the town and the media considered it an American triumph. But the loss of American soldiers was the largest yet seen. This battle haunted the troops who had fought and won long after they came home. Connecticut erected a fountain in the town of Seicheprey and the troops held parades to commemorate Seicheprey Day every April 20 into the 1970s.

Field trip and research possibilities:

Connecticut State Library
Hartford Courant
Chronicling America
Archive.org

Links:

<http://www.newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/connecticut-doughboys-remember-the-battle-of-seicheprey/>

World War II

A New Source of Farm Labor Crops Up in Wartime

During World War I and World War II, the Women's 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/>

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/the-debate-over-who-could-occupy-world-war-ii-public-housing-in-west-hartford/>

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:

<http://connecticuthistory.org/hiram-bingham-iv-a-humanitarian-honored-for-saving-lives-during-wwii/>