

## Teaching Difficult Topics in Social Studies Classrooms

*Editors:*

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The Journal of Social Studies Education in Asia will publish a Special Issue on Teaching Difficult Topics in Social Studies Classrooms (JSSEA Volume 13). In this Call for Papers, we warmly invite readers to contribute to the issue!

Social studies teachers encounter difficulties in teaching specific topics in their classrooms. There are many reasons for the difficulties. Some topics are difficult to fully understand because they are too complicated in nature, and there is no social consensus in understanding them. Some topics are controversial (Hess & McAvoy, 2014) or traumatic (Zemblyas, 2014), and therefore, teachers have difficulties or find reluctance to teach these topics because the way of presenting them in the social studies classrooms might be troublesome. Also, some topics are deeply related to teachers' beliefs or identities, so teachers tend to avoid discussing them in their classrooms (Kelly, 1986). Based on the understanding that difficult topics are decided in the milieu of individual classrooms, especially respective countries' contexts (Misco, 2012), this special issue aims to clarify why and how teachers feel difficulties in teaching specific topics in social studies classrooms and how social studies research and teacher education can support teachers in overcoming the difficulties. Any theoretical, empirical, and practical research that answers the following questions in a particular context or multiple contexts is welcomed in this special issue:

1. What topics do teachers find difficulties in teaching in the social studies classroom? Why do teachers feel difficulties in teaching these specific topics?
2. How did teachers overcome the difficulties in teaching difficult topics? What empowered them and enabled their teaching of difficult topics?

### **Important Date**

(All manuscripts submitted to this special issue will go through the review process of the Journal of Social Studies Education in Asia.)

**August 31:** Submitting proposals for the manuscript - title and abstract (400 words max.)

**September 15:** Reviewing the proposals and sharing them with the authors

**December 15:** Submitting full manuscripts (8000 words max.)

**January 15:** Reviewing the manuscripts and sharing them with the authors

**February 28:** Re-submitting the manuscripts

**March 31:** Final decision

#### **Title and Abstract Submission:**

The title and abstract should be sent to [jongsung@hiroshima-u.ac.jp](mailto:jongsung@hiroshima-u.ac.jp) by **August 31**.

#### **References**

Hess, D. E., & McAvoy, P. (2014). *The political classroom: Evidence and ethics in democratic education*. Routledge.

Kelly, T. E. (1986). Discussing controversial issues: Four perspectives on the teacher's role. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 14(2), 113-138.

Misco, T. (2012). The importance of context for teaching controversial issues in international settings. *International Education*, 42(1), 5.

Zembylas, M. (2014). Theorizing "difficult knowledge" in the aftermath of the "affective turn": Implications for curriculum and pedagogy in handling traumatic representations. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 44(3), 390-412.