A Note from the Editor

Political Tolerance Among Adolescents

Lessons from History: Teacher and Student Conceptions of the Meaning of History

An Investigation of the Use of Behavioral Objectives in Jordanian Social Studies Classrooms

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June, 1988
A Note From The Editor:

We have received twenty-eight manuscripts at the time of this writing. They are all in various stages of review. Seven manuscripts have been accepted for publication. We receive more doctoral studies than the scholarship of senior members of this organization. We plan to have the fall issue distributed before the annual meeting in November. It takes three months for our printer to produce the journal. We will submit the fall issue in August. We have learned that some writers meticulously follow the APA publication guidelines; other writers appear to be less aware of the publication manual. When you submit manuscripts, please edit them with care according to the manual.

One conception of research, not frequently explored in TRSE, suggests that all human beings, including researchers, are members of living social groups. A society is a social arrangement of shared meanings. Children and adults carry the social meanings of their lives into schools where they may be teachers, or students, or parents. Adults carry their social meanings into universities where they may be researchers, or students, or professors. Each school or university is a community of shared meanings and activity. Human beings anywhere are social beings engaged in social life. Doing research is one form of social life. Writing for this journal is another. From this social point of view, culture itself is a problem of research because social life is the ground of all educational activities.

How can we think about the social life that we call education? How should we think about it? Education and socialization are fundamental processes by which culture shapes the minds of human beings. Socialization involves the inculcation of values, attitudes, and beliefs through informal or spontaneous interaction with parents, peers, relatives, siblings, or other significant persons in community life. Education involves the inculcation of standardized knowledge and skill by strangers through stereotypic procedures. Who admonishes or approves or informs a child is what is important in the process of socialization. What is said, in books, materials, or by teachers is important in the process of education because teachers are both interchangeable and strangers. Socialization is particularistic and shapes minds for local community life. Education tends to be universalistic and it adapts students to wider areas of social commitment. There is a degree of tension between socialization and education. Socialization and education can be found in all cultures. Socialization is the most important process by which human minds are shaped in traditional communities; the expansion of education is a fundamental mission of nation states.

If we think of education as social life, then an anthropological literature is of some interest. If we take Murray L. Wax, Stanley Diamond and Fred O. Gearing's *Anthropological Perspectives on Education* (1971) as an example of that literature, then education can be said to:
1. Allocate knowledge and skills unequally among various social classes, majority and minority groups, and between men and women.
2. Legitimate state authority by the establishment of universalistic national symbols to which all students may be trained to respond.
3. Subvert local, regional, or particularistic beliefs as it inculcates universalistic values and attitudes associated with modern industrial states.
4. Nurture a positive attitude toward social change. Modern industrial states are in a constant agony of change: changes in technology, manufacture, communication, social organization that may be associated with changes in human consciousness. The shift in modern industrial states from fate to choice in sexual life style, vocational opportunity, religious orientation, and political freedom has been an unplanned social consequence of technological development.

This account of education contrasts with the industrial notion of education that is based on behavioral definitions of educational objectives and various strategies of quality control production of specified human behaviors. Life in schools may be thought about in many ways; there can be no right way to think about education. The more different ways we can think about education the better we will come to understand both education and the society in which we live.

Schools today are changing as a result of changing technology, changing human consciousness, and a political climate of reform. Integral to modern industrial society is a belief in progress grounded in the experience of improvement in communication, medicine, and the amenities of life. Education is deeply involved in nurturing the idea of the progressive character of social change. It is no accident that professionals in education are committed to progress and reform. It is a major premise of the culture of which we are part.

A social view of education calls attention to ironies, paradoxes, and ambiguities of the life to be found in schools. What has been called the industrial view of education directs attention to the intentions and hopes of those who would make education better. There are plans and aspirations for education and there are unintended consequences. Social studies scholarship should explore both the dreams and the realities. There should be a balance in our literature between social, industrial and perhaps other perspectives. In any case, what are fundamental questions in industrial scholarship? Social scholarship? Are they being addressed in this journal? To what extent does TRSE report fundamental scholarship of social studies education? What are the fundamental questions or issues of our profession?
Political Tolerance Among Adolescents

Patricia G. Avery
University of Minnesota

Abstract

This study provides a reconceptualization and extension of the traditional view of political tolerance. Political tolerance is defined as the willingness to extend basic human rights to one's least-liked socio-political group; basic human rights are defined as those rights delineated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Results of research based on a sample of 480 youth from one southeastern metropolitan area are presented. Statistically significant differences in political tolerance were found in terms of gender, political experiences, cognitive moral reasoning, and perceived threat; no differences were demonstrated between younger and older age groups or between blacks and whites. The results are discussed within the context of previous research findings.

Political tolerance is one of the fundamental concepts of liberal democratic theory. According to Mill (1956), a tolerant societal orientation is essential to both individual and societal progress. At the individual level, freedom of expression and inquiry are crucial to the fulfillment of human potential. At the societal level, a milieu which encourages the exchange of ideas is more likely to stimulate persons to explore the alternatives and consequences of propositions, to ferret out weak or detrimental policies, and to strengthen acceptable arguments. Research has consistently demonstrated a high degree of disparity between the willingness to support abstract democratic principles and the willingness to support concrete applications of these principles. For example, although 60% of all children in Zellman and Sears' (1971) study responded affirmatively to the statement "I believe in free speech for all no matter what their views might be," only 21% were willing to allow a member of the Communist Party to make a speech in their city. Explanations for this paradox include the cognitive inability to discern the inconsistency, the choice of a competing value (e.g., stability), and a socio-political environment that neither encourages nor models tolerant attitudes. Regardless of reason, the failure to apply democratic principles in specific situations is an area of concern to political educators.

The central focus of this paper is a description and partial explication of political tolerance among adolescents; research on adult political tolerance
serves to inform both the nature and the scope of the concerns addressed. The purpose of the study is four-fold: (a) to summarize and review the findings from previous studies of adolescent political tolerance, (b) to offer a reconceptualization and extension of the traditional view of political tolerance, (c) to present results from a recent study, and (d) to consider the implications of the research for both pedagogy and future studies.

Review of the Literature

The concept of political tolerance has been examined by students of political attitudes and socialization for slightly more than three decades. Despite the salience of the concept to political theorists and educators, there are few extensive studies of political tolerance among adults, and even fewer among adolescents.

Table 1 provides a brief description of the major studies of adolescent political tolerance. The reader should be aware of the lack of a consistent conceptualization of political tolerance. One may infer from the items used to measure tolerance that the researchers’ conceptualizations vary. Some (Jones, 1980; Nielsen, 1977) tap tolerance for dissent in a general sense ("Citizens must always be free to criticize the government"), while others (Patterson, 1979; Zellman & Sears, 1971) measure tolerance for dissent from specific groups (e.g., communists). Furthermore, although most of the studies have focused on the right to dissent, Breslin (1982) included items pertaining to economic rights, and Jones (1980) broadened the conceptualization of tolerance to include ethnic and sexual equity.

The researchers do share a concern for the rights of the individual or group within the socio-political environment. How they operationalize this concern, however, may affect conclusions about the variables that undergird the development of political tolerance. Given this caveat, we turn now to a discussion of the relationship between political tolerance and various demographic, experiential, cognitive, and attitudinal variables.

Tolerance and Demographic Characteristics

Age. Among adults, research suggests that older persons are less tolerant than younger adults, regardless of educational background (Corbett, 1982; Nunn, Crockett, & Williams, 1978; Sullivan, Piereson, & Marcus, 1982). Two models attempt to explain this phenomena: the "Life Cycle Model" and the "Generational Model" (Zellman, 1975). Briefly, the Life Cycle Model suggests that persons’ attitudes become more rigid and cautious as they age, perhaps due to an increased need for stability. The Generational Model posits that an individual’s political orientations are formed early in the life span (adolescence through the early 30s) and thereafter remain relatively stable. Accordingly, the time period during which one matures influences political attitudes and orientations. Recent studies have offered greater support for the Generational Model (Nunn et al., 1978), suggesting that although persons become less likely to change toward greater tolerance
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Major Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. All children tended toward intolerance in specific situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zellman &amp; Sears, 1971 (1968; 1971)</td>
<td>1384 children ages 9–14; 946 sixth and eighth grade students (two separate studies)</td>
<td>1. A majority of the youngest children supported free speech as an abstract principle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Political tolerance in concrete situations was low.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Political tolerance in concrete situations was largely determined by the students' attitudes toward the target group.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Political tolerance was not significantly related to home environment or IQ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. In the first study, political tolerance was related to divergent-thinking self-esteem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nielsen, 1977 (1971)</td>
<td>3207 United States and 1317 West German 14-year-olds</td>
<td>1. School social climate was a significant predictor of dissent toleration; instructional emphases on causes and explanations rather than dates and names seemed to have a positive influence on dissent toleration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Civics knowledge was positively linked with dissent toleration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterson, 1979</td>
<td>55 students, ages 9–12</td>
<td>1. Support for free speech was significantly associated with attitude toward communists (the target group) and level of cognitive moral reasoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones, 1980 (1976)</td>
<td>1800–2000 students in each of three age groups:</td>
<td>1. The traditional &quot;agents&quot; of political socialization—school, home, race and gender—accounted for only a small</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Major Studies of Child and Adolescent Political Tolerance (Cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Major Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eyler, 1980</td>
<td>135 college freshmen and sophomores</td>
<td>1. There was a significant positive relationship between cognitive moral reasoning and the application of democratic norms in specific situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1978)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Among 17-year-olds, the level of political tolerance was highly dependent on the target group (e.g., communists, Nazis).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breslin, 1982</td>
<td>1006 students from Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, 17 years of age</td>
<td>1. There was a significant positive relationship between cognitive moral reasoning and political tolerance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Discussion of controversial issues was positively related to political tolerance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The data collection date, if available, is provided in parentheses.*

with age, it is the time period during which they mature that has a lasting impact on their orientations. Stated differently, 50- to 60-year-olds today are not significantly less tolerant than they were when they were 20- to 30-years-old (in fact, they may be slightly more tolerant), but in comparison to the younger adults of today, they demonstrate less tolerance.

Results from research with adolescents is less clear. One study of a fairly limited age group (Patterson, 1979) indicated no change in the level of tolerance. In her comparison of 13- and 17-year-olds, Jones (1980) found the older group more tolerant on some fairly abstract items relating to dissent (e.g., “Citizens must be free to criticize the government”), but the same group demonstrated little tolerance when asked about the right of dissent for specific groups, such as Nazis and communists. (Younger students were not asked similar questions.)

On the one hand, adolescence is a time during which the transition from concrete to formal operational thought is most likely to occur, thus enabling the individual to apply abstract principles to specific situations. On the other hand, we must be cognizant that adolescence is a time during which the need to conform is particularly strong. From a psychosocial
perspective, Erikson (1968) argues that the intolerance of youth often serves as “a necessary defense against a sense of identity loss” (p. 132). The results of the research are inconclusive, perhaps reflecting the tension between cognitive development and psychological needs.

Gender. The few adult studies indicating gender differences in political tolerance have suggested that males are slightly more tolerant than are females (Nunn et al., 1978; Stouffer, 1955). Theorists have generally attributed this difference to the female role, which allows her less opportunity to participate in discussions with differing points of view (Corbett, 1982).

Only two studies of adolescent tolerance have examined gender differences. Nielsen's (1977) secondary analysis of data collected in the IEA nine-nation study (Torney, Oppenheim, & Farnen, 1975) demonstrated no statistically significant gender differences among 14-year-old United States and West German youth. However, in a secondary analysis of the 1976 NAEP data, Jones (1980) found 13- and 17-year-old females significantly more tolerant than their male counterparts. (Interestingly, the reverse held for 9-year-olds.) Jones' conceptualization of tolerance differed from that used in Nielsen's analysis; Jones included sexual equity as a dimension of tolerance, whereas Nielsen focused on tolerance for dissent. It is possible that the relationship between gender and political tolerance turns on the way in which one conceptualizes tolerance. At this point, the research is too inconclusive to suggest a theoretical framework.

Race. Most of the studies of adult and adolescent political tolerance have been conducted with white, middle-class subjects, thus precluding an examination of the relationship between race and political tolerance. Seltzer and Smith (1985) found that when controls for education and region are introduced, any differences between adult blacks and whites virtually disappear. Research with adolescents has produced mixed results (Jones, 1980; Laurence, 1970); blacks demonstrate significantly more tolerance on some items and whites on others.

As victims of intolerance, it might be expected that blacks would demonstrate greater sensitivity to the rights of outcasts or dissenters. However, lower socioeconomic status and educational levels, two variables found in disproportionate levels among blacks, are associated with lower levels of tolerance. Regardless, the inattention to both race and gender is particularly glaring in view of the political socialization literature which suggests the importance of these variables in understanding student political attitudes (Hepburn & Napier, 1982–83).

Tolerance and Political Experiences

Liberal democratic theorists have long held that political involvement facilitates political tolerance because participation exposes individuals to various points of view and teaches them the value of free expression. The early research with adults offered empirical support for this theory; however, later researchers found that when controls for education were in-
introduced, the significance of political involvement was greatly reduced (Sullivan et al., 1982).

Studies of youth are inconclusive; the two studies (Patterson, 1979; Zellman & Sears, 1971) that report no statistically significant relationship between political experiences and tolerance were conducted with students 13 years of age and younger. Jones’ (1980) research, based on a sample ranging in age from 9 to 17, suggested that political experiences may be more important in promoting tolerance among older, as opposed to younger, adolescents.

**Tolerance and Cognitive Moral Reasoning**

Three studies have suggested a positive relationship between cognitive moral reasoning and political tolerance (Breslin, 1982; Eyler, 1980; Patterson, 1979). The researchers conceptualized reasoning in terms of Lawrence Kohlberg’s stage theory of cognitive moral development. In order to understand the nexus between cognitive moral reasoning and political tolerance, a brief explication of the theory is necessary.

Kohlberg’s theory posits six stages of moral development (Kohlberg, 1969). Each stage is qualitatively distinct and is distinguished by the individual’s capacity for various thought processes. Hence, an individual would be expected to use the same mode of reasoning across situations dealing with moral conflict. As a developmental theory, the focus is on the process or mode of reasoning rather than content. Although persons may progress through the stages at different rates, the sequence of stages is invariate. The model conceives of cognitive-moral growth as a process of interaction between genetic-maturational changes and environmental effects. Social experiences that involve role-taking opportunities and cognitive conflict are thought to stimulate moral development.

Each of the three levels of the model—preconventional, conventional, and postconventional—encompasses two stages and suggests a general orientation toward moral dilemmas. At the preconventional level, the individual’s view of the world is limited to the immediate and is dominated by self-interest. One approaches rights issues from an egocentric perspective; the satisfaction of one’s needs dominates thinking and actions. Concern for others may be demonstrated when it serves the individual’s interest. However, reciprocity and sharing are purely for pragmatic purposes.

Most adolescents and adults demonstrate the conventional level of moral reasoning. Perspectives have broadened beyond the self in that emphasis is placed on conformity and loyalty to family, group, and/or national standards. At this level, one is willing to accord rights to those perceived to be in one’s own group, but not to individuals seen as outcasts. Consequently, people reasoning at this level are unlikely to recognize the rights and viewpoints of perceived minority groups.

At the postconventional level, reasoning is based on appeals to abstract principles of justice that transcend extant laws and societal norms. Self-
chosen principles which accord the highest value to justice and human rights form a cohesive basis for moral reasoning. The concern for individual rights and equality overrides negative attitudes toward peoples or groups. Rights are recognized as universal at the principled level of reasoning.

Kohlberg's theory of moral development offers a framework for understanding conceptualizations of rights. At the principled level of reasoning, human rights are recognized as universal; reasoning reflects a concern for individual rights and dignity, unrestricted by social, political, or national classifications. It is the individual's conceptualization of rights which provides the link between cognitive moral reasoning and political tolerance.

Tolerance and Attitude toward Groups

Research with both adults and children has consistently shown a relationship between political tolerance and attitude toward the target group involved (Patterson, 1979; Stouffer, 1955; Sullivan et al., 1982; Zellman & Sears, 1971). The more negative the attitude toward the group or the higher the perception of threat from a group, the lower the level of tolerance.

The early studies of political tolerance suggested that persons with higher levels of education were more tolerant despite their negative attitudes toward groups. It was thought that education increased one's ability to apply and favor abstract democratic principles in concrete situations. A study by Sullivan et al. (1982) casts doubt on this theory, suggesting a strong relationship between tolerance and threat with education controlled. The seeming paradox is explained in part by the way in which Sullivan and his colleagues conceptualized tolerance, a subject to which we now turn.

Toward a Reconceptualization of Political Tolerance

A reconceptualization of political tolerance posited by Sullivan and his colleagues has had a profound impact on this area of research. Sullivan, Marcus, Piereson, and Feldman (1978-1979) suggested that tolerance involves "a willingness to apply these [democratic] norms without disfavor to those whose ideas or interests one opposes" [emphasis supplied] (p. 116). Previous studies had defined tolerance as the willingness to extend procedural norms to outcasts or dissenters; the target groups (usually communists) were preselected by the researchers. The underlying assumption of these studies was that the chosen groups were perceived by the respondents as dissenters or nonconformists. As such, the earlier research had primarily assessed persons' tolerance of specific groups (again, usually communists), not their tolerance of ideas which they personally deemed deviant or threatening. Sullivan and his colleagues began their study by determining the individual's least-liked group, and then proceeded to ascertain his or her tolerance for that group. The present study is based, in part, on this reconceptualization of tolerance.

To date, the majority of political tolerance studies have focused their attention on the rights enumerated in the U.S. Bill of Rights. In the present
study, "rights" have been conceptualized as those rights delineated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1978). The Declaration includes most of the rights found in the U.S. Bill of Rights; however, it broadens the conceptualization of rights to include many social and economic rights (e.g., the right to an education and the right to employment). It is felt that this broader perspective of rights is more consistent with internationally agreed-upon interpretations.

The present research deviates from the current literature on youth in that, in accordance with Sullivan, it is based on the belief that tolerance implies dislike or opposition. Unlike previous research on political tolerance among either adults or youth, rights are defined according to international standards. Political tolerance, therefore, is defined in this study as the degree to which basic human rights are extended to socio-political groups whose ideas, beliefs, or interest one dislikes or opposes.

The present study is an examination of the relationship between political tolerance and age, gender, race, political experience, cognitive moral reasoning, and perceived threat.

Methodology

Sample

The sampling frame consisted of all 9th- and 11th-grade social studies classes in a major metropolitan school district in one Southeastern state. The sample was stratified by grade level; 11 classes were randomly drawn from each stratum. A total of 480 students, ages 14 through 17, participated in the study. Representation by gender was approximately equal; 123 blacks and 357 whites participated in the study.

Measurement of Theoretical Constructs

Instruments designed to assess political participation, cognitive moral development, perceived threat, and political tolerance were administered in February, 1987.

Political experience. The student's political sphere envelops the quasi-political environment of the school as well as the "formal" political system. The school often provides a valuable arena for practicing and refining political skills. For this reason, items were included to measure involvement in school-related activities as well as the more traditional political activities. The Political Participation Checklist, an adaptation of a measure used by Sigel and Hoskin (1981) to study high school seniors' political involvement, consisted of 10 items.

Cognitive moral reasoning. The short form of the Defining Issues Test (DIT) was used to measure students' level of cognitive moral reasoning. This instrument was devised by Rest (1979) as an objective alternative to the standard Kohlberg Moral Judgment Interview (MJI). The dilemmas
presented in the DIT are similar to those used in the MJI; 12 statements of issues raised in the vignettes are presented. Subjects are asked to rate the importance of each issue-statement on a 5-point scale. The statements reflect reasoning based on Kohlberg's stages. After the subjects rate the statements, they are instructed to choose and rank the four most important issues. A 'P' score or principled reasoning score, representing the degree to which responses reflect the use of principled reasoning, is computed for each subject.

The readability of the stories is estimated between the sixth and eighth grade reading levels (Rest, 1979). Rest reports that the test-retest reliability of the short form of the DIT ranges between .60 and .70; the alpha coefficient for internal consistency, a measure of reliability, is generally in the high .70s.

**Perceived threat.** Perceived threat was measured by a scale developed by Sullivan et al. (1982). The scale is composed of six adjective pairs: honest-dishonest, trustworthy-untrustworthy, predictable-unpredictable, safe-dangerous, nonviolent-violent, and good-bad. A factor analysis reported by Sullivan et al. (1982) revealed that these adjective loaded heavily on one factor (.60 to .69 for five adjectives; .39 for the sixth adjective). The measure of perceived threat is a cumulative scale ranging from 6 to 42.

**Political tolerance.** The measure of political tolerance had two parts. In the first, respondents were asked to select their least-liked socio-political group from a list of 13 groups. Students were encouraged to name another group if they deemed it appropriate. The second part consisted of 12 statements based on rights delineated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; students were asked whether they would be willing to extend these rights to their least-liked groups. Each statement was followed by a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." Instrument reliability, as estimated by Cronbach's alpha, was .86.

**Data Analysis**

Ninety-five percent confidence intervals, based on the political tolerance score mean and standard deviation, were established and compared for each of the following variables: age (14- and 17-year-olds), gender (male and female), race (black and white), political experience (high and low), cognitive moral reasoning (high and low), and perceived political threat (high and low). To insure an examination of different perspectives in terms of political experiences, cognitive moral reasoning, and perceived political threat, the first and the fourth quartiles were the comparison groups for each of these variables. Confidence intervals were then compared to determine whether the samples were likely to represent the same or different populations. Confidence intervals that do not overlap suggest samples from different populations with different population means.
Results

Analysis of differences according to the variables of interest is presented in Table 2. In general, statistically significant differences in political tolerance are shown for the variables of gender, political experience, cognitive moral reasoning, and perceived threat; the results do not indicate significant differences between either younger and older students or black and white students.

The females in this sample exhibited significantly greater tolerance than did the males. Students with more political experiences were significantly more tolerant than those with fewer political experiences. Consistent with previous research, adolescents demonstrating a higher level of cognitive moral reasoning showed greater levels of political tolerance.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, Sample Size and 95% Confidence Intervals for Political Tolerance by Age, Gender, Race, Political Experience, Perceived Threat and Cognitive Moral Reasoning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>14 years</th>
<th>17 years</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statistics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>37.2-40.2</td>
<td>37.5-41.5</td>
<td>36.7-39.1</td>
<td>39.4-41.3</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
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<th>High</th>
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<td><strong>Statistics</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>8.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>141</td>
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<tr>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>37.8-40.4</td>
<td>38.1-40.0</td>
<td>36.1-39.0</td>
<td>39.2-42.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Moral Reasoning</th>
<th>Perceived Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statistics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>36.8-39.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>40.9-43.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: CI = \( \bar{X} \pm (\text{S.D.}/\sqrt{N}) \) 1.96
moral reasoning were significantly more willing to extend basic human rights to their least-liked socio-political group than were youth exhibiting a lower level of cognitive moral reasoning. Although the differences in political tolerance for each of these variables are statistically significant, they are quite modest. The greatest difference in political tolerance is with respect to level of perceived threat, with those students who perceived a high level of threat from the target group demonstrating significantly less political tolerance than those students who perceived a low level of threat.

Discussion

The results of any research study should be viewed within the context of an accumulation of research findings. The limitations associated with a single study usually preclude broad generalizations; a series of studies, however, suggests trends which allow tentative descriptions and explanations. Such is the case with the present research. Accordingly, Table 3 presents the results from previous studies with respect to the variables of interest.

The gender differences found in this study are best understood when viewed in relation to previous findings. Only one other study of adolescents (Jones, 1980) has found females to be more tolerant than males. Jones’ work and the present study are distinguished from other research efforts by the types of items used to measure tolerance. In Jones’ study, almost 20% of the items referred to women’s rights. In the present study, the international perspective of rights includes items which may tap the female ethic of caring and responsibility described by Gilligan (1982) (e.g., rights to medical care and education). Other research has focused almost exclusively on the right to dissent. In short, whether males or females are more tolerant may depend on one’s conceptualization of political tolerance and rights.

The findings relevant to political experience provide very modest support for liberal democratic theorists. Given that adult studies have found the nexus between experience and tolerance attenuated when other factors (specifically, education) are controlled, the results should be viewed with caution. However, the results of the four studies that examined adolescent political experiences lead to the speculation that such experiences may be positively related to political tolerance among older but not among younger youth. Perhaps the older adolescent’s anticipation of formal political participation in conjunction with his/her increased cognitive sophistication acts to ascribe meanings to political experiences different from those of younger children.

The present study’s findings suggest a link between the development of cognitive moral reasoning and political tolerance. In combination with the findings from previous studies (Breslin, 1982; Eyler, 1980; Patterson, 1979), the results are promising for those concerned with the development of political tolerance. Other research suggests that instructional strategies
## Table 3
Findings from Adolescent Political Tolerance Research for Selected Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Political Experiences</th>
<th>Cognitive Moral Reasoning</th>
<th>Perceived Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laurence, 1970</td>
<td>mixed results</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>mixed results</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zellman &amp; Sears, 1971</td>
<td>older age group (12-14) more tolerant than younger group (9-11) on 1 of 3 items</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>politicization (political knowledge, media exposure, political involvement) not significantly associated with tolerance</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>negative attitude toward communism associated with intolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nielsen, 1977</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>no significant differences</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patterson, 1979</td>
<td>no significant association</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>no significant association</td>
<td>tolerance positively associated with level of cognitive moral reasoning</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Findings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones, 1980</td>
<td>Older students tended to be more tolerant on less specific items than females at 13 and 17 years. Participatory orientation is a significant predictor of tolerance among 9-year-olds.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyler, 1980</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breslin, 1982</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eyler, 1980 and Breslin, 1982 report that tolerance is positively associated with principled thinking and positively related to level of cognitive moral reasoning.
aimed at promoting cognitive moral reasoning can facilitate moral development (Leming, 1985). The present study underscores the value of such strategies to citizenship education.

Those concerned with the development of political tolerance have often decried the “lip-service” given to abstract democratic principles and the failure to understand the connection between these principles and concrete situations. Similarly, one would hope that few political educators would support the unreflective acceptance of tolerant responses to specific situations. Cognitive developmental theory focuses on thought processes—how and why individuals think the way they do. To go beyond merely eliciting tolerant responses from individuals means to focus on reasoning processes. Kohlberg’s moral development theory may offer one important vehicle for understanding these processes.

The difference in political tolerance between the high and low perceived threat groups corroborates previous findings. From a pedagogical perspective, this difference suggests that teachers attend to students’ attitudes toward particular groups as an integral part of human rights education.

The lack of a statistically significant difference between younger and older adolescents may be attributed to the limited age range of the sample. It should be recalled, however, that no study among those reviewed here has consistently found increased tolerance among adolescents for specific groups in this age range. Interestingly, Zellman and Sears’ (1971) comparison of child and adult responses to concrete situations demonstrated only a modest increase in tolerance with age. When asked whether they would allow a Communist party member to make a speech in their city, 21% and 27% of the children and adults, respectively, responded affirmatively.

These findings, in combination with those from other studies, suggest that an individual’s level of political tolerance may be shaped in early adolescence. However, results from a panel study conducted by Jennings and Niemi (1981) suggest an alternative explanation. In 1969, interviews were conducted with 1,669 high school seniors concerning a range of political attitudes and orientations. In response to a question as to whether a communist should be allowed to take an office to which he/she had been elected, 37% responded affirmatively. In 1973, when 1,348 of the same individuals were again interviewed, 60% gave tolerant responses. Although the time period during which the study was conducted may have been particularly conducive to changes toward increased tolerance, there is the possibility that post-adolescence is an important time for the development of political tolerance.

The political socialization research has often suggested that race is an important structural variable in shaping political attitudes, particularly the attitudes of political trust and efficacy (Abramson, 1972; Jennings & Niemi, 1981). In the present study, no statistically significant differences were
found in political tolerance between blacks and whites. Other studies that have examined differences in political tolerance between adolescent blacks and whites have yielded mixed results (Laurence, 1970).

Political trust and efficacy are implicitly an affirmation of the government's responsiveness to individual or groups needs. Tolerance, on the other hand, is not contingent on one's assessment of the relationship between the government and the individual. Furthermore, tolerance demands acknowledgment, not acceptance.

Conceptual and methodological limitations associated with the research on political tolerance among adolescents should be noted. Conceptually, there is a failure to acknowledge the various dimensions of tolerance. Under the rubric of civic tolerance, we find items that measure a general willingness to accept conflict ("People should be allowed to criticize the government"), measures of the willingness to extend rights to those outside the mainstream ("A communist should be allowed to make a speech criticizing the government"), and, as in the present research, measures of the degree to which persons will extend basic human rights to their least-liked socio-political group ("The [least-liked group] should be allowed to make a speech criticizing the government"). The different ways in which researchers operationalize the concept of political tolerance need not be a limitation to the research, but it must be acknowledged.

Similarly, the researcher's conceptualization of rights should be explicitly stated. Most of the studies reviewed have focused on the right of dissent, but few have acknowledged that this is only one aspect of tolerance. Explicit definitions of both political tolerance and rights would be an initial step toward greater clarity and understanding within this area of research.

The methodological limitations of the adolescent political tolerance research are similar to those associated with much of the research in education, e.g., the lack of longitudinal research and the overwhelming reliance on one means of collecting data. If we are concerned about the development of political tolerance, then a longitudinal design is appropriate. If we want to understand how adolescents think about rights issues, then in-depth interviews rather than written questionnaires are necessary.

The accumulation of research findings on adolescent political tolerance does offer some tentative generalizations. First, an individual's level of tolerance is strongly associated with his/her attitude toward the particular group in question. Specifically, perceived threat is positively related to intolerance. This suggests that educators concerned with the development of political tolerance should address students' attitudes toward various socio-political groups. By using concrete situations involving a wide range of groups, students may recognize the inconsistency with which abstract democratic principles are applied.

Second, it appears that higher levels of cognitive moral reasoning are associated with increased tolerance. The theoretical link between principled
reasoning and tolerance implies that instructional strategies aimed at increasing level of moral reasoning may provide a powerful means by which to increase students’ understanding of basic human rights. Among social studies educators, it is recognized that an understanding of the rights and freedoms in a constitutional democracy requires a level of reasoning that is based on universal principles.

Finally, political involvement is positively associated with political tolerance. The results of this study are consistent with previous research findings in that the relationship between political tolerance and political experiences is not negative. The research thus far has not addressed whether those who are more tolerant seek experiences in the political sphere, or whether political involvement, as posited by liberal democratic theorists, acts to increase political tolerance. However, providing opportunities for students to participate in the quasi-political sphere of the school should not have an adverse effect on their level of tolerance.

There are numerous questions that have not been addressed by the research. Given that perceived threat acts as a significant barrier to tolerance, what factors might reduce or mediate such threat? Do different types of threat (e.g., personal, national) have a different effect on tolerance?

What is the nature of the relationship between political participation and tolerance? Do different types of participation (e.g., discussion, activism) have a different effect on political tolerance?

Are females consistently more tolerant given certain types of rights issues? If so, what factors in their socialization help to explain their tolerance? How can these factors inform those concerned about the development of political tolerance?

Perhaps the most important question is one not easily addressed by survey research: How do people explain their intolerance? Only one researcher (Westie, 1965) has conducted in-depth interviews with adults in which he confronted them with their lack of consistency between support for abstract democratic principles and the application of such principles to specific situations. Most individuals recognized the inconsistency and resolved it in favor of tolerant abstract and specific responses. A similar study with adolescents would have important implications for pedagogy.

Two other variables, though not the primary focus of the present study, deserve consideration. Zellman and Sears’ (1971) initial study indicated that political tolerance was related to divergent-thinking self-esteem. Several studies with adults have also suggested a positive relationship between self-esteem and political tolerance (Sniderman, 1975; Sullivan et al., 1982). In general, individuals who feel positively about themselves are more accepting of ideas and opinions different from their own. Other studies (Breslin, 1982; Nielsen, 1977) have suggested the importance of the classroom climate in promoting political tolerance. Nielsen’s (1977) study of United
States and West German 14-year-olds indicated that an instructional emphasis on causes and explanations rather than dates and names seemed to have a positive influence on dissent toleration. Similarly, Breslin's (1982) study of Irish adolescents indicated that the discussion of controversial issues in the classroom is positively related to tolerance; such results suggest that students who see tolerant behaviors modeled are more likely to express tolerant attitudes. Both studies underscore the importance of an open classroom climate in which students feel free to express their opinions. The roles of personality and classroom climate should be explored further as part of the research agenda on political tolerance among adolescents. Both may have important implications for classroom practice.

Political tolerance is indeed a very complex concept. As it as been defined here, it involves one's fundamental conception of rights—what they are and how they shall be recognized within a society. Certainly this is a significant area of inquiry for political theorists and educators.4

Endnotes

1. Some readers may question whether it is appropriate to include Eyler's (1980) study of college freshmen and sophomores because of the age of the subjects. It is also recognized that these students represent an elite sample. However, given that the students have not yet assumed traditional adult responsibilities and given the relevance of Eyler's findings to the present research, it was decided to include her study in this review.

2. The description of political experiences included the following: campaigned for a candidate, tried to convince people how to vote, worn a campaign button or put a political sticker on a car, talked to friends about politics, written a letter to an elected official, run for school office, participated in a political demonstration, talked with family about political issues, joined a political club, debated a political issue in class. Students were asked to indicate how often they had participated in the activities. Each item response was scored as follows: Never - 0, Once - 1, More than once - 2. The composite score has a potential range from 0 to 20.

3. The complete list of socio-political groups and the percentage of students who chose each group is as follows: anti-abortionists (2%), atheists (4%), Black Panthers (2%), communists (8%), fascists (2%), feminists (0%), fundamentalists (0%), Gay Liberation Front (13%), John Birch Society (0%), Ku Klux Klan (53%), Nazis (8%), pro-abortionists (5%), socialists (0%), and other (3%).

4. Representative items include: "The police should need as much evidence in order to arrest a member of this group as they would need to arrest any other U.S. citizen," "A member of this group should receive the same pay as any other U.S. citizen who performs the same job," and "A member of this group should NOT be allowed to vote." A complete list of the items is available from the author.

5. The author would like to acknowledge and thank Carole L. Hahn and James O. Miller at Emory University for their advice on various aspects of this research.

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Lessons From History: Teacher and Student Conceptions of the Meaning of History

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Abstract

The central purpose of this investigation is to describe and analyze teacher and student conceptions of the meaning of history. The study explores factors which shape conceptions of the meaning of history and the relationship among teacher conceptions, the curriculum, and student conceptions. Data collection included interviews and observation in three sites. Data were analyzed by categories of informants (e.g. teachers and students) using content analysis. Patterns and themes which emerged were compared across these two groups. Results suggest that for these informants, teacher conceptions varied; student conceptions were poorly formed; teacher conceptions shaped the transmitted curriculum; and, student conceptions were influenced by their teacher's conceptions. These findings imply that teachers could devote more explicit attention to the lessons of history, and that more research is needed to clarify conceptions of the meaning of history and their impact on the educative process.

History is 'for' human self-knowledge. . . Knowing yourself means knowing what you can do; and since nobody knows what he can do until he tries, the only clue to what man can do is what man has done. The value of history, then, is that it teaches us what man has done and thus what man is.


. . . It is our function to preserve and perpetuate the social tradition; to harmonize, as well as ignorance and prejudice permit, the actual and the remembered series of events; to enlarge and enrich the specious present common to us all to the end that 'society' may judge of what it is doing in the light of what it has done and what it hopes to do.

—Carl Becker, "Everyman His Own Historian" (1932)

The 10th anniversary of the fall of Saigon prompted heated discussion of the lessons of that unfortunate American experience. Liberals asserted their
belief that the war was a tragic mistake, that future Vietnams must be avoided, and that the current situation in Central America was a case in point. Conservatives argued that the war had been a heroic effort to stop the spread of communism, and that we must make every effort to contain totalitarian communism wherever it threatens democratic freedoms. The debate over the lessons of Vietnam is unusual because it directly relates the past to current issues of national policy.

Do history teachers and students draw lessons from the past, just as liberals and conservatives draw lessons from Vietnam? What conceptions do teachers and students have of the meaning of history? Through a study of teacher and student conceptions of the meaning of history we can discover existing conceptions, their origins, and perhaps their impact on the educative process.

For purposes of this study, "the meaning of history" was defined to include four kinds of informant conceptions. First, I examined informant conceptions of the purposes of historical study and valuations of its usefulness. Second, I explored conceptions of patterns in history, informant beliefs on progress and decline. Third, I examined the degree of generalization with which informants were comfortable. And, fourth, I investigated informant conceptions of the relevance of history, the relation of historical data to the present.

The Status of History in Schools

Though history has lost its monopoly over the social studies curriculum, United States and world history have remained the two most frequently taken social studies courses (Downey, 1985). Presently, we are in the midst of a national revival of concern over the teaching of history in the schools (Ravitch, 1987). However, the current revival of history is failing to address many of the underlying questions which have kept the teaching of history in the schools in a perpetual state of crisis.

The middle 1970s witnessed an outpouring of public comment about history instruction and the problems that plagued it. Writer after writer predicted the demise of history as a separate subject (Mehaffy, 1982). The peak of concern was expressed in a report by Richard Kirkendall (1975) of the Organization of American Historians. Kirkendall declared that history was in a state of crisis because of declining history enrollments in the colleges and a trend away from history courses in the schools.

Student attitude problems have traditionally plagued the teaching of history. Students describe many history courses as boring, complain about history's lack of relevance, and protest its status as a required course (Morrissey, Hawke, & Superka, 1980). Debate over the reasons for this continuing crisis has been confined mostly to assertion rather than extended research. One noted historian accepted the view that history was irrelevant (Donald, 1977). Another attributed the decline in interest in history to the neglect of the larger humanizing function of history in favor of increasingly
narrow specialization (McNeil, 1976). Others attributed history's problems to poor teaching (Fite, 1975; Krug, 1978; Wesley, 1967). It has also been suggested that the history taught in schools is a compilation of myths, that it is irrelevant to the needs of minorities, or that it is political rather than cultural or social (Hertzberg, 1980).

Throughout this literature one may recognize the failure of historians to come to terms with the meaning and purpose of teaching history in school. As a student of history, I have the distinct impression that historians as a group reject attempts to attach any overall meaning, direction, or coherence to history and are reluctant to address explicitly the lessons of the past. Yet, if history is to play an important role in the education of citizens, its meaning deserves extensive attention.

Confusion over purpose is at the heart of the crisis in the teaching of history. Many students see history as a meaningless waste of time; so, perhaps, do many teachers. To reconstruct a sense of purpose for studying history, we must first delineate the scope of the problem.

**Research Related to Teacher Conceptions**

Despite the large amount of research on the social studies and history, scholars have conducted little field research on teacher objectives, goals, or purposes. Historically, social educators have addressed objectives indirectly through debates over content and method. This resulted in a body of literature that was more assertion than research, leaving the social studies curriculum without clear objectives, purpose, or definition (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1977). Several studies indicate that a relatively stable sequence of social studies courses is offered throughout the United States. Within these courses, however, objectives may vary according to textbook or teacher preference (Shaver, Davis, & Helburn, 1979; Superka, Hawke, & Morrissett, 1980; Wiley, 1976). Among other factors, disagreement over the role and function of the social studies seems to preclude the clear definition of objectives. Social studies objectives are difficult to define and highly subject to proliferation (Gross, 1977). These findings underscore the complexity and confusion in the field and help to explain the minimal attention to objectives in the research literature. Yet, it is precisely this area, ill-defined and poorly researched, that is in need of direct attention.

Other studies point to teacher conceptions as the crucial variable guiding curriculum decisions. Brophy and Good (1974) argue that the teacher's belief system or conceptual base is most important in shaping curriculum decisions. Another study has noted the place of the teacher at the heart of the teaching process (Shaver et al., 1979). Thus, a teacher's conception of the meaning of history may shape his or her curricular decisions.

Research on teacher perspectives has explored similar terrain, examining the purpose and context of particular teaching acts. Goodman and Adler (1985), in a recent study of elementary teacher perspectives on social studies, found six major conceptualizations of social studies expressed through
their informants’ beliefs and classroom actions. These included social studies as a non-subject, as human relations, as citizenship indoctrination, as school knowledge, as the integrative core of the elementary curriculum, and as education for social action.

A teacher's conceptual base is also influenced by cultural knowledge. Cultural knowledge includes beliefs, values, expectations, mental models, and formulas used in generating and interpreting classroom events. A recent study by Anderson-Levitt (1987) showed that cultural knowledge shapes teacher decision-making. Spindler (1987) found that teacher cultural knowledge guides successful classroom interaction.

Teacher and student conceptions of the meaning of history are directly related to instructional issues and may shape student learning. Using research techniques adapted from anthropology, this study was designed to explore these conceptions, the patterns of their interaction, their origins, and their impact. The central research questions include:

1. What conceptions do teachers have of the meaning of history? What are the origins of their conceptions?
2. What impact do teacher conceptions have on the curriculum?
3. What conceptions do students have of the meaning of history?
4. What impact do teacher conceptions of the meaning of history have on student conceptions?

The data collected for this illustration prohibits firm conclusions, but what follows will illustrate a possible avenue of research and could serve as a starting point for future, similar studies.

Methodology

Sample

Three high school American History teachers were selected to participate in the study. All three teachers taking part in the study were intern teachers enrolled in a prestigious San Francisco Bay Area teacher education program. The selection of these three teachers was based on (a) their placement as interns rather than student teachers; each taught two classes per day for the full school year, (b) their assignment to high school U. S. History, and (c) their accessibility and the proximity of their schools. The choice of three sites limited the breadth of teacher perspectives studied, but allowed gathering sufficient student data from each classroom and permitted cross-site analysis.

It is important to stress that these were not typical student teachers. As interns, each took full responsibility for their classes from the start of the school year. Also, each held a baccalaureate degree, two from prestigious undergraduate institutions. Prior to teacher interviews, informants were told only that the study focused on their ideas about history and that it would involve interviews and classroom observation. Each seemed genuinely interested and eager to participate in the project.
I also selected three student informants from each site at random \((N = 9)\), one student from the upper-third, one from the middle-third, and one from the lower-third of the class roll based on the previous quarter's grades. This selection was made in an attempt to get a somewhat representative sample. Four were male and five were female; one was a member of a minority group.

Each site was a large, suburban high school with over 1,000 students of mixed ability from a broad range of socio-cultural backgrounds. Within this similarity, there were some differences. Adamson's school was nestled along the edge of the foothills in a relatively wealthy neighborhood and tended to have a majority of college-bound students and little minority representation. Though in the same district, Neuman's school was in a working-class neighborhood closer to the bay. The student body contained a broader mix of students and a higher percentage of minority students. Though Neuman's class generally reflected the student body, it was an upper level group and tended to have more college-bound and fewer minority students (roughly 10%). Wiley's school was in an adjacent district that drew students from wealthy neighborhoods west of the school and from the poorer area to the east. His class was a general level group with fewer college-bound students and a higher percentage of minority students (approximately 30%).

**Data Collection**

In-depth interviews were conducted with each teacher informant prior to collection of any other data. These interviews probed teacher conceptions of the meaning of history and teacher perspectives on the origins of those conceptions. Teachers were interviewed in January and observations were done in February and March. Each teacher had spent six to seven months with each group. Interviews were spread over two sessions of approximately two hours each.

Though conducted in a flexible manner, interviews were structured by an interview guide which listed questions in several categories: teacher conceptions of history, curriculum decisions, teacher knowledge of students, and teacher background. Questions on teacher conceptions of history examined each of the categories described earlier (purpose, pattern, generalizability, and relevance). For example, questions on purpose included: "What makes history interesting to you?" "Tell me a few of your thoughts on the purpose of studying history." "Why bother studying history?" "What is history for?" Follow up and probing questions were then posed based on the subject's initial response.

Nonparticipant observation of three lessons in each classroom produced field notes describing the lessons observed. This descriptive narrative focused on the transmitted curriculum, including dialogue and action. Documentary evidence was collected from the lessons, but only as relevant to the central research questions.
Student interviews, each lasting approximately 20–30 minutes, were conducted after observations were completed. These interviews probed student conceptions of the meaning of history, student knowledge of the curriculum and teacher, student attitudes, and student background information. For example, questions on student knowledge of the curriculum and teacher included: “Tell me a little about your history class. Describe what you do.” Follow up and probing questions were based on initial informant response and, in some cases, on category probes. For the example above, category probes included: “Tell me about your assignments.” “Tell me about some of your class activities.”

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed by qualitative analysis of fieldnotes and documents. Data were coded according to pre-planned categories of informants (e.g. teachers and students) and curriculum. Interview data were organized within these role categories according to the four kinds of conceptions of the meaning of history identified earlier (purposes, patterns, generalizability, relevance) and by the data’s relevance to research questions on the origins of teacher and student conceptions. Data on the curriculum were organized by classroom and by the sub-categories of intended, transmitted, and received curricula. Patterns and themes which emerged were then compared across these two groups of informants with data on the curriculum serving as a source of illustration.

Results

Teacher Conceptions

Analysis of interview data indicated that each of the three intern teachers studied had a distinctly different conception of the meaning of history. Michael Adamson is a social activist and reformer; Jacob Neuman, a cosmic philosopher; and Gordon Wiley, a storyteller. Though some similarities exist, the differences in their conceptions are striking.

For Adamson, the central purpose of studying history is to solve contemporary problems. Though he also gives some importance to knowledge of our common heritage as Americans, that knowledge is important only as it helps students understand the ways people have been oppressed and the strategies they have used to change the conditions of their lives. Thus, history is a constant battle for justice in an unjust world. Adamson sees his teaching as part of the ongoing struggle to improve the human condition which requires this constant press for justice. He believes that we can use the past to make points about today and chooses topics accordingly. Furthermore, he believes that teachers necessarily impart values by linking the past and present, and that we can and should continue the struggle for justice, using knowledge of the past for clues to solve contemporary problems. The following quote illustrates the core of his philosophy of history:
History gives us insight to solve contemporary problems. It helps us understand our world and lets us see how power relationships have worked. It helps us understand the ways people have been oppressed, and lets us see strategies people have used to change the conditions of their lives.

Jacob Neuman has a vastly different conception of history. A cosmic philosopher, Neuman’s conception of history is permeated with his belief that humanity is fundamentally one, a belief based on his adherence to the Bahai faith. His central purpose is to help students develop a knowledge of self and an understanding of each person’s unity with humanity. For Neuman, history provides a context for understanding our place in the world. He believes that humanity is diseased because people don’t have a sense of unity. The disease is manifest in conflict between people who are essentially the same. The major pattern in history is the constant move toward greater inclusivity with people living in larger and larger groups. Neuman believes that human beings are evolving and coming to a point where they will be organically one. The major sub-theme in his conception of history is that there is a pattern to everything, all human actions are interrelated. Because of the essential unity of mankind, any topic in history is representative of many. Neuman believes that when certain forces are revealed to humanity through divine revelation, we will realize our essential unity. The study of history is a seeking of truth, a process of discovering humankind’s oneness. Neuman’s conception of history is illustrated by the following statements:

History is a way of contextualizing oneself in the world. It is a way of sensing others’ experiences, taking me out of myself but teaching me about myself at the same time.

Humanity is diseased because it doesn’t sense its wholeness. The disease is conflict between people who are the same.

The American role in the Bahai faith is to be the spiritual leader of nations. Not a physical leadership of might, this involves some form of great service, bringing smaller units into larger, where states transform themselves without conflict into larger nations. We must transcend the limits of our own nationalism. When America separated from England, we separated from the world. It will take an equal revolution to enter back into the world. Once we connect back up, we will be able to reduce our physical might. History is important to help us see this larger perspective which is not ethnocentric. Human society is all-inclusive. When God’s word is revealed all humanity will be one.

For Wiley, the central purpose of studying history is to understand current issues. This, Wiley hopes, will produce educated decision making. Though similar to Adamson’s conception, Wiley’s thinking is subtly dif-
ferent. Wiley believes that history provides the background necessary to understand current issues. As students of history, we draw lessons from the past by comparison of similar situations. This is possible only because of the continuity of history. The present and future always relate to the past. Most events of the past are relevant to an understanding of current issues. Wiley views content, especially a knowledge of the past 100 years, and skills, especially writing and thinking skills, as crucial for an educated citizenship faced with complex issues. This quote provides an illustration of Wiley's ideas:

In a democracy you need to understand issues. I'm teaching because I wanted to do something about it. I'm not on a mission from God, but it is a chance to do something. I try to reach who I can. The point of history is to relate it to current problems, to make a connection with the past. The connection is sometimes hard to make, but I'm always trying to make a point of relevance. There is a continuity in history. The present and future always relate to the past. Maybe I'm idealistic, but I believe we can shape the future through knowledge of the past.

Each of these teachers is a preacher, pushing a particular valuation of history. Each teacher's goals reflect a conception of history and an interpretation of student needs and capabilities. Adamson finds that his students do not have a conception of solving contemporary problems and believes it is because most decisions in our society are beyond their control. As a result, his teaching is directed toward instilling a desire for problem solving. Neuman believes that his students don't think in conceptual terms but will remember a study of individual lives and can connect to facts at the level of individual experience. Combined with his desire to teach the essential unity of humanity, his teaching focuses on the individual experiences of common people. Wiley, believing that students are most interested when something relates on a personal level, often uses examples or relevant stories of a personal nature. Each of the teachers approaches teaching through a conception of purpose and an understanding of particular students.

Though each teacher shares a belief in the relevance of history to students' lives, each conceives of that relevance in a subtly different way. Adamson sees the study of history as a moral crusade to solve contemporary problems, Neuman views it as a means of developing cosmic awareness, and Wiley values history as essential background for educated citizenship. Figure 1 provides further illustration of the themes which emerged from the study of each teacher's conceptions.

Origins of Teacher Conceptions

During fieldwork, I collected data on what informants said were the origins of their ideas about history. I looked at perceptions of origins
### Adamson

#### Solving Problems:
- "History gives us insight to solve contemporary problems."
- "It is the teacher's responsibility to create a more humane and just world."

#### The Struggle for Justice:
- "No pattern other than the fact that it's an unjust world, part of the human condition."
- "The 'human condition' is the constant battle against injustice."
- "Basically, things are unjust; always examples of people struggling to make things more just."

#### Linking Past to Present:
- "The teacher develops links of past to present."
- "We explore how the past gives us clues to solve contemporary problems."

#### Knowledge:
- "Knowledge of our common heritage."
- "To understand how people have been oppressed."

#### Imparting Values:
- "Foster participation in societal institutions."
- "See strategies people have used to change conditions."

### Neuman

#### Unity of Humanity:
- "I believe that when certain forces are revealed to humanity we will realize our essential unity."
- "History is a way of sensing other's experiences. It's my belief that humanity is fundamentally one."
- "Humanity is diseased, does not sense its wholeness."

#### Context:
- "History is a way of contextualizing oneself in the world."
- "Need ability to see from other perspectives, across time and across individuals."

#### Toward Inclusivity:
- "At some point humanity will become an organic whole because we've been able to live in large groups."
- "Can develop capability to recognize common unity through communication."

#### Pattern to Everything:
- "A pattern to everything that happens. Problem is how clearly we see it."
- "Everything has an impact on other things."

#### Similarities:
- "Each context is unique, but there are similarities."
- "Any topic is representative of many."

### Wiley

#### Relevance:
- "It's not the history itself but its relation to current issues."
- "People don't understand the complexities of issues. Can't understand issues without this knowledge."

#### Comparisons:
- "No sacred truths, but generalizations exist."
- "Most events transcend location and time to relate to other events."
- "History makes you think about the present."
- "Generalizations make history relevant."

#### Decision-Making:
- "Knowledge of the past will help in current decision-making."
- "Can draw lessons from history. For example, from Vietnam we know we can get in trouble taking on a little country."
- "I want them to make educated decisions. They are fooled by propaganda."

#### Content:
- "Content knowledge of the past 100 years is crucial."
- "Can't understand issues without this knowledge."
- "History is crucial for citizenship, skills and content."

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Figure 1. Teacher conceptions of the meaning of history (N = 3): Adamson, the social reformer; Neuman, the cosmic philosopher; and Wiley, the storyteller.

because they can help us understand the reasons for the differences in teacher conceptions. Each informant described previous teachers, home and family, books, particular college courses, media, and geographic origins as important influences, though previous teachers and home environment were seen as most important. It is also possible that undergraduate major played a significant role in the development of each teacher's con-
ception of history. Only Neuman was a history major, having graduated from a small but prestigious liberal arts college in the east. Adamson majored in politics at a relatively small state university with a counterculture image on the west coast, and Wiley majored in international relations at a prestigious west coast university. The following quotes characterize these teachers' views on the origins of their conceptions:

When I was in 9th grade I had this incredible history teacher, Mr. Freidman. He used simulations, trials, and discussion. He really inspired me. (Adamson)

I grew up in a white suburb wondering why the trash men were all black. I had an inkling that history somehow determined it. (Adamson)

My interest in history flowed from personal experience with my family. My dad would yell at Nixon's face on TV, furious about what was going on. I picked up his take on things. (Adamson)

I cried when I learned the south lost the Civil War. My first books were on people in the Civil War like Robert E. Lee. Once we took a trip to the east coast and stopped at every Civil War battlefield along the way. That may have sparked my interest in history. (Wiley)

My first conceptions about history came from books my parents gave me: Meet JFK, Meet Andrew Jackson. I read them over and over and knew them by heart. I had those and football. (Wiley)

Neuman indicated that his conversion to the Bahai faith had the greatest impact on his thinking about history, as shown in the following quote:

After two years at Williams College I set out on a search, a year of growth, traveling, exploring books, solitude, meeting people. I guess I was trying to find the truth. Then a person spoke to me about the Bahai faith. I was struck by that kernel of truth and vowed I'd look into it. I did and was invited in. I discovered that though surface cultures differ, people are very similar.

Analysis of interview data on the factors which shaped teacher conceptions suggests that though similarities exist, the origins of each teacher's conception of history are very individual. For two of these teachers, Adamson and Wiley, previous teachers and home were the most salient factors. In contrast, Neuman's conceptions were shaped by his religious beliefs.

This finding suggests that conceptions of the meaning of history are shaped by interaction with cultural institutions. Other factors may also be
at work. If school, home, and religion are important determinants for these teachers, it is also possible that social class, political affiliation, race, and gender are important determinants for other teachers of history. Further investigation could probe the origins of teacher conceptions more deeply.

The Curriculum

A central finding of this study is that each teacher's conceptions about history seem to have a significant impact on the curriculum they select and the content taught in their classrooms. Observations of Adamson, Neuman, and Wiley provide considerable evidence to support this assertion: The transmitted curriculum is shaped by teacher conceptions. However, the degree to which this is true varies, and may be a function of the teacher's expertise at achieving stated goals. Each teacher's goals are shaped, in part, by a conception of history. Data on teacher intent illustrate a pattern connecting teacher conceptions with the intended curriculum. Data on the received curriculum illustrate the link between the transmitted curriculum and student learning. This section of the report will present findings on the intended, transmitted, and received curriculum for each classroom studied.

Adamson. Adamson uses a variety of activities intended to produce students active in school and public life and as concerned about social justice as he is. His approach, emphasizing value clarification, writing, and group discussion skills is process-centered. His use of history to solve contemporary problems seems related to his undergraduate major in politics.

The curriculum transmitted in Adamson's classroom provides several examples illustrating his central purpose of solving contemporary problems. His syllabus for the unit I observed suggests, "Issues in this unit are all relevant to contemporary social problems." Several present-tense topic questions substantiate this focus. Examples include: "Social mobility: Myth or reality?"; "Is concentration of economic power a threat to democracy?"; "Melting pot or salad bowl?"; and "Do workers have the right to strike?". Another example is provided by a lesson I observed on "The problem of nativism" in which the questions "Where does prejudice come from?" and "What should U. S. immigration policy be?" were discussed, prior to studying the nativism of the early 20th century.

The same lesson provides an example of Adamson's major theme, the injustice of the human condition and the value-laden implication that students should take action to aid the cause of justice. The lesson also provides an example of a link between present and past, and illustrates Adamson's means of imparting values by raising questions. Adamson's central goal in the lesson was to help students recognize the sources of their own prejudices as a step toward overcoming them. Knowledge of our nation's heritage was supplied in subsequent lessons and reading assignments on nativism.
Another illustration of Adamson's central purpose, solving contemporary problems, was observed in a lesson in which students were asked to produce bookmarks for a school project. Students were convinced the activity was real, though in fact Adamson created the activity as a way of demonstrating the principles of mass production. The debriefing discussion focused on teacher questions which illustrate Adamson's conceptions of history. Questions included: "Do people always need leaders?" "How does equality jive with leadership?" "Is speed of production the only standard we should have?" and, "Should anything else determine how we organize our work?". The lesson concluded with Adamson's comment, "Worker safety is an issue today." The lesson linked past and present, sounded the theme of the "human condition," and imparted a sense that worker safety and equality should be valued over speed of production. Implicitly, the central message was active pursuit of solutions to problems. Students were active participants in the simulation and debriefing.

A third lesson, a lecture-discussion on populism, illustrates many of the same points, though the lesson placed greater emphasis on content knowledge. The lesson linked farm problems of the 1880s and 1890s to the problems of farmers today. Again, the "unjust world" theme echoed through the lesson. At one point Adamson stated, "Farmers in the 1880s were getting screwed. Merchants and middlemen were getting wealthy off the farmer's labor." Near the end of the lesson Adamson asked, "Imagine you are a farmer. What demands would you make for change? What strategies would you use?" Then he explained that the populist farmers pooled their resources to make a greater impact. Implicit in the discussion was the value-laden message that we can and should continue the struggle for justice.

Adamson's students say that his teaching centers on the discussion of ideas, using varied activities to keep students actively thinking and involved. His students stress that he "doesn't tell us answers" but "lets us stumble on them." This is consistent with Adamson's problem-centered approach to teaching and his focus on the active pursuit of solutions to problems. His focus on political reform and his use of history reflect his background as a politics major and his desire to set the world straight.

*Neuman.* Neuman, whose stated goal is to develop independent seekers of truth, focuses the curriculum on the study of the experiences of individuals in history, common people with whose lives he thinks his students can relate. This focus flows logically from Neuman's conception of history stressing the essential unity of humankind, and his belief that history is useful for a knowledge of that unity. He wants students to see the forces of history to which they contribute. This will, Neuman hopes, allow them to glimpse at least a part of the pattern underlying our existence.

Though the link is not as obvious, Neuman's conception of history has a profound impact on his teaching. Observation of classroom lessons revealed that he made extensive use of primary documents, particularly docu-
ments that illustrate the lives of common people. His use of source materials seems related to his training in history, his undergraduate major. Neuman’s central purpose was to lead students to the independent discovery of truth. He believes the ultimate truth is reflected in the unity of all humankind. By studying the lives of other people in other times, Neuman hopes his students will discover the pattern of unity by which everything is interrelated.

A lesson on the common people of the San Francisco area circa 1880 using the historical-source method illustrates his conception of this pattern of unity. Students were given documents, mimeographed excerpts from city directories and diaries, from which they were asked to make statements about the people whose lives were represented in the documents. Their statements reflected the struggle for survival and the life experiences common to that time—finding work, doing wash, and having children. The implicit message was that the significant themes in peoples lives are similar, regardless of time. Another lesson, again illustrating his “pattern of unity” conception, employed the diaries of individual immigrants (an Italian boot black, Russian shopkeeper, Chinese laundryman, and Swedish farmer) to point out the essential similarity of people’s lives.

And, finally, a lesson on immigration provides an even more explicit example of Neuman’s conception of unity. The lesson began with the question, “Why did people immigrate?” After some discussion of the variety of reasons for immigration, Neuman summarized the discussion with the assertion, “Everybody in America is an immigrant. We are mongrels, a melting pot. We are all, in cultural heritage, a part of that. Our different backgrounds influence the total culture.” This quote illustrates Neuman’s central message of essential unity and demonstrates his belief that we are moving toward inclusivity. It also illustrates his conception of the way in which everything is interrelated and part of a larger pattern.

Neuman’s students say that his class is centered on discussion of how people lived. Students are engaged in activities which require them to think about what they are studying. Lessons include a lot of reading, discussion, and group work in which “you learn first-hand what people did.” The focus on how people lived is consistent with Neuman’s central message of the unity of humanity. The use of “questions you have to think about” reflects Neuman’s goal of developing individual seekers of truth who can discover the pattern underlying our existence. Thus, Neuman’s teaching is influenced by his religious belief and his training in history.

Wiley. Wiley’s intent is to understand and explain the past and to develop reading, writing, and critical thinking skills along the way. Everything in his curriculum focuses on a theme explaining how something came to be. His central concern is to explain how the present is built upon the past so that his students will understand what is happening now. This central intention, explanation, is essentially content-centered. Though Wiley advocates a process-centered goal, content via explanation dominates his teaching.
Wiley's conception of the meaning of history is reflected in his teaching, though his conception of relevance is less powerfully drawn than Adamson's use of the past to solve contemporary problems. The major goal present in Wiley's teaching is the pursuit of content knowledge, though the relevance of content to current issues is often stressed in discussion of current topics related to the historical material at hand. As an international relations major, Wiley may also lack sufficient knowledge of history to go much beyond a content orientation. It is also possible that the makeup of Wiley's class (fewer academically talented students) limited his approach, leading him to stress basic content knowledge.

Wiley's unit objectives are mostly content-centered, though two of ten call for comparison ("Explain why some nations industrialize") or relation of current events. A major assignment for the unit required students to relate past to present. Students were asked to write a paper answering the question, "What changes that occurred have most affected the world that you live in?" A unit exam question asked students to "compare and contrast problems of early 20th century farmers with farmers today." Wiley's lesson on populism was preceded by discussion of current farm problems, centering on a discussion of whether the U. S. should eliminate subsidies for farmers.

A lesson on monopoly began with the present tense question, "What's good and bad about monopoly?" The lesson used current and past examples to make points about the topic and illustrates Wiley's emphasis on relevance. Two other lessons were content-centered and contained no direct evidence of links to the present. These were lectures on populism, which failed because "they couldn't get the south and laborers excited about it," and Roosevelt's "Square Deal," which represented "an attempt by government to regulate business." Both lectures provided background to current issues, but links to the present were not powerfully drawn. The implicit message was that history is for the passive pursuit of knowledge which is helpful for understanding current issues.

Wiley's students say that he talks a lot. Their role in the class is essentially passive, and Wiley's talk is dominant. This reflects Wiley's content-centered approach to history as background knowledge. Significantly, his students made no mention of the relation of the past to the future. Though more extensive data would be needed to make definitive statements on student learning outcomes, this suggests that students remember the process aspects of their lessons, and provides another perspective on the transmitted curriculum.

Summary. This evidence suggests that for these teachers, conceptions of the meaning of history seem to be an important factor shaping the transmitted curriculum, though other factors may be at work as well. Disciplinary background seems to bear some relation to the way history is thought of and taught. Conceptions of teaching are probably important as well. Also,
the social context of the school and the makeup of students in a particular class are important factors that may influence teacher actions. Perhaps a later study could explore the interaction between conceptions of teaching and conceptions of history or investigate the impact of context in greater depth.

In general though, the data suggest that individual teachers may have a powerful impact on the curriculum, and imply that history teachers may be working at cross purposes based on contradictory conceptions and differing values. One wonders whether some conceptions have more impact on the curriculum than others and what factors determine this. Further research could more fully explain the relationship between teacher conceptions and the curriculum.

Student Conceptions

Students were asked about their conceptions of history in each of the four areas described earlier: purpose, pattern, generalizability, and relevance. In general, student conceptions seem vague, incomplete, and poorly formed, though students did have ideas about history. Student informants frequently hesitated before answering interview questions, and in several instances they answered "I don't know" or "That's a tough question." In a few cases students could not respond at all. This may be attributable to a lack of explicit attention to the meaning of history on the part of their history teachers.

Purpose. Student conceptions of the purpose of studying history centered on knowledge (mentioned by eight informants), relevance (six informants), and the fact that it's required (four informants). For example, "We study history to know why things happen, to know our roots. My family came here from Europe. They were very poor. Now life is easier than they had it." Another said, "We study history because it's a requirement for college. It's not my choice to study it." Yet another said that history was taught "to torture us." The general tone of student comment was that some of the topics were interesting and some were boring, depending in part on the way in which the topic was taught. One student said, "Some parts are interesting, some less, though I still want to learn." Another said, "I like learning about people, and about how and why things happened. It's boring when the teacher just spits out the facts with no 'whys' and 'hows'." Students generally favored discussion-centered activities and disliked text work. The two students who did not like history at all found it "boring," "irrelevant," and "useless." That only two students stressed their feeling of boredom may reflect the atypical nature of their teachers.

Students said that history can give us knowledge of "what happened," "why it happened," and "what the truth is." Several said that by studying history we can "take control of our own lives" and "learn from mistakes" to "avoid problems in the future." For example, "History can make life
less confusing and easier. It can help us take control. We can learn from mistakes.” The study of history was also described as a means for understanding the present, solving problems, and preparing for the future. For example, one student described the study of history as “the best way to prepare for what might happen.” Another said that by “looking at the past we can understand the present.”

**Patterns.** Students also had some ideas about patterns in history. All nine students interviewed showed a belief in progress, at least to some degree. Students said that “society is more civilized,” “more modern,” and “improved”, with “more jobs and less poverty.” One said, “People care more about each other now.” Another stated the belief that society is “constantly improving through competition.” Several stated that there are cycles of war and depression but that progress wins out. One predicted that progress makes it inevitable that “we’re going to start living in space because there’s nowhere else to go.” Another argued, “You never know for sure what will happen.”

**Generalizability.** All of the students interviewed agreed that it is possible to make generalizations from history, though their lessons drawn from the past were not very specific. Most stated that people make or determine change (eight informants). For example, one said, “People determine the future, they decide what will happen. Sometimes people decide to protest. Leaders are usually most important, but all people vote.” Another said, “Nothing is inevitable, people determine the future.” Several stated a belief that it is possible to avoid war (four informants): “I don’t think a nuclear war will come. Everyone thinks that’s senseless. Our leaders will come to some agreement.” One student argued that “people always act in self-interest,” and that “anything good that happens in history is an accident.”

**Relevance.** When queried on the relevance of history, several said it is relevant because we can compare the past with current situations (six informants) or that “the past and present affect the future.” For example, one student stated, “The present is something we want to be better. We can take from the past and learn.” Another student said, “The same stuff happens today as then only now it’s more modern. Things will get better and people will look back and say ‘they had it bad.’ But we can learn that we don’t have to have bad things. There are other ways to live.” These quotes also illustrate students’ idealistic belief in progress.

**Origins of Student Conceptions.** Students describe their ideas about history as stemming from several sources. Data on student perceptions of the origins of their conceptions suggest that school has the greatest impact. All nine students interviewed stated that previous teachers influenced their ideas about history. For example, one student said, “I had a teacher who was an artist. He put pictures on the board of the people and scenery we
were discussing and brought the past close.” Another said, “I was first aware of history in the fifth grade. We studied the Civil War and other parts of American history.”

Family has a strong impact as well, nearly as important as school. Five said they discussed history or current events at home, three said their father talked about history and politics, two mentioned their grandmother’s talk about the past and two others said they learned about the past from family history. One student said, “My dad was in the war and has lots of books on it. I was the only one in the family who wanted to talk about his adventures and he loved it.” Media also had an important influence, though not as great as school or home. Five said that their parents had history books, four mentioned “books I’ve read,” and others mentioned television news, historical programming, newspapers, and movies. Other influences cited included curiosity about the past (four informants), geographic location (two informants), and visits to historic places (two informants).

In summary, student conceptions were most affected by school and family, though the media were also a strong influence in many cases. This suggests that although student conceptions about history are shaped by several forces, history teachers play a significant role. Further research could attempt to extrapolate the impact of schooling from other agents of socialization.

Comparison of Teacher and Student Conceptions

Data collected on student knowledge of teacher conceptions show that students were able to identify their teacher’s conceptions. Two of the three students interviewed from Adamson’s class identified his conception that people can change the future. All three of Neuman’s students identified his belief in a pattern to “what will happen in the future.” Wiley’s students identified his purposes of relevance, knowledge, and understanding. All of Neuman’s and two of Adamson’s mentioned their teacher’s belief in the relation of history to the future. All of Wiley’s mentioned his belief in the relation of history to now. All of the students were able to describe their teacher’s beliefs with some degree of accuracy.

Not only can students identify their teacher’s conceptions, for the most part, they seem to share them. This suggests that teacher conceptions could be shaping student belief. A comparison of teacher and student conceptions shows that definite patterns of similarity exist for each classroom studied. Figure 2 shows that the conceptions of Adamson’s students displayed a striking similarity to Adamson’s conceptions. Twenty of their conceptions were similar and only four were different. All three of Adamson’s students spoke of their belief that people can change the future. This indicates that Adamson’s conception of enlisting students in the battle for social justice may be having some effect.

Figure 3 shows that Neuman’s students displayed a similar likeness to their teacher. Twenty-two of their ideas about history were similar to Neu-
Figure 2. Comparison of Adamson, the social reformer, and his students' conceptions (N = 3).
**Purpose**

Knowledge of self and unity with humanity
Developing context

**Teacher Conceptions**

Pattern to everything
Toward greater inclusivity
Humanity whole, may realize in space

**Student Conceptions**

**Generalizability**

Similarities, essential unity
Disease: conflict
Humanity all same

**Relevance**

Any topic represents many
Everything interrelated

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<th>Similar</th>
<th>Different</th>
<th>Similar</th>
<th>Different</th>
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<td>Know how people dealt with situation</td>
<td>To understand present</td>
<td>Cycles of progress and peace</td>
<td>Never know what will happen for sure</td>
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<tr>
<td>To know my roots</td>
<td>Appreciate nation</td>
<td>History a cycle but eventually better</td>
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<tr>
<td>To know the truth</td>
<td>Prepare for future</td>
<td>Patterns comparing then and now</td>
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<td>To hear the whole story</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Progress inevitable that we will live in space</td>
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<tr>
<td>To know why</td>
<td>People look for own benefits, today and always</td>
<td>All interrelated with environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>See things related to before</td>
<td></td>
<td>Past and present affect future</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Same stuff happens today as then</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Past similar to today better now</td>
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**Figure 3.** Comparison of Neuman, the cosmic philosopher, and his students’ conceptions ($N = 3$).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purposes</th>
<th>Teacher Conceptions</th>
<th>Patterns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand current issues</td>
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<td>Continuity of past with present/future</td>
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<td>Skills; content</td>
<td>Educated decision-making</td>
<td>Survival</td>
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<td>Improvement for the future</td>
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<th>Patterns</th>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge (3)</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Progress and decline</td>
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<td>Why it is the way it is today</td>
<td>To torture us</td>
<td>Progress (2)</td>
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<td>To know how things have modernized and changed</td>
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<td>More modern now</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Society improves from competition</td>
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<th>Generalizability</th>
<th>Teacher Conceptions</th>
<th>Relevance</th>
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<td>Lessons through comparison</td>
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<td>Background knowledge to understand current issues</td>
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<td>Relevance of most events</td>
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<td>Connection between present/past</td>
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<td>Helps in decisions</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Conceptions</th>
<th>Teacher Conceptions</th>
<th>Patterns</th>
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<tr>
<td>Each era has own impact</td>
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<td>People determine the future</td>
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<td>Future determined by political leaders</td>
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<td>Change and modernization</td>
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<td>No two times the same</td>
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<td>Anything good an accident</td>
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<td>Tells us where to go, where not to go</td>
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<td>Knowledge of past</td>
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<td>Future shaped by history</td>
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<td>Helps us understand today</td>
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</table>

**Figure 4.** Comparison of Wiley, the storyteller, and his students’ conceptions \((N = 3)\).
man's and only six were different. One of his students stressed interrelatedness and all three said that we can avoid war, an idea which is very similar to Neuman's conception of eliminating conflict. This suggests that Neuman's teaching, which stresses the unity of humankind and the idea of conflict as a disease, may be shaping student beliefs.

Figure 4 compares Wiley's conceptions with those of his students. Once again their conceptions are similar. Nineteen student conceptions were similar to Wiley's and only five were different. Significantly, all three mentioned knowledge as a purpose for studying history. This is consistent with Wiley's expository teaching style and his conception of history as knowledge for understanding current issues.

In summary, the comparisons suggest that these teachers may have some influence on their students' conceptions about history. Adamson's students share his conception of using the past to solve current problems, Neuman's share his conception of the unity of humanity, and Wiley's share his conception of history as background knowledge. One wonders how enduring these transmitted conceptions will be. Will student conceptions change with the next teacher? Further research could answer this question.

Discussion

The tentative findings of this investigation may be summarized in the following assertions for these three teachers and their classrooms:

1. Regardless of the fact that they are all middle class members of the same society, teacher conceptions of the meaning of history vary: Adamson is a social activist and reformer; Neuman, a cosmic philosopher; and Wiley, a storyteller. Given the striking variation in these teachers' conceptions, it is very likely that other typologies exist. Adler and Goodman found six perspectives toward social studies among the student teachers they studied (1985). Do other conceptions of history exist? Why do they differ? What role does disciplinary training play in shaping conceptions of history?

2. Student conceptions are poorly formed and often muddled or unclear, probably due to the lack of explicit attention to meaning. Are student conceptions related to student attitudes? How do teacher conceptions relate to student attitudes and learning outcomes?

3. The findings presented here suggest that teacher conceptions may be a major determinant of the transmitted curriculum, playing a significant role in content selection, emphasis, questions raised, and pedagogy employed. Is this equally true for all teachers of history? How much impact does the social context of the school have on the role of teacher conceptions in the curriculum?

4. Student conceptions appear to be influenced by teacher conceptions. Does this occur in all history classrooms? How enduring is it?

Further research on these issues could expand our knowledge of the pro-
cess of social education and help us clarify the confusion over purpose which is at the heart of the crisis in the teaching of history. The present study could be expanded to include a much larger sample of teachers and students, developing a full range of teacher typologies. A comparison of teacher conceptions and student learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) using correlational statistics might provide some interesting findings and give an added dimension to the study.

The findings of this exploratory study may have implications for the teaching of history. They support the notion that a teacher's conceptual base is the most important determinant guiding curriculum decisions (Brophy & Good, 1974; Shaver et al., 1979). Further, they suggest that history teaching can be a potent forum for imparting values: Adamson is inculcating little revolutionaries; Neuman, little B'hais; and Wiley, little storytellers. The relationship seems comparable to mentorship in higher education. An historian holding a particular theory or interpretation of the past often produces other historians in the same mold. It is interesting to note that all three teachers saw history as an instrument of some desired change in students. This use of history is consistent with the progressive ideal of social efficiency and social reconstructionism.

Given the importance of a teacher's conceptual base, conceptions of the meaning of history deserve more explicit attention. This investigation shows that student conceptions of the meaning of history are poorly developed, and that most students view at least some topics as boring or irrelevant. Explicit discussion of purpose, patterns, generalizability, and relevance, in short, of the lessons of history, might provoke greater interest. Further, it could challenge historians, teachers, and students to push historical knowledge to its limits, to draw lessons from the past just as many draw lessons from the American experience in Vietnam. The study of history could become a powerful tool for making meaning of today's world and a practical means of forging decisions which will shape the world of tomorrow.

Endnote

1. The names used in this paper are pseudonyms.
2. The author would like to acknowledge gratefully the assistance of Patricia Phelan, Peter Martorella, Richard Gross, and Theodore Coladarci who made comments on various drafts of the paper.

References


An Investigation of the Use of Behavioral Objectives in Jordanian Social Studies Classrooms

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Abstract

This study investigated the differential effects of behavioral objectives on the achievement and retention of high, medium, and low GPA students on knowledge, comprehension, and application, when behavioral objectives were given and their relation to test items was explained to students in the beginning of each lesson. The experiment was conducted in natural classroom environments using 472 10th grade students in 14 intact classes from 14 randomly selected high schools; it lasted for 11 weeks. The design was pretest-posttest treatment-control and data were analyzed by MANCOVA.

The results indicated positive but different effects of behavioral objectives among groups of students with different levels of previous achievement. The results also indicated that when adjustment was made for knowledge-level performance, differences between treatment and control groups vanished for comprehension and application. It was concluded that behavioral objectives may prove more effective if used in a manner appropriate to the specific ability levels of students.

Although objectives of education have been discussed and debated throughout the history of education (Kibler, Cegala, Watson, Barker, & Miles, 1981), the sixties marked the rising popularity of the concept of specific behavioral objectives and the growing awareness of their role in reaching the goals of instruction as well as in measuring the degree to which they have been achieved (Popham & Husek, 1969). The publication of the programmed book, “Preparing Instructional Objectives,” by Mager (1962), in conjunction with other developments in programmed learning
and instructional technology started a sort of mini-revolution in the fields of curriculum design and instructional methodology. However, as Duchastel and Merrill (1973) recorded, the popular acceptance of behavioral objectives did not go unchallenged. The late sixties and seventies were marked by an upsurge of controversial research and inconclusive debates on issues related to behavioral objectives and their philosophical and theoretical underpinnings. Both proponents and opponents of behavioral objectives presented logical rationales, used powerful rhetoric, offered rebuttals to adverse arguments, and tried to substantiate their claims with findings from empirical research. In order to capture the historical flavor of arguments against behavioral objectives one should refer to Arnstine (1964), Atkin (1968), Ebel (1970), Eisner (1967), and Macdonald and Walfron (1970). Niedermeyer and Sullivan (1977) and Popham's numerous writings (e.g., Popham, 1967, 1969a, 1969b, 1973), on the other hand, make arguments in favor of behavioral objectives.

The very fact that at least seven reviews of research on the use of behavioral objectives have appeared in the last decade alone bespeaks the vital importance of the issue, on the one hand, and the complex nature of its unresolved controversy, on the other (Barth, 1974; Duchastel & Merrill, 1973; Kibler, Bassett, & Byers, 1977; Macdonald-Ross, 1973; Melton, 1978; Olsen, 1973; Walbesser & Eisenberg, 1972).

Recent reviews of literature (Hogan, 1981; Kibler et al., 1981; Melton, 1978), as well as contemporary empirical research (Aregahegn, 1981; Borer, 1981; Dirks, 1980; Eldridge, 1985; Hogan, 1981; O'Brien, Mazaros, & Pulliam, 1985; Weitzner De Shwedel, 1980), generally affirm that behavioral objectives increase the effectiveness of the instructional process. Moreover, it is commonly realized that the utility of behavioral objectives is not limited only to students and teachers. Well-stated behavioral objectives are equally valuable to curriculum developers, instructional designers, textbook writers, and instructional evaluators. In fact, knowledge of clearly stated behavioral objectives may prove useful to all the participants in the process of education including parents and educational administrators (Aregahegn, 1981; Kibler et al., 1981; Melton, 1978).

Many researchers support the conclusions of the above reviews and suggest that proper utilization of behavioral objectives facilitates learning (Akers, 1979; Borer, 1981; Dirks, 1980; Eldridge, 1985; Kelly, 1979; Khoynejad, 1980; Weitzner De Shwedel, 1980). More importantly, they do not inhibit incidental learning or prove detrimental to understanding of concepts (Dirks, 1980; Hogan, 1981; Khoynejad, 1980; Rickard, 1985; Weitzner De Shwedel, 1980). One study found that even parents' knowledge of instructional behavioral objectives had a significant effect on 6th-grade students' attitude toward and achievement in science (Aregahegn, 1981). Unfortunately, most of the above-cited research was carried out in rather artificial conditions, not natural schoolroom climates.
In a recent study conducted in a natural setting, Eldridge (1985) reported statistically significant favourable effects on attitudes that resulted from providing cognitive-domain instructional objectives. Another naturalistic study (O’Brien et al., 1985) has reported significant effects of teachers’ utilization of instructional objectives on the achievement of middle and junior high school students.

Many educators have come to accept the potential value of behavioral objectives. To use or not to use behavioral objectives in the instructional process is no longer the issue. The problem is when and how to use them to maximize their effects on learning and achievement of students. The conditions surrounding the effectiveness of behavioral objectives are highly complex. There are no simple universal solutions to the problems concerned with their application and effectiveness. Research efforts should be directed toward identifying the conditions under which behavioral objectives can be used most effectively. Research on effects of behavioral objectives should be conducted in natural settings rather than under artificial conditions.

Most of the studies conducted to test the effects of behavioral objectives on students’ learning or achievement reviewed by Duchastel and Merrill (1973), and Melton (1978) undermined the role of the teacher and virtually measured self-instruction of new material under artificial conditions outside the usual classroom setting. Also, the time of instruction in many experiments was restricted to single classroom periods. According to O’Brien et al. (1985), in many cases the duration of instruction varied considerably, ranging from as little as ten minutes to three school weeks, and achievement was tested immediately after instruction. Such experimental constraints can hardly be expected to yield conclusions useful for natural classroom learning environments. As Melton (1978) and O’Brien et al. (1985) argue, generalizations of the findings of such experiments to regular classrooms are extremely unreliable. Studies are needed that are conducted in natural classroom environments, that teach school-prescribed curriculum, that are extended over reasonable periods of time, and that employ adequate methodology to control and monitor the variables of interest.

Students’ previous achievement level, intelligence, and academic aptitude are well-established predictors of performance on achievement tests. Research that recognizes the role of such variables has typically included GPA, SAT scores, ACT scores, or some other measures of learners’ previous achievement, ability, or aptitude as covariates, and statistically partialled out their influence from dependent variables (Dirks, 1980; Eldridge, 1985; Everett, 1980; Hogan, 1981; Hoskins, 1979; Leffler, Jr., 1973; O’Brien et al., 1985; Pfister, 1981). Whether behavioral objectives interact with achievement level and have different effects on achievement and retention has not received enough attention.

The main aim of this study, therefore, was to investigate the effects of three levels (knowledge, comprehension, application) of behavioral objec-
tives on the achievement and retention of low, medium, and high achievement (GPA) students. Achievement and retention were measured separately on knowledge, comprehension, and application. It was hypothesized that behavioral objectives would differently affect the knowledge, comprehension, and application levels of performance among the three groups of students.

More specifically, the study focused on the following questions: (a) Does stating behavioral objectives at the beginning of each lesson have a positive effect on unit-end achievement and one-month retention? (b) Does identifying behavioral objectives have different effects on students in each of the three groups? (c) Do behavioral objectives have a different effect on the knowledge, comprehension, and application-subtest scores of students within each GPA group?

Since the dependent variables consisted of subtests measuring achievement and retention on knowledge, comprehension, and application, a multivariate null hypothesis of no significant difference (alpha = .05) between the mean vectors of experimental (taught with behavioral objectives) and control (taught without behavioral objectives) groups was formulated independently for each of the three groups of students.

Method

The main aim of this study was to investigate the effects of presenting behavioral objectives to students, with emphasis on their importance, at the beginning of each lesson. Studies in this area are weak because of inadequate controls, faulty designs, artificial experimental settings, and unrealistic constraints. This study was conducted in the natural classroom settings. The treatment lasted for five weeks, which is the typical time spent by teachers to cover the instructional unit chosen for this experiment. The sample, the experimental procedures, and the instruments of the study are described in the following paragraphs.

Sample

The sample of this study consisted of 14 10th-grade classes in 14 secondary schools randomly selected from all the boys' schools of a rural district in the vicinity of Irbid, a northern city in Jordan. The schools are located in a rural lower middle class community. All schools are run by the government, have the same facilities, and are nearly of the same standard. There are no co-educational secondary schools in this area. The education system in Jordan is state controlled. School curricula and textbooks are determined, developed, or prescribed by the Ministry of Education. All schools come under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. All students at the end of 9th grade and 12th grade sit for examinations administered and controlled by the Ministry of Education. Most secondary schools in the country are run by the Ministry of Education. However, there are a substantial number
of schools which are run by UNRWA. Although there are a few private schools in some cities, their number is negligible. Regarding syllabi, textbooks, and examinations there is no difference between private and public schools. The major difference is that private schools charge a substantial fee from students. Consequently, most private school students come from upper socio-economic levels of the community.

In order to steer clear of the possibility of complex interaction among the treatment, sex of teacher, and sex of students, the population of this study was restricted to boys' schools. The sample of 14 classes was randomly divided into two halves. One set of seven classes was randomly assigned to be the treatment group, and the other, the control group. The experimental unit was an intact class with its regular subject teacher.

All teachers involved in this experiment were male graduates with a geography major and a diploma in education. Their teaching experience ranged from eight to twelve years and their age from 35 to 45 years. The number of students ranged from 28 to 41 with a modal size of 35. The exact number of students enrolled in the 14 classes under study was 495; the data analyses are based upon a sample of 472 students. Students who did not appear for any one of the three tests were excluded from the analyses. Inspection of the distribution of test absentees revealed no systematic pattern. At the end of the experiment, students were divided into low, medium, and high achievement groups on the basis of their GPA obtained from school records. Those falling one standard deviation below the mean on GPA were designated as low achievers, at or between plus or minus one standard deviation as medium, and one standard deviation above the mean as high achievers. The distribution of the final sample on the basis of GPA level and treatment is presented in Table 1.

Although an even split would have resulted in a neatly balanced design, statistical elegance had to give way to reality. Achievement is normally distributed in the population of students under investigation. Consequently, a large majority of students (approximately 68%) fall within the boundaries of minus to plus one standard deviation. Splitting them equally into low,
medium, and high achievement groups would grossly distort the reality and mask the distinction among the three levels of achievement. The uneven split resulted in an unbalanced design. In analysis of variance techniques the main effects become confounded with each other when the cell sizes (number of subjects in each group) are not equal. This may require specific partitioning of the sum of squares. The present study used the regression model (SSTYPE UNIQUE) which tests each effect's unique contribution after partialling out all other effects.

**Instructional Unit**

The unit of instruction, "Types of Climate in the World," was selected from the prescribed geography textbook on the basis of what teachers usually cover during that part of the school term. The textbooks contain only general objectives and no behavioral objectives. Normally, teachers do not use behavioral objectives in their instructional methods. Typically, social studies teachers spend about ten class periods of 40 minutes each spread over five weeks to cover this material. The instructional unit was divided into ten lessons, each teaching the concept, knowledge, and skills about a particular type of climate, for example, equatorial, desert, Mediterranean. Three levels of behavioral objectives, according to Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives for the Cognitive Domain (Bloom, B.S., Engelhart, M.D., Furst, E. J., Hill, W. H., and Krathwohl, D. R., 1956) following Mager's (1975) directions for preparing instructional objectives, were formulated for each lesson. On the average, there were nine instructional objectives for each lesson covering the three levels (knowledge, comprehension, and application) of objectives. In all there were 92 behavioral objectives ranging from eight to eleven objectives for each lesson which passed the tests of clarity, performance specificity, and relevance independently performed by three specialists in the field (Saadeh, 1987).

**Achievement Test**

Multiple choice (4 options) items were prepared to measure 92 objectives. All items were subjected to expert scrutiny and tested against various criteria of sound multiple choice items recommended by writers such as Ebel (1979), Gronlund (1985), and Roid and Haladyna (1982). Finally, 25 items were selected for each of the three levels of objectives. Thus, the finished version of the achievement test contained 75 multiple choice items: 25 measuring knowledge; 25, comprehension; and 25, application.

The achievement test was pilot-tested on a sample of 75 10th-grade students. The internal consistency (KR-20) reliability coefficients for each of the three 25-item subtests (knowledge, comprehension, and application) and for the 75-item complete test were, respectively, 0.82, 0.80, 0.77, and 0.87. Moreover, each member of a panel of twelve judges consisting of seven geography teachers, two test-construction specialists, and three specialists in the teaching of social studies, had independently examined and approved the test as a sound measure of achievement.
Procedure

The experiment, spread over 11 weeks, involved the following operations: pretest, one week; teaching treatment, five weeks; posttest, one week; retention interval, four weeks, followed by retention test. The achievement test described above was administered on three occasions (pretest, posttest, retention test) to all the 14 classes, seven experimental and seven control, under very similar conditions.

The seven teachers teaching the treatment classes presented the instructional objectives at the beginning of each lesson and explained their importance and relation to the test. The seven teachers teaching the control classes were told only that the researchers would like to measure students' achievement and retention of the unit material. They taught their classes in the normal way as they had always been doing. Normally, teachers talk and explain the subject matter, using blackboards or maps whenever they choose to do so, while students listen. Students may take occasional notes or ask questions to clarify a point. Teachers do not give behavioral objectives to the students, nor do they use them in their teaching.

In order to avoid the possibility of contamination, neither teachers nor students of either group were informed of students' GPA and performance on any of the three testings.

Results

Checking the Assumptions

For the purpose of data analysis the students were divided into high, medium, and low achievement groups on the basis of their previous GPA. Each group was treated as a separate sample. Pretest knowledge, comprehension, and application scores served as covariates. Knowledge, comprehension, and application scores of both posttest and retention test were the six dependent variables. Treatment with its two levels (behavioral objectives presented, not presented) was the only independent factor. Thus, three separate one-way multivariate analyses of covariance were conducted.

Usual assumptions such as normality of distribution of each variable, homogeneity of variance, homogeneity of dispersion matrices, and non-identity of intervariable correlation matrices were ascertained by means of various techniques available in SPSS-X (2nd edition). Stem-and-leaf plots, normal plots, and detrended normal plots, were examined for normality of distribution of each variable. There was no reason to suspect departure from normality in any one of them. However, the assumption of multivariate normality cannot be guaranteed. Homogeneity of variance and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices were tested respectively by Cochran's C and the Bartlett-Box F tests. The null hypothesis that the population-correlation matrix is an identity matrix (i.e., all the dependent variables are linearly independent of each other) was tested by Bartlett's test of sphericity. Partial correlations' matrices, after adjusting for the in-
fluence of the covariates, were subjected to Bartlett’s test of sphericity. The null hypothesis was strongly rejected in all the three analyses (p < .000).

In case of homogeneity of variance, univariate as well as multivariate, all tests strongly upheld the assumption in high and low achievement group analyses but in the medium achievement group the homogeneity hypothesis was rejected for two variables, namely, posttest comprehension and pretest application. Yet the variance-equality hypotheses of these variables were upheld in the total sample.

Since each analysis involved three covariates and an unequal number of cases in experimental and control groups, the regression or unique sum of squares method was applied.

**Basic Descriptive Statistics**

The means and standard deviations of the experimental and control groups on all the covariates and criteria in the high, medium, and low achieving subsamples are presented in Table 2. Both observed and covariate-adjusted values are presented for the criterion variables (adjusted values in the parentheses).

Three things are conspicuous in Table 2. One is the monotonically decreasing means as we examine at each row from left to right. There is no mystery about it; the table presents the results of high, medium, and low subsamples arranged in this order. This pattern confirms our expectations.

The second is a wave-like pattern of rise and fall in scores as we examine each column of means from pretest to posttest to retention test. This shows the effect of instruction and the degree of forgetting one month after the termination of instruction.

The third thing which is of critical importance for this experiment is the difference between the experimental and the control group means of the posttest and the retention test scores. In all three subsamples, the experimental group means are higher than the control group means on all six variables (three posttest and three retention test scores). Whether the differences are statistically significant or not, we shall soon see. The observed differences definitely speak in favour of the effectiveness of the use of behavioral objectives in instruction, at least in 10th grade geography as taught in Irbid schools. However, the possible influence of the initial pretest stage differences on the criterion performance was statistically controlled by using the three pretest scores (knowledge, comprehension, application) as covariates in the three separate MANCOVAs. The results of MANCOVAs follow.

**Multivariate Covariance Analyses**

The results of three multivariate covariance analyses testing the effects of behavioral objectives on the three types of achievement and retention scores in the three GPA groups are presented in Table 3.

The multivariate null hypothesis was strongly rejected (p < 0.000) in all
Table 2
Means and Standard Deviations of High, Medium, and Low Achievement Experimental and Control Groups on Knowledge, Comprehension, and Application Parts of the Pre-, Post, and Retention Administration of the Achievement Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Part</th>
<th>High Experimental N = 54</th>
<th>High Control N = 37</th>
<th>Middle Experimental N = 163</th>
<th>Middle Control N = 150</th>
<th>Low Experimental N = 36</th>
<th>Low Control N = 32</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRETEST</td>
<td>Kno</td>
<td>7.26 2.52</td>
<td>7.70 2.89</td>
<td>6.00 2.44</td>
<td>6.42 2.67</td>
<td>5.47 2.80</td>
<td>5.81 2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Com</td>
<td>7.04 2.42</td>
<td>7.70 2.13</td>
<td>6.01 2.76</td>
<td>4.87 3.21</td>
<td>5.56 3.20</td>
<td>5.78 2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>App</td>
<td>6.26 2.47</td>
<td>7.62 2.06</td>
<td>5.15 1.96</td>
<td>5.78 3.00</td>
<td>5.00 3.54</td>
<td>5.00 2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POST TEST</td>
<td>Kno</td>
<td>16.63 3.06</td>
<td>11.54 3.45</td>
<td>12.66 2.69</td>
<td>9.44 2.92</td>
<td>8.44 3.15</td>
<td>7.72 2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Com</td>
<td>17.82 2.66</td>
<td>16.65 2.28</td>
<td>14.96 3.18</td>
<td>13.22 3.98</td>
<td>12.83 3.44</td>
<td>11.59 3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETENTION TEST</td>
<td>Kno</td>
<td>14.11 2.89</td>
<td>9.30 3.04</td>
<td>9.27 2.71</td>
<td>7.33 2.73</td>
<td>7.53 2.80</td>
<td>6.69 2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Com</td>
<td>16.72 3.25</td>
<td>14.84 3.83</td>
<td>12.34 4.15</td>
<td>10.49 3.85</td>
<td>10.64 3.89</td>
<td>8.81 3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>App</td>
<td>13.15 4.03</td>
<td>11.35 4.37</td>
<td>11.00 4.04</td>
<td>8.39 4.46</td>
<td>7.97 3.58</td>
<td>7.41 3.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3
Covariate-Adjusted Multivariate Test of Significance for the Treatment (Behavioral Objectives) Effect in the Three Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPA Group</th>
<th>Hotellings Value</th>
<th>Approximate F</th>
<th>Hypothesis DF</th>
<th>Error DF</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>1.003</td>
<td>4.438</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>239.00</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S = 3, M = 1, N = 39½)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>0.430</td>
<td>7.214</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>905.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S = 3, M = 1, N = 150½)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>1.038</td>
<td>3.268</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>170.00</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S = 3, M = 1, N = 28)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the three analyses. In all three GPA subsamples the treatment groups scored better than the control groups at least on some of the variables. Statistically significant differences were revealed by the univariate test of significance conducted individually on each variable in each of the three MANCOVAs. The univariate tests of significance for the three groups are presented in Table 4.

**High GPA group.** In the high GPA group, the differences between the means of treatment and control groups are statistically significant on all the six variables \((p < .005)\), when the differences are tested independently on each test score. But if we assume the hierarchical sequence among the six tests (post knowledge, post comprehension, post application, retention knowledge, retention comprehension, and retention application) and sequentially partial out their contributions to the variance of the next test, then Stepdown F-test gives the significance of the difference between experimental and control group means of each test score having adjusted for all the preceding tests.

The right-hand portion of Table 4, entitled Stepdown F-tests, shows the following: (a) The difference on posttest knowledge scores, adjusted for the three pretests, is highly significant \((p < .000)\); (b) the difference on posttest comprehension scores, adjusted for the three pretests and the posttest knowledge scores, as well as the difference on posttest application scores, adjusted for the three pretests, and knowledge and comprehension posttest, is not significant at the alpha = .05 level of significance; (c) notwithstanding the successive nonsignificance of the two preceding differences, the difference on the retention knowledge scores, having adjusted for the three pretest and the three posttest scores is statistically significant \((p < .002)\); (d) the differences on the retention-comprehension and retention-application tests, adjusted for all the preceding tests, are nowhere near the specified level of significance.

**Medium GPA group.** The significance pattern in the medium GPA group resembles that of the high GPA group. The differences between the treatment and control group means on all six criterion scores, each adjusted for the three pretest scores, are highly significant \((p < .001)\). But when the contribution of the preceding tests has been sequentially and cumulatively neutralized, only posttest knowledge and retention knowledge show a significant difference \((p < .000)\) between the treatment and control groups.

**Low GPA group.** The low GPA portion of the Table 4 contrasts with the results produced by the high and medium GPA groups. The univariate F-tests are significant only on posttest application and retention test comprehension with the levels of significance \((p < .005)\) and \((p < .025)\), respectively, whereas, the Stepdown F-test is significant only on posttest application scores, a far cry from the results of the other two groups.
### Table 4
Covariate-Adjusted Univariate Tests of Significance in the Three GPA Level Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPA Group</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>Post Kno</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>74.175</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>74.175</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post Com</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>9.239</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>3.273</td>
<td>.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post App</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>16.810</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>1.701</td>
<td>.196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ret. Kno</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>69.442</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>10.269</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ret. Com.</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>15.224</td>
<td>.000</td>
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Discussion

The findings of this research are based on an eleven-week field experiment conducted in the natural classroom settings of the government school system. Pretest scores demonstrated three (high, medium, and low) levels of achievement. Previous research (e.g., Burkman et al., 1981; Everston et al., 1980; O’Brien et al., 1985) has reported the importance of students’ entering levels of achievement in predicting their achievement during the course of study.

These studies investigated the relationship between entering achievement and study achievement using whole classes covering the full range of ability. Since the size of correlation is sensitive to the range of scores, it is quite likely for this variable to be an important predictor in a mixed ability group but not significant in some of the selected ability groups. In this respect, the findings of the present study are not only consistent with those of the previously reported studies but also more powerful in the sense that they confirm the existence of this relationship among various highly homogeneous groups.

The effect of behavioral objectives are interesting. In all three subsamples the treatment group demonstrated achievement superior to that of the control group. Superiority is defined by the rejection of the multivariate null hypothesis at a very high statistical level of significance (p < .000) in each one of the three analyses.

The treatment groups outscored the control groups on all six criterion variables in the high GPA and medium GPA groups. In the low GPA group, the experimental group still outperformed the control group, but the difference was statistically significant on only two of the six criterion scores (posttest application and retention test comprehension). Thus, collectively as well as individually, the findings of this study in the three GPA groups of students demonstrate the efficacy of the appropriate use of behavioral objectives in classroom instruction.

A comprehensive look at the effectiveness of the behavioral objectives on achievement and retention among the high, medium, and low GPA students suggests the differential nature of their impact among the three groups of students. The low GPA students benefited least by the use of behavioral objectives. We are inclined to think that modes of application of behavioral objectives, like other techniques, interact with different ability groups in different ways. What is needed is research that investigates the use of behavioral objectives with various ability groups. Low GPA students, more than other students, may need instruction as well as clarification of objectives. Teachers in Jordan typically use variations of the lecture method geared to address average students. Simply stating the objectives and mentioning their bearing on the test results was not enough. Studies designed to investigate the optimal strategies to instruct and clarify the goals to low
GPA students may uncover fruitful and practical approaches to the use of behavioral objectives with these students.

In the high and medium GPA groups, the treatment was effective only on the achievement and retention of knowledge. In both groups, none of the other criterion scores showed significant difference after the contribution of the preceding variables to the target score variance had been partialled out. It seems that knowledge achievement is the basis of achievement at higher levels of the cognitive domain. In this study, it was the knowledge-attributed variance that led to significant differences on comprehension and application scores. Once the knowledge variance was accounted for, no significant difference on comprehension was left. Likewise, accounting for both knowledge and comprehension left no difference on the application scores. This may imply the fundamental importance of knowledge level objectives as a basis for the achievement of higher level objectives.

In the low GPA group the outcome was very different. For these students there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control groups' performance on either posttest knowledge test or retention knowledge test. In fact, when the contributions of preceding test scores were successively accounted for, a significant difference was detected between the experimental and the control group on only one test, the posttest application score (p < .021).

The results of this study provide substantial evidence that stated behavioral objectives can be useful in improving the achievement of many students when students understand the objectives and realize their importance. Other students seem less responsive. Alternate approaches to teaching and subject matter may be required before these students can benefit from the presentation of behavioral objectives.

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Reviewed by Stephen J. Thornton, University of Delaware.

It is not often that books on education are best sellers. A clue to the appeal of E. D. Hirsch, Jr.'s, *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (1987) is that, like many other best sellers, Hirsch’s book has a broad sweep of argument. His argument, in broad outline, is persuasive, even difficult to dispute. Yet broad arguments can be all the more persuasive precisely because they provide apparently straightforward answers to long-standing and complex issues.

In this essay, I first shall deal with the broad sweep of Hirsch’s argument—and although we may wish to question his paucity of attention to growing global interdependence—I shall suggest that his argument has some merit. Second, I shall present several examples of Hirsch’s facile use of evidence. Taken together these examples illustrate that Hirsch’s conclusions do not follow from the evidence he presents. Moreover, even if Hirsch’s conclusions were well-founded, I shall suggest that his move from description of learning theories to curriculum prescription is ill-conceived.

What is “cultural literacy”? What is this phenomenon which Professor Hirsch forcefully contends “every American needs to know”? It is, Hirsch says, “the basic information needed to thrive in the modern world” (Hirsch, 1987, p. xiii). This information is the shared information of a national culture. In the United States, to be culturally literate, one must have appropriate associations for such ideas as the Lincoln myth, Peter Pan, NATO, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 1776, Greeks bearing gifts, and the Golden Gate Bridge. (Hirsch provides a 63 page appendix of such items.) Citing Jefferson, Hirsch argues that an American lacking such knowledge cannot effectively participate in the national culture.

Thus far, Hirsch seems to be on firm ground. Anthropologists tell us that all cultures transmit their cultural legacy to the younger generation, and hence cultures reproduce themselves. Moreover, it is clear that no culture could survive if it lacked shared cultural associations: It is these associations that make communication possible.

From this point, Hirsch’s case becomes more debatable. He proceeds to review evidence from psychology and related fields that points to the central role of background knowledge in thinking. Hirsch contends that educators in the “Rousseau-Dewey tradition” have overemphasized process at the expense of information (Hirsch, 1987, p. 59). Leaving aside for the moment
the issue of the culpability of these unnamed disciples of the Rousseau-Dewey tradition, Hirsch is right that thinking requires a content. Hirsch's next step, however, does not follow from the psychological evidence he cites:

General programs contrived to teach general skills are ineffective. AI research shows that experts perform better than novices not because they have more powerful and better oiled intellectual machinery but because they have more relevant and quickly available information. What distinguishes good readers from poor ones is simply the possession of a lot of diverse, task-specific information [emphasis added]. (Hirsch, 1987, p. 61)

The very authorities who Hirsch cites do not reach the conclusion that expertise consists simply of the possession of a lot of information:

To draw an analogy between the expert's knowledge and the contents of an encyclopedia or other reference book, we must be concerned not only with the book's contents but also with the access routes to those contents, that is, its index (Larkin, McDermott, Simon, & Simon, 1980, p. 1336).

Although information is an important component of learning, so is process. Hirsch goes on to claim that schools in the United States do not do as good a job of teaching cultural literacy as schools in other nations (Hirsch, 1987, p. 27) or as was once the case here in the United States (Hirsch, 1987, p. 108). He contends that, especially in the early grades, too much attention is placed on skills and not enough on cultural content. To blame for this unhappy state of affairs, Hirsch again asserts, are the "faulty" educational theories of Rousseau and Dewey (e.g., Hirsch, 1987, pp. xiii-xvii), although, toward the end of the book (Hirsch, 1987, p. 122), he decides that Dewey was not so much to blame after all.

These criticisms of the existing curriculum resemble many similar criticisms in the last few years (e.g., Bennett, 1986; Larkins, Hawkins, & Gilmore, 1987; Ravitch, 1986). And like those other criticisms, Hirsch's charges contain enough truth that they cannot be dismissed out of hand. In primary grades social studies, for example, there does appear to be an overemphasis on what Richard E. Gross (1973) once dubbed the "holiday curriculum" and on sundry other disconnected, perhaps trivial, topics.

Hirsch's recommendations for curriculum, however, do not necessarily follow from his diagnosis of the problem (content-deficient curriculum). While it may be true that the primary grades curriculum is deficient in cultural information, it remains that by fourth grade the overwhelming emphasis of school curricula is on the transmission of information (Goodlad, 1984, p. 335). Indeed, it is the deadweight of covering information that appears to bore and alienate so many youngsters. Is it, therefore, obvious that more information is the panacea for the early grades?
Hirsch insists that increasing the amount of information taught in schools will be no problem as long as the teaching is imaginative and avoids rote learning (Hirsch, 1987, p. 125). Although no one would want to argue for unimaginative teaching, Hirsch overestimates the circumstances in which imaginative teaching can occur. Merely listing what ought to be taught, and insisting it be taught imaginatively, does not take us very far. Imaginative teaching implies that the learners will be genuinely engaged in what is taught. Genuine engagement, in turn, necessitates some consideration of how and why students learn subject matter—and this Hirsch all but ignores.

Consider, for instance, Hirsch's example of the Major-General in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*. The Major-General is culturally literate in terms of Victorian England. Yet, as Hirsch notes, possession of "this extensive information" made the Major-General "no better at military strategy" (Hirsch, 1987, p. 129). Hirsch concludes that the educational problem here boils down to the Major-General knowing "isolated facts" but not how they "fit together" (Hirsch, 1987, p. 129). Hirsch is right, but only superficially so: It is not only that the Major-General lacks a coherent view of military strategy but also that the knowledge he does possess is irrelevant to his particular life as a general. Nor does his cultural literacy hold much intrinsic interest for him. Motivation to learn—particularly learning that sticks with one—entails the learner seeing some relevance to it. Imaginative teaching of cultural literacy cannot take place in a vacuum. Rather, imaginative teaching requires attention to both what is learned and what engages the learner. Long ago, Alfred North Whitehead recognized this point and its significance for teaching and curriculum:

> In training a child to activity of thought [i.e., culture], above all things we must beware of what I will call "inert" ideas—that is to say, ideas that are merely received into the mind without being utilized, or tested, or thrown into fresh combinations. (Whitehead, 1929/1957, p. 1)

Contrary to the teacher-effectiveness literature, imaginative teaching is not just a matter of technique but implies a content in which students have some personal stake. It is this stake that Hirsch relegates to the sidelines. Just as Hirsch says he recognizes the need for imaginative teaching, he maintains that he recognizes his list of what every American needs to know—or any comparable list—must be arbitrary (Hirsch, 1987, p. 28). Yet, as with imaginative teaching, the issue of arbitrariness extends further than Hirsch suggests. He reports that "[m]ore than one hundred consultants . . . [agreed] on over 90 percent of the items listed" (Hirsch, 1987, p. 146). Hirsch's own argument, however, undermines the authority of his apparent consensus. For example, he uses an allusion from *Julius Caesar* and remarks that his "younger readers . . . may not recognize" it and, thus, would be in a poor position to grasp its significance (Hirsch, 1987, p. 9). Some pages later, however, he suggests that curriculum should be

If a school decided that all its students should read two Shakespeare plays in depth, even the most convinced traditionalists would find it hard to agree on which two plays they should be. (Hirsch, 1987, p. 128)

Which is it? How would all students know the allusion from *Julius Caesar* if they had studied two other plays by Shakespeare?

Hirsch faces the same problem as those who would identify the 100 greatest books. Virtually everyone would agree that the list ought to include, say, *The Bible, The Origin of the Species,* and something by Marx. But the further down the list one proceeds, the harder it becomes to secure interjudge agreement. Hirsch’s own list suggests the same problem: Why McGovern but not Mondale? Why the *Grapes of Wrath* but not *Moby Dick?* Such questions, in my view, reveal that Hirsch’s list is more arbitrary than he concedes.

Finally, I shall identify two assumptions that Hirsch makes. My intention is not to deal with these assumptions in any detail but rather to point to them and suggest that each is open to debate. First, Hirsch contends that “[n]o modern society can hope to become a just society without a high level of universal literacy” (Hirsch, 1987, p. 12). Is this true? What evidence is there that education leads to a fairer or more moral social order? Are more literate people morally better people? Are literate people more concerned with justice? Although Hirsch (after Jefferson) may be correct that a democratic society rests on an informed citizenry, it remains to be proven that higher literacy leads to moral growth.

Second, Hirsch seems to have unlimited faith in the power of schools to reconstruct the social order. Among the consequences of curriculum reform, according to Hirsch, are:

- breaking the cycle of illiteracy for deprived children; raising the living standard of families who have been illiterate; making our country more competitive in international markets; achieving greater social justice;
- enabling all citizens to participate in the political process; bringing us closer to the Ciceronian ideal of universal public discourse—in short, achieving fundamental goals of the founders at the birth of the republic. (Hirsch, 1987, p. 145)

Once again, when confronted with such claims it is prudent to ask for evidence. In particular, can schools remake the social order? Can schools, as dependent institutions, turn around the national culture? The available evidence suggests that Hirsch’s focused curricular priorities—on academic subject matter—contrast with the diverse goals the American public holds for its schools. For example, as Robert Hampel observes, “[o]rderly
schools with tight discipline matter more to many people than orderly thinking" (1986, p. 154). There seems little reason to believe, and considerable reason to doubt, that schools alone can reconstruct the existing social order.

In closing, it is fitting to return to the appeal of Hirsch's book. He offers an alluring view of his proposal: "It should energize people to learn that only a few hundred pages of information stand between the literate and the illiterate, between dependence and autonomy" (Hirsch, 1987, p. 143). This is an ambitious educational goal but, as I have argued, a goal for which Hirsch has a seriously flawed case. Nonetheless, I do not believe that social studies educators should leave this book unread. Views such as Hirsch's have enjoyed a renaissance in recent years and we cannot afford to simply ignore them and hope they will go away. Rather, we need to redouble our efforts to assure that superficially-appealing arguments do not supplant reason in educational debate.

References


For one who trained as a teacher in the 1950s, studying the history of American education fostered a feeling of idealism and presented a success story of an institution which had contributed to the growth of a great nation. American education, as the story goes, had played a vital role in helping a changing and growing population adjust to the American way of life, and the schools helped provide a ladder for social mobility which was an integral part of the "American dream."

This picture was a comforting one and provided support and justification for the task faced by a new teacher. Even as the images of this glowing past were threatened by events of the 1960s, it was still possible to hold tightly to these beliefs. A move to Scotland in the early 1970s only served to reinforce these views. The history of Scottish education—or at least the "accepted doctrine" of the times—followed much the same pattern as traditional history of education in the U.S.A.\(^1\)

The Scots pointed to a long history of an organized, state-supported system of education; the democratic nature of Scottish education; the legend of the "lad o' pairts," that is, the poor young boy who could rise to the top by dint of hard work and take advantage of opportunities the system offered. The similar myths prevalent in both countries provided a feeling of security, pride on one's job, and a sense of belonging to a valued profession.

Yet there were rumblings of discontent with this picture. Perhaps all was not peaceful in the garden? In the late 1960s, revisionists in the U.S.A. began to criticize accepted views. Arguments often took on a Marxist slant, which enabled opponents to cry foul about many of the issues raised by the new educational historians and sociologists. Yet their work, based upon careful research into areas previously ignored, began to build a substantial framework which provided a new or at least a different and more critical view of the history of American education.\(^2\)

Following closely on the heels of the revisionists came another development which would further weaken the idealistic, optimistic and, perhaps, simplistic interpretation of the educational past. This "new wave" began to develop what was to be termed curriculum history.

Teaching in the United Kingdom, I was attracted to the work of Ivor Goodson, who began to publish his findings on the evolution of the curriculum in the schools. Goodson argued that subjects taught in schools were the result of conflict between various groups and interests who sought to use the school to impose their views and values.\(^3\) He wrote that the "written
curriculum provides a clear guide to the selective history of schooling—a changing testimony of the selected rationales and legitimate rhetorics of schooling." (In Popkewitz, 1987, p.vii)

I then discovered, among others, the work of Michael Apple, Herbert Kliebard, and Barry Franklin in the U.S.A. Their views differed but all were interested in the historical development of the school curriculum. At the same time, several books criticizing the traditional view of the history of Scottish education were published and expressed ideas similar to those of Goodson, Apple, and Franklin. I began to examine a subject new to Scottish secondary schools, Modern Studies, to find some explanation for the rapid and unusual growth of this subject to a position of prominence in the secondary school curriculum. I searched for changes in social conditions, political leadership, and economic institutions which might have influenced the growth of this subject.

In short, I found I no longer could accept the idealistic and perhaps oversimplistic views which I had held throughout much of my career. Curriculum history provides, at least to this observer, a potentially valuable method of interpreting the present state of affairs in our schools. It is, therefore, against a backdrop of ideas, events and personal reminiscences that I began reading this new collection of essays edited by Thomas S. Popkewitz (1987).

The purpose of the book is stated clearly in the preface. The editor writes:

[the] volume focuses upon the emergence of the subject-matter of the American school. The school subject-matter provides entrance to the interplay between social, cultural, economic and professional interests that give form to our contemporary school practices. (Popkewitz, 1987, p. ix)

Popkewitz challenges the myth of the neutrality of schooling. He maintains American schools were formed only after much debate as to its function and the actual direction it took was a result of intense negotiations which are shown most clearly in the development of subject-matter in the schools. The essays “focus less on the formal committees and overt events . . .” and are “concerned with the social dynamics that shape the public rhetoric.” Popkewitz insists that the manner in which school content is fashioned can best be explained by examining the power structure of society. He concludes with a Gramsci-type statement when he argues that “the essays also indicate that those who are favored in society continually use the meaning of schooling to their advantage” (Popkewitz, 1987, p. 4).

The essays are grouped into three categories. The first focuses upon curriculum subjects such as art, biology, mathematics, language arts, and social studies. The second section considers the problem of those children defined as failures or backward. Included here is a discussion of the origins of special education and how a definition of learning disability was created.
The final section looks at what the editor calls the “silences of the school curriculum.” Here the essays are concerned with those values challenging the hegemony dominant in the curriculum of the period.

The introductory essay by Popkewitz sets out the basic theme of the book and provides a structure which tie the various essays together—a most vital factor if a collection is to be more than a scattering of ideas and information. It is, I believe, a model for essays of this type. In it, he provides a clear overview of the basic tenets of curriculum history.

He outlines four dynamics which he feels are central to present day curriculum (Popkewitz, 1987, p. 4). These are:

1. The relation of the social and political movement of Progressivism to the creation of mass schooling.
2. Professionalization as a dynamic in creating a social order for schooling, with science serving as a method of administration.
3. The emergence of the university as a dynamic element in the management of society.
4. The invention of psychology for designing curriculum and instruction.

By concentrating upon these dynamics, it is possible to recognize that changes in school subject matter were the result of intense debate and conflict. This analysis can enable us to better understand how our present practices have been shaped by past struggles and will allow us to make clearer judgements about the future direction of the school curriculum.

The historical detail and emphasis which is a major feature of all the essays in this book make it valuable to anyone interested in social studies. However, there are three essays which may be of special interest to readers of this journal.

The essay, entitled “Need as ideology: Social workers, social settlements and the social studies”, by Michael Lybarger offers an unusual interpretation of the historical development of the social studies curriculum. In a brief essay, Lybarger traces the concept of “needs” back to the 1916 report *Social Studies in Secondary Education*. He found that at least four basic elements of modern social studies curriculum were part of the list of recommendations made by the Committee on Social Studies (p. 176). These included:

1. Courses in community civics and vocational civics in seventh and eighth grade.
3. The use of the term “social studies” to refer to the school subjects of civics, economics, history, political science and sociology.
4. The idea that the “immediate needs” of students be the major factor in shaping the social studies curriculum.

However, Lybarger attempts to locate what he terms the “more remote origins of the Committee’s recommendation” as reflecting the ideology of two turn-of-the-century philanthropic movements: charity organizations...
and social settlements. He concludes that the committee members had “a conception of need as the reflection of individual personal inadequacy and not institutional shortcomings” (Popkewitz, 1987, p. 187). The committee “viewed the educational needs of immigrants in terms of the requirements of the dominant society,” and the curriculum was created so that it would assimilate the “underclasses” into the mainstream ideology (Popkewitz, 1987, p. 188). Lybarger points to the “immediate needs” criterion in the social studies as the source of a serious problem. Professionals have often failed to distinguish between what is and what is not a part of social studies and have taken on board—in response to the notion of needs—activities and issues best left to other areas. This weakness has often left the social studies open to criticism of following a vague and trivial curriculum.

The essays by Kenneth Teitelbaum entitled “Outside the selective tradition: Socialist curriculum for children in the United States, 1900-1920” is a fascinating study of the manner in which American socialists “attempted to influence the nature of public school practice . . . and organized alternative educational activities for working-class adults and children” (Popkewitz, 1987, p. 238). Teitelbaum argued that these efforts are important because first, they introduce us to educational practice with which we are unfamiliar; second, they provide us with an alternative social and educational perspective and finally, they represent a view of school knowledge which is in opposition to the dominant ideology of the schools.

The final essay in the collection, “Harold Rugg and the reconstruction of the social studies curriculum: The treatment of the ‘Great War’ in his textbook series” by Herbert M. Kliebard and Greg Wegner examines the social studies textbooks by Harold Rugg which enjoyed great popularity in the late 1920s and 1930s. The authors discuss Rugg’s background, the gradual development of his views on social studies and the publication of his textbook series. They focus upon the treatment of World War I in the series to illustrate “Rugg’s attempt to rescue the teaching of the social studies from the dry memorization of facts . . . and to infuse socially progressive ideas into the curriculum” (Popkewitz, 1987, p. 273). The entry of the U.S. into World War II made Rugg’s criticisms unpopular and resulted in a rapid decline in sales. The authors argue that new social conditions may lead to a reappraisal of the social studies curriculum and force it to focus upon the study of critical social problems—as Rugg so strongly desired.

The other essays in the book are well worth reading and support the position taken by Popkewitz in his introductory essay. I found Kerry Freedman’s “Art education as social production: Culture, society and politics in the formation of curriculum” a prime exemplar of the ability of curriculum history to explain the development of a school subject. The section on Special Education, containing two fine essays by Barry Franklin and Christine Sleeter, can not be given sufficient emphasis in this review and should be discussed fully in another place.

Finally, this reviewer must conclude that this is an important book. It is a
fine teaching tool as well as valuable to those interested in following up issues raised. It is, in many ways, a "state-of-the-art" book. The essays are drawn from current research. Some are more thorough and complete than others; some seem to be raising questions and indicating directions additional research should take. The essay by Popkewitz provides a clear overview of current thought in curriculum history, and the collection of essays might serve as an introduction to the field for the student or specialist.

Endnotes

1. For the standard interpretation of the historical development of Scottish education, see Scotland (1969) and Hunter (1971). The Scottish tradition of education and the concept of the democratic myth is re-examined in a recent book by Anderson (1983).

2. For typical statements by the leading revisionists, see Bowles and Gintis (1976), Apple (1979), and Katz (1971).

3. Goodson has developed his theories in two books (Goodson & Ball, 1983, 1984) which, when taken together, offer a detailed statement of this position.

4. Two recent books by members of the education department of Glasgow University (Humes & Paterson, 1983; Humes, 1986) have been highly critical of the "accepted" version of the historical development of Scottish education. They present an interpretation which is line with much of that set forth by curriculum historians in the United States.

References


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3501 Newark St., NW, Washington, DC 20016

EDITOR
Millard Clements, New York University
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MANAGING EDITOR
Same

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11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete

Frances Halev

PB Form 3520, Dec. 1985