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Editorial

*Theory and Research in Social Education* has now been in existence for 18 years. It had its inception in 1973 under the founding editorship of Cleo Cherryholmes and Jack Nelson. Since then, over 300 articles, letters to the Editor, and book reviews have been published. Prior to assuming the Editorship, I reviewed all of the articles that had appeared in the journal since its inception to gain some idea of the kinds of manuscripts that were being published in TRSE. A variety of methodologies, including experiments, causal-comparative studies, surveys, interviews, historiographies, content analyses, and ethnographies, as well as a variety of theoretical arguments, have appeared over the years. By far, the great majority of the research that has been reported in our journal falls under the rubric of quantitative research; qualitative, phenomenological, and other non-quantitative studies are definitely in the minority.

In future issues of *Theory and Research in Social Education*, under my editorship, I hope this pattern will change so that a greater variety of scholarly perspectives can be included in the journal. We will welcome not only articles involving quantitative methods, but also those that use historical, interpretive, narrative, comparative, legal and critical approaches, as well as inquiries dealing with the phenomenon of social studies research itself. The major emphasis, whether in quantitative or qualitative articles, however, is expected to be on the issue, question or topic rather than on the underlying methodology.

Both the Editor and the Associate Editor shall read each manuscript when it is submitted and judge it against two primary criteria:

- significance to the field
- appropriateness for our journal

In particular, we urge authors to prepare articles that stress the written exposition of ideas, and the critical analysis of, or arguments for or against, a given position.

When Professors Cherryholmes and Nelson founded the journal back in 1973, they prepared a statement of the purposes for which *Theory and Research in Social Education* was designed. We repeat that statement here, as it expresses the philosophy of the current editors as well:

*Theory and Research in Social Education* is designed to stimulate and communicate systematic research and thinking in social
education. The purpose is to foster the creation and exchange of ideas and research findings that will expand knowledge about purposes, conditions, and effects of schooling and education about society and social relations.

Conceptualizations and research from all of the social sciences, philosophy, history and the arts are needed in clarifying thinking and practice in social education. Manuscripts are welcomed on topics such those that follow:

- Purposes of social education;
- Models, theories, and related frameworks concerning the development, diffusion, and adoption of curricular materials;
- Instructional strategies;
- The relation of the social sciences, philosophy, history and/or the arts to social education;
- Alternative social organizations and utilizations of the school for social education;
- Comparative studies of alternative models of social education;
- Models of and research on alternative schemas for student participation and social action;
- Relationship of different pre- and in-service patterns of teacher training to social education;
- Models of the utilization of objectives in social education and related research findings;
- Implications of learning theory, child development research, socialization and political socialization research for the purposes and practice of social education;
- The relationship of different independent, explanatory variables to educational achievements in the area of learning about society and social relations;
- The social climate and cohesion of schools and other school characteristics as independent, explanatory variables predicting general achievement.

In most cases, submissions will be blind reviewed by a panel of at least three reviewers. When we send a manuscript out for review, we shall ask reviewers to judge the author's work in terms of six criteria:

- significance (i.e., the contribution of the manuscript to knowledge about the human condition)
- scholarship (i.e., the accuracy and thoroughness reflected)
- methodological sophistication (the adequacy of the author's research design).
- originality (i.e., the uniqueness of the manuscript)
Editorial

• lucidity (i.e., the clarity of the author’s writing)
• timeliness (i.e., whether or not the manuscript is up-to-date)

Since the Editors want to ensure that the authors of manuscripts communicate in language that is accessible to a wide readership, rather than only to specialists in a particular research tradition, or to those holding a particular theoretical or conceptual viewpoint, we may, on occasion, reject a manuscript without sending it on to reviewers if we do not think the manuscript meets the two criteria of significance and appropriateness mentioned above—if, in our judgment, the manuscript is too limited in its applicability, too narrow in its focus, or has data that do not support the conclusions drawn by the author. We promise, however, to have all manuscripts acknowledged and returned to authors as promptly as we can, and to be fair and responsible in our consideration of manuscripts for publication.

A journal is only as good as the quality of articles the Editors have opportunity to publish, however. We want to encourage the readers of Theory and Research in Social Education, therefore, to submit manuscripts of quality and significance that will enhance the nature of our field, and that will contribute to the knowledge base of our profession. As Editor, I shall do my best to produce a journal of quality, one in which articles of both style and substance are published.

Jack R. Fraenkel
September, 1991
DEMOCRATIC CLIMATES IN ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS: A REVIEW OF THEORY AND RESEARCH

Ann V. Angell
University of Houston

Abstract
This study reviews theory and research on the relationship between classroom climate and citizenship outcomes in elementary settings. A comparison of democratic learning environments described by Dewey (1916/1966); Dreikurs, Grunwald, and Pepper (1971); and Kohlberg (1975) suggests that classroom climate mediates democratic citizenship outcomes through: (a) peer interaction in cooperative activities, (b) free expression, (c) respect for diverse viewpoints, and (d) student participation in democratic deliberations and decision making. Empirical findings support a relationship between these conditions and the development of positive sociopolitical attitudes, higher levels of moral reasoning, prosocial behavior, and sense of community in elementary classrooms. Drawing on Gutmann's theory (1987), it is argued that because the classroom is a vital organ of a democratic system, democratic climates in elementary classrooms may be a sine qua non for promoting the goals of democratic citizenship education.

Schooling and the Development of Democratic Citizens

The integrity of democratic society depends, in part, on a continuing dialogue between those who emphasize preserving the social order and those who advocate its transformation. Educators who aim to prepare students for full participation in this dialogue assume apparently conflicting responsibilities to foster both commitment to democratic principles and an attitude of informed skepticism about how these principles are to be interpreted and applied. The resulting tension between efforts to socialize and to countersocialize students (Engle &
Ann V. Angell

Ochoa, 1988) has fueled debate in the United States about the desirable outcomes of citizenship education and about how schooling can most effectively function to promote them.

Over the last two decades, increasing attention has been given to the role of classroom climate in the development of students' civic dispositions. In a comprehensive review of research on the political socialization of students in United States schools, Ehman (1980a) concluded that classroom climate is one of three main schooling factors that influence students' political attitudes. Parker and Kaltsounis (1986), reviewing classroom climate research in a monograph on research as a guide to teaching elementary social studies, found that classroom climate generally refers to a "distinctive sociopolitical atmosphere" that consists in decision-making procedures, patterns of student participation, treatment of controversial issues, responses to student opinions, and other interaction patterns in the classroom (p. 24).

Numerous studies have demonstrated that student perceptions of a more open or democratic classroom climate are related to the development of more democratic attitudes (Allman-Snyder, May, & Garcia, 1975; Ehman, 1977; Ehman, 1980b; Glenn, 1972; Grossman, 1975; Hahn, Tocci, & Angell, 1988; Torney, Oppenheim, & Farnen, 1975). Democratic classroom climate as a distinct concept, however, remains largely unexamined. Moreover, research on the relationship between classroom climate and democratic citizenship outcomes in the elementary school is scarce, despite the fact that political socialization research has consistently shown late childhood to be a formative period in the development of political attitudes (Easton & Dennis, 1968; Glenn, 1972; Greenstein, 1965; Hess & Torney, 1967). Therefore, the purposes of this review are: (a) to examine theoretical conceptions of democratic classroom climate; (b) to review what is known about the relationship between classroom climate and civic outcomes in elementary classrooms, and (c) to consider the implications of existing theory and research for future research and citizenship education in elementary classrooms.

In an effort to develop a concept of democratic classroom climate, learning environments proposed by John Dewey (1916/1966); Rudolf Dreikurs, Bernice B. Grunwald, and Floy C. Pepper (1971); and Lawrence Kohlberg (1975) are compared. Each of these models proposes a classroom social system explicitly grounded in democratic principles and created by democratic processes; moreover, all three models postulate that the resulting sociopolitical atmosphere of the learning environment mediates the influence of democratic processes on student outcomes.

A review of research on the relationship between elementary classroom climate and citizenship outcomes suggests that certain
attributes of classroom climate are related to the development of participatory skills and positive civic attitudes. These attributes—among them democratic deliberation, respect for diversity, cooperative activity, and deliberate community-building—appear to be consistent with characteristics of democratic classroom climate set forth in the theoretical models. Drawing on the overlapping implications of the theory and research reviewed, I conclude that, if we conceptualize the classroom as an organ of a democratic system, democratic climates in elementary classrooms may be a sine qua non for promoting the goals of democratic citizenship education.

The Goals of Democratic Citizenship Education

Butts (1979) asserted that "the goal of schooling is to empower the whole population to exercise the rights and cope with the responsibilities of a genuine democratic citizenry" (p. 360). The cultivation of democratic citizenship was advanced as the specific purpose of social studies education by the 1916 NEA Committee on the Social Studies, and it has continued to be the unifying goal of the social studies curriculum in the United States (Parker & Jarolimek, 1984; Shaver, 1981).

Parker and Jarolimek (1984) define a democratic citizen as "an informed person, skilled in the processes of a free society, who is committed to democratic values and is able, and feels obliged, to participate in social, political, and economic processes" (p. 6). Implied in this definition is a set of desirable civic outcomes associated with democratic citizenship education: (a) political knowledge upon which to base informed judgments; (b) skills—such as effective communication and interpersonal skills—requisite for interaction in a free society; (c) commitment to democratic values; and (d) interest, desire, and a sense of obligation to participate fully in democratic processes. Accordingly, social studies researchers have measured the outcomes of democratic citizenship education on scales of political knowledge, political interest, political participation, and political attitudes that reflect underlying beliefs: tolerance for dissent (belief in free speech), social integration (belief that one belongs to a group), political trust (belief that people in government are trustworthy), political efficacy (belief that government responds to citizen actions and concerns), and political confidence (belief that one can influence others).

Oliner (1983) contended that the prevailing goals of citizenship education reveal a long-standing preoccupation with national government and national citizenship— institutions so distant and ideas so complex that they may "encourage feelings of impotence and alienation" (p. 69). Emphasizing the importance for students of being citizens in more immediate communities, Oliner argued for a focus on prosociality and community-building in the classroom. Her position
implies the need to include social dispositions such as caring behaviors and concern for others, perspective taking ability, and empathy among the goals of democratic citizenship education.

**Classroom Climate as Implicit Civics Curriculum**

Indeed, citizenship education has traditionally been associated with direct instruction aimed explicitly at the transmission of knowledge about the political system and the citizen's role in a democracy. In social studies theory and research, however, there has been increasing attention to the informal learning experiences that occur at school and often unintentionally influence the development of citizens (Hepburn & Radz, 1983). Hawley (1976) asserted that the behaviors teachers model in the classroom, the nature of their control over classroom interactions and reward structures, as well as student perceptions of the rules and norms in the classroom environment, constitute an "implicit civics curriculum" (p. 2). This proposition was supported by the results of two nation-wide surveys of young people's political attitudes conducted by Torney (1970), who concluded that schooling influences the development of political attitudes through the prescribed curriculum, through cognitive development, and through the authority systems that students experience.

Climate research conducted since the mid-1960s has increasingly relied on students' perceptions of classroom authority systems, interactions, rules, and norms to assess classroom climate (Ehman, 1969; Moos, 1979; Walberg, 1976). Chavez (1984) documented this shift in climate research methodology from relatively objective measures such as frequency counts of classroom behaviors to more subjective, high-inference measures based on participants' perceptions. Summarizing social studies research on climate, Ehman and Hahn (1981) found that "while political knowledge gains are most effectively produced through direct instructional means, classroom and school climate are more important in affecting change and growth in democratic values and attitudes" (p. 72).

**Models of Democratic Classroom Climates**

Educational theorists have often included climate as an important environmental variable in the classroom equation. Getzels and Thelen (1960) conceptualized the classroom as a social system with characteristic institutions, roles, and behavioral expectations. In their model, a class climate develops as the group mediates the interaction between the institutional dimension (role expectations) and the individual dimension (personalities). Moos (1979) conceptualized the classroom as an environmental system, organizing variables into four domains: the physical setting, organizational factors, the human
aggregate (teacher and student characteristics), and the social climate. According to Moos, "social climate is both a fourth domain of environmental variables and the major mediator of the influences of the other three" (Moos, 1979, p. 10).

The Moos (1979) scheme is used as a framework for comparing the learning environments described by Dewey (1916/1966), Dreikurs et al. (1971), and Kohlberg (1975). Although the theorists employ different nomenclature for the environmental variables, a construct much like Moos's social climate is posited as a mediating variable in each model. Table 1 shows how the three democratic learning environment models compare in the domains of Moos's (1979) environmental system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Tools and materials for active learning</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Individualized materials to match each student's ability</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Work places that invite interaction</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Respects individuality and self-initiated learning</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Understands social goals of student behavior</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Relies on communication and cooperation</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Helps students recognize goals of their behavior</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Encourages students to participate in cooperative activity</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Encourages self-direction</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Promotes authentic community life</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Understands stages of moral development</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Establishes conditions for moral development</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Articulates moral concerns of the group</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Participates in building community</em></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Students have diverse social backgrounds and diverse interests</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Appropriate for students at all grade levels</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Students are diverse by class, race, ethnicity</em></td>
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</table>

Table 1
Comparison of Democratic Learning Environments in Moos's Domains
Table 1 (continued)
Comparison of Democratic Learning Environments in Moos's Domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Classroom implementation possible, regardless of school or system structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Can be organized schoolwide, by department, grade, or single classroom</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Social Climate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Intellectual freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Free and equitable interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many connections between classroom and larger society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social cooperative conscience generates genuine community life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students participate in decision making during regular class meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers and students have equal voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students encouraged to voice opinions freely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Diversity respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Role-playing to develop perspective-taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cooperative relationships valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students actively participate in governance of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher and students have equal rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collective responsibility encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on cognitive-moral conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discussions and role-play to develop empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prosocial acts highly valued</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dewey's Ideal Social Environment for Democratic Education

Dewey's philosophical model of the democratic learning environment is elaborated in *Democracy and Education* (1916/1966). Asserting that the conditions that exist in a learning environment function as an "intermediary" to promote or hinder student learning, Dewey argued that:

...the only way in which adults consciously control the kind of education which the immature get is by controlling the environment in which they act, and hence think and feel. We never educate directly, but indirectly by means of the environment. Whether we permit chance environments to do the work, or whether we design environments for the purpose makes a great difference (p. 19).
Because Dewey believed that learning occurs only when student activity is carried out in a social context and is furnished with a social aim, he exhorted educators first to create a social environment that engages individual students in the associated activities of the group, thereby fostering identity with the group's purposes. Conditions that support Dewey's ideal democratic social milieu include a physical setting that invites cooperative activity, a teacher who facilitates full participation and supports intellectual freedom, and a diverse body of students who interact freely among themselves as well as with other groups. Dewey asserted that a democratic social climate influences the development of a social cooperative conscience, which is the spirit of a democratic community. Within this community deliberate exposure to diversity provides encounters with the novel, which broaden viewpoints, promote creative solutions to social problems, and increase the field of common interests. The goal of education, according to Dewey (1928/1964), is to produce students who are equipped with the desires and abilities to assist in the transformation of society, not those who are "complacent about what already exists" (p. 175).

Dreikurs-Grunwald-Pepper: A Democratic Classroom Atmosphere

Dreikurs et al. (1971) concurred with Dewey's emphasis on democratic processes in the classroom. They argued, however, that Dewey failed to take into account students' psychological motivations, which have a powerful influence on their dispositions toward learning. Drawing on the psychology of Alfred Adler, Dreikurs et al. (1971) posited humans as fundamentally social beings, motivated from birth by the overarching desire to belong. Thus, they regarded all human behavior as directed by goals that reflect the individual's convictions about the most effective means of achieving status and significance within the group. "Social interest," a concern for the welfare of others which develops when individuals feel accepted, motivates them to develop their own abilities as worthy members of the group (Dreikurs et al., 1971, p. xi).

The educator's primary task, then, is to build a democratic classroom community that offers every student a sense of worth and membership. This is accomplished by helping students recognize the goals of their own behavior and by promoting increased self-direction, self-control, and cooperation among the students. In the Dreikurs et al. model (1971), constantly practicing the skills required for living as equals among equals creates a democratic classroom atmosphere in which individual potential and responsible group membership can develop. Regarding organizational factors, Dreikurs et al. (1971) emphasized the feasibility of creating a democratic classroom atmosphere regardless of the nature of the school system: ". . . even in
an autocratic school system, the teacher can proceed with democratic methods” (p. 182).

The Moral Atmosphere of Kohlberg’s Just Community

Kohlberg (1975) proposed a democratic learning environment called the Just Community. Acknowledging Dewey’s influence, Kohlberg emphasized that the Just Community school was not a new model, but rather “a modernized version of John Dewey’s progressive, democratic, and developmental view of education” (p. 15). The organizing principle of Kohlberg’s democratic environment is self-governance—full and equal participation by teachers and students, who make a conscious effort to focus on issues of fairness and justice in their deliberations.

Kohlberg (1975) emphasized diversity in the student body, specifying that the Just Community should include students from different social classes, races, and ethnic groups. The teacher’s first responsibility is to establish a moral atmosphere by acting as an equal participant with the students in building a community where justice is seen as both means and end. An atmosphere of perceived justice and communality facilitates the development of collective norms and mediates the influence of existing democratic conditions on the moral reasoning and behavior of group members.

Democratic Classroom Climate

Among the three models of democratic learning environments considered (Dewey, 1916/1966; Dreikurs et al., 1971; Kohlberg, 1975), there is substantial agreement about the nature of a democratic classroom climate. Although the teacher is called upon to understand and encourage individual development in each model, the teacher’s primary role is to foster a cooperative spirit and to promote the development of shared values and authentic community life in the classroom. When students participate in democratic decision making and regard themselves as efficacious community members, they develop more democratic attitudes and demonstrate increasingly prosocial behavior.

For both Dewey (1916/1966) and Kohlberg (1975), a fundamental component of democratic community building is diversity—people with diverse backgrounds and interests interacting freely, exchanging ideas, and developing common values through shared experience. Dreikurs et al. (1971) and Kohlberg (1975) emphasized the importance of encouraging students to consider diverse viewpoints in their deliberations; both suggested the use of role play to develop empathy and perspective-taking skills.

In the Kohlberg (1975) and Dreikurs et al. (1971) models, student participation in problem solving and decision making play the
Democratic Classroom Climates

central role in developing a genuine classroom community. Kohlberg proposed a formal social contract and subsequent governance assemblies; Dreikurs et al. advocated less formal organizational structure, but more frequent meetings for democratic deliberations among students and teachers. Chanoff (1981) argued that Dewey's convictions about how values must be transmitted from adults to children imply a traditional hierarchical classroom organization that precludes students' participation in decision making. Gutmann (1987), however, pointed out that whereas students at Dewey's laboratory school "did not have the same freedom, authority, or influence as teachers," they were invited to participate in collective decision making to a far greater extent than are students in contemporary schools (p. 93).

The strong common themes of the theoretical models of Dewey (1916/1966), Dreikurs et al. (1971), and Kohlberg (1975) suggest an operational definition of democratic classroom climate as a set of conditions that support the development of democratic citizenship outcomes. These conditions are: (a) peer interaction in cooperative activities, (b) free expression, (c) respect for diverse viewpoints, and (d) equal student participation in democratic deliberations and decision making.

How, and to what extent have these theoretical conditions for democratic classroom climate been associated empirically with positive civic outcomes among elementary students? Following is a review of research literature that sheds light on the relationship between attributes of classroom climate and the development of elementary students' sociopolitical attitudes.

Elementary Classroom Climate and the Development of Civic Attitudes: A Review of Research

That democratic climates may be particularly influential in elementary classrooms is suggested by findings of political socialization research, which indicate that elementary students are constructing political concepts (Abraham, 1983; Connell, 1971; Moore, Lare & Wagner, 1985; Stevens, 1982), that they express interest in the political world (Stevens, 1982), and that they are forming long-lasting political attitudes (Greenstein, 1965; Hess & Torney, 1967). Patterns of tolerance for dissent seem to be well developed as early as fourth grade (Zellman & Sears, 1971). Feelings of political efficacy appear to increase as students advance through the elementary grades (Easton & Dennis, 1968; Glenn, 1972; Hess & Torney, 1967), whereas initially high levels of political trust among first, second, and third graders appear to decline in the later elementary years, especially among students in lower socioeconomic groups (Glenn, 1972). In addition, psychological research indicates that the elementary school years are a time of
potentially rapid development in perspective taking ability (Flavell, 1966; Selman, 1976). Taken together, these studies suggest that the elementary years represent a critical socialization period during which schooling experiences may influence the development of political and social attitudes.

The following sections review research that has investigated the relationship between classroom climate and civic outcomes in elementary settings, along with a few studies conducted in secondary settings that appear to be relevant. Research findings indicate that the development of more democratic dispositions may be associated with certain attributes of elementary classroom climate: (a) democratic leadership behavior, (b) teacher verbal behavior, (c) respect for students, (d) peer interaction, (e) open discussion, (f) student participation, and (g) cooperation.

Democratic Leadership Behavior

In their classic text on teaching social studies, Hunt and Metcalf (1968) proposed that teaching method includes "climate making." They argued that the teacher should provide "democratic group leadership" to facilitate a climate of open-mindedness where personal outlooks can be exchanged, disagreements considered, and inquiries reflectively pursued (p. 34).

The conceptualization of the teacher as climate-maker originated in the experiments conducted by Lewin, Lippitt, and White during the 1930s (Lewin, 1938; Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939). They studied the effects of leadership behavior on social climate by documenting the behavior of 10- and 11-year-old boys during small group club meetings under three different leadership styles--democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire. Results of these experiments indicated that leadership behaviors produced different social climates characterized by sharp differences in both individual behaviors and social interactions. Under democratic leadership, group activities were characterized by more cooperative endeavor; and there was a sense of affiliation among group members which the researchers described as "we-ness." Individuals were more inclined to express their own views, to criticize others objectively, and to demonstrate a greater sense of fairness (Lewin, 1938).

It has been pointed out that these demonstrations of the effects of democratic leadership on climate were carried out at a time when world alarm over fascism was building, a situation that may have contributed to indiscriminate enthusiasm for the findings. Furthermore, the appropriateness of extrapolating conclusions from club settings to classrooms has been questioned (Raywid, 1979). Nevertheless, the experiments of Lewin et al. (1939) advanced climate research by
revealing a relationship between leadership behaviors, social climate, and both individual and group outcomes.

**Teacher Verbal Behavior**

Withall (1969) asserted that different patterns of teacher verbal behavior produce different social-emotional climates. Based on his proposition that teacher verbalizations can be taken as representative of a teacher's classroom behavior, Withall measured teacher verbalizations in seven comprehensive categories that represented a continuum from learner-oriented (commendatory, accepting, problem-structuring) to teacher-oriented (directive, reproving, controlling) statements. A ratio derived from the frequencies of observed teacher verbalizations in these categories discriminate teacher-class interaction patterns, or climate types, on Withall's Climate Index.

Two recent studies based on observations of secondary classes support a relationship between teachers' verbal behavior and classroom climate. Analyzing discussions in international studies classes, Torney-Purta and Lansdale (1986) found that the difference in teachers' questioning styles was a strong factor in creating discussion climates. Teachers who asked convergent questions generated more participation in the way of guesses about the "right answer," but little interaction between students--attention levels were low, and the teacher was perceived as being in control of knowledge. When teachers asked more divergent questions, fewer students participated, but a greater diversity of opinions was elicited. Another study (Grossman, Duggan, & Thorpe, 1987) found that a teacher's use of divergent questioning motivated students to share ideas and to respect the process of sharing.

**Respect for Students**

Hawley (1977) solicited fifth graders' opinions of their teachers' attitudes toward students' ideas and free expression in classroom discussions. He found a positive relationship between perceived teacher respect for student ideas and student interest in the views of other students, an aspect of tolerance. Hawley speculated that student perceptions of classroom climate are more strongly associated with the teacher's attitude toward open discussion than with the interactions that actually occur during the discussions. Results of another study of fifth graders (Rossell & Hawley, 1981) indicated that students who perceive that teachers are interested in them and treat them fairly express lower levels of political cynicism (the inverse of political trust).

Hawley and Eyler (1983, cited in Parker & Kaltsounis, 1986) investigated the relationship between teacher behaviors and the
development of tolerance among fifth graders. Assessing teacher behaviors with an adaptation of the Flanders Interaction Analysis instrument and measuring students' perceptions and attitudes with a questionnaire, the researchers found a positive relationship between teachers' respect for student ideas and student tolerance for the ideas of others, suggesting that the teacher's modeling of democratic attitudes influences the formation of student attitudes. Higher levels of tolerance were also related to more frequent opportunities to interact with peers on instructional tasks.

Peer Interaction

A study conducted by Allman-Snyder, May, and Garcia (1975) adds support for the relationship between peer interaction and democratic behaviors. Allman-Snyder et al. (1975) compared elementary students' perceptions of authority with their strategies for conflict resolution. Classrooms were categorized as open or traditional primarily on the basis of teacher behaviors. The traditional classroom teacher was characterized as an authority figure who presented lessons, enforced rules, and limited student participation, whereas the open classroom teacher acted as a facilitator who encouraged peer teaching and student interaction. In interviews with 59 first and fifth graders, students in the open classrooms chose more democratic methods for resolving conflicts and demonstrated more independence from, as well as comfort with, local authority.

Allman-Snyder et al. (1975), like some of the other researchers who compared outcomes of traditional and open classrooms (Fry & Addington, 1984; Solomon & Kendall, 1976), did not report the extent to which criterion teacher behaviors were exhibited in the classrooms under study. Such an omission confounds interpretations of the findings because many different teacher behaviors and patterns of interaction may have been related to the reported outcomes. The implied difficulty of isolating and measuring teacher behaviors that characterize particular climates emphasizes, however, that climate is created by a complex system of interpersonal behaviors and social arrangements.

Open Discussion

The definition that Ehman (1980a) offered for an open classroom climate shifted the emphasis from the social and emotional to the intellectual conditions for openness. He asserted that: "When students have an opportunity to engage freely in making suggestions for structuring the classroom environment, and when they have opportunities to discuss all sides of controversial topics, the classroom climate is deemed 'open'" (p. 108). According to this definition, an essential attribute of an open climate is open discussion--discussion
Democratic Classroom Climates

characterized by free expression and the exchange of different points of view on issues that arise in the classroom, as well as those that reflect the concerns of society at large.

Results of a longitudinal study (Ehman, 1980b) that measured perceptions of classroom climate and political attitudes of high school students indicated that perceived freedom to express opinions in class was the best predictor of both general political and school-related attitudes of trust, social integration, confidence, and interest. Exposure to controversial issues was associated with increased social integration and political interest. The perception that the teacher presented diverse viewpoints on issues was positively associated with trust, social integration, and interest.

Two studies that included elementary students suggest that open discussions of sensitive issues and perceived freedom to express one's opinion may also be related to positive political attitudes of younger students. In the ten-nation study of civic attitudes conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (Torney, Oppenheim, & Farnen, 1975), questionnaires administered to more than 30,000 10-year-old, 14-year-old, and pre-university students solicited perceptions of school experience and measured four areas of civic outcomes: (a) knowledge of civic education, (b) support for democratic values, (c) support for the national government, and (d) civic interest/participation. The only school-based variables that appeared to contribute positively to outcomes in all categories were classroom climate variables: "More knowledgeable, less authoritarian, and more interested students came from schools where [students] were encouraged to have free discussion and to express their opinion in class" (Torney et al., 1975, p. 18).

In Glenn's (1972) survey of elementary students' political attitudes, a 3-item participation scale asked students how free they felt to express their opinion in class, to help decide class rules, and to talk in class. Although participation scale items showed only weak relationships with feelings of efficacy, the item which had the highest correlation with efficacy was "Kids feel free to say what they want in class" (p. 59).

These studies suggest a relationship between students' perceived freedom to express their opinions in open discussion and the development of positive political attitudes. Clearly there is a need for further studies to substantiate this relationship in elementary classrooms.
Participation

A 1983 position paper issued by the National Council for the Social Studies on social studies for young children held that: "The school itself serves as a laboratory for students to learn social participation directly and not symbolically. A democratic and participatory school environment is essential to this kind of real world learning" (cited in Atwood, 1986, p. xi).

In a study of factors related to student alienation (the inverse of social integration) in the elementary school, Dillon and Grout (1976) found that a lack of meaningful participation in school and classroom life was strongly related to student feelings of powerlessness and isolation. Surveying the attitudes of 5th, 6th, and 7th graders in seven midwestern elementary schools, the researchers found significantly less alienation among students in schools where students reported that they participated in making the rules and in setting goals.

Findings of studies that have investigated Just Community experiments suggest that participation in democratic decision-making processes is key to the establishment of an atmosphere that promotes positive social-moral development (Kohlberg, Lieberman, Power, Higgins, & Coddington, 1981; Power, 1981; Reimer, 1981; Wasserman, 1975). An elementary principal (Murphy, 1988) described a schoolwide adaptation of the Just Community model in which students in each class participated in regular class meetings to establish rules and to consider infractions, and class representatives formed a primary (K-3) and an intermediate (4-6) student council, which met regularly with the principal. Reflecting on its effects over six years, Murphy concluded that the Just Community plan had gradually transformed a "callous and uncaring" student population into a caring, responsible community.

Another elementary Just Community project (Kubelick, 1982) that emphasized participation was conducted jointly among three intermediate classes (mixed ages 8-10) at the University of Pittsburgh's Falk Laboratory School. Over the course of a school year, a series of community activities was introduced to the 80-student unit, including opportunities for small group work, training and practice in group skills, participation in planning and decision making, and regular class meetings. Responses to an attitude questionnaire near the end of the school year indicated that the students perceived the environment as fair, and a comparison of pre- and post-test measures on the Damon Positive Justice Interview showed advances in moral reasoning for every age group in the experimental unit.

Project Change at the State University of New York helped teachers adapt the Just Community model for their early childhood and elementary classrooms. The program emphasized projects that required participation in collaborative activity and frequent class
Democratic Classroom Climates

meetings in order to help children decrease their social-moral egocentrism and to strengthen the sense of community. Elementary teachers who implemented these strategies in their classrooms reported a variety of positive outcomes including improved conduct and respect for group-generated rules, increased cooperation, empathetic responses, and active concern for each other during daily interactions (Lickona, 1977).

These reports indicate that student participation—especially participation in making decisions that have a direct bearing on the quality of life at school—contributes to the development of prosociality, high level moral reasoning, and a sense of community among the students. Both the Falk School and Project Change agendas also suggest that cooperative activities help to create a classroom climate that influences positive civic outcomes.

Cooperation

In less than 20 years David Johnson and Roger Johnson and their colleagues at the University of Minnesota have amassed a mountain of evidence that cooperative learning activities have positive effects on a wide range of cognitive and affective learning outcomes (Johnson & Johnson, 1974; Johnson, 1981). Moreover, the Johnsons' research, much of which has been conducted with elementary students, indicates that cooperative learning promotes a climate of tolerance and prosociality in the classroom.

In a small scale study (Johnson, Johnson, Johnson & Anderson, 1976) of a fifth grade class, 30 students were assigned to two groups during language arts instruction for a 17-day period. Instruction was structured cooperatively in one group and individualized in the other. Student responses on post-treatment measures indicated that students in the cooperative group were more altruistic and more accurate in their recognition of others' feelings, and that they felt more strongly that both teachers and peers liked them. Another study (Zahn, Kagan, & Widaman, 1986), which investigated the effects of two cooperative learning strategies on the climate in classrooms (grades 2-6), showed that both cooperative methods produced more favorable student attitudes toward schoolwork and slightly more favorable attitudes toward social relations in the class than did the traditional class structure.

In a study of social interdependence and classroom climate conducted by Johnson, Johnson, and Anderson (1983), a national sample of 883 elementary students (grades 4-9) responded to the Classroom Life Instrument, which measured climate on 12 scales. Results indicated that students who perceived their classes as more cooperatively structured also perceived more personal support and more social cohesion in the class. Positive attitudes toward cooperative learning
were negatively correlated with alienation, another indication that cooperative learning experiences contribute to social integration.

**Summary**

Positive social and political attitudes, higher levels of moral reasoning, prosocial behavior, and sense of community in elementary classrooms have been empirically associated with certain climate attributes: (a) democratic leadership, (b) peer interaction in cooperative activities, (c) free expression and respect for diverse viewpoints, and (d) student participation in democratic deliberations. Whereas these climate attributes are congruent with conditions for democratic classroom climate set forth by the theorists, the empirical findings would seem to corroborate the operational definition of democratic classroom climate derived from the models of Dewey (1916/1966), Dreikurs et al. (1971), and Kohlberg (1975).

**Discussion**

In order to establish the validity of the operational definition of democratic classroom climate proposed here, implementation and evaluation of the specified conditions will be essential. Elementary classrooms that can be characterized as democratic in a holistic sense—classrooms where all conditions for democratic climate are operating together—deserve the attention of both practitioners and researchers. Qualitative studies that describe democratic climates in particular classrooms may contribute to our understanding of how the attributes of democratic classroom climate are implemented and integrated, how they mediate civic dispositions, and to what extent the goals of democratic citizenship education are served. To ascertain the influence of democratic climate conditions, there is also a need for behavioral definitions of the civic outcomes we expect from democratic environments, including tolerance, perspective-taking ability, social integration, and prosociality, as well as for the development of new strategies for authentic assessment of democratic citizenship outcomes.

Research into the nature and influence of particular attributes of democratic classroom climate in elementary settings is also warranted. The effects of intellectual openness and participation in democratic deliberation have received little attention, pointing to the need for studies that investigate the possibilities, as well as the limitations, of controversial issues discussions and democratic decision making in elementary classrooms. What kinds of discussions promote thoughtful and constructive interaction among elementary students? What leadership strategies help elementary students form opinions, express diverse viewpoints without fear of censure, and respond to each other with empathy and respect? What kinds of teacher verbal
behavior facilitate open discussion? What kinds of limitations can be set without restricting openness?

The potential contribution of student diversity to democratic classroom climate presents another promising area for further study. Dewey (1916/1966) and Kohlberg (1975) both argued that the free and frequent interaction of diverse students is an essential aspect of a democratic classroom environment, and cooperative learning research indicates that cooperative interaction among students of diverse backgrounds is related to the development of prosocial outcomes. The increasing diversity of the United States student population suggests the need for further investigation of the means by which diversity in the classroom can be directed to positive ends. Moreover, research on student diversity may be particularly relevant among elementary students, whose interpersonal perspectives are taking shape.

VanSickle (1983) asserted that classrooms are not simply democratic or undemocratic, but that democratic experiences such as student participation in decision making can move classrooms along a continuum toward more democratic climates. Qualitative studies may inform our thinking about the process of democratizing classrooms as well as about participants' perceptions of that process. In particular, elementary teachers' perceptions of the obstacles to democratic processes in their classrooms should be investigated.

Leming (1985) asserted that there are few reported instances of democratic schooling; consequently, we have a "meager research field" from which to draw conclusions about the potential influence of democratic schooling on democratic dispositions. Moos (1979) found that the percentage of classes "oriented almost exclusively toward teacher control of student behavior [was] striking" (p. 157); and, furthermore, that classes at lower grade levels are even more likely to be control-oriented environments. Investigations of elementary teachers' rationales for creating control-oriented environments may prove to be valuable. Teachers might be asked to assess their classrooms in terms of the conditions here identified with democratic climate, and then to explain their reasons for creating or eschewing conditions such as participatory decision making, controversial issues discussion, or cooperative activity.

Many who attempt to explain the absence of democratic classroom environments contend that democratic education is neither possible nor practical in elementary classrooms. One argument holds that democratic participation requires reasoning abilities and social skills that elementary students lack. This viewpoint is contradicted, however, by findings of political socialization research as well as by testimonies of practitioners who have employed democratic processes with young students. Lickona (1977) held that the question is not one of children's readiness or ability to participate perfectly, but rather
"that children, like other people, are more likely to understand rules and take them seriously when they have a hand in their making and when they regard them as fair" (p. 101).

The most common explanation for the dearth of democratic classrooms argues that the organizational structures of the school are inherently authoritarian and that the hidden curriculum of the school will contradict efforts to offer students the entitlements of democratic citizenship. According to Cohen and Lazerson, "students cannot learn democracy in the school because the school is not a democratic place" (cited in Merelman, 1980, p. 320). Raywid (1979) argued that the goals and organizational mode of the school are not consistent with democratic principles—that is, a class does not choose its purpose, its participants have no right of withdrawal, and the teacher cannot be voted out. Raywid disputed the idea that a teacher's leadership style can produce a democratic classroom environment, given existing institutional constraints.

In response to these pessimistic outlooks, Gutmann (1987) argued that we should not be dissuaded from efforts to democratize classrooms simply because classrooms are not ideal democratic societies:

\[\ldots\ \text{democracies depend on schools to prepare students for citizenship. Were students ready for citizenship, compulsory schooling--along with many other educational practices that deny students the same rights as citizens--would be unjustifiable. It would, on the other hand, be remarkable if the best way to prepare students for citizenship were to deny them both individual and collective influence in shaping their own education. (p. 94)}\]

Gutmann (1987) admits that there is not enough evidence to say exactly how much participation in the classroom is necessary to cultivate democratic citizens; however, "the low levels of political participation in our society and the high levels of autocracy within most schools point to the conclusion that the cultivation of participatory virtues should become more prominent among the purposes of primary schooling. \ldots \"(p. 92).

Clearly, autocratic teaching methods are in part the result of pressures to demonstrate professional competence--pressure to produce higher test scores, pressure to cover more material, pressure to impart "correct" values, pressure to maintain quiet and order in the classroom. It is difficult for teachers to put democratic principles into practice without the support of the parents, policy makers, and citizens whose convictions create these pressures.
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Gutmann (1987) has contributed to the advancement of theory by approaching democratic education as a community concern rather than simply as a classroom problem. She argued that educators, parents, and citizens all legitimately share the authority to influence educational practice in a democracy and, furthermore, that deliberation among those groups is both educative in itself and essential to a spirit of democratic education in schools. This position echoes Dewey's emphasis on the importance of constant interaction between a democratic classroom community and groups beyond its confines.

Neither Dewey (1916/1966), nor Dreikurs et al. (1971), nor Kohlberg (1975), however, recognized democratic classrooms as arenas in which teachers must regulate the conflicting interests of society at large. Gutmann (1987) observed that the ongoing deliberations of democratic politics force teachers to rely on their own best judgment to make day-to-day decisions on issues that society has not resolved. This implies a model of democratic classrooms that, rather than positing the teacher as the creator of a microcosm of democratic society, envisions the classroom as a vital organ of a democratic system, with the teacher in a mediating role. In this model, the integrity of the system depends largely upon the democratic functioning of all its organs—particularly those involved in regenerating the system. Such an exemplar might encourage teachers to apply democratic principles more broadly in their classrooms, and challenge parents and other citizens to be more circumspect in formulating their expectations.

Endnotes

1. Although school climate may also be related to civic outcomes and clearly influences the climate in classrooms, the unit of analysis here is classroom climate. See Anderson (1982) for a comprehensive review and analysis of research on school climate.

2. Other theorists have proposed broad implementation of instructional strategies that may also serve democratic ends. Shaftel and Shaftel (1967), for example, advocated role-playing for citizenship education; Glasser (1969) suggested class meetings; and Johnson and Johnson (1975) argued for cooperative tasks and reward structures. However, because these models neither rest explicitly on democratic premises nor postulate a climate-like mediating variable, they are not considered here.

References

Ann V. Angell


Ehman, L. H. (1969). An analysis of the relationships of selected educational variables with the political socialization of high
Democracy Classroom Climates


Ann V. Angell


THE INFLUENCE OF ADMINISTRATORS ON THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES

James K. Daly
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Abstract
Critics in large numbers claim that the social studies have not lived up to the requirement of dealing with controversy. One issue deserving examination is the influence of administrators on teacher decisions regarding materials, methods and topics. As part of a larger study, an investigation of Chief School Administrators in New Jersey was undertaken to determine their awareness of and support for the professional responsibilities of the teacher of social studies. The results suggest that the expressed support for dealing with controversial issues and critical thinking may not be as substantive as it first appears.

Introduction
The teaching of social studies requires dealing with controversy. This expectation is common throughout the many competing definitions and rationales of the field. The very existence of these competing definitions and rationales is cited by Nelson (1985) as an indicator that by its nature the social studies demands the opposite of apathy. Whether the field is perceived as properly dealing with decision making (Engle, 1964; Oliver and Shaver, 1966), or critical and reflective thinking (Anderson, 1942; Hunt & Metcalf, 1955), as social criticism (Besag & Nelson, 1984), or as described in the New Criticism (Giroux & Penna, 1979; Apple, 1982; Apple & Teitelbaum, 1985), the scholarship of the field points to the requirement of dealing with controversy. Despite this expectation from so many perspectives, critics in large numbers claim that the social studies have not lived up to this requirement.

The perception of this failure is not new. In 1936, Beale wrote of the avoidance of controversial issues by teachers of social studies.
Oliver and Shaver (1966) characterized the previous 50 years of the teaching of social studies as devoid of controversy while maintaining the status quo. The teaching of social studies is reported to ignore an examination of society and its institutions (Berlak, 1977), while biases are untouched and rational decision making not practiced (Barr, Barth & Shermis, 1977). Rote memory and recall are the major techniques employed as classrooms are closed to the study of sensitive issues (Selakovich, 1967; Schuman, 1977; Cox, 1979). Curriculum and classroom practices are similar throughout the nation (Anyon, 1979; Shaver, Davis & Helburn, 1979; Patrick & Hawke, 1982). Shermis and Barth (1982) report that analysis and decision making are not addressed in most social studies classrooms. These classrooms lack active discussion and simulation (Sirotnik, 1983). Engle (1985) deplores the graduation of students indifferent to the political process and ill-informed of the most serious and pressing issues of society. Critical thinking is usually not a part of the social studies experience for most students (Cornbleth, 1985). Beyer (1985) maintains that where critical thinking is done, it is not done well. Cherryholmes (1985) characterizes the topics dealt with in the social studies classroom as safe, non-controversial and relatively meaningless.

Why this situation exists is open to debate. Several possibilities appear worthy of consideration, and again the views reflect a wide range of perceptions as to what the field is and should be. These possibilities do not exist in isolation, but rather influence and are influenced by one another. One issue deserving examination is the influence of administrators on teacher decisions regarding materials, methods and topics.

In a study on teacher selection of material for classroom use (Daly, 1987), perceived administrative reactions were reported as influential by large numbers of teachers. This influence was apparent both in the written responses to a survey questionnaire and in interview discussions. This seems reasonable considering what Bolte (1960) and others have pointed out, that there are no institutions more vulnerable to pressure from every direction than the public schools. They are easily accessible and often the center of the local community, and relying on public tax funds.

Teachers who had neither experienced nor knew of any challenges to materials or methods in their districts anticipated administration criticism if they explored controversial issues or topics (Daly, 1987). Teachers interviewed implied that negative experiences unrelated to academic decision making concerning curriculum were one source of such expectations. Throughout the interviews there appeared to be a perception among teachers that lack of administrative support on differing issues suggested a lack of support for any actions at all liable to generate any degree of controversy. A number of remarks were
made pertaining to a sensed lack of respect from administrators. Perhaps the hierarchical structure of the institution so excludes the teacher from decision-making that making decisions becomes difficult. The actions of administrators appeared to contribute to a sense of powerlessness which manifested itself in academic decision making as well as in institutional behavior. It was stated that even with tenure teachers would not risk needing the support of administrators in the event of criticism and challenges.

It appeared that many teachers of social studies need to know that their role, a major function of which is to deal with controversial issues and critical thinking, is understood and supported by administrators. However, Woods (1979) contended that administrators accounted for most of the censorship incidents that started from within educational institutions. Such activity is apparently not limited to recent times. Beale (1936) identified administrative pressure as restricting the freedom of teachers. Specific incidents of censorship activities by administrators are cited by Jenkinson (1979). Kamhi (1981) claimed teachers often avoided any controversial topics because of the real or perceived reactions of administrators. Superintendents and principals were reported to often give in to the demands of censors with little or no resistance. Hahn (1984) suggested that administrators do not want to rock the boat. Rather, they may encourage teachers to self-censor and avoid controversy.

Method

As part of a larger study, a survey of Chief School Administrators in the state of New Jersey was undertaken. A questionnaire was developed for the purpose of examining if these administrators were aware of and supportive of the professional responsibilities of the teacher of social studies. Administrators who completed the pilot study reported the questions to be clear and understandable. All felt that the directions were concise and that the time required to complete the questionnaire was reasonable.

The survey instrument sought information as to whether individual districts had written policies dealing with the following concerns: materials selection; appropriate materials and methodologies for class use; student publications; outside speakers; academic freedom and challenges to materials. Each administrator was asked to attach copies of such policies.

These areas seemed of interest as several researchers have indicated that the existence and the following of such guidelines often helps teachers to resist attacks on materials and methodologies (Cox, 1977; Jenkinson, 1977, 1979; Sanchez, 1985). Policies in these areas are advocated by the National Council for the Social Studies (1967); the
American Library Association (1953, 1972) and the American Association of School Administrators (1975). In addition, Nelson (1977) points out that the New Jersey Administrative Code stipulates that instruction should give students an opportunity to participate in the study of individual, school and community problems. This would seem to indicate a need for substantial protection from censorial restraint. Examination of the status of New Jersey schools was also of interest as less than 50% of public schools nationwide were reported as having policies for selecting materials or dealing with complaints (Burress, 1985).

The administrators were also asked to indicate district criteria used for selecting appropriate materials, and to select objectives which they believed to be among the responsibilities of teachers of social studies. They were asked to identify groups and organizations which influenced their perception of community values. In addition, their opinion was sought as to what areas, if any, ought to be avoided by teachers.

Chief school administrators from 62 school districts (randomly selected, and geographically stratified) were mailed survey instruments. Only school districts with secondary levels (grades 9-12) were included in the group from which the sixty-two were selected. Responses were received from 53 administrators. Twenty-five administrators returned part of or entire policies dealing with specific issues. Eighteen policies dealing with materials selection were received, as were 16 concerning student publications, seven on challenges to materials, five dealing with outside speakers, four involving academic freedom, and one copy of a district’s teacher contract.

Results

The first four questions in the survey dealt with existing district policies (see Table 1). Question one sought to establish if school districts had a materials selection policy. Fifty-two responses to this question were received with 94 percent indicating that their districts had such a policy.

The second question was designed to identify the extent to which written policies existed concerning teacher conduct with respect to the use of appropriate materials and methodologies in the classroom. Of 50 responses, 42 percent indicated that such policies existed in their district.

Identifying the existence and the nature of written policies governing student publications was the attempt of question three (completed pre-Kuhlmeier). Fifty-one administrators responded, with
47 percent replying that their district has such written policies.

The fourth question was asked to determine if written policies existed governing invitations to outside speakers. Fifty-one responses were received, with 31 percent reporting that they had written policies.

Question five (see Table 2) sought to identify objectives perceived by chief school administrators to be appropriate for the teachers of social studies in their districts. There were 51 responses. All (100%) of the respondents rated as appropriate the development of critical thinking. To explore controversial issues was perceived as an appropriate objective by 94 percent, with 100 percent indicating that another such objective was citizenship. Global education was reported to be an appropriate objective by 90 percent of the respondents, with 96 percent indicating as appropriate the development of an appreciation of American ideals and values.

In question six (see Table 3), 49 administrators responded to the question of whether written policies existed on academic freedom. Fifty-five percent indicated that their districts had such a policy.

The seventh question was designed to discover how many districts had written policies that specified how to deal with challenges to materials. Out of 51 respondents, 71 percent indicated that such a policy did exist. The identification of criteria used to determine the appropriateness of materials was sought in question eight (see Table 4).
Eighty-four percent of the 51 administrators responding indicated that one criterion to be considered was the ability level of the students. The recommendation of teaching materials by teachers was indicated as a consideration by 84 percent. Fifty-five percent reported that a consideration in the selection of teaching materials should be traditional American values and moral standards. Community values and standards were indicated to be a consideration by 69 percent.

Question nine (see Table 5) was designed to identify how materials are selected that do not violate community values and standards. The chief school administrators were asked to indicate all sources of input that are considered when decisions are made about the adoption of materials. There were 51 responses. Of these, 86 percent
The Influence of Administrators

indicated that input from teachers is considered, while 58 percent reported considering student input, with 43 percent considering input from parent groups (of these, 73 percent indicated PTA, PTO or a Home/School Association). Input from political organizations was reported to be a consideration by two percent, with 10 percent indicating consideration to input from religious organizations while four percent considered input from patriotic organizations. Identifying other sources of input were 18 percent of the respondents, with special committees most frequently cited.

While question five had asked what objectives were perceived as appropriate, question ten (see Table 6) asked respondents what they perceived, in their role as administrator, should be avoided by teachers of social studies in their districts. Four percent of the 51 respondents reported that materials or topics that might cause controversy should be avoided. That teachers should avoid discussion or materials which contain inappropriate language (obscenities, swear words, "street language") was indicated by 25 percent. Sixty-one percent reported that discussion or materials that present an unbalanced point of view should be avoided, while 39 percent indicated that teachers should avoid discussion or materials that undermine traditional American values. Indicating that teachers should not invite outside speakers who might cause controversy were 8 percent of the respondents, with 45 percent reporting that teachers should not invite speakers who might give unbalanced presentations on a subject. Twenty percent of the respondents indicated that teachers should avoid discussion and topics based exclusively on properly selected texts and materials.

Table 4
Materials Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ability level of students</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations of teachers</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional American values and moral standards</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community values and standards</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (identify)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

indicated that input from teachers is considered, while 58 percent reported considering student input, with 43 percent considering input from parent groups (of these, 73 percent indicated PTA, PTO or a Home/School Association). Input from political organizations was reported to be a consideration by two percent, with 10 percent indicating consideration to input from religious organizations while four percent considered input from patriotic organizations. Identifying other sources of input were 18 percent of the respondents, with special committees most frequently cited.

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Altogether, part or all of 51 written policy statements were received and analyzed. Of the policies dealing with materials selection, certain similarities were evident. Forty-four percent specifically mentioned controversial issues or topics, and encouraged the teacher to explore them. All of these policies made reference to addressing opposing points of view, although some were vague. Three urged a presentation of balanced views, one encouraged the full presentation of all sides of controversial questions under investigation, while one stated that many sides should be studied. Another 22 percent of the policies dealing with this area encouraged, to varying degrees, the presentation of various points of view. Seventeen percent of the policies in this first section appeared to have a provision that may be seen as more restrictive with respect to teacher conduct and materials selection. In one of these, the policy specifically stated that all materials, texts as well as non-school supplemental materials (newspapers, magazines) must have the approval of both the building principal and the superintendent. Approval may be given, this policy states, if the materials meet several criteria, which included the promotion of American democratic ideals and moral values. In another

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5</th>
<th>Sources of Input</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. In determining what materials do not violate community values and standards, input from which of the following are considered? Check all that may apply.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent groups (identify)</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political organizations (identify)</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious organizations (identify)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriotic organizations (identify)</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (identify)</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
policy, the statement is made that materials are not to be used in the classroom unless they have been reviewed by the superintendent and approved by the board of education. Of interest was still another policy in which was a statement that in selecting materials and conducting classes teachers had a responsibility to understand the community well enough to know the areas of potential sensitivity.

Of the policies dealing with student publications, 88 percent contained language recognizing the need for freedom of expression. Twenty-five percent specifically stated that students enjoy First Amendment rights. Specific instances of unacceptable and unprotected writing were cited in 75 percent of the policies. Among the forbidden topics for student publication were: hate literature; pornography and obscenity; personal attacks on individuals; and material not suited for distribution in the schools. Specific examples of the last category were not listed. Several policies advised extreme caution in writing editorials, while most warned that students could not take a written stand on school board elections or on any public issue.

All of the policies dealing with outside speakers that were sent either encouraged or recognized the value of inviting persons from

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6 Areas of Concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. In your role as Chief School Administrator, which of the following do you feel should be avoided by teachers? Check all that may apply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials or topics that cause controversy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of materials which contain inappropriate language (obscenities, swear words, &quot;street language&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion or materials that present an unbalanced point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of materials that undermine traditional American values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitations to outside speakers who might cause controversy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitations to outside speakers who might give unbalanced presentations on a subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion and topics based exclusively on properly selected texts and materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
outside the school community to address students. In all of the policies, approval of all outside speakers had to be obtained prior to any visit.

While very few policies on academic freedom were returned by chief school administrators, those that were covered a range of issues. In one, under a section entitled "restrictions," were stated several types of restrictions on teacher conduct and performance. A sub-section on societal restrictions stated that communities varied in what they would tolerate in classroom discussion. A paragraph on legal restrictions informed employees that differences of opinion on what is acceptable regulation of teachers often finds solution only in legal action. Under a heading of professional restrictions, the policy stated that teachers and their organizations had to decide what effect insisting on exercising freedom of speech would have on their roles and effectiveness. In another section of this policy teachers were told not to disrupt harmony among co-workers or to interfere with the maintenance of discipline by school officials. No abusive comments were to be made about any school officials according to this policy. Two other policies had sections identifying both personal and academic freedoms. In one, the section on academic freedom concluded by stating that any potentially controversial materials and methods be discussed with the immediate supervisor. Another policy mentioned the right of students to learn, encouraging the investigation of different points of view and stating that teachers should strive to promote tolerance.

Discussion

The reported administrative support for the listed objectives of social studies may not offer as much protection for teachers in the classroom as it first appears. While indicating support for such objectives, well over one half of the administrators also indicated that teachers should avoid any discussion or materials presenting an unbalanced point of view. The concern appears to be that all material be balanced individually as opposed to balanced in the overall scope and presentation of the issues. Almost one half of the administrators also indicated that invitations be avoided to any speaker who might give an unbalanced presentation on a subject. This concern for balance is intriguing for many reasons. The attempt to avoid one-sided materials seems to preclude dealing with controversy by reading from several alternate sources. Rather than balancing the program by exposing students to materials strongly expressive of various points of view, the presumption appears to be rather that a summary of "both" sides be presented. Such materials are likely to be neutral in tone, expressing two points of view, without the passion and conviction often associated with controversy. Presenting the pro and con arguments to an issue of controversy in a tidy summary may indeed be a disingenuous way of
approaching controversy. Similarly, the expectation with speakers seems to restrict the teacher from seeking advocates to express and explain a particular issue. The implication is that speakers ought to present mainstream points of view, perhaps with a mention that another or other opinions exist. Teachers appear to share this concern with balance, both with respect to individual materials and to presentations by invited speakers. Survey results and interview discussions (Daly, 1987) reveal considerable sensitivity to dealing with anything that was representative of one position. The need to address "both" sides was stressed by teachers as well.

The commitment to the objectives reported as appropriate appears to be open to question also by the large percentage of administrators indicating as to be avoided any material undermining traditional American values. Over one half of the administrators reported that traditional American values and moral standards should be considered a criterion for selecting materials for classroom use. Only a small percentage indicated that teachers should avoid basing classes exclusively on properly selected textbooks and materials.

Of additional interest is how this group identified traditional American values and morals. In evaluating community values and standards they reported considering input from several sources, including organizations such as the PTA, and PTO. Several wrote that key communicators or outspoken individuals in the community were requested to give input. It may be that administrators perceive some in the community as powerful and representative. Individuals or groups so perceived are given a power, possibly greater than their numbers would suggest they deserve, to influence schools and the actors in those schools.

School districts appear to have institutionalized many procedures. Over 90 percent of the districts represented in the survey have written materials selection policies, and over seventy percent have policies for dealing with challenges to those materials. Slightly less than one half indicated that they have written statements on academic freedom, with fewer having policies on student publications, the teacher use of materials and methodologies, and invitations to outside speakers.

Many of the policies were similar from district to district, with several virtually identical and provided by the same organizations. Two of these organizations were Robert F. Strauss and Associates, of Morristown, New Jersey, and the New Jersey School Boards Association School Policy Service in Trenton, New Jersey. This may suggest that local ownership and agreement on the content of such policies is less the result of collegial discussion and debate than the perceived legal or bureaucratic need to simply have such policies in place. Such policies may well not be seen by teachers as mechanisms for building a base of
support for teachers who choose to deal with controversial issues, materials and topics.

Based on the copies that were sent, the procedure for adopting materials and for challenging materials selected are common throughout the state. There were differences between some policies with respect to the treatment of controversial issues and the role of the teacher in addressing them. Many of the policies seemed to contribute to, or make clear, the hierarchical separation of responsibilities and rights between teachers and administrators.

As few policies were sent concerning academic freedom it is difficult to draw any conclusions. However, of those received there was considerable difference both on the autonomy of the teacher to select materials and to address topics of a controversial nature.

There are many areas that need to be addressed before teachers of social studies can begin in larger numbers to meet the scholarly expectations for the field. In New Jersey, administrative understanding of and support for the role of the teacher may not be as strong as it first appears.

Teachers and their representatives may well benefit by working with community members and organizations that wield influence. At the local level, the goals and objectives of the social studies should be articulated and discussed both within the educational community and beyond. Teachers and schools need to re-examine how information is shared and exchanged. The traditional process of communication, with open house arrangements and parent teacher conferences may not serve the need for dialogue well. Going into the community and bringing the community into the school seems more appropriate.

Since administrators appear to accept at face value the stated goals and objectives for the social studies, teachers should work to institutionalize such support, in contract or other policy documents. Even as with members of the community, dialogue and discussion on the expectations and requirements for the field need to be addressed with administrators and policy makers. The implications and consequences of supporting the stated objectives for the social studies need to be addressed. The very nature of controversy needs to be explored in the school and in the larger community.

Professional organizations must educate, publicize and continuously keep their membership aware of the need for dealing with controversial issues. These organizations must join with other groups in examining the structure of the institution of schooling. The hierarchical arrangements which characterize schooling may in themselves prohibit teachers in the social studies from fulfilling professional requirements. It is within this setting that teachers report administrative influences on their selection of materials,
methodologies and practices. Such an environment may burden administrators with an influence they are neither prepared for nor anxious to exert. Teachers too often may be relegated by the nature of the schools to a function not unlike that of the assembly line worker, being told what to do, when to do it, and how to do it (Besag & Nelson, 1984). The report of the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986) states that the school environment is suffused with bureaucracy, with rules and decisions made by others than teachers.

Professional groups and individuals must be encouraged to speak for intellectual freedom. Allies from within and without the educational community must be identified and invited to become involved in this effort. Increased attempts must be made to demonstrate the benefits associated with teaching students how to deal with controversial issues. Professional organizations must themselves invite challenge and disagreement. At every opportunity such disagreement should be encouraged, in journals and publications and at conferences and workshops.

Any teacher tempted to avoid a topic in order to escape criticism should feel restrained from such an action. Such restraint should be based on the words and example of administrators, colleagues and professional organizations. This is not presently the situation. Recognition of the requirements of the field by educators, enhanced communications with the community and a support system based on collegially designed institutional policies may be an appropriate beginning.

References


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Author

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SURVIVING ITS OWN RHETORIC: BUILDING A CONVERSATIONAL COMMUNITY WITHIN THE SOCIAL STUDIES

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Abstract
In this article, the authors construct an argument citing the need for a conversational community within the social studies profession. After noting the need for more research to aid in understanding the field of social education, they explore relevant attributes of a conversational community. Seeking to service, in part, the research need and apply the conversational community conception to the social studies profession, the authors develop three researchable questions related to conversational practice. In short, they asked 1) who speaks, 2) what are the topics of discourse, and 3) how is language used? The authors conclude that while a conversational community does exist, certain practices inhibit its full potential.

Introduction
Our identification with our community--our society, our political tradition, our intellectual heritage--is heightened when we see this community as ours rather than nature's, shaped rather than found... In the end, what matters is our loyalty to other human beings clinging together against the dark, not our hope of getting things right. (p. 166; emphasis in the original)

Richard Rorty

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In their seminal work, *Defining the Social Studies*, Barr, Barth and Shermis (1977) describe social studies as a "seamless web," an unflattering characterization of the field's ill-defined quality. Further, in an effort to demarcate the landscape of social studies as a school subject, they admit that there are a variety of reasons to declare that social studies is indeed anything that people say it is. As a critique of social studies, however, *Defining the Social Studies* does not stand alone.

Shaver (1977), and Shermis and Barth (1982), caustically assert that the social studies has failed its citizenship education mission by promoting "passive citizenship." More recently, Leming (1989) has argued that an ideological fracture within the social studies profession creates barriers to the proper social education of the nation's youth (on this criticism, see also Shaver, 1981). Other critics (e.g., Longstreet, 1985) wonder whether the profession has the ability to create an adequate justification for its existence as a school subject, much less develop enough consensual support to produce a viable, well organized social studies curriculum. The current debate surrounding the release of the National Commission on Social Studies in Schools report (1989), *Charting a Course*, may well be a case in point.

Taken together, these criticisms suggest that social studies as a field and as a school subject is in deep trouble. Concerned with the plethora of ideas and interests characteristic of social studies rhetoric, critical arguments appear focused toward a more predictive, unidimensional consensus within the profession around its curricular and pedagogical goals.

If enacted, such a move might establish some semblance of prediction and control over the apparently unruly field. But, one wonders whether consensus-establishing changes would ever be possible; and if they were, whether they would be all that desirable. As Toulmin (1990) adroitly observes:

There may be no rational way to convert to our point of view people who honestly hold other positions, but we cannot short-circuit such disagreements. Instead, we should live with them, as further evidence of the diversity of human life. Later on, these differences may be resolved by further shared experience, which allows different schools to converge. In advance of this experience, we must accept this diversity of views in a spirit of toleration. Tolerating the resulting plurality, ambiguity, or lack of certainty is no error, let alone a sin. Honest reflection shows that it is part of the price that we inevitably pay for being human beings, and not gods (p.30).
Consequently, serious attention would need be given first to the goal and desirability of consensus. Secondly, if found desirable, concern would need to be directed toward how a consensus might be built, about whose voices would be heard, and whose voices might be silenced in the process. And thirdly, a focus would need to be established concerning at what level of consensus (goals, language, practice, or all three for example) the process might be directed.

Answering these questions is an exceedingly complicated matter and one that does not lend itself to easy analysis and resolution. The issues at stake demand a more thorough understanding. The thesis advanced here argues: (a) that consensus is a rational but complex idea that demands careful scrutiny, and (b) that, embedded within this first point, two additional matters arise that deserve attention. The first involves the need for developing a research agenda in social studies education, and the second focuses on an examination of the professional social studies community. The first of these latter two points we will raise and examine briefly. The second point we will raise, explore in significant detail, and conclude by making its analysis central to our work in this article.

Developing a Research Agenda

Little is known about the actual diversity of ideas and approaches peculiar to classroom social studies teaching and learning, knowledge which would be necessary to build a consensual approach. Despite some research into curricula and its relationship to pedagogy (Shaver, et al, 1979; Shermis & Barth, 1982), and with regard to student attitudes about social studies (Fouts, 1989; Haladyna, et al., 1982a, 1982b; Shaughnessy & Haladyna, 1985; VanSickle, 1990), there has been a general paucity of investigation into social studies education that could be used to construct a viable, normative consensus.

Social studies borrows heavily from the generalizations derived by the disciplines of social science, geography, and history. At its best, it also utilizes the pedagogical approaches of issue-centered instruction, reflective inquiry, and values analysis while incorporating a “citizenship education” theme. In every way, social studies is a unique educational hybrid and, for this reason, a laboratory for an interesting investigation into the purposes of education in general and social education in particular. Insofar as this is the case, we have only marginally begun to avail ourselves of the opportunities inherent in this endeavor. Shulman (1987) puts it this way:

Richly developed portrayals of expertise in teaching are rare. While many characterizations of effective teachers exist, most of these dwell on the teacher's
management of the classroom. We find few descriptions or analyses of teachers that give careful attention not only to the management of students in classrooms, but also to the management of ideas within the classroom. Both kinds of emphasis will be needed if our portrayals of good practice are to serve as sufficient guides to the design of better education. (p. 1; emphasis in the original).

One method of addressing this concern would involve pursuing an investigative agenda designed to discover how pedagogy and subject matter come together in social studies classrooms across the country. This investigative agenda would require a serious commitment to detailed case studies and deep ethnography.

Examining Rhetorical Practices

Developing more in-depth understandings also requires a second approach. It entails the engagement of the social studies profession in a broad and authentic conversation about, at least initially, the rationales presently held to justify curricular and pedagogical choices (Grant & VanSledright, 1990; Newmann, 1977). What we advocate represents a means by which a conversational community could be created. It centralizes the process of open, authentic conversation within the context of a community of educators whose initial task would be to explore the arguments and methods suggested above. However, before continuing, it is necessary describe how such a social studies community can be defined, and suggest the potential parameters of authentic conversation within that community. It is entirely possible that such a community already exists, and therefore, nothing more needs to be said. It is also possible that, if the community exists, its conversational felicity could be improved through productive changes in its institutional practice.

On Building Conversational Community

This community would be characterized by, among other things, a celebration of ideas. This celebration would serve to respect the voice of community members, and assist in providing a variety of solutions to problems that confront the community. Additionally, it would be characterized by (a) articulated and mutually shared definitions of crucially descriptive terms and concepts; (b) a propensity to provide critique and offer self-criticism; and (c) authentic conversation where freedom to speak, trust, and "problem-setting" (Kennedy, 1987) is prized.
A community is defined and legitimated by its members. The common bonds of membership, whether related to occupation, politics, or leisure, act to define the nature and substance of the community. Although there are many benefits, the central benefit of membership derives from possessing the freedom to express one's opinions, ideas, and viewpoints regardless of whether or not they are held as common beliefs within the community. In short, while many communities are characterized by some sort of stratification of membership, the pivotal precept of equal voice is never ignored. Thus, in many ways, communities operate by privileging valued democratic principles.

However, we would be remiss by failing to point out the problematic nature of valuing democratic principles. Clearly, groups, community oriented or otherwise, operate and sustain themselves by having leaders and followers. But in a conversational community, unlike groups that do not value or possess the aforementioned characteristics, the fundamental difference involves the position of voice relative to, for example, the roles of leaders and followers. First, in a conversational community, members acknowledge that roles (follower, leader) have a somewhat malleable quality. For example, a leader may assume the role of a follower in the event that she lacks the appropriate knowledge, skill, or understanding to operate in the role of a leader. Ideally, members are sensitive to the process of deference to situational forms of leadership and followership, and advantage themselves accordingly by listening carefully to all voices. Therefore, power through voice becomes equalized and shared.

Secondly, those called upon to act as leaders attempt to comprehend, command a keen sense of, and be responsive to forms of general commitments within the community of voices. In other words, leadership positions gain warrant by their representation of these immanent voices. And finally, the voice of the membership can be protected by institutionalized and recurring changes in roles. Followers are asked to become leaders and leaders subsequently become followers. When voice is protected and privileged in this manner, authentic conversation becomes normative in the community. This stands as one of its most notable attributes.

Questions, Methods, and Discussion

From the vantage point of this approach to community, we sought to examine the membership of the social studies profession. Because the centrality of voice and its place in authentic conversation appear as key attributes of community, and because these attributes are essential to the process of building consensus within the field, we asked three questions designed, to ascertain whether or not, and/or to what degree, our definition coincided with what presently typifies the
VanSledright and Grant

social studies field. These three questions are: (1) Who speaks and exercises voice and to what degree? (2) What are the topics of interest to the speakers? and (3) What language or rhetoric is used for arguing and advancing topics?

The focus of this inquiry is directed toward developing a perspective on the communication process that crosses over regional or local professional lines. We are interested in a broad sense of the community. Therefore, this inquiry covers the large terrain of national membership in the profession, and includes the public manifestations of this through national conference presentations and journal authorship.

Question One: Who Speaks?

The membership of social studies consists of a number of identifiable parties. Not surprisingly, classroom teachers comprise the largest single group. College and university faculty, state curriculum consultants, local curriculum supervisors, academicians, staff members from affiliated projects, and textbook authors also hold general membership within the field of social studies. One specific means of quantifying that membership is to look at the enrollment rosters of professional organizations. Table 1 provides a breakdown of membership in the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS),

With a large and active professional organization (NCSS), and an even larger pool of unaffiliated members, the social studies profession has enormous potential to make powerful and productive contributions to the educational lives of students. But when membership data was linked with the question, "Who exercises voice within the profession?," some unsettling patterns appeared.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990 Membership:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Council for the Social Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers (Grades 7-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers (Grades K-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College and University Faculty (Includes supervisors and other specialists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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As a means of understanding who engages in talk within the field, we focused attention on the participation patterns of the two largest groups within the profession—classroom teachers and college and university social studies educators. The method consisted of surveying the two leading means of expressing voice within the field—professional journals and national conferences. Simply put, articles written by classroom teachers were counted and that number was compared with the number of articles written by college and university faculty, followed by the same general procedure (with minor exceptions) with respect to presentations at conferences.

The inquiry began with a review of three principal journals in the field of social studies education: Theory and Research in Social Education, Social Education, and Social Studies and the Young Learner. Since this study was designed to develop a perspective rather than to complete an exhaustive account, the scope of the project was restricted. Table 2 provides the range and purview of the articles investigated as well as the patterns of authorship.

Theory and Research in Social Education is described as the research journal of NCSS. Since research is time-consuming, often requires special funding, and is perceived as outside a teacher's normal functions, it is not surprising to see that the dominant authorship in Theory and Research in Social Education comes from the professorial ranks. Even so, we were surprised to discover that of articles contributed over the past several years, all were authored or co-authored by college and university faculty.4

Even more startling, however, was the difference between college and university faculty and classroom teacher contributions to Social Education. Considered to be a vehicle for discussions of practical knowledge and classroom applications, we found little evidence of teacher input as authors. As Table 2 reveals, the overwhelming majority of articles were authored by college and university faculty. Classroom teachers were listed as the authors of only a small percentage. Members of affiliated groups (state curriculum consultants, project directors, specialists, and the like) contributed the balance of the articles.

The new journal, Social Studies and the Young Learner was also dominated by college and university contributions as Table 2 makes clear. The remainder of the articles were written by authors with other affiliations (e.g., specialists, curriculum consultants, project directors).

Turning away from print, we investigated how groups within the social studies profession communicate in other settings. To do so, attention was directed at the participation of classroom teachers and college and university faculty at national conferences. The method involved classifying the affiliation of the presenters of General
Sessions, Special Sessions, Vital Issue Sessions and workshops presented during the 1988 (Orlando, FL), 1989 (St. Louis, MO), and 1990 (Anaheim, CA) National Council for Social Studies conferences. Again, the structural categories were: Classroom teachers, college and university faculty, joint classroom teacher-college and university faculty presenters, and "others."

The analysis of conference presenters yielded quite different results than the study of journal authorship. The NCSS national conferences typically draw large numbers of classroom teachers and, while most choose to attend as non-presenting participants, a large number do respond to the opportunity to lead sessions. The import of this situation became clear when we compared the numbers of classroom teacher and college and university presenters. Whereas college and university faculty write for publication at a rate of almost six to one, virtually no difference between the number of presentations made by classroom teachers and those by college and university faculty emerged.
Table 3 provides a rather clear depiction of this relationship in addition to the more specific statistical breakdown of the affiliations of the presenters.

Were the conferences composed only of these broadly based sessions and workshops, a reasonable conclusion might be that a form of conversational community indeed exists. After all, such conferences are widely attended, there are, as we shall soon show, a wide range of discussion topics, and presenters appear to be broadly representative of the various groups within the social studies field. However, NCSS represents more than one identifiable group. Within the larger organization, three specialty groups have formed—the College and University Faculty Association (CUFA), the Council of State Social Studies Specialists (CS4), and the Social Studies Supervisors' Association (SSSA). These associations hold business meetings and arrange special sessions geared to their particular interests usually in the days immediately preceding the general conference. As a result, while classroom teachers and others interested in attending these sessions are not formally excluded, neither are they expressly included. The analysis of these presentations (see Table 4) supports this contention, and would tend to counter the suggestion that a conversational community exists for the profession at large.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Conference</th>
<th>College &amp; University Faculty</th>
<th>Classroom Teachers</th>
<th>Co-Present</th>
<th>Other*</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orlando, FL (1988)</td>
<td>58 (30%)</td>
<td>55 (29%)</td>
<td>16 (8%)</td>
<td>63 (33%)</td>
<td>192 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis, MO (1989)</td>
<td>43 (24%)</td>
<td>44 (24%)</td>
<td>14 (8%)</td>
<td>81 (44%)</td>
<td>182 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaheim, CA (1990)</td>
<td>72 (29%)</td>
<td>53 (21%)</td>
<td>30 (12%)</td>
<td>96 (38%)</td>
<td>251 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>173 (28%)</td>
<td>152 (24%)</td>
<td>60 (10%)</td>
<td>240 (38%)</td>
<td>625 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Curriculum developers and specialists, experts from private foundations and organization, the media, the U.S. Government, and the like.
In contrast to the CUFA sessions, the CS4 and SSSA sessions offered a slightly different pattern. During the 1988 conference, the presentations during these sessions were dominated, as one might expect, by members of these groups. A much different configuration resulted at the 1989 conference. Here college and university faculty presented a relatively greater number of sessions (see Table 4) than did any other group. The pattern for 1989 was repeated again in 1990 at Anaheim.

Question Two: What are the Topics of Interest?

Similar counting methods were used to answer the second question: What are the topics of interest to the speakers? Again, the focus involved journals and conferences as the sources of data. Lists of topics were enumerated by searching the titles and contents of articles and conference sessions for key terms that best represented the subjects that authors and presenters addressed in the body of their papers and presentations. When the analysis suggested topics that were already present on the list, this was noted by indicating which topics recurred in the communication of ideas and viewpoints. As one might imagine, the list of topics was long and detailed. It goes beyond the scope of this paper to list all the topics, so those selected appear as representative samples. Table 5 presents the recurring topical interests for both the journals and conferences.

The recurrence of certain topics in Social Education can presumably be accounted for in part by the editorial policies of this journal whereby certain issues are devoted to one topic. However, the topic recurring most often--citizenship--spanned many issues. The topics not identified here, but present in the journal, represented a vast array of interests and viewpoints signifying marked diversity. So marked was the array that it would seem social studies education encompasses almost any topic that could possibly be taught under its rubric.

Similarly, Theory and Research in Social Education displayed coverage of a range of topics. As with Social Education, certain topics received recurring attention. These are represented in the second column of Table 5. The newest journal, SSYL, followed the same pattern parlaying a variety of topics, some with multiple occurrences across issues (see the third column of Table 5).

Paralleling the journal inquiry, topics of presentation at the three annual conferences were carefully examined. In keeping with the present line of inquiry, we examined the program catalogues for the past three years (St. Louis, 1989; Orlando, 1988; Anaheim, 1990).
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considering contents of sessions, counting, and generating topical lists. Recurring topics are also presented in Table 5. Reflecting a breadth of interests, several rather curiously esoteric topics such as personal financial planning, and teaching students about responsibility by learning to take care of their pets appeared in the conference schedule. Although the recurring topics indicated some common concerns, by far, the same diversity present in journals, prevailed here as well.

Question Three: What is the Nature of the Use of Language?

For this question, we chose to focus our inquiry on the concept of citizenship education. This was done for several reasons. First, citizenship serves as a pivotal concept in social studies education, and vies for center stage as the rallying theme for the profession. Second, it has been the source of much recent scholarship, both in and beyond the field of social studies. And third, it promises to be a point around which the profession could develop shared meaning and consensual ratification. It therefore begs inquiry and further discussion.

Table 4
Presenters at Recent CUFA and CS4/SSSA Sessions of NCSS National Conferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Conference</th>
<th>College &amp; University Faculty</th>
<th>Classroom Teachers</th>
<th>Co-Present</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orlando, FL (1988)</td>
<td>20(87%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>2(9%)</td>
<td>23(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUFA</td>
<td>4(14%)</td>
<td>3(10%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22(76%)</td>
<td>29(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS4/SSSA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis, MO (1989)</td>
<td>21(91%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2(9%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUFA</td>
<td>9(35%)</td>
<td>1(5%)</td>
<td>8(30%)</td>
<td>8(30%)</td>
<td>26(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS4/SSSA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaheim, CA (1990)</td>
<td>22(76%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5(18%)</td>
<td>1(6%)</td>
<td>28(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUFA</td>
<td>8(33%)</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>5(21%)</td>
<td>10(42%)</td>
<td>24(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS4/SSSA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>84 (55%)</td>
<td>5 (3%)</td>
<td>21 (14%)</td>
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In examining the literature on citizenship education, one is immediately struck by the choral opinion that the term lacks an adequate definition. Leming (1989), for example, notes that, while there are a number of possible explanations for its problematic nature, the "nebulous conceptualization of the goals of citizenship education" (p. 406) appears the most likely culprit. In concrete terms, Pratte (1988) identifies at least three different conceptions of what he terms civic education: instilling national loyalty or patriotism, civic understanding of rights and obligations, and developing virtuous citizens (p. 304). Morrissett (1979) tenders the most telling concern about the term citizenship education when he states that, "It is not clear whether this [citizenship education] means education of citizens or education for citizenship" (p. 13; emphasis in original). Driving the point home, Shermis and Barth (1982) claim that social studies text writers rarely define citizenship education because this permits them to "argue that citizenship is whatever they say it is" (p. 25). If citizenship education, as some would have it, is to function as a unifying theme for social studies education, then this "word magic" is counter-productive. Unfortunately, this study of the social studies profession and its discourse practices shows that attaining clarity is far from certain.

Taking sheer coverage as an indication, what is clear is that citizenship education is integral to social studies education. In the period we studied, citizenship education was the principal topic of 28 journal articles and 39 conference presentations. The editors of Social Education, as part of a year long focus, recently featured citizenship education in a thematic issue (October, 1989) that explored the topic from a number of perspectives. As part of that effort, Cogan (1989) edited a series of articles written about citizenship education by social studies educators from five different nations. In addition, citizenship education was the theme of the very first issue of Social Studies and the Young Learner. Numerous conference sessions have addressed this topic. In fact, McFarland (1990) noted in her 1989 Presidential address entitled, "The Social Studies: Gateway to Citizen Voice, Vision, and Vitality," that the NCSS Board of Directors had chosen "participatory citizenship" as the Council's leadership theme for the next two years (p. 100).

Apart from this apparent enthusiasm in support of citizenship education as the "defining mission" of social studies education, few additional points of consensus emerge. First, the sheer number and variety of associated phrases used in conjunction with citizenship education appears striking. In three articles alone (Barber, 1989; McFarland, 1990; Parker, 1989), at least 20 different variations on the phrase citizenship education were employed. Most surprising,
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however, was the manner in which these phrases were used. With rare exceptions, the authors used this language without definition; phrases like "civic knowledge," and "civic life" were continually inserted throughout the text without adequate referent. For example, McFarland (1990) used both "civic education" and "participatory citizenship" in the same sentence without defining either. Parker (1989) also left "civic education" unexplained and added phrases such as "civic life," and "strong civics" which beg for clarification. Finally, Barber (1989) contributed even further to the apparent confusion with such undefined expressions as "civic knowledge," "civic talk," and "civic questions."

If Barber, McFarland and Parker were, in using this language, merely expressing the same ideas in different forms, one could be more forgiving. Unfortunately, such is not the case. McFarland (1990) clearly comes down on the side of the knowledgeable citizen. Set within a context of disciplinary study, her citizen is "informed," "answers fundamental questions," reflects "civic dispositions," and is engaged in the "continual life-long effort required to form the bits and pieces together into meaningful wholes—into in-depth citizen knowledge" (p. 100).

Reflecting another perspective, Parker (1989) contends that students must possess "civic virtue," the "disposition to think and act on behalf of the public good" (p. 354). Much more so than McFarland, Parker places special emphasis on the first word of the concept "participatory citizenship." Through the study of history and politics, Parker envisions students participating in democratic practices through the discussion of public policy.

Barber (1989) takes Parker one step farther. He uses the phrase "strong democracy" to portray a system in which, "every member of the community participates in self-governance" (p. 355). He explicates this position by suggesting that students are capable of "on-going engagement at local and national levels." Barber, while not explicitly disavowing the disciplinary constructs of McFarland and Parker, clearly establishes his priorities in the practical and the participatory. As a result, he advocates community service, practical political experience, and involvement in school decision-making as necessary to a student's education as a citizen. Such disparate visions for citizenship education recall Longstreet's (1989) observation that the "crisis in citizenship," may actually be a series of crises springing from our "vague conceptions of citizenship" (p. 41).

Implications

One might read the "answers" provided to the three questions in a number of different ways. For now, by way of commentary, we offer a number of observations that reflect our reading.
An analysis of the findings lends support for the arguments advanced by the critics of social studies who contend that the field is mired in a combination of confused meanings and diverse interests. Beard’s (1963) characterization (borrowed by Barr, Barth, and Shermis, 1977) of the field and its subject matter as a “seamless web” appears particularly salient to the findings of this inquiry. Additionally, Barr, Barth, and Shermis’ (1977) use of the term “word magic,” appears well supported following an examination of the rhetorical confusion surrounding one social studies term—citizenship education—alone.

The research presented here also offers support for the contention that there is a form of conversational community present within the profession. The significant breadth of topics discussed in both the journals and the conferences, the debate implied by the crucial juxtaposition of topics and interests, and the variety of participants expressing views (at least at conferences) provides evidence to support this perspective. The substance and nature of this perspective, along with some reservations about its form, serve as the focus of the following specific observations.

Despite the existence of a form of conversation within the social studies community, institutional and organizational practices clearly suggest a stratified system that privileges the voice of college and university speakers. The numbers, documented in this inquiry, provide support for the argument that their voices dominate the conversation in journals and at conferences. There could be several reasons for this.

Classroom teachers have seldom been thought of as experts. This role is usually reserved for college and university faculty, or individuals who have made careers out of a rather narrow line of specialty work. Their worklives tend to be arranged in such a way so as to facilitate their public exercise of voice. This is assured by role responsibilities that increase time allotments usable for research, writing, and public presentation. Compulsion to publish and present as a matter of career enhancement usually serves as a powerful motivator for college and university faculty (and often for specialists). Classroom teachers, on the other hand, face teaching as their main role responsibility, giving them less time to research, write for publication, and make presentations. These differences in roles help in part to account for the disparities of voice documented in institutional practice.9

But acknowledging important and recognizable role differences does not resolve the issue of voice. For example, our analysis of Social Education suggests that voice selection and authorship for a particular theme, operates, in some measure, by a process whereby “experts” are
invited to make contributions. This seems understandable. However, it is troublesome that classroom teachers—certainly expert at many things and on many topics—all too infrequently share their expertise by exercising their voice on the pages of the journal, and thereby to the social studies field at large.

Without casting blame or suggesting that all journals and conference programs change their practice by reserving proportional representation for classroom teachers, we are nevertheless concerned about a substantial number of community members who are unheard and who seem unrepresented. The membership of a minority—the college and university faculty—is clearly favored, and that of the majority—classroom teachers—is at best underrepresented.

The implications of this practice seem quite large. At a crucial level, it forces a reconsideration of the idea that multiple and diverse voices within the community can all have equal voice. As the voices of some are ensured, issues of status are raised that are incompatible with the need for democracy and equality of participation that seem so important to the viability of a community. At the same time, the substance of the conversation becomes suspect. If the contributions of a significant portion of the community to that conversation are muted, then the substantive conclusions put forth to date are not substantive at all, but become problematic and open to serious question.

These differences in voice make possible the speculation that classroom teachers and college and university faculty share little more in common than an interest in similar academic subjects. The distrustfulness between teachers and professors, so long alluded to, becomes an increasingly plausible rejoinder to the complaint that theory has little apparent effect on practice.10 In short, given these conditions, it becomes difficult to envision a community capable of developing shared understandings and commitments to shared goals. Dewey (1961) put it this way

Individuals do not even compose a social group because they all work for a common end. The parts of a machine work with a maximum of cooperativeness for a common result, but they do not form a community. If, however, they were all cognizant of the common end and interested in it so that they regulate their specific activity in view of it, then they would form a community. But this would involve communication. Each would have to know what the other is about and would have to have some way of keeping the other informed as to his own purposes and progress. Consensus demands communication (p. 5).
The second question we asked attempted to identify the topics of interest within the field. Although we have already commented on the breadth and type of these topics in some detail, we would like to expand that analysis to the practice of conversation within the social studies professional community. To this end, we shift to a consideration of national conferences by way of an illustrative example.

The vast quantity of topics detailed in our investigation into conferences fostered the observation that, although they do indeed reflect diversity by their very range, upon closer analysis there seems to be almost no procedure for distinguishing powerful ideas from ones that are less so. This gives the distinct impression that all topics are weighted equally, and conversely, that no topic can be thought to provide a central focus for conversations within the community. This suggests a curious conundrum, for if our observations about voice have merit, then we might look to the topics generated by college and university presenters to provide focal points and central ideas. But considering these topics alone does not point to a solution for the scope of topics here was only slightly less broad than for the conference as a whole.

Some topics, to be sure, recur with a frequency that seems to suggest the ideas they contain are more powerful than are others. Citizenship education serves as a case in point. But this topic is depicted in such a myriad of ways that it virtually defies categorization as a single entity, and therefore as a powerful idea. Here one notices the absence of a rationale and discourse practice for determining substantive topics of conversation within the community. Given the plethora of subjects presented, and the absence of methods for ascertaining powerful topical ideas from ones less so, the relative matter of personal taste seems to prevail. Constructive diversity blurs into disconcerting superfluity.

The final question we posed focused on one particular aspect of conversation, namely the nature of the language the participants use. We conjecture that, for a conversational community to flourish, shared understandings of key terms and concepts is essential. In other words, if language is used injudiciously, opportunities for misunderstandings and miscommunications abound and the potential for conducting an authentic conversation diminishes.

Frankly, the results of the inquiry are not very encouraging with respect to this question. The lack of clear definitions and the casual use of language (particularly evident with regard to the term citizenship) quickly becomes disturbing. That the arguments presented by the authors highlighted here were cogent and pertinent to the field is commendable. However, what fails to be apparent is whether any two educators are talking about the same thing. Although each addressed the preparation of good citizens, in some senses that was the
only commonality they shared. The incautious use of modifying or associative phrases that, while generally undefined, were used as if commonly understood, confounded the matter even further.

That the profession fails to hold shared understandings of terms like citizenship education remains troubling. After all, with a history that spans 75 years, it is discomforting to realize that conversants continually talk past one another. However, this situation need not continue. In fact, acknowledging that the profession lacks common definitions may well provide both the impetus and the place upon which to build a conversation.

Longstreet (1985), adding to Engle (1982), has argued that “there is a need for the establishment of a [scholarly] discipline of citizenship. Without such a discipline, it is unlikely that the definition of the field of social studies can be accomplished, depending as it does so heavily on the goal of achieving good citizenship” (p.27). This suggestion and its rationale meshes nicely with what we have in mind here. Perhaps this discipline and the conversation it would inspire could be sponsored and supported by NCSS. Such sponsorship would include, by necessity we presume, participants from the full spectrum of social studies' professional ranks. We remain at a loss to explain why it has yet to occur given all the recent attention paid to citizenship education.

Conclusion

In many ways, this study generated considerably more questions than it resolved. Though limited to the field of social studies, we now wonder whether similar observations would hold for other fields. A more fundamental question asks whether a community that engages itself in thoughtful conversation is, in fact, necessary. Clearly our position is yes.

But without doubt, other answers to the question of how best to effect change in social studies education exist (Hertzberg, 1981). Some would advocate sweeping curricular reform and would reconstitute social studies into “history and geography,” or “history and the social sciences.” Others, seeing the problem as administrative, would propose, for example, keeping some version of the expanding horizons curriculum, but effectively making it the national curriculum. Still others see the issue primarily in terms of improving teacher knowledge and practice: If teachers were simply more knowledgeable about subject matter and better trained as teachers, the problems of social studies would take care of themselves.

While we do not necessarily disagree with any of these suggestions, we contend that they have never been seriously considered through an authentic conversation within the social studies community.
Instead, like so many other ideas, they are cycled through without thorough study and discussion. We see the potential for a conversational community to break this cycle. In effect, we advance the idea that conversation can provide a forum whereby all voices within the profession can be heard. In addition, we understand conversation to be the means through which powerful ideas can be distinguished, nurtured, and brought forth having undergone the scrutiny of the community.

However, this is not an unproblematic situation, and we end this inquiry as we began it, with a series of questions: (1) How can the community insure that all voices are heard by a process of reasonable and appropriate representation? (2) As an authentic conversational community develops, how does it decide which ideas to put forth for discussion? (3) By what standards or criteria are ideas judged? and (4) What are the means by which the community constructs shared understandings? That these questions are difficult, there is no question. However, if we are to "see this community as ours, shaped rather than found..." (Rorty, 1983; emphasis in the original), then they are the community's to answer.

Endnotes

1 Taken from Richard Rorty's (1983) The Consequences of Pragmatism.

2 Since only one-third of NCSS members indicate their precise positions on enrollment forms, a more detailed breakdown of the organization's entire membership is unavailable.

3 For the purposes of this paper, we counted only the principal articles in each journal. For Social Education, for example, this meant that we did not count articles in the Instructional Media, Eric/Chess, Books, Letters, or Gallery sections.

4 As Table 2 indicates, only two were co-authored by classroom teachers and college and university faculty.

5 We did not include in our analysis, sessions devoted to council governance, special interest groups, technology labs, or poster sessions.

6 Many of the CS4 and SSSA members hold joint memberships and several sessions were designated as appropriate to both groups. It was our decision, therefore, to count them as one category.

7 We borrow this term from Barr, Barth, and Shermis (1977) whose description is apropos: "'Word magic' is a term that comes form the field of general semantics. It refers to a particular way of using words. Instead of employing language to communicate meaning, people use
languages as if they were trying to wish something into existence” (p. 9; emphasis added).

8Barber (1989) uses the following phrases: civic knowledge, strong democracy, civic experience, traditional civics, civic talk, civic forms of judgment, public talk, political talk, and civic questions. McFarland (1990) uses civic dispositions, strong participatory citizenship, civic education, participatory citizenship, citizen voice, and positive citizenship. Parker (1989) uses democratic citizenship, civic life, strong civics, and civic virtue.

9The reasons that help account for the disparities of voice deserve a lengthy and sustained discussion of their own. Such an undertaking goes significantly beyond the scope of this analysis. Our brief and sketchy remarks on this matter will have to suffice.

10For a biting commentary illustrating this complaint in regard to student teachers, see Shermis and Barth (1982).

References


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BOOK REVIEWS

A Note from the Book Review Editor

I am delighted to serve as the new Book Review Editor of Theory and Research in Social Education. Emerson once said: "Tis the good reader that makes the good book." It is with this in mind that I hope TRSE will become a sounding board for readers of the kind of books that can have an impact on our profession. We wish to consider books for review which focus on significant topics, issues and concerns that are directly related to social studies education. Reviews of books which cover a wide range of topics such as research, theory, philosophy, history and classroom practices, among others, are encouraged.

Normally, book reviews are solicited by the Book Review Editor. Book reviews published in TRSE are of two kinds:

1) Essay reviews are longer than the usual book review, and attempt to compare two or more books that deal with the same or highly similar topics. An essay review may also be constructed so as to relate the book being reviewed to issues or historical perspectives in the field. Essay reviews should be no more than 5000 words in length.

2) Book notes are brief reviews that include books either directly related to social studies education or books from the various social science disciplines, sociology, curriculum theory, qualitative and quantitative theory and biographies. These reviews are to be 500 words in length and should give a perspective only on the book reviewed.

In this issue, we present two essay reviews.

Perry Marker
September, 1991
ESSAY REVIEW

Engaging in Renewal


Review by NORMAN E. WALLEN, School of Education, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132

This slim volume should be of considerable value to anyone seriously interested in resurrecting the social studies curriculum in a way that is viable. Eschewing the easy and sometimes reactionary answers provided by the so-called "reform movement," Parker comes out unequivocally for renewal from within—to be brought about by teachers at the local level. Such an approach is perhaps the only one likely to bring about real change and it is surely the only one consistent with the democratic process. Accepting the need to stay, at least roughly, within the traditional subject matter focus (history, geography, civics, and perhaps, sociology, psychology, economics, anthropology), he nonetheless places primary emphasis on development of an informed, concerned and participating citizenry. He gives life to his own view of the essential learning (the democratic ideal, cultural diversity, economic development, global perspective and participatory citizenship) by raising a variety of important questions which, at appropriate difficulty levels, can and should be addressed throughout 12-13 years of schooling. Consistent with his commitment to democratic processes, Parker acknowledges the necessity and desirability of local debate as to what the questions—and even the essentials themselves—should be.

To Parker, the heart of democratic character is the wherewithal to deliberate, which he defines (quoting Gutmann)\(^1\) as "careful consideration with a view to decision" (p. 6). Further, "to educate children for democratic character is thus to educate them to share in ruling, in deliberation. . . " (p. 7). Consistent with this position (and having other virtues as well) is his commitment to a curriculum which is genuinely thought-provoking to students and focused on a limited number of essential learnings (and topics) that are treated in depth.

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Renewing the Social Studies Curriculum

Since Parker's primary purpose is to help teachers engage in the renewal process at the local level, he devotes considerable space to a discussion of factors in school organization which often impede the kind of development he advocates. These include departmentalization, testing, teaching, the limited knowledge base of teachers and the mission of the school (real as opposed to publicized). He has suggestions for addressing each of these, prominent among them being a community curriculum advisory board which can serve as a vehicle both for input and for facilitating connections between the curriculum and the politics, workplaces and other aspects of the community at large. While none of the preceding is new, it is presented in a way that is both persuasive and readable.

After presenting and analyzing a fictitious "case study" of the deliberations of a school district curriculum renewal committee which is based on his experiences as a consultant, Parker gets down to specific guidelines which seem to make a sensible compromise between academic theorizing and the practical experience of teachers. The first step he suggests is a comparison of the formal, written curriculum, with the taught curriculum as identified in writing, by (hopefully) each teacher. This is followed by eight other steps designed to produce a manageable curriculum arrived at through consensus. Next, Parker discusses five pitfalls he has encountered: (a) no deliberation, (b) great plan, no materials, (c) not setting priorities, (d) leaving students out; and (e) rushing to pet solutions. The great virtue of this section is the specific examples given throughout.

Having presented and illustrated his conception of the goals of curriculum revision and a practical implementation model for use by a working committee, Parker next addresses an illustrative group of issues likely to be raised by teachers and/or community groups. These include such items as "whose values are being promoted" and "what does global education mean?" Among teachers, his discussion of "special topic enthusiasts," "skills enthusiasts," and "self esteem enthusiasts" will ring true. The topics presented and the suggestions made for dealing with them reflect both the author's experience with such matters and his willingness to confront them.

Familiarity with existing alternative curricula should enrich and review the planning process. Parker discusses the commonly used "national curriculum pattern" (the expanding environments cycle–K6) and three more specific proposals: the NCSS recommendation, the Kniep "Global Education" model and a model emphasizing citizenship for the Twenty-first Century (Hartoonian and Laughlin). While this section is likely to put the casual reader to sleep, it nonetheless makes many valid and important points.

The final section of the volume is devoted to making assessment meaningful for both evaluation and instruction. Following Parker's
three principles should go a long way in this direction: They are: (a) assessment activities should closely resemble learning activities; (b) they should require higher-order thinking; and (c) students should know what performance is expected. Most of the examples given seem to satisfy the first two principles, but some are questionable (e.g., having summarized a recent international conflict and discussed the influence of climate, resources, and location on the conflict, the student "sketches from memory (sic) a map of the region showing national boundaries, capitals (sic), and salient landforms"). There are several instances throughout where Parker seems to make such an exception for geography. More problematic is his treatment of the last principle—particularly since scoring assessment tasks is considered an "important, but secondary problem. The primary problem is identifying the kinds of exhibitions. We can worry later about a fair, efficient and objective method for grading them" (p. 91). Maybe. This reviewer's experience, however, is that the development of such scoring is a major undertaking and must be given high priority if principle number three is to be upheld. If it is not, students will soon find it out and feel they have been had.

Having, I hope, made it clear that I am in agreement with Parker philosophically and that I think his volume is a definite contribution, I must move to some caveats. I don't think he does justice to the variety of strongly held views likely to be found among a faculty curriculum committee. While his fictitious committee has some important disagreements (training workers vs. educating citizens, for example), most of them are procedural. If the views of social studies teachers identified by Goodman and Adler extend to all grade levels (as I suspect they do), differences are much more serious. While the view that social studies is a "non-subject" is not likely to be represented on the committee, it surely exists at the elementary level. Other views are likely to be heard including social studies as human relations or textbook knowledge; or the great integrator of all content areas; or social responsibility/action; or training in patriotism. While consensus that the overriding concern should be preparation for participatory citizenship (as Parker defines it) may emerge, Parker seems too sanguine about it.

While it may be unfair to ask Parker to go beyond his intention of providing a usable model, it seems reasonable to complain about his failure to include his experience on this issue. Is it the case that he has

not encountered the diversity of strongly held views suggested by Goodman and Adler (and by this writer's experience)?

Another issue not addressed is inherent in the democratic process. The deliberations and conclusions of such a committee are bound to be strongly influenced by the roles and personalities of the members. How can we be confident that those philosophically committed to "careful consideration" will not lose out to louder voices inclined toward the very simple answers Parker eschews? Parker's philosophy commits him to accepting a decision to promote "patriotism," however much he may dislike it. It would be a great service if he were to include specific suggestions (perhaps materials) for use by any who hope to persuade their fellow teachers of his philosophy.

Finally, I come to the broader community. If our social critics are anywhere near the mark, very few of our citizens care to be active participants in a democracy, representative or otherwise. We prefer to leave government, at all levels, to someone else, subject always to spasmodic criticism when our particular ox is being gored. How then to engender support for Parker's admirable goals—even on the advisory board? Consider the following:

I envision employers agreeing to require of a job applicant, in addition to the firm's application form, indications of the applicant's ability to write, read, and compute, as well as participate as a citizen in a democratic community. Applicants might be asked to submit a portfolio that includes a school transcript, a written analysis of a public policy controversy the community faces and, as an indicator of computational ability, an explanation of statistics on a recent local election or demographic trends in the neighborhoods (p.22).

While the idea is laudable, I simply can't imagine it happening in any community I know. Whether by design (as some critical theorists would have it) or by default, our educational system has clearly failed to date in its charge to educate the citizenry for participatory democracy. How then, do we expect our citizens to rally to this cause in the education of their children?

The seemingly unsolvable dilemma of government is, as ever, how to procure enough individuals with the talent, energy and personal integrity to serve the entire community when the community desperately wishes to be left alone and consequently is eminently manipulable by the existing power structure. A friend of mine is seriously depressed by the ease with which the U.S. public is led to ecstasy over killing 150,000 Iraqis, running up oil profits and leading
the nation further into economic trouble. I keep telling him we aren't really that cruel or stupid; just ignorant and selfish.

Were I to set about trying to implement Parker's model, I'm afraid I would select my committee and my advisory board very carefully, thus vitiating the model's commitment to true democracy.
ESSAY REVIEW

Making Sense of Social Studies: Maginot Line for the Field?


Review by LYNN R, NELSON, School of Education, University of Maine, Orono, ME

The title of this review captures an overall feeling of forboding that encompassed my reading of David Jenness' insightful and scholarly analysis of social studies. This work clearly and elaborately examines the intellectual history of social studies, history, and the social sciences as they were conceived by university theorists, yet remains myopic regarding the role which elementary and secondary teachers play in defining the field for students. Additionally, Dr. Jenness' "grounds for hope," (changes he believes that will reform social studies) appear very inadequate given the intellectual and programmatic challenges to the field mustered by the advocates of the history-social science rationale.

In reality, *Making Sense of Social Studies* should be three separate works: the first is Jenness' elaborate analysis of the social studies; the second is the missing chapter(s), the social studies as defined and practiced by teachers and students; the third is the "grounds for hope," trends which Jenness feels will improve social studies. In all fairness to Jenness, the majority of his work is excellent; it provides social studies educators with a depth of historical perspective regarding the field that was previously missing.

The book is organized around five major themes: The Scope of Social Studies, History of the Curriculum, The Subject Matters, Conflicts and Concerns, and a Conclusion. The initial three sections provide the reader with a rich description and analysis of the field from the perspective of university theorists.

The initial chapters focus on the history of the social studies curriculum. These chapters provide researchers with a wealth of information regarding the development of the curriculum. The author moves beyond merely chronicling the changes in the curriculum to placing these changes and controversies within the larger social picture. For example, he clearly analyzes the cross purposes associated with progressive education: "social meliorism, social determinism, social efficiency, and social reform." This perspective enables Jenness to capture the ambiguities that attended the birth of social studies and that remain with us today.
Perhaps the most impressive parts of this study are the chapters devoted to the disciplines and subjects which comprise social studies. Jenness' command of these subjects results in an elaborate analysis of the dominant ideas which shaped these disciplines in the twentieth century.

In the chapters that comprise a section on "Conflicts and Concerns" Jenness addresses many of these issues which have concerned social studies educators in recent years. His analysis of the test score controversy is extremely well documented and enlightening. By placing the controversy in an historical context, he separates fact from fiction regarding test construction and interpretation. His examination of changes in tests scores from generation to generation and the factors which influence test scores should prove interesting and valuable to individuals responsible for interpreting test scores for the public.

The majority of Making Sense of Social Studies contributes greatly to our understanding of the field. There are several areas which I believe require more extensive examination, however, if we are to adequately understand social studies.

Jenness fails to give adequate attention to the importance of the classroom teacher in determining the purposes, content, and methods of social studies instruction. Any study which purports to make sense of the field cannot afford to ignore the beliefs and actions of elementary and secondary teachers. To be sure, classroom teachers share some of the beliefs expressed by members of the university-based academic community. However, recent research has indicated that the culture of the school and expectations of colleagues and students have persuasive effects on teachers' actions which may be more important than the ideas of university theorists. McNeil\(^1\) provides a detailed analysis of the factors which enter teachers' thinking as they define the social studies. She concludes that teachers often design their classes to control students rather than attain intellectual or citizenship purposes. While a number of important surveys, such as Project SPAN, are included in Jenness' study, the neglect of this relevant qualitative research has the effect of over-estimating the ability of university-based theorists to initiate and maintain educational changes in elementary and secondary classrooms.

Additionally, few pages are devoted to the education of social studies teachers. While the study recognizes several of the key issues facing teacher education (i.e., the weak content background of elementary teachers, and the little time spent by secondary students in learning and applying instructional skills), the author fails to

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learning and applying instructional skills), the author fails to recognize the consequences of these circumstances. As many authors have reported, teachers are informally socialized into patterns of behavior that are acceptable to their colleagues in elementary, middle, or high schools. Elementary and secondary teachers apprentice for their professions for a minimum of twelve years prior to entering the university. They then study formally for four years, (a time which may also include substantial periods of classroom socialization while they observe, teach lessons, and student teach). Finally, they obtain their initial teaching position whereupon their success or failure is determined by institutional norms.

I do not wish to belabor this issue of teacher education. However, the classroom teacher creates a sense of the social studies for her students in the way she organizes her instruction and countless other decisions that are part of the curriculum and hidden curriculum. Current research indicates that the culture of the school is a powerful determinant of teachers’ beliefs and actions. In order to make sense of social studies, we must understand the central role of the teacher and the processes which form her beliefs.

The recommendations, "grounds for hope," which the author is able to derive from his study are inadequate to meet the challenges to current practices established by advocates of a history-social science curriculum, or critics within the social studies community. I believe this weakness is due to two factors:

- The failure to confront the necessity of providing a rationale, or perhaps a set of competing rationales for social studies.
- The failure to understand the importance of the classroom teachers as the ultimate arbiter of social studies.

My understanding of the purpose of this work is that it is to provide an intellectual framework for the definition of social studies. Critics of the field, from Author Bestor in the 1950s to current advocates of revision have labeled social studies as "muddled," "utilitarian," "presentiatic," "overly concerned with intellectual skills," etc. This list of complaints could be continued for several pages. Jenness paints a wonderfully elaborate picture of the importance each discipline and subject play in the social studies, but he fails to sum these components. Social studies is more than the accretion of academic disciplines.

In a very real sense, advocates of a history centered curriculum have defined social studies, provided an elaborate rationale for history as the core of the curriculum, and established the scope of the debate. Although the search for a rationale, or competing rationales, may have been beyond the scope of this study, I did expect the author to call upon social studies advocates to articulate a rationale, or
Lynn R. Nelson

several rationales to define their beliefs. Without definition not only is it impossible to make sense of the field, but more importantly, it may be impossible to win the debate with the field's detractors.

The study identifies three "grounds for hope" in the future of social studies. Although I admire the scholarship which was required in order to conduct this study, I believe these trends reflect the author's lack of attention to classroom-based research.

Jenness believes that there is hope in the improvement and revision of textbooks. There are both philosophical and empirical issues related to textbook use. The reliance on a textbook is antithetical to purposes for social studies which stress social criticism, inquiry, and decision making. Critics of textbook use point out the power of authors to omit and bias information available to students. On a practical level, studies of teacher use of New Social Studies curriculum projects conclude that teachers altered the materials to suit their purposes; inquiry activities were altered to work sheets or even lecture notes. I believe Jenness' faith that scholars are . . . "in a position to establish workable quality control over textbooks that few school systems or public groups will question" elevates the scholar to a position far above the actual esteem accorded academics by teachers and segments of the public. In fact, there is a significant body of evidence that various segments of the public, for example the Christian Conservatives, view academics with distrust and many teachers view them as of marginal importance to the work of the schools.

The second ground for hope is the "gradual convergence of the disciplines to new patterns." According to the author, the convergence of scholarly interests across disciplines will result in greater cooperation among scholars representing the various disciplines. This would alter the social studies through a greater emphasis on interdisciplinary education in colleges and universities. This certainly has the possibility to benefit social studies instruction at some future data. However, it raises other issues that were not considered in the study. Will these students engage in inquiry and other student- and group-centered learning activities as part of their undergraduate education? Secondary and elementary social studies teachers pattern their methods after individuals they admire. Too often these are the inspiring lecturers they learned from in the university. I agree with Dr. Jenness that interdisciplinary study holds the promise of improved social studies instruction. However, I believe a more important issue is the type of learning activities in which students engage.

Given budget constraints, I am not sanguine about the prospects of improving the preparation of our undergraduate students. The convergence of ideas across the disciplines is important, but I believe smaller class sizes and the use of a variety of instructional techniques by all professors, individuals in the Arts and Sciences, as well as those
in Colleges of Education hold greater promise for the improvement of social studies instruction in elementary and secondary schools.

Dr. Jenness' third ground for hope is in the flexibility of the middle school as an institution and the eagerness of middle school teachers to adopt new ideas and means of instruction. I agree with him that the middle school organization affords a good opportunity to teach an interdisciplinary social studies curriculum. However, I believe there is a real danger in focusing our attention on one segment of the social studies curriculum. Do we wish to relinquish the high school curriculum to a history-centered focus? Are elementary students to study myths and the biographies of "great persons." I do not believe that Dr. Jenness wishes us to concentrate on the middle school to the exclusion of other grades. I do believe it is seductive to identify a "critical period" in the lives of students and therefore lose sight of our responsibility to implement a thoughtful program in social studies from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Making Sense of Social Studies is a remarkable work. In many ways it mirrors the social studies, both past and present. Making Sense of Social Studies is indeed a valuable addition to the professional library of social studies educators and it should be required reading for graduate students in social studies education. The quality of the thought and research that is contained within its pages will provide scholars with intriguing questions for future studies. Students of the social studies will gain a rich understanding of the contributions that each of the disciplines has made to social studies. Furthermore, the disciplines are analyzed within a historical context; a line of inquiry which has too long been ignored by all but a few researchers.

As a body of scholarly work, its merits vastly outweigh its limitations. Perhaps it would have been more appropriate to title the study: "History and the Social Sciences Revisited." At this level of focus, the study adds greatly to our understanding of social studies.

My reservations focus on the mis-match between the attempt to make sense of the field and the failure to include sufficient data on classroom teachers. Granted, historical information regarding classroom instruction is more difficult to locate than the records of commission meeting. However, it is impossible to comprehend or define the social studies if one does attend to the beliefs and actions of elementary and secondary teachers.

Furthermore, failure to factor in the pivotal importance of the classroom teacher, and the environment in which she works, severely limits one's ability to recognize opportunities for improvement in instructional and curricular practices and to sustain these practices into the future.

If one of the purposes of this study is to provide an intellectual defense of social studies, it has created a Maginot Line. Impeccably
reasoned arguments have been constructed around the fortification of the various disciplines. A myriad of research fortifies these positions. But our critics have chosen a different route. They ask, what is your rationale? Will the social studies community fortify this position?
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