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Editorial

In this issue, we offer an unusually provocative set of articles, ranging from a portrait of in-depth instruction to a view of social studies as a low classroom priority. We also include a type of research investigation that we rarely receive or have the chance to publish, a citation analysis study.

Specifically, John Rossi looks at in-depth social studies teaching and learning in one high school classroom. He concludes that such an environment must be organized around essential issues and extensive classroom discussion to foster critical and reflective thinking among students, and he offers cautious recommendations regarding future reforms based on depth study. Jane Heckley Kon examines the relationship between classroom instruction and textbook use among seven 5th-grade teachers by analyzing their approach to a new social studies textbook. She reports three distinct styles of textbook use and asserts that the teachers' curricular planning was not particularly dependent on the text.

Neil Houser provides an illuminating view of social studies as underrepresented in elementary classrooms. He describes some of the factors that contribute to its low status and suggests ways to bring it to the forefront, citing the importance of social studies to citizenship development. Following this article is James Leming and Murry Nelson's citation analysis of The Handbook of Research on Social Studies Teaching and Learning, edited by James Shaver. In their study, Leming and Nelson tallied references to authors, specific pieces of scholarship, and journal citations. Drawing upon their findings, they report interesting conclusions about the social studies research base.

Finally, we present a reaction by David Warren Saxe to Oliver Keels' review (Volume XXI, Number 2) of Saxe's recent book Social Studies Teaching in the Schools, followed by Keels' response.

We believe you will enjoy the articles in this issue. As always, we welcome your comments.

Jack R. Fraenkel
May, 1995
IN-DEPTH STUDY IN AN ISSUES-ORIENTED SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

John Allen Rossi
Virgina Commonwealth University

Abstract
Much social studies instruction at the secondary level emphasizes the coverage and memorization of fragmented information; critics of this learning method have called for more in-depth instruction. This article proposes a definition of in-depth instruction, and constructs a portrait of its inception in one issues-oriented high school classroom. Gathering and analyzing data from classroom observations, interviews, and a student survey, the author asserts that (1) central to such instruction is the organization of knowledge around essential issues, the use of knowledge to take positions on issues, and extensive classroom discourse; (2) three teaching dilemmas give practical pedagogical meaning to in-depth study; and (3) students voice a more tentative, complex, diverse, and tolerant disposition toward knowledge at the end of the instruction. The author offers cautionary words and provides direction for instituting such reforms in the future.

A Rationale for In-Depth Study

Recent critics of secondary social studies have decried its emphasis on breadth of coverage at the expense of in-depth study (Sizer, 1985; Newmann, 1986, 1988; Wiggins, 1989; Van Sickle & Hoge, 1991; Parker, 1991; Sears & Parsons, 1991). This controversy over breadth and depth goes to the heart of the profession's search for direction and purpose reflecting nothing less than a dispute about the goals of social studies education. At the core of the breadth argument is a concern about cultural transmission and knowledge acquisition (Gagnon, 1985; Hirsch, 1987; Ravitch, 1985). Supporters fear that in-depth study overlooks the shared information required for cultural continuity. At the core of the depth argument is a concern for critical and reflective thinking as tools for producing a more complex student
understanding and more thoughtful citizens. Advocates fear that breadth reduces knowledge to meaningless lists of memorized facts.

However deep the disagreement over goals may be, it cannot hide the pervasiveness of coverage approaches in many social studies classrooms. Several studies reveal that social studies curricula in many high schools consist largely of isolated fragments of information without coherence or focus. Powell, Farrar, and Cohen (1985) describe treaties between teachers and students in which academic intensity is reduced in favor of partial knowledge. McNeil (1986) defines this as defensive teaching—a way of maintaining classroom control. Meanwhile, national tests report how little high school students know about American history and government (Finn & Ravitch, 1988), and students report that social studies is boring because of its emphasis on memorization of endless facts that they say are of little importance to their lives (Schug, Todd, & Beery, 1984).

The argument for in-depth study emanates from three sources. First, it comes from a belief that such study fosters goals critical to producing informed and thoughtful citizens. Second, it is a response both to the delusion that every important piece of information can be taught and to the mindless and trivial pursuit associated with such rote learning. Last, it springs from the need to engage students by refocusing attention on the use of knowledge to understand issues of importance to students and society. Clearly the call for depth study derives from problems central to the profession's search for direction and purpose.

**Definition of In-depth Study**

While concern over mindless instruction and student disengagement has produced many calls for in-depth study, no proposal has clearly defined it. To produce an operational definition, I examined examples of curricula labeled as in-depth (Halsey, 1963; Taba, Levine, & Esley, 1964; Oliver & Newmann, 1971; Lockwood & Harris, 1985; Ladenburg, 1988) and found four common characteristics:

1. The use of knowledge that is complex, thick, and divergent about a single topic, concept, or event using sources that range beyond the textbook;
2. Essential and authentic issues or questions containing ambiguity, doubt, or controversy;
3. A spirit of inquiry that provides opportunities, support, and assessment mechanisms for students to manipulate ideas in ways that transform their meaning; and
4. Sustained time on a single topic, concept, or event.
Other forms of effective instruction, including coverage-based methods, may contain one or more of these characteristics. The purpose of defining in-depth study in this way is to distinguish it both from superficial, textbook-driven, coverage approaches that emphasize recall of information and from those approaches that include extensive knowledge on a single subject but without focus on essential issues and the sense of inquiry necessary for student understanding. In-depth study is not to be interpreted as mountains of disorganized information on a single topic in which the teacher determines the meaning of the knowledge. In-depth study combines coherently organized in-depth knowledge with student inquiry and sufficient time. It calls for the existence and integration of the above four characteristics in any given unit or series of lessons.

The operational definition of in-depth study incorporates elements of a constructivist view of learning. The underpinnings of its definition come from Piaget's and Dewey's perspectives about learning. Piaget asserted that learning is an active and internal process in which every individual constructs an idiosyncratic meaning for knowledge through the creation of mental structures. These mental structures function to organize and filter information, directing attention to patterns of usable knowledge rather than to isolated bits of information (Cornbleth, 1985; Torney-Purta, 1991). Changing one's understanding of knowledge involves identifying misconceptions, challenging them with new information and different perspectives, and building and using new structures (Duckworth, 1979; Cornbleth, 1985). In-depth study reflects this concept of learning in its call for organizing information around essential and authentic questions and challenging extant student understanding of a topic through exposure to divergent perspectives.

Dewey (1933) believed that thinking involves two phases: (1) a state of doubt, hesitation, or perplexity in which thinking about knowledge originates, and (2) an active search to find knowledge to resolve the mystery. This process involves commencing with problems from ordinary life experiences, expanding those experiences toward a richer more organized form in which subject matter is presented, utilizing knowledge to solve problems, and providing sufficient time to digest and translate knowledge (Dewey, 1933; 1938). In-depth study reflects this Deweyan perspective in its spirit of inquiry about questions of doubt, ambiguity, or controversy and in opportunities for students to manipulate and give meaning to knowledge.

More recent research by cognitive psychologists supports these perspectives. Expert-novice research (Voss, Tyler, & Yengo, 1983; Voss, Greene, & Post, 1983; Voss, 1983; Chi, 1985) indicates that utility of knowledge depends upon its density and organization. Some researchers (Johnson & Johnson, 1979; Glaser, 1984; Cornbleth, 1985; Gardner, Perkins, & Perrone, 1991) argue that student understanding of
knowledge depends upon its importance to the disciplines, its openness to doubt and interpretation, its potential use to solve problems, and the interest it arouses among students. The definition of in-depth study contains all of these elements.

While theory and research examine how knowledge should be selected, organized, and utilized, they ignore the externalities of the classroom. Their focus is on how knowledge should be, not on how in fact it is organized and utilized. Any understanding of what happens to the theoretical perspectives of Piaget and Dewey when they confront the social interaction of a real classroom is missing. What happens to the tenets of in-depth study and its theoretical underpinnings in the context of the practical realities of everyday classroom teaching?

The Practitioner and the Social Context of Teaching

What obstacles might impede the practice of in-depth study? They are myriad, and they reside in the beliefs of teachers, the institutional and social context of schools, and the broader outside social forces that affect classroom practice. Research on teacher beliefs, institutional features, and external social forces suggests a complex web of interrelationships that have a powerful influence on classroom practice. The boundaries between these forces and the classroom are often overlapping and invisible. Many teachers hold beliefs about the purpose of social studies education, the nature of knowledge, and student ability that justify their preference for content coverage (Eslinger & Superka, 1982; Onosko, 1991). Research on the institutional context indicates that social studies reform is often inhibited by structural and organizational obstacles such as class size and teacher isolation (Cuban, 1984; McNeil, 1986; McCarthy & Schrag, 1990).

Despite these obstacles, it is equally important to remember that reform is possible within the structure of extant institutions (Ladwig & King, 1991; King, 1991). One key element within the traditionally structured school involves the everyday social context of the classroom, which contains the beliefs and practical knowledge of teachers, and the social interaction between teacher and student and among students. Both Shulman (1987) and Elbaz (1983) claim that a teacher's daily functioning in the classroom and decisions about instruction reflect practical knowledge, a complex, practically oriented set of understandings that merge content and pedagogy and spring from the decision-oriented nature of the teacher's situation. In her research on teachers' attempts to translate constructivist theory into practice, Lampert (1984; 1985) found that they encounter practical dilemmas resulting from contradictory beliefs and outside expectations. The teacher's task was to adjust his or her ideas about what should be
taking place in the classroom to the moment-to-moment reality of what was really happening.

The research in this area has implications for in-depth study, suggesting that its definition and the way it employs knowledge face alteration by the practical knowledge of teachers and the interaction with the complex realities of the classroom. The research that follows in this article is an attempt to apply the definition of in-depth study and its theoretical underpinnings about learning to the reality of classroom practice. While earlier research (Oliver & Shaver, 1966; Levin, Newmann, & Oliver, 1969; Newmann, 1991) on programs similar to in-depth study emphasized the effects of such programs, the research reported here will describe and analyze what such programs look like as they encounter classroom reality. Its purpose is not to confirm or disconfirm a hypothesis or to predict the performance of teachers and students, but rather to describe and analyze how a definition and its theoretical underpinnings apply to practice. Using a qualitative case study of an in-depth classroom, this research is designed to answer the question what does in-depth study look like in practice. In particular, it explores three issues: (1) How and why is knowledge selected, organized, and utilized in the depth classroom, and what meaning do students give it; (2) what is the nature of the social interaction in the classroom, and what meaning do students give it; and (3) what practical teaching dilemmas do teachers face in the everyday practice of in-depth study.

Research Design

These issues are consistent with a research paradigm that reflects the contextualized, complex, and holistic nature of teaching (Shulman, 1986; Armento, 1991; Cornbleth, 1991). Assuming that reality is constructed socially, such a paradigm advocates the use of interpretive fieldwork and qualitative methods as a means to interpret that reality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Erickson, 1990). Erickson (1990) argues that fieldwork is best when it is difficult to control and isolate variables because the environment is too complex, when the focus is on events in a particular setting, and when the concern is with the meanings that participants bring into the setting. Because these circumstances correspond closely with the research questions mentioned, I constructed two interpretive, qualitative case studies (see Merriam, 1988) of in-depth approaches to social studies.

Setting and Participants

The selection of the settings and participants was purposive and criterion based. I chose two classrooms where the curricula corresponded closely with the four components of the definition. The Crawford
classroom was an elective on future studies that explored social issues related to technology and bioethics. The Martin classroom focused on a one-semester contemporary issues class based upon a model developed by Oliver, Shaver, and Newmann. Because of space limitations, I will report on only the Martin classroom. Heterogeneously grouped, the class contained 26 students (14 female, 12 male) mostly from white, middle, and upper middle class homes. Martin High School is one of four traditionally structured high schools in a midwestern city with a population of approximately 200,000.

In addition to my role as a participant/observer, other participants included the teacher, Kenneth Lansbury, his third period class, and five designated students in the class. Holding a master's degree in political science, Lansbury was in his 26th year of teaching and was largely responsible for conceptualizing and planning the public issues course. The selection of student interviewees was not random. Taking into account the diversity of the class in terms of race, gender, social class, and ability, Lansbury proposed the names of several students. After observing the behaviors of the students in class, I selected three to interview, one female and two males, from different levels of academic achievement and whose parents' occupations ranged from waitress to businessman. Because I was unsure of the credibility of the interview data gathered after the first round, I selected two additional female students for the final round.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection and initial analyses extended over the course of one full semester. I employed primarily qualitative methods in data collection, including four interviews with Lansbury, two interviews with three students, and one interview with the two other students. All interviews were semistructured guided by a small number of open-ended, descriptive, or structural questions (Spradley, 1979). Follow-up questions were asked to probe responses. The length of each interview with Lansbury was approximately 60 minutes, while each student interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. In addition, approximately 10 informal interviews with Lansbury occurred spontaneously at the beginning and end of lessons, which I recorded in my journal later each day.

I observed two of Lansbury's units, each of three weeks duration—one on freedom of speech and the other on race and affirmative action. I observed 8 of the 15 lessons in the first unit and 6 of the 11 in the second. I wrote raw fieldnotes of my observations and expanded them into an elaborated version later the same day. These fieldnotes (FN) were shared with Lansbury to gain trust and to enhance credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I examined other sources to increase opportunities for triangulation, including course descriptions, student readings,
worksheets, assignments, exams, student written work, and a student survey. Providing a rich source of data, the survey given at the end of the second observed unit asked each of the 26 students to react to class dialogue, group projects, and the knowledge contained in the units.

My goal was to produce a story about this class that would both resonate with the reader and, from the perspective of the teacher and students, would be an honest rendering. In addition to seeking out and disciplining my subjectivity (Peshkin, 1988), the keys to meeting this goal lay in six weeks of observation, the triangulation of data, the deliberate search for disconfirming evidence, the active involvement of the participants in the checking and analysis of data, and the inclusion of their voices in the narrative.

The analysis process included coding chunks of data to form domains and searching for patterns among the domains from which emerged a set of initial and tentative assertions (Spradley, 1979). During this process, I wrote a series of seven memos about these assertions that connected the data to theory, and produced confirming or disconfirming feedback from Lansbury. I wrote a series of vignettes reflective of either teacher or student perspectives, and shared them with the participants as a means of verifying the credibility of my observations. In addition, I kept a personal journal throughout the entire process.

The analysis produced a descriptive and interpretive portrait of Lansbury's classroom. I chose a realist style with two major alterations to ensure that the voices of the people studied were included (see Van Maanen, 1988) as an active part of the text, and incorporated two impressionist vignettes to capture a moment-in-time representation of the participants' experiences.

The Dialogue of Democracy
Vignette One: Tinkering with Student Speech

Mr. Lansbury has organized the room into nine groups of three seats each. He hopes that small group activity will encourage the larger number of quiet students to participate in the discussion. In addition, the small groups will encourage the students to think and to respond in any manner desired. As each of his students enters, he hands them a sheet of court cases and a worksheet, asking them to find a vacant chair in one of the groups. Once the bell sounds, he instructs them to identify the conflict in the case of _Tinker v. Des Moines_ and to decide it as if they were judges using one of the legal theories printed on the board. The students begin to read the case and as they finish, Lansbury encourages them to work through the case as a group using the worksheet. The groups begin to talk.
Fifteen minutes pass. Proud that the groups have taken the activity seriously and checking to see that they have finished, he initiates the class discussion.

Lansbury: Tom, why don’t you summarize the key facts.
Tom: Students having the right to wear armbands and school rules.
Lansbury: So put that in terms of a public policy question.
Tom: Should students have the right to wear armbands against the war as a first amendment right?
Lansbury: How about that as a public policy question?
Student: It doesn’t contain a decision-maker.
Lansbury: Throw one in for him. Everyone should be listening.
Student: Should the Des Moines School District have the right to ban black armbands to protest the war (FN, 9/21).

Lansbury smiles, encouraged that this student is able to state a public issue as a question consistent with the way he has taught the skill earlier in the course. He knows that thinking requires that some direct skill instruction should be taught and practiced. Satisfied with the question, Lansbury pushes the discussion forward:

Lansbury: Bob, would you tell us what your group decided and why.
Bob: We decided the preferred position because we think restrictions...restricting something like armbands is bad. Restricting something like swastikas on an armband that could create physical or moral danger would be appropriate.
Lansbury: Did everybody hear that? It’s the preferred position (FN, 9/21).

Bob’s response delights Lansbury. He has applied one of the legal theories that form the foundation for this unit to a case he had never heard of before today. With this theoretical framework in mind, the discussion continues:

Lansbury: But you would restrict a swastika?
Student: It causes physical or moral danger.
Lansbury: Is it the clear and present danger standard you are applying here? Or something less. Let me put you to the test. I walk into the school room and I have a swastika on. As a principal you are going to say “take that off.” And the court is going to say that is okay? Argue that there is a clear and present danger.

Student: Someone might be affected mentally.

Student: I don’t see a difference between that and something prowar that causes a disturbance.

Student: Well, swastikas are more associated with evil and the antiwar armbands are more for peaceful negotiation.

Lansbury: So you see a distinction between a black armband protesting the war versus this evil symbol of the swastika.

Student: How can an armband be dangerous physically or morally? Then, everything—even some AIDS thing—could be seen as dangerous.

Student: The black armbands are not a clear and present danger (FN, 9/21).

Lansbury calls on other groups to state their positions. After one group mentions the strict constructionist doctrine, he asks them to explain and to apply it to the case. Kathy’s group also opposes the ban, but uses the standard that the armbands do not “disturb the education process.” Lansbury has created the exact classroom climate he seeks. There is controversy about the definition of key concepts, sustained student-to-student interaction involving the exchange of divergent perspectives, and higher order thinking as students take, defend, and question their position on the issue. Lansbury eventually explains the court decision and reasoning in the Tinker case and then begins to probe student understanding of it.

Lansbury: What would be a real good reason why? Do you have to have this moral danger or physical danger before you restrict? No, they said what Kathy said—disturbing the educational process. If conduct was shown that materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline, then you could restrict free speech. So what was the standard that they applied? Not just disturb. That’s pretty broad. They defined disturbed as materially substantially interfere. (He writes both standards on the board and points to them.)
Is this the same as this? If I were to say you could restrict free speech anytime it materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, is that the same thing Bob said? Is it the same thing as Kathy said? How do you react?

Student: We said physical and moral danger.

Lansbury: So it's not right to talk about this as a physical and moral danger, right? So which test allows you to restrict freedom of speech more easily?

Student: That one.

Lansbury (pointing to disturbing the educational process on the blackboard): This one, right? This one requires a lot more danger, a lot more bad things happening from the speech, right? This one doesn't require as much. Now, does this one here—the one that the court came up with—is it more restrictive of a standard than this one? If I followed this standard—that I could restrict speech if it disturbs the educational process—would that be easier or harder to restrict your speech? Easier, right? Because it is real broad. What does "disturb" mean? Well, kind of broad. If kids don't listen in class? What does the word materially mean in this respect?

Student (After a pause): Like it is actually happening.

Lansbury: Yeah. Action that is visible (FN, 9/21).

Lansbury realizes that the tone of the discourse has changed. He now dominates the conversation. He is more directive, the disseminator of knowledge, wanting to make sure that the students understand the complexities of the subject matter. He seeks a way to attach the subject matter to their experiences.

Lansbury: What about wearing hats? If you were the principal here, how would you argue the case?

Student: The rule doesn't make sense. There isn't a gang problem at Martin.

Student: At Harrison and Brenner there have been problems. It will start here. It's true. It will start here.

Lansbury: And you're saying it will materially and substantially interfere with education. And therefore we need to do it now.
Student: I don't know if we need to do it right now, but it was happening at other schools.

Student: If you restrict hats, gangs will find another symbol.

Lansbury: Right now you're saying you should be going to Ms. Bennett and saying this is not a reasonable restriction. I have a right to wear it. There is nothing you can show us that would be interfering with education. How would the court decide this case?

Student: It's not a protest if only one person does it.

Lansbury: What if this class gets together and decides we want an American Experience hat that we all wear to represent our participation in this class. We all wear this hat that says "Social Studies Forever."

Student: We're not like causing trouble in the world culture classes. Like some sort of gang. If we are not disrupting anything, we can wear the hat.

Student: I was just going to say that it doesn't involve gangs. There isn't usually any violence in history class (FN, 9/21).

The bell rings, and the students scurry out of the room. Lansbury is happy and a bit frustrated. Frustrated that once again the time schedule has interrupted a discussion; happy that 10 to 12 students were actively involved, and that there was some dialogue among students. Equally important, he is elated that some students had applied legal concepts to the hats and coats issue at the high school. Although not having a chance to discuss any of the other legal cases, Lansbury is satisfied that he had explored one case in-depth.

The Organization and Utilization of Knowledge

This vignette characterizes a free speech unit, one of the five units in Kenneth Lansbury's public issue course. The structure of each unit was identical: an introductory activity designed to engage student interest, class and group discussion of background readings linking the information to a conceptual framework, use of previously taught skills to enable students to identify issues and defend positions on them, and a scored discussion where students applied their knowledge to a contemporary example of the issue.

Lansbury opened the free speech unit by showing a videotaped episode of "The Simpsons" in which Marge Simpson launched a protest against violence in television cartoons. Lansbury believed that starting with content drawn from the students' experiences would pique their
interest and enable them to understand the abstract concepts more easily. Not using a textbook, in-depth knowledge came from readings and worksheets of landmark legal cases ranging from Matthew Lyon and the Sedition Act, to Schenck v. U. S. and the Tinker case mentioned in the vignette. This knowledge did not remain inert in students' minds; rather Lansbury asked his students to present the knowledge in docudramas, make decisions about the court case in small groups, or probe the conceptual meaning of the case in a class discussion.

The goal was not merely to know the facts and decisions in the court cases but to understand the concepts embedded in them and how to apply them to similar cases; for example, in one class discussion, acting as the director of a local fair and using legal concepts explained earlier, the students had to decide whether or not to grant space to the Nazi Party in a town with a large Jewish community.

Equally important to Lansbury was integrating skill instruction and practice with subject matter content. He advocated the direct teaching of skills as necessary for higher order thinking, and he required students to state policy questions, identify and explain definitional, value, and factual issues, and make and defend positions on controversial issues. In fact, these skills served as the foundation for the centerpiece and concluding activity of each unit—the scored discussion (see Zola, 1992).

The task in scored discussion was for groups of students (5 to 8 per group) to conduct a 25 minute discussion of a contemporary free speech issue using an agenda developed by the group. Using the question of whether the local university should reinstate a hate speech code, each group met to decide the definitional, factual, and value questions that would serve as the agenda for their discussion the next day. Over the course of the next two days, each group conducted their discussion using the knowledge gathered in the unit and practicing the expected skills. Lansbury sat at his desk, pencil poised, scoring two discussions per day, giving points to students who used evidence, pointed out contradictions, or made a transition. Lansbury rarely interrupted except to end the discussion and ask the group to evaluate their performance. Although in-depth knowledge was necessary for the discussion, its prime purpose was to develop critical thinking and discussion skills rather than to have students remember a body of information.

What does this framework tell us about how Lansbury organized and utilized knowledge in his version of in-depth study? Clearly the emphasis was not the random presentation of facts; instead, he made a serious effort to have students attach historical and legal information to concepts essential to the issue. He asked students to use this information and these concepts to take and defend a position on contemporary public issues, and sought to attach subject matter to local student experiences. Each activity required social interaction between
Lansbury and his students and among the students themselves. Discourse was the heart of the process.

Class Discussion

Lansbury indicated that “the focus in this class is on discussion skills rather than writing” (Interview, 3/6). His concern for dialogue stemmed not from learning theory but from his belief that “good public policy might result from dialogue between people where they have to talk about the issues and communicate their position” (Interview, 3/6). That dialogue took two forms—class discussion and scored discussion.

The Tinker vignette raises questions about the character of Lansbury’s class discussions. What was Lansbury’s role and style in class discussion? What were the tone and climate in the classroom? What problems and obstacles did Lansbury confront? What meaning did the discussions have for students? Lansbury’s style in class discussion was Socratic, analytic, and nondirective. Read this excerpt from a class discussion on economic equality during the unit on race and affirmative action.

Lansbury: So working hard doesn’t necessarily get you economic success?
Student: Yes.

Lansbury: Does someone want to respond to that? Tim.

Tim: I agree. My mother works hard as an elementary school teacher, and she doesn’t get paid enough.

Lansbury: So Brian’s idea that working hard leads to economic success....We have some people who disagree with that. Do you want to support your idea, Brian?

Brian: Just because you are guaranteed equal results doesn’t mean ... just because you are guaranteed the same opportunities as everyone else is no guarantee of economic success. Like in choice number one it says everyone is given the same rules to the game, but you have to play the game. Some play the game better.

Student: It’s the same game that everyone else has.

Student: Yeah, but our system doesn’t guarantee the same results as everyone else. Someone else might be richer. Someone else might end up doing better because they are better at playing the game.

Student: Or they have more money to start with.
In-Depth Study in an Issues-Oriented Classroom

Student: Well, it's because their parents were better at playing the game.

Student: That's their fault? It's someone's fault that their parents have the wealth? (Lansbury allows the open discussion among students to continue for five or six more comments) (FN, 12/3).

Lansbury was pleased with this exchange because it demonstrated what he cited as one of the central challenges of leading a discussion—"to run from where the students are to where you I would like them to be" (Interview, 3/6). He was able to link their comments about how hard people worked and the advantages of wealth with the concepts of equal opportunity and equal results described in the readings. The tone was controversial but accepting of different perspectives on the meaning of economic equality. There was significant student-to-student interaction.

However, the character of that same discussion changed later. When Lansbury sought to integrate some subject matter content from their readings into the discourse, he received little response. When he wanted to establish the information base necessary to talk about the starting line concept, the students sat there and listened. Lansbury became the disseminator of information, ensuring that what he deemed essential information was covered. Gone was the student-to-student interaction, the controversy, the open discussion of divergent perspectives prevalent just 15 minutes earlier.

Such was not the case with scored discussions. They required student-to-student interaction, and often generated controversy and divergent perspectives. Vignette two provides the flavor of these discussions.

Vignette Two: A Scored Discussion

The five members of group C reluctantly take their seats in the circle to the left of Mr. Lansbury's desk. They lost the coin toss to group D and must go first. Yesterday things had not gone well in their agenda-setting group, and they pieced together an agenda rather quickly. Mike, a member of the basketball team, and Bruce preferred to talk about last evening's game. Not wanting to appear as if they preferred "to do school," Tim and Lisa decided to work on their scored discussion worksheets individually. Sara was absent. Pencil in hand and ready to score, Lansbury expects the worst, but encourages them to begin.

Bruce opens the discussion by stating the policy question: Should the United States continue to approve an affirmative action strategy to
remedy the inequalities that exist between people? The five stare at each other, waiting for someone to move the agenda.

Tim: Okay. Let’s go on to the first issue then. How do you define inequality?

Mike: Inequality is like favoring somebody because of their race, color, or sex. Favoring somebody other than their ability to do something.

Tim: That’s kind of what choice one says on page 15. “To remove hidden barriers and allow all agents to have access to promotional opportunities for which their capabilities and experiences qualify them.”

Sara: Basically are we saying that inequality is discrimination?

The group members nod their heads in agreement. Tim wonders if he has earned a point for using a quote from the reading. Likewise, Sara wonders if she has earned one for making a summary statement.

Bruce: Shall we move on to a value issue? Is it right to discriminate to help minorities who are farther behind because of past discrimination?

Tim: Not with the affirmative action, preferential treatment principle. I’m saying that this preferential principle, they’re hiring people—black people—across the board because they are black for whatever reason. I believe that on a regular basis that reversely discriminates against whites.

Mike: But there is no other way. There still is discrimination against minorities. It hasn’t just disappeared because they have equal rights. People discriminate when they are hiring, and if there is no other way to do it, you have to find some way.

Sara: I think I see what you mean. I saw an article by Gary Jones where he said “by seeking to encourage minority hiring, affirmative action is discriminatory against whites.” Is that what you are saying when you say if you hire a black just because he is black that affirmative action is wrong?

Tim: Yeah. You see I think it would work in the sense that...if you hire black applicants across the board, it would
work because blacks would be getting jobs, but you don't know how many white applicants have been discriminated against in order to get that job.

Mike: Isn't that the same thing...isn't that why they made affirmative action because blacks and other minorities were getting discriminated against? Kind of doing the opposite to help them get back so they are equal. So the question I'm asking you is don't you think they should be held equal in jobs?

Tim: Well, I fully agree with black equality in jobs and everything, but I'm saying that if you're discriminating against whites to hire the black applicant or vice versa, you're violating the principle of equality either way.

Tim realizes that he has forgotten about his need to amass points. The issue has provoked his thinking, and he has been able to articulate his opinion and back it up with relevant comments. Mike has forgotten about basketball.

Bruce: Let's switch to a factual question. Does affirmative action work?

Sara: On the last page of this thing, the polls or statistics on the very back—"Polls on Affirmative Action." Enterprise magazine conducted a poll of black people with incomes around $46,000. They asked if you have been positively affected by affirmative action, and 51 percent of them thought it had a positive value.

Mike: Also in the same poll they asked how effective the people thought affirmative action was. Over 80 percent of them said it was effective. Sixty-three percent said it was somewhat effective and 19 percent said it was very effective.

The race is on, group members having realized that citing evidence not only is important to support their position but also to score well in the discussion.

Sara: I do think that affirmative action does work, but I think it works in a way that is not very good. If there is another way that could get that to happen and get more jobs for the minorities, I think that would be good. But I think the way affirmative action does it is not the best idea. Going by race to get a job.
Bruce: (turning to Lisa) What do you think?

Lisa is reluctant to say anything. She has completed her scored discussion worksheet, and has formed positions on some of the issues. Before she finds the courage to say something, someone else already has expressed her view. She wishes she had been more assertive.

Lisa: I think you should rely on affirmative action for now, and during that time you can get the school system put back together so everyone has equal opportunity in the schools. Then you can probably get rid of affirmative action.

Mike: Yeah. I think it is necessary to help out because minorities have been given a raw deal ever since America has been around. Tim, I think you kind of contradicted yourself earlier when you said...you think there ought to be equality in minority hiring for jobs, right? Then you said you don’t believe in affirmative action, but that is what affirmative action is doing. Are you saying that isn’t fair? I don’t understand.

Tim: I think it does if it doesn’t discriminate. If someone is hired because of their race, and the other person is not hired because of their race, it’s discrimination. I’m not stating something racist in that way. I’m just saying I don’t care which race is more qualified. They should be hired for their qualifications, not their race.

Lansbury interrupts the discussion and indicates that it is time to stop. The bell rings. Sara checks with Mr. Lansbury to see how she did. Tim gathers up his materials and leaves with her still talking about the issue. Mike and Bruce celebrate with “a high five” and leave the room talking about the basketball team.

Social Interaction in Lansbury’s Classroom

This vignette captures the character of a scored discussion. The structure of the discussion was systematic and disciplined, starting with a definitional question and proceeding to value and factual questions. Lansbury expected the students to follow their agenda, use evidence from the readings, and stay focused without any single individual dominating. Tim and Mike proposed divergent perspectives, and were willing and prepared to question and clarify their responses. In particular, Tim struggled to interpret his understanding of the complexities of equality as one of his values. There was a respect and tolerance for differing opinion, the exercise did not degenerate into a
shouting match, and the students were able to sustain 25 minutes of rational discussion without teacher interference.

The vignette also raises some questions. What meaning did the students give to these discussions and to this knowledge? What motivated their participation—scoring points, interest in the topic, or some combination of the two? What meaning did the discussion have for Lisa, the reluctant participant? How did students view the systematic structure of the interaction?

In Lansbury's classroom, discussion was a central means by which students interpreted and gave meaning to knowledge. Lecture and recitation were foreign activities. The discourse was serious, intense, structured, and sometimes Socratic. Lansbury asked thought-provoking questions, and permitted students to take the discussion in a variety of directions, which often contained a variety of perspectives and sparked controversy and student-to-student interaction. At other times, Lansbury was more directive, particularly as he sought to include subject matter he considered important. These moments were characterized by a reluctance of students to participate.

What explains the patterns extant in the discourse? I believe that the answers lie in Lansbury's beliefs and knowledge about teaching and learning, the practical reality of classroom interaction, and outside contextual forces over which he had little control. These three elements interact to form three practical teaching dilemmas that define in-depth study in Lansbury's classroom.

**Teaching Dilemmas**

Lampert's (1985) concept of teaching dilemmas helps to clarify the dynamics in Lansbury's classroom. Lampert asserts that the attempt to solve everyday common classroom pedagogical problems leads to a series of practical dilemmas. She accepts these dilemmas as a continuing condition entangled in a web of contradictory forces that teachers seek to manage. Although I was aware of Lampert's research, I originally did not search for practical dilemmas in Lansbury's classroom; however, in our conversations and my observations, three such dilemmas reoccurred, which I have labeled the director's, the participation, and the information dilemmas.

The director's dilemma consisted of two components. Lansbury expected students to set the agenda for classroom discourse. He wanted to begin with student attitudes and experiences, often by finding school and local examples of themes related to the public issue. On the other hand, he wanted to provide them with the information and conceptual framework that he deemed necessary for an understanding of the issue. The dilemma concerned merging the two issues.
I usually try to run from where the students are to where I would like them to be in terms of various cases....That is really difficult to do because you have to be adept at manipulating....I don’t want to say that...adjusting to certain topics, kind of tailor-making the discussion as you go through the topic to where you want to go without telling them that (Interview, 3/6).

In the second component, Lansbury wanted students to struggle with the information, discover the complexities of the issue and create their own meaning from the knowledge. On the other hand, he wanted to direct them to the meaning of that knowledge that he considered most important. Lansbury expressed this dilemma this way:

You get caught in this bind of...ideas that you want them to get. An easy way would be to present the ideas to them. The other option would be to go back over and still try to draw it out....It was just trying to get them to see the ties and kind of subtly work it (Interview, 10/9).

Lansbury was like the director of a Broadway play who has his own interpretation and conception of the script, but desires to grant his actors some autonomy.

The most dramatic examples of the dilemma occurred during class discussion. As exemplified by the economic equality discussion, Lansbury started with student knowledge and opinions about whether everyone should have economic equality, and sought to relate their ideas to the starting-line construct; however, with the twin pressures of time constraints and the need to attach their ideas to formal knowledge, he became more directive, and supplied the information about the related civil rights laws and the meaning of the starting-line metaphor. Lansbury resolved this dilemma by becoming more of a disseminator of information, ensuring that the information base he had selected was in place.

On other occasions, Lansbury more successfully integrated student knowledge with subject matter content. The opening vignette about the Tinker case was one example, and the fair director discussion was another. Part of the free speech unit required the students, acting as the director of a local fair, to decide whether or not to grant booth space to the Nazi Party in a town with a large Jewish community.

Lansbury: Let’s start with Scott this morning. Why don’t you stand up.
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Scott: I don’t think they should give the permit because there is a clear and present danger of moral or physical danger to Jews.

Lansbury: Could you elaborate a little bit more?

Scott: There is a clear and present danger. The Jews who come to the fair will not expect the Nazis to be there. They could become scared of physical harm. We don’t know what the Nazis will do.

Lansbury: Any questions for Scott as fair director? Do you need to know anything else, Mark?

Mark: I don’t know. Lansbury: Are you satisfied with his decision and the way he has justified it?

Mark: No. Lansbury: What would you ask him then? Go ahead.

Mark: Okay. What’s your proof that it will cause mental or physical harm?

Scott: Because every time the Nazis are out they usually cause damage.

Lansbury: (Looking at Mark) Are you satisfied with that?

Mark: No.

Lansbury: Why aren’t you satisfied with that?

Mark: I don’t know. Can I tell you how I decided the case?

Lansbury: You are on the opposite side. Sure, go ahead. Stand up.

Mark (stands and refers to what he has written for homework): I thought that it would not hold up in court because it does not give guidelines about the ability of the city to give or not give permits. In Hague v. C. I. O., the court said you could not suppress free speech without setting some guidelines.

Lansbury (writing Hague v. C. I. O. on the board): So Mark, you are supporting Scott’s case by adding this precedent. Debbie, did you understand the precedent (FN, 9/23)?

In this example, Lansbury started with student positions on the issue, and they successfully introduced relevant subject matter to support their decisions. In the process, he chose to forego discussion of other situations
and their related content in order to follow student ideas about the Nazi case, and he was pleased with the management of the dilemma.

The participation dilemma began with Lansbury's desire for a structured, disciplined pattern of investigation that probed ideas with intellectual rigor. In class discussion, this entailed the steady use of a Socratic, analytic style that probed student thinking about complex legal issues. Lansbury was convinced that "a rational individual has to look at something in a systematic fashion" (Interview, 12/10). Otherwise the discussion would become unfocused, emotive, and repetitious. Such a style demanded that students follow the discussion carefully, ready to state a definitional question, provide evidence, and agree or disagree with another student. In scored discussion, his style entailed identifying different types of issues, summarizing what other students said, and using evidence.

Lansbury paid a price for this systematic pattern. Some students were reluctant to talk, perceiving the pattern and tone in both forms of discourse as judgmental and threatening. Lansbury recognized the reluctance of the more introverted student to speak during the discussions. "I have found that...I have quite a few quiet students who have not been able to participate in the discussion, and I have not been able to get them involved" (Interview 12/10).

In addition to the personalities of the quiet students, Lansbury suspected that the reluctance to speak was related to the structure of the discussion. He recalled one conversation with a student:

The other thing he said which was interesting—I don't know how to deal with this necessarily—is he said that he's having difficulty because the conversation is so formally structured; that there are specific...rules to follow and that if it was just where you could talk, he would feel more comfortable, but having to be disciplined makes it difficult for him to get involved (Interview, 12/10).

The student survey confirmed elements of the dilemma, indicating a wide variation in the frequency of participation in class discussion. One student commented, "I only occasionally talk because I'm afraid to voice my opinion, even if I know the same amount or more than the other person, because I don't know what they will think." Lansbury reacted seriously to this reluctance to participate and sought several remedies. He talked to students individually, and encouraged them to write down their comments before speaking up. Despite his attempts, the problem persisted.

As I observed class and scored discussions, one persistent impression was the wealth of available knowledge that went unused by students, which led to the identification of the information
dilemma. Most activities in Lansbury's class depended upon information that Lansbury supplied and students read for homework. He did not want to waste valuable class time on reading more efficiently accomplished at home. Unfortunately, students were not completing the readings, thereby short circuiting Lansbury's goals. "And so I get caught in the bind of assigning the reading, making the assumption that they're going to do the reading. They're not, and I know they're not going to do the reading and designing activities that revolve around...having done the reading" (Interview, 12/10). One way to cope was to adjust his expectations by reducing the length of required readings. He asked students to complete worksheets composed largely of recall questions and added recall items to the unit test as an incentive. Although uncomfortable with these conventional motivators and doubtful of their effectiveness, Lansbury found no other choices.

These three dilemmas are not unique to in-depth study. The same teaching dilemmas arise in other forms of instruction. Indeed the best schools and the best instructors report exactly this (Lightfoot, 1983; Zumwalt, 1986); however, in-depth study exacerbates their existence because it places greater responsibility on the student to interpret, use, and communicate the information base, and requires greater flexibility from the teacher in adjusting to student choices about the use of information. Consequently, these dilemmas are more likely to appear with in-depth study than with coverage-based forms of instruction.

These dilemmas reveal a central problem facing in-depth study in practice. That problem involves developing an information base necessary for higher order thinking—how to encourage students to acquire and struggle with the information base in an environment that promotes open, non threatening discourse. Persistent curricular questions are raised, such as whose knowledge should serve as the information base; how much knowledge is enough; how will that knowledge be judged; and how do you create a safe, open, and challenging environment to acquire and struggle with knowledge. Despite his preferences, Lansbury answered these questions in traditional ways. He often decided what knowledge was of most worth, and he found himself dominating class discussion; he relied on tests and worksheets to evaluate the knowledge. This conclusion strikes at the heart of two elements of the definition of in-depth study. It exposes the difficulty of creating the rich, divergent knowledge required for depth study, and it exposes the difficulty of promoting the spirit of inquiry where students interpret and give meaning to the knowledge under consideration.

Sources of the Dilemmas

This analysis portrays Lansbury as a dilemma manager, an active negotiator balancing a variety of beliefs and interests that interact in the classroom. Lansbury faces choices each with certain undesirable
consequences. What are the sources of these dilemmas? For all three dilemmas, they lie in Lansbury’s beliefs and knowledge about teaching, the reality of classroom interaction, and the contextual forces outside of the classroom. Lansbury’s beliefs and knowledge about teaching and learning were sources of tension that pulled him in opposing directions. To analyze them, I will use the categories of a teacher’s knowledge base developed by Shulman (1987)—subject matter content, educational purposes and goals, pedagogical content, learners and their characteristics, and social context and its influence on the learner.

The director’s dilemma illustrates the tension in and between Lansbury’s subject matter knowledge and his beliefs about learners and their characteristics. From his training in political science, Lansbury acquired a set of legal concepts and a Socratic style that formed the foundation for his discussion of free speech and affirmative action. This background enabled him to engage students in interactive modes of learning and to fit student knowledge into a conceptual framework; however, at the same time, this strong subject matter background influenced the self-imposed pressure Lansbury felt to select and cover content and thus his tendency to become more directive when content was missing. Likewise, Lansbury had doubts about the developmental ability of 10th graders to handle the expected level of abstraction. Personally, he preferred to move the course to the 11th grade (Journal, 12/18). These doubts fed his tendency to become more directive and to restrict student autonomy in the selection and organization of data.

A second source of the teaching dilemmas was the reality of social interaction in a classroom of 26 tenth graders. Such a classroom setting is a complex place—multidimensional, immediate, unpredictable, simultaneous, and public (Doyle, 1986), and these elements contributed to the formation of the participation dilemma. Lansbury’s systematic approach to discussion required the total concentration of the students. As one student advised, “Just pay attention in class because otherwise you will get lost” (Interview, 10/14). In addition, Lansbury himself confessed that some students felt “threatened in terms of the large group when I ask questions and they have to respond in front of 30 students” (Interview, 2/2). One introverted student reported to Lansbury that “he was embarrassed to talk because he felt the other people were judging his comments” (Interview, 12/10). Thus, in the real world of everyday classroom interaction, Lansbury’s desire to pursue a rational, structured conversation confronted a reluctance to speak that emerged from the rapid pace and difficulty of the discourse as well as the personal fears of students.

Last, certain institutional forces within and broader social forces outside the school interacted to influence both the participation and the information dilemmas. The institutional force was the lack of coordination between the 9th grade U. S. history program and the
public issues course. The history course required passive memorization of data delivered didactically by the teacher. Programmed to sit there and wait for someone to tell them the answer, students in the 10th grade were now expected to use information to defend positions on the issues. From this perspective, Lansbury was a director with poorly prepared actors who waited to be directed.

The outside social force was a societal pattern that Lansbury claimed pulled students away from school and toward extracurricular activities, work, and television. He claimed that student culture in the 90s was “becoming more conservative, more willing to live with decisions of some authority without questioning whether that’s a good thing or not such a good thing” (Interview, 9/23). His students’ compliance and passivity reflected a more pervasive societal pattern that devalued schooling except as a means to secure the credential required for job or college admission. He claimed that these outside social forces were detrimental to his style of discourse and his ability to encourage students to struggle with the information base required for the course.

From these sources the director’s, participation, and information dilemmas were born. Lansbury became a dilemma manager who accepted conflict as a continuing condition with which he had to cope. His conflicted beliefs and knowledge about teaching and learning, the complexity of interaction in his classroom, and the institutional and social forces inside and outside of the school altered the meaning of in-depth study in practice.

Student Voices

So far, the voices of the students are missing from the description and analysis of the character of classroom interaction and the meaning given to knowledge. The survey given to students at the end of Lansbury’s class revealed significant variations in the frequency of participation, implying the possibility of multiple meanings. The first meaning sprang from the comments of students who participated frequently, best characterized by Tim McClaine. Disliking previous history classes, Tim praised the interaction in Lansbury’s class as “thought provoking,” claiming that he had to “tune off [his] analytical brain ... and tune in [the] problem-solving side of [his] brain” (Interview, 10/8). He viewed the interaction as user friendly where “you get a chance to express what you feel and hopefully provoke others to feel the same way” (Interview, 10/8). He appreciated the more mature, club-like atmosphere where he was encouraged to state his views and talk with his peers.

A second meaning emerged from those who participated occasionally. At its core, characterized best by Lisa Lerner, was a
reluctance to talk not because of disinterest, lack of preparedness, or intellectual ability but from a lack of assertiveness or fear of what others would think. While Lisa liked class discussion and listened carefully, she rarely participated because she had “a tendency to wait and then when [she] finally [had] something to say, a person around [her] said it first” (Interview, 10/14). She learned by listening and following along, the interaction becoming most meaningful when it matched her interests.

Mike Rogers described the discussions as “long and boring.” Unlike Tim and Lisa, he did not prefer the public issues class to previous history classes. He perceived the class discussions as lectures, not as thought-provoking opportunities to express his opinions. Mike’s attitude was passive neutrality. He came to class, listened, participated when asked, and was not disruptive, but rarely engaged in the interaction.

For some students, the interaction had meaning outside the classroom in their encounters with friends and parents; for example, Lisa Lerner indicated that the interaction in class surprisingly had created a model for conversation about issues outside the class with a friend. She described an episode at lunch where she found herself saying to a friend, “Wait a minute, but you can’t do that because ... and I started using evidence” (Interview, 10/14). She attributed her response to Lansbury’s class. Another student, Kelly Webber, was proud that she was now able to listen and to have her own opinions when her parents talked about politics—an experience she had never had before. Some students experienced a sense of empowerment that they knew how to talk maturely with others.

Thus, classroom interaction had a variety of meanings for students both inside and outside of the classroom. But what about the knowledge being discussed during these interactions? What meaning did it have for students? Most students expressed a new and different awareness that knowledge was complicated and complex, containing many dimensions and interrelationships. They also expressed an awareness that knowledge could be controversial, consisting of many sides and viewpoints, and an open-mindedness and tolerance toward viewpoints other than their own. Last, they expressed a healthy doubt about their own understanding of knowledge.

I found these dispositions toward knowledge in both the student surveys and interviews. In the survey, students commented about how their understanding of the topics had changed.

Free speech is more complicated—some speech can hurt people; I used to believe you could say anything you wanted.
I'm pro choice, but I now realize how important pro life is to some people.

There are (sic) more than one side to an argument. People have reasons for any side you take. Just because you don't agree with someone doesn't mean you shouldn't understand them.

I explored these impressions in greater depth with several students, including Tim McClaine, on how his understanding of race and affirmative action was more complex. He replied:

The race issue...I simply thought it was you're either a racist or you're not a racist. Or blacks should advance or blacks should not advance. But now I realize that there's all these intertwined things, like poverty is a factor and discrimination in jobs which I didn't realize before (Interview, 12/17).

These dispositions were consistent with the way knowledge was organized and utilized in the class and with the nature of the interaction. Although Lansbury selected the knowledge, it was rich in detail and complex in its variety of perspectives. Although some students were reluctant to participate, the discussions required students to take and defend positions. Although the teaching dilemmas did strain and block genuine interaction at times, significant dialogue between teacher and student and among students did occur frequently. Lansbury asked challenging questions and devoted significant time to each question. The message of the class was that there is a variety of perspectives and choices about these topics. Out of this structure and classroom environment flowed these new student dispositions toward knowledge.

Conclusions

There is no doubt that the definition of in-depth study encountered challenges in the context of the everyday classroom in the form of teaching dilemmas that gave pedagogical meaning to the elements of the definition and raised questions that Lansbury had to answer. Whose or what knowledge should guide the inquiry? How do you integrate student knowledge and experience with subject matter knowledge? Did students have enough information? What if students chose not to read, let alone search for the knowledge that they were to interpret? What type of classroom environment encouraged students to talk about the knowledge in a thoughtful and productive way? What if
key subject matter had not been introduced as the unit reached its third week? As Lansbury confronted these questions, he found one foot on the depth train while the other remained on the platform. His management of the dilemmas produced a version of in-depth study not always consistent with the elements of the definition and the theory behind it.

Cautionary Words

The above conclusions suggest that we approach in-depth study as a reform with some caution. Although emanating from concerns about mindless instruction and student disengagement, in-depth study is not a panacea because of the dilemmas it creates for teachers and the demands it places on students. It alters traditional roles and expectations for teachers and student, and the social and institutional context in which they exist.

First, depth study requires a different role for the teacher and the student regarding the knowledge base for learning. The teacher is no longer the disseminator of knowledge, and instead provides guidance and direction about the knowledge. This role requires greater teacher spontaneity and flexibility in a complex environment. It raises the challenge of how to integrate the knowledge and experience of students with the school knowledge of teachers. It challenges teachers to re-examine their beliefs about which knowledge is most important as well about the abilities and priorities of learners. In-depth study also involves a different role for the learner. To a greater extent than in conventional social studies classrooms, it shifts the responsibility for understanding to the student, and it challenges the learner to be prepared to struggle with the knowledge base. She or he is no longer the passive receptor of knowledge but is expected to develop his or her own interpretation of the knowledge. These are formidable challenges even for the most able learner.

Second, in-depth study requires a different pattern of classroom interaction than the one found in more conventional social studies classrooms. Under ideal circumstances, it is a pattern where genuine dialogue between teacher and students and among students on substantive issues is expected. Such a pattern is more unpredictable for the teacher and is less subject to his or her control. The teacher is more dependent upon the well prepared student who is willing to participate. For the student the pattern is more challenging and risky because of the expectation that she or he be able to articulate ideas, use information, and ask questions.

Third, in-depth study depends upon the interplay of certain contextual factors. The support of the administration and fellow teachers and the availability of and support for materials other than the textbook foster its growth. Institutional forces within the school
often program students to sit passively and wait for answers. Social forces within the student culture and the broader society draw students away from the academic preparation that benefits all educational pursuits and in-depth study in particular. Another potential obstacle lies in the movement toward curricular standards and assessment. Detailed, comprehensive standards attached to standardized testing pose obstacles. As Cuban (1984) reminds us, there are boundaries in and outside the classroom that limit teachers to hybrid reforms that fit easily into their school and classroom context.

**Limits and Future Research**

I want to identify the limitations of this research and attach those limits to questions for future research. First, the public issues curricula that exemplify in-depth study in this research does not correlate with a recognized social science where a prescribed body of knowledge exists. How would in-depth study be constituted in history or economics courses where the pressure to cover is greater? Second, the course was not built upon the constructivist tenets underlying in-depth study. Students did not generate the questions for investigation or find themselves in situations where their prior knowledge was contradicted. What would in-depth study look like if students formulated their own questions and initiated the inquiry?

The students in Lansbury’s class were a group of heterogeneously grouped sophomores from a community with above average income and educational levels. Lansbury doubted that his sophomores were prepared cognitively for his class, claiming that the course would be more successful with juniors. Lansbury’s claim corresponds with Leming’s assertion (1994) that high school students are unprepared developmentally for the reflective thinking required by in-depth study. To what extent is in-depth study beyond the cognitive reach of adolescents? What would in-depth study look like with other secondary school populations?

Last, the foreground of the research was the organization and utilization of knowledge in the classroom. Except for their influence on the teaching dilemmas, outside contextual factors stayed in the background. Future research might investigate which institutional, social, and structural forces nurture in-depth study and which serve as obstacles that alter its shape.

**Future Direction**

Despite these limitations and cautionary words, this research does suggest some positive directions for social studies reform. The first rests upon the assumption that one goal of social studies education is to foster a disposition among students that will enable them as citizens to think about social issues. The students in Lansbury’s classroom reported
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a more complex, diverse, tentative, and skeptical disposition toward knowledge. Two themes underlie the growth of this disposition. First, the disposition occurred in a classroom where knowledge was organized around essential and authentic questions, and was utilized to propose and evaluate options for decision making. Second, the disposition occurred in a classroom where discourse extended beyond lecture and recitation, and contained opportunities for interaction about diverse ideas. These two themes have implications for both teacher education and learning theory.

In terms of teacher education, these two themes suggest certain directions for preservice and inservice education; i.e., in the planning of lessons and units, it is important for teachers to identify essential and authentic questions to serve as organizing features, and to design learning activities that combine decision making and problem-solving tasks with opportunities for genuine discourse between teacher and student and among the students themselves. The research also suggests that the concept of teacher as dilemma manager is a powerful one and potentially useful as a construct for teacher education. Teachers would benefit from identifying dilemmas in their own teaching, their origins, and alternative ways of managing them. At the same time, it is important that teachers realize that the existence of teaching dilemmas is not a sign of failure but a natural outcome of their beliefs, the reality of social interaction, and outside contextual factors.

In terms of theory, these themes support elements from cognitive psychology and Dewey that give direction to social studies reform. For example, they confirm theoretical claims that thinking about and understanding knowledge depends upon: (1) its organization around key ideas; (2) a functional base where the learner uses knowledge to solve problems; and (3) a social setting where the learner interacts with teachers and students.

Thus, this research both confirms and disconfirms the value of in-depth study. On the one hand, depth study provides guidelines for moving social studies reform in the direction of a pedagogy that promotes dispositions desirable for informed and thoughtful citizens. On the other hand, these theoretical guidelines confront powerful practical teaching dilemmas that reveal new roles for teachers and students, and uncover obstacles that block their fulfillment. Fulfilling the promise of reforms such as in-depth study may in part rest upon our ability to understand and manage these dilemmas and their sources more astutely.

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TEACHERS' CURRICULAR DECISION MAKING IN RESPONSE TO A NEW SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOK

Jane Heckley Kon

Abstract
In this study the author examines how seven 5th-grade teachers organized their social studies curriculum using a recently issued textbook. In general, the teaching was more variable than might be expected given the similarity of teaching materials. The author discerned three different styles of textbook use, each with a distinct impact on the teachers' assessment of the curricular potential of the new resource and on the ways the teachers modified their prior instructional agendas. Overall, teacher planning was less dependent upon the textbook than previous studies suggest.

Introduction

Every few years, the cycle of textbook adoption ends with the distribution of new tomes to thousands of classrooms. Weighty, glossy, and imposing, the new social studies textbooks arrive with a thud at the doorstep of teachers and students. At this point, the work of politicians, writers, consultants, publishers, salespeople, and all those involved in producing the new text is finished, but the work of the teacher has just begun. How do teachers use a new social studies textbook, and why? These simple questions lead us to a consideration of teachers' roles as curricular planners in the classroom and to an examination of the relationship between external curricular policies and internal classroom practice.

The arrival of a new text is an occasion to examine teachers' thinking about approaching a specific subject matter, since teachers must judge how and when to use these new materials with students in their classrooms. They must, in the words of Miriam Ben-Peretz (1990),
evaluate the "curriculum potential" of the new materials. This is particularly true at the elementary level, where teachers have little direct voice in selecting a new text, but where they have a fairly high degree of autonomy over the curriculum enacted within their classrooms. In this study I examine the social studies curriculum of seven 5th-grade teachers in one school district in California. Prior to the study, each teacher was issued the controversial new state-approved textbook for the social studies, America Will Be, published by Houghton Mifflin (Armento, Nash, Salter, & Wixson, 1991). By tracking the daily curricular decisions regarding social studies during the first few months following receipt of the new textbook I wanted to observe if and how the new textbook affected their instructional choices.

By interviewing social studies teachers about their instructional decisions during such a time of change, I hoped to gain a better understanding of teachers' priorities and practices in social studies teaching. I wanted to understand the factors they considered in designing social studies lessons, and the manner in which they balanced the inevitable dilemmas of classroom teaching. During our numerous conversations, I attempted to gain a perspective on their views towards both curricular change (as embodied in the new text) and curricular stability. Social studies is merely one part of their daily responsibilities. My questions asked how they managed to reconcile the changes in this process with their previous social studies agendas and their overall classroom practices.

Teachers as Curricular Decision Makers

Over the past decade, there has been increasing interest in educational research efforts to better understand and support the professionalism of classroom teachers. Research on teacher planning (e.g., Clark & Peterson, 1986; McCutcheon, 1981), on teachers as curricular decision makers (e.g., Ben-Peretz, 1990; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988), on teacher knowledge (e.g., Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987; Shavelson & Stern, 1981), and on teacher beliefs (e.g., Hawthorne, 1992; Prawat, 1992) have converged to create an image of teachers as autonomous curricular decision makers who ultimately determine the knowledge and experiences to which students will have access in school.

Awareness of the teacher's role in curricular decision making is not new (see Cronbach, 1955), but neither are concerns that an excess of individualism could jeopardize the quality and continuity of the curriculum. Over the past century the dominant trend in curricular policies has emphasized prescription and a striving for equality and consistency through the use of standardized text materials. Yet there has always been an awareness that the curriculum is mediated by teachers in the classroom (McMurray & Cronbach, 1955; Tanner, 1988). Teacher
involvement in this area has been viewed alternately as a wellspring of inconsistency and as a potential source of innovation and creativity in tailoring classroom instruction to the particular needs of students. Textbooks have been credited with playing a powerful role in shaping the elementary school curriculum (particularly in social studies), yet there has been little classroom-level data gathered on the ways in which the text is actually used.

Research on Texts and Teaching in Elementary Social Studies

The dominant image of elementary social studies is one in which students are led by a teacher, chapter by chapter, through the textbook (Shaver, Davis, & Helburn, 1980; Stake & Easley, 1978; Weiss, 1978). In this situation, teachers employ a limited range of pedagogical strategies focused on reading the text and answering the questions at the end of each chapter. Each chapter is taught sequentially and in essentially the same way. This conclusion mirrors the curricular research conducted by the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Case Studies in Science Education project during the 1970s. Recent analysis of a survey of social studies instructional practices in over 1,200 first, second, and third-grade teachers in the midwest also found that the text "dominates primary social studies instruction" (Finkelstein, Nielson, & Switzer, 1993, p. 68).

An in-depth study of 12 elementary school teachers' planning conducted by Gail McCutcheon and associates (1981) during the same period as the NSF studies also supported the claim that textbooks were the primary curricular resource for most teachers. In one of the three school districts in this study, teachers were told explicitly to follow the textbook, but in all three systems "teachers generally relied on textbooks as the basis for their class" (p. 57). Thus even without a specific mandate, teachers' use of texts suggests that "texts provided a sense of security about what to teach, and [school] policies reinforced their use" (p. 57). McCutcheon and her associates concluded that "in all school systems that were a part of this study, then, social studies was derived almost exclusively from the textbook" (p. 58).

Again these findings were corroborated by John Goodlad's (1984) well-known Study of Schooling that involved several years of observing the teaching of various subject matters in over 1,000 classrooms across the nation. Commenting on the results of this study, Francis Klein (1989) remarked that despite efforts to promote inquiry-oriented teaching and production of many innovative curricular materials, "Something seemed to have happened which mediated those influences and produced a much more conforming curriculum" (pp. 35-36). Whose evidence showed that intended curriculum and actual classroom practices were "depressingly" the same from school to school and classroom to classroom.
Studies such as these are cited commonly as evidence that elementary social studies has been and is taught irregularly and with relatively little imagination (Shaver, 1989; Thornton, 1991). Alternative visions of social studies have always existed, however, in which, teachers use a variety of materials and learning modalities. Examples of innovative curricular materials and pedagogical techniques fill the pages of journals such as *Social Education* and pack the exhibition halls of teacher and subject matter conferences. Small scale observational research on elementary social studies is also accumulating to suggest that the subject can be and is being taught more variously than the NSF, McCutcheon, and Goodlad studies suggest, and that the textbook does not exert as much influence over the curriculum as some policymakers seem to have assumed (e.g., Brophy, 1992; Stodolsky, 1988). These studies attempt to provide a more in-depth view of elementary social studies classrooms than the large-scale surveys have been able to provide.

Perhaps the most widely known study of elementary social studies teaching was undertaken by Susan Stodolsky (1988) in the late 1970s. Intrigued by differences in pedagogy attributable to subject matter, Stodolsky conducted a study of social studies and mathematics teaching in 39 fifth-grade classrooms. Using a detailed observational protocol, she coded instructional patterns and practices for teachers teaching the two disciplines, and concluded that subject matter does indeed exert a significant amount of influence on teachers’ choice of pedagogical strategies; for example, students undertook much more seatwork in mathematics than in social studies. Teachers also used a much wider array of instructional media and techniques in social studies, and they covered a much more diverse range of topics. The image of diversity painted in this tightly focused investigation of social studies runs counter to the prevailing impression presented by the large-scale survey studies (e.g., Goodlad, 1984; Stake & Easley, 1978).

Stodolsky (1989) returned to a subset of the data she had collected for the original study to investigate differences in the use of textbooks and other instructional media and to compare classroom use with the instructional focus of the teacher’s edition of the text. Somewhat tentative in nature (she had not initially gathered data to support all of her new questions, and her sample of teachers used a wide variety of different text materials), this second analysis suggested that while textbooks are frequently used in some elementary social studies classrooms, their influence is not nearly as pervasive or uniform as had been earlier assumed. In mathematics, for example, Stodolsky found that the text seemed to represent maximal content coverage. In social studies, topics not in the text (such as current events) were often regularly included in the curriculum. On the other hand, when the text was in use
in a social studies class, the sequence of topics was rarely altered as it often was in mathematics.

Overall, Stodolosky's research suggested that the predominant image of a textbook-driven social studies is overdrawn. She concluded that more research is needed on the relationships between the presence of texts in a classroom and the ways in which they were used for teaching students about their world. She attributed the variations in practice she observed to teachers' own convictions and preferences about teaching and learning, the nature of the materials they used, the school context in which they taught, the particular students in their classes, and the subject matter and grade level they were teaching. This combination of personal and contextual variables seemed to support a wide variety of teaching styles with respect to instructional materials. She concluded that a great deal remains to be learned about the presence of texts in a classroom, how teachers teach, and what students learn.

Stodolsky's comparison of instruction and text use between mathematics and social studies was one of the first to focus on variations in pedagogy attributable to subject matter. Continuing that line of inquiry, reading specialists Jeanne Chall and Susan Conard (1991) recently examined the use of the textbook in both high school and elementary social studies as part of a larger study of teaching with texts. First they conducted a nationwide survey of teachers' attitudes towards texts, and then conducted more intensive observations and interviews in over 100 classes. In elementary social studies, nine classrooms in each of fourth and sixth grades were observed. The researchers noted that the most frequently used pattern of textbook use involved what they called the directed-lesson and the multiple-resource approaches. Teachers, especially in the fourth grade and lower-achieving sixth grade classes, tended to structure or direct the reading of students through the text. Overall, they found that elementary school teachers viewed subject matter textbooks as a means to develop and reinforce reading skills as well as to teach content. Correspondingly, teachers devoted considerable direct instructional energy to the processes of reading and gathering information from textbooks. Chall and Conard found that a suitable reading level was a "vitally important" criterion with respect to a new text—more so than features such as design, teaching aids, organization, or even content or concepts. According to this research, these elementary teachers' decisions about texts are thus considerably influenced by their beliefs about students' reading abilities, and their beliefs about the functional role texts can play in improving students' literacy skills.

Design of the Study

Here I look at the social studies curriculum of seven teachers who had recently been issued new state-approved textbooks for this subject.
To minimize the impact of district-level influences on the curriculum, all of the teachers taught fifth grade in the same large urban school district. The teachers had been invited to join the study on the basis of the characteristics of the schools in which they taught (such as being a magnet school). No effort was made to select teachers who had been pre-identified as exceptional in any way.

Because of my interest in analyzing variations in how the teachers first interpreted and used these new text materials, the study was focused on the teachers' first months of use. Data were gathered primarily through weekly interviews with the seven teachers. These interviews focused on how and when they taught social studies, and how and when they used the textbook. All kept daily logs of their social studies activities, and the weekly interviews provided opportunities for the teachers to explain why and how their curricular decisions fit with their overall conceptions of what fifth grade social studies can and should entail. These weekly interviews were preceded by a lengthy initial interview, and took place over the period of seven weeks between November and December 1992. Follow-up interviews were then held with each in February and May. In addition, I observed each teacher teach his or her class at least two times during the fall of 1992. Thus while most of the data for this study come from teachers' self-reports about their activities and intentions, I observed the teachers in the classroom and reviewed students' work products in social studies as well.

Conducting a regular series of interviews focused on tangible evidence of the teachers' decision-making (their logs, students work samples, and my fieldnotes) best addressed the question of how a small group of teachers responded to the arrival of a new social studies text. This design allowed me to track teachers' curricular decisions at a point in time when teachers were called upon to make fundamental choices about what and how to teach the subject. The analysis of this data has enabled me to define distinct styles of textbook use that might be useful in subsequent studies which might profitably examine the text use of a much larger sample of teachers to determine if the patterns in this preliminary study are generalizable to a larger population and to different administrative contexts. At the same time, the findings of this preliminary study could also be used to frame more in-depth studies on the educational impacts of different styles of text use on student learning.

Analysis

The central feature of the conceptual model focuses on the key role of teachers' instructional agendas in the decisions they make about the textbook in their curriculum. In contrast to linear or top-down models of curricular change, which tend to assume that curriculum changes
proposed from the outside will lead directly to change in instruction, this
model focuses on the intersection of the new text with the teacher’s prior
agenda for the social studies.

The newly arrived text does not encounter a tabula rasa. As
Penelope Peterson (1990), commenting on California’s mathematics
reform, states, “the pedagogical slate is never clean.” The teacher has an
established social studies instructional agenda in which he or she has
already defined a role for the textbook (among other things). These basic
styles of textbook use are critical in determining the reception receives
when it crosses the threshold of the classroom and the ways in which the
text is subsequently used. Since texts are such a ubiquitous feature of the
curricular landscape in elementary schools, nearly all teachers have
clearly formulated ideas about the role of texts in the teaching of the
subject matter. They may use them extensively or not much at all, but
they have formed a general opinion about their use. Similarly, most
teachers have also formed opinions about such things as the use of
groupwork, formal evaluation, and projects for social studies. Such
determinations structure the instructional agenda of the teacher, and
subsequent inputs (such as a new text) is evaluated in light of these
decisions.

An agenda suggests two images that I believe to be significant in
teachers’ curricular planning: having overall goals that guide the
teaching enterprise yet the capacity for flexibility and reordering as
circumstances warrant. An instructional agenda, like the agenda of a
well-run meeting, keeps the enterprise on task, provides a sense of
direction, and is comfortably routine, yet it is amenable to modification
and reprioritization as new facts or situations are brought to the table.

My analysis of the basis of these teachers’ social studies agendas
was initially focused on four categories of factors their own (a)
educational experiences and professional affiliations, (b) normative
views about the goals of social education and how best to teach it, (c)
evaluation of the needs and abilities of the students in their classes, and
(d) the characteristics of the schools and classrooms in which they
worked. A fifth factor, the day-to day relationships between teachers and
students in a class, also emerged as a significant influence during the
analysis.

Results

From the beginning it was apparent that my assumption that these
teachers would have different conceptions of the social studies, their
roles as teachers, and what students could and should learn in fifth grade
social studies was borne out. In addition, these seven teachers while all
teaching in the same district all had different local teaching contexts that
clearly influenced their decision making about social studies. Even
teachers working in the same schools found that variation in the ability levels of their students influenced their decision making; therefore, the social studies teaching of these seven was much more variable than might be expected given that all taught from the same textbook based on the same framework in the same grade level and in the same district. As in the California mathematics curricular reform, the text does not encounter a tabula rasa (c.f., Peterson, 1991), and teachers' prior agendas are indeed significant in how they perceive and receive a new text. This finding challenges the assumption that the teaching of elementary social studies is relatively homogeneous in part because teachers do not really care about it. Teachers' instructional agendas do matter in what gets taught; the new text encounters a prior agenda and like a prism, initial variations in these agendas result in variations in teaching practices. A summary of each teachers' background, teaching situation, and initial textbook use is presented in Appendix 1.

How Teachers Used the Text

Interviews with and observations of these teachers revealed three basic dispositions towards use of the text. Two of the teachers, Hank and Rachel, used the text as their primary resource in curricular planning for social studies. The text was the curriculum. Not only did they allow the text to structure the content and the pacing of the curriculum, they also relied heavily upon the supplemental materials, such as worksheets, that accompanied the texts. These teachers used the end-of-chapter examinations provided with the text series, and oriented their teaching around helping students succeed on those exams. Like the mathematics teachers cited in Stodolsky (1988), Hank allowed the text to represent the maximal range of his social studies teaching. He taught only what was in the book, although occasionally he modified its suggestions to better fit his teacher-centered pedagogical style. In one instance, for example, he converted an assignment for students to interview an immigrant to this country into a whole class discussion of what they would find out if they did do such an interview. Students in Hank's class could expect to use their texts, publisher's worksheets and publisher's tests over 95% of the time spent on social studies instruction. Rachel used a wider variety of media and pedagogical strategies to teach students what they needed to learn to do well on the text-based examinations; thus while the text defined the curriculum in her class, it was not the sole teaching resource as it was in Hank's class, but she clearly saw the text as the curriculum she was supposed to teach.

If this is the curriculum that I am supposed to do, then I feel a responsibility to do this....Somebody decided that was the
In contrast, two other teachers, Marlene and Sibyl, appeared to view the text as an active but not primary resource in their curriculum. They had read the curricular framework for social studies and had pre-established their curricular goals for the year. When they received the new texts, these teachers sought ways to achieve their curricular objectives. Unlike Hank and Rachel, they did not rely heavily upon either the supplemental materials that came with the text or the publisher-provided examinations. They were also more selective about projects or questioning strategies suggested in the teachers’ editions and were more selective about picking and choosing which sections of the text to use. As Stodolsky found in her study of texts in elementary social studies, these teachers tended to teach topics in the same sequence as presented in the book. But often the instructional emphases were modified to meet the teachers’ perception of what students needed to learn. Sibyl, for example preserved the order of the information to help her teach a unit comparing the Revolutionary and Civil War periods, but the unit design was hers—the text merely was a handy resource.

Finally, two of the teachers, Gwen and Beth, appeared to view the text as a limited resource. Both teachers believed that social studies can and should be taught more authentically through the use of other media and learning experiences. In addition, both teachers appeared to view curricular planning for social studies a personally exciting intellectual challenge. Neither teacher thought that the book was very useful to them in teaching the type of social studies they believed their students needed, and neither wanted to use the text “as their main source of learning” (Beth 2/18/93). Prior instructional agendas accorded a limited role to textbooks, and their initial classroom experiences with the new text reinforced this predilection. This is especially true in the case of Beth, whose class was predominantly limited English proficient (LEP). She attempted to use the text once early in the year and deemed the experiment a “total disaster.” Thereafter, her sole use of the text was as a reference book for the various projects (such as a newspaper account of the voyages of discovery) that the students undertook.

In Gwen’s case, her commitment to integrate subjects within her class clearly influenced her curricular decision making with respect to the text. Valuing integration, she placed much more instructional emphasis on trade books and reference materials than on the text. Repeatedly citing the new California literature framework’s charge to teach “Into, Through, and Beyond,” (CSDE, 1987) Gwen blended literature and social studies throughout the day, “so when we’re doing reading, quote unquote, or language arts, we’re actually doing social studies together” (11/5/92). During our conversations, Gwen almost
never mentioned a learning task that was not explicitly designed to teach two or more subjects simultaneously.

The seventh teacher in the study, Brenda, appeared to shift in her style of text use during the year. This shift reveals some of the necessary interplay between the influences of school context, teacher beliefs about student learning, and the day-to-day relationships within a classroom. Brenda had never before taught fifth grade, and she had been assigned the class at a new school only a few days before the start of the term. With little time to prepare and limited knowledge about fifth graders (she had previously taught K-3), her social studies curriculum in the fall was as closely linked to the textbook as Hank's was, despite her belief that students need hands-on activities to learn a subject as abstract as social studies and that factual history was a relatively unimportant component of elementary social education. She used the text because it was there. Brenda also used it as a tool for classroom management during the early months of the year when students were actively challenging her authority in the classroom. Two of the three times I observed a whole-class interactive activity in the fall based upon the text was abandoned in the face of student misbehavior, and students were instead made to read the text and answer questions at the end of the section individually and silently at their desks.

As Brenda became more familiar with her class and her day-to-day relationships with them improved, she had more time to locate appropriate alternative materials. Textbook use in her social studies curriculum occupies a position that was more consistent with her overall instructional philosophy. She oriented her curriculum around a simulation exercise on the Colonies, and merely used the text as a supplement. It was still an important resource, but it no longer determined the pace and content of instruction nor was her teaching focused on preparing students to succeed on the publisher-provided examinations. "I just found that I had to teach this the way I know how to teach" (12/14/92).

Why Teachers Used the Texts as They Did

One of my motivations in conducting an interview based study was not merely to document that elementary social studies teaching is more diverse than it is frequently portrayed, but also to begin to examine these teachers' agendas for social studies and to inquire into the features that undergird teachers' instructional decision making. I therefore asked them questions about their experience and professional affiliations, their normative visions of elementary social studies, their understanding of their students' characteristics and teaching context, and their day-to-day relationships with students in their classrooms. Brenda was most eloquent in detailing the conflicts between her overall vision of what
social studies should be and what she found possible to accomplish in a
new setting with new challenges and demands upon her teaching skills. The other teachers also appeared to interpret and make accommodations
to the new text based upon their prior agendas for social studies as well.
What they believed about social studies, how students learn, and what
was possible and practical to attempt in their teaching environments
clearly channeled their initial responses to the new text. Student
reactions to the text and the enacted curriculum also had an influence.
Below I briefly describe some of the factors that appeared to be most
salient in the teachers' decision making.

Educational Experience

There was no clear relationship between number of years of
teaching experience and textbook use. The less experienced teachers did
not seem more disposed to use a text as the basis of their curriculum than
were the more experienced teachers. In fact Hank, Rachel, and Marlene
were among the most experienced teachers in the study, and they used
the text quite heavily, while Beth and Brenda were the least experienced,
and were the least favorably disposed towards its use.

University experience is also an inadequate source of the
explanation of the differences in the enacted curriculum. In contrast to
the secondary school teachers in the knowledge growth in teaching
studies (e.g., Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987), experience with
university subject matter seemed to have little relationship to teachers' views about what to teach in elementary social studies. Most seemed to feel that "...it was a long time ago, I don't remember" (Rachel 11/4/92). When asked about their majors, they seemed to feel that they were irrelevant to their thinking about their social studies curriculum. None of
the seven teachers had majored in history and the teachers' social studies
focus on conveying factual knowledge, thinking skills, or effect seemed
unrelated to university subject matter preparation. This ambivalence to
their university or college subject matter preparation is probably due to
the fact that these teachers teach elementary school. Unlike secondary
teachers who tend to define themselves by the subject they teach--
history, math, or language --these teachers seemed to define themselves by the grade level.

Similarly, none of the teachers remembered or cited any references
to their teacher education programs with respect to what to teach in
social studies. Beth was the only teacher in the study whose teacher training took place at the same time as the new curricular reforms were coalescing in the late 1980s. It may be that her orientation towards thematic-indirect teaching in general originates with some of the same forces that spawned the new text, but there appeared to be no direct relationship to her views about social studies teaching. Again, this weak
relationship is probably attributable to the fact that as elementary teachers, their training was not very subject matter focused.

As noted in numerous other studies (e.g., Lortie, 1975; Shavelson & Stern, 1981), a much stronger point of reference for these teachers in terms of what should be taught in social studies was their apprenticeship of observation, their own experience as students. These experiences tended to be vividly remembered, and formed a lodestone for the teachers. Rachel, for example, continually cited her own Catholic school experience as her teaching model. Gwen, Beth, and Marlene in contrast all had memories of their school's social studies that can be termed anti models, models they did not want to use. Their motives in curricular planning were influenced by their desires not to teach the way they themselves were taught. Gwen recalls being humiliated in social studies class for challenging the teacher, and Beth recalls:

The only thing I remember from fifth grade was making a three dimensional covered wagon, and the teacher saying only this and this student can work on it, because she wanted it to be perfect. (11/10/92)

Overall Marlene focused on the positive, project-based aspects of her elementary experience, yet she remembered with distaste one year “when all we did was copying, copying, copying all the time off the board” (12/18/92).

Professional Affiliations

Consistent with the recent attention given to ideas such as teacher networks (e.g., Lieberman & McLaughlin, 1992), the perception of teachers’ roles as professionals and their decisions about professional affiliations did seem to influence their instructional agendas. Teachers choose the professional activities to get involved with, and these choices may be shaped by and may reinforce a teacher’s prior agenda; for example, it is probably not a coincidence that the teachers whose dispositions were most favorable to indirect or constructivist models of teaching (Brenda, Beth, Gwen, and Marlene) were those who were most active in educational organizations that extended beyond the school or school district. These organizations were not focused on social studies instruction, but instead formed in effect supportive communities in which teachers could discuss reform ideas in education. Brenda’s leadership in the Whole Language Association, therefore, may have indirectly affected how she thought the aims and processes of social education. Similarly, Marlene’s work with the Bilingual Education Project may have affected her decisions about what can and should be taught in social studies. At the same time, Beth’s decision to work with a
group of five other teachers on a thematic social studies unit for the district brought her into contact with teachers who view teaching the same way she does through indirect methods, providing a supportive community to discuss new ideas in education that she does not find at her school.

While not specifically a professional affiliation, another source of influence on these teachers' decision making about course content was the teachers' own extracurricular activities with respect to social studies; for example, both Gwen and Sibyl were personally active in the 1992 election campaigns, and found ways to bring these interests and understandings into the curriculum more explicitly than most of the other teachers in the study. Teachers were teaching a major goal of the framework--civic participation--but were not using the text to do so. Similarly, Marlene, Sibyl, and Gwen frequently cited their travels around the country as inspiration for teaching practices.

Normative Visions of Social Studies

One of the most powerful sources of influence on pedagogical decisions is a teacher's belief about how students best learn social studies. Teachers have different concepts about students' needs and achievements. Part of this difference stems from the teachers' perceptions of the goals of social education and their opinions about whether the subject should be knowledge centered, skill centered, or affect centered. There were strong differences of opinion among the seven teachers on this point. Brenda, for instance, felt that

If I could have my way (this is kind of radical) I wouldn't teach social studies through fifth grade. I would have it be more social learning and spend a larger amount of time on class meetings and getting along with others and becoming a responsible person rather than teaching content they won't remember next year anyway (11/5/92).

While Rachel believed that "U.S. history is very concrete. It's what has happened," and that the best way to teach it was to "teach the basic highlights put into terminology the kids can understand and not try to educate them to be like college students" (5/25/93). Clearly these different perceptions contributed to the differences in how Brenda and Rachel ultimately used the text in the spring. Brenda shifted away from reliance on the text towards the use of a purchased simulation exercise on colonial settlement, while Rachel found to her dismay that she was "reading orally to them an awful lot" (5/25/93).

Teachers' normative visions also differed in their orientation to the value of direct instruction and an accretionist view of learning versus
indirect instruction and a constructivist view. This conflict that can be illustrated by comparing Rachel's and Gwen's positions.

Traditional Rachel believed that students need to learn through practice and repetition. She held that students need repeated exposure to skills to learn them, not only in social studies but across the curriculum. She worried, for example, about the move away from such things as diagramming sentences in English, complaining that

I think that once they got away from diagramming sentences and getting into some of the real nitty-gritty logistical types of things of writing, they lost people. Some of these kids can be creative in their writing and that's about the story. Their creativity is wonderful, but they can't spell, they can't punctuate, they can't do anything. All of that unstructure carries through to all of these subjects, including social studies (11/4/92).

Citing concerns about students' developmental levels, Rachel was very concerned that the content and tasks students face should not be too advanced. She views learning as sequential and cumulative, and her job as the teacher is to structure tasks and questions designed to make students think about the content in a safe arena.

Gwen, on the other hand, citing her experiences as a leader in staff development in the district, advocated an accelerated education for all. "You have to make them reach...and put it together for themselves" (11/5/92).

I believe that I have to challenge my students with the type of work that I do in class--I consider it all GATE [gifted] work, not according to the ability of my students, but what I think that they need to do to do higher level critical thinking; therefore, everything that I do is based on Bloom's taxonomy, and so I definitely think about that as I plan the curriculum (11/5/92).

Student Characteristics

Chall and Conard (1991) found in their national survey of teachers' views that suitable reading level was the single most important characteristic about an elementary school textbook, and this was certainly true for the teachers in this study. All of the teachers in this study spoke of the need to adapt the new text to the reading abilities of their students, and all of them felt that the new textbook was beyond the reading ability of most of their students. While there was a range in average reading ability level among the classes in this study, from Beth's
“average third grade level,” to Sibyl’s “high ability readers,” almost universally the teachers in this study felt that the text was too hard for their students and they responded by either eliminating sections (or the use of the text altogether in Beth’s case), or by reading sections aloud to students and discussing them in a teacher-centered instructional style (as noted above for Rachel). Rachel’s response to the students’ difficulty was to redouble her efforts in guided literacy, whereas other teachers responded by minimizing the role of the text in the curriculum.

School and Classroom Context Considerations

Finally, an ever increasing tide of research on school context has been shown to be a significant factor in determining both how teachers teach and also how change is perceived and supported or resisted (e.g., Lieberman & McLaughlin, 1992; Talbert & McLaughlin 1992). Recognizing the potential significance of the local school context, I designed this study to enhance the probability of finding differences in the way the new textbook was received in different schools; therefore, I selected five different schools within one district. To increase the variability of the context, two were designated magnet schools. It has been suggested that magnet schools are significantly different from other schools because of their differential access to materials, spirit of school mission, collegiality of faculty, and so forth (Doyle & Levine, 1984).

Being a magnet school did not per se seem to have a direct impact upon teachers’ social studies decision making for any of the teachers except perhaps Beth. Marlene and Gwen at the science magnet, for example, did not integrate their social studies and science curricula to any great extent because the students in science class were assigned to a resource teacher. The effect of being in the magnet, therefore, merely meant that Gwen and Marlene did not have to teach science. Similarly, participation in a technology magnet did not have a clear impact on Hank’s instruction. Hank’s marginal use of technology in his social studies curriculum (he used a word-processor occasionally) provides evidence that being in a technology-rich environment does not ensure it will be integrated across the curriculum. At the same time, Beth’s affinity for teaching with technology may be as rooted in her professional background in computers and her basic educational philosophy as it is in her placement in a technology magnet school. These factors are clearly related.

Time and Space Considerations

For Hank, the overriding context features that influenced his curricular decision making were the open space nature of the classroom, and the fact that his students came and went through various enrichment
programs. Not once over the course of the seven weeks of interviews did he fail to mention these factors and what he would do in another situation. His argument that the text was not appropriate to an open classroom situation indicated that he was aware of the discrepancy between the vision of the reformers and his practice (he knows that he is not teaching fully in accord with the reform), but he felt unable to do otherwise. He read the suggestions for interactive activities in the text, but argued that the text “isn’t written for an open space type classroom,” and that “this book would’ve been successful in my first years of teaching when I did a lot of committee work, but I can’t do it here” (2/10/93). While Hank felt the most constrained by architecture, both Marlene and Beth also felt that the open-space architecture made teaching language-limited students in particular more difficult, as illustrated by this conversation with Marlene in December:

JHK: Does the fact that you teach in an open classroom affect how you teach?

Marlene: Give me four walls please.

JHK: Could you do a lot more if you had four walls?

Marlene: Yes, we could sing, I do a lot of singing, I think singing is a just a great therapeutic tool for the soul. There are wonderful patriotic songs in the fifth grade music book. And for cooperative learning we have to tone it down all the time. It takes the edge off the fun having to be so quiet all the time. And for the LEP’s, here we’re trying to help them to learn another language, and we want them to talk, but we can’t let them talk because we have to keep them quiet because we don’t have walls around. It just does not make a lot of sense.

Overall, in the allocation of time for social studies, these teachers did not seem overly disposed to reduce the amount of time spent on social studies in favor of other subjects. Gwen, Beth, and Marlene in contrast frequently spoke of cutting into language arts or mathematics time to finish a social studies projects. None of the teachers displayed the cavalier attitude towards social studies perpetuated by reports in the literature of teachers’ saying, “We’ll get to it if there is time” (e.g., Shaver, 1989; Thornton, 1989).

School Administration and Community Involvement

In general, the principals in the schools I visited were not viewed as very involved in the teachers’ curricular decisions. Brenda somewhat tailored her instruction at the beginning to the perceived desires of the
principal, but she was never actually told how to teach. Most teachers commented that they felt no pressure from the administration, or from parents or the community about their social studies instruction. They believed that designing their curriculum within the constraints of the framework was their responsibility. Three teachers, Hank, Sibyl, and Marlene did comment, however, that they suspected parents would be disappointed if they did not do state report projects. These projects are a common and long-standing feature of the fifth grade curriculum and while neither the state framework nor the text makes mention of them, all of the teachers except Beth and Brenda undertook them this year.

Day-to-Day Classroom Experiences

While the school context had some influence on the instructional agendas of the teachers, a more proximate source of influence was the day-to-day relationships between them and their students. The teachers did not rely solely upon their formal knowledge of the subject matter or pedagogy when setting their instructional agendas. The teachers thought about and discussed their teaching in a specific context to a specific group of students. They established routines and with the students a prevailing classroom climate.

All teachers were that their preferences for teaching certain ways were shaped and modified by student responses. Often these modifications came from their assessment that the curriculum was too difficult or that the students did not have the requisite background knowledge; thus both Rachel and Hank, in finding that the students had difficulty reading the text, intensified the way they taught with it. Rachel, in particular, spoke of the conflict inherent in needing to become more teacher-centered in her pedagogy as she found students frustrated by the text. Her agenda was shaped by the assessment that her students needed more scaffolding and background information, even if such teaching is not fully in accord with the reform. Beth, in contrast, responded to her students' difficulty by dropping the text altogether—a response that was consistent with other aspects of her instructional agenda such as her desire to incorporated more technology into her curriculum.

Section Summary

All of the factors described in the section above appear to be interrelated singly and in combination, and appear to have an impact upon teachers' instructional agendas to help shape their responses to a new text. What this analysis has revealed most plainly to me is that there is no single overriding factor that determines the reception a teacher will give to a new text and the use she or he will make of it in the classroom. Once again, the diversity of classroom decision making defies simple
categorization. One cannot assume, for example, that an inexperienced teacher will rely upon a textbook (Beth), that a teacher with a bilingual class will eschew it (Marlene), or that a teacher with good access to technological supplements will use them (Hank); the factors are complex and interrelated. Even teachers with similar beliefs about student learning and teaching philosophies appeared to respond differently to a new textbook in different teaching situations.

Much more descriptive case-based research needs to be done in classrooms where the teachers have different orientations to textbook use to untangle these relationships. Such research could also delve more deeply into the educational implications of teachers' different styles of textbook use. Does it matter which style of text use a teacher adopts? What do students learn from these different orientations to textbook use? For which types of students does each style of text use seem most appropriate? Are some subjects (or students) better taught with textbooks than others?

Textbooks are a ubiquitous feature of the elementary school landscape, but we have a very limited understanding of how best to use them to help students learn.

Conclusions and Implications

The Houghton Mifflin text did not encounter a clean pedagogical slate in the classrooms of these seven teachers. Their initial instructional agendas determined how they went about exploring the curricular potential of the new resource and the instructional decisions they made with respect to it. Previous research on how experienced teachers plan social studies teaching has suggested that teachers tend to be quite dependent upon their textbooks (e.g., McCutcheon, 1981), that social studies is often not considered an important part of the elementary school day, and it is therefore often planned haphazardly (Brophy & Alleman, 1993; Shaver, 1989). I did not find that this was generally true in my study. Since the teachers who viewed the textbook as their primary resource did use it to structure their planning, as McCutcheon (1981) suggests. They tended to plan in terms of sections of the textbook; when thinking about and planning for social studies, they used the text, while other teachers did not.

The comparisons of these seven teachers' practice remind us that there is no typical elementary social studies teacher or standard way in which elementary teachers use their social studies texts. Teachers are not the same, yet educational policy tends to be written as though they were, assuming that individual differences will not significantly impact how teachers will respond to external changes such as the arrival of a new text.
This finding has implications for teacher education and teachers' professional development. As current learning theory suggests, teachers need to attend to students' prior knowledge and understanding, and provide opportunities for them to construct new knowledge. Policymakers and researchers must to investigate the styles of text use best suited for all students and teaching contexts.

Many researchers who have studied educational change have concluded that instead of looking for the solution to educational deficiencies by our example, improving textbooks, the road to reform involves what Linda Darling-Hammond (1993) calls capacity building, and what Fullan and Miles (1992) call building the capacity for continuous improvement—ways to strengthen and support the ability of teachers and others in the schools to make ongoing decisions about educational practices. As this analysis of the instructional agendas of these seven teachers has revealed, teachers all encounter reforms (in this instance the new social studies text) from different sources, but they are not only starting from different points of reference about what can and should be taught, the teachers' own learning styles and needs are also different. Thus while Rachel and Hank each asked for more inservice training on how to teach this new way, Brenda recoiled at the thought of more formal training. She wanted a group of teachers that she could meet with regularly to discuss the proposed reforms and the successes and failures in trying to implement them. Closer attention to the factors that undergird teachers' instructional agendas may shed light on such preferences for different modes of professional development.

In sum, the arrival of the text is a critical juncture that calls upon teachers to employ their pedagogical reasoning skills. Analysis of the relationships between teachers' initial instructional agendas for social studies and the new text suggests that the reformers' hopes that a new textbook written to the specifications of a new curricular framework would lead directly to improvement in the quality of the social studies curriculum across the state may be ill-founded. While changes in the textbook might be a useful adjunct to curricular reform, especially for some teachers, we do not know enough about how and when teachers use texts to assume that changes in texts will be sufficient in and of themselves. It appears that textbook reform needs to be supported by a wider array of reforms in teacher education, professional development, and context restructuring that affect how a teacher thinks about and responds to the unbidden arrival of new agents of reform, such as a textbook.
Appendix
Summary of Teacher Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th># years teaching</th>
<th># years at this school</th>
<th>Special expertise</th>
<th>Additional comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Previous career in high-tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hank</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>GATE teacher, media specialist, taught all levels</td>
<td>Has seen many educational reforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlene</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Currently working on federal bilingual program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher training, GATE specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>mentor teacher</td>
<td>Returned to teaching after raising family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibyl</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taught previously at alternative school, First time teaching fifth grade, first time in traditional school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1
Teaching Experience
### Table 2
Beliefs about Social Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>The role of social studies</th>
<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>A vehicle for teaching middle school survival skills.</td>
<td>Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hank</td>
<td>To teach students pride in their heritage and the facts and skills needed for middle school.</td>
<td>Facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlene</td>
<td>Social studies should be fun and engaging; depth on a few topics.</td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen</td>
<td>To teach critical interpretation, importance of multiple perspectives, through group work.</td>
<td>Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>Social studies is and should be history. History is fixed. History is made up of facts.</td>
<td>Facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibyl</td>
<td>To teach history as stories so that students develop pride in America.</td>
<td>Facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda</td>
<td>Personal development: to teach students “who they are as people”; to help them get along with others and other cultures; history or factual knowledge are secondary.</td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Teaching Philosophy</td>
<td>Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>Students need basic life skills; they need to learn how to learn. Teaching needs to be thematic.</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hank</td>
<td>Students need regularity and equal access to learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlene</td>
<td>We need to keep up with changes in teaching (e.g., LEP technology). School needs to be fun for students.</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen</td>
<td>Constructivist approach: Learning has to be integrated. We need to accelerate learning and “make it all GATE work.”</td>
<td>Subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>Believes in progression and structure. Small steps/scaffolding are valuable. Students need to build skills.</td>
<td>Subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibyl</td>
<td>School needs to be fun and relevant to students.</td>
<td>Subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda</td>
<td>Focuses on meaning, on whole language. Personal development of students is key.</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4
Teaching Context and Student Body

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Magnet?</th>
<th>Classroom</th>
<th>Student Makeup</th>
<th>Achievement Level</th>
<th>Collegial?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Open space</td>
<td>Mostly Latino/a</td>
<td>Low, over half LEP</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hank</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Open space</td>
<td>Mostly Latino/a</td>
<td>Wide range of ability, several GATE students</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlene</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Open space</td>
<td></td>
<td>Most diverse in study: half LEP, a few GATE</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Open space</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students mostly at or below grade level</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Self-contained</td>
<td>Large class size: 40 in social studies</td>
<td>Middle to low</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibyl</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Open space</td>
<td>Mostly upper middle class</td>
<td>Students at grade level</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Self-contained</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower than in rest of school</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


**Author**

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Social Studies on the Back Burner: Views from the Field

Neil O. Houser
University of Delaware

Abstract
Elementary social studies is "on the back burner." Heavy competition for resources, low student interest and teacher concern, and a highly sanitized and uneven curriculum are among the conditions underlying its underrepresentation. Among the various effects of this back burner status, limited opportunity for substantive social development is perhaps the most important. Moving social studies to the forefront of the curriculum will require an understanding of the interrelated nature of the underlying conditions and an appreciation of the classroom practitioners' considerable influence upon curriculum and instruction.

Social studies is one of the things you put on the back burner—everything else has to be brought first....It's what we do when we have time left over.

Second-grade teacher, 21 years experience

Personal development for the greater good of society has long been a primary and explicit focus of the social studies (Hertzberg, 1981; Nelson, 1992; Stanley, 1985). Although specific emphases and approaches vary, most social educators advocate some form of individual citizenship development as a means of promoting broad societal improvement. Whether achieved through the cultivation of a critical social perspective (Giroux, 1985), an ethic of caring or community (Greene, 1988; Noddings, 1992), or the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for responsible civic action (Banks, 1987; Barr, Barth & Shermis, 1977; Newmann, 1975), the underlying premise of the social studies is that some form of individual social development is
necessary for the greater good of society. Nonetheless, the subject is underrepresented in the nation’s elementary schools. It is allocated less and less instructional time, and it is frequently given little more than perfunctory consideration in curricula reform proposals (Goodlad, 1984; Gross, 1977; Hahn, 1985; Lengel & Superka, 1982; NCSS Taskforce on Early Childhood/Elementary Social Studies, 1989; Shaver, 1989).

The purpose of this article, based upon a study conducted in Delaware, is to examine the relationship between the status of elementary social studies and the goal of personal development for the greater good of society. First, I will describe teachers’ perspectives on the definition and value of the social studies; next, I will examine the status of the social studies in Delaware and its underlying conditions underlying that status. Finally, I will discuss general implications for improving the status of the elementary social studies.

Theoretical Framework

This report draws upon three basic assumptions. First, human activity is mediated by interpretation (Neisser, 1976; Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Wertsch, 1991). Our actions are influenced by personal goals and perspectives. Sometimes these influences are contradictory in nature. Desire for personal independence, for example, may counterbalance the wish for social belonging (Hewitt, 1991), and personal perspectives on issues such as freedom, democracy and justice may vary according to experience and circumstance (e.g., Greene, 1988). To the extent that one goal or perspective contradicts another, conflicts may arise that require reconciliation. While these conflicts often exist externally between individuals, internal contradictions arise as well. Thus, it is possible for individuals, including teachers, to experience internal tension between professional and personal goals, between efficacy and safety needs, and so forth.

The second assumption is that learning requires a mental struggle with information not yet understood. Psychological development results from an ongoing effort to reconcile existing perspectives with environmental experiences that challenge those perspectives (Anderson, 1985; Neisser, 1976; Piaget, 1972). By extension, social development (i.e., the psychological development of social perspectives) would seem to require the contemplation of dissonant social views, conditions and relationships.

1The data drawn upon in this article were collected as part of a larger study of the status of the social studies in Delaware (see Thornton & Houser, 1994). The project was completed under the auspices of the Center for Educational Leadership and Evaluation, College of Education, University of Delaware.
The third premise is that within a democratic and pluralistic society if any individual or group is required to challenge its existing beliefs, all individuals and groups should be expected to do the same. Members of a dominant culture should be as self-reflective and self-critical as any other individual or sociocultural group. Although this ideal is reflected in our national rhetoric, it is far from being a social reality. Instead, ongoing resistance to the critical examination of dominant perspectives and practices has resulted in sanitized social curricula (Anyon, 1979; Banks, 1987, 1989). Similar concerns are at the center of pluralist arguments against cultural assimilation in education and in society (Baldwin, 1988; Greene, 1993; Nieto, 1992; Sleeter & Grant, 1988).

Research Participants, Context, and Methodology

The research methodology employed in this study was qualitative in nature. Although varied approaches were used to gather the data, an interpretivist perspective compatible with the research focus and theoretical framework was utilized to guide inquiry and analysis (Berg, 1989; Glazer & Strauss, 1967; Jacob, 1987; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Lofland & Lofland, 1984; Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). One of the basic tenets of the qualitative, or interpretivist, paradigm is that human activity is mediated by personal interpretation of context-specific experiences within particular social settings (Jacob, 1987). Rather than responding in some mindless, universal way to environmental (e.g., physical, social) stimuli, human thought and action are influenced by the interpretation of specific environmental conditions and the integration of these conditions with personal goals, interests, and concerns.

Thus, the primary value of qualitative research lies not in the verification and generalization of universal truths, but in the rich description and thoughtful explanation of complex processes, relationships, and environmental influences. It seeks to describe the actions of particular individuals (in this case, the social studies practices of elementary teachers) and to explain the perspectives and environmental contexts underlying those actions. The aims of this

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2This report follows Nieto's (1992) use of the terms dominant culture and dominated cultures to distinguish between the European American "mainstream" and sociocultural groups that have been systematically dominated by the ideologies and actions of that mainstream. Although there is no clear demarkation between dominant and dominated cultures (i.e., to some degree dominance is relative and context specific) and the terms should therefore be interpreted cautiously; the concept that some cultures have been dominated by others is central to this article.
The Social Context

Although Delaware is in some ways distinct (e.g., it is one of the smallest states both in population and geographical size), but it shares important sociocultural and educational characteristics with many other states. To the extent that such factors ultimately influence classroom practice, understanding the broader context of the social studies in Delaware may provide valuable insight for the field in general.

Sociocultural Factors

As in many other states, Delaware's sparsely populated and ethnically homogeneous areas are balanced by densely populated and culturally diverse regions, its highly industrialized regions are offset by agricultural areas, and extreme wealth is contrasted with acute poverty. The 1990 census indicated that the state population was approximately 80% European American and 17% African American, with the remaining 3% of the population distributed among Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, American Indians, Eskimos [Inuit] and Aleut, and various "other" ethnic groups (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1990). This distribution, however was unevenly reflected in districts and schools throughout the state. For example, while African Americans comprised less than 10% of the student population in some schools, they exceeded 40% of the population in other schools.

In addition to uneven ethnic distribution, school populations varied economically as well. While a handful of elementary schools reported that 5% or fewer of their students lived below the poverty line, five other schools reported that 50% or more of their students lived in poverty. More than one fifth of the public elementary schools in Delaware reported 30% or more of their students living below the poverty line.

Educational Climate

Like many other states, Delaware is currently involved in school reform initiatives. During the last several years the state has engaged in a massive curricular restructuring effort aimed at developing content standards for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies, and statewide assessment tools to be administered in grades 3, 5, 8 and 10. The revision of each subject is spearheaded by a 45-member framework commission represented by teachers, parents, students,
administrators, college and university faculty, and members from business and industry.

According to the most recent draft of the social studies standards, the four most important disciplines to provide a foundation for responsible citizenship are history, geography, economics, and civics (Delaware Social Studies Framework Commission, 1994). Multicultural perspectives and social issues are identified as important lenses through which to view these four primary disciplines. The assessment tools include grade-level performance tasks that seek to evaluate higher order thinking (e.g., critical analysis, problem-solving, and application of knowledge) and the demonstration of proficiencies rather than the mere selection of correct answers.

Although history, geography, economics and civics are highlighted in the 1994 draft, they have also been heavily emphasized in prior state and district curricular standards (e.g., State Board of Education, 1990) and in the social studies textbooks that often serve as de facto curricula within the classroom (e.g., Thornton, 1992). What has changed, perhaps, is the level of specific attention to multicultural education and social issues, along with a less-is-more philosophy that maximizes the four disciplines while minimizing or eliminating disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology.

The Participants

Data were gathered by four means, including: (1) a statewide survey of district level social studies supervisors (or their equivalents), (2) a statewide survey of elementary school representatives (e.g., teachers and principals), (3) interviews with 20 teachers throughout the state, and (4) the collection of documents (e.g., state and district curricular guides and state census information).

The district survey was mailed to 15 of the 19 public school districts in Delaware. (The four remaining districts were excluded because their programs do not include elementary schools housed within the state.) Each superintendent was asked to select a district representative (i.e., a district level social studies supervisor or equivalent) to complete the survey. Since few districts employed social studies supervisors as such, most of the surveys were completed by district level curriculum specialists. Twelve of the 15 districts responded to the surveys, yielding an overall return rate of 80 percent.

The school-level survey was disseminated to all 112 public schools in Delaware serving any combination of grades between K and 6. Each principal was asked to select an appropriate school representative. The respondents included a combination of grade-level team leaders, teachers working on school-level social studies curricula,
vice-principals, and principals. Responses from 75 percent of the schools (N=84) representing 27 different grade-level combinations (e.g., K-2, pre-K-3, K plus 4-6, 1-6, 6-8) were returned.

The 20 teachers were selected on the basis of grade level, teaching experience, geographical location (e.g., southern or northern portion of the state; urban, suburban or rural school setting), the approximate gender distribution of teachers within elementary classrooms, and the ethnic profile of the state. Based upon these factors, a stratified sampling approach (e.g., Gay, 1987) was utilized to select the teachers to be interviewed. School principals and classroom practitioners were contacted until the desired representation of participants was achieved. Therefore, among the 20 teachers interviewed, 17 were women and three were men, 17 were European American and three were African American. Eleven of the interviewees taught in grades K-3, and nine taught in grades 4-6. No grade level was represented by fewer than two teachers or by more than four. The experience level of the interviewees ranged from 2 to 23 years. Approximately two thirds of the teachers had either earned advanced degrees or were enrolled in graduate programs at the time of the interviews.

Research Tools

Survey Instruments

Although the wording varied and certain items were added or eliminated as needed, the district and school level surveys were similar in both method and substance. Both sets of surveys contained Likert scales, rank-ordered items, and open-ended questions and statements calling for brief written responses, and both sets of surveys were developed around the same five categories.

The five major categories included: (1) demographic information (e.g., average student enrollment, student ethnic and economic status); (2) social studies curriculum and instruction (e.g., most/least common instructional practices and evaluation procedures, typical scope and sequence, textbooks and materials, average instructional time per week); (3) the status of the social studies (e.g., relative to other subjects); (4) the influence of recent developments (e.g., national studies and reports, political trends) upon local policy and practice, and (5) priorities for future social studies development.

Most survey items were divided into separate categories for the primary and upper grades. In these cases, items eliciting responses, for grades K-3 were immediately replicated for grades 4-6. Open-ended questions and statements requesting a narrative response were among the most useful survey items. For instance, district representatives were asked to respond to the following statement:
Although the district curriculum guide plans for 1-6 articulation in the social studies curriculum and for articulation with secondary social studies courses, most teachers ignore the guide. In practice, the knowledge, skills, and values that students learn in social studies in one grade are rarely connected to what they learn in the next grade. Responses to this statement varied from claims that curricular continuity was not a problem in District X, to assertions about the need for greater district control over local practices, to indignation at the suggestion that centralized policing was either possible or desirable. Items such as this provided valuable insight on a variety of perspectives and settings.

Interviews

Unlike the surveys, the interviews were explicitly designed to examine practitioners' perspectives on their particular roles, teaching contexts, and social studies goals and approaches. The teachers were asked to describe their personal teaching philosophies and environments and the influence of these factors upon their social studies curriculum and practice.

The interviews were semi-structured (e.g., Berg, 1989). Although an initial set of questions guided the conversation, adequate space was provided to pursue unanticipated but important issues that emerged during the interview. In several cases, follow-up interviews were arranged to further explore topics of importance to the teacher or interviewer. Typical items included:

1. How would you define social studies? What is it for? Is there any real value or need for social studies? Explain.
2. Describe a typical social studies unit or lesson in your class.
3. Under optimum conditions, what would you want your students to learn in social studies?

Findings

The surveys and interviews yielded important information about the status of the social studies in Delaware and the various conditions underlying that status. Specifically, this section describes: (1) the participants' perspectives on the content and value of social education; (2) the influence of those perspectives upon the status of the social
studies in Delaware; and (3) the relationship between this status and
the larger goal of personal development for the greater social good.

The Definition and Value of the Social Studies

In addition to the open-ended survey items administered to
district and school representatives, the teacher interviewees were
asked to define social studies, to discuss their views on its value or
purpose, and to describe the kinds of social studies activities conducted
in their classrooms. Based upon these data, typical content areas were
identified along with a sense of the teachers' views on the primary
value of the social studies. The content areas consisted of history,
geography, and multicultural education, with some attention also given
to subjects such as economics. The major value of the social studies
according to the participants involved socializing the child into the
larger society.

Variations on history and geography permeated the data. When
asked how she would define the social studies, for example, a sixth
grade teacher responded, "It's actually a combination of things, as far
as I can see: history, geography, current affairs, how people relate to
their world—their environment." In addition to history and
geography, multicultural education was also a growing priority. As one
school representative wrote, "We...are in touch with people
throughout the world on a daily basis. Multicultural education from a
social studies perspective is crucial in preparing our young people for
their world of today and tomorrow."

While history, geography, and multicultural education were
considered central to the social studies, the primary value of the field
was related not so much to a particular content area as to a
developmental process. Time and again the participants indicated that
socializing the child into the larger community (e.g., the classroom, the
neighborhood, the nation) was an essential aspect of the social studies.
As a first grade teacher stated, the value of the social studies is
"mostly for social development. When I think of social studies, I think
of getting along with others—learning how to be cooperative." A fifth
grade teacher shared a similar perspective:

[Social studies involves] learning to cooperate with others.
It's building not only self-esteem but skills that you need to
get along in the world....Like in real life you can do your job
really well, but if you cannot get along and cooperate and
follow the rules of the business and society, you can get
fired.

Although the teachers' perspectives and state and local curricula
were far from isomorphic, the various sources of data converged on at
least two important points: Elementary social studies in Delaware consists primarily of teaching history, geography, and multicultural education, and socializing the individual child into broader society is a pervasive underlying concern. The next section examines the relationship between the status of the social studies, thus defined, and the larger goal of promoting personal development for the greater good of society.

Social Studies on the Back Burner

Like social studies across the nation, social studies in Delaware is undervalued and underrepresented in the elementary classroom. As a fourth grade teacher in a suburban neighborhood stated, "(S)ocial studies is...one of those things that's kind of tacked onto the end....You know, if you need to do extra math, the first thing you cut is social studies and science."

Nor was this view limited to the upper grades. A second grade teacher with 21 years' experience appeared to express the views of many when she said, "It seems like social studies is one of the things you put on the backburner—everything else has to be brought first....It's what we do when we have time left over." The belief that social studies is marginalized within the broader curriculum was supported by the surveys as well the interviews. Figures 1a and 1b indicate the status of nine major subjects as interpreted by the district and school representatives. Mean scores are shown for each of the rank-ordered items, with 1 considered most important and 9 least important.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>District</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Reading (X=1.5)</td>
<td>Reading (X=1.0)</td>
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<td>2 Mathematics (X=2.2)</td>
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<td>3 Language Arts (X=2.5)</td>
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<td>9 Foreign Languages (X=7.9)</td>
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Although social studies was ranked fifth in each instance, careful examination reveals little cause for optimism. The subjects that were ranked below the social studies, which the participants commonly referred to as "specials," were considered supplementary rather than essential. These subjects were taught by specialists two or three days a week (if at all) rather than by the regular classroom teacher on a daily basis. The fact that social studies was ranked just ahead of the specials actually reinforces the notion that social education is relegated to secondary status within the overall curriculum.

The conditions underlying the marginal status of the social studies are numerous and complex. Nonetheless, three broad, interrelated explanations emerged from the data, including: (1) competition for limited resources, (2) the conception of social studies as uninteresting and unimportant, and (3) a general reluctance to critique dominant social perspectives and practices.

**Competition for Resources**

The most common explanation for the underrepresentation of social studies involved the limited availability of resources. Like other programs across the nation, elementary teachers in Delaware believe the curriculum is overcrowded. There is too much to be done and too little time, money or material resources with which to do it. When asked, for example, what influenced her social studies decision-making, a suburban second grade teacher responded without hesitation, "Time, [and] the overwhelming sense of so many other things to cover."

A school representative described the impact of the overcrowded curriculum: "Too many items are mandated by the Department of Public
Instruction to be included in the curriculum. Nothing is taken out. Hence, social studies... get(s) squeezed into a lower priority.” Indeed, social studies was sometimes eliminated altogether. A fourth grade teacher observed the following:

The third grade is required to take the SAT test and (this year) our third grade teachers were—now this was an administrative push—the administrators, all they were telling everybody was “Our test scores need to be higher. Our test scores need to be higher.” So what the third grade teachers in our building did is they stopped teaching social studies and science for a whole month and taught extra math and English. So the kids did not get any social studies or science for at least a month. And amazingly so (spoken with a tone of irony), our test scores went up.

In addition to time constraints, the social studies also competed for financial and material resources. In response to an inquiry about program development, one exasperated school representative wrote:

We have a good social studies program now. Instead of worrying about it, get us atlases, maps, globes, software, books, videotapes and other materials to use and get us some funds for travel to museums and historical sites and for talented guest speakers. We can’t afford a subscription to a newspaper. We know what to do and how to do it but can’t keep hiding the fact we have no resources to make us more effective. When we spend at least $200 per student on supplies and materials—then ask us again about program improvements.

Similar frustration was expressed by a second-grade teacher:

What I feel is really detrimental to me and everyone else there is that, yeah we have to teach (the mandated curriculum), but they don’t give us anything...to teach from. We have absolutely no textbook to draw from. Not that I would rely totally on the textbook, but at least to see something that has been approved by the district....We’re pretty much left on our own.

Teachers responded to the competition for resources by reducing the quantity of social studies instruction. The remaining instruction was either isolated or integrated into the overall curriculum. Curricular isolation was most acute when the social studies was relegated to
Friday afternoons, to celebratory holidays, and so forth. While social studies was sometimes isolated, at other times it was integrated into the overall curriculum. An 18-year-veteran described an approach that intertwined many areas of the curriculum:

I incorporate all the other areas of the curriculum.... we'll get into science, even through spiders, through the African folk tales of Anansi. And we'll do scientific observations of an aquarium with spiders in it....And on math we'll write math stories about spiders and double facts because spiders have four plus four legs, eight legs....I believe you try to incorporate everything as much as possible.

Thus, whether isolated or integrated, the ongoing competition for limited resources resulted in an overall reduction in social studies instruction.

Social Studies as Uninteresting and Unimportant

Another factor contributing to the secondary status of the social studies is that the subject is often considered uninteresting and unnecessary. A second grade teacher stated quite simply, "Social studies is not one of my favorite things to do....Science is more interesting." Even a sixth grade teacher involved in state-level social studies curricular development acknowledged that disinterest was an important issue:

Boredom...(is) the first impediment to kids' learning....there's just so much that I want the kids to get [but] I don't want them to die of boredom in the process.

To stimulate interest in the subject, teachers tried to involve students in stimulating, "hands-on" (i.e., experience-based) activities. For example, the sixth-grade teacher involved in curriculum development sought to counter student boredom with "high interest stimulation." Similarly, a first grade teacher noted that effective social studies instruction consists of "hands-on activities where the children get involved."

Not only was social studies considered uninteresting, but many saw it as unnecessary as well. This point was implied by the survey data (see Figures 1a and b, for example) as well as the interviews. As one sixth grade teacher with 23 years' experience bluntly asserted, "Social studies isn't a priority. People just don't seem to see a need." Thus, social studies was often viewed as uninteresting and unimportant. These views contributed to the reduction, and in some cases the outright elimination, of social studies instruction. Teachers sought to counter
student boredom by making the remaining instruction stimulating, hands-on, and otherwise as interesting as possible.

The Sanitized Curriculum

Although competition for resources and a lack of interest and concern help explain the backburner status of the social studies, they do not fully account for its underrepresentation within the overall curriculum. As the study proceeded, it became clear that these conditions were related to a much larger problem.

In spite of open-ended and probing questions about the definition, importance, and method of the social studies, there was little indication that dissonant social information was included in the curriculum. Teachers appeared particularly reluctant to critique dominant social norms, and in some cases they openly resented such efforts. The few teachers who did encourage their students to critique the dominant social system experienced considerable opposition and very little support; for example, although several participants identified economics as an important social studies subject, there was little indication that it was approached critically. Specific references were limited to activities such as mini society, an elaborate simulation approach used to teach about the principles and processes of the free market system. Under the best of circumstances, such programs address problems within the economic system (e.g., they encourage students to delineate between wants and needs, they note the tension between unlimited wants and finite resources) while stopping short of critiquing the system itself.

Failure to critique the fundamental premises or ethics of existing social systems (whether economic, political, or otherwise) restricts incentive to contemplate viable alternatives. In turn, failure to contemplate alternatives contributes to the perpetuation of the existing system. Perhaps even more important, reluctance to challenge students' fundamental social assumptions precludes the cognitive dissonance required for substantive social development. Indeed, among the 96 surveys and 20 personal interviews, barely a handful of comments implied any substantive critique of existing economic or political systems.

Reluctance to critique the dominant social structure was also evident in multicultural education. Although multicultural education was strongly advocated by many participants, conceptions of culture were often narrow and uncritical. One teacher, for example, characterized her efforts as doing "the cultural holiday thing." Another teacher noted that multicultural education is "overinundated with Martin Luther King, Jr." Overall, it appeared that politically safe heroes and exotic life styles were far more likely areas of focus.
than were the substantive philosophical perspectives or diminished life chances of dominated sociocultural groups.\(^3\)

To better understand the nature and underlying conditions of the sanitized curriculum, consider the response of a fourth grade teacher when asked whether there was any real need for the social studies:

I feel like the kids need to be aware....It's important in how you do things in life, you know. If you don't know what's happening in the Persia Gulf, if you don't know a war is coming, it might catch you by surprise!

This teacher acknowledged the need to be aware of important social issues and events (e.g., the Persian Gulf war). Such awareness, however, was viewed more as a means of preserving existing social conditions (e.g., personal safety and national security, which would be threatened if the war were to catch you by surprise) than critiquing—much less changing—those conditions. No mention was made, for example, of the value of encouraging students to critique the range of motives underlying U.S. involvement in the Gulf war.

This was not an isolated case. Few participants seemed inclined to challenge the efficacy or ethics of prevailing social perspectives. When such issues were raised, discussion tended to be tentative or non-committal. For example, a first grade teacher with 17 years experience was asked whether she believed part of the teacher's role involves changing society in general:

I don't think about that in first grade. But in a way, yeah. If they don't do it, who's going to?...My first impression is, Well, parents should be doing that. But if parents aren't teaching kids how to show respect—how to get along with others—then teachers have to do it.

This response is informative for several reasons. Initially, the teacher acknowledged that she simply did not think about social change as part of her present role. She noted that social change is the parent's job rather than the province of the public educator; however, she then conceded that if parents either cannot or will not socialize their children to "show respect" or to "get along with others," the responsibility falls upon the teacher.

Perhaps the most important aspect of such responses was that social change was perceived in limited terms. While often equated

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\(^3\) The life style versus life chances distinction is drawn from Bullivant (1986). Banks (1987) also borrows this terminology to argue convincingly for a more substantive approach to multicultural education within the social studies.
with changing individuals or groups who deviate from dominant societal norms (e.g., those who do not respect others, those who do not get along in society), social change was seldom viewed in terms of changing the norm itself. For example, there was little indication that students were asked to consider that not all perspectives (e.g., bigotry, racism, greed) are equally deserving of respect or that getting along is always best for society. There was even less indication that students were encouraged to address the various forms of bigotry, racism, and greed institutionalized within the dominant social structure. While it is certainly important to provide affirming experiences for every child, emotional safety should not and need not preclude intellectually sound personal and social critique (e.g., Nieto, 1992; Paley, 1992).

Conflicting Goals

Among the many factors contributing to the sanitized curriculum, teachers were particularly concerned with their own professional, social, and personal preservation. Preservation of professional status was a specific concern for the second grade teacher who earlier argued that "they don't give us anything...to teach from...that has been approved by the district." She was asked how she felt about her curricular decisions being strongly decided by the team:

Sometimes I feel limited, then I feel safe because I know that we're all covering the same ideas, and then we get back to the old accountability situation. Then parents can't come back to us and say that Mrs. So-and-so did this, why didn't you cover this?

Thus, the teacher's reliance upon district sanctioned materials was part of a larger effort to shield herself from criticism; however, to the extent that the need for professional preservation restricts instructional flexibility based upon social critique and self-reflection, the goal of maintaining professional security begins to contradict the goal of providing quality social education.

Although presenting dissonant social information was seldom identified as important to the social studies, this was not exclusively the case. A sixth grade teacher with nine years, experience provided insight to the difficulty of addressing such issues:

I think maybe we can learn from our life styles too, some things that we do wrong. And we can assess our own culture and say Maybe we're not quite right. We call ourselves civilized, but are we civilized? We can look at the Indians who lived here for thousands of (years) and never damaged the land....And yet here we are with our briefcases and our three piece suits and our cars and our roads and our highrise apartments and we say that we're civilized. Yet we do a lot of damage, and it seems like we have a lot of problems that
go along with just this life style...You need to study that. You need to look at it and think about it and make judgments for yourself.

As he continued, it became clear that this teacher's approach entailed some risk:

A lot of curriculum choices are made once that door is shut....Once I shut that door, you know, they can more or less say well, here's the content you should try to cover. (But) I'm going to sort of do it my way, and what I feel is important.

In addition to professional preservation, social and personal concerns also restricted the presentation of dissonant social information. This was the case with a white fourth grade teacher who responded to a black student's public charge that she was prejudiced. According to the teacher, the event occurred shortly after she had been complimented by another student:

Then this boy raises his hand and he says, "You know, I have two friends who were fourth graders a couple of years ago, and both of them said that you and this teacher and this teacher, all three of you, were prejudiced." There's this hushed silence that kind of covered the room as this boy said this. The kids were all kind of looking around and most of them were just wide-eyed with terror that I was going to just kind of let go on this kid because he more or less just called his teacher prejudiced.

Rather than postponing or isolating her response or silencing the student altogether, the teacher decided to pursue the issue publicly, in the setting in which the interaction had been initiated. The result was a 30-minute-discussion in which the teacher asked the student to support his claim with personal experience and observations. The class discussed both the seriousness of prejudicial thinking and action, and the seriousness of charging someone with being prejudiced. In this way, the teacher used the opportunity to encourage her students to think both critically and reflectively about prejudice. Several months later, the teacher reflected upon the experience:

I didn't realize at the time that it was a huge social studies lesson....I didn't expect it to go in the direction that it did, and I certainly didn't expect it to go on for the length of time that it did, [but] I knew that it was time well spent.
Indeed, it had been time well spent. In a 30-minute-class discussion, the teacher not only challenged a student to examine the evidence upon which he had based a serious personal judgment, but she did so in a way that suggested neither she nor anyone else who is socially, economically, or politically more powerful is beyond reproach. Rather than dismissing the student’s accusation, this teacher acknowledged the fear it aroused in her and struggled to reconcile the teacher-student relationship:

Part of me still wonders in the back of his mind if he is not thinking to himself [that I am prejudiced]....I’m not trying to defend myself, although I guess I am trying to prove something to him....It’s always in the back of my head. Part of me is saying you cannot treat him or respond to his behavior differently just because you have this fear.

The teacher’s satisfaction was further diffused when she recounted the event to several fellow teachers and a couple of personal friends:

One of my friends reacted, “Why did you even allow a kid to say that?”...I’m not sure that anyone who I told the story to said I handled it well...I think everyone was like You spent 30 minutes doing that!?

The effort of those who risked their own security to address difficult social issues takes on even greater significance when contrasted with one teacher’s views on the teaching of revisionist history:

I’m trying to adjust without giving in to—what do you call it—revisionist history....I have some people working in my school, and I’m not sure where the funding comes from, but their whole purpose is supporting black students—the minority students. Well, some of the stuff that the kids are being told down there just kind of boggles my mind. Like Columbus didn’t discover America,...Cleopatra was a Black woman—that kind of stuff. I want to see some credible support for it. I’m not teaching it just because it suits somebody’s purpose.

She continued:

What it’s really doing is causing divisiveness that wasn’t there before. At least I didn’t know it was there and none of the [other] teachers did [either]....I think somebody’s planting some bad seeds here to make the kids feel like the
only history that you really want to hear is the history of your own race.

This teacher's reluctance to entertain alternative historical perspectives was based upon the grounds that such alternatives are unsupported by empirical evidence. She apparently failed, however, to consider that those responsible for perpetuating particular historical perspectives and standards often benefit most by those perspectives and standards (Baldwin, 1988; Greene, 1993; Noddings, 1992; Ogbu, 1987; Zinn, 1980). In failing to entertain even the possibility that alternative standards and perspectives may have merit, she denied both herself and her students a vital opportunity for social development through critical self-examination.

Discussion and Conclusion

Elementary social studies in Delaware is defined largely in terms of history, geography, multicultural education, and socializing the child into the larger community. Thus defined and practiced, social studies is undervalued and underrepresented within the overall curriculum. Heavy competition for resources, student disinterest, failure to view the subject as important, and a reluctance to present dissonant social information are among the many conditions that contribute to its backburner status.

It is tempting to address each of these underlying conditions in isolation; however, these factors and many others actually interact to perpetuate the underrepresentation of the social studies. For example, it is not difficult to understand reduced instruction in a program viewed as personally irrelevant by some and flatly demeaning by others. Similarly, it is not unlikely that students consider social studies uninteresting precisely because much of the inherently interesting (e.g., controversial, personally relevant, and socially challenging) material has been eliminated from the curriculum. The larger point is that the conditions underlying the backburner status of the social studies are overlapping and interrelated. Procuring additional resources without simultaneously attending to the sanitized curriculum is unlikely to promote substantive social development. Isolated attempts to raise social consciousness are not a viable substitute for ongoing social critique.

Addressing difficult social issues was perhaps the riskiest and least developed response to the backburner status. The competition for resources, low student interest, and lack of concern were addressed in a variety of ways (e.g., by reducing, isolating, and integrating instruction; by making the remaining lessons as stimulating as possible); however, critiquing the system itself was a far more difficult matter. Partially
because of the general socializing orientation of the subject and partly because teacher autonomy conflicted with the goals of maintaining professional, social, and personal safety, there was often a price to pay for challenging dominant social perspectives and practices.

For one teacher, the price entailed closing the classroom door and operating in secrecy. For another, it involved the loss of valuable instructional time and considerable risk to her professional status and personal identity. Even when the teacher who had been called prejudiced risked a candid and public discussion with her accuser, and even though she was justifiably satisfied with her efforts, her actions were misunderstood and ultimately rejected by her friends as well as her peers.

This teacher faced her own fears in a way few may be willing to do. In so doing, she demonstrated that the underrepresentation of quality social studies instruction results as much from a desire to protect personal identity and social position as from any professional conviction. Her response is all the more remarkable when contrasted against the uncritical approach to the Gulf war, or against the view that contemplating alternative standards and historical perspectives is an indication that bad seeds are being sown.

Finally, any subject that simultaneously assimilates diverging individuals into the sociocultural mainstream while exempting the dominant culture from critical self-examination helps perpetuate an educational situation that is not only undemocratic, but educationally unsound. While the views and actions of some students are challenged, the beliefs and practices of others remain unexamined. To the extent that social development involves the contemplation of dissonant social information, the dominant culture is denied opportunity for substantive social growth. And to the extent that our social ideals imply shared opportunity constructing society, other sociocultural groups are denied a fundamental democratic right.

In conclusion, the secondary status of the social studies involves more than physical or temporal underrepresentation. Perhaps the representation of greatest significance involves real opportunity for each student and teacher to contemplate truly difficult social information. Until this issue is adequately addressed, some teachers will continue to risk personal, social, and professional security, others will strive to stimulate interest in inherently uninteresting material, and all will struggle with inevitable resistance to unidirectional socialization. When teachers are supported for their efforts to grapple with difficult social issues and when educators at all levels begin to contemplate alternative standards and perspectives, we can begin to speak legitimately of removing the social studies from the backburner.
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Neil O. Houser


**Author**

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A CITATION ANALYSIS OF THE HANDBOOK OF RESEARCH ON SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHING AND LEARNING

James S. Leming
Southern Illinois University

Murry Nelson
Pennsylvania State University

Abstract
This study evaluated the characteristics of the knowledge included in The Handbook of Research on Social Studies Teaching and Learning with a view toward better understanding the sources of the discourse and the epistemology of the field. The method used was citation analysis. Tallies were computed for the most frequently cited authors, single pieces of scholarship, and journal citations. We found that the field largely relies upon its own scholarship, rather than drawing upon the social sciences for its knowledge base. We also found that new approaches to research focusing on critical, multicultural, and gender-based perspectives have not been widely incorporated into the research base. Overall, it was concluded that the field appears to remain unclear regarding its purpose(s), traditional in its view regarding knowledge construction, and inward looking in its attempt to develop its knowledge base.

Introduction

The publication of a collection of the most extensive reviews to date of any area of knowledge represents a significant benchmark for that field. The Handbook of Research on Social Studies Teaching and Learning edited by James Shaver appeared in 1991. This volume, by far the most comprehensive review to date, contains 53 chapters and contributions from 71 scholars representing the current state of knowledge of educational theory, research, and practice of social
studies education. Previous multi-authored reviews of research on social studies education were of much smaller scope (Hunkins et al., 1977; Stanley, 1985).

The purpose of this article is not to examine the substantive content of the knowledge presented in this volume, but to evaluate the demographic characteristics of knowledge content with a view toward a better understanding of selected factors associated with the development of the discourse and epistemology of the field. The method for accomplishing this task is citation analysis; specifically, the following questions serve as guides for this analysis:

1. Who are the most frequently cited authors? What is the breakdown by gender and ethnicity?
2. What are the most frequently cited sources?
3. Which of the social science disciplines (e.g., political science, cognitive psychology, sociology) have scholars drawn upon most to support their research in social studies education?
4. What has been the impact of National Council of Social Studies (NCSS) published research compared to other publishing sources?
5. To what extent have newer research methodologies (ethnography and critical theory) been incorporated into mainstream scholarship and research on social studies education?
6. To what extent has research on gender issues and multiculturalism been incorporated into mainstream scholarship and research on social studies education?
7. Which institutions of higher education have been the most influential in the generation social studies researchers and of the knowledge base for social studies education?
8. Is there a noticeable age-related effect in the generation of the knowledge base for social studies education?

Methodology

The co-authors worked collaboratively in the development of the research questions, data collection criteria, and research procedures. The citation counts were completed independently. The authors independently achieved exact counts on better than 95 percent of the tallies where the goal was to identify most frequently cited author, articles, books, and journals. In cases where exact counts were not achieved initially, the data were reanalyzed until agreement was reached. In all remaining data analyses, the authors worked collaboratively until consensus was reached.
Results

Eminent Scholars

Who are the most frequently cited authors? Three indices of eminent scholarship were calculated. First, the total number of citations in the text of the 53 chapters was recorded from the author index of the handbook. This tally produced a number indicating the total author citations in text including both sole author and secondary author in multiple authorship citations. These data are reported in Table 1 below. Second, the citations were tallied for authors only when the individual was either the sole author or lead author in multiple authorship citations (see column 2). Finally, the number of chapters in which an author was cited was tallied (column 3 below). All three of the above tallies exclude citations where the handbook author cited him/herself. The number in parenthesis following the citation count in all three columns equals the rank. A total of 3,280 different authors are cited in the handbook. Data are reported in Table 1 for the 28 authors that were cited 15 or more times.

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Thirty-three additional authors were cited between 10 and 14 times. Cited 14 times were C. Cherryholmes; C. K. Curtis; W. Parker; M. K. Jennings; R. Remy; and S. M. Wilson; Cited 13 times were J. Barth; I. L. Beck; S. S. Shermis; P. Cusick; H. Giroux; A. D. Glenn; L. McNeil; M. Schug; R. E. Stake; J. F. Voss; and W. Wallen; Cited 12 times were: M. Apple; A. L. Brown; E. Gilliom; and R. T. Johnson; Cited 11 times were: F. Erickson; D. Ravitch; S. S. Stodolsky; and S. Verba; Cited 10 times were J. D. Bransford; J. Dewey; M. Downey; S. Helburn; H. Hertzberg; R. Jantz; R. Stevens; and H. Taba. These researchers and the 28 listed in Table 1 (N=61) will hereafter be referred to as the most frequently cited researchers.

Among the most frequently cited researchers, males dominated with 79 percent of the citations. Among all authors cited in the handbook, females accounted for 15 percent of citations and males totaled 85 percent. No African American or Hispanic authors were among the most frequently cited researchers. With regard to race, the sample of citations for all researchers is estimated to be over 95 percent white.

The dominant pattern was one-time citation; that is, citation of an author only once. Of the total 3,280 authors cited in the handbook, 2,268 or 66 percent were cited only for one publication.

What are the most frequently cited sources? The most frequently cited books were John Goodlad’s (1984) *A Place Called School* (10 citations) and Donald Oliver, & James Shaver’s, J. (1974), *Teaching Public Issues in the High School* (9 citations). *Education for Democratic Citizenship* by Shirley Engle and Anna Ochoa was cited six times. The only other books with four or more citations were two books by Fred Newmann, *Education for Citizen Action* (5 citations) and *Clarifying Public Controversy* (4 citations). Jean Piaget’s *The Moral Judgment of
the Child (4 citations), and the most recent compendium of social studies research, *Review of Research in Social Studies Education: 1976-1983*, edited by William Stanley (4 citations).

The most frequently cited articles or chapters were all focused on an appraisal of the field of social studies research, or were themselves reviews of research. The titles and authors of the articles and chapters are presented below in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Citations</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armento (1986)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>Research on teaching social studies.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaver et al. (1980)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>An interpretive report on the status of precollege social studies education.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaver (1979)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>The usefulness of educational research in curricular/instructional decision-making in social studies.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (1985)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>What works for teachers: A review of ethnographic research studies as they inform issues of social studies curriculum and instruction.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehman (1980)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>The American school in the political socialization process.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornbleth (1985)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Critical thinking and cognitive processes.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraenkel &amp; Wallen (1988)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Toward improving research in social studies education.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaver (1982)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Re appraising the theoretical goals of research in social studies education.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaver &amp; Larkins (1973)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Research on teaching social studies.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is the influence of social science scholarship upon the field? One indication of scholarship's influence on the social sciences can be seen from the frequency of the most oftencited journals in the handbook. Table 3 presents the frequency of citations by title.
Note the strong influence of the journals of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) upon the field with three major journals among the top six of those cited. Based upon the subject content, child development and developmental psychology were found to be the most influential social science disciplines cited in the handbook. Additionally, journals publishing sociology/anthropology and political science research are considered to be relevant to the field of social studies education. There were scattered citations (fewer than 5 each) for American Psychologist, Journal of Social Issues, Journal of Geography, American Sociologist, Review of Economics and Statistics, American Sociological Review, and American Anthropologist.

What is the impact of NCSS published research? By far the most cited journal was Theory and Research in Social Education (TRSE)
A Citation Analysis

with 285 citations. Citations were distributed unevenly among the eight sections of the handbook. Section 1 on epistemology and methodology contains 123, nearly half of the TRSE citations. Social Education was cited 138 times. Three other social studies education journals were also cited often Journal of Social Studies Research (36 citations), Journal of Economic Education (33 citations), and History Teacher (11 citations).

One indication of the significance of TRSE is the extent to which the research published therein has impacted upon the field. To assess this impact publications were counted for the 10-year period preceding the publication of the handbook (1979-1988). Of the 165 articles published, 80, or 48 percent, were cited in one chapter. Articles cited in chapter 6 were not included since that chapter reviewed all quantitative research published in TRSE regardless of quality or significance. If this handbook is a true reflection of the field of social studies research, then either NCSS membership or journal reading is mandatory for those who wish to gain some insight into the field. The five journals after TRSE and Social Education, contained nearly 100 fewer citations than Social Education.

The total citations for two frequently cited social studies education journals are somewhat misleading in terms of significance to the field. The Journal of Economic Education was cited 33 times, but the citations were all in one chapter, "Teaching and Learning Economics." Of the chapter's two co-authors, one is on the editorial board of the journal and the other is editor of another journal published by the same organization, the National Council on Economic Education. Of the 36 citations for the Journal of Social Studies Research (JSSR), 30 came from the chapter on "Quantitative Research in Social Studies Education," which reviewed all quantitative studies that appeared in the journal between 1979 and 1988 regardless of quality or significance. JSSR has an erratic publication schedule, and TRSE is published quarterly; JSSR is not indexed in the Education Index; it is, however, indexed in Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE).

Influences on Research

What has been the impact of research using ethnographic and critical perspectives? Given the recent interest among the educational research community in two newer research methodologies, critical analysis and ethnography, we sought to determine if this interest was reflected in the handbook; however, these methodologies did not receive significant attention except in the specific chapters on these topics (3, 4, 5, and 8).

Henry Giroux is cited 13 times in nine different chapters, but other critical theorists are nearly overlooked two citations for Friere, seven for Foucault in four chapters, three for Derrida in three chapters,
and five for Habermas in four chapters. Also conspicuous by their absence are citations from journals that serve as primary outlets for critical research: *Curriculum Inquiry, Journal of Education* (Boston), *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, etc.

None of the authors identified with critical theory was cited in section five of the handbook: “Teaching For and Learning Social Studies Outcomes.” Apparently, research based on these new methodologies was not utilized in the effort to develop generalizations regarding the teaching and learning of social studies.

What impact has research on gender issues and multiculturalism had on the research of the field? Based upon the citations in the handbook, it appears that issues of gender equity and multiculturalism were not seen as relevant to ongoing research in most of the field of social studies research. Carol Gilligan is cited a dozen times in five chapters; however, only in the handbook chapter “Achieving Social Studies Affective Aims” are other works besides *In a Different Voice* cited. Nel Noddings is cited only four times. Katherine Scott, a social studies researcher associated with gender issues, was cited only four times—once in her own chapter.

Research on multiculturalism was also seen as irrelevant by the authors of the handbook chapters. James Banks, the most cited person of color, was cited six times, and then only three times outside of his chapter. All Bank’s citations are of textbooks, indicating the field’s unawareness or disinterest in his research. No other person of color has even five citations. This sparse showing for gender based and multicultural research is remarkable in light of the editor’s injunction to the authors to include such content in the handbook. It may be an indication of the difficulty the field has in attracting, nurturing, and retaining capable minority group researchers.

Which institutions of higher education have been the most influential in the generation of social studies researchers and of the knowledge base for social studies education? Table 4 contains information on the institutional base of the most frequently cited researchers and the relationship of individual institutions to the generation of influential scholarship in the field of social studies education.
## Table 4
### Institutional Base of Social Studies Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th># of most frequently cited researchers employed (N&gt;1)</th>
<th># of most frequently cited researchers that completed doctoral degrees at institution (N&gt;1)</th>
<th># of social studies dissertations completed between 1969 and 1991 (on average N&gt;1 per year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boston Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Columbia Univ.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida State Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard Univ.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana Univ.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hopkins U.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan State U.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern U.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State U.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penn State Univ.</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Princeton Univ.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purdue Univ.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>S. F. State Univ.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford Univ.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syracuse Univ.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temple Univ.</td>
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<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>U. C.-Berkeley</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Univ. Illinois</td>
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<td></td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>U. MD-College Park</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Univ. Michigan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Univ. Nebraska</td>
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<td>Univ. Pittsburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Univ. TX-Austin</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Univ. Washington</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. of WI-Madison</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah State Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1This information is taken from Saxe, Jackson, and Mraz (1994).
Of the most frequently cited researchers, seven are deceased, and 22 are the only faculty cited from their own institution. Of the remaining 32 researchers, one institution housed four (Michigan State University), and three constituted home base for three frequently cited researchers: University of Wisconsin at Madison, the University of Washington, and the University of Maryland at College Park. Ten other institutions served as home base for two frequently cited researchers. Geographically, the Big Ten universities (including Penn State) are centers for the generation of social studies research where 37 percent, 20 of 54, of the current researchers work. The University of Iowa was the only Big Ten university not having a top 61 author.

One would expect that the institutions employing the greatest numbers of frequently cited researchers would in turn be those that gave rise to the next generation of most productive researchers. An analysis of Dissertation Abstracts International, the institutions that granted doctoral degrees to the most frequently cited social studies researchers determined that 15 institutions were identified that produced two or more frequently cited social studies researchers. Additionally, we found that the University of Georgia produced one frequently cited researcher.

Among the 14 institutions employing two or more most frequently cited researchers, only the University of Maryland, University of Pittsburgh, Michigan State University, Purdue University, and San Francisco State University had not produced at least one frequently cited researcher. Overall, four institutions produced four or more frequently cited researchers, three produced three each, eight produced two each, and 15 institutions produced one each. Seven institutions, although leaders in the granting of terminal degrees to frequently cited social studies researchers, were the home institution to only one frequently cited social studies researcher: Columbia University, Stanford University, Northwestern University, Utah State University, John Hopkins University, Princeton University, and the University of Chicago.

Eighteen institutions were identified that averaged the granting of at least one doctoral degree per year between 1969 and 1991 (Saxe, Jackson, & Mraz, 1994). As indicated in Table 4, nine of these institutions either housed frequently cited researchers, or provided the doctoral programs from which frequently cited researchers graduated; however, an additional nine institutions that averaged granting at least one social studies doctorate per year both did not house two or more cited researchers nor were the location of earned doctorates for more than one cited researcher. Of these nine institutions, only the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Illinois employed one frequently cited researcher.
Is there a noticeable age-related effect in the generation of the knowledge base for social studies education? Based upon the data collected from Dissertation Abstracts International a proxy for age of social studies researchers was identified; namely the date of dissertation. The median date for conferral was 1967. No clear period effect was detected; and the date of the dissertation among this sample was spread relatively evenly over a wide period of time. Five dissertations were granted prior to 1950, nine were granted between 1950 and 1959, 22 were granted between 1960 and 1969, and 21 were granted between 1970 and 1979. Four were granted after 1980. Seventy percent of the most frequently cited researchers earned their doctoral degrees in the decades of the 1960s and 1970s.

Discussion

In some respects, the demographic characteristics of frequently cited researchers are similar to those of the field. As Leming reported in a survey of the College and University Faculty Assembly (CUFA) membership in 1990 (Leming, 1992), 71 percent received their terminal degree in the decades of the 1960s and 1970s. In this sample, 70 percent received their terminal degree in those two decades. The major difference between these two samples is that 26 percent of the CUFA sample received their doctorate after 1980, whereas in this sample only six percent received such degrees. Another difference between the CUFA sample and this sample is that 79 percent of this sample are male, but only 67 percent of the CUFA sample were male. Frequently cited researchers are more likely to be older and more likely to be males compared to the field of social studies researchers in general.

Ninety-four percent of the most frequently cited researchers completed their doctoral work prior to 1980 and seventy-nine percent prior to 1975. If we assume that the handbook covers research published up to 1990, then it appears that it takes a typical researcher at least 15 years to develop an influential body of work. This rough time frame may partially explain why newer research methodologies such as critical theory and ethnography have not had more of an impact on the field. It is much too early to say, however, that the field is not aware of this body of research, or that this research area will not have a significant impact as it matures. This time-to-eminence factor may also explain why females and minorities were not more included among the most frequently cited researchers in this sample. If more minorities and females over the past decade have entered the field of social studies research, the impact of their research on the field may come in the next decade.

Major research institutions are clearly the source for the training of social studies researchers. Among the most frequently cited
researchers, nearly all received doctoral degrees from a Carnegie I institution. Smaller state institutions that grant doctoral degrees in social studies education are not represented as the source of doctorates among this collection of eminent researchers. The reasons for this are likely that the best and brightest among potential students select the major research institutions to do their doctoral work. Also, the quality of research training, the mentorship, and the network among eminent scholars probably result in academic positions for their new graduates at research institutions that greatly increase the likelihood that these students will become productive scholars. Similarly, it appears that potential researchers obtaining doctoral degrees at lesser institutions will lack the necessary intellectual and social capital to effect a similar significant impact.

By most reports, the 1980s and 1990s have been a time of general decline in the number of doctoral degrees awarded by major research institutions. Many once highly visible and influential doctoral programs in social studies education are now moribund. One possible impact of this state of affairs on the future generation of social studies research may be that the critical mass for a vibrant research agenda in social studies may disappear. A few exceptional social studies scholars, graduating from elite institutions and lacking competition in the research field may dominate social studies research in the future, even more so than was found to be the case in this analysis.

Although no comparison exists with other fields of educational inquiry, such as mathematics education or English education, we suspect that the social studies research community is not much different from other educational research communities in terms of its demographics. Clearly, at the heart of the research effort in social studies education is the journal *Theory and Research in Social Education*. The current acceptance rate for TRSE of approximately 25 percent (Cheng, Fraenkel & Grant, 1994), while higher than many mainline social science journals, compares favorably with similar journals in other educational fields. Also, the finding in this study that 48 percent of TRSE articles were not cited in the handbook, is similar to the figure reported by Pendelbury (1991) regarding articles in social science journals that are not subsequently cited.

It should be recognized that the research reported on above is only a limited perspective on research in the field. This analysis is not a study of research productivity but only of research significance. Also, this study has not examined the impact that social studies researchers may be having outside the field itself, nor has it examined the impact that social science research is having on the field of social studies research.

An area of interest for future citation analysis research might be age of the knowledge base in social studies education for example, it
A Citation Analysis

has been found that citation counts for articles published in the Social Sciences Citation Index peak two years following publication (Howard & Howard, 1992). Although this analysis did not attempt to establish data on age of individual citations, we suspect that based upon the age of many frequently cited sources in the study, the knowledge base in social studies research does not expand at the same quick pace as knowledge in the other fields of education and the social sciences. An analysis of this type could provide a useful perspective on the field.

Finally, given the relatively poor showing of the newer research methodologies and of multicultural and feminist research in the handbook, it is of interest to note whether the demographics of social studies research is changing since the publication of the handbook. To provide insight into this question, a tally was computed of the authors of research published in TRSE since the chapters were completed for the handbook. This TRSE tally, covering from 1990 (Vol. 13, No. 1) to 1994 (Vol. 17, No. 3), was then compared with the tally of the most frequently cited researchers in the handbook. It was found that 105 articles have been published over this time period in TRSE, and that only ten of the 105 articles, or 9.5 percent, were authored by frequently cited researchers. None of the articles published in the past two years, 1993 and 1994, were authored by frequently cited researchers. Although this is not a very precise estimate of influence on the field, it is an indication that the possibility for new perspectives on the field of social studies education may be forthcoming.

References


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REACTION AND RESPONSE

Editor’s note: Below is a written response to the essay review written by Oliver Keels (Volume XXI, Number 2) about David Warren Saxe’s Social Studies in Schools: A History of the Early Years, followed by Oliver Keels’ reply. Due to time and space constraints we were not able to publish this exchange until now.

Back to the Drawing Board: Reactions and Thoughts on Social Studies Historiography

DAVID WARREN SAXE, Pennsylvania State University.

While I am particularly grateful for the opportunity to comment on Oliver Keels’ review of my history of the early social studies, I am, like a history teacher explaining for the third time who is buried in Grant’s Tomb, somewhat mystified that Professor Keels missed the book’s central and, I think, modest point. Perhaps Keels’ misunderstandings and frustrations are due to his self-confessed “considerable excitement” on hearing about its publication. I believe that few authors would be able to fulfill the sort of expectations that Keels had for my book. The work was designed to introduce the history of social studies to students and scholars. I think that to some, including the eight reviewers of the book in manuscript form, I was on target. To Keels, however, and perhaps to others, explanations are in order. To this end, I attend to Keels’ review.

When I started teaching high school social studies nearly 20 years ago, I knew nothing about the origins of my profession. I doubt that this deficit affected my teaching, but it did affect my professionalism. Practitioners need a sense of the field’s past, not because it will make them better teachers, but because historical perspective on social studies yields the same sort of benefits for social studies professionals that knowledge about our nation’s development yields for our students. It is certainly a curious paradox to teach about history in schools, and have little knowledge of our own rich and varied social studies history. Nonetheless, when I began to research social studies foundations some eight years ago, I discovered that social studies had virtually no written history; the past existed largely as oral tradition handed down from one teacher to the next, if that. Consequently, I began to write the sort of book that Keels might have hoped to review, but I soon learned that there were too many unknowns about the field’s past, that too much mythology was mixed with our meager understanding. There was no existing history of social studies to
guide my research; I found no tradition, no great researchers, and no singular volume that might have set the pace for further studies. In sum, no clearly marked paths into the "seamless web" were available. I have discussed elsewhere (Saxe, 1992) that aside from Hertzberg's brief treatment of curricular milestones and a few scattered dissertations, there are few documents from which to reconstruct a history of social studies, let alone construct one. One need only read David Jenness's recent attempt at "making sense of social studies" to realize the difficulty of using single volume histories based upon interviews and secondary sources alone. Remarkably, we have had little help from educational historians. You will find no mention in Cremin's (1988) largely definitive American Education suggesting anything of a past for social studies.

Consequently, without a comprehensive historiography to draw upon, claiming a revision of a nonexistent history is absurd. On the other hand, writing a history from nothing without historical sources is also folly (see Jenness, 1990). For me, the course was clear: write an introduction to the history of social studies, one to set the stage, note key figures, and identify issues and concerns.

The type of history that Keels wished for does not and will not exist until the many paths to the past are marked and measured. To this end, although I appreciate his eagerness and sincerity, he (and the social studies community) must be patient. History writing is not something that can be rushed. Mindful that one should not judge a book by its cover or by a publisher's selected title, I clearly alerted readers on page one that this work was, very modestly, an introduction to the history of social studies, not a complete history of the field. This is the critical point that Keels fails to recognize and address.

Keels identifies that the strength of the book is "not in Saxe's new interpretations (which are not that new, only more forcefully expressed), but in the synthesis of what I would call the tradition of social studies as an educationist's creation." There are several problems here. First, how can one have a new interpretation that is not that new? The phrase 'new interpretation' would appear to cancel out the latter implication that this has all been said before. Either the interpretation is new or it is a restatement of an earlier version. Keels cannot have it both ways. Second, if the new interpretation is not new, then where are the old interpretations and interpreters? Who has said this all before? Where are these histories? If they exist, why does Keels omit references here? Plainly, if someone has already managed to publish a history as poor as Keels claims this is, should we not be informed of the earlier bungled versions? If the real strength of the work is in the syntheses of a tradition, it would indeed be revealing if Keels could identify this alleged tradition for our readers. Syntheses describes a coming together, a collecting of different strands, while
tradition bespeaks a history of common methodology, common perspective, a common knowledge, and common customs, all transmitted from one generation of social studies practitioners to the next. In my study of the history of social studies, I was struck more than anything by this salient trait: Social studies has no tradition. While I certainly hope to become part of a tradition, I am surprised to discover that Keels has already identified one, and I have somehow managed to synthesize it!

If I may be permitted this side note (for those interested in the history of social studies), the phrase ‘educationist creation’ was coined in the 1950s by Professor Arthur Bestor. Without peer (until the awakening of Diane Ravitch), Bestor sought to rally the educational community against social studies, a field that he believed held some sort of perverse intellectual hold on public education. Bestor, leading the witch hunt, worked for years to smear and destroy social studies; it survived, nevertheless. For anyone who has read through the debates of the 1950s, the term ‘educationist’s creation’ stings both professionally and personally. To a historically grounded social studies professional, ‘educationist’ is derogatory. It is intellectual name calling at its worst. That Keels applies this derisive and degrading appellation to my work either signals his profound ignorance of the field’s past (which I hope is the case), or signals a cruel insensitivity toward his own field. When one understands the history of social studies in the 1950s, it becomes clear that one does not call a social studies professional an educationist; this is a major faux pas.

Keels also states that he is “in fundamental disagreement with much of what [Saxe] has written.” Instead of continuing with and elaborating upon his professional disagreements, within one sentence he drops one of the most serious charges a colleague can issue to another: that of incompetence. Keels claims the book is a “seriously flawed piece of historical scholarship.” To shift from fundamental disagreement to the charge of research incompetence so quickly is astounding. Instead of tackling the substance of what I did write, as one would expect in a professional review, Keels instead returns again and again to his original point that more archival sources should have been investigated. In essence, Keels claims to have fundamental disagreements with my reported findings, but cannot accept the fact of how I arrived at those findings.

Because he is so certain that the great laws of history study have been violated, that something somewhere in the book is amiss, rather than attending to fundamental disagreements with the work (which might have advanced our discussion of foundation), Keels becomes so consumed with his own lecture on historical research techniques that he neglects to critique the substance of the book. More to the point, although he claims fundamental disagreement Keels does not counter a
single point. Not one claim, not one salient date, figure, or issue is checked and leveled. All in all, the best Keels can muster in reference to one of my findings that Giddings, Vincent, and Small influenced members of the Committee on the Social Studies [Dunn in particular] is that “one can easily offer an alternative speculation” of committee influences. Incredibly, Keels offers Herbert Croly (through Croly’s *The Promise of American Life*) as such an influence. Keels writes “that [Croly] has to be seen as the origin of their [the committee members] notions of purpose and focus of social studies.” Does Keels really hold that “both [his and mine] interpretations become equally valid speculations without evidence?” If so, the main problem here is that I offer evidence of the connection between the earlier sociologists and principally Dunn (who was publicly credited with preparing the report), while Keels offers none. Writing in 1905 (four years prior to the publication of Croly’s book), Dunn notes that his work was inspired by Small and Vincent. The supposition of influence was not speculative, but discovered in public records.

At the core of Keels’s review is my alleged failure to conform to standard historical research methods. Here I stand guilty as charged and proudly so. As my eighth-grade math teacher always said, “If you use the wrong method, it doesn’t make any difference if you get the answer right, it’s still wrong!” I continue to be baffled by people who think that answers to our questions must always be found according to the rules. While I cannot find fault in Keel’s lecture on methods as applied to standard historical treatments, Keels does not appear to be aware that the past of the social studies is hardly standard historical fodder. My book is not like a history of the American Civil War where most if not all the dates, personalities, and issues are well known to researchers. We simply do not know about our social studies past. To suggest that we hunt only through diaries, census records, and the like, and that we must be held to all standard historical practices is an advancement on the practice of social studies foundations for which the field is not quite ready. While a detailed biography of Herbert Croly’s relationship to social studies might be an interesting endeavor for a researcher, it might be a serious waste of time if Croly had nothing to do with the field. By analogy, Keels’ suggestion of Croly’s connection to social studies is the equivalent of claiming Mary Chesnut advised Abraham Lincoln on the Civil War. While Mary Chesnut’s diary is certainly wonderful to read, her writings had nothing to do with the actual course of the war. Keels may wish us to explore the nooks and crannies, but that is his own research choice. I believe that we need to straighten out the facts of our past. Granted, this can be achieved through standard methods, but there are alternatives as well.
On the issue of methodology, like the historical tradition Keels imagines himself defending, it is silly and patently untenable to claim any history is seriously flawed if it fails to include private correspondence, references to archival sources, or published collections of correspondence. This is the sort of nineteenth-century list mentality that limits history study as a profession to those chosen few who tow the company line, wear the right suits and the correct ties, and keep their little finger ever so still, upright and straight on the tea cup. As social studies researchers, because we lack a historical tradition (that Keels somehow imagines exists), we must be free to develop our own traditions and our own methodologies. If this is our tradition, our field, then as long as we are held accountable for our work, we are not bound to follow another's paradigm merely because Keels says we must. Crude as it may be, we are building our own path toward the past; at this point, how we get there is not as important as whether or not we arrive.

Continuing with this point, what Keels does have to say about the book, in exasperation no doubt, is that "every primary source reflects solely public utterances." While I will not attempt to disentangle Keels' notion of primary sources reflecting public utterances, I think I understand what he means here. Permit this translation: The book is entirely about what can be found on the public record of social studies. If this is what Keels means, he is right on target, but for all the wrong reasons. For this introduction, my intention was precisely to attend to what was known about the public record of social studies, answering questions such as: When did the field start? Who were its leaders? What were the major issues confronting these early leaders? What were the field's turning points? What were the claims of history education? Who objected to these claims? What were their critiques? What was the Committee on the Social Studies? Who wrote its report? and on and on. These are simple questions that newcomers might ask—information about the past of social studies that any practitioner should be able to find in a methods text. These are questions, I might add, for which few authoritative answers exist in the literature of social studies or any place else for that matter.

Like a detective on a murder case, to proceed with the investigation we need to be sure of our facts, however tentative they may be; that is, before we run about collecting information that firmly connects the accused to the corpse, we must establish that we have a corpse. I have already reported the failure of the field's researchers in doing this (Saxe, 1992), including Keels' own classic faux pas, "It is probably a truism that social studies began with the study of history." How is it possible to utter such a profoundly antithetical research statement with a truism as its highlight? Are there any facts that are self-evident in historical research? Are there any issues that stand on such solid ground that challenge is unthinkable? The problem with
Keels' review efforts is that he does not understand the subject of his own pontification.

To proceed with the history of social studies, we need to establish our salient dates, our key figures, our critical issues, and more. True, we also must be mindful of the context of our work, to bring the history of social studies into a wider stream. Nonetheless, it is not that the dates, figures, or issues that emerge in the book are the only key facts and generalizations, but we need to begin somewhere. This book represents my attempt, but it is only a beginning. Rather than casting a cloud over the book and over our embryonic historiography on methodology, if we critique anything, let us hold our findings under close scrutiny.

In sum, Keels' lecture on historical methods is a sad but true reflection on the field; people do not know enough about the history of the field. As I prepare the special issue on the foundations of social studies for Theory and Research on Social Education as guest editor, I am particularly aware of the responsibilities associated with commencing such a history. Hopefully, through the upcoming TRSE special publication and other publications to follow, our dialogues will grow in intellectual strength and vigor as will the strength and vigor of social studies as a profession.

References

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Back to the Drawing Board Indeed! A Reply to David Saxe

OLIVER M. KEELS, Berea College.

Negative reviews often spark authors to react that their ideas and arguments have not been justly treated. Authors can also point to what reviewers did not say about a work. David Saxe is no exception.
Limited by space restrictions to the eight or nine pages given to reviewers in TRSE (roughly half of which is needed to provide a minimal description of the contents of a book-length work), much is necessarily left out. Whether or not a reviewer has chosen to focus upon what is truly critical in assessing a work as a scholarly contribution, readers must determine for themselves. As for myself, I believe that my review holds, and nothing said in Saxe's response causes me to alter the thrust of my criticism. I do find, however, that the tone of his reaction and certain specific statements call for further comment.

Saxe does not quibble with the substance of my criticism of his methodology, arguing only that it was misdirected. His use of "introduction" on page one (and his apparent assumption that I would be able to divine that the title was the publisher's and not his) was supposed to alert me to a greatly delimited purpose. It did not. I was guided instead by the statement in the preface that "practioners and researchers alike would benefit from a historical interpretation of the contexts, issues, and individuals that this history of social studies endeavors to portray" (Saxe, p. xv). This suggested to me that I would examine his book as a piece of historical research, which is what I did. Saxe may take pride in his failure to conform to standards of historical practice, but it should come as no surprise to him that it is as historical research that his work will be judged. Even though the field of social studies has not been extensively written upon, and there are many other topics from the whole of our human past that are relatively unstudied, this fact in no way frees the historian from expectations as to the appropriate practice of the craft. I certainly make no apology for pointing out Saxe's failure to conform to those expectations.

I also reject Saxe's assertion that because the field of social studies has not received extensive treatment in the historical literature, practioners and researchers are "not quite ready" for a rendering of the field's history that takes into account the relevant draft documents, personal papers, and correspondence of central protagonists. Never have I suggested, in my review of his book or elsewhere, that "any history is seriously flawed if it fails to include private correspondence, references to archival sources, or published collections of correspondence." What I actually said is that Saxe's work was seriously flawed for his failure to employ those existing sources necessary to support his arguments. While I dare not generalize this criticism to any history, I will say that I have yet to see a positive review of a work of historical research that ignores existing relevant sources. Saxe may not respect the ability of those in the profession to appreciate a thoroughly researched history, but I am convinced that there are many social studies educators sufficiently well schooled in the discipline to know a good work of history when they see it.
I definitely agree that the field of social studies has a feeble historiography and said so in my review. But interpretive traditions are not defined solely on the basis of a volume of works. An "interpretive tradition" exists when a discernable pattern of viewpoints, assertions, or generalizations can be seen over a period of time. The viewpoint that social studies originated outside the matrix of college-based, professional, academic disciplines and found its original expression in the 1916 report is such an interpretive tradition. Despite Saxe's detailed effort to more forcefully connect the Committee on Social Studies to the thinking of some early sociologists, his work still fits that interpretive tradition.

In labeling this tradition "educationist creation," I did so fully aware of the negative connotation that had arisen toward educationists in the 1950s, but I also understand how it fit an interpretive view that had social studies taking shape outside academic disciplines.

At least as early as the 1890s, the term educationist was used occasionally as a synonym for "schoolmen," and its connotation was generally benign. The earliest concerted efforts to transform the term into a pejorative started with the consensus historians in their attacks on the progressive historians in the 1940s. Because progressive historians had been so closely involved in the creation of social studies and saw history as a true social study, their consensus-history critics used the term educationist as a way of placing them outside the "legitimate" academic world of historians. As the efforts of consensus historians to break with progressive history spilled over into examination of social studies during the 1940s and 1950s, a sharper delineation occurred. While Bestor was the most popular of the social studies critics, it was Chester Destler who made the most forceful claim that social studies was created by educationists (a group into which he placed Dewey and those corrupted by him). He introduced into the literature the sharp polarization of us versus them (with the us and them dependent upon one's position relative to social studies) that Bestor and Ravitch have used with such polemical effect (Destler, 1950).

Since then, critics and supporters of social studies alike have largely accepted this polarization. So does Saxe. Though Saxe may reject the label of educationist creation, his dichotomization of competing interests in the creation of the social studies into "social studies reformers versus traditionalists" follows the same interpretive tradition as the consensus historians. The label I employed for that tradition was not intended to demean Saxe or to label any social studies educator, and there was certainly no pejorative intent toward the profession I entered over twenty-five years ago. I am sorry for Saxe's distress at my using a term that Bestor derogated in his polemics, but I
see no reason to let critics constrain unreasonably the language that we
use. Bestor also sought to taint the term social studies with the same
claim of intellectual perversity that he brought to bear on
educationists. Would Saxe have us drop that term?

Saxe laments my failure to use this review to explore more fully
what it is that I disagree with in his book. I apologize to any readers
who similarly wish that I had detailed more of his failings. I perhaps
let myself be too strictly guided by the recommended length for book
reviews. Put quite simply, however, the fundamental disagreement
that I have with Saxe is over the characterization of the development
of the field as a conflict between us (social studies reformers largely
working outside the academic disciplines) versus them (hidebound
academics, largely historians, opposed to social studies). I think such
characterizations are gross oversimplifications. I expressed my
disagreement simply to alert readers to my viewpoint, seeing it as a
courtesy to both readers and the author to provide what context I could
for my criticism. I did not attempt to write here my own history of the
early years of the social studies because that is not what I was asked to
do. I was asked to review Saxe's book.

I did point out in the review examples of where I thought
Saxe's failure to adequately research the viewpoints of historians
dovetailed my fundamental disagreement with his work. In the space
available, I gave clear illustration of evidence that contradicted his
assertions and pointed out that his "social studies insurgency" was in
fact consonant with the developing mainstream of historical practice.
His "traditional history" was nothing more than a straw man. If his
basic dichotomy between the protagonists as social studies reformers on
the one hand and and anti-social studies traditionalists on the other is
based on a false characterization of one of the factions, then his
interpretation just doesn't hold up to scrutiny. Nor does the limited
purpose he now sets for his work vitiate that particular criticism. And
the poor quality of his own research certainly flies in the face of his
concern for the historiography of the field when he says: "[T]o proceed
with the investigation we need to be sure of our facts." In pointing out
his disregard for important and accessible evidence, I challenged his
argument and pointed out his own failure to be sure of the facts.

My reference to Croly was meant as nothing more than an
illustration of the implication of Saxe's failure to demonstrate the
connection between the sociologists and the writers of the 1916 report.
He asserted a causal connection. His extensive discussion of the ideas of
the sociologists did point out the similarities of the ideas, but I found
nothing in his work that sufficiently supports the claim of formative
influence. I merely pointed out that similar ideas were accessible to the
authors of the 1916 report, e.g., Croly. Saxe could write an entire
additional book on the similarities between the ideas of the
Oliver M. Keels

sociologists and Dunn and the other members of the Committee on Social Studies, but it would not establish the formative connection he claims. His silly Lincoln-Chesnut analogy, no doubt meant for sarcastic effect, actually makes my point: if the writings of the sociologists had something to do with the shaping of the 1916 report, Saxe should give us evidence instead of vacuous speculation. He is the one who claims the formative connection of those ideas, and it is he who must demonstrate it. I feel confident that Saxe can find substantial support for some of his contentions. He may even find a way to do it without going to archival holdings, though such circuitous routes to the proof hardly seem worth the effort if personal correspondence or draft copies of the report contain the evidence. My basic point in the review, which still holds true, is that he does not provide the evidence needed to justify the claim he makes in his book. This is not pontificating on method; this is merely pointing out a serious weakness that undercuts the value of his book as a scholarly contribution.

My final comments have to do with the tone of Saxe’s reaction. I find it interesting that he takes umbrage at my having used a term to characterize an interpretive tradition that he associates with Arthur Bestor since his own rhetorical style shares so much with Bestor’s. Once the ad hominem arguments are removed from Saxe’s response, little of substance remains. Saxe has typecast me as a nineteenth-century historian trying to hold him to some rigid methodology such as that of the manual of historical method required of history graduate students at the turn of the century, C.V. Langlois and C. Siegnobos, Introduction aux études historiques. He then takes great pain to point out how inappropriate, archaic, and downright silly, such methodological rules are for the embryonic historiography of the social studies. Straw men are indeed easy to knock over. Saxe also calls upon me the opprobrium of the profession for my social blunders. Here he introduces an interesting new slant to ad hominem attack—first misrepresent what is actually said, then fulfill the deprecatory intent by accusing one who would say such a thing of committing a faux pas.

Saxe claims to quote the lead sentence of an article that I wrote (“It is probably a truism that social studies began with the study of history.”) and calls it a “profoundly antithetical research statement,” and a “classic faux pas.” The actual sentence reads, “In the study of the foundations of the social studies it is probably a truism that secondary school social studies began with the study of history: history dominated the curriculum and college-based historians were the most active of academic groups giving guidance to schools in their efforts to shape a social studies curriculum” (Keels, 1988-1989, p. 37). Putting aside the blatant misrepresentation of what I actually said, and his failure to give any regard to the actual focus of the article, we must look at how Saxe has chosen to use the notion of a truism for his
polemical purposes. A truism is commonly defined as a "self-evident or an obvious truth." The idea of it as a self-evident truth comes from its use in philosophical and theological discourse, which serves Saxe's purpose to argue ad hominem and denigrate my criticism of his book. My use of the term, which can be inferred easily from the context of both the sentence itself and the entire article, is that it is obviously true that in the study of the foundations of social studies it is accepted that history dominated secondary school social studies and historians were the most vocal of specialized academic groups giving guidance to schools as they shaped social studies curriculum (the article focuses on the period before 1900). This simple observation of fact was my sole intent, and such an observation is hardly evidence of an anti-empirical attitude on my part. If Saxe can refute the fact with evidence, then he should do so. The petty name-calling he resorts to here is not at all becoming for a member of the community of scholarly inquiry that we call the social studies profession.

Saxe concludes his diatribe with the hope that "our dialogues will grow in intellectual strength and vigor as will the strength and vigor of social studies as a profession." I too hope this. But personal attacks and semantic games are inconsistent with intellectual growth. If Saxe is going to persuade our community that he is truly sincere in this statement, then his own conversation must reflect the tone of true dialogue—honesty and the attentiveness to others inherent in judicious inquiry. One is not required to accept ideas shared in dialogue, but if we are to have real dialogue there must exist receptivity to the sincere criticism of others. We must maintain an intellectual atmosphere that rejects polemics and fosters a true community of inquiry.

References
INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

*Theory and Research in Social Education* is designed to stimulate and communicate systematic research and thinking in social education. Its 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 as those that follow:

- Purposes of social education;
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