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The Official Journal of the
College and University Faculty Assembly
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Editorial

In this issue, we present three articles and two book reviews. In a provocative article, Sandra Hollingsworth, Margaret Gallego, and N. Suzanne Standerford argue that what they call "multiple literacies" must be addressed if middle school students are to learn social studies content. An especially interesting aspect of the article is the authors' continuing struggle to analyze their own classroom experiences.

Alan Singer describes his efforts using a unit in an 11th-grade U.S. history class to enable students to examine their attitudes toward gender differences. Of interest here is Singer's description of his attempt to employ ideas and teaching methods that he had discussed with university colleagues and students during his previous two years as a teacher educator at a nearby university. A particularly unusual device described by Singer is the use of cartoon dialogues.

James Byrnes and Judith Torney-Purta describe a research project which, they argue, reveals how the theories, age, and education of students relate to the ability of individuals to think critically about selected political issues.

Again we are impressed by the quality of work that many of the professionals in our field continue to produce. The three feature articles in this issue are ample evidence to this fact.

Lastly, we include two book reviews. Michael Whelan reviews Learning History in America (edited by Kramer, Reid, and Barney) and argues that the imposition of national standards will not improve the quality of history instruction in the public schools. David Berman, in a moving review of Bao Ninh's novel The Sorrow of War, helps to make clear the tragedy of war for us all.

We hope you enjoy the issue.

Jack R. Fraenkel
Summer, 1995
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dr. Jack R. Fraenkel, Editor
Theory and Research in Social Education
College of Education
San Francisco State University
San Francisco, CA 94132

Dear Dr. Fraenkel:

Dr. James A. Banks' thesis in "Transformative Challenges to the Social Science Disciplines" (Winter, 1995 issue) is disturbing from my perspective as a career high school social studies teacher.

Course content changes as new data accumulates, new pressure groups emerge, and perspectives evolve. Even the "hardest" of natural sciences are no more than best understandings at the present time—always subject to change. Further, humans need various sources of truth. No amount of historic or scientific data can determine what one should do in specific situations! Our values and ideals must come from our secular and religious philosophies. For example, Banks' belief that marginalized groups such as African Americans and women should have their voices heard is based upon various democratic assumptions originating in the Western world to a significant degree.

To deny this relativistic world view makes one a 'true believer' candidate likely to be taken in by an adroit demagogue. Assuming an open-ended human social order, however, seems far removed from Banks' perspectives.

I believe the voices of African Americans, women, and many other marginalized groups should be included in what we teach; however, I cannot see how adolescents are aided if teachers conjoin philosophical ideas—that anyone can espouse—with reified biological groupings over which people lack control. Women in the United States do not hold a particular world view because of their gender—not even considering women in other parts of the world. Neither do African Americans or left handers.

Beginning in the 1960s my colleagues and I teaching at Riverside-Brookfield High School tried to develop an effective prejudice reduction program, a multicultural initiative and teachable understandings of an open-ended universe. Student responses were very positive not only on end-of-course evaluations but also in feedback five years later.
Encouraged by this input, we maintained and expanded the programs through all the educational gyrations of the past decades. And, James A. Banks' formulations probably are not going to cause us to change directions.

Sincerely,

Brant Abrahamson
Social Studies Teacher
Riverside-Brookfield High School (1961-1993)
INTEGRATIVE SOCIAL STUDIES FOR URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOLS: A CASE FOR MULTIPLE LITERACIES

Sandra Hollingsworth
Michigan State University

Margaret Gallego
University of California, San Diego

Nancy Suzanne Standerford
Northern Michigan University

Abstract
In this article the authors argue that the integration of mainstream, standard or "school" literacy into social studies instruction is necessary to ensure that students in urban middle school classrooms learn social studies content. Then the authors ask even more from social educators—arguing for social studies instruction from perspectives of feminist praxis that include multiple literacies—or standard, community, and personal literacies—to validate and engage disinterested students. The argument for multiple literacies develops around an analysis of instructional differences in two personal classroom vignettes that reveal cognitive, sociocultural, and critical theories of literacy proficiency. Following the discourse model established by Lugones and Spelman (1983), they also critically examine their own attempts to apply those theoretical perspectives in an urban junior high school. Without presupposing unity of expression, this article, then, is a collection of the authors' interpretive experiences.

Introduction

Is it possible to teach secondary social studies without also teaching basic literacy—the processes of reading, writing, listening, and speaking? To give the reader an idea about what it means to talk
about differences between social studies classrooms where there is no explicit literacy integration (but where standard literacy skills are required nonetheless) and classrooms that integrate from a perspective of various or multiple literacies, we begin with a first-person description by Sandra Hollingsworth of two personal classroom experiences.

A Student of Social Studies

In elementary school, my attitude toward social studies was neutral. My most vivid memory of social studies involves the construction of a salt map in fifth grade. I remember struggling to get the right salt mixture, but I do not recall the content or purpose of the activity; in other words, I did not learn enough social studies content in elementary school to develop a passion either for or against it.

By the time I reached high school, however, an instructional pattern emerged that made me thoroughly dislike the subject. My first semester of eighth-grade world history stands out as a classic example. Typically, my fellow students and I would file into class, take assigned seats arranged in straight rows, note the chapter assignment written on the board, and begin reading silently. I was vaguely aware of the teacher, enthroned behind a desk at the front of the room, grading yesterday’s assignment (questions at the end of the textbook chapter). Some students (including me) would finish reading, and begin answering the day’s questions. Others continued to struggle with the text; some worked on math homework. A few merely stared out the windows. About three quarters through the 50-minute period, the teacher stood up, collected the day’s assignment in its various stages of completion, and began discussing the chapter. He usually asked us to recall chronological events, name famous leaders, and elaborate on cause/effect relationships. A few of us answered most of the questions, and some never spoke. Although I was a good student, I dreaded going to class and often wondered how those who did poorly must have felt.¹

Most of my experiences with social studies instruction during secondary school were similar, although there was one shining exception. During the spring semester of eighth grade, my family moved to California, where I enrolled in an urban school. I joined a class in progress on the subject of Elizabethan England. I entered the classroom ready to be bored, and at the same time ready to take my place as one of the class stars. I had already learned the rules of doing well in social studies: read carefully, write clearly, and memorize. I was good at all three, having a passion for reading, a propensity to

¹ Later I learned that my experience was fairly typical of high school social studies classrooms (see McNeil, 1986).
keep journals and write essays to make sense of my experiences, and a favorite aunt who asked me to memorize and recite passages in 'the king's English'. I was prepared to do well with the standard literacy required of social studies even though I resisted learning any content presented in the typical mind-numbing fashion. My experiences in school had also taught me that those who had fewer opportunities to practice standard literacy skills would not do as well in social studies.

To my surprise, my peers and I seemed to enjoy that class more than any other. The teacher not only instructed us in the history and culture of Elizabethan England, but taught us how to read Shakespeare, challenged us to interrogate and critique the relationship between language and power during group debates and discussions, encouraged the processes of writing and revising, and helped us translate Elizabethan drama and politics into modern-day American skits and charades using slang and regional dialects. The teacher's use of various instructional techniques later reminded me of two things: the importance of integrating social studies with standard or mainstream literacy, and the necessity of providing students with opportunities to succeed through multiple (or cultural, personal, critical, and transformational) literacies. From my experience with this teacher, what remains with me is the memory that most of us enjoyed the work and also did well.

The Case for Literacy Instruction in the Social Studies Classroom

Many teachers at the elementary level integrate social studies and literacy instruction, although sometimes the social studies content is lost in the process (see Alleman and Brophy, 1993). We suggest that the relationship between skill in literate processes and the learning of social studies content, however difficult to balance, is important enough to command the attention not only of elementary teachers, but of secondary teachers in all content areas, especially history and the social sciences.

Cognitive, Social, and Critical Theories of Literacy

Many scholars have searched for an essential definition of the term literacy. Although that quest is not central to our work except as continuously reconstructed in praxis, we rely upon broad conceptions of literacy to situate and make coherent our perspectives. The three of us were schooled in cognitive psychological traditions that unquestionably defined literacy as "the ability to read and write, read and speak standard English" (Gee, 1990). Many cognitive theorists (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Ausubel, 1963; Gough, 1984; Palinscar & Brown, 1984; Schallert, 1982) view skilled readers and writers as engaging primarily in an individual cognitive activity where
capacities such as attention, motivation, prior knowledge, comprehension, and (for many cognitive theorists) the ability to decode and encode print enable students to access and learn subject-specific content. This perspective suggests that Hollingsworth’s peers, those who did not perform well in social studies, could not attend well to cognitive content, perhaps because they lacked the ability to do so.

Other theorists might explain the primary characteristic of literacy as a social phenomenon, or “the collection of cultural and communicative practices associated with particular uses of both written and spoken forms among specific social groups” (Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 1981). This sociolinguistic view of literacy as a set of discursive practices assumes that social context, not cognitive framework, grounds literacy acquisition; for example, students who are viewed as deficient in standard school literacy might be fully literate in the community (social) and personal (biographical) literacies that are not recognized in school curricula. Thus, lack of familiarity and practice with standard forms of literacy would have rendered Hollingsworth’s peers from nonmainstream social groups less successful in social studies. By the same token, recognition of social cues in the classroom would have enabled Hollingsworth to succeed in the good student role.

Mehan (1979) and others describe this ability as reading the hidden curriculum of the classroom—a sociocultural ability often denied to students outside of the mainstream culture. From social perspectives of literacy, then, it becomes important for teachers to understand not only how students think and learn cognitively, but what cultural and linguistic roots underpin their thinking and learning. Again, such instruction appears particularly important to teachers concerned with social education. Lisa Delpit (1988), for example, argues that children of color whose out of school literacy experiences have not taught them to decode and encode standard texts of the culture of power require explicit instruction in standard literacy. Delpit suggests that parents outside the culture of power want to ensure “that the school provides their children with discourse patterns, interactional styles, and spoken and written language codes that will allow them success in the larger society” (p. 285). James Gee (1990) would support Delpit’s argument:

Literacy as “the ability to write and read” situates literacy in the individual person, rather than in the society of which that person is a member. As such it obscures the multiple ways in which reading, writing and language interrelate with the workings of power and desire in social life (p. 27).
Although there are overlapping and contradictory positions across all literacy theories, critical theorists of literacy (like Gee) might also suggest that Hollingsworth's peers did not learn social studies from either cognitive or social perspectives because they did not perceive the content to be important enough to empower their lives. In other words, learning to read and write in order to succeed in social studies classes that rendered their lives invisible and powerless simply may not be worth the effort. Similar to Lave and Wenger's (1991) argument, some critical literacy theorists (e.g., Fraatz, 1988) would suggest that understanding and learning arises not out of an individual's mental operations upon objective structures or print, but through increased levels of participation in expert or empowered life roles. Thus Hollingsworth's peers did not engage in social studies learning in the traditional classroom perhaps because they did not perceive themselves capable of becoming experts or powerful participants in the mainstream world that such content reflected and that the classroom teacher modeled.

Instead of labeling students who lack proficiency in standard or school literacy as deficient, many critical literacy theorists turn their attention instead to the politically narrow manner in which literacy is accepted into the social institution of schooling. They point out that schools historically have ignored the influence of out-of-school environments when establishing their in-school rules for learning. The narrow, unfamiliar, and inaccessible concept of school literacy encourages too many adolescents to retreat to communicatively familiar ground (Bennett & LeCompte, 1990). Others might further suggest that Hollingsworth, a white, middle class female, performed well in social studies because she knew that success in learning social studies and other content would enable her to participate personally, economically, and politically in the world (e.g., Ogbo, 1979).

Critical feminist theorists of literacy (Beckleman, 1991; Greene, 1986; Lorde, 1984; Middleton, 1993; Noddings, 1992; Sola & Bennett, 1991) assert that learning in school must take into account cognitive, social, and critical experiences, but also personal experiences as well. While Hollingsworth and her peers succeeded in social studies by concentrating on standard literacy styles at the expense of community and personal literacies, they may have paid a price for that focus. Gilligan, Lyons, and Hanmer (1990) have suggested, for example, that middle class adolescent girls are particularly at risk of losing confidence and self-knowledge as they move out of elementary school. Because they succeed in replicating standard reading and writing behaviors and are rewarded in school, they are less likely to risk dissonant (but personally meaningful) literacy styles.

Although not as well researched, the loss of personal literacy may also have a similar effect upon the socialization of boys and young
The descriptor ‘feminist’ should be read here in a broad sense. It not only means the experiences of white, middle class, heterosexual women, but any and all people, both male and female, who are joined by experiences of marginalization and oppression in a common struggle for social change leading to personal validation. The integrative experiment examined in this article, one that involves male and female adolescents of the working class and minority cultures, secondary teachers, graduate students, and junior women faculty, is connected by feminist descriptors.

Feminist literature, variously arguing for social change through awareness of inequities in race, class, and gender socialization helps us question the purpose and method of allegiance to a school-based literacy at the expense of personal literacy. Feminist questions about societal organizations, traditions, and processes are only part of a sense that the shape of life as we knew it is growing old.

Something has happened, is happening, to Western societies....The demise of the old is being hastened by the end of colonialism, the uprising of women, the revolt of other cultures against white Western hegemony, shifts in the balance of economic and political power within the world economy, and a growing awareness of the costs as well as the benefits of scientific and technological “progress” (Flax, 1990, p. 5).

While nonfeminist critical theorists of literacy (e.g., Cherryholmes, 1992) and historians (e.g., Tyack, 1993) have often pointed to these ruptures in society and have helped us to become skeptical about deconstructed ideas of truth, knowledge, power, history, and language, they are deficient in their treatment of issues regarding race, class, gender, and self. Feminist critics of standard literacies, for example, would claim the centrality of gender relations in the constitution of all categories of self, person, community, knowledge, standards, and power (Weiler, 1993). Rethinking gendered relations from the perspective of personal literacies, for example, shows that the societal concept of woman is not a reflection of biological essence, but rather a consequence of historical, and hence changeable, forces. To develop personal literacies in itself is an act of personal praxis.

The Argument for Multiple Literacies

To redress these problems of equity in social studies classrooms, we have attempted to identify the various literacies that should be integrated into instructional programs, based upon three categories
selected from various perspectives on literacy: (a) school literacies—the learning of interpretive and communicative processes needed to adapt socially to school and other dominant language contexts, and to use/practice those processes in order to gain a conceptual understanding of school subjects; (b) community literacies—the appreciation, understanding and/or use of interpretive and communicative traditions of culture and community which sometimes stands as a critique of school literacies; and (c) personal literacies—the critical awareness of ways of knowing as well as beliefs about self which comes from thoughtful examination of historical or experiential and gender-specific backgrounds in school and community language settings.

Moving beyond School or Standard Literacies

Standard social studies instruction usually involves learning content through traditional practices (taking notes on lectures about course material, reading textbooks, and writing text-explicit responses). In this approach, exposure to and practice with school literacy are viewed as the means to develop a unified or national literacy. While some people argue that promotion of a standard national language is the only appropriate purpose for literacy instruction even within a democracy (Hirsch, 1986), others do not. James Gee (1991), citing Robert Bocoak and Antonio Gramsci, makes a compelling point about the hidden purpose behind the standard of a correct interpretation model of literacy:

The most striking continuity in the history of literacy is the way in which literacy has been used, in age after age, to solidify the social hierarchy, empower elites, and ensure that people lower on the hierarchy accept the values, norms, and beliefs of the elites, even when it is not in their self interest (or ‘class interest’) to do so (p. 40).

The result is a hegemony of power, a kind of domination that maintains existing social and political structures without the use of force by infiltrating our thinking about what is standard or normal in society and then assuming that the standard is not only satisfactory but generally equitable (McLaren, 1989).

Hegemony is not so much about winning approval for the status quo, winning consent for it or even acceptance of it. Rather what seems to be involved is the prevention of rejection, opposition or alternatives to the status quo through denying the use of the school for such purposes (Dale, 1982, pp. 156-157).
By endorsing standardized tests to measure single standards of literacy, school systems become hegemonic agents. As such they are conservative by nature and highly resistant to change. Alternative realities and accompanying discourses are therefore discouraged.

Community Literacies

Social educators in particular should attend to community literacies in their classrooms, for ethical and moral reasons. To instruct only for school literacy is to disenfranchise entire classes of people who communicate perfectly well in many out of school environments. We see community literacies as appropriate within specific subcultures. Our view of community is not exclusive to ethnically bounded norms or racial and religious distinctions. It instead approximates the idea of communicative competence (Mehan, 1979) and reflects the social and content knowledge necessary to interact appropriately within a particular group.

Incongruence between school and community literacies is a problem area particularly for urban students in the United States (Au & Mason, 1981; Fine, 1991). Those whose community literacies do not match the school standard fare poorly, often falling into a cycle of failure. They seldom question the school’s definition of who is knowledgeable or school literate, but are more likely to question their own knowledge and knowledge resources, and believe them inadequate.

Personal Literacies

While some scholars of literacy now recognize the need for community-based literacies in school, few speak to the need for personal literacies. In our view, personal literacies involve unique communication patterns arising from historical or experiential and gender-specific backgrounds. They reflect both the ways students believe they should interact socially in the world (according to cultural and class-based rules of behavior), and the private ways they know they can and would like to be able to interact. Teachers might help students to understand that the correct interpretation of an event depends upon the boundaries of interpretive possibilities, and in so doing, help students to find validation for their personal literacies.

Such an instructional stance is incumbent upon social educators preparing students to be democratic citizens. As far back as Alexis de Tocqueville, critics of democracy have warned of tyranny by the majority over independence of mind, thought, and expression. After his visit to America in 1835, he wrote:

I know no country in which, speaking generally, there is less independence of mind and true freedom of discussion than in America....In America the majority has enclosed
thought within a formidable fence. A writer is free inside that area, but woe the man who goes beyond it; he must face all kinds of unpleasantness and everyday persecution....The master no longer says, "Think like me or you die." He does say, "You are free not to think as I do; you can keep your life and your property and all; but from this day you are a stranger among us" (in Scollon, 1988, pp. 16-17).

Such individually voiced critiques of democracy, of course, are what keep it alive. The notion of democracy as a space for dissension and critique—as a ubiquitous, unfinished project—makes it "the last great hope for society" (Engle & Ochoa, 1988). The central place literacy holds in an ideal democracy is well acknowledged, yet we seem to have forgotten the role of the individual in democratic processes with our insistence on fidelity to the standard literacy and on correct textual interpretation of the majority.

The Experiment

Given solid theoretical bases for integrating social studies and literacy and ways of describing multiple literacies instructionally, we wanted to apply the integrative praxis to the social studies classroom, using the theories as a context for selection of instructional procedures and studying the results as we attempted to achieve them. We began by reviewing the literature on good social studies practice and we selected four organizing characteristics. For both our own work and that of our students, we were committed to social education that (1) is collective and social rather than individualistic (Bliss, 1989; Levstick & Pappas, 1992); (2) emphasizes depth rather than breadth in social science and history content and includes controversial and community-based studies (NCSS, 1994); (3) is reflective, critical, inquiry based and action oriented rather than transmitted through lecture and memorization (Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Hursh, 1994; Manson, Marker, Ochoa, & Tucker, 1971; McGowen, Sutton, & Smith, 1990; Mathison, 1994; Thornton, 1994); and (4) integrates not only instruction in history and the social sciences, but moral education (Fraenkel, 1981; Joseph, 1990), a variety of assessment forms, and multiple literacies (Nelms, 1987).

Next, we considered how to integrate multiple literacy instruction and practice (Hollingsworth & Gallego, 1994), and study it from a perspective of social change and feminist praxis (Stanley & Wise, 1990). We chose not to use ethnomethodological procedures to observe social studies classrooms where we thought we might find such instruction. Rather, our commitment to feminist research led us to teach it ourselves in a rather challenging situation. Doing so enabled us to
critique the theories from the standpoint of personal as well as political involvement or praxis.

What makes this teaching/research process feminist? Although there are many variations of feminist theory and research, we viewed our research as a cooperative effort to influence social change and furthermore, as an opportunity to examine our involvement critically as well as the progress of our students in the effort. While we as a research team differed in our understanding and endorsement of feminist theories, our previous experiences working as and with teachers for change (Weiler, 1988) caused us to begin this work with great optimism and enthusiasm. We expected that social and political changes would occur as the result of our work together if we could help others see the possibility in such integration; therefore, the experiment could not take place in a university laboratory school. We began by choosing Urban Junior High School\(^2\) as the setting for our experiment.

The Site

Urban Junior High (UJH) is housed in a large brick and oak building of 1940s vintage, located in the working class area of a major urban city in the United States. The tall brick smokestacks of its physical plant flag its geographic location. Although students represent primarily African American and Caucasian backgrounds, UJH also has the largest number of Latino and Native American students in the district. Unlike suburban children who arrive at school fluent in the discourse of standard literacy and who thus are better able to conform to middle class academic and behavioral values, many UJH students resisted such conformity. Their resistance could be viewed as a healthy attempt to maintain personal and cultural identities (McLaren, 1989), but to many teachers at UJH, weary with years of experiencing such resistance, it was viewed more as a disciplinary issue that required correction. Tardiness, for example, was considered such a major problem that school policy was created to punish regular offenders. Frustration led many teachers to view these students as difficult to teach. Sitting in the teachers’ cafe in September, we heard many comments such as these recorded in the space of a half hour:

- Lock these kids up.
- If you want them to learn, hire a home-bound tutor. Don’t send them here.
- Get back at them. Find a class you don’t really like, and hire a substitute.

\(^2\)All people and place names used are fictitious.
Send homework to parents three days in a row. Let them see what they don’t do. If Tommy is such a nice kid, why won’t he work? Quit making excuses and tell him to get to work.

One kid is coming back to school today. He’s only been here once before. He told the counselor he just doesn’t like coming to school. He’s not going to make it. I’d like to help him, but enough is enough.

If they don’t want to come, I just fail them.

Why didn’t the kid want to come to school?

I don’t know. But for whatever reasons, if the kid is not there, he didn’t learn and should fail.

Educational opportunities within the school appeared to be textured by race, class, and gender. UJH students are segregated into advanced sections (comprised primarily of upper working class and middle class white students with good standard literacy skills) and regular and remedial sections (comprised primarily of African American and Latino students from a lower economic background with less facility in standard literacy forms).

Like other junior and high school teachers, teachers at UJH are also traditionally separated from each other by disciplinary training and school scheduling. While teachers of reading and writing courses still see literacy instruction as part of their roles, the social studies, math, and science teachers (Hollingsworth & Teel, 1991) view literacy as the responsibility of special teachers, parents, and the students themselves. The separation of literacy from subject instruction thus further aggravates the tendency to track and vary equitable opportunities for students, and it inhibits development of a climate for addressing the problem of student failure.

We worked at UJH as part of a Professional Development School (PDS) relationship between a local university and the school district. In the beginning, we focused on the teachers’ evolving perceptions of schooling and literacy; however, we found such strong resistance at this school to our belief that changing instruction practices could make a difference in student performance that we decided to try our ideas out first with the students. Although most of the teachers on our team at UJH disagreed with our plan, we were given permission to try out the theories behind integrating social studies and literacy by co-teaching a first period eighth-grade world history class. To do so, we had to negotiate with the regular classroom teacher who taught the other
five periods of social studies during the day, with other social studies, English, and reading teachers involved in PDS at the school, and with parents of the first-period class. That negotiation left us primarily in contact with only the teacher of the first-period class. Thus, the vision, methods, and analysis of our work with UJH students were primarily ours alone.

The three of us reporting this experiment, however, were qualified and credentialed to teach the class. Sandra "Sam" Hollingsworth is a teacher educator with a background as a secondary social studies teacher, reading specialist, and elementary teacher. She came to this project from another cross-disciplinary collaborative project that focused on instructional and social changes in a conversational mode (Hollingsworth, 1992, 1994). Margaret "Margie" Gallego was also a classroom teacher and now, as a professor, teaches bilingual literacy courses at the university and conducts an after-school program in a Latino community center. N. Suzanne "Susie" Standerford, who joined our team as a graduate assistant, had more than 20 years of experience as an elementary school teacher and curriculum coordinator in literacy.

The students in this eighth-grade classroom, like in other urban classrooms, represented a rich variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds and many community literacies. While one third of the students entered the class fairly successful both in school literacy and in academic subjects, nearly two thirds had a history of poor performance and/or school failure. We defined the students' failure in school as problematic (not simply attributed to student deficiencies) and redefined the problem as indicative of a separation between social studies instruction and personal and community-based literacy processes. We anticipated that recognizing and integrating students' personal and community literacies would both enhance their understanding of school literacy and increase their success in disciplinary studies in the short term. Our long-term expectation was that students would view the study of social studies as a way to improve their lives. We were able to investigate this hope only in a limited way at the outset, but it lends itself well to longitudinal study. Our short-term goals were:

- to improve students' school literacies in order to enable them to utilize more social studies content and to take more control over their own learning;
- to construct new ideas by building upon familiar concepts from community literacies;

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3The teacher who turned his first-period class over to us asked not to be mentioned by name as that attention would be unfair to other teachers involved in the PDS.
benefit of integrating literacy with social studies, but at the effect that in-class reading had on classroom management. He remarked:

> It does calm them down, and for some strange reason, they like reading. We have used other things like point systems, but with this you don't have to tell them. They just come in, get a library book, and sit down and read it. The students really like talking about their books, and they like hearing other people talk and hearing themselves talk. It kind of brings the class together in a community type way because they all like hearing each other and talking. Some may feel it's not school, and they get enjoyment out of reading, but I think it's really helpful to encourage people to read because we all read. Teachers read, everybody in here reads, all adults read, so they can see the importance of it. It sets the tone for the class.

When we first began to introduce novels, historical fiction, and other unofficial texts to the students, we not only found resistance to reading but complaints that we were mixing up English class and history class. "We're not supposed to read things like this here," Lucinda told us. By the end of the first semester, we asked again about the unfamiliar practice of reading novels in a history class. The responses were encouraging:

Rita: The advantage is that if you read more, when you get older you can read better.

Sam: Is that what you really think or what you think I want to hear?

Rita: Sort of...so we can read good books.

Lucinda: Before, I didn't like to read, but I'm starting to read more now. I don't understand because when we read these, it's not like reading history books. With these, we get a choice and with the history books the teacher tells us.

Juanita: If you read everyday, it gets easier.

Selina: I like it 'cause it is better than reading a textbook.

Danny: I don't know if I like it....I like to read, but them books...

Sam: You want more exciting literature?

Danny: Yes.
Selina: Every Friday should be a reading period for the whole period.

Lucinda: I think the librarian should let us choose our own books.

Bud: I like it.

Atkin: Why?

Bud: 'Cause it's better than doing work.

Atkin: Now we're getting into a new concept, 'cause that's not what we were doing it for.

Sam: What are we doing it for?

Atkin: To help us learn. I like it 'cause it helps us learn to read.

Sam: Has reading gotten easier?

Atkin: Yes.

Sam: How many of you think reading has gotten easier? (17 boys and 4 girls raised their hands, 21 of the 29 students.)

Standerford also recorded an occasional exchange involving reading the history text.

Sam: Jorge, tell us about your book.

Jorge: I'm reading about the Hebrews and their belief systems.

Sam: You're reading your textbook during [free] reading time?

Jorge: Yes. It's interesting.

With a strategy to improve the reading portion of school literacy in place, we began to look at ways to increase the students' comprehension of social studies.

Social studies literacy. Initial interviews with the students told us that their interest in ancient and unfamiliar cultures was less than enthusiastic; therefore, in an effort to have students identify culturally with the study of history, we asked them to investigate their own cultural backgrounds through an archaeological dig. Sam Hollingsworth disguised herself as a famous archaeologist, Dr. Snoop, and brought in artifacts from her home. Students had to identify as much about her culture as they could from the artifacts. They then used
information gained from digs of their own homes, along with anthropological family interviews, to write about their own cultures in self-selected, paired groups (see Hollingsworth & Dybdahl, in press, for the advantages of friendship groups in classrooms). We made no attempt to influence students to write using standard or school literacy for this early assignment because we wanted to encourage them to write in their community literacy styles and to engage them in the study of culture and history. Gladine, an African American student who usually failed to turn in classroom assignments because “they wouldn’t be very good anyway” worked with a self-chosen partner to write an especially insightful and poignant essay, explicating some topics that displayed part of her community literacy.

My mom culture is Africa American. I want to know why Racism still exist in 1991. My mom said that racism was worse than it is today. And today people still hate one another. What do society want from people of color. My family believe in honesty, and spending time with relatives and going to church every Sunday morning.

Gladine’s African American partner, Selina, wrote similar comments about her family’s concerns and traditions. These cultural essays were combined into a class book that was published and bound at the university, then distributed to all class members. By the end of the term, when students had practiced more standard writing literacy through exercises that included composing annotated illustrations of historical events and reflective journal entries about social studies concepts, they were asked to prepare a class newsletter on the Renaissance. Gladine wrote an article on individual rights and responsibilities with a new Vietnamese partner:

What do eighth graders have power over? We have power over our younger brothers and sisters. We have power over our pets. We have power to disagree. We have power to wear anything we want to.

Not all the students improved their written assignments as dramatically as Gladine did, nor was all the feedback we received about our work in the first-period class positive. It was clear to us, however, that many students were beginning to improve their school literacies and to take more control over their own learning.

On the other hand, we encountered conflicts with other social studies teachers over content coverage. In our team meeting discussions, it became clear that some teachers felt concern about the number of world history topics we could cover with our extensive attention to
literacy. We cited the current recommendations in social studies instruction regarding depth over breadth (EES & Partners, 1991). Still, teachers were skeptical. Although world history was not yet part of the state examination process in social studies, the teachers were anticipating its inclusion and they worried that the content had not been fully covered.

In retrospect, we failed to consider the personal relationships that could have been developed with other social studies teachers if we had compromised our original position. We had established a new school literacy for that first-period class that, although unfamiliar, benefitted other teachers. Such conflicts in perspective were common across our work at UJH. Our results, however, were promising enough for us as university co-teachers to continue the experiment.

Donald, for example, was a 13-year-old white male from a working class family. He was viewed traditionally as a major disciplinary problem and a prime candidate for school failure. After four weeks, Susie Standerford found that he was coming into class, getting a novel of his choice, reading continuously, then volunteering every day to share his reading with the class. We found that he had a photographic memory and often became so engrossed in his retellings that he acted out the parts. The quality of his reading, thinking and oral reporting was much fuller than the few lines he had scratched periodically onto paper as evidence of what was learned.

In this case, the regular classroom teacher was as pleased as we were, but he predicted that the steady progress would decline.

Community Literacies and Social/Critical Theories

The second major area of instructional change in the classroom involved recognizing and valuing students' community literacy styles. We tried to incorporate community literacy into the early writing assignment described above and to encourage it by allowing students to work in friendship groups. We also made a concerted effort to reward oral as well as written contributions; to treat all comments as intelligent; to involve parents in the educational process; and to recognize that many of these students had difficult lives outside of school and should not be penalized in class for their inattentive behavior.

Oral presentations. In addition to promoting writing, we also worked to validate and build upon the students' oral strengths. These students knew much more than they convey through writing; therefore, during class discussions, one student would use the overhead projector to
write down all comments made by class members, something that seemed to help students attend to and build upon their peers' comments and to take themselves seriously (as attested by the increasing complexity and thoughtfulness of the comments). The preserved overhead transparencies also gave us a record of oral contributions. Here are some of Hollingsworth's summary observations of Greg:

Greg is an African American boy whose grades are very low and who is often suspended for fighting. When he is in class, he reads voraciously, comments, asks perceptive questions of all speakers, and finishes his work. His oral presentations, however, are the best indication of his deepening critical knowledge of world history. His intelligent and sensitive qualities come out better orally than in writing.

Susie Standerford reported Atkin's progress after much reading, writing, and speaking practice:

At the beginning of the year, Atkin, an African American boy who thought his family came from Scotland, would not read, did not think he was going to do well in the class, and generally was inattentive. He now has read and reported on five books in less than three months, has researched his family background and written about it, and he eagerly contributes to discussions and conversations about world history. It is not unusual to see him hanging in the aisle to listen to the teacher or another student.

Such progress, evident in approximately half of the previously disinterested students, led us to believe that these students were beginning to construct new ideas by building on familiar concepts from community literacies, and beginning to voice their own ideas about social studies concepts through personal literacies. On the other hand, the issue of rewarding oral contributions and valuing them as intelligent was another point of disagreement with the regular classroom teacher. One planning meeting between Margie Gallego, Sam Hollingsworth, and the regular teacher led to a discussion of how best to promote students' oral responses. The regular teacher wanted all students' hands to be raised before we called on them. Gallego had suggested a more variable style of participation. Hollingsworth's reflective field notes documented the tension around a discussion of appropriate and inappropriate oral responses from behavioral and cultural perspectives.
[We] talked about linking appropriate school behavior to cultural differences. I suggested that call out communication styles are more acceptable in African American communities, less so in school. I wanted to try teaching so that kids could see that they were not wrong for calling out in school, but are engaged in a cultural shift. I wanted them to know that they are learning to become biliterate (engaging in different conversational styles) so that they could fit well into the standard literacy style of school. I wanted also to promote other opportunities for appropriate oral response so that call outs were not a display of resistance to oral silencing.

[The regular teacher] wants to limit call outs. He feels that they are disrespectful. He also wants to talk about the need for respect outside of culture. [Our different experiences were showing. We're both talking about respect, but from different angles.]

As a result of our discussion, Hollingsworth suggested a compromise: We would insist on hand raising and we would limit call outs, but we would grade oral presentations after students were called upon. She based the compromise in terms of fairness, explaining that students who wrote well in standard English prior to taking this class were usually seen and evaluated as the brightest students. She argued that rewarding alternative displays of literacy would equalize all students' opportunities for success. Understandably, [the regular teacher] felt judged by Hollingsworth's comments. He told us in a planning meeting:

Grading is a very sensitive issue to me. I think I am really fair. I give every student an opportunity to do well. Everyone in here can get an A. I tell them that all the time. I am here for them most every day after school. I let them make up work. I think I am very fair in my grading policies.

In a reflective memo, Hollingsworth wrote about the issues that his bold and honest comments elicited in their collaborative relationship. Our varying school and university community literacies unintentionally had caused confusion and misgivings.

I have been questioning my role as a facilitator here. What right do I have to challenge his usual grading policies, question [by suggesting alternatives] his familiar style of teaching? I come in with things I notice and point them out
without allowing him to first ask questions. The resolutions of our deliberations usually feel okay in the end, but I wonder about the process.

*Communicating with parents.* To ensure that parents were informed about our classroom work and to gain their support for our efforts to reward students for multiple literacies, we decided to contact each parent at least once during the semester to relate something positive about his/her child’s progress. Although we were familiar with the literature on urban schooling and family expectations, we were still surprised at the uniformity of results. Here is an example from Sam Hollingsworth’s field notes:

Gladine was shy and hesitant at the beginning of class and didn’t appear to like to read. I praised her for doing so, and later called her mother to tell her she was beginning to read consistently.

Her mother said: “Gladine is doing well in school? You can’t mean Gladine. You mean my other daughter. Gladine is always in trouble!”

I assured her that I *did* mean Gladine. I reported that she takes her role as paper monitor seriously. She works well in her group. Her reading is improving.

Many other parents remarked that they had never heard any good comments about their children from school. Consuela’s mother wanted to tape record our comments. The results often showed on the students’ faces in class.

*Supporting lives outside of school.* A few students in the first period class were the primary source of financial support for their families. They worked late into the night and were often tired when they arrived at school in the morning. Rather than penalize them for their responsibilities, we allowed them to nap in class if necessary. For those few that this policy affected, we noted better attendance overall, a sense of self-acceptance, and slightly improved social studies performance.

**Personal Literacies and Feminist Theory**

Here we attempted to integrate social studies learning with both school and community literacy practices to make room for students’ personal literacies. We worked hard to balance out male and female voices and to achieve a critical reading of history for gender, race, and class biases.
In addition to valuing oral contributions in class, we attempted to teach in a manner that discouraged boys' dominance of the conversations, particularly dominance of African American boys over Asian American boys. In one class session we reported educational research to the class indicating that boys usually speak 80 percent of the time in class, and girls only 20 percent (Sadker & Sadker, 1992). We asked our students if they want to conduct an experiment and attempt to do things differently in our democratic classroom.

For the first 80 percent (40 minutes) of class, only the girls were allowed to speak. The last 20 percent (10 minutes) of class were saved for the boys. After settling the boys’ protest, we began discussion of the day's topic and waited for the girls to respond, ignoring any boys who tried to jump in. Fifteen minutes passed. When the girls tentatively began to speak, the boys were silent, but many were visibly agitated. After about five minutes, Atkin yelled out, “Okay, you've had your 20 percent. Now it's our turn!” We spent the rest of the class period processing this phenomenon and discussing why it exists in school classrooms. Although that exercise could not reverse the strong pattern of socialization where girls listen and boys speak, it brought the issue to the forefront for continued work.

We were interested in giving all students an opportunity to speak because we wanted to monitor how well they were learning to think critically about various interpretations of historical events as those events related to their personal experiences. We asked students to investigate particular historic episodes, decide why they were appropriate for study in modern society and how they were relevant to their own experiences, prepare arguments for and against the issues raised, and debate with classmates about contrasting interpretations. Sometimes the historical events were selected for study because they reflected key concepts about actual students' cultures in our class. When we studied cultures that were not represented, we tried to relate focal issues within the content that were also familiar to the students.

An example is the issue of women’s rights in ancient Greece. Students were asked to take a position on the practice of denying Greek women full rights of citizenship, to prepare arguments for a Greek assembly, and to debate the issues in a simulated meeting. They spent time working in small gender-specific groups to investigate the pros and cons and to develop their positions. As students delivered their arguments, audience members were asked to critique the issues, the thoroughness of the arguments, and the persuasiveness of the teams, and finally to vote to either deny or grant women full rights:

Agnes: We want equal rights because women are just as good as men.
Kawanda: We believe that fact is true, but also the role women should play in society is that they should stay home and nurture the young.

Gladine: Housework and raising children do not fill up the entire day. That means women have too much time, too much idle time. They would rather be in the assembly making working decisions that they are capable of doing.

Lucinda: Women should not be watching soap operas all day long. They should be cleaning the house and doing laundry.

Rita: Women can and want to achieve if given citizenship. Some women have left their dull lifeless existence to become liberated Greek women. Clearly, women are as capable of men in intelligence. To think otherwise is to be blindly unreal.

The debate format allowed students to hear, examine, and appreciate different personal literacies—the way personal attributes such as gender affect opportunities to communicate and participate in society. Although the issue of granting women's rights was not resolved (the final vote locked the class in a stalemate), written critiques after the debates forced students to identify and record opposing views. Similar debates were held on issues relating to colonization and slavery in ancient Greece. Because of the diverse experiences of the group, interesting and opposing viewpoints surfaced on all issues. We began to see promising results for both our third and fourth goals: relating the social studies content to their own lives and critically evaluating the content as a means of using social studies to improve their lives.

Evaluation

Although the results were neither uniform nor compellingly positive, particularly with respect to our relations with other social studies teachers, we assessed our overall progress in a variety of ways: (1) applying the principles of multiple literacies to social studies content through a simulation; (2) measuring development in standard or school reading ability; and (3) summarizing students' attendance, interests, enthusiasm, and content comprehension.

To learn more about students' understandings of community and societal issues and to assess how students understood the concepts of power, equity, wealth, society, and democracy inherent in world history, we asked the class to play an older, simulated society game,
Starpower, twice during the first semester. The first episode was used as a pretest to uncover students’ ideas about how one gains power in society and to demonstrate the ethics of those in power. Students were assigned to social classes (Triangles, Circles, and Squares) on the basis of their ability to gain colored chips of higher values. Students could move upward socially through economic gains and luck. Those who moved up into the ruling class (the Squares) replicated external society by making rules that would be to their own benefit. When mobilized into the Squares, Danny, who earlier, as a member of the Triangle class, had requested justice for all classes, now made a new rule for his lower class Triangle peers: No sleeping on park benches!

As the Circles and Triangles lost power and hope for improving their life, they quit the game. The class had an interesting discussion about the perceived power of the underclass since the ruling class has no power when the lower groups resist. They also wrote about their experiences. Here are Gladine’s reflections:

Today was real borning4 because I didn’t get no gold and I’m...I went down for trading chips.

The game rules really sucks everybody poor should go on protestor so they don’t have nobody to take the money from the circles and triangles (the lower classes).

I wish we can be in they group so they no how it fells to be poor.

Seeing the sense of societal disenfranchisement revealed by the game, we decided to focus on the idea of learning to create an egalitarian society as an end-of-semester content goal in addition to working toward multiple literacies. The students initially had few ideas about how they might help create a more egalitarian society, but they had little trouble connecting the game to their lives. In December we asked the students to repeat the Starpower simulation as an end-of-term posttest to see if their ideas about their own roles as powerful transformers of history had been challenged critically during the semester. We were hopeful that their experiences not only had taught them some facts about world history, but also had helped them value diversity of opinion, read history critically, resist current and historical norms, and imagine different possibilities.

Although the process was not easy, our hopes were realized. This time the students decided not only to use game chips to represent economic values, but education, leadership qualities, personality, and

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4Gladine’s personal interpretation of “boring”.
family connections as well. They had learned that power and wealth could be achieved through a variety of means and that power should not belong only to the wealthy. Students in the poorer groups offered ideas for rules, instead of giving up that right to the rich. By the end of the game, the class as a whole agreed to give each person in our classroom society the same number of chips. Atkin, now our elected class mayor, announced that the class had achieved an egalitarian state.

Growth in School Literacies

To see how the reading practice, critical social studies knowledge, and attitude changes affected students' reading levels, eight students with varying reading abilities were pre- and posttested using the Ekwall Reading Inventory (1979) in September and in January. The students all showed gains of at least one year in their school literacy levels for both word recognition and comprehension.

Content and Personal Achievement

Reviewing class assignments and interview data, we saw a pattern suggesting that the instructional changes not only increased students' standard or school literacy levels and their understanding of the connection between school and community, but also their feelings of self-worth and academic achievement in social studies. Because we did not avoid controversial or difficult concepts central to both students' lives and their study of world history, we offered students an opportunity to take part in democratic procedures within the classroom, to experience and analyze inequities in society, and to investigate their own and other cultures. By implementing a variety of evaluation measures to determine the quality of students' ideas with regard to multiple, not merely standard reading and writing literacies, we found that students became engaged with the subject matter, were willing to share their own ideas, showed pride in their own backgrounds, and demonstrated a heightened awareness of broad historical themes such as power, conflict, and equality.

A Final Note

Obviously we were pleased with the results of the semester-long experiment. Some cautions, however, were necessary in evaluating the effectiveness of our instructional integration. (1) Unlike the regular social studies teacher who teaches six social studies classes back-to-back every day, we had the luxury of thinking about and using one hour, and spending other professional time during the day planning for, reflecting upon, and making sense of our teaching. (2) These instructional changes were possible because we worked as a team, not in isolation, as most teachers must. Teachers in isolated classrooms can
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also integrate their social studies instruction with multiple literacies, but we question whether it would be possible without the cooperation and support of a school administrator and at least one other teacher. (3) The qualitative progress we reported here in one class over one semester is not sufficient to imply sweeping changes for all social studies classrooms. (4) The most significant limitation in the study for us was the UJH teachers' decision not to co-author this article with us. The varying interpretations of these events would have illuminated the difficulties of PDS work in urban areas.

Moreover, we question the ethics of enacting a new social studies curriculum in a classroom usually run in other ways, including our right to displace traditional content coverage and to integrate content and literacy instruction when we did not have the full support of other social studies teachers in UJH. We hope, however, that the students will think about themselves, social studies, and school differently because of our study. Although our personal convictions are strengthened by this experiment, certain questions remain: What is our responsibility as social educators in urban secondary schools with regard to understanding the role of literacy in learning social studies content? What is our responsibility with respect to equity, diversity, democracy? What are our responsibilities to institutional traditions, norms, and other social educators who disagree with us? There are no clear answers to these questions except that they demand the serious and cooperative attention of all social educators. We encourage other school-based teams to create environments that encourage students to go beyond becoming successful merely academically and to learn instead to be truly critical learners and teachers of self, curriculum, and society.

References


CHALLENGING GENDER BIAS THROUGH A TRANSFORMATIVE HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

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Abstract
This article reports on an effort to use a transformative curriculum in 11th grade United States history classes to promote student examination of bias in contemporary American society and to encourage student reflection on and reconsideration of personal views about gender. As part of a unit on the struggle for equality in post-World War II United States, students created and then discussed cartoon dialogues depicting two teenage women. An analysis of these cartoon dialogues illustrates some of the problems teachers face when they assume that students are making the intellectual connections they expect. It also underscores the social positionality of student understanding. Suggestions for helping students connect academic knowledge to their understanding of the world in which they live are included.

Introduction

During the summer of 1993, New York City public swimming pools were plagued by a phenomenon known as the whirlpool. Large groups of teenage men surrounded, sexually harassed, and then abused teenage women. When questioned, many of the male participants claimed that the young women wanted this sexual attention ("For Some...", 1993).

We live in a society where gender biases reinforced by popular youth culture and school practice (Nicholson, 1980) are used to justify and ignore sexual harassment and violence by male students toward their female counterparts. For the purposes of this study, antifemale gender bias is defined as attitudes and behavior based upon stereotypes

¹With assistance from Christina Agosti, Karen McGuiness, Lisa Simone, and Judith Y. Singer.
that (a) define sex roles as universal and biologically determined and that
(b) characterize women and girls as inherently inferior to men and boys
(Schau & Tittle, 1989). Sexual harassment includes behavior ranging from
jokes designed to embarrass and silence women to overt physical
intimidation, exploitation, and violence (Stein, 1989).

The relationship between gender bias and sexual harassment is
discussed by Stephanie Riger (1993) in a study of grievance procedures
intended to deal with sexual harassment in the work place. According to
Riger, most grievance procedures are inadequate for addressing sexual
harassment because they operate on the assumption that what should be
seen as unacceptable male attitudes and behaviors are normative. Riger
argues that effective programs to eliminate sexual harassment in the
work place require an organizational commitment to address the
structural roots of institutional gender inequalities and biases.

Two studies sponsored by the American Association of University
Women (AAUW) document the prevalence of both gender bias and
sexual harassment in American secondary schools. The AAUW’s 1992
publication, How Schools Shortchange Girls, “challenges the common
assumption that girls and boys are treated equally in our public schools”
(1992, p. v). The report exposes the impact of peer, pedagogical, and
curricular bias on teenage women and the ways these biases limit both
personal choices and societal development. According to Hostile Hallways
(1993), the AAUW survey on sexual harassment in America’s schools, 31
percent of teenage women and 18 percent of teenage men report that
they have been repeated targets of sexual harassment while in school.
Perhaps even more astonishing, two thirds of the male students and 52
percent of the female students admitted that they had participated in
sexually harassing other students. Their most frequent explanations
were: “It’s just a part of school life,” “A lot of people do it,” “It’s no big
deal,” and “I thought the person liked it” (p. 12). This 1993 study
concluded that “sexual harassment is creating a hostile environment that
compromises the education of America’s children...[with] repercussions
[that] echo throughout our society” (p. 21).

Other studies have documented the pervasive influence of gender
bias on school culture and the difficulty of changing entrenched
institutional patterns and student and teacher attitudes. Lockheed and
Klein (1989) explore many of the subtle factors that perpetuate sexual
inequities from early childhood education, including verbal and
nonverbal messages from teachers and classmates. Sadker and Sadker
(1994) state that either through omission or because of continued and
conscious gender stereotyping, schools continually cheat female students
out of a constitutionally guaranteed, equal education. In their
ethnographic study of a junior high school, Grant and Sleeter (1986)
conclude that while students frequently are able to question traditional
stereotypes about gender and sometimes are able to reject them, their
ability to do these things is impeded by cultural knowledge acquired from their experiences in the broader community where they live and in school. Gender biases are reinforced in schools by institutional acceptance of social segregation among students, gender-influenced elective choices, curriculum biases, and sex-based staffing patterns (Grant & Sleeter, 1986).

For more than two decades, Selma Greenberg has interviewed teenagers, documenting the existence of and exploring the nature and sources of adolescent antifemale biases. Greenberg (1973, 1994) found that while male and female teenagers most often identified family members, especially their fathers, as their primary source of exposure to sexist attitudes, a majority of students also reported sexist attitudes among their peers in school. One young woman complained to Greenberg: "Guys constantly degrade women, talking about how at the beginning of time it was men with all the power and that's the way it should be" (1994).

In addition to its impact on students, Noddings (1992) argues that gender bias has limited the scope of the social studies curriculum artificially, focusing attention on the public, political, and competitive aspects of society while ignoring private life, peace studies, and values that promote caring. Noddings believes that challenges to gender bias in the curriculum and exploration of contemporary feminist thought have the potential to promote a broad reexamination of and perhaps even "a revolution in social studies education" (p. 240).

These studies underscore the pressing need for secondary school teachers to stand against gender bias and sexual harassment in our classrooms and in our schools. They point to the importance of social studies units and projects that enable students to reflect upon and reconsider their own ideas and values related to gender and those reflected in society's institutions.

Transformative Curriculum

The present study grew out of a unit in an 11th grade U.S. history class during the spring of 1993. Major goals of this unit focusing on the period following World War II were to teach high school students to apply understanding gained from studying the civil rights movement to struggles for gender equity and to encourage them to express and examine their own attitudes about gender differences as an introduction to the problem of gender bias in contemporary American society.

During the 1992-1993 school year, I returned to the high school classroom after a two-year leave of absence as a preservice teacher educator at a local university. In my high school classes, I attempted systematically to incorporate the ideas and teaching methods we had discussed in teacher education classes. This unit was designed to employ
Challenging Gender Bias

aspects of the critical pedagogy developed by Paulo Freire, particularly his concept of *conscientization*, where collective student analysis of prior experiences becomes the basis for academic understanding, problem posing, and classroom dialogue (Freire, 1970; Shor & Freire, 1987; Shor, 1987). In addition, I wanted my teaching to reflect ideas learned from Maxine Greene (1993), who calls for a "curriculum for human beings" (p. 211) that challenges marginalization, celebrates student voices and cultural diversity, and perceives human identities as "always in the making" (p. 213).

Other educational theorists and practitioners also contributed to the concept of transformative curriculum that informs my teaching. James Banks (1993) argues that, unlike a mainstream academic curriculum, a transformative curriculum is based on the assumption that "knowledge is not neutral...and that an important purpose of knowledge construction is to help people improve society" (p. 9). Banks (1991) proposes a nine-step values inquiry model to help students explore the reasons, sources, and possible consequences of their value choices and to assist them in developing "consistent, clarified values that can guide purposeful and reflective personal or civic action" (p. 134).

Banks and other transformative educators believe that teachers' ability to create transformative classrooms depends upon their willingness to examine their own personal and cultural values and identities, to change the ways that they organize classrooms and relate to students, and to commit themselves actively to social change. In *Border Crossings, Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education* (1992), Henry Giroux discusses how teachers can use their classroom authority to allow students to explore their lived experiences, to locate themselves culturally, to dissect their personal ideologies and the dominant ideology of their society, and to confront established power relationships. Giroux (1992) urges teachers "to establish classroom conditions in which different views about race can be aired but not treated as simply an expression of individual views or feelings" (p. 138). Peggy McIntosh's (1983) model of interactive phases of curricular revision calls upon teachers to involve students in creating curricula that include everyone while at the same time critiquing earlier forms of instruction and the social theories that undergird them.

Critical commentary tends to focus on social and curricular theory and not actual classroom practice; as a high school teacher with a commitment to transformative education, I found few secondary school models that I could use to inform my own teaching. One of the best examples of experimentation with transformative ideas and methodologies by secondary school educators is the work of William Bigelow and Linda Christensen (Bigelow, 1988, 1990; Christensen, 1994), who team teach at a high school in Portland, Oregon. Bigelow and Christensen describe their classroom "as a center of equality and
democracy" where students are engaged in "an ongoing, if small, critique of the repressive social relations of the larger society" (Bigelow, 1990, p. 437). Christensen and Bigelow use literature and history "as points of departure to explore themes in students' lives and then, in turn, use students' lives to explore history and our society today" (p. 438). Their goal is to have students become "social researchers, investigating their own lives" (p. 440). One of the most impressive components of their work is the ability to discuss their difficulties as secondary school teachers struggling with students to build supportive and democratic learning communities that engage students intellectually, emotionally, and as social activists (Christensen, 1994).

My experience as a classroom teacher supports Christensen and Bigelow's emphasis on the importance of building secondary school classroom communities where students are able to express and explore ideas and feelings and not feel silenced or attacked. As part of my commitment to transformative education, I discuss with my students ways we can create an atmosphere where everyone feels respected even though their ideas may be challenged. Out of these discussions, we arrive at some variation of the following guidelines: (1) The teacher and students will respect the right of participants in our class community to hold opinions that differ from theirs; (2) Speakers are expected to present evidence to support their opinions; (3) Speakers will not use words that hurt, i.e., words, phrases, or tones that other members of the classroom community find insulting or intimidating.

Studies by Ira Shor, Nancy Schniedewind, and Janice Koch, educators who employ feminist and Freirian principles in their college classrooms, provided other useful classroom models. Shor (1992) uses problem-posing dialogues to explore student resistance in remedial writing courses and to encourage his students to change the reality that they find oppressive. Schniedewind (1987) organizes women's studies classes as cooperative communities and integrates cognitive and affective learning so that "feminism is taught through the process as well as through the formal content" (p. 179). Koch (1994) enables preservice teachers to reexamine their own schooling experiences as they critically investigate gender bias in schools, classroom practice, and curricula.

The Project Site

The study took place in a magnet high school specializing in communication arts that is open to residents of one of New York City's five boroughs. Of its more than 3,500 students, approximately 16 percent read below grade level, 16 percent read above grade level, and 68 percent read on grade level (New York City Board of Education, 1991). The school is ethnically diverse: 49 percent of the students are white, 21 percent are African American (including Caribbean American), 15
percent are Asian/Asian American, and 14 percent are Latino/a (“School choice”, 1994). Many students are either immigrants or are the children of recent immigrants. The school has no interscholastic sports teams and as a result, tends to attract significantly more female than male students. Table 1 shows responses to a demographic survey by the 96 students in three classes that participated in the study.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>35 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None/blank</td>
<td>18 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no mandatory tracking in this school, but students can register for Advanced Placement classes. Most students enroll in New York State regents-level academic classes. Ten percent of the students are in special education, and many of these students are mainstreamed into regular regents-level classes. Classes meet four times a week; twice per week for 60 minutes and twice per week for 45 minutes. The school operates on a four cycles per year programming system. Students and teachers receive new class schedules in September, mid-November, February, and mid-April. Because of the four-cycle system, the unit that
included the gender bias project began immediately after classes had been reorganized in mid-April, 1993.

**Problem Posing**

The major problem posed at the start of the fourth cycle of the academic year (April-June) was whether or not the United States, in the post-World War II era, could finally live up to the promise of the Declaration of Independence and become a more democratic and inclusive society. Within this unit of study, students spent eight lessons exploring the struggles of the African American civil rights movement, four lessons discussing the struggle of women for social, economic, and political equality, and two lessons learning about problems confronting recent immigrants to the United States.

During the section on the African American civil rights movement, students kept current events logs; they collected newspaper articles and wrote about contemporary civil rights issues. Classroom discussions frequently began with student comments on recent newspaper stories, especially the second round of police trials related to the Rodney King case or their own personal experiences with racial or ethnic bias and discrimination. In an effort to promote open and critical discussion during this period, I also shared some of my own experiences and I described my family and neighbors' attitudes about race, ethnicity, class, and gender (I am white, male, Jewish, and I grew up in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s).

In these U.S. history classes, the important goals of the transformative social studies curriculum were to promote student examination of racial, ethnic, religious, and gender biases in contemporary American society and to encourage student reflection and reconsideration of their own personal views. The attitudes of young men towards young women and of young women towards themselves and each other continually emerged in classroom discussions and activities. The difficulties encountered in addressing these attitudes illustrate some of the limitations of a content-based curriculum and some of the pedagogical problems that teachers must be willing to address in heterogeneous classrooms.

**Cartoon Dialogues**

Miles Horton (and Freire, 1990) argues that educational research should be collaborative and that educators need to “experiment with people not on people....They’re in on the experiment. They’re in on the process” (p. 148). When high school students first enter my classes, I explain that I want to involve them in exploring the impact of our classroom discussions on their ideas and values, and I want the class to
analyze some of their own assignments. While students frequently raise questions about what I mean and about how we will do it, there has never been any objection. Generally students are excited about the idea of being involved in experiments and consider what they will be doing important.

After the civil rights movement lessons, as part of the introduction to the role of women in the contemporary United States, I asked students to create cartoon dialogues depicting two female high school students who appear to be having a serious discussion. The assignment was presented to students outside the context of previous discussions of racial and ethnic bias, and was intended to determine if the students drew connections between issues related to race and gender and if discussions of racial bias had influenced student attitudes about the interests, concerns, and ideas of teenage women.

The use of cartoon dialogues as a way for students to express their ideas and clarify their values was developed by Wayne Paulson (1974, 1976) of the Foundation for Health Care Evaluation. The cartoon dialogue activity I used was based upon an exercise in peer adolescent AIDS education workshops. It contained six panels in which two female high school students are having a discussion. Students in the class were asked to imagine the dialogue and then fill in blank conversation bubbles.

Students were given approximately 10 minutes to complete the blank dialogue boxes. Several students asked if they could decide the sequence of who was speaking. It was agreed that they could design the dialogues any way that they saw fit, as long as they made it clear who was speaking and where it fit into the conversation. The assignment was collected after students completed the panels.

Initially I intended for the students to analyze the cartoon dialogues in the next class meeting in order to promote student discussion about gender bias and about their own attitudes toward differences between men and women. While I expected some expression of gender stereotypes in student dialogues, I also anticipated that as a result of our study of the struggle against racial discrimination in U.S. society, many students would create dialogues that challenged gender bias and discrimination against women.

When I examined the dialogues at the end of the school day, I found that most of them were about teenage life and problems; i.e., pregnancy, school, jobs, and dating (see Dialogue 1). Only a few dialogues reflected the political or civil rights issues we had discussed in class (see Dialogue 2).
Dialogue 1: A representative dialogue about teenage life
Student A: Did you see Ryan today?
Student B: Boy did I see Ryan. He looked so hot.
Student B: I really like him.
Student B: Do you think he likes me as much as I like him?
Student A: I'll set you two up.
Student B: Do you want me to help?
Student A: Now you'll have a boyfriend you deserve.
Student B: You are beautiful.

Dialogue 2: A dialogue reflecting a political or civil rights issue
Student A: Did you hear about the talk of the town trying to ban abortions again?
Student B: I heard about it, and it makes me sick to think that in this country and in these days they can't allow a woman to make up her own mind.
Student B: I just wish we can have the right to make our own judgment.
Student B: If men were having abortions, they wouldn't think twice about who should make up their own mind.
Student B: What do you think?
Student A: I don't favor abortions. I see them as killing a baby.
Student B: But if you had to make a choice, you would want it to come from your own head.
Student A: I just hope it will never come to that.

My first reaction to the dialogues was disappointment—not in my students, but in my own teaching. I felt that I had failed to make it possible for them to draw connections between what we were studying in class and their personal lives and views. Instead of returning the cartoon dialogues for classroom evaluation, I decided to hold them while we discussed the history and impact of the women's rights movement after World War II. During these lessons, we examined passages written by Betty Friedan and Ashley Montagu, Doonesbury cartoon strips about male chauvinism, statistics comparing the gender gap in earnings and employment possibilities, and changes in federal laws that affected the legal and reproductive rights of women.

After these lessons, I asked students to complete the cartoon dialogues a second time. Students were told that they could complete the dialogue the same way they did the first time, or they were free to create new dialogues. I also asked students to write their reason for selecting the topic on the back of the cartoon. After students had completed the second set of cartoon dialogues, I reminded them of the concept of exploring the impact of the things we were studying on their ideas and values, and raised the possibility of examining the dialogues for evidence
of possible gender bias. After the classes responded affirmatively, both sets of cartoon dialogues were examined in class by students working in previously established heterogeneous cooperative learning teams of between three and five students. Each team had a minimum of two female students, and most had female majorities.

I asked the student teams to sort dialogues by topic and according to student explanations for why they created their dialogues. Teams created their own topic and reason categories. These were presented to the class as a whole, standardized within each class and later standardized between my three classes. The final topic and reason categories are presented in Table 2. Teen problems include dating, drugs, decisions about becoming sexually active, after school jobs, and relationships with friends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>14 percent</td>
<td>18 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family conflict</td>
<td>3 percent</td>
<td>11 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School problems</td>
<td>23 percent</td>
<td>11 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen problems</td>
<td>34 percent</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condoms/AIDS</td>
<td>0 percent</td>
<td>3 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics/current events</td>
<td>3 percent</td>
<td>2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination/bias</td>
<td>11 percent</td>
<td>16 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future (work &amp; college)</td>
<td>6 percent</td>
<td>7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6 percent</td>
<td>2 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal experience</td>
<td>4 percent</td>
<td>7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend’s experience</td>
<td>14 percent</td>
<td>7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen talk</td>
<td>4 percent</td>
<td>7 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage girl talk</td>
<td>18 percent</td>
<td>12 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>43 percent</td>
<td>40 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studied in class</td>
<td>0 percent</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18 percent</td>
<td>17 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>31 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After all classes had performed a preliminary analysis, a team of four student volunteers met during their lunch period to compare the topics and explanations made by male and female students and they created charts to show these initial findings. After the charts were
presented and discussed, the cartoon dialogues were returned to students and the cooperative learning teams met to discuss: (1) what students were trying to show in their dialogues; (2) why they chose particular topics; (3) why some students changed their topics and others did not; (4) why people felt that the females depicted were discussing these particular topics; and (5) if gender stereotypes or biases influenced topic choices.

In all three classes, discussion was heated in the cooperative learning teams and later in the class as a whole. Many students argued that some of the cartoon dialogues either by choice of subject or because of content expressed stereotypes about teenage women; however, the teams and the classes were divided over which dialogues and which explanations constituted gender biases. For example, a male student who identified himself as Puerto Rican and Roman Catholic, created the following dialogue (see Dialogue 3).

### Dialogue 3

**Student A:** Hey, did you do the math homework?
**Student B:** Yeah, but I didn’t get all of it because there were a few that I didn’t get, so I left them out.
**Student B:** I probably won’t hand it in.
**Student B:** Pretty stupid huh? I should have went for some help.
**Student A:** I can help you and you can hand it in on time.
**Student B:** Gee thanks. I could use the help.
**Student B:** I’m glad you are my friend.
**Student A:** Don’t worry about it pal.

This cartoon dialogue was placed in the category of school problems. The cooperative learning team that discussed the dialogue had a mixed reaction to it. Some students felt that it was an example of a stereotype about women because it showed a young woman having trouble in math. Others felt that it was not a stereotype because the student who helps her with her homework is also a young woman.

The teen problem category included a number of cartoon dialogues created by male and female students, in which the young women were discussing their relationships with boys or other girls. These cartoon dialogues evoked the sharpest disagreement about gender bias and stereotyping. In one class discussion, a young woman commented, “It’s okay to say that there are topics that girls talk about, but some of the boys have it all wrong.” Another young woman challenged the dialogues developed by some of the males. She demanded to know: “How can you say those things [about teenage girls] after all the stuff we have talked about in class?” Two examples of dialogues created by a male student that elicited this kind of response follow (see Dialogue 4 and Dialogue 5). The author of the Dialogue 4
identified himself as male, white, and an immigrant. He said that “I chose this topic because I know girls mostly talk about guys when they are alone.” The author of Dialogue 5 identified himself as male, white, and Italian American. He said, “I recently experienced something like this with my friends,” and “I included the profanity that they [girls] usually use.”

Dialogue 4
Student A: Did you see him in school today? He is so hot!
Student B: I know I want that kid so bad, but he never even looks at me.
Student B: I saw him at the ‘rave’ (party) last week.
Student B: He was being ‘sweated’ (admired) by all the girls.
Student A: How come you didn’t tell me about the ‘rave’?
Student B: I wanted to get to be alone with him. You don’t go for ‘raves’ anyway.
Student A: You know I always liked him.
Student B: Well, that’s too bad because he don’t like you.

Dialogue 5
Student A: You know, I heard something at school today.
Student B: No. What did you hear?
Student B: Did it involve me?
Student B: Well, is it bad? Just tell me.
Student A: You. You stole my boyfriend!
Student B: What? I don’t know what you’re talking about.
Student A: You ho! How dare you! We’ve been seeing each other for a year! Bitch!
Student B: I don’t know what to say.

Interestingly, despite this male student’s belief that teenage girls talk this way to one another, not one of the female students who participated in the project created cartoon dialogues in which the young women referred to each other using this language. While some of the female students had the young women in their dialogues curse, only four male students used the words “ho” (whore), “slut” or “bitch”.

Some of the cartoon dialogues about pregnancy included disparaging comments about female sexuality, the female discussants, or their acquaintances. Many female students objected to these cartoon dialogues. Female students in each of the three classes noted that there was a wide difference in the seriousness that students brought to these cartoon dialogues. As one young women stated, “A dialogue between girls when one of them is pregnant means one thing to a boy, but it is a very serious issue to a girl.” There was a consensus in the classes that there had to be some way of measuring how serious the dialogues were.
The following cartoon dialogues all dealt with the topic of pregnancy. The first (Dialogue 6) was created by a female student who identified herself as Hispanic and Roman Catholic. This young woman said that she selected this topic because it is important today.

**Dialogue 6**

Student A: So how did things go at the clinic?

Student B: Terrible. It was just terrible. I can’t believe what he told me....He told me I’m pregnant.

Student B: I don’t know what to do. Should I tell my parents? Should I keep it?

Student B: How is my future going to turn out? Listen to me. My future, I don’t have a future now.

Student B: I’m going to have a kid now.

Student A: Well maybe there’s a way to solve this. Maybe you can get an abortion.

Student B: You think so. I don’t know. I’m kind of scared. How am I going to get the money?

Student A: Well, that’s what friends are for. I’ll help you out. I’m always here for you.

Some students felt that cartoon dialogues that discussed pregnancy contained an element of gender bias. Most of the young women in the classes felt that pregnancy was a very real problem that they faced and that the key to evaluating such dialogues lay in the manner with which the topic was handled. Dialogue 6 was judged to be serious because it showed the difficult choices that young women have to make and the importance of supportive friends.

The next dialogue (Dialogue 7) was created by a female student who identified herself as Haitian and Catholic. She did not give her reason for selecting this topic.

**Dialogue 7**

Student A: Monique, I’m pregnant.

Student B: What! I can’t believe it. How could you? Who’s the father?

Student B: What’s wrong with you? I thought you were a virgin.

Student B: When did you start having sex? How can you just come and surprise me?

Student A: Monique, I’m really sorry. I need your help.

Student B: We’ll I’m sorry too. I’m really disappointed in you Jessica.

Student A: I don’t even know who’s the father. I was really messed up. But I know better now.

Student B: Some people never listen.
Students felt that Dialogue 7 was different and less serious than Dialogue 6 because it focused on the issue of sexual activity rather than on the problem of teenage pregnancy. One male student created another dialogue (Dialogue 8) on pregnancy. He said that he selected this topic because by the looks on the young woman’s faces, they were talking about something serious.

**Dialogue 8**

**Student A:** Did you tell your parents?

**Student B:** No. I’m afraid that they’ll say I should have thought of the consequences before we did it.

**Student B:** I don’t know what to do or say to them.

**Student B:** I’m also scared of what John will say. He doesn’t know about it yet.

**Student B:** I hope he can take it?

**Student A:** Don’t worry about John, I know how he is and he’ll get over it soon.

**Student B:** What do you mean by that?

**Student A:** We had sex before.

This is the kind of cartoon dialogue that disturbed many female students. While it discussed a serious topic, they felt that both the insensitive way the friend spoke to the pregnant teen and the way the women are portrayed as having sexual relations with the same person were examples of antifemale stereotypes. One female student offered her own cartoon dialogue as a more realistic example of the way two female friends would discuss the same situation. In her dialogue, the friend says, "Don’t worry about it. I will go with you to the doctor if you want.”

Eventually, discussions of the cartoon dialogues expanded into broader discussions of continuing gender bias in American society and in modern American youth culture. In general, among the more vocal students, female students reacted most strongly to the impact of stereotyping, citing ideas raised in previous lessons and their own personal experiences with male students in school.

With a few exceptions, male students were much less vocal than female students during the discussions. Unlike previous class discussions, they make no flippant and derogatory remarks (“Hey, that’s just the way things are,” “Feminists say those things because they can’t get guys,”).

After discussing the experience in my classes with a group of colleagues in the social studies department, another teacher who was using a more traditional social studies curriculum decided to instruct two of her classes (45 students) to create dialogues using the same cartoons. There were some interesting differences in the responses. A much larger percentage of students in the second group created cartoon
dialogues where the young women discussed teen problems and a much smaller percentage discussed discrimination or gender bias. Table 3 compares responses by the two groups.

Reflective Practice

At the end of the school year, the cartoon dialogues were reanalyzed with the assistance of two graduate students in the Hofstra University School of Education preservice teacher education program and a doctoral candidate from the New York University School of Education. As we examined the cartoon dialogues and the initial analysis made by the high school students, our exercise in reflective practice about teaching methods evolved into an effort to better understand the ideas and values of the students who had taken part in the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Author’s classes</th>
<th>Colleague’s classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>17 percent</td>
<td>11 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family conflict</td>
<td>8 percent</td>
<td>13 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School problems</td>
<td>23 percent</td>
<td>11 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen problems</td>
<td>31 percent</td>
<td>49 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condoms/AIDS</td>
<td>2 percent</td>
<td>6 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics/current events</td>
<td>2 percent</td>
<td>2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination/bias</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
<td>2 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>2 percent</td>
<td>6 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3 percent</td>
<td>0 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the suggestions made by the high school students during cooperative learning team and full class discussions, the group established a five-part scale for comparing the seriousness or complexity of the dialogues, based partly upon whether or not the cartoon dialogue examined an area that students identified as a major concern and whether or not the dialogue gave a sense of the complexity involved in the topic being discussed. The five categories were:

1. Most serious: The cartoon dialogue examined an area that students considered a major concern from multiple viewpoints and recognized that the problem did not have a simple resolution.
(2) **Serious:** The cartoon dialogue examined an area that students considered a major concern from one point of view and suggested a one-dimensional resolution of the problem.

(3) **Responsible but not serious:** The cartoon dialogue was completed in a responsible way but (a) while the topic was identified as a major concern by students, the dialogue treated the subject in a perfunctory manner; or (b) students identified the topic as a minor concern.

(4) **Complete but superficial:** The assignment was completed within the established guidelines but did not suggest any serious thought about the topic.

(5) **Irresponsible or incomplete and not serious:** The assignment was treated jokingly, the dialogue was nonsensical, or it was left partially completed.

**Findings**

Because of the small sample size, 96 students, and the limited number of students in some demographic categories, the results of this study, while suggestive, cannot be considered conclusive. Analysis did reveal, however, a definite clustering pattern along gender, racial, ethnic/national, and religious identification related lines in terms of the topics selected by students for their cartoon dialogues, the seriousness or complexity of their cartoons, and the reasons given by students for choosing particular topics. This type of demographic clustering in student responses has also been reported in other studies on the attitudes of high school students (Lunneborg, 1979).

**Gender-related Clustering**

Thirty-one percent (19 of 61) of the cartoon dialogues created by female students, compared with only 3 percent (1) of those created by male students, were placed in the most serious category. Twenty-three percent (8 of 35) of the male students, but only 11 percent (7 of 61) of the female students developed dialogues about school problems.

**Table 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4</th>
<th>Comparison of Dialogues by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Male students</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most serious dialogue</td>
<td>3 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic: School problems</td>
<td>23 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed cartoon topic or increased seriousness</td>
<td>0 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When given the opportunity, female students were much more likely than male students to either change their topic or to increase the seriousness of their dialogue. All 20 of the students who significantly changed their cartoon dialogues were female. This group constituted approximately one third of the female students.

Racial, Ethnic/National and Religious Identification Clustering

There also appears to be a correspondence between racial, ethnic/national and religious identification and topics selected, the complexity of cartoon dialogues, and the reasons given for selecting specific topics. Some examples that support this conclusion are: (a) when compared to topic selection by white students in the class, three times as many African American students and nearly four times as many Latino/a students selected pregnancy or AIDS as a topic; and (b) 20 percent of the white students (8 females and 3 males) created cartoons where the young women discussed discrimination against women. This was significantly higher than the percentage of African American (5 percent) and Latino/a (8 percent) students who chose this topic. When other demographic factors were examined, it became apparent that the students who selected discrimination against women were also more likely than the rest of the students in the class to identify themselves as Jewish and as Russian immigrants. They were also less likely than the total student sample to give a reason for their topic selection.

Table 5
Comparison of Dialogues by Race and/or Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Latino/a</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy/condoms/AIDS</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>39 percent</td>
<td>11 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination &amp; gender bias</td>
<td>5 percent</td>
<td>8 percent</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examining a Specific Cluster:
Native born, Roman Catholic Latinas

The cartoon dialogues created by this group were more homogeneous than those created by any of the other demographic groupings. Eleven female students created cartoon dialogues that depicted the young women discussing the possibility that one of them is pregnant. An examination of these students shows that they were atypical of the total sample in a number of significant ways. Ninety-one
percent (10 of 11) of the female students who selected pregnancy identified their religion as Roman Catholic. Roman Catholics were 28 percent of the sample and 34 percent of the female students. One-hundred percent (11 of 11) of the female students who selected pregnancy were born in the United States compared to 54 percent (33 of 61) of the female students overall.

Seventy-three percent (8 of 11) of the cartoon dialogues by female students on the topic of pregnancy were rated in the most serious category compared to 31 percent (19 of 61) of all of the cartoon dialogues created by female students. Fifty-five percent (6 of 11) of the female students who selected pregnancy as a topic also identified as Latina (female Hispanic). They represented 60 percent (6 of 10) of the Latina students. All of these students identified as Roman Catholics and were born in the United States. Eighty-three percent (5 of 6) of their cartoon dialogues were rated in the most serious category. None gave personal experience or the experience of a friend as the reason for selecting this topic. Among Latina students who were born in the United States and who identified as Roman Catholic, 86 percent (6 of 7) selected pregnancy as a topic. The three Latina students who were not born in the United States selected other topics.

### Table 6
**An Example of Clustering**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Total females</th>
<th>Females w/ pregnancy topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># students</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>28 percent</td>
<td>34 percent</td>
<td>91 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native born</td>
<td>53 percent</td>
<td>53 percent</td>
<td>100 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most serious topic</td>
<td>21 percent</td>
<td>31 percent</td>
<td>73 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latina/o</td>
<td>14 percent</td>
<td>16 percent</td>
<td>55 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dialogues about pregnancy created by the native-born, Roman Catholic Latina, while individual and personal, reflect the interplay of the specific cultural, religious, and generational forces they grapple with as members of a distinct social group. Further, the overall clustering pattern that emerged in our analysis of student responses validates the use of the cartoon dialogues as a way of allowing students to express some of the underlying and stereotypical assumptions they make about teenage women.
Connecting Academic Learning and Personal Experience

Teacher-initiated action research projects pose particular problems. While independent researchers have the ability to focus on the demands of a study, a teacher researcher's primary responsibility is to respond to the needs of students and to the ideas raised in class. Throughout the unit, I was concerned both with the impact of my teaching methods on students in my high school classes and with my ability to model the transformative pedagogy I was discussing with students in my teacher education classes. In response to these concerns, the focus of this gender bias project shifted from measuring student transference from struggles for racial equality to ideas about gender equity, to making it possible for students to express and analyze their own ideas and values about gender differences.

It is difficult for teachers to enable students to express their real opinions on the issues that are important to them, especially when the experience of so many groups of young people is one of being silenced. Even when students speak up in class, much of their effort is aimed at presenting the answers they believe teachers want to hear or that their peers will accept.

Michelle Fine and Nancie Zane (1989) argue that our public schools have created separate spheres for the public and private aspects of people's lives. Especially for young women, the issues that they "experience as 'private' and 'personal'—even if they affect large numbers of adolescents across social classes and racial and ethnic groups—are reserved for discussion inside counselors' offices rather than in classrooms" (p. 34). The AAUW report How Schools Shortchange Girls (1992) advocates changing our concept of education to include the "evaded curriculum...matters central to the lives of students and teachers but touched upon only briefly, if at all, in most schools" (p. 75). The personal nature of so many of the cartoon dialogues reflects the need teenagers have to discuss the issues that are personally meaningful to them and reveals the absence of opportunity that ordinarily exists in our schools. Until students feel able to discuss their actual thoughts and concerns in class, I do not believe it is possible to help teenagers reflect upon the implications of their ideas and values.

Other studies report using activities similar to the cartoon dialogues to promote student thinking about their own and society's ideas and values. Mark James (1990) describes a program for chemically dependent teenagers in which participants analyze the themes and values in song lyrics as part of a process to clarify their own values. Berenice Fisher (1993) regularly uses what she describes as a theater of ideas to allow her students to act out the meaning of a text, to explore its implications, and to examine their emotional reactions to it. Fisher argues
that student reflection about these emotional reactions is crucial "in helping us to explore feminist beliefs and values" (p. 77).

What I attempted to do in my own U.S. history classes was to provide students with: (1) A vehicle to express how they see a particular situation, i.e., what appears to be a serious conversation between two teenage women; (2) an historical framework (an understanding of the way people struggled to make the United States a more democratic and just society) that they helped to develop and that they could use for evaluating the underlying ideas that informed the creation of different student dialogues; (3) a cooperative learning community in which they felt able to discuss their ideas and those of the other community members; (4) an opportunity to use their own ideas and values to help them better understand historical events; and (5) an opportunity to use the historical framework developed in class to reconsider their own ideas and values about gender differences and the nature of gender bias.

The unit goals were intended to enable students to think more clearly about what they perceived as personal issues, to see individual problems in a social and historical context, to become more conscious of the ideas and values that influence the choices they make in their lives and to encourage them to become active citizens concerned about gender bias, sexual harassment, and social inequality.

Learning with Our Students

As a teacher educator returning to the high school classroom, I found myself thinking more critically and systematically about my educational practice and becoming more interested in the ways other teachers were addressing similar issues in their classrooms. Realistically, however, there is little time structured into the school year to read widely, explore classroom issues with students and other teachers, or to conduct action research. Much of the theoretical discussion presented in this article regarding the transformative curriculum, gender bias in the classroom, and ways to promote student voice was formulated after the completion of the school year when I had more opportunity to read, talk, listen, and think.

My initial goal in writing about this project was to help me better understand the impact of my teaching on my students. In retrospect, as a veteran social studies teacher and as a teacher educator interested in transformative pedagogy, I should not have been surprised by the difficulty involved in helping high school students to connect academic and personal ideas and to transfer their understandings about one topic to another. The fact that I was surprised points out a pressing need for more action research and publication by secondary school teachers interested in transformative education.
Despite its methodological and theoretical limitations, I believe that this study supports a series of conclusions about transformative education and about addressing gender bias in the secondary school social studies classroom. While tentative, these conclusions are of value to me and to other educators. I am aware that questions have been raised about the reliability of this type of study regarding student values and ideas. In a review of 13 values clarification research projects, Alan Lockwood (1978) challenged the validity of such studies and the significance of reported changes in student values. In Making Connections, The Relational Worlds of Adolescent Girls At Emma Willard School, Carol Gilligan and others (1990) explored the changing ideas, values, and relationships of teenage women, but their team utilized in-depth interviews conducted over the course of a number of years.

In my report on this project, I have tried to take into account the criticisms raised by Lockwood and the experience of Gilligan and her colleagues. While I believe the cartoon dialogues created by my students do provide important insights into what teenagers are thinking, I recognize that these glimpses are limited. Student choices regarding the cartoon dialogues show that social studies teachers cannot assume that students are making specific intellectual connections. Even when students are interested in a topic like the civil rights movement and they work to master it, they do not automatically connect what they have learned about that topic with other study areas or with issues confronting them in their daily lives. When my students created their cartoon dialogues, they generally did not view them as a way of expressing a connection to what they had been studying about racism and/or gender bias. Most of them used the dialogues as an opportunity to comment on much more personal topics and concerns.

If teachers want students to recognize connections, we must draw their attention to them. We must find ways to make parallels clear and to help students make understandings explicit. Academic knowledge by itself, even knowledge of social struggles against racial and gender prejudice, did not prompt students to reconsider basic ideas and values. Knowledge remained compartmentalized until student cooperative learning teams evaluated the dialogues for potential gender biases.

This study supports the idea that student creation and evaluation are key to transformative learning and are necessary for the development of critical consciousness. Students must participate actively in the experiment. The creation of cartoon dialogues and the cooperative learning group evaluations that followed allowed students to bring their lives into the learning process and made it possible for them to utilize their new academic knowledge about U.S. society and to reevaluate their own stereotypes about young women. The academic discussions about struggles for social change made these evaluations possible, but by
themselves they did not enable students to examine their own values and ideas about gender bias.

Transformative educators must search for ways to help students raise their ideas to a conscious level where they can be examined and reconsidered. The quality of the discussion and evaluation of the cartoon dialogues in the cooperative learning teams as well as in classes demonstrates the importance both of the teams and of student leadership in the transformative learning process. My experience during this study suggests that cooperative learning should not be viewed as just another teaching technique useful for enhancing student interest. Student team interaction is a crucial part of the process that allows students to begin to reconceptualize their world.

Further, teachers need to encourage students leaders who can engage their peers in creating new levels of understanding. All of the classes in this study had significant female majorities. It is worth considering whether these female majority classrooms influenced the results of the project by helping to create mixed gender classrooms where female students felt able to freely state their opinions and take leadership in classroom discussions.

The implicit feminism exhibited by many of the young women in the classes through their discomfort with gender stereotypes, their stated belief in gender equality, and the importance that the young women placed on the issue of pregnancy support similar findings by Michelle Fine and Pat Macpherson (1993). Fine and Macpherson report that feminism has been a powerful force in shaping the lives of contemporary young women they interviewed, and these young women “are engaged with questions of ‘being female’,” especially “who will control and to what extent can they control their own bodies” (p. 131).

I expected that the cartoon dialogues would more closely reflect what I had been teaching in class; however, the open-ended nature of the assignment made it possible for students to create dialogues that had meaning for their lives. As a result, the demographic analysis of the cartoon dialogues shows distinct racial, ethnic, religious, gender, and class-based patterns to student work. Dialogue topics, complexity, and student explanations for their choices reflected all of the social factors and positionality that shape our understandings of the world around us and our place in it (Code, 1991; Alcoff, 1988). The cartoon dialogues suggest that because of what students bring with them as members of different social groups, they experience classroom lessons in significantly different ways. This conclusion supports research by Rahmina Wade (1994) on knowledge construction, social studies concept formation, and change in fourth grade elementary school classrooms as well as research by Marilyn Johnston (1990) on the influence of preservice teacher education programs on the ideas of new teachers. Johnston found that “the influence of the program was partial and differential because the
new ideas were reacting with students' backgrounds, beliefs, and personalities. New ideas came in contact with prior assumptions and experiences, and the latter informed how the former were interpreted" (p. 229).

As an educator with a commitment to the development of multicultural and gender-fair curriculum, I learned both from the activities in class with my high school students and from the post project analysis I was able to construct with colleagues. I became more conscious of my own biases and of my role in the class as a teacher and as a white male. I also found myself thinking much more about who my students are, what they bring to the classroom, and how they create their understandings of gender roles and bias.

The findings of this project suggest that if multicultural and gender-fair curricula are going to promote student reflection and reconsideration of personal views about gender differences, classroom educators must move beyond the simple introduction and critical examination of information. In a transformative classroom, teachers must struggle with students to draw connections between academic knowledge and the world as lived. The meanings that students created in their cartoon dialogues and in the evaluation sessions reflect the multicultural nature of our society and the complex nature of human learning. This certainly complicates a teacher's task, but if we recognize and utilize the diversity of student perceptions as a classroom resource, then transformative learning through dynamic student interaction can become a real possibility.

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NAIVE THEORIES AND DECISION MAKING AS PART OF HIGHER ORDER THINKING IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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Abstract

In the present study, the authors attempted to show how naive theories, age, and education relate to higher order thinking in adolescents and adults. In a structured interview, 54 adolescents and adults were asked to make decisions about two political issues: global warming and homelessness. Half of the adolescents had attended an intensive workshop on multiple issues including global warming. Results showed that regardless of age and education, all subjects referred to their naive theories to (a) identify the causes of global warming and homelessness, (b) create strategies for addressing these problems, and (c) envision the consequences of implementing each of the proposed strategies. All students engaged in appropriate higher order thinking; however, the adolescents who attended the workshop demonstrated more accurate higher order thinking than the adults and the non-workshop adolescents. Implications for classroom practice are discussed.

Although social studies educators disagree about many things, most agree that greater attention should be given to higher order thinking in social studies classrooms (Armento, 1986; Brophy, 1990; Newmann, 1990). It has been difficult, however, for teachers to implement the goal of higher order thinking because of institutional,

1The authors thank Sonya Geshmay and Linda Yokoi for help in administering the decision-making tasks and Bruce Van Sledright for very helpful comments on a prior draft of this manuscript.
Naive Theories and Decision Making

In recent years, the task of knowing how to enhance higher order thinking has been made somewhat easier because of an emerging consensus about the nature of higher order thought in social studies. Most scholars now agree that higher order thought is manifested in tasks that promote an understanding of causal connections among ideas (Hallden, 1986; McKeown & Beck, 1990) and that "require interpretation, analysis, and manipulation of information to solve problems that cannot be solved by routine application of previously acquired knowledge" (Newmann, 1990, p. 53). Brophy (1990) shares Newmann's emphasis on problem solving, but adds that one important goal of social studies instruction is to help students become effective decision makers. Decision making is a clear example of higher order thought because when we ask students to make decisions using a body of knowledge, we are asking them to interpret, analyze, and manipulate that information in a nonroutine way.

Decision making also requires higher order thought because it taps into a student's causal understandings. When confronted with a problem from the social studies domain (e.g., slavery, Third World debt) and asked to propose a solution, students often think about its causes as well as the consequences of several possible courses of action (e.g., Voss, Tyler & Yengo, 1983).

Carrying this one step further, we make the straightforward proposal that in judging the likely consequences of a policy, plan, or action, an individual is forming a causal belief (see Carroll, 1986). After all, thinking about antecedents and consequences is what constitutes causal thinking; however, the assumption that causal beliefs are involved introduces a further, not so obvious assumption: Recent analyses have shown that a causal belief does not usually exist in someone's mind as an isolated idea. Instead, it tends to be part of theory, either a relatively naive or scientific one (Hallden, 1986; Kuhn, 1989; Weiner, 1986). Which type of theory is invoked depends upon the person and upon the problem being considered. If the person making a causal judgment is an experienced, educated specialist in the area of concern (e.g., a professional historian judging the adequacy of a policy), the judgment is said to derive from the individual's scientific theory. In contrast, if the individual is not a specialist in the area (e.g., the average student), causal judgments are often said to derive from so-called naive theories (Carey, 1985; Gelman & Coley, 1991; Kuhn, 1989; Weiner, 1986; Wellman & Gelman, 1992).

A number of studies have emerged in recent years that show how the naive theories of students differ from those of the scientific community (see Byrnes, in press, for a review of this work). In the area of physics, for example, studies show that students often believe that an object does not have a temperature unless it feels warm. In the area
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of biology, studies show that some young children believe that anything that moves is alive (including wind-up toys).

Naive theories are analogous to scientific theories in that they serve to make sense of the world by providing explanations for (a) why objects have the characteristics that they do, (b) why individuals behave as they do, and (c) why events turn out one way instead of another. This emphasis on why questions implies that theories are more than just compilations of facts (e.g., “Brazil is losing its rain forests”). They instead represent an interrelated set of connections among facts and explanations (e.g., “Brazil is losing its rain forests because...”).

When we construe a certain fact as a problem, we can see that theories form the basis for a diagnosis of that problem and they provide a prognosis regarding the effectiveness of a course of action. It should be clear how making a correct diagnosis leads to the implementation of an appropriate treatment in the field of medicine, but the connection between cause and intervention is true for any other problem-solving domain as well (e.g., automobile repair, classroom misconduct, and so on). The central premise is that knowing the cause problem provides important insight into how to solve that problem. In a series of studies, Mayer and his colleagues (e.g., Mayer & Anderson, 1992) have shown high levels of problem solving and transfer with regard to novel problems when subjects are given insight into their cause (e.g., air not getting to an automobile engine). Subjects on their own recognize that to solve the problem, they need to interfere with the cause somehow (e.g., eliminate the cause of the blocked air). We were interested in seeing if subjects could be equally successful when confronted with problems from the social studies domain.

Until recently, most delineations of naive theories were confined to the domains of biology and physics. It now appears that a whole range of naive theories exist for social, political, and economic problems as well (Emler & Dickinson, 1993; Torney-Purta, 1994). We suggest that for the individual who lacks specialized training, naive social, economic, or political theories lie at the heart of judgments regarding (a) the cause of social or historical problems and (b) the effectiveness of past or future policies. It is our view that as many science educators are now doing, social studies educators can use discussions of naive theories to engage students in appropriate forms of higher order thought. More specifically, instead of merely presenting historical or contemporary problems and informing students about policies that were or will be enacted, students should be asked to devise policies of their own and think about the consequences of these policies. To make the task truly one that requires higher order thought, students should be given insight only into potential causes. It is essential that they be allowed to construct courses of action on their own.
In the present study, we examined our proposals about naive theories using several groups of academically talented adolescents and adults. The sample was constructed around a focal group of adolescents who recently had attended an intensive summer workshop on international geopolitical issues and had attained a substantial amount of knowledge about several topics. We focused on their knowledge of one topic; namely, global warming. These individuals had received instruction about possible causes of global warming and had spent time in general discussions of this and related problems prior to our interview. The workshop was designed to promote higher order thinking as we have described. We examined two ideas: (a) the content of their theories with respect to global warming and to another political issue that they had not debated (homelessness) and (b) the basis for their judgments about what policies would be effective. After gaining their consent to participate in the study, we compared the performance of these adolescents to two groups who had not received direct instruction about either of these problems. One group consisted of adults and the other of same-age adolescent peers. Using these comparison groups, we could partially examine the effects of age and instruction (particularly the use of small-group discussion and computer networking) on their higher order thinking. We expected that all subjects would be capable of reasoning from causes and making decisions, but that the workshop would promote especially impressive forms of reasoning in the students who attended.

Method

Subjects

Fifty-four subjects were divided equally into three groups: instructed adolescents (M age=16.61 years), uninstructed adolescents (M age=16.53 years), and adults (M age=25.28 years). The adults were recruited mostly from graduate programs at the University of Maryland. The instructed adolescents took part in an intensive educational workshop sponsored by the Department of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland (the ICONS project, see Torney-Purta, 1989) that was open to students who lived in Maryland and who had interests in international politics. Because there was limited enrollment, however, the final group of participants was selected from the total pool of applicants, using grades and teacher nominations. Once accepted, students were assigned to seven-member teams. Throughout the workshop, each team acted as a representative of a foreign country (e.g., Brazil) and role played negotiations on behalf of this country regarding a geopolitical issue (e.g., international security, the global environment). Through lectures, readings, discussions, and simulated international conferences conducted via computer networks,
students learned about the network of causes for problems such as global warming and Third World debt. Each group was instructed to devise policies to solve these problems and then to argue for the adoption of their policies in the simulated conferences. This kind of activity precisely illustrates how students can "apply their knowledge to solve problems in a nonroutine way" (Newmann, 1990, p. 53).

Due to the workshop's selection process, these trained adolescents were not only knowledgeable about global warming, but they were also bright and motivated. To obtain a matched sample of uninstructed adolescents, therefore, we needed a group of equally bright and motivated counterparts who had not participated in such an intensive and focused educational experience. Such individuals were found in an elite private high school with high standards for admission, located near the University of Maryland.

**Tasks and Procedure**

Within an interview format, all subjects were presented with two decision scenarios: one about global warming and another about homelessness. Each scenario presented subjects with a problem. They were asked to (a) provide its causes, (b) suggest solution strategies, (c) provide each strategy's pros and cons (its positive and negative consequences), (d) rate the likelihood that the problem would be solved using a given strategy, and (e) choose one strategy (in this order).

The global warming scenario was selected because the instructed adolescents had just learned about its possible causes prior to our interview. The homelessness scenario was selected because the group had not learned about it during the workshop, which focused on international, not domestic issues. The students could have learned about the causes of homelessness elsewhere, however, as both comparison groups could have for both scenarios. The global warming and homelessness scenarios were introduced with the following respective statements:

As you know, things are happening in developing countries that may be causing global warming.

As you know, things are happening in the United States that may be causing homelessness.

Following the introduction of each problem, subjects were asked five questions:

1. What are some causes of global warming [homelessness]?
2. What are some of the things that we could do to try and
solve global warming [homelessness]?

(3) You said that one thing we could do is [strategy 1/2/3]. What are some pros and cons of solving it that way?

(4) How likely would it be that if we [used strategy 1/2/3], there would be less global warming [homelessness]?

(5) Which strategy do you think we should choose?

To help subjects structure their thinking and remember their responses, the experimenter filled out two decision maps for each person. Each map depicted a box labeled 'problem' with the words global warming or homelessness printed in it. To the right of the box was a column of three empty boxes labeled 'strategy 1', 'strategy 2', and 'strategy 3', respectively. When subjects offered a strategy in response to question 2 above, the experimenter recorded it in one of the strategy boxes. Subjects were asked to give as many strategies as they could; most gave three or fewer.

To the right of the strategy boxes were three empty 'pro/con' boxes, each connected to one of the strategy boxes. When subjects gave pros and cons for an individual strategy, the experimenter recorded them in the appropriate box. To the right of each pro/con box was a space for a likelihood rating (see question 4 above). Subjects were shown a 10-point rating scale that ranged from "very sure it will (help solve the problem)" to "very sure it won't (help solve the problem)." Thus, the raw data for each subject consisted of one filled-in decision map for the global warming problem, and another for the homelessness problem. See Figure 1 for an example of a filled-in decision map for an instructed adolescent.

Results

Results are organized around group comparisons for each of the following aspects of decision making: attribution of causes, strategy generation, and consequences (pros and cons). Within some analyses, both quantitative and qualitative comparisons are made. Multi-level effects are interpreted using Newman-Keuls post hoc tests.

Causal Attribution

As an initial quantitative analysis, we considered the total number of causes that each subject supplied. To see if there were significant differences in the mean number of causes supplied by each of the three groups, a 3 x 2 (group x scenario) ANOVA with repeated measures was performed. This analysis revealed significant main effects of group, F (2, 51)=7.29, p<.002, and scenario, F (1, 51)=8.88,
Figure 1
A Filled-in Decision Map for an Instructed Adolescent

CAUSES
- using inefficient technology
- depleting Amazon rain forest
- overuse of fossil fuels

STRATEGY 1
- provide financial incentives and better technology to stop depletion of resources

PROS/CONS
Pros: protects ecosystem as it exists
Cons: expensive; subject to political instability

STRATEGY 2
- force countries using fossil fuels to be more efficient with processes

PROS/CONS
Pros: cuts down on emissions w/o lowering standard of living; fossil fuels last longer
Cons: somewhat costly; risky—needs advances in science

STRATEGY 3
- worldwide switch to nuclear energy on massive scale

PROS/CONS
Pros: sharply reduces amount of gases released; preserve natural resources; power less expensive
Cons: danger of nuclear fallout; spreading nuclear technology to unstable countries
The group x scenario interaction was not significant. For the main effect of group, post hoc analysis revealed that the adults (M=2.75) and instructed adolescents (M=2.72) mentioned significantly more causes per scenario than the uninstructed adolescents (M=1.83). The adults and instructed adolescents did not differ in this respect. The main effect of scenario resulted from the fact that all subjects mentioned significantly more causes for the homelessness scenario (M=2.74) than they did for the global warming scenario (M=2.13).

The scientific literature on global warming (e.g., the 1986 special issue of Chemical and Engineering News) and on homelessness (e.g., the 1991 special issue of American Psychologist) was next used to code the correctness of each cause mentioned by subjects. With respect to global warming, many experts argue that gaseous emissions from a variety of sources (e.g., forest fires, automobiles, oil based power plants, industrial smokestacks, etc.) concentrate in upper levels of the atmosphere blocking the radiant reflections of heat from the sun and directing the heat energy back to the surface of the earth. Whereas all countries contribute to the overall amount of "greenhouse" gases in the atmosphere, industrialized countries have passed laws requiring the use of emission control technology on cars, smokestacks, and so forth, while many developing countries have not. Moreover, some countries have allowed large amounts of deforestation through burning (e.g., Brazil). With respect to homelessness, experts argue that the recession of the 1980s, coupled with a sharp drop in the availability of subsidized housing, produced most of the increase in homelessness during recent years. In addition, reports show that approximately 30 percent of homeless individuals are substance abusers or are afflicted with a mental illness.

Every time a subject mentioned a cause of global warming or homelessness cited by experts, they received one point. To see if significant differences existed in the mean number of correct causes supplied by each of the three groups, a 3 x 2 (group x scenario) ANOVA was computed. This analysis revealed only a main effect of group, F(2, 51)=6.16, p<.004. In this case, the instructed adolescents (M=2.17) mentioned significantly more correct causes than either the adults (M=1.67) or the uninstructed adolescents (M=1.28). The adults and uninstructed adolescents did not differ in this analysis. Comparing the two analyses, we can see that 80 percent of the causes mentioned by the instructed adolescents were correct, while only 61 percent of those mentioned by the adults were correct. Although the uninstructed adolescents generated fewer causes in both analyses, 70 percent of the causes that they mentioned were correct.

In addition, giving credit for only correct causes eliminated the main effect of scenario found in the prior analysis. For correct causes, there was no significant difference between the global warming
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(M=1.61) and homelessness problems (M=1.80). Seventy-six percent of the global warming causes were correct, as were 65 percent of the homelessness causes. Thus, we can reinterpret the first analysis by saying that subjects were more likely to generate a greater number of incorrect causes for the homelessness scenario than for the global warming scenario.

As a first qualitative analysis, we considered the categories of causes for each problem. Table 1 lists these categories and the percentages of subjects who mentioned causes in a given category. As evidenced, subjects in each group often mentioned similar causes, but the groups differed in the number of subjects who mentioned particular causes. To examine whether these differences were statistically significant, chi-square analyses were computed for the three most common categories for global warming: (a) industrial pollution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Instructed adolescents</th>
<th>Uninstructed adolescents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global Warming</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) lack of emission control technology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in dev. countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) deforestation</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) industrial pollution</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) burning fossil fuels</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) auto emissions</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) public ignorance/apathy</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) aerosols</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) other</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homelessness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Lack of jobs/recession</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) lack of concern/empathy</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) insanity/deinstitutionalization</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) drugs/alcohol</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) lack of education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) increase in house prices</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) other</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Entries are percentages of subjects who cited a cause in that category.
(combining categories 1 and 3); (b) deforestation (category 2); and (c) burning fossil fuels (combining categories 4 and 5). A chi-square analysis is appropriate in this case because it determines if the frequency of a given type of response covaries in a systematic way with group membership. Similar to Pearson correlations, it measures the degree of association among two variables (Howell, 1982). Group membership was in fact significantly associated with the type of cause mentioned $\chi^2(2, N=54)=8.44, p<.02$. Inspection of the cell frequencies reveals that whereas a group difference emerged for the industrial pollution category, no differences emerged for the deforestation or fossil fuel categories. For the industrial pollution category, the instructed adolescents were much more likely to mention factory emissions than the other two groups.

For the homelessness scenario, chi-squares were computed on the number of subjects who mentioned causes in the following categories: (a) lack of jobs/recession; (b) lack of education; (c) drugs/alcohol; (d) lack of concern/empathy; and (e) insanity/deinstitutionalization. These analyses revealed no significant differences for the lack of jobs and lack of empathy categories, although significant differences emerged for the remaining three categories. As shown in Table 1, the instructed adolescents were more likely to attribute homelessness to lack of education than were the other two groups; the adults and instructed adolescents were more likely than the uninstructed adolescents to mention drugs, and the adults were more likely than the younger two groups to mention insanity. According to the proposals advanced in this article, these between-group differences in the kinds of causes mentioned should produce differences in the kinds of strategies generated.

Note that the accuracy and elaborateness of the causes mentioned by the instructed adolescents indicate that their theories have progressed substantially away from a naive variety toward a more scientific variety. For this reason, we shall refer to their theories as scientific.

**Strategy Generation**

Unlike the distinction drawn between correct and incorrect in our analysis of causes, it was not possible to judge the correctness of each proposed strategy, because experts do not agree among themselves. Moreover, the ultimate test of a strategy is whether it solves a problem over time. Thus, we restricted our analyses to only the types of strategies suggested. Table 2 lists the most common strategies suggested by subjects for the global warming and homelessness problems. Some overlap was evident in the types proposed, but there was still variation among and within groups.
To ascertain if significant group differences existed, chi-square analyses were computed for the seven main strategies for global warming listed in Table 2:

(a) switching to alternative fuels/sources of power  
(b) stopping deforestation  
(c) helping developing countries to obtain emissions control technology  
(d) educating the public  
(e) curtailing production/consumption of CFC products  
(f) promoting recycling  
(g) establishing international standards/regulations for industries.

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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) switch to alternative fuels/sources of power</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) stop deforestation</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) help developing countries get emission control technology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0*</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) educate the public</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) curtail production/consumption of CFC products</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) recycling</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) international standards/regulations on industries</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8) other</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Homelessness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) provide more jobs</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) govt. money for homeless/homelessness programs</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) psychiatric counseling for homeless</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) provide more shelters/low income housing</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) education/job skill training</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) volunteering</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) other</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Entries are percentages of subjects who proposed at least one strategy in that category; significant group differences for a strategy are indicated by an asterisk.
The chi-square analyses revealed significant differences for only three of these categories. As indicated in Table 2, the instructed adolescents were significantly more likely than the adults or uninstructed adolescents to propose that industrialized countries should help developing countries obtain emissions control technology, $X^2 (2, N=54)=13.50$, $p<.01$. Note that the instructed adolescents were also the only ones to cite the lack of emissions control technology as a cause of global warming (see Table 1). Second, the adults and uninstructed adolescents were significantly more likely than young experts to propose restrictions on the production of aerosols and CFC products, $X^2 (2, N=54)=6.24$, $p<.05$. This latter strategy suggests a misconception on the part of the adults and adolescent novices that the problem of the deterioration of the ozone layer is identical to the problem of global warming. Note also how the adults mentioned aerosols as a cause of global warming (see Table 1). Third, adults and uninstructed adolescents were more likely than instructed adolescents to propose recycling, a general environmental protection strategy that is several steps removed from the global warming problem, $X^2 (2, N=54)=6.24$, $p<.05$. Regardless, all subjects engaged in the type of higher order thinking described earlier. They creatively constructed strategies by thinking about how to intervene with causal mechanisms. The knowledge supplied by the workshop helped instructed adolescents channel their higher order thought in directions likely to yield effective solutions to the problems posed to them.

With respect to solutions to the homelessness problem, chi-square analyses were computed on the six main strategies listed in Table 2:

(a) more jobs
(b) government money for programs
(c) psychiatric counseling
(d) more shelters and low income housing
(e) education and job skill training
(f) volunteerism

These analyses revealed significant differences for only the psychiatric counseling strategy. Adults were more likely than either of the adolescent groups to offer this strategy: $X^2 (2, N=54)=8.64$, $p<.02$. Recall that adults were also more likely to cite mental illness as a cause of homelessness; thus, as predicted, there is once again a link at the group level between cause and strategy.

**Consequences**

To assess qualitative differences in the kinds of pros and cons mentioned by the three groups, the responses were coded into various
categories. Those that emerged are listed in Table 3, and examples of pros and cons coded into these categories are included in Figure 2. In Table 3 the majority of these categories concern a subject’s beliefs about the causal effects of a given strategy.

More specifically, nine of the twelve categories reflected a subject’s belief that a given strategy would (a) produce a positive or negative change in the state of the world (physical effects on the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory*</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Instructed adolescents</th>
<th>Uninstructed adolescents</th>
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<tr>
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<td>GW</td>
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<td>Earth Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) physical effects on</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>the world/environment</td>
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<td>(2) psychological effects</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) undesired responses</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) procedural effects</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) social relations</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>(6) financial effects</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>78</td>
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<tr>
<td>(7) resource issues</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8) physical effects on</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>people</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>(9) time and effort</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>56</td>
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<td>(10) general effectiveness</td>
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<td>(11) partial effectiveness</td>
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<td>(12) moral/value issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>(13) other</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>67</td>
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*Theories were naive for adults and uninstructed adolescents; they were more scientific for instructed adolescents. Note: Entries are percentages of subjects who described at least one pro or con in that category.

world); (b) produce a positive or negative change in people’s knowledge, attitudes, emotional state, or mental health (psychological effects); (c) be challenged, resisted, refused, or ignored by people (undesired responses); (d) affect the way groups of people or
environmental conditions can affect people's health reflect a biological theory; and beliefs about social relations or the behaviors of groups reflect a social theory (see Torney-Purta, 1994). When these beliefs are accurate and elaborate, they reflect scientific versions of these theories. When they are inaccurate and unelaborate, they reflect their naive counterparts. These responses also reflect creative thinking on the part of the subjects. Although most of the strategies were invented on the spot, clear linkages to both antecedent causes and future consequences were apparent.

Table 3 also reveals that the degree to which the theories were invoked appears to vary by group and scenario. To assess whether any of these differences were significant, subjects were given one point each time they provided a pro or con in one of the eight categories related to theories. Scores for each category within a theory were then combined to reflect a total score for each of the four most frequently evoked theories. A 3 x 4 x 2 (group x theory x scenario) ANOVA on theory scores revealed significant main effects of group, $F(2, 51)=8.22$, $p<.001$, and theory, $F(2, 102)=50.11$, $p<.001$, as well as a significant scenario x theory interaction, $F(6, 153)=24.27$, $p<.001$.

For the group effect, the adults ($M=1.67$) and instructed adolescents ($M=2.01$) had significantly higher theory scores than the uninstructed adolescents ($M=1.18$). The adults and instructed adolescents did not differ significantly. For the theory effect, post hoc tests revealed significant differences among all theories. The means were economics ($M=2.11$), psychology ($M=1.71$), earth science ($M=.91$), and social theory ($M=.24$), suggesting that economic theories, a type of theory not mentioned by Wellman and Gelman (1992), was the most important for the respondents.

Post hoc analysis of the scenario x theory interaction revealed that subjects were significantly more likely to appeal to their psychological beliefs when discussing the pros and cons of their solutions to the homelessness problem ($M=2.24$) than those pertaining to their solutions to the global warming problem ($M=1.19$). The opposite was true for earth science beliefs. Pros and cons were more likely to reflect an earth science in discussions of the global warming problem ($M=1.72$) than of the homelessness problem ($M=.09$). Finally, subjects appealed to their economic and social beliefs equally often for the global warming and homelessness problems.

Discussion

The present study attempted to show how theories, age, and instruction relate to higher order thinking in adolescents and adults. We expected that regardless of their age and amount of education, all subjects would use their theories (naive or otherwise) to (a) identify
the causes of global warming and homelessness; (b) create strategies for dealing with these problems; and (c) specify the consequences of implementing each of the proposed strategies. The results strongly supported these expectations.

Consistent with Mayer & Anderson (1992) and Voss, Tyler & Yengo (1983), our results show that an individual's diagnosis of a problem plays an important role in his or her decision making and problem solving. In particular, a very clear linkage was apparent between perceived causes of a problem (e.g., lack of emissions control technology) and proposed solutions to the problem (e.g., providing emissions control technology). Moreover, subjects were more likely to choose a strategy if it attacked a problem's root cause than if it remained at the periphery. The primary difference between the groups was not whether or not they used causal beliefs to invent their own strategies, but whether or not their beliefs about the causes were accurate. By virtue of learning about developing countries, only the instructed adolescents proposed strategies that would likely affect root causes of problems in these countries (e.g., industrial pollution). Adults and uninstructed adolescents held some important misconceptions that prompted them to propose solutions that would be unlikely to have much of an effect on the problems (because they failed to address important causes). In addition, many of the strategies proposed by the latter two groups would also be ineffective because they were too general; thus, students can engage in higher order thinking if they are presented with a historical or contemporary problem and asked to identify the causes of and solutions to these problems. Of course, to promote accuracy it is important to ensure that students gain access to expert beliefs about these problems, through written materials and other media. To avoid premature closure on discussions, however, it is important initially to restrict this access. If students are presented with expert beliefs about both causes and strategies at the beginning of a discussion, they are likely to do very little higher order thinking on their own.

We believe that the ICONS project and the decision map technique effectively illustrates how higher order thinking can be implemented in the classroom. Instead of merely teaching facts about foreign countries in the workshop, students were presented with a problem and asked to propose solutions. The adolescents were, however, provided with appropriate reference materials and found clues to the causes on their own. Posing the problem motivated the students to learn about countries in order to develop strategies. In addition, by focusing attention the causes using the decision maps in our study, students quite readily constructed novel solutions on their own. Moreover, asking them to generate pros and cons forced them to be reflective and critical about their proposals. Following Brophy (1990) and Newmann (1990), we find...
reason to teach a great deal of social studies content in this manner.

Future research should extend the methodology to other topics (e.g., racism, sexism, etc.) to both replicate the extent of higher order thinking found in our groups, and to discover if a decision-making approach improves student achievement in social studies over and above traditional lecture presentations or discussions without a decision-making focus. Because we employed a quasi-experimental design and did not employ random assignment to conditions, we cannot say which aspects of the workshop or students promoted the higher order thought that we observed (e.g., was it the discussions? Was it the focus on the causes of problems?). In addition, further study is needed to examine the extent to which theories relating to economics or sociology permeate thinking in social studies. Additional work is also needed to determine how specialized, noncausal factual knowledge relates to a student's propensity to engage in higher order thinking in a given domain. We do not expect that large quantities of unexplained factual knowledge would help someone engage in higher order problem solving or decision making more so than smaller amounts of such facts would, but that is an empirical question.

References
Naive Theories and Decision Making


Authors

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BOOK REVIEWS

ESSAY REVIEW

National Standards Are Not the Answer


Review by MICHAEL WHELAN, State University of New York, The College at New Paltz.

Anyone who has ever taught history, especially the sort of survey courses so common in secondary education, has had to face the illusively simple issue of deciding what to teach, the central question addressed in Learning History in America. Properly conceived, history embraces all aspects of human experience, and this encompassing breadth of vision presents a distinctively demanding set of challenges in defining curricular content. Many profound considerations about the nature and purposes of history education inevitably arise when confronting these challenges; unfortunately, the collection of 16 essays included in Learning History in America offers an uneven analysis of these considerations.

The book derives from a 1991 conference about history and history education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The essays are based upon presentations by the conference's principal participants. In one way or another, each speaks to the question of what to teach, a topic that, as I am sure everyone reading this review is aware, has become a highly controversial issue in recent years. The controversy stems at least in part from the explosion of new historical knowledge that has been generated during the last quarter century or so. Never before have historians inquired so fruitfully into such a broad range of human activities and relationships. Teachers, as a result, must make more—and more difficult—curricular decisions. How much simpler such decisions must have been when so much less was known, for example, about Christopher Columbus and the effects of his explorations and conquests. Whereas his place in history was once uncomplicated and secure, today that place is highly problematic and cannot be analyzed or evaluated apart from the complex context of the Columbian Exchange. The point is not to lament advances in scholarship as inexpediently burdensome for teachers, because such advances, as most teachers would likely agree, afford opportunities to enhance history's educative value. Opportunities
cost, however, and in this case the combination of new material to teach with little or no additional time to do so has made curricular decisions that much more difficult.

This difficulty has been complicated still further by the keener understanding of the nature of historical knowledge that has emerged as an integral part of the recent advances in the field. Key to this new understanding is a heightened awareness of the significance of perspective. Whatever meaning history may hold depends to a great extent upon one’s perspective. The meaning of Columbus’ voyages is much more than a simple matter of fact; it is a complicated question of interpretation, and as such it is unavoidably influenced by issues of perspective. Historical facts, such as the dates of Columbus’ voyages to America, may be objectively verified; that is the nature of a fact. But assigning meaning to facts is a highly subjective intellectual process involving, among other considerations, the historian’s sense of judgment, insight, empathy, and purpose. Thus, historical knowledge, like that of all aspects of social reality, is a cognitive construct, dependent to a significant degree upon the values and intellectual disposition one brings to the task. Competing claims about Columbus’ role in history, whether that of heroic explorer or malevolent invader—to put the question in perhaps its starkest terms—are examples, however extreme, of this constructivist nature.

This conception of historical knowledge, in conjunction with the idealism inherent in the nation’s professed political values, is at the heart of the rationale underlying many proposals for a more inclusive, multicultural curriculum. To rely upon a single perspective, to analyze public policy decisions solely from the point of view of the decision makers, for example, is quite simply bad history. It leads to narrow, distorted perceptions of the development of a society or a culture. But, as many teachers are quick to point out, the need for multiple perspective taking has affected curricular decision making in much the same way as the explosion of new scholarship; the problem, once again, is that there is more to do than there is time in which to do it.

The authors of the essays in *Learning History in America*, most of whom are college- and university-based historians (only one is a current school teacher) offer advice about ways to meet the curricular challenges involved in defining a more inclusive, yet coherent and feasible program of history education. In that sense, the book is not new, but part of a genre that can be traced back at least as far as *The Past before Us* (Kammen, 1980) and includes, most recently, the National Standards reports (1994) prepared and published by the National Center for History in the Schools. It is possible, I believe, to divide this genre into two subcategories. In the first and more useful, leading historians simply inform readers about scholarly developments in the field. *The Past Before Us* and *The New American History* (Foner, 1990) are excellent examples. In
the second category, of which *Learning History in America* and the National Standards reports are examples, historians advise readers in considerable detail about what should and should not be included in a history curriculum.

The latter approach has less value for teachers for two closely related reasons. First, it tends to generate the sort of controversy that has accompanied the publication of the National Standards reports; that is, a rather tedious, superficial debate about the relative attention one topic should receive at the expense of another. Curricular decisions of this specificity should be made only in the context of real classrooms and not imposed from without. This leads directly to my second point; that is, that classroom teachers should make most curricular decisions because they are best positioned to discern at any given moment the needs of students in relationship to those of society and the subject matter in question.

It may be appropriate for an official or quasi-official agency—a state or local board of education or even an organization such as the National Center for History in the Schools—to make general curricular recommendations, but the task of operationalizing those recommendations is properly the province of teachers in the classroom. Only they can make the adjustments that are inevitably needed in a general curricular framework to ensure that it provides an educational experience that is relevant to a particular group of students living in a very fluid social and intellectual situation. For example, few people, I believe, would dispute the proposition that all students should study the United States Constitution at some point during their secondary schooling, but the specific questions and issues that most need to be highlighted or emphasized during that study are very likely to vary from classroom to classroom and time to time. When I studied the Constitution in high school in 1963, a time of particularly intense resistance to federally imposed integration in many parts of the South, my teacher scheduled several class sessions, and wisely so in my opinion, for students to consider the implications of Article VI, Clause B of the Constitution. Today, however, such emphasis would be far less timely and therefore less advisable. Admittedly, this example involves the necessity of curricular adjustment over an extended period of time, but that does not negate the basic point. Indeed, I believe one could reasonably argue that a unit about the Constitution studied immediately after the elections of 1994 should emphasize issues different, and in some cases significantly so, than those that may have been emphasized in a unit about the Constitution studied just before those elections—depending, of course, upon the needs of the particular groups of students involved.

This general conclusion, moreover, is not merely a matter of preference or conjecture, but arises from the realities of classroom
experience. Teachers, for better or worse, define the operational curriculum; they determine how a given topic is actually studied. Their locus of authority is not solely pedagogic, but curricular as well. What they need from professional historians, therefore, is not the sort of advice about specific curricular content that is offered in the National Standards reports and to a lesser extent in many of the essays in *Learning History in America*. Such advice is likely to be more deleterious than helpful, for it may very well lead to further standardization of textbooks and/or stimulate additional standardized testing. Either or both results will only constrain the curricular decision-making flexibility that teachers need in order to be most effective with their students.

Useful advice more consistent with the realities of classroom practice would not prescribe specific curricular content, but, as mentioned above, would simply inform teachers of important intellectual developments in the field. A few essays in *Learning History in America* are so conceived, and as such are potentially helpful to teachers. Three stand out in this respect. James O. Anderson, a professor of history of education at the University of Illinois in Urbana presents a number of insightful ideas in an essay entitled “How We Learn about Race through History” (pp. 87-106). His principal point, largely adapted from other historians, in particular Barbara Fields, is that race is best understood, at least for educative purposes, as a historically defined ideological phenomenon. In another essay grouped with Anderson’s under the general heading of “rethinking categories of historical meaning,” Bonnie G. Smith, a professor of history at Rutgers University, addresses issues involved in “Gender and Historical Understanding” (pp. 107-119). Although she takes some time to develop her argument, she eventually presents a thought provoking, neo-Marxist interpretation of modern gender relations. Again, the ideas are not original; nonetheless, the prospect of focusing on the gender divisions inherent in “the means of reproduction” holds much potential for curricular synthesis and historical understanding.

The concluding essay, “Reflections on the Crisis in History” (pp. 201-211) by Edwin M. Yoder, Jr., a columnist for the *Washington Post*, is perhaps the book’s best. As the title suggests, Yoder is troubled both by the current state of historical scholarship and that of history education. Among the many points he makes about these related issues, two are especially insightful and relevant. First, about teaching, he says he suspects that one must have a sense of “conviction about what is important” in order to teach history well (p. 204). In other words, if teachers are to gain and sustain the credibility and authority they need in the classroom, they cannot rely upon the flimsy pretense that a given topic is important and therefore worthy of study simply because it is included in some externally imposed curriculum. Deciding what is important is a judgment that all teachers must make for themselves in
consideration of the needs of students, the purposes of formal education, and the nature of the subject matter. Such judgments, Yoder wisely implies, cannot be made with any specificity by someone or some agency not directly involved in the particular teaching and learning situation. Second, about curricular matters, Yoder argues that "broadening the 'master narrative' to include the once excluded is surely desirable in principle—so long as the new historical canon is not determined by political fashion or by some sort of plebiscitary process" (p. 210). He admits that his fears in this regard are somewhat exaggerated, but, in light of the debate that has followed the publication of the National Standards reports, perhaps not pointless so.

In the end, the best way to answer questions about what to teach is to ensure that every classroom teacher is up to the task. It is an issue of teacher education, not an issue that can be resolved by imposing a set of national curricular standards. Thus, if college- and university-based historians want to improve the quality of history education in schools, and no doubt many sincerely do, the curricular question that should most concern them is whether or not the special needs of the prospective and current school teachers among their students are being met.

References
ESSAY REVIEW

The Sorrow of War


Review by DAVID M. BERMAN, University of Pittsburgh.

In the prologue to their powerful reconstruction of the Battle of the Ia Drang in the Central Highlands of Viet Nam during October and November of 1965, Lieutenant General Harold G. Moore and Joseph Galloway offer moving testament to the 234 American men who died during the four days of fighting, and all 305 men who died in the 34-day Ia Drang campaign (Moore & Galloway, 1992). It would seem only natural that then Lieutenant Colonel Moore, commander of the 1st Battalion of the 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, would write of the heroism of his own men in the memoir entitled *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young*, yet in the process, the authors gallantly acknowledge their Vietnamese enemy as well.

While those who have never known war may fail to see the logic, this story also stands as tribute to the hundreds of young men of the 320th, 33rd, and 66th Regiments of the People's Army of Viet Nam who died by our hand in that place. They too fought and died bravely. They were a worthy enemy. We who killed them pray that their bones were recovered from that wild, desolate place where we left them and taken home for decent and honorable burial.

In this regard, Moore and Galloway cross a significant threshold as we continue to reconstruct the longest war in American history. Moving beyond the reconstruction of the battle itself, the power of the book lies in the courage and humanity of soldiers during combat, viewed within the framework of historical memory. As the years pass and the bitterness of the Vietnam War fades into memories kept only by the soldiers and their families, *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young* will remain significant as one of the very first accounts by American combatants to acknowledge the Vietnamese as a worthy enemy we once killed by our own hands.

At approximately the same time the Moore and Galloway book was published in the United States, a novel in Vietnamese entitled *Noi Buon Chien Tranh* (1991) was published in Viet Nam, eventually to be
translated into English as The Sorrow of War (1994). Written by Bao Ninh, a former North Vietnamese soldier, the book opens in eloquent concert with the prayer by Moore and Galloway for recovering the bones of our enemy to be returned home for decent and honorable burial. “On the banks of the Ya Crong Poco River, on the northern flank of the B3 battlefield in the Central Highlands, the Missing in Action body-collecting team awaits the dry season of 1976” (Bao, 1993, p. 3). Here between the Song Sa Thay and the Ya Crong Poco (Ia Crong Pko), just to the north of the Ia Drang and to the west of Pleiku and Kontum, one year after the end of the war, the Vietnamese search for the bones of their comrades scattered across the Jungle of Screaming Souls.

“Kien knows the area well. It was here, at the end of the dry season of 1969, that his Battalion 27 was surrounded and almost totally wiped out. Ten men survived from the Unlucky Battalion after fierce, horrible, barbarous fighting.” Thus Bao Ninh, one of 10 survivors of the 27th Battalion, introduces us to his alter ego and to our (North) Vietnamese enemy. We observe our enemy over time as Kien’s life weaves back and forth between the battlefields of the south, the innocence of life in Hanoi before the war and, for those who survived, the sorrow of war to follow. It is the power of the opening scenes in the Jungle of Screaming Souls, however, that stays with us through the novel as we read the story of one Vietnamese survivor of the war against us as the American enemy.

Indeed, Bao Ninh introduces us to some of the most powerful scenes to emerge from the war, perhaps from any war. We Americans once wondered what it must have been like to be on the other end, to endure all the firepower of a modern technological society, the napalm, the gunships, the artillery, and the bombings. For the first time in such a format, a soldier of the North Vietnamese Army (the NVA) relates to us what our enemy would endure. Thus we realize that if good men like Harold Moore and Joseph Galloway can offer their testament to the NVA as a ‘worthy enemy’, then Bao Ninh’s account of his experience can only increase our respect for the NVA (and the Viet Cong) soldier we once

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1 Noi Buon Chien Tranh [The Sorrow of War] was originally published in Vietnamese as Thanh Phan Cua Tinh Yeu [The Fate of Love]. The American version of the novel was translated from the Vietnamese by Phan Thanh Hao and edited by Frank Palmos. First published in Great Britain by Martin Secker and Warburg Limited, the ‘English version by Frank Palmos’ was ‘based on the translation from the Vietnamese’ by Vo Bang Thanh and Phan Thanh Hao with Katerina Pierce. The translation of the novel reads more smoothly but less powerfully than the original translations of Nao Buon Chien Tranh (1991) which appeared as excerpts in the British newspaper The Guardian (1992), also by Vo Bang Thanh and Phan Thanh Hao with Katerina Pierce. Palmos’ ‘Jungle of Screaming Souls’ is translated by Vo, Phan, and Pierce as ‘the Wood of Crying Souls’, a more subtle and appropriate translation of the Vietnamese truong Goi Hon.

2 The book jacket incorrectly reads that Bao Ninh “served with the Glorious 27th Youth Brigade” during the Vietnam War. Bao Ninh served in the 27th Battalion, 24th Regiment, 10th Division of the People’s Army of Vietnam (PAVN), what we once knew as the NVA (North Vietnamese Army). (Bao, 1995).
hated, for his bravery and tenacity, and for his capacity to persevere and endure for his cause. We witness the power of the opening scenes as Battalion 27 is cut down:

That was the dry season when the sun burned harshly, the wind blew fiercely, and the enemy sent napalm spraying through the jungle and a sea of fire enveloped them, spreading like the fires of hell. Troops in fragmented companies tried to regroup, only to be blown out of their shelters again as they went mad, became disoriented and threw themselves into nets of bullets, dying in the flaming inferno. Above them the helicopters flew at tree-top height and shot them almost one by one, the blood spreading out, spraying from their backs, flowing like red mud.

The diamond-shaped grass clearing was piled high with bodies killed by helicopter gunships. Broken bodies, bodies blown apart, bodies vaporised.

No jungle grew again in this clearing. No grass. No plants....

In the days that followed, crows and eagles darkened the sky. After the Americans withdrew, the rainy season came, flooding the jungle floor, turning the battlefield into a marsh whose surface water turned rust-coloured from the blood. Bloated human corpses, floating alongside the bodies of incinerated jungle animals, mixed with branches and trunks cut down by artillery, all drifting in a stinking marsh. When the flood receded, everything dried in the heat of the sun into thick mud and stinking rotting meat....After that battle no one mentioned Battalion 27 any more, though numerous souls of ghosts and devils were born in that deadly defeat. They were still loose, wandering in every corner and bush in the jungle, drifting along the stream, refusing to depart for the Other World.

From then on it was called the Jungle of Screaming Souls. Just hearing the name whispered was enough to send chills down the spine. Perhaps the screaming souls gathered together on special festival days as members of the Lost Battalion, lining up on the little diamond-shaped grass plots, checking their ranks and numbers. The sobbing whispers were heard deep in the jungle at night, the howls carried on the wind. Perhaps they really were the voices of the wandering souls of dead soldiers (Bao, 1993, pp. 5-6).

As we Americans continue to search for the bones of some 2,000 of our own missing in action (MIAs), the Vietnamese search for the bones of
some 300,000 of their MIAs at the same time and in many of the same locations. Bao Ninh (1993) offers us glimpses of the realism and sanctity of the search:

In the past months of the wet season Kien has been posted to the MIA team charged with gathering the remains of the dead from the worst battlefields....The MIA team had uncovered a vast family of forgotten members of their regiment, dead under the mantle of the warm jungle. The fallen soldiers shared one destiny; no longer were there honourable or disgraced soldiers, heroic or cowardly, worthy or worthless. Now they were merely names and remains....After some final touches with the shovel their graves would be done, their remains laid out. Then, with their final breath their souls were released, flying upwards, free. The uprush of so many souls penetrated Kien’s mind, ate into his consciousness, becoming a dark shadow overhanging his own soul. Over a long period, over many, many graves, the souls of the beloved dead silently and gloomily dragged the sorrow of war into his life (p. 25).

It is these opening scenes in the jungles of the Central Highlands that draw us into the flow of Kien’s life story during postwar years, now defined and consumed by the sorrow of war. As we are drawn into Kien’s story and hence back in time to our war in Viet Nam, we recognize the timelessness of the novel that follows in the literary traditions of great war novels; Kien’s story could indeed be our own story, and the reader could be gathering the bodies of his own dead comrades, or our own souls could be wandering the Central Highlands of Viet Nam.

The timeless sense of the novel, however, appears somewhat incongruous here given the fact that we Americans have seldom given thought to Vietnamese casualties and to the Vietnamese perspective on what we term the Vietnam War. Bao Ninh’s novel suggests the development of a more holistic and humanistic paradigm for teaching about Viet Nam, one that compels the inclusion of the Vietnamese experience during the war, and by extension Vietnamese history and culture, within the curricular framework that shapes our teaching of the war fought between the United States and Viet Nam. As prospective social studies teachers, our students often come to us with a basic knowledge of the Vietnam War, but the frameworks for teaching that knowledge are beyond their horizons. As the teacher educators of these students, we offer them the epistemological frameworks that will organize their teaching of the social studies in the classrooms of America’s schools. These frameworks often suggest alternative
perspectives to the traditional social studies curriculum that shaped and continues to shape the nature of social studies instruction to this day.

In his introduction to Larry Rottman's *Voices from the Ho Chi Minh Trail: Poetry of America and Vietnam, 1965-1993*, Bruce Weigl (1993), a veteran and poet, speaks to this issue in artistic terms:

Suffice it to note that there have been far too many works of art produced in response to the war that have glorified in the suffering of others and romanticized the nightmare that war is among this cacophony of artistic responses, what's missing, ironically, is the presence of the Vietnamese themselves. Just as soldiers in training for war were taught to dehumanize the Vietnamese so as to make it easier to kill them, the American public has not yet been allowed or able to imagine our former enemies in any other light but that of faceless, nameless aggressor....Many cultivate this image of the Vietnamese because they need to protect themselves from the unsettling truths of our involvement in that war: over fifty-eight thousand Americans dead, and more than three-hundred thousand wounded, and over sixty thousand Vietnam vet suicides. And on the other side, as many as five million Vietnamese dead, two thirds of whom were women and children. Allowing ourselves to see the Vietnamese as human beings would require us to accept more fully the responsibility for our individual and national actions during America’s long involvement in Indochina (foreword).

Translated into the curricular framework of a social studies education, we need only cite the theme issue of *Social Education* entitled “Teaching the Vietnam War”, which contained 16 articles devoted to the war, none of which concerned the war’s impact upon the Vietnamese people, and none of which concerned the teaching of Vietnamese history and culture as a context for understanding the war (National Council for the Social Studies, 1988).

We thus continue to dehumanize the Vietnamese as a people who, to this day, remain faceless and nameless in the social studies curriculum as we teach about the war in their country whereby Viet Nam has become but a metaphor for recent United States history. The story of Kien’s survival in the face of 10 years of warfare against the Americans ensures us that he can no longer remain anonymous to the American reader as we reflect upon our own experience as Americans fighting against Vietnamese with names and faces like Bao Ninh.

Bao Ninh’s novel is all the more relevant because no other such novels from the Vietnamese are available in English. The threshold crossed by Moore and Galloway in humanizing our Vietnamese enemy.
David M. Berman

therefore takes on even greater significance as Bao Ninh offers us the Vietnamese portrait of the American as enemy. We thus begin to stare into the eyes of the enemy only to face ourselves as the enemy here—and to confront the reality of war whereby, caught up in the fervor of wartime, we move to dehumanize our enemies in order to kill them for political and ideological reasons. In the process, we seek to rationalize the killing in our history and mythology, thus becoming part of the dehumanization ourselves. Only when men such as Harold Moore and Bao Ninh, who once found themselves on opposite sides of the killing fields of the Central Highlands, serve to remind us of what once happened on now hallowed ground do we pause to reflect upon the human cost of political and ideological conflicts.

"To write about Vietnam is to write about America," suggests Bruce Weigl, "and to exclude that particular chapter from our history is to lie, is to not present the fullest possible vision of what it means to be an American" (in Faulkner, 1988, p. 5). Viewed within educational parameters, Weigl might suggest that to teach about Vietnam is to teach about America, that to teach (or fail to teach) about Viet Nam as a country and the Vietnamese as a people suggests something of how we Americans view the world, of American perceptions of other cultures, and of how we translate our historical traditions into the curricular framework of a social studies education. Teaching Viet Nam and the Vietnam War in a general sense, and the story of one Vietnamese soldier in a particular sense, should compel us to question the traditional fabric of a social studies education and the manner in which we enculturate our youth in the traditions of the country.

Bao Ninh suggests Vietnamese illusions as well, just prior to the impending American involvement, seen first through air strikes in the north. From the opening scenes of the war, the novel moves back and forth in time to life in contemporary Hanoi, to life in Hanoi on the eve of the war when Kien leaves "his sweetheart [who] was now the most radiant beauty in the entire Chu Van An school," the most prestigious high school in the north, caught up in the fervor of war with the rest of the country.

Kien saw the Buoi school as it had been back then, in April 1965, just before the outbreak of the war. It was a late spring afternoon. By then its shady row of trees had been chopped down, its yard criss-crossed with deep trenches, anticipating war. The headmaster, wearing a fireman's helmet, boasted loudly that the Americans would be blown away in this war, but we wouldn't. "The imperialist is a paper tiger," he screamed, "You will be the young angels of our revolution, you will rescue mankind."
He pointed to a student among the tenth-form boys holding wooden rifles, spears, spades and hoes, showing childish bravado. "Life is here, death is also here," the boy said and the others sang noisily. Someone yelled, "Kill the Invader!" and everyone cheered (1993, pp. 117-118).

In fact, Chu Van An would lose at least 10 people to the American war, nine former students and one former teacher ("Chu Van An, 80 Nam", 1988). The sacrifice of the country is seen today on the walls of Chu Van An in faded photographs of young men as soldiers, portraits of former students of the school, reminders of the great sacrifice we make when we go to war (Berman, 1995). These photographs also remind us of similar portraits on the walls of American high schools, portraits of young men as soldiers, portraits of ourselves as students, and portraits of our own students as well.

Kien himself volunteers for the army in the summer of 1965 and receives his orders to report for duty on the battlefields of the south. He survives bombing raids on troop trains and railway stations along the way, marking his first exposure to the war at the age of 19, the average age of the American soldier in Viet Nam—a trip that ends 10 long years later with the fall/liberation of Saigon in 1975. The novel becomes Kien's personal story of war viewed years later, as the transformation of a young man during the formative years of his life:

Sure, thinks Kien, it's hard to forget. When will I calm down? When will my heart be free of the tight grip of war? Whether pleasant or ugly memories, they are there to stay for ten, twenty years, perhaps for ever.

From now on life may be always dark, full of suffering, with brief moments of happiness. Living somewhere between a dream world and reality, on the knife-edge between the two....So many tragic memories, so much pain from long ago that I have told myself to forget, yet it is that easy to return to them. My memories of war are always close by, easily provoked at random moments in these days which are little but a succession of boring, predictable, stultifying weeks (Bao, 1993).

What makes The Sorrow of War so very human and timeless are these "memories of war" seemingly "provoked at random moments", memories that could belong to any soldier in any war. Such memories call to mind Michael Norman's (1989) opening passage from These Good Men: Friendships Forged from War, perhaps the best work written on the legacy of the Vietnam War on the American side:
Sometimes I still hear his call. It does not come in a dream—I do not dream anymore. The guns are silent, the fields covered in green. Instead, it must be memory I hear, an old cry for help, echoing unanswered across all these years (1989, p. 1).

Bao Ninh's novel, the legacy of 10 years of unending warfare, reads as though the author were indeed "living somewhere between a dream world and reality, on the knife-edge between the two" between today and yesterday, between reality and memory, and between war and peace.

In self-examination, Bao Ninh offers the reader a narrator of Kien's story, perhaps in deference to the confusion that might arise as we try to make sense of it all. It is the narrator who offers us in turn his perspective on the manuscript written by the strange and tortured soul living alone today in a Hanoi apartment who, in the end, disappears from the printed page, leaving only a manuscript as a sign of his passing. The narrator attempts to make sense out of "the abandoned novel of our writer" through his analysis of the circumstances by which he was entrusted with the manuscript (1993, p. 231). The author leaves it to his narrator to discover that he recognizes the writer in reading the story. Indeed, we learn that the narrator once knew the writer during the war. In an ironic final twist, the narrator places the writer's personal story into the larger perspective of Vietnamese soldiers during war, if not the larger perspective of all soldiers during all wars.

And both he and I, like the other ordinary soldiers of the war, shared one fate. We had shared all the vicissitudes, the defeats and victories, the happiness and suffering, the losses and gains. But each of us had been crushed by the war in a different way.

Each of us carried in his heart a separate war which in many ways was totally different, despite our common cause....Our only postwar similarities stemmed from the fact that everyone had experienced difficult, painful and different fates.

But we all share a common sorrow, the immense sorrow of war. It is a sublime sorrow, more sublime than happiness, and beyond suffering. Thanks to our sorrow we were able to escape the war, and escape the continual killing and fighting, the terrible conditions of battle and the unhappiness of men in fierce and violent theatres of war (p. 231).

Now at least there is peace, the narrator muses, and so we are living more beautiful lives than we could ever have once imagined. "Surely this
was what the real author of this novel intended to say?” the narrator asks rhetorically. The narrator can only conclude on a positive note by suggesting that the sorrows of war which would burden Kien’s life were but “an impasse of pessimism” or that perhaps his life had been “devoid of spiritual hope”. Thus we find in this book an attempt to rationalize the soldier’s experience so that it makes sense to a reader who surely knows nothing of this experience. Amidst the sorrow of war, there must be some peace, some happiness, suggests the narrator, in a half-hearted attempt to rationalize the soldier’s story for the reader.

Even so, I believe he derived some happiness from looking back down the road of his past.

His spirit was not eroded by a cloudy memory. He could feel happy that his soul would find solace in the fountain of sentiments from his youth....I envied his inspiration, his optimism in focusing back to the painful but glorious days. They were caring days, when we knew what we were living and fighting for and why we needed to suffer and sacrifice.

Those were the days when all of us were young, very pure and very sincere (Bao, 1993).

Thus, write Harold Moore and Joseph Galloway (1992), “This is our story and theirs. For we were soldiers once, and young” (p. xx).

References
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*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:

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