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The Journal of the College and University Faculty Assembly of National Council for the Social Studies

**Volume 29  Number 4  Fall 2001**
This year, we will continue to explore the ways in which technology can support our goals for social studies teaching and learning as well as linking that discussion to the digital divide in technology and diversity issues within social studies.

For more information see:
http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/teacherlink/social/cufa/

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POSTSCRIPT
The Choice Is Not Between Tyranny and Terror
E. Wayne Ross & Rich Gibson
Six years ago when I took over as editor of *Theory and Research in Social Education*, I figured I was in for a lot of work and I was hopeful that the experience would be equally rewarding. Looking back I can say that I underestimated on both counts!

I am very pleased and honored to have had the opportunity to edit 23 issues of this journal. Without a doubt the most rewarding part of my experience has been the chance to work closely with a wide range of authors, reviewers, board members, and editorial staff. I would like to particularly thank Michael Whelan and Perry Marker who have done outstanding work as Book Review Editors for *TRSE*. I also appreciate the assistance and support of Valerie Ooka Pang and Ceola Ross Baber who have served as Associate Editors the past three years. The *TRSE* Board members and manuscript reviewers are crucial to the success of the journal and I have learned much from their critiques of scholarship. Last, but certainly not least, I am pleased that so many scholars, working in a variety of research traditions, have chosen to send their work to *TRSE* in recent years, without them there would be no journal.

I set out a number of goals for the journal when I took it over in 1996. I wanted to ensure that the journal continued to play an effective and significant role in sustaining and enlivening the conversations among social studies educators. This goal, with the assistance of many, I think has been achieved. *TRSE* has pursued an open and critical approach to research in the field, publishing rigorously juried, high-quality scholarship from a variety of perspectives.

In addition, the journal has grown in length, which has allowed for expanded dialogues, viewpoint articles, and more book reviews. The *TRSE* Forum listserv has also enhanced our conversations. The journal (and as a result CUFA) is in its best financial state ever, thanks to increases in library subscription rates over the past few years.

In my first “From the Editor” column, in the spring of 1996, I made note of the winner of the Outstanding Dissertation Award from Division B (Curriculum) of the American Educational Research Association—a CUFA member named Elizabeth A. Yeager. It is with great pleasure that I now pass on the role of *TRSE* editor to Professor Yeager.
In 1998, Lee H. Ehman published a content analysis of TRSE covering the years 1973 to 1997. What follows is a brief update of the categories Ehman used in his analysis, including my years as editor (Spring 1996 through Fall 2001). I think that Ehman did a great service to the field with his analysis and it would be useful to keep these data “up to date” as a way of presenting a snapshot of the scholarship in social education.

As has always been the case, during my term as editor empirical research was the predominant type of inquiry reported in TRSE. Seventy-two percent of the feature articles published were empirical; theoretical articles made up 23% of articles published, with the balance being research reviews. (See Table 1 for a complete break down of types of feature articles published in TRSE from 1973-2001 by editor.)

Of the 70 empirical research articles published during my editorship, 14 use quantitative methods (20%), 45 qualitative methods (64%), and 11 were historical inquiries (16%). (See Table 2 for editor-by-editor comparisons of type of empirical articles published.)

Trends in article content were stable over the past six years. Fifty-five of the 97 feature articles published in this period were classified as about teachers and/or teaching (57%). This compares to 55% during Jack Fraenkel’s term as editor. Thirty-one per cent of articles published addressed curriculum issues and articles on learning and/or learners made up 12 percent of articles published. (See Table 3 for an editor-by-editor comparison of article content.)

In his analysis of refereed and non-refereed material in TRSE, Ehman argued that there had been an erosion in the percentage of pages devoted to refereed material in TRSE and made a plea for TRSE editors to be more “archivist” than “activist” (e.g., Ehman argued for the inclusion of fewer opinion pieces, book reviews, letters, etc.), for fear that potential articles were being displaced from the archive. As Table 4 indicates, from spring 1996 through fall 2001, an average of 104 pages per issue have been devoted to refereed articles—18 pages more than the average total length of TRSE under its first 7 editors. In short, while non-refereed material has increased under my editorship, the concomitant increase in overall length of the journal has not reduced space available for refereed articles. In fact, the percentage of pages devoted to refereed articles in my editorship has increased by 39 percent.

While year-to-year statistics on acceptance rates have varied, during my editorship there were 326 manuscripts submitted for review. Of those, 101 were accepted for publication (73 on condition of revisions). That computes to a 31% acceptance rate. (Several manuscripts accepted under my editorship will appear in upcoming issues of TRSE.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editor</th>
<th>Empirical</th>
<th>Theoretical</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Review</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>N of Issues</th>
<th>N of Articles</th>
<th>% of Articles</th>
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<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1973-1975)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>42</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1985-1987)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<td>(1996-2001)</td>
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<td>OVERALL %</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>418</td>
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Table 2

Type of Empirical TRSE Articles
(Percentages of Articles in Three Categories)

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<th>Qualitative</th>
<th>Historical</th>
<th>Total N</th>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehman</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popkewitz</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nelson</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Larkin</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clements</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraenkel</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL %</strong></td>
<td><strong>56%</strong></td>
<td><strong>33%</strong></td>
<td><strong>12%</strong></td>
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Table 3

Content of TRSE Articles
(Percentages of Codings in Three Categories)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editor</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Learners/ Learning</th>
<th>Teachers/ Teaching</th>
<th>Total N Codes</th>
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<tr>
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<td>48%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>Ehman</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>Popkewitz</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nelson</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Larkin</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>71</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fraenkel</td>
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<td>81</td>
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<td>Ross</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>57</td>
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<td><strong>OVERALL %</strong></td>
<td><strong>36%</strong></td>
<td><strong>33%</strong></td>
<td><strong>32%</strong></td>
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*Ehman’s analysis of content of TRSE articles included multiple codings of single articles. The data in this table for articles published by Ross did not use multiple codes, rather a single primary focus of each article was used for categorization.
Table 4
Analysis of TRSE Refereed and Non-Refereed Article Material

<table>
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<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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<td>18.9</td>
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<td>82.1</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<td>.86</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

a Excludes masthead, index, instructions to authors.
b Includes article abstracts.
One of my primary aims as editor has been to make *TRSE* as inclusive as possible. One measure of inclusiveness is the number of authors whose work has appeared in the journal. During my years as editor, 261 authors and co-authors have publish in the journal. On average, there were over 11 different authors in each issue.

Someone once said "40% of all statistics are wrong." With thought in mind, I want to point out that the worth of any journal cannot be measured in a series of statistical tables (although the information can be illuminating). What matters is the impact the journal has had (and continues to have) on the thought and practice of social studies educators. *Theory and Research in Social Education* is the premier research journal in field and I am proud to have had the opportunity to contribute to its success.

**Reference**

Reconciling Freedom and Control in the Early Grades:
Toward a Critical Consciousness for a Freedom of Choice

Neil O. Houser
Sheri Overton
University of Oklahoma

Abstract
Social educators have long sought to understand the relationship between personal freedom and social control and to contemplate the implications for classroom practice. In this year-long ethnographic study conducted in an ethnically mixed first grade classroom, we focused on the relationship between a European American teacher and two of her African American students. Among other things, we examined the specific social, cultural and linguistic factors involved in the negotiation of freedom and control, the nature of the socialization process that exists in schools, and the consciousness that emerges as a result of this process. Our findings are consistent with Dewey's notion that freedom and control are highly interrelated aspects of a unified whole. Our data also support the conclusions of sociocultural (re)productionist theorists who suggest that many students participate uncritically and unconsciously in their own socialization and that of their peers. We questioned the value of the socialization process. By limiting contemplation upon multiple perspectives, educational socialization restricts opportunities for the personal development of citizens and erodes the diversity needed to maintain complex systems like our own society. Still, since some form of socialization is essential for the development of self and survival of society, we do not reject socialization itself. Rather, we advocate alternative approaches based on mutual accommodation and the construction of a critical consciousness for a freedom of choice.

Social educators, broadly defined, have long sought to understand the relationship between personal freedom and social control and to contemplate the implications for classroom practice. At the turn of the twentieth century, John Dewey dedicated much of his attention to understanding the nature of this relationship (e.g., 1916, 1922, 1938). Since that time, issues of freedom and control have informed our fundamental debates over the teaching of citizenship (Barr, Barth & Shermis, 1977; Cherryholmes, 1980; Engle, 1960; Stanley, 1985) and
Questions involving freedom and control are closely related to the process of socialization. Should educators prepare students to fit neatly into the existing social structure (e.g., Bennett, 1992; Hirsch, 1987) or to critique and transform that structure (e.g., Apple, 1990; Counts, 1932; Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994; Sleeter & Grant, 1994)? Or should teachers prepare students to determine for themselves whether and when to support or resist the existing social order? And if this is the case, what is to prevent the most powerful from perpetuating the oppressive conditions that currently exist for so many others? Such questions are at the heart of the ongoing debate over the purposes of education and the role of the teacher.

The literature suggests that many students in formal educational settings participate, often uncritically and unconsciously, in the (re)production of existing social and cultural perspectives and conditions (e.g., Anyon, 1979; Lubeck, 1994; McNeil, 1986; Willis, 1977). Students of all ages influence their own socialization and that of their peers. However, while recent investigations provide a powerful indictment of socialization activities in educational settings, it can be argued that socialization itself is a natural human process required for the growth of the individual and the survival of the species (e.g., Kluckhohn, 1965). Thus, rather than endorsing or indicting socialization per se', our task is to critique destructive practices in education and society and to provide ethically sound alternatives.

Whether or not a particular instance of socialization is ethically sound has much to do with the society in question and the specific relationships and mechanisms involved in the process. One way to assess the merits of specific situations might be to consider issues of freedom and contingency, including the extent to which persons willingly choose or must be coerced into participation (Dewey, 1938; Holt, 1972; Quinn, 1997, Shepard, 1982). Another indicator might be the degree to which particular persons and groups could, realistically, influence the broader social structure (e.g., Baldwin, 1988; Banks, 1989; Nieto; 1992). Numerous scholars have argued that uncritical, unidirectional socialization can be harmful both to the self and to society (e.g., Baldwin, 1988; Banks, 1989; Nieto, 1992; Ogbu, 1987). What is needed, according to Sonia Nieto, is a society that accommodates a plurality of others while supporting the development of "multicultural persons" (1992, p. 274).
Today, more that a hundred years after Dewey began his inquiry into the relationship between freedom and control, many of our challenges seem greater than ever. Disproportionate attention focused on the wants of individual persons rather than the needs of the broader community has left educators, and citizens in general, scrambling to address increasingly severe social and environmental problems (e.g., Bellah, et al., 1985; Eisler, 1987). While the existence of these problems reveals material inequalities (e.g., based on race, class and gender, Sleeter & Grant, 1994), the persistence of these problems involves dominant perceptions of self, others, and the relationship therein (e.g., Anzaldua, 1987; Capra, 1996; Eisler, 1987; Foucault, 1972; Freire, 1970; Quinn, 1992, 1997). Thus, if we are to adequately address the material conditions that plague our society, at least part of our attention must focus on the perceptions that underlie and support our continuing activities.

In this report we argue that any form of education concerned with reconciling the needs of particular persons with the good of society must attend to the complex relationship between freedom and control, and we suggest that social education can be a useful avenue for addressing this relationship. Specifically, we report on the findings of a study on social interaction and self-development in a first grade classroom. The study focused on the phenomenon of schooling through the eyes of Calvin and Tommy, two six year old African American boys, and through the eyes of Donna Baldwin, their European American teacher. Our findings, we challenge some of the basic concepts (e.g., personal "freedom," social "control," the "common good") and assumptions (e.g., regarding "socialization," "cultural assimilation," and the persistence of social inequality) that guide educational practice in the United States today. Among other things, we will demonstrate that personal freedom and social order are highly interrelated rather than separate factors. We will also insist that we must begin to rethink some of the basic beliefs that guide educational practice, including reductionistic, either-or assumptions regarding the fundamental relationship between self, society and the world we live in.

First, we will provide a philosophical and theoretical framework for the study, introducing concepts and concerns that informed our inquiry. Then we will outline the research methodology, discuss the general context of the study, and introduce the participants. Next, we will present and analyze our findings. Finally, we will discuss implications for theory and practice.
Philosophical And Theoretical Framework: Guiding Concepts And Concerns

Several interrelated concepts and concerns guided our inquiry and the analysis of findings. Since these ideas influenced our interpretation of the data, we will discuss them in some detail before proceeding further.

First, like many others within the field, we believe education should promote greater consciousness of the importance of equality and plurality in our society and world. Hence, rather than restricting our attention to the technical aspects of education, we contemplated the broad questions "Education for what? Education for whom? and Who gets to decide?" Within a democratic society, we assume everyone should share responsibility for creating and maintaining just and equitable social conditions. Unfortunately, in spite of the belief that education can help narrow existing discrepancies (e.g., "the great equalizer" proclaimed by Horace Mann), an opportunity gap continues to separate those with sufficient political and economic means to influence their personal circumstances from those who neither possess nor can reasonably acquire such means (e.g., Anyon, 1979; Counts, 1932; Freire, 1970; Houser, 1996; Mann, 1957; Sleeter & Grant, 1988). This gap is buoyed by a seemingly intractable assimilationist ideology and continued resistance, particularly among the most privileged members of our society, to engage in deep and critical self-examination.

Part of the problem is that the obstacles we face are not always visible. Berger and Luckmann (1966) have demonstrated that humans construct explanations that legitimize their own (current) perspectives and privileges while discrediting alternative views and possibilities. Over time, these explanations come to be seen as objective facts rather than social constructions. Berger and Luckmann refer to this activity as the process of reification. Once subjective beliefs, assumptions and social arrangements are construed as objective reality, as simply "the way things are," critical examination is considered pointless. As long as no serious threat is posed which challenges the perception that existing beliefs and conditions are objectively real, it is now possible to act confidently and unreflectively on the basis of these unexamined assumptions.

The challenge for educators is significant. How can teachers support the development of a consciousness of freedom when the very possibility that things could be different remains invisible—submerged in the mechanisms of our own socialization? In his classic text, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Paulo Freire (1970) argued that we must develop a critical consciousness of the very nature of oppression if we are to transform the ontological assumptions that limit human freedom. It
stands to reason that an aspect of this consciousness must include an awareness of the reification itself.

Freire advocated a "problem-posing" approach to education. Within this approach, fundamental challenges such as the objectification of humans, oppressive social conditions, and the "culture of domination" (1970, p. 40) are posed as problems to be addressed. In their struggle to address these problems, oppressed persons gradually develop critical consciousness and, in so doing, come to recognize themselves as Subjects who can act upon and transform their world and their lives.4

A second guiding concern our inquiry involved the nature of the relationship between personal freedom and social control (e.g., Aboulafia, 1986; Dewey, 1938; Freire, 1970; Greene, 1988). More than half a century ago Dewey (1938) theorized that, rather than existing as opposite poles, personal freedom and social control are actually interrelated aspects of a unified process. Indeed, according to Dewey, social order requires personal freedom and personal freedom depends, at least in part, upon a degree of social stability. He suggested that because human beings naturally support a social order they voluntarily help create, within a truly democratic society externally imposed social control would cease to be an issue. The members of such a society would control themselves. However, this presumes authentic freedom and genuine opportunity for participation in the process of constructing and maintaining the existing social order.

In addition to its theoretical appeal, Dewey's argument also makes sense practically and philosophically. On the one hand, no society can continue to survive unless its members work together to maintain social stability. On the other hand, societies influence the fundamental development of individual selves even as those individuals reciprocally influence the nature of society (e.g., Mead, 1934). Thus, it makes little sense to conceptualize personal freedom and social order as opposing entities, as has typically been done in modernist western thinking. (See Houser and Kuzmic (2001) for a detailed analysis of the language and practice of individualism in relation to citizenship education).

Existentialist philosophers like Jean Paul Sartre add that freedom involves a particular kind of consciousness. Sartre suggests that it is possible for persons to be aware of their own existence—including their contingency and freedom—and that this awareness can provide an important source of self-control (e.g., Aboulafia, 1986). The awareness of one's own existence enables the individual person to participate, consciously and systematically, in the very construction of his or her being. However, as George Herbert Mead (1934) reminds us, becoming conscious of the existence of self in the first place is dependent upon the process of social interaction. Seeking to reconcile
the perspectives of Sartre and Mead, Aboulafia (1986) argued that although it is indeed possible for the individual to participate in the construction of self, “the consciousness which allows for self-determination is itself constituted in and through the social” (p. xv).

We believe schools can support the development of self-awareness needed for greater self-determination by helping students understand that it is possible to be conscious of one’s own existence, that it is necessary to remain critical of one’s own consciousness, and that no consciousness (and therefore no freedom) can exist in the first place without social collaboration. As Maxine Greene (1988) has demonstrated, authentic freedom requires an awareness of the possibility of freedom, an understanding of the nature of the obstacles, and the collaborative effort of all people in search of emancipation to overcome those obstacles that, by continuing to oppress some of us, oppress us all.

A third set of concerns guiding our inquiry involved the process of socialization (that typically occur in schools and society (e.g., in the name of citizenship education, life skills training, intervention, cultural assimilation). Essentially, socialization can be understood as a process, beginning at birth and continuing throughout life, through which individual persons adapt to and learn to function within the broader society and the particular social and cultural milieus of which they are a part (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Hewitt, 1994; Mead, 1934). It is through these processes that children learn social and cultural norms, narratives, and the symbolic means (e.g., the structure and use of language, broadly defined) by which these norms and narratives are constructed and communicated to others.

From a cultural learning standpoint, socialization can be viewed as a process in which children (and adults) internalize the views of those with whom they interact and transform their prior understandings accordingly (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Wertsch, 1985, 1991). Beyond the internalization of particular norms and narratives, humans also internalize the cultural tools (language, symbolic interaction) used to mediate learning and development in the first place. In this way, socialization contributes not only to the development of new understandings, but also the development of new and different mental, social, and linguistic capacities. Indeed, according to Mead (1934), these processes can contribute to the development of a fundamentally different sense of self.

According to Mead, the development of self, identity and reflective consciousness is fundamentally tied to our relationships with others. In essence, we come to know who we are by viewing ourselves through the eyes of others. Initially, our significant others are a finite group of primary caregivers, and a person’s sense of self is relatively narrow. However, as we encounter a broader range of others (teach-
ers, friends, new acquaintances) who provide new sources of information and respond to us in different ways, how sense of self expands and evolves and the individual becomes a different person. This work supports Nieto’s (1992) assertion that a meaningful integration of multiple perspectives can contribute to the development of an increasingly complex and diversified multicultural person.

While the benefits of multicultural self-development may seem clear, particularly for those members of the dominant culture whose insulated lives have limited internalization of the views and concerns of others, members of traditionally oppressed groups may be understandably suspicious of the prospect of further cultural assimilation (e.g., Anzaldua, 1987; Baldwin, 1988; Debo, 1970; Kincaid, 1988; Ogbu, 1987). As Victor Lewis, an African American participant in Lee Mun Wah’s (1994) powerful film The color of fear stated to one of his European American counterparts, “I’m not going to trust you until you’re as willing to be changed and affected by my experience and transformed by my experience as I am everyday by yours.”

The problem in many settings is that not all participants are equally able to influence the construction of the shared environment. While socialization itself may not be a linear or unidirectional process (after all, we learn from each other), particular social conditions (and socializing efforts and activities) often serve to legitimize the perspectives of some groups while marginalizing the views of others. As James Banks (1989) has observed school curricula often tend to be mainstream-centric, emphasizing the views and values of the American mainstream while de-emphasizing (or excluding altogether) the perspectives of many members of ethnic minority groups. Similarly, the views and concerns of women are often minimized (e.g., Greene, 1988, 1993; Noddings, 1992; Woolf, 1938). One-sided approaches can be harmful both to those who are excluded and those who are represented in the curriculum. According to Banks, a mainstream-centric curriculum denies opportunities for minority students to learn of their own historical significance, it perpetuates a “false sense of superiority” (1989, p. 189) among members of the dominant culture, and it restricts the diversity of thoughts and opinions needed to maintain and improve our complicated society.

A fourth concern involved the vital role of language in the struggle for freedom. While philosophers like Dewey, Mead and Sartre have provided broad theoretical bases from which to contemplate abstract relationships between freedom and control, others have sought to analyze these issues within specific social, cultural and historical contexts. Maxine Greene (1988), for example, provided a brilliant analysis of the relationships between freedom, control, and the interaction of specific personal, social, cultural, and linguistic and material factors influencing the lives of American men, women and children.
Greene observed that freedom in the United States has typically been characterized as an endowment rather than an achievement and she concluded that dominant conceptions of freedom have been primarily negative and individualistic in nature, emphasizing the personal “freedom from” social constraint without embracing, with equal passion, our “freedom to” construct a better community. While European American men who have successfully claimed freedom as an official endowment, few women or members of ethnic minority groups have been able to procure such an entitlement. Thus, Greene concludes that authentic freedom must be seen as an achievement rather than an entitlement. Freedom as achievement involves the collaborative efforts of people (both men and women) who join together to identify existing possibilities and name the obstacles that stand in the way of their collective emancipation.⁶

Among other things, the efforts of scholars like Maxine Greene underscore the fact that language (e.g., the naming of obstacles and possibilities) is a central factor in the struggle for freedom. Indeed, it is perhaps the primary medium through which social norms and structures are established and maintained and, conversely, through which these norms and structures can be challenged and transformed. Ironically, according to Foucault (1972), one of the most insidious obstacles to human freedom is the very system we use to mediate our thoughts, social interactions, and membership in society. Foucault asserted that language itself embodies mechanisms of disempowerment and dehumanization. As we are born and socialized into a community, we learn the language and linguistic structures of that community and internalize the social norms and attitudes embedded in the language. Because every modern industrial society is hierarchical in nature, and because every social structure is embedded in and communicated to future generations through its system of language, an inevitable aspect of the socialization process within such settings is the perpetuation of hierarchical perspectives. An important implication of Foucault’s analysis is that a consciousness of freedom must include an awareness of the importance of critiquing the very mechanism (language) we use to comprehend our world.

Finally, our study was informed by the basic constructivist assumption that psychological development involves cognitive struggle. According to Piaget (1972), humans are cognitively active beings who, throughout life, experience, interact with, and interpret information within the environment. As these interpretations are interrelated, they form a cognitive structure, or schema. When humans encounter information inconsistent with their existing beliefs, they experience a sense of uncertainty, or cognitive dissonance. Psychological growth results from the mental struggle to reconcile prior understanding with new (dissonant) information, (e.g., Neisser, 1976; Piaget, 1972). Thus, when
we provide meaningful opportunities for students to struggle with important issues and ideas, we maximize the developmental potential of the educational experience.

Imbalanced socialization processes manifested in schools and society often limit opportunities for American citizens to achieve their potential as persons-in-community, and for the United States to realize its full potential as a community of persons (e.g., Houser & Kuzmic, 2001). Rather than ignoring these concerns this report seeks to better understand the nature of the problem and to explore viable alternatives. In the next section we will turn to a discussion of the research methodology, the context of the study, and the teacher and students who participated in our investigation.

**Research Methodology, Context Of Study, and Participants**

This is a qualitative case study. Case study approaches focus on a particular individual, group, setting or event (i.e., on a specific “case”), seeking in-depth understanding of the history and context of the specific situation and the unique perspectives of the participants. One advantage of a case study approach is that it can provide not only descriptive information related to the “what” of a situation, but also explanatory insight related to why things are the way they are and what difference these factors make in the lives of the participants. In the case of critical ethnography, it is also possible to theorize about what can and should be done to address ethical (e.g., political, economic, interpersonal) issues related to the findings.

A qualitative research methodology was used to collect and analyze the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lofland & Lofland, 1984; Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). Methods for data collection included participant observation and field notes, formal and informal interviewing, the administration of questionnaires, photographing the educational environment, and gathering school documents, lesson plan, student notes, and so forth. The teacher in this case also shared extensive reflective journal entries and other work related to a portfolio she was developing for her masters degree, and she helped interpret the findings as the study proceeded. The paper is based on the assumption that the primary value of qualitative research lies not in the verification and broad application of causation, but in the rich and thoughtful description, interpretation and explanation of findings related to particular human phenomena (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Smith & Heshusius, 1986; Wilson, 1977).

We also assume that, since researchers can never completely divorce their observations and interpretations from their own subjective perspectives, the conclusions we draw are ultimately “embodied” rather than disconnected (Behar, 1996, Bogdan, 1992). Therefore,
instead of seeking to strip away the context of our own subjectivity (Mishler, 1979), we acknowledge our own inevitable influence, as teacher educators who operate from positions of greater privilege and power than many classroom practitioners, on the research setting, analysis of findings, and conclusions for theory and practice. In this regard, the aims and approaches of our report are consistent with the modest tenets of an embodied approach to qualitative research.

Context of the Study

Harry S. Bonner Elementary School served approximately 500 students in grades K-3 in a suburban setting located in the Middle Atlantic Region of the United States. Like other social and educational institutions in the region, Bonner Elementary was influenced by the presence of several highly competitive, well-established east coast corporations, by a major university located nearby, and by its close proximity to the largest and most socially and culturally diverse city in the state. The school was also influenced, at the time of the study, by the social and political tensions surrounding the national events of the mid 1990s. Prominent concerns included controversy over mandatory bussing to enforce racial desegregation, disagreements regarding school choice and a proposed voucher system, and the actions of a local chapter of the Ku Klux Klan who had used a recent “inappropriate touching” incident at Bonner Elementary as an opportunity to stage a public demonstration and a march through town.

Among those who were served by Bonner Elementary, family incomes varied significantly. Some parents held fairly prestigious and/or high paying university or corporate positions and lived in comfortable homes located in expensive housing developments. Other parents, including those of the mostly European American students who lived in nearby apartment complexes and the mostly African American students who were bussed from a government subsidized housing project, held low paying jobs or were unemployed.

With regard to ethnicity, the student population was distributed in roughly the same proportion as the state as a whole. Within the state, approximately 80% of the population was European American and 17% was African American. The remaining three percent were distributed among Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, American Indians, Eskimos [Inuit] and Aleut, and various “other” ethnic groups (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1990). The proportion of black to white teachers at Bonner Elementary was about the same as the proportion of black to white citizens in the general population, and the district superintendent and school principal were middle- to upper middle-class African American women.

Finally, parental involvement and community support were mixed. While some parents were involved in the business of the school
and seemed to attend every event, other parents were seldom seen. However, there was no easily discernible pattern regarding which parents provided support and which did not. In some cases, for example, the most financially stable parents failed to attend while the most financially strapped individuals participated whenever they could.

The Participants

The broader study was a year-long examination of the relationship between Donna Baldwin and her twenty-seven first grade students within the contexts of the school and community. The students ranged from five to seven years of age, and they were fairly evenly split by gender. Approximately three-fourths of the class was Caucasian, and one-fourth was African American. One child was of Asian descent, and at least one other student was Latin American. For the most part, the students came from middle and lower income families. According to standard measures of achievement, the academic potential and performance of the students ranged from well above average to well below. The students also ranged from high to low in terms of popularity with their peers (an informal indication of their informal social stratification) and in terms of their social and emotional development.

Donna was a European American woman in her mid-thirties. She had 12 years of teaching experience and was completing the final phase of a Masters degree at the local university. Among other things, she was interested in literacy education, ecological and environmental issues, and matters related to social justice, racial harmony, and world peace. Donna placed strong emphasis on creating a "loving" and "caring" classroom environment. However, she also spoke of having done a powerful simulation activity, based on the classic ABC documentary The eye of the storm, designed to raise the critical awareness and empathy of her first-grade students. Donna’s willingness to promote cognitive struggle in order to build empathy and understanding makes this case an interesting one to study.

In this report we focus primarily on Donna and two of her students—two African American boys named Calvin and Tommy. One of Donna’s former students, an African American boy named Tymere, was also significant to the study. Other participants will of course be mentioned. However, by focusing primarily on the relationships between Calvin and Tommy and their peers and teacher, we will be able to address, in detail, the impact of the schooling experience on two children for whom the pressures of cultural assimilation were particularly acute.
Findings

What we found at Bonner Elementary School was a caring and capable teacher who made a deliberate effort to understand and appreciate her students, and we found many bright, energetic children who were remarkably compliant with the wishes of the school personnel. We also observed a complex process of social interaction in which personal freedom and social control were continually negotiated and renegotiated by the various participants.

In this section we will first address the teacher’s educational perspectives and practices. Then we will examine the views and actions of her students, focusing particular attention on Tommy and Calvin and their relationships with their peers and teacher. Next, we will identify some of the changes that occurred in the students’ thoughts and actions as the year proceeded. Finally, we will analyze and critique the socialization processes involved in the education of the children at Bonner Elementary.

The Teacher’s Perspectives and Practices

In general, Donna’s educational perspective focused on developing academic skills and understandings, promoting the personal growth and emotional well-being of her students, and helping her class develop greater understanding, empathy, and appreciation for others. Thus, in addition to providing a strong academic curriculum and maintaining a comfortable physical environment, she taught about the needs of those who lived in a local homeless shelter, established a “love and care” box to which the children could voluntarily contribute, and designated “Let There Be Peace on Earth” by Vince Gill the official song of the holiday season. She also regularly involved parents and community members in the educational process (e.g., as guest speakers, as chaperones on field trips).

Donna provided rich multicultural experiences, included parents and the community in the educational process, pushed her students’ thinking, resisted pat answers, and encouraged the class to apply to their own lives what they learned about others. Many of these experiences were interrelated. For example, Donna invited all her students’ parents to participate in class at least one time during the year. One mother shared what it was like to work in a homeless shelter, while another set of parents taught the class to write in Chinese. Another child’s father chose to serve as a chaperone during a field trip. Since the general purpose of each visit was for the parents to share some aspect of their work, culture or family tradition, the class was exposed to a variety of personally relevant social and cultural experiences throughout the year.
More time was spent in Room 18 building empathy (e.g., Donna frequently asked her students to consider how particular statements and actions might make others feel) and identifying the symptoms of social problems (e.g., homelessness) than exploring the causes of these problems (e.g., greed, individualism). However, even the challenging task of exploring the underlying causes of current social problems was taken up on occasion (e.g., during the *Eye of the storm* simulation activity).

Many activities focused on building self-awareness, developing greater self-control, and promoting the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Throughout the year, Donna emphasized the idea that differences make people special, and she persisted in her efforts to help all her students become more caring and considerate members of the classroom community. Toward these ends, Donna embraced a Role Model Program sponsored by the district, taught the students to engage in peaceful conflict resolution, and emphasized the development of self-control. With the assistance of a fellow first grade teacher, Donna even conducted a conflict resolution workshop for her peers.

At times, Donna's goals and procedures were explicit. Such was the case when she taught her students the importance of choosing to "do the right thing" and when she insisted, during an economics unit, that love and care are basic human needs. This was also the case when Donna provided explicit conflict resolution strategies to help her students express their feelings and expectations when they were unhappy with the actions of their peers. A background in special education was reflected in her use of a behavior modification point card system in which students received praise as well as explicit reminders about areas in need of improvement. Thus, in some instances Donna's message was clear and explicit, and the approaches she used were sometimes prescriptive.

Like many teachers, Donna had a lot of work to do and little time with which to do it. Her students' academic abilities were varied, parental and administrative requests were exacting, and high expectations for the standardized achievement tests loomed over her head. Given such time-related pressures, it was surprising how seldom Donna truncated the activities and conversations she began with her students. She was more inclined to continue work already underway and to adjust the following day's lessons than to abandon a fruitful lesson or discussion.

Common indications of the relationship between freedom and control involve the extent to which existing practices become institutionalized (e.g., within educational settings) and the relative degree of choice and voice experienced by the various participants. With regard to the institutionalization of procedures in Room 18, there were relatively few formal routines. Each morning the students entered the
room and placed their coats and books in designated areas. When the bell rang, announcements were made, the pledge of allegiance was recited, attendance was taken and lunch money collected, and school formally began. There were also routines for lining up to leave the room, and during certain activities the students were expected to raise their hands if they wished to speak aloud.

Beyond these fairly typical school-related constraints, the children enjoyed considerable freedom from formal, teacher-directed routines. Unlike many classrooms, the students were sometimes permitted to choose from a variety of optional learning centers, they did not have to ask for permission to use the restroom, and they could elect not to participate in a class activity if they felt they needed to be alone. Moreover, during much of the day, the students were relatively free to move about the classroom. This provided a sharp contrast to art class, for example, where the (European American) specialist maintained rigid guidelines and made harsh comments that, during the only observation conducted in that setting, reduced one (African American) child to tears. In Room 18, the atmosphere was far more hospitable, and the routines and freedoms seemed to be understood and accepted by the various participants.

Evidence of the relationship between freedom and control was also reflected in the nature of the discourse in Room 18 and the degree to which the children helped determine the classroom curriculum and instruction. The students were almost always engaged in some form of verbal interaction. Indeed, it was far more common to hear them talking together, commenting on drawings and writings, asking for assistance and offering advice, than to hear silence in the classroom. Although Donna often monitored the volume and focus of the dialogue, student talk was seldom discouraged altogether.

The relationship between Donna and her students was also highly dialogical in nature. Beyond the typical discourse used to communicate instructions (e.g., the IRE pattern described by Mehan, 1979 and Cazden, 1988), Donna went to great lengths to explain the reasoning behind her decisions, to address her students' collective and personal concerns, and to communicate appreciation for the class as a whole. Unlike several of her peers, Donna Baldwin occasionally permitted her students to express opposition to her own ideas, as long as they did so respectfully and without disrupting an existing activity.

It is also important to note that the children in Room 18 selected many of the activities in which they participated and, at times, even helped determine the curriculum itself. It was not uncommon for the class to vote in order to decide which book they wanted Donna to read or what activity they preferred to play during an indoor recess. At the same time, the students often decided for themselves the pictures they wanted to draw and the stories they wished to write. Op-
opportunities for students to select their own learning experiences increased as the year proceeded. Thus, by the end of the year, the students had begun to choose from a variety of learning centers on a modified “first come, first served” basis, and Donna seemed confident that the class had evolved to a point where they could assume substantial freedom and responsibility.

The students also influenced the curriculum when they responded to a series of questions, posed by Donna, regarding the kinds of things they wanted to learn and wished to know. The students’ responses were first recorded on the bulletin board. Individual responses were then transferred to yellow post-it notes and placed in Donna’s daily lesson planner. Throughout the year these notes served as daily reminders of the kinds of stories she might select for reading, the sorts of lessons she might develop for science, and the kinds of interests in general held by her students.

**Tommy and Calvin**

While Donna’s focus centered on the personal and social development of her students, most of the children expressed interest in various forms of social interaction (e.g., play). Given a choice, the children typically elected to play games with one another, to visit while doing their schoolwork, to talk with their teacher, or to “study” (e.g., observe, play with, discuss, write about) animals, toys, super heroes, and other topics of interest. Most of the students in Room 18 seemed to enjoy times like lunch and recess when they were relatively free to choose their own focus and mode of interaction. Conversely, they appeared least satisfied during long periods of enforced physical or verbal inactivity (e.g., during independent seatwork) or when the actions of some students interfered with the opportunities of others (e.g., when one child monopolized a toy or activity; when children were teased or excluded at recess). These preferences applied to Tommy and Calvin as well as the rest of the class.

Tommy was a soft-spoken child who took pride in his appearance, was interested in sports, and enjoyed visiting and playing games with the other children. Tommy was meticulously tidy in his dress and grooming and in the organization of his desk and cubby hole. He was also aware of his surroundings and attentive to the organization of the classroom. One morning, for example, Tommy quietly crawled away from the rug to replace a stuffed animal that had fallen from its normal spot in another part of the room. On another occasion, he voluntarily helped the researcher organize his materials as the researcher prepared to leave for the day.

For the most part, Tommy’s actions were consistent with those of his peers. However, there were also some important differences. More than any other child in Room 18, Tommy exercised his right not
to join the class at the rug for group lessons and discussions. He could often be seen lingering on the periphery, lounging on the floor, or crawling under a desk. Sometimes he flatly refused to join the group, remaining at his desk instead. As an example of the frequency of these kinds of activities, in three out of three days of observation conducted during an eight day period in the latter part of November, Tommy either remained at his desk during a group activity, sat at the back of the rug away from the rest of the students, placed himself on voluntary time out, or crawled away from the group in the middle of a discussion.

Donna searched for opportunities to encourage Tommy’s participation, but she also wanted him to follow the designated rules. At one point in a class discussion, for example, she asked if anyone could think of a “fr...” word. Tommy blurted, “Oh! Frog!” Donna looked in his direction and said, “Raise your hand.” Tommy shot his hand up, and Donna pointed and said, “Yes, go ahead.”

“Frog”, he repeated.

Donna complimented Tommy for his contribution to the lesson and then moved on to hear other responses.

According to both Donna and the principal, Tommy’s living conditions were less than ideal. The principal indicated that Tommy’s mother was quick to complain about school policies and procedures and that she provided little overall support for the school. Donna, too, was concerned with Tommy’s living situation. She was aware of his mother’s hostility toward the school, and she knew that some of his family members had been in trouble with the legal system. Speaking, in part, of Tommy’s situation, Donna noted:

Parent involvement is a difficult issue for me as a teacher. Many times I’m confronted with anger, resentment, or non-involvement...It is hard for me sometimes to really understand where parents are coming from when they’re not there for their child in the evening or their child comes to school without a coat. Just basic needs aren’t being met. I know there are a lot of hardships going on, but even though I know that intellectually...it’s hard for me to excuse it and empathize. It makes me feel bad then—I’m hard on myself that I’m not more empathetic.

Thus, while Donna was concerned about the well-being of her students, she was sometimes frustrated and confused by the actions of their parents. And while she was certainly sensitive to the feelings of others, at times she worried that she was not sensitive enough.

In general, Tommy spoke softly and politely, using words like “please” and “thank you” in his conversations, and he seemed eager
to help others in need. As already mentioned, one day in the cafeteria as lunch was ending, Tommy quietly, voluntarily, straightened the researcher’s materials into a neat stack and handed them to him. Another day, also during lunch, Tommy’s sandwich fell on the floor. When the researcher got him a new sandwich, Tommy made a deliberate effort to stop what he was doing, look into his eyes, and say “Thank you.”

Still, in spite of Tommy’s general politeness and willingness to help, at times he was extremely defensive and fiercely competitive. Indeed, on some occasions he would yell without a moment’s notice, hit or kick his classmates, retreat to his desk, and refuse to participate in class activities. This behavior led to resentment on the part of his peers. As one student said, “He pushes to get stuff. He throws temper tantrums...He says ‘I never get a turn’ and goes to tell the teacher.” Such reactions, in turn, further increased Tommy’s own anger and frustration. Thus, although Tommy could be polite and helpful, anticipating his moods and coping with his violent outbursts frustrated his peers and consumed much of Donna’s time and energy. As Donna stated:

I’m giving [Tommy] all this love, this time, and energy and [he’s] not responding. But he’s got so many other things that he has not dealt with and that are on his mind that make him break down...I see potential in Tommy, and it’s like slipping through my fingers because he has so much else going on, and it drives me crazy that this child is getting older by the second. That’s probably my biggest frustration.

There were times when, in spite of Donna’s best efforts to intervene when tensions began to rise, the class seemed collectively to hold its breath in the hope that Tommy would make it until lunch without blowing up.

Unlike Tommy, Calvin had a big laugh, a huge voice, and a grand smile. Like Tommy, the majority of Calvin’s activities were fairly consistent with those of the rest of the class. Calvin participated in class activities and discussions and eagerly joined his peers on the playground. Unlike the situation with Tommy, Donna felt supported by Calvin’s family. Calvin lived with his mother, his grandfather (his “Pop Pop”), and his grandmother. Calvin’s Pop Pop, in particular, spent considerable time with his grandson. He also verbally expressed his support and appreciation for Donna’s efforts. Although Calvin’s grandfather expressed concern about his daughter’s (Calvin’s mother’s) financial stability (e.g., Calvin received Title One financial assistance...
and his mother was apparently unemployed), Donna was convinced that Calvin received love and support at home.

Calvin was active and witty, and he wanted to be at the center of every event. He seemed to thrive on the opportunity to demonstrate his wit and bravado, and his energy and enthusiasm sometimes seemed inexhaustible. This was the case late one morning when several students gathered at one of the tables in the cafeteria at the beginning of the lunch hour. The conversation focused on numerous topics, including snowballs (it had snowed earlier that morning), the idea of exaggeration, and flying to the moon. Calvin lit up, flashed a big grin, and loudly told about going crabbing with his Pop Pop. Breanne followed suit, jumping into the conversation with wide eyes and a beaming face. Amidst expansive gestures, the children competed to speak and be heard. Often several children talked at once in what seemed a frenzy of speech and activity. Throughout the discussion, Calvin’s voice could be heard above the rest. He rose from his seat, tossed his apple in the air, and bragged about punching a boy he had caught talking to his girlfriend.

As might be expected, these activities did not go unnoticed. During the brief lunch period, both a cafeteria worker and a teacher stopped by the table to comment to, and about, Calvin. One of them said, “I see we have a guest [the researcher] today, you’ll have to use your best manners.” In spite of these warnings, the broad smiles, intense gestures, bright eyes, and loud, frenzied talk persisted until lunch was complete.

Although Calvin generally complied with Donna’s requests he, too, sometimes became frustrated and angry, especially when he was denied the opportunity to say what was on his mind. These frustrations were heightened when, in an effort to provide greater student choice and leadership during class discussions, Donna permitted the child who currently held the floor to select the next participant. When bypassed in the process of selection Calvin concluded, among other things, that “girls don’t want to pick boys” and that his classmates in general treated him unfairly. Although these reactions sometimes created tension with his peers, Calvin’s hostility did not persist, and the class was not as negative toward him as it was toward Tommy.

Donna was aware of Calvin’s desire to be included, and she provided opportunities for him to participate. However, since she wanted the other students to receive similar opportunities, she was unwilling simply to let Calvin have his way, and certain frustrations continued to arise. Still, Donna believed that progress was made as the year proceeded. As she stated one day when Calvin struggled to control his emotions, “Sometimes there’s another person that’s really trying to come out.”
Some of Calvin’s greatest frustrations involved other children, like Duncan, a bright-eyed, blonde-haired boy who complied with school expectations and had difficulty concealing his exasperation when he thought his peers were hindering him. One morning when Duncan attempted to explain the rules of a game at a newly established learning center, Calvin responded harshly, “Duncan, we know how to do it!” A few moments later Donna, who had overhead the exchange, came to the center and explained to Calvin that the reason Duncan already knew the rules was that she had earlier explained them to him. Interestingly, although Duncan was compliant with his teacher’s requests, Duncan’s mother (a room mother for Room 18) offered the harshest criticism Donna received all year. This criticism was presented in a scathing letter denouncing the *Eye of the Storm* activity, an activity designed to promote empathy for others.

On another occasion, the children were sitting at the rug for a lesson on editing. Calvin had been scowling and making loud, angry noises. Duncan turned on his hands and knees, his back toward Donna and his face toward Calvin. Poised approximately two feet away, he silently mimicked Calvin’s scowl. Then, resuming his original position, Duncan politely rejoined the discussion: “People shouldn’t get called on if they misbehave for attention.” Throughout the year, actions like these fueled Calvin’s resentment toward some of his peers and contributed to the difficulties he experienced in school.

**Gradual Changes in Room 18**

As the year proceeded, gradual changes could be observed in the thoughts and actions of the children in Room 18, including an increase in the regulation of their own activities and the actions of their peers. These regulating activities began as whispered “shushes” and quiet reminders about the classroom rules and their teacher’s expectations.

One day in mid November, for example, the students were working quietly at their desks grouped in clusters of four. Deanne, Michael, Josh and Tiffany sat in one group. Josh did some writing, then some drawing. Tiffany made a tiny sound, a gasp, looked at one of the adults in the room, smiled, and covered her mouth. There were occasional shushes in the room as the children monitored the noise level. Josh finished his assignment, got up to retrieve his writer’s workshop folder, paused to whisper to a friend, and returned to his desk and resumed his work. Tiffany glanced at what Josh was doing. Deanne, looking in the direction of a slight commotion in another group, stated in a voice loud enough for the teacher to hear, “Stop fighting.”

Donna looked up from her work and said to the class, “If it’s writer’s talk, it’s fine. If I hear you talking about what happened at recess or at home, it’s not okay.”
Deanne added, “And it has to be quietly.”

By mid-year, student participation in the classroom socialization process was so prevalent that the class sometimes regulated itself without Donna’s assistance. Like many of the other students, Calvin and Tommy participated in the process. One day Donna observed:

Calvin, have you noticed, will put his hand over his mouth. That’s the only thing that will get him—he knows he has to silence himself...He’ll call out and then go “oop” and then he’ll cover his mouth and then he’ll raise his hand. That’s his technique to get himself to do the right thing...He was doing it for a while, then I would say, “Good thinking, Calvin, in raising your hand.” And (I would call) on him right away. But lately I’ve been seeing him doing it and waiting. Then when he doesn’t call out then I’ll call on him....You could see him going through the process of ‘Here’s my rule. Here’s what I need to do in group.’ It’s great to see a kid actually, I mean, you can see the thinking going [on] right there.

On another occasion, Calvin approached the researcher with a smile and brandished his point card. It contained one letter as punishment but two stars for positive behavior. Calvin stated, “My mother is going to be proud of me. She’s going to let me take my bike out.” Donna later explained that, for the first time, Calvin had disciplined himself on his point card. He had asked for a letter for lunch behavior because he hadn’t followed the rules, but he assured Donna that he would work on the problem. Donna had given him the letter, but later that day she added two stars for good work in other areas.

Eventually, even Tommy began to utilize Donna’s socialization techniques. One morning, for example, after being removed from the classroom for disruptive behavior, Tommy returned to the room, approached the rug, and voluntarily apologized to the group, “I’m sorry for the way I acted.” Another day, Mr. Danny, the school counselor, gave Tommy some stickers to distribute to his peers for good behavior. Donna noted:

Tommy was supposed to give them out when he liked something that was going on or he liked the way he (another child) was behaving...or if he saw someone else doing something nice. He has...given a couple out, but I didn’t realize what he was doing. And then like today [I complimented someone]...and Tommy went over and gave them a sticker.
Thus, like many of their peers, Calvin and Tommy participated in the process of socializing themselves and others in accordance with the desires of their teacher and the goals of the school.

Nowhere, perhaps, was personal participation in the socialization process more apparent than in the development of one of Donna’s former first grade students. During an interview conducted the year prior to the study in Room 18, Donna discussed her approach to conflict resolution. One purpose of the approach, she observed, was to help students develop greater self-control by teaching them to explain to others (and, in so doing, to reinforce for themselves) what they were feeling during a particular situation and what they wanted the other person to do:

This year I have a little boy, Tymere... He’s like my challenge this year... Tymere needs to verbally reinforce himself whenever he does something, like “I finished this piece of work. See, I finished this piece of work, now I’m going to put this piece of work here”... So he’ll verbally tell you step-by-step as he does things and when he’s learned... and he wants me to say, “That’s good!” every time he does it... So when he, when somebody turns over in group and [even so much as] breathes on him, he’ll say, “Timothy, I don’t like it when you breathe on me, could you please move over?”... He’s like big time telling the [other students] exactly what bothers him instead of going, “Get away from me!” So he’s controlling his anger and saying what he doesn’t like... Some of the teachers have made fun of me because he’s so... robotic about it, but it works for him, you know. And hopefully sooner or later he’ll [internalize] it in his head and he won’t be saying it to me... You can tell it really makes him feel—not comfortable—but just in control... he’ll look at me and he’ll say, “I’m solving my own problem, I’m moving away from the person who’s bothering me.” I hear myself in his voice.

While Donna’s description of Tymere’s development was more detailed than that of her other students, similar processes occurred, in varying degrees, with Calvin, Tommy, and the rest of the class. In the next section we will analyze and critique these processes and relationships, setting the stage for our concluding discussion of implications for theory and practice.
Analysis of Findings

We believe our findings, viewed through the theoretical lenses provided at the beginning of the paper, provide important insights concerning the relationships between personal freedom and social control and the nature of problematic socialization processes in education and society. In spite of the efforts of caring and capable teachers like Donna Baldwin, our social and educational systems are still far from complete in their capacity to accommodate and appreciate a diversity of persons and perspectives. In turn, there can be little doubt but that this failure to embrace diversity limits the effectiveness of teachers like Donna and the growth of students like Tommy, Calvin, Duncan, and others.

As we turn our attention to an analysis of the findings, we must begin by acknowledging that many of the problems we face are systemic rather than individualistic. Indeed, given the constraints of the broader social environment within which schools like Bonner Elementary are located, we believe teachers like Donna Baldwin do a remarkable job. Beyond providing a sound academic curriculum, Donna addressed meaningful social issues, including the tenuous relationship between freedom and control. She respected and appreciated her students, and she helped them learn to respect one another. She provided choice and supported voice, and she reflected critically upon her own assumptions and activities. Moreover, Donna was sensitive, sophisticated, and skillful. She recognized Calvin’s frustration with Duncan when he explained the rules of the game, and she tactfully explained to the group why Duncan already knew this information. In so doing, she helped demystify what Calvin may have perceived as a false sense of superiority and helped diffuse the immediate situation. While it may have been possible for Donna to focus more explicitly on the nature and causes underlying our current social dilemmas, she nonetheless provided an important foundation for her students to engage in critical reflection and social analysis during their subsequent educational experiences. Even the challenge of helping young children contemplate the causes of some of our contemporary social problems was taken up in some of her lessons (e.g., the Eye of the storm activity). Unfortunately, such efforts met intense resistance (e.g., the letter from Duncan’s mother), which may help explain why they were not a more prevalent part of her overall curriculum.

In spite of the significant problems that persist in schools (and society), we do not believe the sole (or even primary) responsibility rests with individual teachers. Rather, our most pressing problems appear to be systemic in nature (e.g., see Capra, 1996; Houser & Kuzmic, 2001). Although Donna and a handful of her peers attempted to modify the mainstream-centric curriculum in their own classrooms,
for the most part these were isolated efforts limited to a few classrooms rather than broad, systemic attempts to assess and transform the curriculum (much less the ethos) of the school. Problematic conditions including a false sense of superiority (e.g., Duncan's mimicking and admonishment of Calvin), opposition to critical reflection (e.g., the letter from Duncan's mother to Donna), and insensitivity in general (e.g., like that of the art specialist) indicate that much work remains to be done. Similarly, the persistence of harmful norms and perspectives in the school and community (e.g., the mainstream-centric curriculum at Bonner Elementary; the Ku Klux Klan rally; the social, political and economic disparities between various participants) suggest that we still have a long way to go to affirm and support our sociocultural diversity.

As a result of conditions like these, much of the socialization activity in schools continues to be relatively uncritical and unidirectional in nature. The processes of change typically experienced by Calvin, Tommy and Tymere, and by the other students at Bonner Elementary, can be viewed as examples of what Berger and Luckmann (1966) have called "secondary socialization". Through the careful guidance of a secondary caregiver (e.g., a teacher), these students gradually learned alternative ways of thinking and acting—ways that challenged and modified earlier perspectives developed through interaction with their primary caregivers (e.g., parents, family).

From a cultural learning standpoint, it can be argued that Donna's students gradually internalized aspects of their teacher's and peers' perspectives and transformed their prior understandings accordingly (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Wertsch, 1985, 1991). They internalized Donna's approach to conflict resolution (e.g., "Timothy, I don't like it when you breathe on me, could you please move over?") and her behavior management strategies (e.g., when Calvin assigned himself a letter for misbehavior). They also internalized Donna's expectations for classroom interaction (e.g., "And it has to be quietly") and the school counselor's behavioristic approach to positive reinforcement (e.g., Tommy's rewarding of his peers with stickers for "good behavior").

From the perspective of theorists like Vygotsky (1978, 1986) and Wertsch (1985, 1991), such processes involve not only the development of new understandings, but also the construction of new and different mental, social, and linguistic capacities. On this view it could be argued that Tymere, for example, developed different strategies for social interaction, as well as a different language with which to think and communicate. According to Mead (1934), processes like these can contribute not only to the learning of alternative communication approaches, but to the development of a fundamentally different sense of self. Based on Mead's assertion that we come to know who we are
by viewing ourselves though the eyes of others, Donna may have been closer to the truth than she realized when she said, “I hear myself in his voice.”

While students like Calvin, Tommy and Tymere are often expected to gain new understanding through interaction with their peers (e.g., “there’s another person that’s really trying to come out”), it is less certain that members of the dominant culture (e.g., students like Duncan) are expected to learn from students like Calvin, Tommy or Tymere. Indeed, as Victor Lewis clearly understood, there is little indication that the most privileged participants in school and society are “willing to be changed and affected...and transformed by” the experiences of children like Calvin and Tommy. Hence, socialization in schools remains strongly unidirectional in nature. Stripped of the checks and balances and intricacies provided by a plurality of perspectives, such socialization would seem to provide little opportunity for the development of a consciousness of freedom—a freedom of choice. It seems unlikely that learning simply to “do the right thing” can yield such a consciousness unless students understand that the “right thing” sometimes involves adhering to personal convictions (e.g., resisting unidirectional assimilation) even if those convictions violate others’ conceptions of what may be the right thing to do.

While some form of socialization is inevitably needed for the good of the person and the good of society, the current approach is not the answer. The view of freedom we envision involves both consciousness and choice, including an awareness of the processes by which new perspectives evolve and prior views are challenged, and a measure of choice in deciding whether and to what extent one wishes to engage in these processes in the first place. We need to explore better ways to create and maintain educational environments conducive to the development of critical consciousness for a freedom of choice. Part of this work involves rethinking our own assumptions and motives, and part of it entails developing better ways to help children, parents, peers, and politicians examine the meaning, merits and mechanisms of an education for a freedom of choice. In the final section of the paper we will address these important challenges.

**Implications for Theory and Practice**

What do our observations about the relationship between personal freedom and social control in a first grade setting suggest for teaching in general? If freedom and control are interrelated and socialization is inevitable, as both the theoretical literature and our empirical findings seem to suggest, what conclusions can be drawn about the educational process, about education for freedom? At minimum, it seems the socialization processes employed in education should seek
to promote mutual accommodation rather than linear acculturation and a form of critical consciousness needed for a legitimate freedom of choice.

Mutual Accommodation in School and Society

In our estimation, an educational process based on mutual accommodation would be one in which all participants, teachers and students alike, would stretch their existing perspectives to make room for others. Both the person and the community would need to accommodate the other. Rather than expecting individual persons to assimilate unidirectionally into an unyielding community, or the broader community to support the activities of uncompromising persons, each would need to accommodate the other. For Donna, this involved incorporating her students' interests into the curriculum, really listening to what they had to say, and encouraging and permitting all their parents to participate in the school experience.

Promoting mutual accommodation in schools would require the meaningful inclusion of a variety of participants in the educational process. Much has been written about the importance of student-centered learning, the formation of parent-community-school partnerships, and the like. Such approaches must be utilized if we are to move toward the democratization of schools. While it is certainly possible to misuse these approaches (e.g., through engineered consent), if approached honestly and critically, authentic student participation and substantive parental and community partnerships of the kind initiated by teachers like Donna hold promise for the development of mutual accommodation in the educational process.

Mutual accommodation would include students, parents and the community in the educational decision-making process. Moving farther in the direction initiated by teachers like Donna, deep inclusion might encourage substantial student, parent, and community participation even in selecting educational approaches, determining the curriculum, and identifying modes of assessment. Students would help conceptualize the classroom atmosphere most conducive to (their own) learning and development. Rather than merely complying with the predetermined decisions of educational and political leaders or the reified, profit-motivated values of corporate America, mutual accommodation would mean that students, parents, and community members would have a real voice in determining what is worth knowing in the first place. Far from removing teachers from the equation, such approaches would place teachers in vital roles as architects of classrooms for democratic education (e.g., Brodhagen, 1995). And far from providing an invitation to anarchy, approaches like these could actually increase stability in the classroom and society (Brodhagen, 1995; Dewey, 1938; Kohl, 1988).
For teachers like Donna, mutual accommodation is reflected in a willingness to alter the curriculum to accommodate the interests and experiences of students and parents (e.g., Donna provided an interesting classroom environment, included parents as guest speakers, and permitted the students to select the next person to speak). For years, teacher-scholars have demonstrated that young children can make sense of difficult social issues. Vivian Paley (e.g., 1979, 1992), for example, used the preferred mode of the child—story and play—to help her kindergarten students develop greater empathy for children who regularly experience exclusion in schools and to reflect critically upon their own exclusionary attitudes and actions. While young children may lack the experience and maturity of older students, educators like Vivian Paley and Donna Baldwin demonstrate that providing a foundation for critical reflection and the development of empathy for others can begin early in life.

We have long known that, beyond influencing the mode of instruction, students can also help determine the nature of the curriculum (e.g., Dewey, 1902). Barbara Brodhagen (1995) took this challenge seriously when she invited her middle school students to participate in the development of the class curriculum. With Brodhagen’s support and encouragement, her students constructed a class constitution reflecting their needs, concerns, and ideas about how to thrive as an educational community. Their constitution included the following kinds of statements: “We appreciate our learning differences. We recognize our learning differences. We will be honest with one another in order to build trust. We will learn to resolve conflicts, which may involve learning to live with nonresolution. Each person will truly listen to every other person. We will cooperate and collaborate with one another. Having fun will naturally become part of our experiences.”

The students also helped plan and conduct student-parent-teacher conferences, and they brainstormed authentic, personally relevant questions about life and society that strongly influenced the classroom curriculum. Some of the students’ questions about self and the world included: “How did my skin color come about? What will happen to me after I die? Why was I born who I am and into my family? Why do some people/groups think they are better? Why are some people gay? Why are so many politicians dishonest? Will there ever be a President who is not a white man? Will there ever be enough for all to survive? Why are some kids popular? Why do we only hear about the bad stuff?” Rather than directing the action from the front of the classroom, Brodhagen’s role was to facilitate the activity and collaborate with her students. She modeled how to hold discussions and ask clarifying questions, listened to be sure the group was not
controlled by one or two students, and offered encouragement and suggestions.

Related approaches are also possible in the early grades. Although not as elaborate Brodhagen’s approach, Donna encouraged her first-graders to help determine the curriculum by surveying their interests, listening attentively to their thoughts and concerns, and integrating their responses into her daily lessons. Similar methods have also been used by teacher-scholars like Vivian Paley (1978, 1990, 1992), whose emergent curricula in the lower grades have been based, in large part, on a willingness to consider students’ personal concerns and the evolving needs of the classroom community.

We know that it is possible, through honest negotiations and critical self-examination, to develop mutually respectful and trusting relationships with alienated students. This was the case for Herbert Kohl (1988), for example, whose teaching in a school in Harlem during the 1960s was informed by often painful but incalculably valuable reflection upon his white, middle class attitudes and assumptions. Kohl was not satisfied until he began to permit himself to be changed and affected by his students’ experiences. Again, strong parallels exist in the early grades with teacher-scholars like Vivian Paley (who seem relentless in their quest to monitor their own beliefs and motives) and classroom practitioners like Donna Baldwin (who, in spite of incredible compassion in a difficult situation, worried that she may not have been empathetic enough). While no single teacher can be expected to do it all, accomplishments like these demonstrate that it is possible to promote a greater degree of mutual accommodation even under the most difficult of circumstances.

Toward a Critical Consciousness for a Freedom of Choice

Finally, we believe it is possible for educators, even in the earliest of grades, to help students begin to develop a different kind of consciousness—a critical consciousness for a freedom of choice. Indeed, we do not believe our society can continue to survive, much less improve, without such a consciousness. In order to address our persistent inequities (e.g., the opportunity gap; the culture of domination) and the crisis of perception that keeps them in place, it is imperative that teachers help their students begin to develop a critical consciousness for a freedom of choice.

A critical consciousness for a freedom of choice would require not only a critical awareness of the relationship between self and society, but also an awareness of the existence of consciousness itself, and of the importance of remaining critical and conscious of one’s own ever-evolving consciousness. Only through such an awareness will individual citizens, like Calvin, Tommy and Duncan, as they grow
and mature, be able to critique the mechanisms, as well as the consequences, of their personal participation in their own socialization. And only thus can these understandings be communicated to others.

Since patterns of oppression are established early in life (e.g., Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Foucault, 1972; Lubeck, 1994; Paley, 1992), this is where the work must begin. The task for educators is not to determine whether it is possible to begin during childhood (Cannella, 1993, Mead, 1934, Paley, 1978 & 1992 and others have demonstrated that it is), but how best to proceed for the good of the person and the health of society. Vivian Paley (1978, 1992) began by insisting that her students struggle to make sense of problematic social conditions and personal actions occurring in the classroom (e.g., the practice and experience of exclusion). Donna Baldwin really listened to her students, expected them to listen to one another, and encouraged them to consider the feelings of others. Both teachers used the media preferred by children—play, story, and direct, honest discussion—to help lay a foundation for the development of the kind of consciousness needed to empathize with others, to critique self and society, and to identify the mechanisms and consequences of their own socialization.

It is difficult to speculate about what might be added to the efforts of teachers like these. At some point we may have to acknowledge that further progress cannot be made without greater support from the rest of the community. Still, the literature we have reviewed does imply some additional ways to explore the meanings of freedom, identify unnamed possibilities, and name the obstacles that must be addressed for these possibilities to become reality. Recognizing that exclusion practiced early in life is later institutionalized in the form of racism, sexism and classism (to name but a few), Paley (1992) utilized the power of storytelling to help her students begin to name their own exclusionary attitudes and actions. She also created a classroom environment in which her students could communicate with their peers the feelings they experienced when they felt excluded. Donna Baldwin provided a variety of social and cultural experiences, encouraged her class to contemplate the feelings of others, and helped her students name pressing social problems (e.g., homelessness) and basic human needs (e.g., food, shelter, love and care). Although Donna’s focus was different than Paley’s, she too encouraged her students to communicate their feelings and expectations when they were dissatisfied with the actions of their peers. Barbara Brodhagen went a step further when she encouraged her students to address their own learning and development in the class constitution.

Building on efforts like these, we believe it is possible to help children name and struggle more directly with the processes of socialization in school and society. We might begin by focusing on an understanding of self, the value of diversity, and critical concepts re-
lated to socialization. Greater self-awareness might be encouraged by focusing on questions like: “Who am I? How do I think, and what makes me feel? What kinds of things do I think, feel, enjoy? What sort of person am I? What makes me special? What kind of person would I like to become? What can I do to become that kind of person? What can I do to keep myself from becoming the kind of person I don’t want to be?”

Concerned with individualistic conceptions of self and the dichotomization of self and society, Houser and Kuzmic (2001) have suggested that we might begin to think in terms of self-in-community and communities-of-selves. Along these lines, we might also ask children to consider questions like: “Who are we together? What sort of community are we? What kind of community would we like to become? How can we become that kind of community? Must we all be the same in order to be accepted?”

Valuing diversity is another important dimension of a critical consciousness for a freedom of choice. A number of resources are currently available to help children explore the value of personal, social and ecological diversity and the related concepts of multiplicity and complexity. Outstanding children’s books address the complex balance of biodiversity in nature, the value of social and cultural plurality, the complexity of self, the importance of critical reflection, and the merits of learning to suspend judgment of others. Materials like these might be used to supplement classroom discussions based on the following kinds of questions: “Why do you think there are so many different kinds of plants and animals in the world? Why is there such a variety? Why do you think there are so many different kinds of people and ideas? Is variety also important with people? Why? How are you different from your friends and family? What special qualities do you have that help your friends or family, and what qualities do they have that help you? What are some of the differences in this class that make our community interesting? Can our differences make us a better community? How?”

While questions like these would need to be tailored to the particular situation and the maturity of the children, they begin to get at important issues related to the value of diversity in life and society. Of course, these kinds of questions are only a beginning. Ultimately, children will need to struggle with the hard work of valuing diversity. Since valuing diversity is not always easy, teachers also need to address the merits of suspending judgment, the challenges of living with uncertainty and ambiguity, and the importance of knowing (or at least sensing) when to wait and when to act.

Finally, developing a critical consciousness of one’s own socialization involves the exploration of related factors such as friendship, community, social acceptance and rejection, and persistence, compli-
ance and resistance. Some of these issues can be addressed by asking the following kinds of questions: "Why do you think children do what their friends want them to do? What if one child wanted another child to do something he/she didn’t want to do? And what if the second child tried to say no, but the first one really wanted him to do it anyway? Why? Why do people sometimes do what others want them to do even if they don’t think it’s a good idea? Has this kind of thing ever happened to you? What does it feel like to be pushed to do something you don’t want to do? If it feels this way, why do think people still push?

Using these kinds of questions as a beginning point, the conversation might gradually be refocused as an authentic social problem with which the students should struggle. The problem might be posed as follows: "Now what do we do? What if a person doesn’t want to go along with a friend but is worried that the friend will be angry if she doesn’t agree? Then what? Is it possible to say ‘no’ and still remain friends?" To push even further, the problem might again be shifted: "Are there times when it is important to go along, even if we don’t feel like it? When? What about the person doing the pushing? Are there ever times when it might be important to keep pushing, even if your friend doesn’t want to go along? Are there times when it is appropriate to encourage others to do things they don’t wish to do? When? How can we know when to go along and when to refuse? How can we know when to push and when to stop? How can we know when to wait and when to act?"

Although rudimentary in nature, we believe conversations like these can help lead to a better understanding of the socialization process and to the development of perspectives and abilities necessary for critical citizenship in a democratic society. Having posed critical issues as problems for students to contemplate, we think it is essential for the teacher to wait and to listen, to encourage the children to sustain the struggle, to permit multiple views to be heard, and to invite deeper exploration through reflective thought and ongoing deliberation. Rather than hastening to provide closure (e.g., “the right answer”), students need to continue contemplating a variety of alternatives. In this way children can begin to develop a more critical and complex understanding of the very process of socialization.

In conclusion, many teachers, like Donna Baldwin, have made significant strides in creating classroom conditions conducive to the development of a critical consciousness for a freedom of choice. They create dynamic classroom environments in which academic knowledge is constructed and students learn to care about themselves and others. To accomplish these goals, they provide interesting and diverse educational experiences, authentic choices, and a climate of respect and appreciation. We believe it is essential to push thinking
deeper, to encourage children to name and to struggle with the socialization process. However, we recognize that teachers like Donna Baldwin cannot be expected to assume the challenge alone.

In spite of the work that remains to be done, we are deeply impressed by the efforts and accomplishments of teachers like Donna. Numerous students and communities have contributed as well. Year after year, children like Calvin and Tommy and Duncan and Tymere establish relationships with their teachers in good faith. They come to school, sit in class, participate in educational activities and, for the vast majority of the time, follow the established rules and procedures. While the parents of these children are subject to the same negative conditions that often influence our society as a whole, most parents truly seem to care about the welfare of their children and the efforts of their teachers.

As a result of the efforts of many people, some progress has in fact been made. However, in spite of our gains, more support will be needed if teachers like Donna Baldwin are to maximize their abilities. If students are to develop a critical understanding of their own socialization, they must continue to struggle with the complex relationships between personal freedom and social control, and teachers like Donna must receive support and encouragement from parents, peers, administrators, college and university faculty, and the community in general. Searching beneath and beyond our existing assumptions, we must continue to develop a different sort of consciousness in our students and ourselves. We must strive to develop a critical awareness of the world in which we live, of the importance of being critical and conscious of our own socialization, and of the means by which to support similar understandings for generations to come.

Notes

1 We recognize the concept “citizen” is limited. It tends to emphasize the public sphere rather than the private sphere, and it tends, by definition, to include some members of a given society (e.g., on the basis of officially sanctioned criteria for membership) while excluding others. The least exclusionary use of the term may be the notion of the “global citizen.”

2 Although this paper focuses primarily on issues of race, the broader study identified numerous other factors influencing the participants’ perspectives, actions and relationships—factors that work together and can never really be separated. Gender, for example, certainly influenced the relationships between the various participants. However, since there are limits as to what can adequately be addressed in any given paper, we have chosen to focus primarily on issues of race while acknowledging the existence and importance of other essential influences. In another paper currently in preparation, gender factors and research ethics will be explored in greater detail.

3 The works of theorists like Fritjof Capra (1996), Riane Eisler (1987) and Daniel Quinn (1992, 1997) suggest that, over a period of millennia, humans have developed and legitimized a vast, overarching culture of domination, consumption, and fragmentation based on a highly competitive, mechanistic, and reductionistic view of reality. Like other reified conceptions, these views and values often elude the critical attention of their authors and benefactors. While alternative beliefs and conceptions are systematically rejected. According to Capra (1996), many
of the social and environmental challenges we currently face are rooted in these unexamined assumptions—assumptions that collectively constitute a "crisis of perception" (p. 3). Unfortunately, this crisis of perception negatively affects not only human beings, but the entire web of life (e.g., Capra, 1996; Shepard, 1982).

4 There is seldom a clear demarcation between oppressed and oppressor. To some extent, "oppression" is relative and context specific. However, the difficulty of isolating and quantifying oppression should not be used as a justification for deflecting responsibility for one's own oppressive activities. Rather, it only means that it is all the more important to carefully attend to historical patterns and preponderances, while at the same time taking seriously the concerns of individual persons who believe they have been oppressed, no matter who those persons may be.

5 Although multiple modes of communication and varied forms of intelligence exist within our pluralistic society (e.g., Au, 1980; Belenky, et al.; Heath, 1983; Philips, 1972; Quinn, 1992, 1997; Sternberg, 1987), we are concerned that little has been done to utilize these valuable resources for the improvement of self and society. Indeed, more often than not, conformity precludes diversity (Belenky, 1984; Capra, 1996; Ogbru, 1987; Quinn, 1992, 1997; Sternberg, 1987). Generally speaking, complex systems that demand uniformity as the price of survival risk diminishing the diversity they need for self-organization, self-regulation, and self-improvement. This is as true of social systems (e.g., Baldwin, 1988; Eisler, 1987; Merchant, 1994; Quinn, 1992) as it is of our ecosystem (e.g., Capra, 1996; Quinn, 1992).

6 Other scholars, like bell hooks (1994) and Gloria Anzaldua (1987), have also provided outstanding analyses of the relationships between and control. In addition to being critical and contextual, these works embody the authors' own lived experiences.

7 While this study considered community, state and national contexts, we recognize that global events also affect, both directly and indirectly, the lives and conditions of participants in local venues.

8 According to Donna, only a few of the students actually needed the point cards, but she used them with the whole class so the few who needed them would not feel singled out.

9 Donna was keenly aware of the need for improvement in certain aspects of her teaching. This was evident not only in her daily efforts to improve her practice, but also in the reflective nature of her comments during informal interviews and her responses while helping interpret the data for the study. As just one example, she expressed discomfort with her approach to the Eye of the Storm activity even before receiving the note from Duncan's mother.

10 We acknowledge that some form of socialization is necessary. It is difficult to deny that some kind of intervention is needed for students who, like Tommy, become violent in the classroom. And surely it is unfair to others for children like Calvin to monopolize the teacher's time and energy. Nor can it be beneficial for students like Tommy and Calvin to falsely conclude that society will continue to accommodate such behavior. Nor again can society itself benefit from a diversity of views if those who hold differing perspectives are unwilling or unable to communicate with others. However, the current approach simply is not the answer.

11 This assertion is supported not only by a solid theoretical base (e.g., Mead, 1934) but also by empirical research in early childhood education (see Cannella, 1993, for example, who found that shared cognitive experiences in which children collaborate to solve perspective-taking problems can result in cognitive change).

12 Researchers like Michelle Fine (1987) and Paul Willis (1977) have demonstrated that high school students consciously critique socialization processes occurring in school. It is likely that the foundations for this sort of critique begin much earlier.

13 See Houser (1999) for specific uses of critical children's literature for the social studies.

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Service Learning in Student Teaching:
"What's Social Studies For?"*

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Abstract
Education for a democratic society has been a powerful, long-standing rationale for the entire public school curriculum. But the idea has special relevance for social studies education. This study examined the extent to which notions of democratic citizenship developed in the personal theory of teaching held by one preservice social studies teacher during a student teaching semester. The research posed the question of whether this beginning teacher's incorporation of service learning into his curriculum would serve as a catalyst to help him develop ideas about the role of social studies and what it means to educate for democratic citizenship. Though he believed service-learning was his most powerful and effective teaching during the semester, this student teacher mostly failed to connect what he learned from service-learning to his developing rationale for social studies. The results raise questions about the possibilities for democratic projects in teacher education and the supports needed to facilitate such work.

Introduction
The theoretical rationale for service-learning, as well as the growing number of success stories of service-learning as an educational intervention, suggest possibilities for its use in preservice teacher education, especially by those teacher educators whose work is guided by a commitment to schools as instruments for promoting democratic empowerment. Education for democracy has particular salience for the field of social studies education, since social education theorists have long played up this particular aim as a rationale for the field’s inclusion in the modern school curriculum (Marker & Mehlinger, 1992). Though rigorous disagreement about the meaning of the democratic ideal has plagued researchers and teachers of social studies education, the rationale is firmly entrenched in the rhetoric, if not the actual

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practice, of teaching and learning in social studies (Hursh & Ross, 2000). Arguably then, one essential task facing social studies teacher education is to help beginning teachers develop their own defensible and articulate understandings of democratic citizenship education. Yet, this part of the teacher education agenda appears to be easier said than done. At best, research reveals a mixed record of success on this measure (Ross, 1987a; Dinkelman, 1999, 2000; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). A more sobering read of the literature on preservice teacher education credits programs with having little influence on the philosophical foundations of beginning teachers as they develop their personal theories of teaching (see Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1981; Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990).

Service learning may offer opportunities to address the challenge of teacher education for democracy. Service-learning refers to organized school service experiences that are connected to the academic curriculum, coordinated with actual community needs, structured to provide time for student reflection, designed to extend student learning beyond the school, and directed toward the development of a sense of caring for others (Alliance for Service-Learning in Education Reform, 1993). The growing research base on both the theory and outcomes of service-learning as a curricular intervention suggest a close fit with the democratic aims put forth by leading social educators since the field’s inception. Can service-learning be used by social studies teacher educators as a tool to promote the rationale-building efforts of their students? This study examines the potential and promise of service-learning in reform-oriented social studies teacher education and is framed by the following research question:

How does service-learning influence the understandings preservice teachers hold of social studies as a form of democratic civic education?

Two student teachers—Sam and Betsy—participated in the study. Both used service-learning curricula in their high school social studies settings. In this context, their developing perspectives on social studies education were investigated. Due to article length constraints, this paper reports the analysis of the experiences of one of these student teachers—Sam.¹

Theoretical Framework

Two organizing sets of ideas form the theoretical basis for the research. First is a theory that links notions of social studies as a form of democratic citizenship education with claims about the aims and outcomes of service-learning theory. The apparent congruence between
the rationales for both social studies and service-learning leads to this study’s initial research question. As well, this theoretical convergence helps explain part of the framework utilized in shaping the investigation, interpreting data, and generating inferences to explain results. Second is a theory of the activity of teaching that points to the important role beliefs and conceptions play in learning to teach. Here it is assumed that beliefs and conceptions of the field are integral features of both the process of teacher change and teacher decision making. Thus an important aim of preservice teacher education is to encourage beginning teachers to engage in sustained, deliberate reflection on the constellation of beliefs, attitudes, conceptions, and assumptions underlying their personal theories of teaching (Handal & Lauvas, 1987; Ross, Cornett, & McCutcheon, 1992). In this section, I describe these two theories in order.

**Democratic Citizenship and Social Studies Education**

The strong relationship between schooling and a democratic social order is not a new idea. Since its inception as a discernable part of the school curriculum, those working in social studies have struggled to shape the idea into a workable rationale that would unify the field. Mainstream social studies foundations work centers on the “three traditions model” (Barr, Barth, and Shermis, 1978) consisting of social studies for cultural transmission, social studies as social science disciplines, and social studies to promote reflective inquiry. Each tradition favors certain conceptualizations of both the scope and nature of democratic life, and the differences among these views give rise to the particular arguments and recommendations of each camp. Over the past several decades, work rooted in critical, feminist, and post-modern education perspectives has challenged mainstream perspectives on the field (see Ross, 1997). The result is a “radical perspective” (Newmann, 1988) that does not easily fit the three traditions model. With some exceptions, most of these different intellectual orientations share a general set of common educational commitments, including emphases on decision making (e.g. Engle and Ochoa, 1988); rational deliberation on public issues (e.g. Oliver and Shaver, 1966); active, as opposed to passive, engagement of students in thinking about important social studies content (NCSS, 1994); and preparation for at least minimal participation in civic life (e.g. Newmann, 1975).

Amidst the disagreements that characterize the field, these common commitments then suggest at least a partial vision of what we might expect to see in the best social studies classrooms. Students should be using their minds well in considering powerful questions, ideas, and social problems. Students should be actively engaged in challenging assumptions, looking for evidence, and considering alternative viewpoints. Students ought to participate in deliberation
about what is meant by authentic democratic civic participation. Unfortunately, there is little evidence that such activity is taking place. In most social studies classrooms, students rarely have the kinds of experiences that might give them practice in developing democratic habits of mind (Goodlad, 1984; Sizer, 1984; McNeil, 1986). For example, students are rarely asked to think critically about public issues (Newmann, 1988). Instead, they mostly memorize facts. They are intellectually passive. They very seldom are challenged to formulate their own original ideas. Students find social studies content disconnected from their own interests and see little value in this part of their school day (Schug, Todd, and Beery, 1984). Furthermore, the research literature documents a wide gulf separating social education theorists at universities from classroom social studies teachers (Leming, 1989). Historically, the former have seen reflection on the democratic foundations of the field as crucially important, while the latter have viewed rationale-building as peripheral to their concerns (Marker & Mehlinger, 1992; Shaver, 1987). This “two-cultures” thesis may explain some of the divergence between the ideals of democratic education and the reality of teaching and learning in many social studies classrooms.

Arguably, the manner in which beginning social studies teachers are prepared for professional practice must figure into an explanation of why social studies as a school subject has failed to live up to its democratic ideals. Unfortunately, social education research provides few investigations into the ways preservice teacher education helps beginning teachers incorporate the ideas of democratic citizenship education into their developing professional identities. Though recent research has addressed perspectives on democratic citizenship held by preservice elementary social studies teachers (Ross & Yeager; 1999) and practicing social studies teachers (e.g. Anderson, et. al. 1997; Vinson, 1998), this work has not investigated the development of these perspectives, and the survey orientation of this work has done little to match perspective development with actual classroom practice. Thus, the question remains— how can social studies teacher education promote the idea of democratic citizenship in ways that are meaningful to those who are about to enter the profession?

**Service Learning**

Service-learning provides one possible answer to this question. In theory, the core tenets of service-learning would seem to map well onto the democratic citizenship mission of social studies. The National Service-Learning Cooperative (1998) lists “essential elements” of service-learning, including emphases on academic discipline content, student participation, problem solving, collaboration, diversity, student reflection, and issues and problems drawn from the school or
community. Service-learning challenges traditional school practices that have come under fire by scholars who stress the link between public schooling and a rich civic life (Battistoni, 1985; Barber, 1992; Goodlad 1996; Fenstermacher, 1997). The aims and purposes of service-learning appear to match much of the agenda mapped out for social studies education by leading scholars (e.g., Oliver and Shaver, 1966; Hunt and Metcalf, 1968; Newmann, 1975) and the field’s main professional organization (NCSS, 1994). If service-learning focuses preservice teachers’ attention on real-life community issues and challenges them to help their students participate in civic life, service-learning may provide a rich opportunity for student teachers to directly experience social studies as a form of democratic citizenship education. In turn, this experience could shape their beliefs about what the field has to offer the contemporary school curriculum.

Adding to the strong theoretical rationale for the role of service-learning in citizenship training, there is a growing empirical research base on the positive outcomes of this curricular reform. For example, Donahue (1999) reports that preservice English teachers found their use of service-learning posed dilemmas of practice that opened up “an authentic opportunity to appreciate teaching as a political and moral endeavor” (p. 693). Wade (1995) reported that preservice social studies teachers who implemented service-learning in their teaching talked about benefits to the community and student motivation. In this research, study participants also developed a greater sense of self-efficacy in the classroom. Similar results are found in research conducted in teacher education and other higher education settings (Root, 1994; Wade & Anderson, 1996; Erickson and Anderson, 1997; Markus, et. al. 1993).

Drawn from both public school and higher education contexts, these practical success stories suggest promising possibilities for the use of service-learning in preservice social studies teacher education. Yet these possibilities have not been investigated with attention to the specific question of influencing beginning social studies teachers to better understand the democratic citizenship mission of their field. This research design targets this shortcoming.

**Beliefs, Conceptions, and Learning to Teach**

The relationship between service-learning and social studies for democratic citizenship education provides the theoretical underpinnings to this study. The research finds a different sort of theoretical basis in a set of assumptions about the role of belief and conceptions in learning to teach and the teacher change process. As Richardson (1996) points out, there has been a marked shift on research in teacher education over the last few decades as interest has turned toward the ways in which beliefs (and related constructs) influence the teacher
change process. In part, this change in emphasis has been fueled by a growing interest among educational researchers in hermeneutic and naturalistic research traditions and their stress on the complex relationships among teachers' frames of reference and their actions. Of late, case studies of the teacher socialization process have become the most prevalent type of teacher education research. The shift from process-product research designs to more interpretive modes of inquiry has been sparked by increasing acceptance of the simple dictum that context matters (see Zeichner, 1999). One widely accepted feature of the teaching and learning context is the set of beliefs and concepts teachers hold concerning their work.

This research falls in line with this trend toward locating and understanding the beliefs and intentions that underlie teaching practices. In this study, "beliefs" are defined, in part, in the widely accepted sense of the term— as "psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true" (Richardson, 1996, p. 103). However, drawing on recent scholarship that suggests the interactive nature of beliefs and actions (e.g. Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Ross, 1987b), the intention was to go beyond self-reported statements of ideology and attitude and to connect propositions about education to the activity of teaching and learning to teach. Here then, beliefs are assumed to have a vitality that influences teacher decision-making. In this sense, beliefs can be understood in much the same way that "perspectives" have been used in prior social studies teacher education research (Adler, 1984; Goodman & Adler, 1985; Ross, 1987b)—as ideas that are rooted in context, animated in practice, and held by teachers concerning particular acts of teaching.

Closely related to beliefs is the idea of conceptions. As used here, conceptions are synonymous with beliefs except the term does not necessarily imply the same interrelationship with practice. In other words, conceptions are distinct from beliefs in that they may exist as mental understandings on the part of the study participants without necessarily influencing their practices. Furthermore, it is held that both beliefs and conceptions are brought to teacher education programs by students and are amenable to change, though the degree of amenability is a matter of long-standing debate in the teacher education research community. This investigation is predicated on the notion that understanding the complexities of beliefs and conceptions held by preservice teachers may contribute to more effective efforts to influence teacher development. Teacher decision-making is complex and multi-faceted. Beliefs and conceptions alone do not explain why teachers make the decisions they do. Yet, there is a theoretical assumption made in this research that the beliefs and concepts that figure into beginning teachers' rationales for their work in a given curricular area
are important factors of influence in shaping their practice. In other words, this paper assumes that how beginning teachers answer the question, “What’s social studies for?” is important in understanding the instructional decision-making manifest in their current and future professional practice.

**Methods Of Inquiry**

The research question is best investigated in context, as the process under study occurs, and honoring the perspectives of the participants. Accordingly, I employed a qualitative case study methodology (Stake, 1995). Two volunteer preservice teachers were selected from a group of 10 preservice students just beginning their student teaching semester at a large Midwestern US research university. The student teacher featured in this analysis—Sam—was a 22 year old, Euro-American man completing his Bachelor of Arts in History through the University’s Liberal Arts School and teaching certification in the School of Education. Sam student taught in the spring term of 1999 and began that semester with the expectation that he would incorporate service-learning into his field-placement curriculum. Sam’s student teaching semester was completed at Bellwood High School, a mixed race, predominantly working class, large high school in a large Midwestern metropolitan area.

In addition to the typical student teaching program (i.e. university supervision, return-to-campus seminars and related assignments, and cooperating teacher supervision), Sam and Betsy received instruction on the implementation of service-learning “modules” in their student teaching settings. This instruction was coordinated by a University faculty member affiliated with the University’s Center for Learning through Community Service. Through monthly workshops, Sam learned the essential elements of service-learning (National Service Learning Cooperative, 1998), and he worked collaboratively with Betsy to support their efforts to enact service-service-learning curriculum in their school settings.

A variety of data were collected, drawn mainly from four sources. The first of these was a series of semi-structured interviews (Patton, 1990) conducted with Sam at the start, midpoint, and conclusion of the semester. Each interview lasted approximately 90 minutes. The resulting interviews provided a rich, in-depth source of data regarding his developing perspectives about social studies, identity as a teacher, and conceptions and beliefs about democratic citizenship. Interviews were constructed from two sources. First, there were questions stemming from themes established by the research questions (e.g. What meaning does democratic citizenship education have for you?”). Second, additional questions were derived from in-process analysis
of study findings, and were tied to the particularities of the case under study (e.g. Describe what you considered as you chose "racism in local history" as the focus of your service-learning curriculum?).

The second primary source of data was the researcher's on-site observations of Sam's practice during the student teaching semester. These observations occurred periodically throughout the semester, and with greater frequency during periods when he was engaged in implementing his service-learning module. Field notes generated from these observations included both descriptive and reflective material (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) tied to direct observations. For each observation, the researcher took notes from the back of the classroom and did not participate in the activities of the lesson. Post-observation discussions, conducted directly after each classroom observation, allowed for questioning and dialogue about the service-learning project and its outcomes, and provided opportunities for the student teacher and researcher to share ideas, interpretations, and problems.

The final two main data sources proved less productive than the first two, but still generated helpful data. One such source was the assignments and other written work (e.g. lesson plans and personal correspondence) produced by participants over the course of the semester. Also, the university supervisor charged with overseeing Sam and Betsy, and their respective cooperating teachers, were periodically interviewed during the semester.

Data analysis was guided by the naturalistic research paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and involved a careful meshing of two types of analytical categories. Coding and analysis were driven in part by "foreshadowed problems" established by the conceptual structure set by the research question (Stake, 2000). These predetermined codes stemmed from long-standing issues derived from research literature on service-learning and rationale-building among social studies preservice teachers. For example, a common theme in debates over various rationales for social studies is the stand specific views take on social reconstructionism—the idea that teachers are obliged to shape their curricula to promote particular (usually "democratic") social and political agendas (Stanley & Nelson, 1994, Stanley, 2000). That is, to what extent should social studies teachers teach for democratic social change? Given the prominence of this question in research in social studies rationale-building research, the theme became part of the analytical framework supporting the study.

In addition to those coding categories established by the research problem, another sort was derived from the actual data collected. The researcher inductively derived coding categories as the investigation unfolded. These emergent themes and topics were identified from the data as they were collected, coded, and frequently reviewed during the semester under study and the following summer.
Both kinds of analytical categories—foreshadowed and emergent—were employed in reviewing data. In general, the conceptual coding structure took shape around concepts related to democratic citizenship education, Sam’s developing teaching identity, his understanding of the theory and practical dimensions of service-learning, and his reasons for instructional decision-making. The particular coding categories underwent revision as patterns and themes were derived inductively from subsequent participant responses and other data. Table One lists the key coding categories used in the analysis. In total, fourteen coding categories were derived and used in the analysis. Sam collaborated in “member checks” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 314-316) of tentative hypotheses and conclusions, and his responses were carefully considered in the analysis. Though in-process data analysis was an integral part of the study, the most thorough reflection on data took place after the student teaching semester had ended, when notes and other data sources could be read and synthesized in their entirety.

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Categories</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>teacher decision making—what to teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher decision making—how to teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conceptions of democratic citizenship—how to teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conceptions of democratic citizenship—what to teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conceptions of social studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reform orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good teaching—generic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good teaching—social studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>methods class influence—on rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>methods class influence—on practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>field influence—on rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>field influence—on practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curriculum builder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion of Results**

At the end of the semester, the service-learning module was viewed by Sam as the most powerful curriculum he taught. Sam spoke glowingly of service-learning and described how this unit stood apart from the more traditional strategies he employed in his classes. He expressed an interest in making service-learning a more central fea-
ture of his instructional approach in years to come. He also identified student-learning outcomes from service-learning consistent with the idea's rationale. For example, students were actively engaged, found the subject matter content relevant, learned to take perspectives of others, and developed a greater sense of community. By these measures, service-learning seemed to "work." However, the research uncovered little influence of service-learning experiences on the understandings Sam held of social studies as a form of democratic civic education. That is, he did not connect the practical benefits of service-learning as an instructional process with the theoretical basis of his work as a social studies teacher. In this sense, service-learning did not lead to substantial changes in the principles underlying his personal theory of teaching and learning, especially with respect to the field of social studies. In this section, Sam's case is examined in an attempt to discuss his experiences with service-learning vis-à-vis his developing rationale for teaching and for teaching social studies.

Start of the Semester

Sam began his student teaching semester under the supervision of a 30+ year veteran teacher at Bellwood High School. His assignment put him in charge of a sophomore-level Sociology class and a senior-level Government class. With his cooperating teacher, he also helped coordinate a Peer Mediation and Conflict Resolution program/class. Sam described his cooperating teacher as a "great person," a caring teacher who had much to share with him about good teaching. Yet he found her methods of instruction wanting, especially in her social studies classes. According to Sam, her teaching focused on content coverage at the expense of challenging students to think critically. Mostly, Sam was impressed by the way she interacted with students. From his cooperating teacher, Sam learned about what he described as "the personal side of teaching." In this context, Sam was given mixed autonomy to test out methods and activities that he felt would help his students learn. In his Sociology class, he felt tied to the pace of coverage set by his cooperating teacher. In his Government class however, Sam had only a general outline of topics comprising the curriculum. Decisions about how to teach these various topics were largely his own.

At the beginning of the semester, it was clear that Sam was not relying on a clearly articulated rationale for teaching social studies. This is not to suggest his teaching decisions were baseless. Sam saw himself as someone who was going to shake up conventional patterns of drill-and-fill social studies teaching practices. He had a sense that passive content coverage did not represent what he hoped to accomplish, even if he was not very clear (at the start of the semester) about what he did hope to accomplish. However, little of his reform-orientation appeared to be rooted in a vision for the field. As he stated,
I don’t have a set in stone rationale, set in stone purposes. I think I know the first step. I know that I’d like to teach history different from how most students learn it. I’d like to teach them things they’re not exposed to, maybe not, exposed to learning but haven’t learned. As far as setting some rationales, I’m having trouble. Methods had a lot of discussion of democratic education and preparing for democratic citizenship, and I think a lot about that, but whether that’s…. it seems like almost too abstract to me. (interview, 1-13-99)

In effect, Sam was firm in the conviction that his teaching ought to encourage active, engaged participation among students. He further believed he had a responsibility to “break through the mythology and show students a different way of seeing things.” Such leaning is consistent with dominant rationale-building efforts in social studies education, but Sam’s own views were not rooted in that set of ideas. He noted, “My rationale is things need to be changed. Now whether that means there’s a larger purpose involved—I’m not sure” (interview 1-13-99).

His teaching identity was connected to the field of social studies, but only marginally. Within the last year, as he started taking education courses, in addition to completing work toward his history major, he began to view himself as a social studies teacher, rather than a teacher in the generic sense of the term. He claimed, “I can see myself as a social studies teacher mainly because I can’t imagine teaching a science class or physical education class” (interview, 1-13-99). Significantly, his education courses led him to see that the act of teaching history is something different from the act of knowing about history. Sam explained, “I realize now that you have to think differently as a teacher, than you do as a student of history…. The real challenge of the teacher is you have to think about how is the best, how am I going to present this” (interview, 1-13-99). Here Sam makes the distinction between what Shulman (1986) termed “subject matter content knowledge” and “pedagogical content knowledge.” Yet the early formation of these disciplinary understandings had not yet expanded into another category of teacher expertise—knowledge of the foundations of a particular discipline’s inclusion in the curriculum. Stephen’s identity as a social studies teacher was not grounded in a sense of the field’s underlying aims and purposes.

Not surprising then, Sam’ perspective on democratic citizenship education was only partially formulated. He saw the term democracy itself as largely connected to questions of government and voting. He embraced a traditionalist perspective on democracy that emphasized
the public sphere, and rejected more expansive notions that view democracy in terms of, for example, "a mode of associated living" (Dewey, 1916). In the United States, he saw a crisis of democracy reflected in meager election participation, hypocritical foreign policy decisions, and a self-interested apathy among citizens. He understood that "America has always put us through as a shining example of democracy and it's not" (interview, 1-13-99). He believed schools had an important role to play in correcting these shortcomings, but he stopped far short of embracing a social reconstructionist position. For example, Sam's vision of the good citizen was one who was "well read, votes well, and maybe tries to influence those around him, but I don't know if good citizens are revolutionary" (interview, 1-13-99). Accordingly, Sam believed that teachers should maintain neutrality as they direct their efforts toward helping students to think critically, analyze a debate, think through various sides of an issue, and responsibly choose a position. Critical thinking was to become a dominant theme across the semester, and this aim bore some relationship to Sam's conception of democracy. At the start of the semester, Sam had not developed his thinking on this relationship in a way that fed into a rationale for social studies teaching and learning.

If Sam began the semester with a less than fully articulated sense of purpose as a social studies teacher, he did seem clearer on how he might incorporate service-learning into his curriculum. In part, his enthusiasm for service-learning was rooted in his own experiences with service-learning. For a year, he had served as a volunteer in a Department of Sociology program called "Project Community," a project that Sam claimed built "a lot off the idea of Paulo Friere, the idea that people working in communities to overcome what societal institutions that may be keeping social divisions in place" (interview, 1-13-99). This experience, and early conversations with his students at Bellwood, convinced him that effective service-learning must go beyond unreflective single-shot experiences. For example, he was critical of a past service-learning project at the high school in which "students spent the night outside acting, pretending, they were homeless... it sounded more like a sleep-over than anything else, you know, light a fire in a trash can and that's supposed to be fun." As he looked forward to his own use of service-learning he realized "a part of service-learning is realizing that there's limitations to what you can do, and it's always important to keep persistent, that through persistence you're going to make solid changes, either in individuals' lives or helping people in general" (interview 1-13-99). He hoped to develop a project that would accomplish these aims, and he looked forward to several supports in working service-learning into his curriculum—the full-time service-learning coordinator at Bellwood, the instruction he would receive at the University, and the support of his fellow stu-
dent teachers at his school. Though he did not believe his cooperating teacher would provide any guidance as he planned and enacted his ideas, at least he believed she was generally supportive of his efforts.

**Service Learning Project**

Sam gave his second interview for this project in late March, almost three months into his student teaching placement and just two days before he was scheduled to start his service-learning module in his senior-level Government class. These three months of experience in the classroom had taught him a great deal. First, he learned that he could do the work of teaching. While he felt he had a long way to go before he would be the kind of teacher he wanted to be, he was satisfied with the competency he had shown. With respect to the questions posed by this research, Sam admitted that his rationale for his teaching was no more developed now than it was at the beginning of the term. His interest in challenging students to think critically and actively engage in class activities remained constant, but he had not done any more to connect these ideas to a sense of his underlying purpose. This lack of connection was certainly true as he considered his underlying purpose as a social studies teacher. He noted that he was reflecting heavily on his role as a teacher, in general, in terms of his ability to "connect with students," and this had little to do with his role as a social studies teacher. He noted:

What I've been doing at Bellwood is dealing with maybe the teacher part, and I haven't been thinking or doing much at all with my [social studies] vision. I've been worrying about how am I going to get through today without having the classroom explode, so maybe I haven't given my vision enough time because I haven't had enough time to think about it (interview 3-20-99).

Against this backdrop, his Government classed was poised to begin a two-week service-learning unit titled, "The Elderly and Democratic Values: Day of Dialogue." Table 2 depicts the day-by-day organization of this unit. According to Sam's teaching documents, this unit was intended to address the community needs of "ignorance of elderly issues; stereotypes of the elderly by teenagers and teenagers by the elderly" (notes, 3-22-99).
### Table 2

**"The Elderly And Democratic Values"**  
**Unit Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DAY OF WEEK</strong></th>
<th><strong>ACTIVITY</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week One—Day One | • Students worked on one-page "interior monologue" written from perspective of elderly person.  
• Whole class discussion of interior monologues, list of concerns on board |
| Week One—Day Two | • Worksheet activity using quotes from yesterday's interior monologues  
• Small group work connecting elderly concerns to democratic values |
| Week One—Day Three | • Bellwood Coordinator of Senior Services visits class to discuss stereotypes of elderly and to provide students with interview tips |
| Week One—Day Four | • Model interview performed by two students  
• Students work in pairs to develop interview questions  
• Students write a journal on expectations of "day of dialogue" |
| Week Two—Day One | • "Day of Dialogue" visit to Bellwood Senior Center, interviews |
| Week Two—Day Two | • Whole class discussion of visit to Senior Center  
• Small group work relating experiences to democratic values  
• Teacher describes form essay assignment |
| Week Two—Days Three and Four | • Time spent in Media Center researching topic of student's choice related to elderly issues |
| Week Two—Day Five | • Time spent in Computer Lab composing the essay's final draft |

The centerpiece of the unit involved the class going to the Bellwood Senior Center so that students could be paired with and interview senior citizens in the Bellwood community. In part due to administrative pressure to prepare students for the upcoming state assessment of social studies curriculum standards, Sam decided to focus the students’ inquiry around four “core democratic values.” Yet his plan for this unit also reflected Sam’s own views about what counts as powerful teaching, and embedded in these were views of democratic citizenship. He explained, “What we’re doing for our service-learning project is focusing on equality and the common good... That's
what I think of as democratic education” (interview, 3-20-99). Whether inspired by state curriculum frameworks or his own ideas of meaningful teaching, planning this service-learning project directed Sam’s attention to the relationship between classroom practice and democratic ideals.

End of the Semester

At the end of the semester, Sam labeled his service-learning project the most valuable teaching he did as a student teacher. On multiple measures, he believed the “Day of Dialogue” unit stood apart from his other curriculum work that semester. According to Sam, this unit sparked student interest, encouraged students to actively participate in activities, and generated a good deal of critical thinking. Moreover, the service-learning activity challenged students to think about their community in ways that more traditional curriculum might not. Sam felt students were drawn into the material through their involvement in goal-setting and participation to an extent he had not seen before in his classroom. Clearly, he believed his first attempt at using service-learning was a success. The question remains: how did service-learning influence his understanding of social studies as a form of democratic citizenship education? The short answer is that it did not. However, as discussed in the following section, the answer is a little more complicated than that. Service learning did seem to influence his personal theory of teaching on several issues related to democratic citizenship education. However, such an influence did not amount to a reconceptualization of his rationale for teaching social studies. None of these issues, taken alone, led to anything approaching a wholesale transformation of his views on democratic education. But taken together, they signal some promising potential for the use of service-learning in democratic teacher education.

If service-learning did not lead to an epiphany about democratic citizenship education, at least it did push Sam to see possibilities he might not have otherwise. At the start of the semester Sam spoke of teaching for critical thinking and alternative accounts of history. Yet at that early point, these aims were not associated with any conception of democracy. His service-learning experience this semester brought to his mind an initial, though hazy, association. Service learning was seen as a tool Sam could use to “show students how community means more than it should, that equality is as essential to democracy as voting, diversity as essential as voting, things like that” (interview, 5-11-99). Sam came to see community as a useful theme around which to develop an exploration of democratic values. Only after he taught the service-learning unit did he come to this realization. He explained,
What I’m looking at next year is how I might begin the year just talking about community and that’s kind of talking about democratic values—what we picked up midway through the semester. I’m thinking now I should’ve begun the semester with that—asking them what their concept of community was, what their concept of democracy is, which you can almost sometime use as a synonym sometimes. And always referring back to that throughout the lessons of the semester. (interview, 5-11-99)

Service learning gave Sam a chance to see his students interact with community members outside of the school building, discuss issues of community life, and discover common interests with a group of people who typically inhabit a social world far removed from their own. In turn, Sam was able to see the theory and rhetoric of democratic education assume a real vitality. Sam noted, “I see service-learning can be a first step that leads to a larger step. I see service-learning as very practical, but that can lead into something theoretical” (interview, 5-11-99). There was little evidence to suggest that Sam fully took that step toward reshaping his personal theory of teaching, but service-learning did put the issue on his agenda.

Service learning also helped Sam to rethink the idea of what he was teaching for. That is, early in the semester Sam felt uncomfortable with the idea that his teaching might be construed as a form of activism—activism for democracy or for any other social goal. After teaching his service-learning project however he began to see that he has considerable influence as a teacher. He explained, “You have a lot of power within your classroom, whether you wanted it or not, and if you can use that power towards a better society then you should always try to do that” (interview, 5-11-99). He stopped short of calling himself an activist, but continued that he now felt “much more inclined in that direction, which is strange.” Service learning was helpful in promoting this change in belief because he saw firsthand that, as a teacher, his actions could promote “very positive things as far as social change goes.” He explained the evolution of his thinking,

As I was planning the service-learning project, I didn’t think, “Oh, I’m going to do this because I want to show them how we can change society.” My main thing was, I think it’s important to get out into the community and this is going to help student interest... more practical concerns than theoretical concerns. (interview, 5-11-99)

In other words, he went into the service-learning experience thinking that service-learning was a novel technique for making the curriculum
relevant to his students, as a means to spark student interest. He came out of the experience thinking more deeply about his role as an educator in relation to the broader social conditions of schooling. He ended with a clearer sense that there was a larger purpose to his teaching than what transpired within the four walls of his classroom.

Sam’s service-learning unit yielded a third benefit related to democratic citizenship education. He experienced powerful teaching. In turn, he acquired firsthand knowledge of what good teaching can accomplish. He learned that the high ideals trumpeted in his social studies methods class, and elsewhere in his teacher education program, were not only possible, but possible in his classroom. He began the semester knowing that he wanted to foster critical thinking, encourage deliberation on alternative viewpoints, and show students that history/social studies is interesting. What he did not know was whether he would be successful in reaching these aims. His service-learning unit allowed him to taste success. Furthermore, he came to link the ideas of democratic citizenship education and rational deliberation, “I just think when you are talking about democratic education, critical thinking as to be assumed” (interview, 5-11-99). Most importantly, critical thinking and democratic education did not simply come to his mind as theoretical constructs:

They developed more concretely in that I know how to do it more. I mean I’ve always thought, “Oh, that’d be great to teach a more complete view of history.” I just can’t tell students, “OK, this is what happened before Columbus arrived, isn’t that interesting?” They’re not going to remember that for twenty minutes. Now, throughout the semester, I’ve developed ideas on how to do that. (interview, 5-11-99).

For obvious reasons, developing a concrete sense of how to practically engage students in thoughtful deliberation is of no small consequence in the professional socialization of a beginning teacher. However it warrants stressing that acquiring practical competence is a crucially important step in developing theoretical competence, especially when teachers are gaining their first exposure to classrooms. Knowing that good teaching is possible, via firsthand experience, frees up space for reflection on the foundations of best practice. Student teachers can move from the “what” of teaching to the “why” of teaching. The survival-mode in which some student teachers operate precludes their reflection on the philosophical underpinnings of their teaching. In this sense, Sam’s service-learning unit aided his, albeit limited, attempts to work out a more sophisticated vision behind his work as a teacher.
Despite these valuable pieces of the puzzle, the whole picture—a defensible rationale for Sam’s work as a social studies teacher—remained elusive. Service learning did not lead to the development of a clearer sense of democratic citizenship education, nor did service-learning appear valuable in helping Sam craft his own identity as a social studies teacher. He had a view of the purpose of schooling: “...getting people to think critically, to analyze their world and be able to think things out, to not necessarily believe what everyone else believes, that kind of idea” (interview 5-11-99). But this view was unrelated to social studies. If anything, his experience as a student teacher diverted his attention from the field of social studies. He explained:

I haven’t had a radical shift in what I thought about social studies... I now see myself as a teacher first and a social studies teacher second, which is a change because at the beginning of the semester, I saw myself as a social studies teacher. (interview, 5-11-99)

He admitted he had not “really considered the personal side of teaching” before student teaching. “There’s much more to being a teacher than the curriculum parts,” Sam noted, “the part where I probably need to improve on the most is connecting with students on a more personal level” (interview, 3-20-99). In the wake of this realization, the extent to which he maintained his initial disciplinary connections to social studies was diminished. At the end of the semester, he believed that good teaching was less a matter of possessing a passion for a particular discipline, and more a matter of connecting with students. As he explained:

When I first went in, I thought, “What I really love is teaching history.” And now it’s just I can teach anything... You shouldn’t teach one class one way and another class another way. You should be able to teach any class that way. (interview, 5-11-99)

Though service-learning provided some push towards a clearer articulation of Sam’s understanding of democratic citizenship education, it did not cause him to rethink his reasons for teaching social studies. His instructional decision-making reflected this absence of a foundation. In planning learning activities and deciding on particular content, Sam asked himself, “Why am I teaching this? Why would students find this interesting” (interview, 5-11-99)? He continued, “As far as democratic values, building ideas of community, which is one idea that really kind of popped up this semester, I’m not thinking of a larger vision.” Here, student interest becomes the litmus test. Will the lesson plan connect with students? Certainly, student interest must be
a part of what teachers consider as they make the many decisions they face. But what sort of guide does student interest, by itself, provide when one is faced with selecting among the seemingly endless content (and methods) choices facing social studies teachers? Sam ended his student teaching semester having made little progress on a social studies rationale that would provide more direction, despite his success with service-learning. He concluded, “I don’t think it [service-learning] helped me figure out what social studies is because, as I mentioned, I’m not clear on it yet.”

Conclusion

The very idea of public education in the United States can trace its roots back to notions of a strong relationship between schooling and democracy (Soder, 1996; Goodlad & McMannon, 1997). This relationship is played up more in writings about social studies than in scholarship on any other curriculum area (see Parker, 1996). Though deep, persistent disagreements exist over exactly what constitutes the best form of education for democratic citizenship (Marker & Mehlinger, 1992), there is some unanimity of opinion that social studies, as currently practiced, is not meeting its mission. Few would argue with the idea that preservice teacher education programs have a significant role to play in influencing the dominant forms of instruction students receive in their social studies classrooms. Yet very little is known about how beginning social studies teachers view the aim of democratic citizenship as they leave preservice programs; nor is much known about the teacher education experiences that are effective in influencing beginning teachers in this regard (Adler, 1991; Armento, 1996). This research sought to address this knowledge gap by looking at the extent to which the use of service-learning by a student teacher influenced his understanding of democratic citizenship education as a foundation for social studies teaching and learning.

The results suggest that service-learning influenced aspects of this beginning teacher’s beliefs and conceptions about teaching but did little to further a rethinking of his aims as a social studies practitioner. Sam’s success with his service-learning unit led him to think more deeply about what counts as meaningful democratic education, gave him a greater sense of his obligation to consider his teaching vis-à-vis the broader social order, and provided a first-hand experience in delivering instruction that engaged student interest and fostered critical thinking. Democratic citizenship was a provocative, though not dominant, thought on his mind throughout the semester, especially during and after his service-learning unit. On the other hand, the idea of a social studies rationale was not a pressing concern for Sam. His thinking about what he accomplished with service-learning never
gelled into a form that could be called an articulated vision. For these reasons, the research does not yield a conclusive answer to its research question. The results suggest a mixed answer that might be interpreted pessimistically.

Yet another interpretation is possible. The benefits of service-learning in this case suggest possible directions for both teacher education research and practice. The ways in which Sam’s service-learning did influence his beliefs and conceptions about teaching raise interesting questions. In this sense, Sam’s student teaching experience opened up opportunities that likely would not have existed without service-learning. How might these opportunities be mined, cultivated, and directed toward different ends? What forms of support could have been provided to Sam as he reflected on matters of social studies rationales and democratic citizenship? By Sam’s own admission, he was given little encouragement to think about these concerns from his cooperating teacher, university supervisor, or peers. In fact, his own participation in this research represented the most valuable forum in which he found a place to systematically reflect on issues related to the study. Sam noted, “[Study participation] made me think about what I was doing a lot more than most student teachers from my methods class were... I’m guessing they have a vague idea of social studies, and they haven’t really pursued it more” (interview, 5-11-99).

Perhaps then the most powerful set of questions arising from the results of this study deal with the issue of supports. To harness the potential of service-learning, what structures and processes need to be in place in order to scaffold student teacher reflection around social studies rationales? One wonders how Sam’s thinking might have evolved had there been encouragement to think about rationales apart from just his participation in this study. For example, what if he had experienced a collaborative relationship with a cooperating teacher who valued inquiry into the foundations of practice? What more would have been added by a university supervisor who understood the supervisory role to include support for rationale-building efforts? Research on effective student teaching experiences indicates the ways in which active mentoring provided by both cooperating and university teachers positively enhances opportunities for student teachers to learn about teaching (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Cochran-Smith, 1991; Borko & Mayfield, 1995). In the absence of such support, the student teacher is left to reflect on underlying purposes for teaching individually, if at all. Clearly, service-learning influenced how Sam thought about important conceptions related to rationale-building. More was needed to help him develop and incorporate these conceptions into a coherent system of beliefs that would inform the decisions he made as a social studies teacher.
If social studies is going to improve its record as a form of democratic citizenship education, teacher education must help beginning teachers cultivate personal theories of teaching that make sense of what it means to educate for democracy. Sam began student teaching with a reform-orientation and a desire to challenge students to think critically about social studies content. In this sense, Sam was starting with a powerful base upon which to build. Service learning added more to this base. Further research may provide ideas about how teacher education might help beginning teachers like Sam leave student teaching with a clearer understanding of what they are teaching social studies for. Though this accomplishment would be only one part of what is needed to change the way social studies is taught, the value of this agenda calls for greater attention to the relationship between what teachers believe about their field and what they do in practice.

Note

1 Two separate, subsequent analyses are underway related to this research. The first of these is an analysis of Betsy’s experience. The second is an exploration of findings revealed by a cross-case analysis of both Sam and Betsy’s experiences.

References


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Struggle at the Frontier of Curriculum: The Rugg Textbook Controversy in Binghamton, NY

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Abstract

Harold Rugg, a prominent social reconstructionist, published a series of social science textbooks entitled, Man and His Changing Society, which became controversial in the late 1930's and early 1940's. This controversy is important because it illustrates the extent to which vested interests and social forces are able to shape the discourse of schooling and curriculum content. As the case study of Binghamton, New York, illustrates, many forces—both local and national— influenced the development and use of curriculum. Revisiting this controversy, and placing it in the socio-historical context in which it occurred provides insight into the way controversies develop and grow and hopefully can help educators understand the formation of current controversies. What transpired in Binghamton is but a small chapter in the turbulent history of the development of the social studies curriculum, yet it illustrates how important the ideals of democratic process and community discussion can be in reaching decisions about curriculum.

Introduction

Throughout the history of American education, political power struggles have erupted over the use of certain textbooks and curricular material in public schools. A variety of social, political and economic forces have attempted to influence the content of textbooks and the decisions about which textbooks should be adopted. One important, yet perhaps overlooked controversy centered on Harold Rugg's textbook series. A prominent leader in the field of education and curriculum reform, Rugg published a series of social science textbooks entitled, Man and His Changing Society. The texts, which were initially quite popular, stirred a national controversy in the late 1930s and early 1940s. This controversy was important because it uncovered the extent to which vested interests and social forces can shape the develop-
ment and dissemination of curriculum materials, ultimately influencing the discourse and practice of schooling.

The controversy surrounding the content of the Rugg textbooks and their use in the schools is not without precedent (See Rugg chapter, "This Happened Before! Hysteria & Witch-Hunting" in That Men May Understand (1940) and also the dissertation by Newman (1961), for a discussion of the California controversy in the later 1940s over the Building America curriculum). The Rugg controversy is also not without present day parallels. As recently as 1987, controversy erupted over curriculum content when New York and California developed statewide history-social studies curricula. As Catherine Cornbleth and Dexter Waugh (1995) explain, two camps emerged. One was supportive of an additive multiculturalism that added to but generally kept the dominant version of American history intact. The other camp supported a transformative multiculturalism- a curriculum that would provide students with the tools needed to question historical events, draw their own conclusions and thus change their conceptions of American history. It was an emotionally trying and exhausting fight with the dominant version of American history prevailing.

Kenneth K. Wong and Tom Loveless (1991) describe one way in which textbook controversies can be analyzed. They cite two kinds of politics that govern textbook policy- institutionalized politics and de-institutionalized politics. Operative within these frameworks are three major entities: textbook publishers; government agencies; and teachers and students. These entities sometimes find themselves embroiled in disputes over textbook policy and content. Institutionalized disputes are less publicly visible, often internal to the publishing industry, and occur mainly amongst publishers, subject matter experts and administrators.

The other type is more likely to be brought to the public’s attention, as Wong and Loveless (1991) explain:

In contrast, de-institutionalized politics are characterized by publicized challenges on textbook decisions from sources outside of the regular decision-making network. Outsiders’ intrusion is facilitated by broad social and ideological movements, political leadership, changing socio-economic context, organized interest groups with specific demands, and individual defiance on the part of teachers and parents.

The Rugg controversy embodied both institutionalized and de-institutionalized politics. At the center of the controversy was Harold Rugg, the subject matter expert (or more accurately the coordinator of a team of subject matter experts). His anti-corporatist and unconven-
tional political views, together with the innovative pedagogical approach evident in his textbooks put him at odds with some of the political and economic interests that held sway at the time the controversies erupted.

According to Wong and Loveless (1991), objections about textbook content raised by outside vested interests stem mainly from offenses of omission and commission. For instance, the civil rights movement was instrumental in giving rise to a more inclusive aspect to, and in some cases a different perspective on, the content of textbooks. This forced textbook creators to address historical content that had hitherto been ignored, thus remedying an offense of omission.

Disputes over offenses of commission however, can be more vitriolic as Wong and Loveless (1991) explain:

Quotations from the textbooks can be used as documentation of indictment and as a means of whipping up a maelstrom of public outrage, as most dramatically evidenced in the 1974 Kanawha County, West Virginia, textbook protest that led to school boycotts, miners strikes, school bombings, and police-escorted school buses fired upon with shotguns. (p. 35)

Both offensives of omission and commission characterized the Rugg controversy. The textbook series, *Man and His Changing Society* became controversial because it omitted the patriotic vision of American history that was present in most textbooks at that time. It also included content that depicted corporations and their motives in an unfavorable light, an offense of commission.

This discussion is divided into three main parts. Part one, *Harold Rugg*, explores his philosophical position on the purpose of education and the development of curriculum. It contains a brief biography and description of his role in the Social Reconstructionist movement. Part two, *The “Rugg Textbooks”*, addresses how and why the texts were developed. We give special attention to the form, style, and content of the books as a means of uncovering reasons for the subsequent perception of the textbooks as threatening. Part three, *The Controversy*, explores the Rugg textbook controversy in Binghamton, New York. By casting light on the historical and political events that influenced the social climate of America in 1939, we identify specific factors that may have sparked the flames of the controversy locally and nationally. In addition, by uncovering events that led to the banning of Rugg’s textbooks in Binghamton it becomes clear that national events were influential in local decision making about curriculum and schooling.
Conversely, what transpired in Binghamton was used to fuel the fire of the controversy nationwide.

Harold Rugg

Harold Ordway Rugg was born in Massachusetts in 1886. He graduated from a public high school in 1902 and worked in a textile mill for two years before deciding to continue his education in Dartmouth College’s engineering program. He received a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering in 1908 and then worked as a railroad surveyor. He later taught civil engineering at Milliken University in Decatur Illinois. As a consequence of his teaching experience, he decided to pursue graduate studies in education, psychology, and sociology at the University of Illinois. Rugg received a PhD. in education in 1915.

Subsequently, he worked as an associate professor at the University of Chicago for two years under Charles H. Judd, a psychologist and proponent of the scientific study of education. Although Rugg had shifted his studies from the natural sciences to the social sciences, his approach to studying education was ostensibly still based on a natural sciences inquiry method. During this period, he wrote about the application of scientific method to the study of education, and developed curricula for mathematics. From 1916 to 1918 he wrote and published three books: Experimental Determination of Mental Discipline in School Studies (1916), Statistical Methods Applied to Education (1917), and Scientific Method in the Reconstruction of Ninth Grade Mathematics (1918).

During World War I, Rugg served with Edward L. Thorndike on the Army’s Committee on Classification of Personnel. The Army was one of the first institutions to administer intelligence and aptitude tests on a large scale. Also during this time, Rugg became acquainted with Arthur Upham Pope who introduced him to the writings of several social critics that Rugg would later characterized as “Frontier Thinkers”. The ideas of Van Wyck Brooks in his books, America’s Coming of Age, and Letters and Leadership as well as the works of Waldo Frank, and Randolph Bourne, opened new ways of thinking and spurred Rugg to rethink his previously held notions on a range of societal issues. He also became acquainted with John Coss, with whom he discussed an idea for creating an undergraduate course at Columbia University that would integrate the social sciences.

Rugg accepted an associate professorship at Columbia University, Teachers College in academic year 1919-1920 as well as the position of educational psychologist at the Lincoln School (a progressive experimental school associated with Teachers College). The move to New York City offered Rugg career advancement opportunities and
the chance to become acquainted with the avant-garde artists and writers of Greenwich Village, among them, Alfred Stieglitz, John Marin, Marsden Hartley, and Georgia O'Keeffe. This can be considered a turning point in Rugg's career and thinking because it opened new vistas of social critique and verified for him how disciplines such as the arts can have an impact on social thought and pedagogy.

**Social Reconstructionism**

Rugg was affiliated with the social reconstructionist movement, a movement which evolved from the social, political, and educational theories that developed between 1880 and 1920. Prominent theorists such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels questioned the then prevailing notions of social Darwinism and laissez-faire capitalism (Stanley, 1992). In addition, events such as the stock market crash of 1929 and the subsequent economic depression of the 1930s reinforced the need for critique of the economic system in the United States. Furthermore, the Russian Revolution of 1917 provided concrete proof of a viable alternative to the capitalist system.

Although the social reconstructionists were critical of the economic, social, and political order, they were by no means the most radical of the social movements that emerged in the 1920s and 1930s. The social reconstructionists, including such theorists as George S. Counts, John Dewey, Boyd H. Bode, John Childs, and H. Bruce Raup did not call for the overthrow of the government or the economic system. Instead, they argued that the social and economic systems required careful planning and execution by a cadre of experts to ensure that social justice would prevail. Somewhat ironically, the social reconstructionists also believed that democratic consensus was the only way to ensure that goal. This is but one of other inconsistencies of the social reconstructionist philosophy.

A thoroughly modernist project, social reconstructionism put its faith in technological innovation as the salvation from the drudgery of manual labor. A scientific plan would provide the blueprint for a better life. Rugg believed that continuing on the path of laissez-faire capitalism would result in a lack of concern for the welfare of society, an increase of monetary greed, rampant materialism, and the end of participatory democracy. As Rugg stated in *The Great Technology: Social Chaos and the Public Mind* (Rugg, 1933 p. 172), "It is now axiomatic that the production and distribution of goods can no longer be left to the vagaries of chance- specifically to the unbridled competitions of self-aggrandizing human nature."

Rugg and the social reconstructionists believed that the schools were an important incubator for social change. However, he believed that existing schools promulgated individualistic, self-interest above
democratic and cooperative relationships, and was greatly concerned about the subject matter of the existing curriculum. He felt that traditional curriculum placed emphasis on the rote learning of conventional subjects that were not related to each other nor were they integrated with everyday experience. He comments:

The protagonists of this view [the traditional] pointed out that the men of the modern world had discovered this "subject matter" of language, number and mathematics, geography, science and the like, and through the centuries they had perfected its statement of principles and organized its techniques... It was the social heritage."

He went on to say that the traditionalists believed that "...the school should pass on these knowledges and skills arranged in the same perfection of form in which mature minds after millennia of struggle, had organized them" (Rugg, 1936 p. 532). For Rugg, the flaw in this logic was that the organizing principle inherent in the "social heritage" was not necessarily the best way that curriculum could be organized. He valued the connections that could be made between disciplines.

Furthermore, traditional curriculum did not include a program of social education in the way that the social reconstructionists envisioned (Muschinske, 1974). Rugg sought to implement an innovative, interdisciplinary curriculum. It emphasized the interrelations of citizens and incorporated a social action component encouraging individuals to work cooperatively in order to have a positive influence on society. The aim of the curriculum would be to teach students to be aware and critical of injustices in American society, and to become active participants in bringing about needed social change. (Bagenstos, 1977)

The "Rugg Textbooks"

Much of the impetus for developing the textbooks came from Rugg's work in the Lincoln School. Necessity being the mother of invention, Rugg, along with several of his colleagues, set about creating the curriculum materials that were needed at the school. Beginning in 1920, the Lincoln School used Rugg's experimental social science pamphlets over a two-year period. In 1922, Rugg and two assistants then wrote and published the Social-Science pamphlets for wider distribution. The project was financed with Rugg's personal funds - borrowed money that he used to pay the assistants and publishing costs. Rugg marketed the materials himself by soliciting school administrators and teachers. (Rugg, 1941) We can conclude therefore, that there was much
more riding on the success of the materials than the advancement of Rugg's professional career.

Perhaps it was Rugg's earlier training as an engineer that impressed upon him the value of planning. Before undertaking the construction of this fused curriculum, he conceived a scientific method for approaching curriculum development: "... As an engineer habituated to meeting situations as problems and to design before building, I tended naturally to regard curriculum construction as a technological process, not an act of sentiment or evangelical faith." (Carbone 1977, p. 16) His method was to conduct an extensive survey of the ideas of several contemporary thinkers in order to develop the content themes for the books.

Rugg felt that exploring the "great ideas" of the people he considered "frontier thinkers" would lead to a greater understanding of the social world. The frontier thinkers came from a variety of disciplines and were considered to be in the forefront of creating new paradigms in history and the social sciences. Rugg believed the frontier thinkers could provide solutions to the persistent social problems plaguing American society. Prominent figures such as Charles and Mary Beard, Frederick Jackson Turner, and Charles Pierce were influential in the development of Rugg's thinking.

The determination as to which of the great ideas merited consideration and which did not, was of course a value judgment on Rugg's part but was very much in keeping with the notion of relying on the expert. Although he tried to portray his methodology as scientific and neutral, his choice of frontier thinkers had a decidedly liberal leaning.

Rugg's team, which included his Lincoln School colleagues, his brother Earle, and some of his students from Teachers College, researched the literature, book reviews, and articles of the frontier thinkers. After thorough deliberation, the team generated a list of trenchant books by social analysts and editorials selected from five liberal magazines. They believed they were now equipped to develop a curriculum that addressed important issues on five frontiers: the educational, social, personal, psychological, and esthetic (Winters, 1967; Nelson, 1977). Rugg believed that a curriculum that addressed these five frontiers and included the thoughts of the "frontier thinkers" would be the best means of teaching children how to evaluate the pressing social problems of the day.

After several years the pamphlets went into a second edition. During the years 1927 to 1931, a new project evolved. As Rugg explains:

With the aid of several associates I completed the researches, scrapped all the old pamphlet editions and made the first commercial edition of six six-hundred-page jun-
ior high-school volumes, together with six Workbooks of Directed Study and six Teacher’s Guides. (Rugg, 1941 p. 42)

The texts were the first nationally marketed curriculum series in social studies written exclusively for junior high school students (Nelson, 1982). There were two texts for grade seven entitled, *An Introduction to American Civilization* and *Changing Civilizations in the Modern World*; two texts for grade eight entitled, *A History of American Civilization* and *A History of American Government and Culture*; and two textbooks for grade nine entitled, *An Introduction to the Problems of American Culture* and *Changing Governments and Changing Cultures*. The texts, workbooks, and teacher’s guides were published and distributed by Ginn and Co., the first in August of 1929 and the last in January of 1932. They were all subsequently updated. As Rugg describes the period 1936-40 in the book, *That Men May Understand*:

> The junior-high-school series was systematically reconstructed to fit the drastic world changes of the 1930s. New material dealing with the emergence of the dictatorships of Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese War party had to be added. (Rugg, 1941 p. 43)

In the beginning, *Man and His Changing Society* was highly successful. According to Rugg’s own estimation, over 5,500,000 copies of the textbook series, teaching guides, and student workbooks were sold to almost five thousand schools (*Publishers Weekly*, October 12, 1940). According to Spring (1991), “At the peak of their popularity in 1938, annual sales were 289,000 copies.” (p. 193) The initial success of the Rugg books can be credited to their innovative form, style, and extensive content, yet paradoxically these same characteristics, we argue, led to the textbook controversy in the early 1940s.

**Form of the Textbooks**

Rugg’s philosophy of pedagogy and his ideas regarding the structure of knowledge were instrumental in determining the interdisciplinary form that the series would take. His conception of the social studies curriculum was one that unified separate subject areas such as history, civics, geography, economics, and sociology into a cohesive whole. This curriculum, he believed, would help to create a new social order whereby the needs of individuals would outweigh the needs of corporations (Bagenstos, 1977; Muschinske, 1974; Popkewitz, 1987). According to Herbert M. Kliebard and Greg Wegner:
His great ambition was to create a fused social studies out of the several individual disciplines that had traditionally characterized its presence in the curriculum in an earlier era and at the same time to inject into that study a vision of a new America and indeed a new world (in Popkewitz, 1987 p. 269).

Traditionally, the disciplines were taught independent of each other, and connections were not made between them. Although followers of Herbart briefly captured American pedagogues' attention at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, their call for a unified curriculum was not widely adopted. However, this was exactly what Rugg hoped to achieve. By bringing together the various sub-disciplines of the social sciences, Rugg helped to establish this amalgamation as the field of social studies. His intent was recognized early on, as the comments of Agnes deLima in 1925 indicate:

Rugg has abolished the artificial divisions existing between history, geography, civics, economics and sociology, and grouped the material under one natural heading—social studies—designed to help the student to understand and deal intelligently with the problems of contemporary life. (deLima, 1935 p. 135)

Eventually, Rugg's integrated curriculum would extend beyond the social sciences to include the natural sciences, mathematics, and the arts. This should come as no surprise given Rugg's interest in the arts as a means toward social improvement, and his authorship of textbooks in mathematics, statistics, and earth science. Ridding the social studies of disciplinary compartments also allowed Rugg to pursue thematic concepts that could cut across disciplinary boundaries and could be explored in greater depth.

**Style of the Textbooks**

The style of the textbooks reflected many of Rugg's ideas about pedagogy and the importance he placed on the role of the arts and aesthetics in education. Rugg believed that an individual could develop an "integrated personality" through artistic expression, and that the process of artistic creation required discipline and an inwardly directed search for meaning and truth. These were the same qualities, he felt that both good students and critical citizens possessed.

Each chapter was written in an interactive style that was intended to capture the attention of the readers and maintain their interest by engaging them in a dialogue with the text. A conscious effort was made to create developmentally appropriate textbooks for children. Rugg
criticized the existing curriculum as being “conceived of as a given body of facts and skills to be absorbed equally well by all” (Rugg, 1936 p. 531). The Rugg textbooks, however, were meant to be (if not absorbed equally well by all) at least resonant with all students on some level. Rugg and his colleagues took pains to ensure that this would be the case. He summoned the expertise of several of his students at Teachers College many of whom completed dissertations based on the work they had done for the textbook series. One of Rugg’s colleagues, Hyman Meltzer, set about testing over 300 students for their understanding of some of the concepts considered for inclusion in the books.

One of the stylistic features intended to foster critical thinking skills was the inclusion of thought-provoking questions that were designed to encourage students to critique various aspects of the content material. For example, at the end of one of the chapters in A History of American Government and Culture, (Rugg, 1931 p. 13), the following critical thinking questions appeared.

The constant struggle of the mass of the people for a larger share of the government. In considering each period of history we shall ask: How democratic was the government? Who had the privilege and responsibility of voting? Who were excluded from voting or holding office? Why? (italics in original)

Each textbook contained an extensive bibliography that was intended as a resource for further reading and research. Providing more information, Rugg believed, would enable the students to become more critical and to realize that textbooks are not the only source of information available to them.

Although the books were critical in nature and meant to alert the reader to important issues, they were also meant to be interesting and appealing. It was certainly Rugg’s intention to make the books and the subject matter as interesting as possible to students. They were not intended to convey received knowledge. In fact, Rugg referred to them not as textbooks but as reading books (Nelson, 1977). Interestingly, they are not the oversized tomes we easily recognize today as textbooks. Because of their smaller size, they more resemble literary works than textbooks.

Although the textbooks did not include an abundance of artistic projects for students themselves to engage in, they did include a plethora of artistic visual representations such as photographs, charts, tables, maps, and cartoons. For example, in the chapter, “The Story of American Newspapers, Magazines and Books”, in Introduction to Problems of American Culture (Rugg, 1931 p. 331) Rugg extrapolates from the data in the Table to explain the growth of the newspaper industry.
The indices used in the table included: gross income, paper consumed, employees, and pages printed. From this information he concludes:

Table XXXII, for example, gives some of the facts regarding the New York Times, which is one of our metropolitan papers. This newspaper is not the largest by any means, yet you can see how much business is involved in the management of one paper...Do not these figures suggest that large amounts of capital were needed to build these enterprises?

Dramatic narrative was another device used to illustrate the subject matter in a creative manner and was often provided to animate historical events (Nelson, 1977). For example, in a chapter entitled, “How England Became an Industrial Country” in Changing Civilization and the Modern World, the text describes upheavals in the iron industry. Note the dramatic tone of the following narrative:
The ironmasters in turn began to tremble for their trade, for without wood they thought they could not carry out business.

Robert Dudley, the son of an ironmaster, saved the situation and helped bring about the wider use of coal. His father’s iron foundry was built above a coal field. Young Dudley succeeded in inventing a way of smelting iron ore instead of coal.

But the ungrateful charcoal ironmasters feared that their profits might dwindle. They drove him from his home. He built an iron foundry first in one place and then in another. In each place the charcoal ironmasters opposed him.

Finally he succeeded in producing more iron with the use of coal than the other ironmasters could by using charcoal. Nevertheless, riots were organized against him, his machines were destroyed and at last he was forced to give up his work. (Rugg, 1930 p. 64)

Another aspect of the textbooks that represented an innovative stylistic feature as well as a striking departure from the traditional curriculum content was the emphasis on “social action inquiry”. In An Introduction to the Problems of American Culture, Rugg entreats students to become involved in their communities by urging them to:

...organize a survey of life in your village, town or city. Study the history of your town, gathering together copies of old records. Try to understand the people who founded
and developed it into what it is today. Try to understand the neighborhoods, the family life, social organizations, the real government. Study the needs and try to learn how to improve the community in which you live. (Rugg, 1931 p. 14)

By encouraging students to explore their local communities Rugg hoped they would acknowledge and ameliorate the social ills they confronted.

Content of the Textbooks

Some of the themes addressed in the texts included: the fragile nature of the economy, a critique of laissez-faire capitalism, the unfair distribution of wealth and income, the causes and consequences of high unemployment levels, class conflict, immigration, rapid cultural change and, imperialism. Expounding on these topics, Rugg’s perspective was transparent. For example, in the text, Changing Governments and Changing Culture, Rugg offers the following commentary:

Upon this fundamental principle [laissez-faire] coal, iron, and other mineral land was taken and exploited by the first discoverers. This idea of unrestricted competition of private owners was the one upon which hundreds of millions of acres of forests were cut down. It was the basic idea upon which oil was squandered in America, in the Near East, and in Asia. With this slogan English business men, French business men, Italian business men, - in fact the business men of every European country (except Russia today) and of the industrialized countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America,-developed their modern enterprises. (Rugg, 1937 p. 196)

Perhaps even more significant than Rugg’s frankness on the issues is the fact that they were raised at all at a time when history textbooks by and large sought to promote “Americanism”. Rugg brought to light topics which through their absence had produced an ideological hegemony. By raising the issues, Rugg revealed some of the omissions of the curriculum. As Carbone and Wilson point out:

Rugg, to be sure, gave both the pros and the cons of this laissez-faire system in his textbooks. On the face of things it would seem that Rugg was being eminently fair. Yet this tactic also served his particular purposes. For in presenting an unfamiliar negative in contrast to a familiar positive, he was, as it were, raising jarring questions here-
tofore not raised in the student’s mind. (in James, 1995 p. 70)

Much interesting analysis can be conducted by looking at what Rugg and his team chose to include in the books. We focus here on two content themes: Rugg’s depiction of the print media, specifically newspapers; and his criticism of the advertising industry, to illustrate how the content of the Rugg textbooks fueled the controversy nationally, especially as it proved irksome to the Hearst newspaper organization and the advertising industry.

Concerning the print media, Rugg seemed to show a particular antipathy toward William Randolph Hearst and the Hearst newspaper organization. The following passage points to the potential for a newspaper’s widespread influence over people:

The largest of these newspaper chains is that controlled by William Randolph Hearst. The Hearst chain stretches from coast to coast. From San Francisco to New York almost every large city has a Hearst newspaper. So great is the combined circulation of these newspapers that it is estimated that they enter daily one home out of four in the United States. (Rugg, 1931 p. 333)

Although presumably presented as a simple statement of fact, some in the Hearst organization perceived this and other passages as a pointed threat. In addition to exposing the newspapers as a force capable of wielding extensive power, the text also states explicitly that the newspaper industry’s major underlying motive is profit. It baldly states, “Newspaper publishing is a business, and newspapers are printed for profit. What they contain is essentially what the publishers think the American people want” (Rugg, 1931 p. 348). In short, Rugg portrayed the newspaper industry as a powerful structuring force on society.

Another content theme we address is the adverse effect of advertising. The inclusion of content regarding the newspaper and advertising industries is again an example of what Carbone and Wilson characterize as “presenting an unfamiliar negative in contrast to a familiar positive”. For example, in Introduction to Problems of American Culture, the newspaper and advertising industries are portrayed as acting in collusion and without regard for the public:

In recent years, as advertising mounted hand in hand with circulation, many people have often criticized the newspapers, complaining that they permit advertisers to determine the policy of the papers. On this question evidence can be obtained on both sides. Some investigations have
shown that newspapers have either withheld or distorted news which would otherwise be unfavorable to their advertisers.

Thus we see that differing opinions are held about the effect of advertising upon news. There is reason for believing that advertisers play an important part in determining what goes into our newspapers. (Rugg, 1931 pp. 369-370)

Rugg presents the advertising agencies in a negative light by implying that they are powerful enough to influence the media by controlling the information that they present to the American public. The critical perspective of the textbooks probably presented the threat that inevitably led to the texts' demise.

It becomes apparent from the excerpts quoted above that certain segments of society might have felt threatened by these and similar statements. However, it does not explain why the ensuing controversy over the texts escalated to the extent that it did. The controversy that arose represented more than a quarrel between the Hearst organization, and the advertising industry on one side; and Rugg and his supporters on the other. The organizations that rallied against Rugg were seeking to protect the American way of life and perceived the textbooks as a threat to morality and the political economic system.

The Controversy Builds

The early 1900s was a time of increased immigration and industrialization that brought great prosperity. However, by the 1930s the Great Depression shattered the security Americans had felt, creating a period of uncertainty and vulnerability. Unemployment in 1940 was at nearly 15 percent and the economy was making only a slow recovery from the Great Depression. Strikes and violent labor unrest were erupting, yet this period can be characterized as an era of big business. As Peter Gran explains:

The power of corporate capital continued to grow. Despite the common image of the New Deal as the period in which the state was the major actor, the initiatives of the state were often pushed aside, especially if they infringed on corporate prerogatives. For example, corporations simply brushed aside antitrust legislation by controlling the regulatory agencies that Roosevelt set up to control the corporation. Even the Supreme Court worked against the New Deal, declaring unconstitutional a number of laws affecting industry. (Gran, 1996 p. 299)
Most of the controversies over the Rugg textbooks erupted in cities and towns in the northeast portion of the country including: Binghamton, N.Y, Englewood, N.J., Red Bank, N.J. Garden City, N.Y., Bradner, Ohio and Philadelphia, Pa. At the time, these cities were headquarters for major manufacturing companies, such as Endicott-Johnson, a shoe manufacturing company located in Binghamton, New York. Many of these industries relied heavily on immigrant workers. In order for society to absorb the influx of workers, it was widely believed that the immigrants and first generation Americans needed to be assimilated into the dominant culture. Business organizations such as the National Association of Manufacturers, and patriotic organizations, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution sought to protect their business interests and promote their versions of American nationalism.

Rugg's interdisciplinary approach however, made it more difficult to perpetuate the prevailing conception of nationalism. The very idea of a social studies methodology, as Rugg envisioned it, could be threatening to the hegemonic ideology of nationalism and to the interests that depended on it. This point was not lost on one of Rugg's critics, Augustin Rudd, chairman of the Educational Committee of the New York Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, American Legion member, and chairman of the Guardians of American Education.

In April 1940, Augustin Rudd wrote an article that attempted to blame Rugg for the growth of Communism in America. Rudd said that the historical ignorance of our youth "has come about through the widespread teaching of 'social science,' an omnibus course practically supplanting specific study of history, geography and United States Government." (Nelson, 1982 p. 73)

However this proposition alone is not sufficient to explain the extent and intensity of the controversy. After all, Rugg's ideas were not extremely radical nor out of step with the times. In fact, Rugg's ideas were consonant with the ideology of welfare capitalism and the programs that were being implemented after the Depression. It was the critical nature of the textbooks that presented the greatest threat to the notion of a unified nation and a fervent nationalism called Americanism.
The National Controversy

Given the social, political, and economic factors of the time, it was not long before the “Rugg Textbooks” encountered resistance. The Hearst newspaper organization, the advertising industry, and other powerful interests criticized the textbooks for “picturing the U.S. as a land of unequal opportunity, and giving a class-conscious account of the framing of the U.S. Constitution” (Time, 1940 p. 64). An underlying current against the Rugg textbooks began in 1937, when Bertie C. Forbes quietly sought to remove them from an Englewood, New Jersey school because they were considered to be “un-American, socialistic and subversive” (Bagenstos, 1977 p. 33). Although he was initially unsuccessful, Forbes mounted a grassroots, public campaign to rid the community of the textbooks. He used his column in the Hearst press and his position as publisher of the business magazine, Forbes Weekly to attack the books (Bagenstos, 1977; Nelson, 1982). By the spring of 1939, the increased publicity had persuaded others to join the effort. Rugg explains how Forbes campaigned against the books:

Forbes carried on his own research into the soundness of the Rugg books and reported his findings in his Hearst column during November and December of 1939. But most of his “investigations” were concentrated on a single page of the seven thousand printed pages of my twenty books. He took this one page out of the context of its chapter and book and thereby tended to destroy its meaning. Several times in a newspaper barrage against me he has used this single excerpt. (Rugg, 1941 pp. 27-8)

The Advertising Federation of America, a national organization with over 60 affiliates was one of the first organizations to disseminate anti-Rugg propaganda. At their annual convention in June of 1939, they launched a campaign to censor the Rugg books, identifying certain passages as damaging to advertising. By that winter, A. J. Falk, (director of the Bureau of Research and Education for the Advertising Federation of America), had written a pamphlet entitled, “Facts You Should Know About Anti-Advertising Propaganda in School Textbooks”. It was distributed to all members of the organization. The pamphlet highlighted offensive phrases in the Rugg books and encouraged local communities to investigate the use of the books in their public schools. By April of the following year, Norman S. Rose, president of the Federation and advertising manager of the Christian Science Monitor sent a letter to several large companies. In it he quoted parts of the Rugg books that he found objectionable. Quoting from Rose’s letter:
Advertised products are untrustworthy! That is the lesson taught to the children in 4,200 school systems by a social science textbook of Professor Harold Rugg of Teachers College, Columbia University... Attacking business from every angle, Rugg sneers at the ideas and traditions of American democracy, making a subtle plea for abolition of our free enterprise system and the introduction of a new social order based on the principles of collectivism. (The Publisher’s Weekly, 1940 p. 1323)

The American Legion was another national organization piqued by the Rugg textbooks. As Joel Spring (1991) reminds us, patriotic organizations in the 1920s, such as the American Legion, sought to monitor the content of the textbooks to ensure that such anti-American ideas as the theories of the Soviet Bolsheviks were not influencing America’s youth (Altbach et. al. 1991, p. 193).

In September of 1940, the American Legion distributed a pamphlet written by O. K. Armstrong titled, “Treason in the Textbooks”, which contained a list of books that he felt local American Legion posts should campaign against. Fifteen of Harold Rugg’s books were on the blacklist (The Publisher’s Weekly, 1940). Apparently Armstrong’s critique was not limited to the textbooks alone. Rugg commented on the article, “This is without qualification the most unfair attack I have seen made on schoolteachers in thirty years” (Rugg, 1941 p. 73).

Sustained by the controversy led by Forbes in Englewood, New Jersey, the American Legion now had an opportunity to mobilize its power on a national and local level. Rugg (1941) provides a description of the American Legion’s efforts:

It so happens that the organization in whose name the “treason” article was published has a special officer in each of hundreds of local communities throughout the country. These officers, disregarding protests and retractions, at once went into action—guided, as it appears, from headquarters. Many of them, bringing the matter up before local school boards and school superintendents, demanded that the Rugg books, Scholastic magazine and other publications blacklisted by Armstrong be investigated. (p. 74)

In November of 1939, Rugg was invited to a parent-teacher meeting at the Englewood school district to discuss his textbooks. During the “question hour”, which lasted until midnight, several representatives from the Hayworth American Legion began to attack Rugg, claiming he was advocating “collectivist government” (Newsweek, 1939).
This was not the only time the American Legion organized an attack against Rugg. American Legion posts in Ridgefield, New Jersey, Manhasset, Long Island, and Mount Kisco, New York succeed in forcing an investigation of the Rugg books in their communities (The Publisher's Weekly, 1940).

Yet another organization that joined the anti-Rugg campaign, and helped seal the fate of the textbooks was the National Association of Manufacturers (N.A.M.). George Sokolsky, the publicity director for the N.A.M., was responsible for convening an investigation of social science textbooks. Ralph W. Robey, an Assistant Professor of Banking at Columbia University headed the investigation (The New Republic, 1941). Robey, and three assistants, reviewed 600 textbooks on economics, sociology, civics, history, and geography and reported a “substantial portion” of them were suspicious because they were critical of free enterprise and the current form of American government (School and Society, 1941).

His report, which became known as the Robey Report, was critical of almost all the books, even those used as reference materials. As Henry Seidel Canby and Norman Cousins explain, Robey was suspicious of the textbooks’ critical analysis of America’s political and economic system. They comment: “Mr. Robey, after making his excerpts, stated that he found too much criticism of the spirit of free enterprise, which, we take to mean, is the system of more or less controlled laissez-faire under which American finance and industry have operated in the last half-century “ (School and Society 1941 p. 8).

The influence of these organizations was wide-ranging and undeniable. As Ned H. Dearborn, Dean of the Division of General Education at New York University and National Chairman of the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom, stated in 1941, “The N.A.M. is a powerful organization and its members have great local influence. Misuse of these abstracts, in our judgment, will seriously endanger the democratic tradition of education in this country” (School and Society, 1941 p. 268). The ability of these organizations to employ grassroots organizing illustrates the range of influence that they possessed to steer the direction that the local controversies took. Harold Rugg explains how this was accomplished:

Note the role of two supremely important factors in building up social unrest which makes it possible for a small group of persons to reach into millions of homes and to bring about drastic social action in thousands of communities: (1) They use the headquarters facilities of powerful national organizations with means of communication reaching the entire nation; (2) their community “posts”
or "locals" have officials whose responsible job it is to act on suggestions from headquarters. (Rugg, 1940, p. 499)

There were several other organizations and influential persons that were successful in fomenting national and local campaigns against Rugg's books. The Daughters of Colonial Wars vigorously denounced the Rugg books, labeling them "very, very, un-American" (The Binghamton Press, 1940). For the most part, Rugg was criticized for being partisan, however as reported in Time magazine he was also criticized thusly:

In Philadelphia, Mrs. Ellwood J. Turner, a Daughter of Colonial Wars, denounced the books because they "tried to give the child an unbiased viewpoint instead of teaching him real Americanism." (Time, 1940, p. 64)

Merwin K. Hart, an attorney from Utica, New York and president of the New York State Economic Council, was labeled by The New Republic, in 1941, as "Public Education Enemy No. 1" (The New Republic 1941, March 10 p. 327-328) because of his vehement attacks against Rugg. Apparently, an influential person, Rugg describes Hart as:

...a graduate of Harvard, a lawyer (specializing in taxation), ..., an executive of insurance and other corporations and for a short time a member of the New York State Legislature. Since 1931 he has devoted himself increasingly to the task of keeping taxes in New York State at a low level. His chief organ in such activities has been the New York State Economic Council which he organized himself in 1931 and of which he is president. In one announcement the avowed purpose is "to curb public spending and to prevent legislation harmful to those who live by private enterprise." (Rugg, 1941 p. 77)

At the 71st annual convention of the American Association of School Administrators in Atlantic City, Hart declared the textbooks tainted, saying they tended "to play down the accomplishments of America and praise the accomplishments of Russia" (School and Society 1941, March 1 p. 268). Hart was influential in initiating the Binghamton controversy as well.

Although attacked by some, Rugg was also defended by several national organizations including: the School Book Publishers Association, the National Council for the Social Studies, the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom, and the American
Civil Liberties Union. They claimed that the attacks against Rugg were exaggerated, filled with falsehoods, and that the passages used in their attacks were often taken out of context. “The quotation without context is unquestionably the most popular weapon of the Hart groups” (The New Republic, 1941 March 10 p. 328). Their defense of the Rugg textbooks however, could not stem the mounting controversy.

**Case Study—Binghamton, New York**

By analyzing the socio-historical context of Binghamton, New York, with a particular emphasis on immigration and industrialization, the reasons behind the controversy become more evident. The city of Binghamton, one of the first cities where the controversy erupted, is located at the convergence of the Chenango and Susquehanna Rivers in New York State. Incorporated in 1834, Binghamton became an industrial city in the mid 1800s. With the development of an East-West and North-South railroad in 1865, Binghamton, referred to as a hub city, became a leading industrial manufacturing area that used the rail lines to receive raw materials and dispatch finished manufactured goods. Businesses such as H. Westcott and Son, a cigar manufacturing company; Lester Brothers, a boot and shoe manufacturing company (which later became the Endicott-Johnson Shoe Corporation); and Bundy Manufacturing Company, a recording device company (which later became International Business Machines [IBM]) were the dominant employers in the Binghamton area and relied heavily upon unskilled immigrant labor (Smith, 1988). “The necessity for unskilled workers led to the call abroad for immigrants to come to the United States and seek their fortune in the factories of the valleys” (Smith, 1988, p. 75).

The population of the Binghamton area changed in the early decades of the 1900s. Broome County increased significantly in population from 62,793 in 1890 to 113,610 by 1920, due in large part to immigration. By the 1930s most of the manufacturing industries, with the notable exception of Endicott-Johnson, were being replaced by technology-based industries such as IBM (International Business Machines) and Link Aeronautical Corporation but the reliance upon unskilled labor remained. By 1940, it was estimated that almost forty percent of the white population in the city of Binghamton were foreign-born or the children of foreign-born residents.

The shift from a predominantly Anglo-Saxon to an ethnically and culturally diverse population produced some strife. As Lawrence Bothwell, a local historian notes, “As the ethnic composition of the local population changed, nativist appeals to “traditional” values led to anti-immigrant prejudice and episodes of open conflict” (Bothwell,
By 1919, a group of prominent professional men established The Americanization League of Broome County. The purpose of the organization was to transform immigrant groups into "true Americans" by providing a variety of programs, including English language classes (Bothwell, 1983).

By 1940, the influence of labor unions was growing across the nation, but Binghamton was notable for the relative absence of industrial unions in part due to the labor practices of the local industries. The "square deal" policies of George F. Johnson, that are often characterized as "welfare capitalism", included benefits such as free medical care, free company-produced shoes, recreational facilities, low cost housing, profit sharing, sizeable bonuses, and public markets (McGuire and Osterud, 1980).

When the Great Depression hit, the Binghamton area fared relatively well. Only days after the stock market crash, Thomas J. Watson, president of IBM, announced the building of a new plant in Endicott, and borrowed money to raise employees' wages. Under Roosevelt's New Deal policies, IBM was awarded a government contract to supply the recording and calculating machines needed for the new Social Security program. IBM and Endicott-Johnson adjusted working hours to keep as many workers employed as possible. They also provided working families with bread, fruit, and substantial meals for only pennies (Binghamton Press, 1979 April 29).

The Binghamton Controversy

The social climate and the economic situation provided the background for the controversy that came to Binghamton in December of 1939. Merwin K. Hart was a guest lecturer for the Exchange Club at their regular meeting held at the Arlington Hotel on December 13, 1939 (The Binghamton Press, 1940 April 4). During the lecture, Hart expressed his views about Harold Rugg and the social science textbook series, Man and His Changing Society. In summary, he criticized Rugg's books as encouraging America's youth to question and overthrow the capitalist system replacing it with a new social order based upon socialistic principles (School and Society, 1941). He labeled the books "subversive", stating that they undermined the foundational beliefs of American youth and served as a propaganda front for the Communist party. In Hart's words, the Rugg books were "one of the shrewdest and probably one of the most effective of the Communist Front efforts now being made in the United States - all the more dangerous because carried out under the high respectability of our American school system" (The Binghamton Press, December 23, 1939 p. 5). Hart also accused Rugg of trying to undermine and devalue the advertising industry. "There is no American institution against which these books inveigh more strongly than advertising...It is perfectly
clear," he noted sarcastically, "that advertising as we know it should be suppressed" (*The Binghamton Press*, December 23, 1939 p. 3). Immediately after Hart's lecture to the Binghamton Exchange Club, local school personnel came to the defense of the books.

Another factor related to Hart (as founder of the New York State Economic Council), concerning the onset of the controversy was reported in the *Binghamton Press*:

Protest against the books arose here after a clinic on the costs and policies of education, conducted in February at Albany by the New York State Economic Council, Inc. (*April 17, 1940*)

In 1939, the Binghamton school district had two junior high schools, West Junior High School, with Harold V. Hager its principal, and East Junior High School, with Edward T. Springmann its principal. The School district owned 180 copies of the textbook series, *Man and His Changing Society* and used it mainly as supplementary reference material. Thirty copies of each of the six books were shared between the two junior high schools. Hager, Springmann and Edith Oagley, director of social sciences, called Hart's attack unfair. Springmann was quoted in *The Binghamton Press* as saying:

You could take excerpts from even the Bible and interpret them in a score of different ways. By using excerpts you can't get all the facts. If I want publicity, I could make my own interpretations of many books concerning the same subject. You'll find that no adverse influence is being created in Binghamton by Professor Rugg's books. (*The Binghamton Press*, December 14, 1939, p. 27)

According to Oagley, "in all likelihood only one out of 100" ninth grade pupils has read *Introduction to Problems of American Culture*, the text Hart singled out as most controversial (*Binghamton Press* March 5, 1940).

Tom Hutton, editor of the *Binghamton Press*, used his editorial column to demand that the school district investigate Hart's charges and prove that the books were not un-American. Hutton launched a grassroots campaign against Rugg by encouraging the local P.T.A. to conduct a hearing and request that Harold Rugg attend a parent-teacher meeting to defend his books. Hutton states:

... and now that the question has been raised here it probably wouldn't be fair to continue the use of the books without a complete airing of the pros and cons...This suggestion, we suspect, will appeal to all fair-minded educators
and also to persons who believe that Mr. Hart had the right of it when he said what he did here the other day. (Binghamton Press December 16, 1939 p. 6)

Apparently Hutton's call for a meeting with Rugg never materialized. Rugg had been traveling across the country, attending many such meetings and in all likelihood probably would have agreed to come to Binghamton. Since the meeting didn't occur, there is no public record of the opinions of teachers, students and parents on the Rugg textbooks. Rugg describes the reactions of parents, teachers, and students in other localities in his explanatory book on the controversy, That Men May Understand (1941).

Hutton continued to promote the banning of the textbooks through his editorials in the Binghamton Press. It is unclear why this became a rallying point for him, however, some speculations can be made. Robert Manning, a reporter working for the Binghamton Press at that time, characterized Hutton as an eccentric man who frequently used the paper and his editorials to promote his social and political views, especially those concerning the impending war in Europe. Manning explains:

...Hutton was not above bending the paper to his own passions. At one point, for example, he found menace in a series of harmless American history textbooks whose author, a professor named Rugg, had somehow been singled out by the arch conservative National Association of Manufacturers as a dangerous subversive... (Manning, 1992 p. 42)

The New Republic reported that Hutton collaborated with Merwin K. Hart and that his editorials were often cited by Rugg's accusers. (The New Republic, March 10, 1941 p. 328). Perhaps, Hutton was motivated purely by his convictions but other factors may have played some part as well.

At the time of the controversy, the Binghamton Press was independently owned by Willis Sharpe Kilmer. Kilmer had put up several million dollars to create the Binghamton Press Corporation after a local paper had printed a story about him that he perceived as unflattering. This seems to indicate that Kilmer felt a strong need to influence the local media for his own purposes. It is conceivable that Hutton did not have a personal vendetta against the Rugg books but rather was ordered by Kilmer to escalate the controversy (Smith, 1998).

Kilmer, a wealthy multi-millionaire and owner of Dr. Kilmer and Company (which manufactured a nationally popular patent medicine called "Swamp Root") may have had a personal stake in squelching
Rugg's critique of the advertising industry. The company was successful in large part because of its massive advertising campaign for Swamp Root.

Either way, it seems clear that the Binghamton Press had a specific agenda with regard to Harold Rugg. The Binghamton Press contributed more heavily to the coverage of the Rugg controversy than the other local newspaper, the Binghamton Sun, printing roughly twice the number of pieces on the subject.

In lieu of a public meeting with Rugg, the Binghamton Council of Parents and Teachers responded to Hutton's editorial by establishing a committee to investigate the communistic nature of the Rugg textbooks. Mrs. James J. Linehan, president of the council appointed Mrs. George Aug to head what became known as the Committee of Three. Mrs. Aug, along with Mrs. H. Clair Lester, Mrs. Felix Constine, and Mrs. Esther Perkins comprised the team that investigated the books. They reviewed one text, *An Introduction to Problems of American Culture*, by selecting controversial chapters from the table of contents. Each member then read, critiqued and analyzed the material included in the selected chapters (*Binghamton Sun*, January 9, 1940; *The Binghamton Press*, January 9, 1940).

Segments of the Binghamton community reacted to the controversy while the Committee of Three analyzed the textbook. Local Republican women reiterated the accusations of Merwin K. Hart at a School of Politics meeting on February 23, 1940. Mrs. Golda White presented the "matter of the Rugg textbooks" (*Binghamton Sun*, February 22, 1940) frequently quoting from the speech Hart had given to the Exchange Club in December. The women did not make any decisions to take formal action other than to state that they considered the textbooks to be "subversive" (*Binghamton Sun*, February 24, 1940).

On March 4, 1940, the Committee of Three presented its findings to the Binghamton Council of Parents and Teachers. They reported that only two paragraphs in the text were offensive. One of the objectionable paragraphs was a description of Russia's method of national planning. The committee was concerned that the text's discussion of national planning did not address the many weaknesses of the Russian system. However, they did not feel that the two paragraphs were cause for alarm (*The Binghamton Press* March 5, 1940). As Mrs. Aug stated "...the committee had found nothing to be alarmed about in the books under inspection, as there are only thirty of the books in use in the school system and these are only used as supplementary reference books" (*Binghamton Sun* March 5, 1940 p. 2). In addition, Mrs. Aug emphasized that concerned parents should consider the teacher's part in presenting the material.

Daniel J. Kelly, Superintendent of the Binghamton City Schools, made an official statement after the Committee of Three released its
report. Dismayed by a controversy he considered "nonsense" he was probably relieved to hear the positive findings of the Committee of Three. He defended its findings, reiterating his support for the Rugg textbooks, saying, "Personally, it's the kind of book I want my children to have. To say it is subversive is absurd" (The Binghamton Press March 5, 1940 p. 11). Unexpectedly, not more than seven days later, Kelly announced he was willing to remove them if parents found the books to be objectionable (The Binghamton Press March 12, 1940).

Kelly's change of position on the Rugg textbooks may have been the result of several people pressuring him to remove the books. George H. Hale, President of the Board of Education, and president of City National Bank was certainly in a position to pressure Kelly. Unfortunately, limited evidence is available to establish Hale's intent but he is quoted as asking Kelly, "is it worth the argument with which we are confronted to continue their use" (The Binghamton Press March 12, 1940 p. 3).

The Binghamton Chamber of Commerce may also have influenced Kelly's decision to ban the textbooks. The Chamber's Committee on Subversive Activities was sponsoring an essay contest on Americanism at the time. Its purpose was to promote a better understanding of American democracy among the youth of Binghamton and to "indoctrinate school pupils with the principles of Americanism" (The Binghamton Press March 12, 1940 p. 5). The Social Science department had compiled an extensive bibliography of resources that students could use in their essays. It included some of Rugg's books. J. Kennard Johnson, manager of the Chamber of Commerce, opposed the inclusion of the Rugg books saying, "We protested to Mr. Kelly the inclusion of these books on the bibliography in view of the controversy and requested that they be stricken from the list" (The Binghamton Press, April 4, 1940 p. 5). His comment is hardly surprising given the fact that Rugg's ideas were anathema to those who believed in Americanism.

On April 4, 1940, Kelly announced the removal of the Rugg books from the shelves of the Binghamton Junior High Schools. He ordered the books removed because "there's no use of having a controversy over something which has no point to it" (The Binghamton Press, April 4, 1940 p. 5). Edith Oagley, the social science director, was instructed to have the junior high teachers gather the books and send them to Kelly's office where they would remain indefinitely. Kelly did not specify if the books would be banned permanently.

Unfortunately, it is not clear why Kelly changed his mind and dropped his defense of the books. It is possible that the vocal opponents forced Kelly's hand. He denies that he was forced to remove the books from the shelves. However, he is quoted as saying he had consulted with George H. Hale, president of the board and Reverend...
Theodore J. Dewees, a member of the board, before he made his decision (The Binghamton Press, April 4, 1940).

After Kelly made the decision to temporarily remove the Rugg books from the shelves, Tom Hutton wrote an editorial praising the decision:

In recalling some 180 volumes of the Rugg so called social science textbooks used as supplemental texts in Binghamton Schools, Superintendent Daniel J. Kelly had done the only wise and reasonable thing that could be done, considering the controversy over the subversive nature of those books...We hope that they are out of circulation to stay as far as Binghamton schools are concerned, because we don’t think it is fair to use taxpayer money in a democracy to teach the glory of collectivism to the budding citizens of a democracy. (The Binghamton Press, April 6, 1940 p. 6)

Hutton also took the opportunity to further blast Rugg. He questioned Rugg’s loyalty to democracy, his participation in the Progressive Education Association, and painted him as a communist sympathizer (The Binghamton Press, April 8, 1940 p. 6). Hutton’s comments were then used by others across the country to reinforce the view that Rugg and his textbooks presented a threat to American nationalism. The New Republic (1941) in “The Crusade Against Rugg” explains how one of Hutton’s editorials was used by some of Rugg’s opponents (including Major A. G. Rudd, Major General Fries, and Legionnaire West) in a number of publications despite the inaccuracy of his comments.

On April 17, 1940, the Board of Education confirmed Daniel J. Kelly’s decision to remove the Rugg books from the library shelves. It unanimously passed a resolution sponsored by Board president George H. Hale to ban all 180 copies of the Rugg books (Binghamton Sun April 18, 1940 p. 3). The board minutes provide few details about the proceedings:

Swartwood, Dewees, Knauf, LaRoche, Hale
By Commissioner Dewees:
Commissioner Dewees reported that the Rugg books and teachers’ guides had been removed from the schools by order of Superintendent Kelly. Moved by Commissioner Dewees, 2nd by Commissioner LaRoche and carried that this action of Superintendent Kelly be approved.

T. R. Keating, the supply director, then collected the textbooks and moved them to Department of Education offices (The Binghamton Press,
April 15, 1940). Furthermore, social studies teachers were given the directive to ensure that all students remove any references to the Rugg books that they might have used in their Americanism essays (The Binghamton Press, April 15, 1940).

The controversy reached its climax on April 18, 1940. After the board meeting approved Superintendent Kelly's decision to remove the books, it was uncertain as to whether the books would remain in storage or be sold. One board member, Mrs. Swartwood, is quoted as suggesting the books be used in a public bonfire, "Mrs. Howard R. Swartwood, member of the Board of Education's teacher committee, proposed today that a 'bonfire be made' of the 180 Rugg social science textbooks, formerly used in local schools" (The Binghamton Press April 18, 1940 p. 3). Her statement was reported in the national media and was used to escalate the Rugg textbook controversy. Time magazine's report titled, "Book Burnings" states that two board members sought to have the books destroyed in a public bonfire (Time September 6, 1940 p. 65).

As one of the first school districts to ban the Rugg textbooks, the outcome in Binghamton received national attention. The American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom responded by sending an open letter to Superintendent Kelly, praising him for his defense of the Rugg textbooks. Over 150 people including prominent authors, professors, publishers, and clergymen signed the letter. They included Van Wyck Brooks (who was an early influence on Rugg), Ruth Benedict, Alfred Harcourt and W. W. Norton (Publisher's Weekly, June 22, 1940; New Republic, March 10, 1941). Frederic G. Melcher, editor of Publisher's Weekly, provides a succinct summary:

The harm which 1940 did to American education cannot be recalled. Mrs. Elizabeth Dilling, Bertie C. Forbes, Merwin K. Hart may know little about American history but they did know how to work upon the prejudices of the people through public press and private bulletins until their readers believed that the American way of life was being undermined." (Publishers Weekly, 1941 p. 1533)

Conclusion

Although Rugg's textbooks were not committed to the engulfing flames of a bonfire as may have been implied in the national media, the fact that the books were removed from the Binghamton schools is nonetheless significant. Just as significant was the absence of a public discussion in a democratic forum regarding the books. The controversy could have been brought to the people most directly involved with books, namely the students, teachers and parents. It should be
noted that the protracted controversy in Englewood, New Jersey, which did include extensive public discussion, did not end in banishment of the books from the schools.

How differently the Binghamton chapter of the controversy might have appeared if the shrill cry for a book burning had not been taken as representative of the will of the majority. How differently it might have ended if the voices of the junior high school students and their teachers had been heard. The working class parents may not have been as acquiescent as the companies and interested parties had hoped if they had been given the opportunity to participate in the discussion.

In many ways the Binghamton controversy mirrors the national controversy. An influential sector of society was able to shape the controversy according to its own perception of it. People with moneyed interests and an interest in maintaining the status quo fashioned the controversy to hinge upon a point of contention that suggested that "Americanism" and "the American way of life" were at risk.

The Binghamton controversy is an example of a crisis manufactured by elites. These crises arise again and again regarding the struggles over schooling. The importance of revisiting one such crisis lies in uncovering how they are started and perpetuated, for it is not the power of the elite alone that can sustain them. By placing the Rugg controversy in a socio-historical context one can assess the extent to which historical events, such as industrialization, a worldwide economic depression, government policy, immigration, and an impending war, can have upon public opinion. Rugg himself characterized the textbook controversy as a manifestation of the "social hysteria" which gripped the nation at the time. In an article published in the Teachers College Record, in March of 1941, Rugg states:

The conditions and problems of today are but the product of the moving trends and factors of yesterday. Every area of the social order must be put both in its long-time and short-time historical setting, and every bit of history given must have some clearly established functional justification. (Rugg, 1941 p. 495)

In revisiting the Rugg controversy, we wish to emphasize the importance of contextualizing the situations that help give rise to struggles over curriculum and schooling practices. This can be most helpful to better understand current struggles such as those over standards, high-stakes testing, and the many pressures facing students, teachers, and parents. Although struggle can be healthy and is often unavoidable, it only becomes a fair fight if democratic discussion is an inherent part of that struggle.
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Making Sense of “Best Practice” in Teaching History

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Abstract
The author revisits reform proposals in history education which call for increased emphasis on “historical inquiry.” Historical inquiry can be viewed as an instructional approach that brings together new understandings in the discipline of history with recent developments in cognitive research, especially in regard to children’s historical thinking. The beginning history teacher in this qualitative case study held knowledge and beliefs about subject matter and students considered essential for teaching historical inquiry. However, the teacher was reluctant to take this approach, for reasons that shed light on divergent interpretations of “best practice.” The author argues for a “learning from practice” model of professional education that begins with questions emerging directly out of individual teachers’ particular notions of best practice.

Introduction
In recent years, numerous history educators have proposed instructional models which engage students in the processes of historical interpretation (e.g. Holt, 1990; Kobrin, 1996; Segall, 1999; Shemilt, 1987). In Kobrin’s (1996) classroom for example, students are encouraged to read primary source material, look for patterns, develop hypotheses and write their own historical narratives. Kobrin suggests that this approach provides a way for students to learn that there is no single authoritative account of the past. In addition, the hope is that “students, whatever their personal history or acquired skill level, will come to appreciate the potential power of their minds” (p. 59).

Historical inquiry can be viewed as an instructional approach which brings together new understandings about the discipline of history as well as recent developments in cognitive research, especially in regard to children’s historical thinking. In the discipline, greater attention is being paid to the mind-activity of historians as they interpret evidence and reconstruct the past (Novick, 1988; Seixas, 1993b). History is something one does: a process of reasoning using contextual information, texts, empathy and imagination (Lee, 1984).
Traditional modes of history teaching may present a misleading impression of history as inert, disconnected facts. As Whelan (1997) argued:

The all-too-common pattern of teacher-centered, textbook-driven instructional practice in which students are required merely to memorize and periodically regurgitate selected sets of factual information is wholly inconsistent with the nature of historical inquiry and understanding (p. 507).

Paralleling the interest in historians' mind-activity, a cognitive approach to learning considers students' thinking as they interpret images about the past. It appears that students actively and imaginatively develop their (sometimes misinformed) sense of the past through a wide range of experiences, including television, ethnic identity, family stories, and history textbooks (Barton & Levstik, 1998; Epstein, 1998; Rose, 1999; Seixas, 1993a; VanSledright, 1999; Wineburg, 1996). Although very little research exists which correlates the use of historical inquiry with improvements in students' historical understanding, on a conceptual level it is striking that, as Bain (1995) phrased it, “a natural affinity exists between history and a cognitive understanding of learning” (p. 1).

As compelling as this “natural affinity” may be, historical inquiry is seldom practiced in U.S. classrooms. A body of research on history teachers' knowledge, beliefs and pedagogical reasoning offers plausible explanations. History teachers may be unfamiliar with historical ways of thinking (Wilson & Wineburg, 1988) or have insufficient pedagogical preparation for teaching historical inquiry (McDiarmid & Vinten-Johansen, 1993). They may become socialized by a school culture which values curriculum coverage and teacher-centered instruction—a condition which seems to discourage teachers from adopting an historical inquiry approach (Fehn & Koeppen, 1998; VanSledright, 1996).

The study presented here takes another look at history teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and school contexts in light of the effort to introduce historical inquiry as best practice. It is based on an intensive case study of a third-year history teacher, one of two teachers who participated in an investigation concerning the contribution of beginning history teachers' disciplinary knowledge and beliefs to their practice (Hartzler-Miller, 2000). One of these teachers, David Parker (pseudonym), held knowledge and beliefs about subject matter and students considered essential for teaching historical inquiry. He viewed history as a creative process in which historians' perspectives influence
their selection and organization of evidence. He was familiar with multiple and contested interpretations of past events. He perceived his students as active meaning-makers. In addition, David worked in a school environment that granted him considerable autonomy to shape his curriculum. If he had wanted to infuse historical inquiry into his curriculum, he could have. But David was reluctant to take this approach, for reasons that shed light on the ways teachers may make sense of best practice discourses.

In this article, I begin by providing a closer look at the model of historical inquiry, focusing particularly on its use of disciplinary developments and literature on children’s historical thinking. Next, I describe the research design and methods, followed by excerpts from David’s interviews and teaching episodes to illustrate his pedagogical decisions and justifications. I conclude with an analysis and discussion of implications for professional education.

Disciplinary Developments

It is impossible to talk about history education without acknowledging what has happened over the last 20 years within the discipline of history. Two interconnected changes directly relate to historical inquiry as an instructional approach. One change has to do with the way historians view their craft. Traditionally, historians assumed that it was possible to write authoritative, consensual historical narratives. Postmodernist challenges to the notion of objectivity—paralleling similar debates in literary theory, feminist studies, philosophy, anthropology and psychoanalysis (Segall, 1999)—highlighted the influence of authors’ questions, selection of evidence, values and analytic frames in the interpretive process. It became apparent that multiple interpretations of the same event were inevitable.

The second change concerns the topics historians choose to investigate and interpret. Traditionally, historians wrote about political and military leaders and events. Since the 1960s, the range of viable topics has exploded, as new historians suggested that historical significance is a matter of perspective. Ulrich (1990), for example, dismisses the accusation that the daily life of an eighteenth-century New England midwife is “trivial” by declaring that her account “fills in the missing work and trade of women” in the early, tumultuous years of the new republic (p. 29). The stories of great white Western men have been irrevocably dethroned from their once exclusive positions in the historical canon.

These days, the discipline of history is characterized as fragmented; among historians, issues of historical objectivity and significance are far from resolved (Bender, 1986; Novick, 1988; Rosenau, 1992). While many historians might concede that historical accounts reflect
authors' perceptions and values, they disagree over the extent to which objectivity may reside in the methodology—rather than the product—of historical research. On the less skeptical side is the argument that, although no single, authoritative account is possible, the scholarly community is in a position to judge the extent to which historians follow proper procedures for collecting and weighing evidence. Thus, some interpretations may be deemed more trustworthy than others (Rogers, 1984). On the more skeptical side is the view that the discipline is so divided, consensus regarding methodology is impossible. Whatever knowledge historians draw upon to judge their peers' work is simply another "text" informed by particular frames of reference (Harlan, 1989).

Likewise, debates continue concerning the issue of historical significance. While most historians agree that the traditional canon is problematic—given its exclusive focus on the history of dominant groups—there is disagreement over the extent to which there ought to be a new common set of standards for determining historical significance. The conflict is, again, related to the objectivity question. Some historians argue that it is possible, at least within the scholarly community, to distinguish between the significant and the trivial as long as standards are fluid, evolving as new questions or issues emerge. Other historians deny the possibility of consensus, preferring instead to treat historical significance as idiosyncratic (Novick, 1988; Seixas, 1993b, 1994).

Children's Historical Understanding

The unresolved disciplinary debates over objectivity and significance provide one window through which to view the historical inquiry approach in history education. A second window is research on children's historical understanding. This growing body of literature suggests that students—in conventional, transmission-style classrooms—tend to view history as static facts to be memorized. They believe that there is a single story about what happened, that teachers and textbooks are neutral sources of information, and that their own judgments about the past are irrelevant (Gabella, 1994; VanSledright, 1999; Wineburg, 1996).

Research also reveals that students do not passively receive these messages. Rather, they draw upon life experience to construct personal understandings. When students are asked to interpret events from the colonial period or the Civil Rights Movement, their responses vary widely, depending upon their social backgrounds and family stories (Rose, 1999; VanSledright, 1999). Barton and Levstik (1998) found that although elementary and middle school students were able to recite the "official narrative" of progress in U.S. history, some of them
observed flaws in the narrative based on their prior knowledge of civil dissent. It is not uncommon for children to confuse, forget or misunderstand past events (McKeown & Beck, 1994). For example, Barton (1996) discovered that elementary-aged children tended to oversimplify, believing that "all immigration happened before the American Revolution, or that the Westward Movement took place before there were any cities in the United States" (p. 403).

When viewed through the dual windows of disciplinary developments and cognitive research, the historical inquiry model—as an alternative to traditional history teaching—makes sense. Historical inquiry entails:

- a shift from an emphasis on 'a story well told' (or, the story as told in a textbook), to an emphasis on 'sources well scrutinized.' In other words, students do history—pose questions, collect and analyze sources, struggle with issues of significance, and ultimately build their own historical interpretations. (Levstik, 1996, p. 394)

When students are taught to do what historians do, the history they encounter is more like historians' sense of their discipline. The idea is that as students learn to use primary source material, contextual clues, empathy, and imagination to interpret events, they experience the ways in which authors' backgrounds and values influence historical accounts. As students build their own historical narratives, they confront multiple possible interpretations and diverse definitions of significance.

A second rationale for historical inquiry is that it treats as a given students' natural tendency to construct personal meaning about the past. Instead of assuming that students passively absorb information, historical inquiry invites them to articulate their interpretations. Teachers can then discern points of confusion, misunderstanding or oversimplification. Historical inquiry is also consistent with a cognitive explanation for why students tend to forget what they hear or read during traditional instruction. In a synthesis of research on cognition and learning, Bransford, Brown & Cocking (1999) noted that:

- the fact that experts' knowledge is organized around important ideas or concepts suggests that curricula should also be organized in ways that lead to conceptual understanding. Many approaches to curriculum design make it difficult for students to organize knowledge meaningfully. Often there is only superficial coverage of facts before
moving on to the next topic; there is little time to develop important, organizing ideas. (p. 30)

Superficial coverage of facts is antithetical to historical inquiry. Students cannot “do” history without delving deeply into topics. Kobrin’s (1996) secondary students spent weeks exploring Renaissance views of love, religion and authority. Rose’s (1999) third and fourth graders spent nearly an entire semester investigating migration to Michigan during the twentieth century. Obviously, this kind of in-depth study requires careful selection of topics or themes that are pedagogically rich in their potential for meaningfully linking historical concepts and time periods.

Research on History Teaching

Historical inquiry attempts to utilize new understandings about the discipline and recent insights about students’ historical sense-making. But, the discipline is fragmented, not unified, when it comes to issues of methodological objectivity and historical significance. Thus, it is possible to imagine varied approaches to teaching historical inquiry. One history teacher may decide to establish correct procedures for the interpretive process and standards for selecting historically significant topics. To do so would communicate the view that, within the discipline, consensus on these matters is possible. Another teacher may deliberately refrain from defining procedures and standards, in order to directly confront students with the discipline’s unresolved debates. For example, Kobrin (1996) describes a classroom in which there is no common set of “rules” for interpreting history, except the expectation that individual students explain their choices to their peers:

I think of objectivity as a learning and study process rather than as the absence of personal perspective. As a process, objectivity requires working according to a set of rules that make clear to yourself, and to those who follow and check your steps, how you worked and why you decided what you did. It means sharing and acknowledging premises and assumptions; utilizing known pools of evidence; not ignoring what you know, or could know, including the work of others in your field; and being clear about your criteria for drawing conclusions based on shared evidence. That is the best a person can do.” (Kobrin, 1996, pp. 91)
To date, there has been scant research on the various ways history teachers interpret and enact models of historical inquiry. Perhaps one reason for this is that historical inquiry is relatively uncommon practice (Downey & Levstik, 1991; Levstik & Barton, 1994; Stanley, 1991; Yeager & Davis, 1995). Studies on history teachers’ knowledge and beliefs offer plausible explanations. Wilson & Wineburg (1988) found that history teachers tend to view history as a parade of facts, particularly if their subject matter background is in a social science other than history. Yet even when teachers have learned to interpret evidence and construct narratives themselves, their changed views of the discipline don’t necessarily translate into pedagogical knowledge or beliefs (McDiarmid & Vinten-Johansen, 1993; VanSledright, 1996). And even when teachers are trained in strategies for teaching historical inquiry, they may resort to traditional models in the classroom. The socializing influence of school culture may be such that teachers experience historical inquiry as incongruent with expectations to cover the curriculum and manage student behavior (Fehn & Koeppen, 1998; Seixas, 1998).

David Parker, a third-year world history teacher, offers another glimpse into the influence of teachers’ knowledge, beliefs and school contexts. In this case, David is a teacher who views history as a creative, interpretive process, is familiar with historiographic debates regarding objectivity and significance, and regards students as active meaning-makers. During preservice education, he was introduced to “inquiry methodology” as an instructional approach, he developed an inquiry-based World War II unit which required students to “use different types of evidence and draw their own conclusions,” and during his student teaching experience, he collaborated with his mentor teacher on a unit using artifacts from the antebellum period. Although his colleagues expect him to cover 4000 years of world history in two semesters, David enjoys considerable freedom to select and organize the curriculum as he pleases. But David is reluctant to teach historical inquiry, for he holds an alternative understanding of best practice in history teaching.

Method

David was one of two teachers who participated in a study on beginning history teachers’ content knowledge. Both participants had received exemplary evaluations from their instructors and cooperating teachers. Both had graduated from a highly-regarded teacher education institution that required candidates to hold subject matter majors. The purpose of the study was to understand the knowledge and beliefs that enable novice teachers to transform disciplinary content into representations that are accessible to young learners. Previous
studies of this type suggested that life history, content knowledge, and disciplinary orientations impact teachers' transformation of subject matter (Grossman, 1990; Shulman, 1987; Wilson, Shulman & Richert, 1987; Wilson & Wineburg, 1988). Thus, I structured interviews around particular tasks that elicited the teachers' autobiographies, historical knowledge and beliefs, and pedagogical reasoning in the act of planning and teaching. For example, in the autobiographical interviews, I asked the novices to describe pre-college memories related to learning history, significant college history courses and influential aspects of their teacher preparation program. In the content knowledge interviews, I invited the teachers to draw a conceptual map of the specific historical content they were about to teach, talk about what they knew regarding the topic and to explain where and when they had learned about the topic and whether they were aware of alternative or conflicting historical interpretations.

I observed each teacher during the 1998-99 school year for two class periods every day for the duration of two units: one "familiar" and one "unfamiliar," based on self-assessments of content knowledge. This study design afforded the opportunity to notice variations in teaching based on differences among students and in the teachers' topical understanding. Midway through each unit, I held a reflection-on-action interview in an effort to elicit tacit and intuitive teaching knowledge (Schon, 1983). These interviews consisted of a series of tasks, in which the novices commented on a list of instructional representations they had used and thought out loud as they listened to an audio-tape of their teaching. At the end of each unit, I held a post-observation interview in which teachers analyzed samples of students' work and imagined out loud how they might teach the same unit next year. A final source of data consisted of documents that the teachers produced as part of their units (such as lesson plans, handouts, student work, tests, quizzes, and seating charts) as well as information from district and state offices concerning socio-economic, cultural and political features of the school, school practices, and the student body.

My methodological orientation in this study was naturalistic. I wanted to immerse myself in the culture of the participants' teaching environments, understand as much as possible what reality looked like from their perspectives, and allow theories to emerge from the data. (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Lee & Yarger, 1996). I read and reread my field notes and interview transcripts, looking for themes and patterns, as well as disconfirming evidence (Bogdan & Biklin, 1982). After all interviews and observations were complete, I invited the participants to respond to early drafts of my memos as a way to involve them in the process of interpretation (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).
David Parker's Conceptions of History Teaching

At the time of the study, David Parker—a 24-year-old, Caucasian male—was in his third year at Sycamore High School (pseudonym), located in a well-to-do, predominantly white suburban community on the outskirts of a mid-sized Midwestern city. David taught world history, economics and French, but history was his passion. As a child, he had been drawn to history because of its story-like quality, "the whole grandness of seeing history happen and people getting caught up in it...Even now when I look at history, I see it as a story with characters."

David's elementary and middle school experiences were in predominantly white public schools, while he spent his high school years in a private, all-male, mostly white Catholic school. He enjoyed learning history no matter how it was taught, as long as he was encountering new material. He loved the "difficult" teachers whom his peers "hated:"

Mr. Jordan was a really hard man, a difficult teacher, but he inspired me. . . . I got a lot out of it, but most students hated him. He was a bit of a jerk I guess.
(Interview, 11/3/98)

By the time he entered twelfth grade, David perceived he knew as much about U.S. history as his Advanced Placement teacher. He remained an exceptional history student throughout college, receiving a solid 4.0 in his chosen major.

Well before David entered college, he knew he would become a history teacher. In fact, he saved notes and assignments from elementary and secondary school, thinking that he might need them one day. When he recalls the experiences that shaped his current view of history teaching, he gives equal attribution to "the history side and the education side." On the history side, there was Dr. Clark:

He is the greatest professor I've ever had in the way that he combined music, art, literature, science, everything. A humanities approach to history, it summed up everything that I had been learning, everything comes together, everything about the history of mankind.
(Interview, 10/21/98)

In addition to developing a "humanities approach to history," David recalled learning "endless historical skills" in college, such as
"determining validity of evidence, bias, [and] validity of witnesses, developing generalizations, [distinguishing between] facts and theory, use of maps, use of data, how to read tables [and] make inferences."

These experiences were influential in shaping how David views history as a discipline:

I now see history as something that is very much constructed through the historian's eyes. There is no such thing as [a distinct approach called] revisionist history: it's all revisionism. If we see the same set of events, we're going to have radically different interpretations. To say that we stick to the facts is dumb. Even the facts we choose to present are slanted by the way we try to make sense of them. The order we create is history but it's also us. You can never take the bias out of it. People think that because they got it from a certain book it must be true. Even the most primary sources are biased by the individuals who wrote them, their choices about what to leave in and leave out; even with a camera, [by] what you choose to ignore. (Interview, 11/3/98)

David appears to be quite familiar with disciplinary developments, in terms of the issues of objectivity and significance. He views history as a creative process in which historians' perspectives influence interpretive accounts. He wants to teach his students to "be like an historian," to see "how new pieces of evidence come in and they change the way we know." And, he wants his ninth graders to encounter "alternative ways of looking at history." So, on the first day of school:

I talked about how history is misinterpreted as an end all and be all. The textbook is just one historian's opinion that [the students] are welcome to disagree with. I pointed out that the book barely mentions the Columbian exchange and celebrates the European explorers more than it talks about the impact on Native American culture. So then we had a discussion about whether they see the Columbian exchange as a disaster or something we should celebrate. (Interview, 10/21/98)

David credits his education coursework for teaching him about "how people learn, ways to reach people, different learning styles and group work." He says that it was an "eye-opener" for him when he realized that, in retrospect, his favorite high school history teacher—Mr. Jordan—had been "teaching to the top 10 percent of the class:"
He was all lecture. The tests were all multiple choice, [with questions like] “What numerical ratio is needed to impeach a president?” A good number of people fell asleep in his class everyday. There was no attempt to teach to their learning styles. I see what I do as an antithesis to what he did. (Interview, 10/21/98)

Frequently, David expressed high expectations that his ninth-graders were capable of “making connections about, questioning, even disagreeing with” historical narratives. Occasionally, a students’ comment or interpretation of an assignment reminded him that:

a lot of what [students learn] is being defined by their preconceived notions and their schema and backgrounds and what they pick and choose [to attend to]. We can teach them the truth, or what we consider the truth to be, and they come away with something like the truth.”

(Interview, 4/16/99)

Many researchers have studied the influence of both early schooling experiences and preservice education on teachers’ practice (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Goodman & Adler, 1985; Lortie, 1975; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984; Weinstein, 1990; Yeager & Wilson, 1997). In David’s case, both sets of experiences carried weight; one did not supercede the other. His commitment to inspire students by expecting much from them and his passion for grand historical narratives were nurtured during his “apprenticeship of observation,” when he assessed his teachers from a personal and student-oriented perspective (Lortie, 1975). At the same time, his education courses prompted him to reevaluate his impression of his favorite high school history teacher. David developed a vision for enabling all students to learn history, not just the “top 10 percent of the class.” His view of learning was perhaps more complicated than Mr. Jordan’s: he knew students had “different learning styles” and were actively involved in constructing their own historical understanding.

Planning for Instruction

The Sycamore High School history department afforded teachers considerable autonomy to adjust the curriculum. In his planning, David did not consult national history standards and there was no common exam (the state had not yet instituted its standardized test) or curricular guidelines for teaching the world history course. David’s
decisions were guided largely by his own subject matter knowledge and perspectives on teaching history.

One feature of David's curriculum was that he tended to group events closely related in time around big themes and broad narratives. For example, he designed a unit called "Changes in Ideas" which compared philosophers from several time periods: Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Darwin, Freud, and Marx. He decided to focus on non-Western nations such as China, India and Russia during the "Interwar Years" unit. And, he combined the American, French and Industrial Revolutions into a unit called "The Age of Revolutions," organized around a theme he called "the revolutionary dialectic."

The revolutionary dialectic is an interpretation of revolutionary change David learned in Dr. Clark's "humanities approach to history" course. The interpretation, as David described it, portrays revolutions as following a "pendulum swing:" a sense of optimism toward the future—especially among the middle class—fuels revolutionary activity, which is followed by a reactionary movement causing people to be (arguably) worse off than they were before.

David was familiar with alternative interpretations of revolutionary change and social histories of the American and French Revolutions. For example, he identified as a "self-congratulatory theory" the view that revolutions tend to make nations more democratic. He referred to a "Chinese model" which argues that history is cyclical. And he had recently read social histories of colonial women's economic activity and the eighteenth-century French system of capital punishment. But David chose to build his unit around the revolutionary dialectic because it fit his sense of best practice:

Ideas are the thing that I emphasize the most...Ideas are mind-expanding, applicable and useful in life in general...We will look at the French, American and Industrial Revolutions and see how the revolutionary dynamic is there. . . . [The goal is] to determine a pattern for revolutions,...what leads to them, what happens in them, the outcomes and to look at whether these are necessarily good things. (Interview, 11/3/98)

David was also drawn to the revolutionary dialectic because of the potential to have students make judgments about the consequences of revolution, using historical evidence:

Was life better or worse after the French Revolution? That's an intriguing question, worth having the kids think about, worthy of discussion as opposed to having them memo-
rize some text. In that sense they are creating their own version of history. . . . History is something created by each individual. But that doesn’t mean that there isn’t something to be known. There is something to be learned. For me to understand the French Revolution, I have to understand this dynamic, the causes, the results. I have to understand the chain of events—not memorize them—but know them in order to make a judgment about whether this was a good thing or bad thing, and to interpret it with evidence and support my ideas. But you can’t make a rational or strong case unless you have all the information and you understand it. You can’t just say I think the French Revolution was a good thing and not say what evidence I’m counting and discounting. (Interview, 11/3/98)

David knew that, within the discipline, multiple interpretations of the three revolutions abounded. But he designed a unit intending for students to learn just one of those interpretations—the revolutionary dialectic. His reasoning seemed linked to his memories as a history student, when he developed a passion for grand historical narratives and a commitment to inspire students by presenting them with challenging content. He clearly believed that—whatever conclusions students came to about the consequences of revolution—it was his role to judge what was historically significant and predetermine the questions around which students would draw conclusions.

**Teaching about the Age of Revolutions**

David’s Age of Revolutions unit plan, which he taught in late November, represents a possible variation of historical inquiry. Instead of making disciplinary debates over objectivity and significance explicit, David predetermined the proper content and methods for studying it. Yet, because he intended for students to reach their own conclusions about the effectiveness of revolutions, there was still an element of inquiry. Presumably, students would learn to use evidence effectively when making judgments about history. Not only would they be likely to remember the revolutionary dialectic as a “mind-expanding” idea, they might even challenge the notion that revolutions invariably end badly and thereby develop a sense of the subjectivity in historical reasoning.

But it became apparent during the enactment of his unit plan that David’s choices were not guided by concern for historical inquiry.
He did not ask students to interpret evidence nor build their own interpretations regarding the effectiveness of revolution.

The following excerpt is from the lesson in which David introduced the idea of the revolutionary dialectic. It took place immediately after he presented nine causes of the American Revolution and contrasted the structures of government articulated in the Articles of Confederation and the U.S. Constitution:

David: The ideas of John Locke. Yes they led to revolution, but they also did what? What was our first government designed to do?

Student: Protect our rights.

David: Protect our rights, but how? What kind of government did they design to protect those rights—strong or weak?

Student: Weak

David: So here they are, no rights under the British empire, then they swing to the other extreme. How many of you have ever seen a pendulum before?

Student: Yeah, it goes backwards and forwards.

David: Right, it starts on one side, you let it go, it goes all the way to the other side and then what?

Student: It comes back.

David: All the way to where it started?...No it does not, otherwise it would be a perpetual motion machine... Now, this is a lot like a pendulum. We start with no rights under the British empire and we feel that the government is being a tyrant and being horrible so we swing all the way to the other side and what kind of government do we create?...We swing, all the way opposite, from a government that doesn’t give us any rights to a government that protects those rights by being very weak. Did that system work?

Student: No
David: So what did we do?

Student: Swing back.

David: But did we go all the way back? No, we created our modern-day government...We have the Bill of Rights. So we had a government first that didn't protect our rights [and] we got rid of it. We created a government that was so weak that it was a mess and came back and created a government that was stronger, but we still wanted what? Think about the original causes, what did we want to do?

Student: Protect our rights

David: We still wanted to protect our rights and so we do that with the Bill of Rights. (Class session; 11/24/98)

This recitation style of instruction dominated in both sets of observations: November and April. David presented a big theme or broad narrative near the beginning of each unit and used subsequent lessons to buttress the narrative with historical details. His students rarely offered more than a comment or two, appearing to treat his questions as rhetorical rather than serious opportunities to offer their own interpretations or inquiries. And yet, David expressed overall satisfaction with the lessons, pleased that—for example—students were able to recall the pendulum swing pattern associated with each of the three revolutions and apply it to either the Mexican or Russian Revolutions.

David labeled this extended response part of the exam “Historians’ Exercise.” However, the test question wasn’t designed to have students generate interpretations using evidence or to consider alternative accounts of the same event. Rather, the task conveyed an objective approach to the discipline: the revolutionary dialectic was the most significant, authoritative and trustworthy interpretation; historical analysis happens within a prescribed set of procedures. As a result, the exercise tended to elicit uniform, superficial responses rather than personal, in-depth interpretations. No students offered alternative explanations of revolutions even when their analyses suggested flaws in the revolutionary dialectic. The test question didn’t even ask students to judge “whether life was better or worse after the French Revolution.” Yet David was pleased with the essays because they dem-
onstrated that most students were “trying to apply the pattern . . . It wasn’t about being right or wrong but about effort.”

Indeed, throughout the post-observation interviews, David was not inclined to second-guess his content selection or instructional style. Instead, he repeatedly expressed concern about the “concrete thinkers” in his class. In his preservice education, David had developed a commitment to be “an antithesis” to his favorite history teacher, Mr. Jordan, who had ignored all but “the top 10 percent.” David had learned that students are active learners, with “different learning styles” and this is what preoccupied him during the post-observation reflections. After he read the early draft of my analysis, his first comment was:

It was painful to read about myself. I mean, I don’t want to be like Mr. Jordan. I don’t want to overlook the concrete thinkers who have difficulty understanding the abstract ideas. . . . I believe that anything worth doing is worth doing well, but it’s also difficult. If it’s easy to do, it’s not worth doing. I don’t want to avoid the difficult, abstract ideas. Coloring in maps so they learn where France is, they’ll get an A but they won’t have learned much. So I give them examples to make it concrete: here’s the abstract idea, here are some examples [to illustrate it], what happened, how did it happen, now do you see the pendulum?. . . . And if they don’t get it with this unit, they’ll see it when we get into [post-World War II], the Age of Anxiety. (Interview; 12/21/98)

David’s knowledge and beliefs closely resembled the perspectives held by proponents of historical inquiry. But his practice was largely informed by his passion for abstract ideas and his belief that by focusing on fewer ideas, connecting them across the curriculum, and providing concrete examples, all students would develop meaningful understandings of the past.

Understanding David’s Practice

When I first began analyzing David’s knowledge, beliefs and practice, I saw similarities between David and Martha Reese, the veteran history teacher about whom Bruce VanSledright (1996) has written. Unlike David, Martha had a Ph.D. in history and 14 years of secondary teaching experience. However, both teachers exhibited an apparent discrepancy between knowledge and practice; like David, Martha was familiar with disciplinary debates over objectivity and significance, yet did not use an historical inquiry approach in her prac-
tice. VanSledright speculated that the discrepancy in Martha's case had to do with a number of factors, including the difficulty inherent in accepting the curricular implications of postmodernism, the influence of a departmental exam which required students to memorize disconnected historical information, and Martha's beliefs that historical inquiry was inappropriate outside of an Advanced Placement, senior history course.

I considered each of these factors as potential explanations in David's case. It is conceivable that David can articulate a desire for his curriculum to be informed by issues of objectivity and significance, without yet grasping the implications of that desire in terms of new roles for teachers, students and texts. In spite of the teacher autonomy within his department, the expectation to cover 4000 years of world history in two semesters sends a strong message that breadth is more important than depth. And one of the explicit reasons David gave for not using historical inquiry with his ninth graders was that "it's complicated if their vocabulary is weak and their reading skills are poor...Maybe at the end of the year ninth graders might be more ready for something like this."

Another consideration is the relatively brief exposure David had to teaching historical inquiry in the context of his preservice education. Researchers who have studied prospective teachers' practice following intensive instruction on historical inquiry during sixteen-week methods courses, report that more time is needed (Fehn & Koeppen, 1998; Seixas, 1998; Yeager & Wilson, 1997). David's opportunities to observe and practice historical inquiry in high school classrooms were quite limited in comparison, and probably did not provide him with the tools and skills deemed essential by these researchers: an array of age-appropriate primary texts, strategies for engaging students in historical interpretation, and confidence in managing open-ended discussions.

All of these explanations for David's practice seemed plausible. However, I felt unsatisfied, because none took into account the possibility that, from David's perspective, there was no incongruity that needed to be explained. I wondered what I would see if I asked the question differently. Instead of wondering why David didn't teach historical inquiry, I took a second look at what he did teach. What notion of best practice does David's knowledge and beliefs support?

A major theme that linked David's knowledge and beliefs to his practice was his interest in providing students with a conceptual structure, a coherent historical narrative. He believed that students were best able to make sense of historical people and events when they worked within a common, organizing scheme, such as the revolutionary dialectic. David perceived that, as the teacher familiar with the various models and narratives historians have produced, it was his
job to select the most applicable, scholarly, conceptual tools for his students. It was his job to make those narratives accessible to all of his students, including the "concrete thinkers." To expect students to create the revolutionary dialectic—or any other common narrative—by studying raw data as professional historians have done, made no sense.

I wonder if something like this [teaching with primary documents] is sustainable for a whole year. A whole course of interpretive history? I think it would be exhausting for the students. Would they be able to do that? I don’t know. If you talk about that there is a narrative—a story to history and things to be known—then are you talking about students creating that entire narrative over the course of the year? It’s a very exciting idea, but then, I think you sacrifice content. I just don’t know how you would structure a course for nine months like that.

(Interview, 5/4/99)

David’s notion of best practice meant conveying a broad, conceptual narrative based on historical scholarship which his students could recognize and describe. His interest in ensuring that students work from a shared narrative made him skeptical toward historical inquiry, in which the goal is to have students build their own interpretations. Historical inquiry, from this standpoint, is impractical since it allows more than a single narrative to emerge. When David said he wanted his students to “be like an historian,” that didn’t mean they had to directly imitate historians. Rather, he introduced them to the discipline by selecting intellectually rigorous content and keeping a tight rein on students’ analysis of events. He responded to his learners’ needs by attempting to teach fewer big themes, relating them across units and providing more concrete and interesting details. He admitted that his approach didn’t cause students to view history as an interpretive enterprise:

I mention it at times, but I still suspect they’re reading it [the textbook] as the truth. . . . I’ll have double things going on. On the one hand I say, “This is a construction, this is an interpretation, you might disagree with this.” And then I ask them to answer the questions in Section Two: “Well, where are the answers to the questions? In the book, all the answers are here, this is what happened.”

(Interview, 5/4/99)
David understood what historical inquiry was, he had some experience learning how to teach it, and he was able to recognize that his notion of best practice did not fit the historical inquiry model. He preferred an alternative approach which finds support, perhaps ironically, in the history standards documents: *Building a World History Curriculum* (National Council for History Education, 1997) and the *National Standards for History* (National Center for History in the Schools, 1996). I point out the irony here, because the standards documents are often used to promote historical inquiry. However, I believe it is possible to interpret the standards documents as if historical inquiry is intended to be secondary (and distinct from) selecting scholarly content. For instance, both documents are organized around lists of content with an emphasis on "broad significant themes and questions." In regard to the era both documents label as the "Age of Revolutions," history teachers are encouraged to help students "compare the causes, character, and consequences of the American and French revolutions" (National Center for History in the Schools, 1996, p. 187). David's "Historians' Exercise," though not an exercise in historical inquiry, did nevertheless create an opportunity for students to perform to this standard.

From the perspective of historical inquiry as best practice, David's teaching represents a skewed interpretation of history education reform. But given the disciplinary debates and political nature of history curriculum development, it is perhaps more useful to consider David's teaching from the perspective of multiple notions of best practice. David's reference group includes historians and history educators for whom the concern about bringing students into the disciplinary debates about objectivity and significance takes back seat to the issue of selecting major, enduring themes from the ever-changing body of historical scholarship (see Craig, 1989; Gagnon, 1988; Kammen, 1989; and most of the eleven historians featured in the Winter, 1998 issue of *American Scholar*). This notion of best practice tends to be satisfied to leave historical inquiry in the hands of trained professionals, whose scholarly, peer-reviewed work can then inform the questions and themes to which young learners are exposed. And, it tends to fit much better than historical inquiry into current school contexts, where a flexible curriculum has fallen victim to standardized testing.

**Professional Support for Learning from Practice**

During the year I observed David Parker, I found myself both admiring his facility with subject matter and feeling disappointed that historical inquiry held so little appeal for him. Realizing why his notion of best practice made sense to him helped me to see my own preferences for historical inquiry as situated within a particular dis-
course. I share with other proponents of historical inquiry the concern that too many students perceive history as an inert subject, believe that historians merely report facts, and assume that their questions about the past are irrelevant. I am attracted to historical inquiry because it seems a potentially powerful model for curtailing the widespread misuse and misunderstanding of history.

But as a teacher educator, I must keep in mind that multiple notions of best practice exist. Undoubtedly, I will continue to teach students who, like those in other case studies, bring little understanding of the constructed, contested nature of history (Fehn & Koeppen, 1998; Seixas, 1998; Wilson & Wineburg, 1988; Yeager & Wilson, 1997). But I will also teach students like David, who hold knowledge considered essential for teaching historical inquiry but, for legitimate reasons, find historical inquiry impractical and nonsensical. What then, is the teacher educator’s role?

A central task of professional education is to help teachers improve their practice. One approach is to present teachers with a normative model of best practice—historical inquiry, for example—and the rationale and methods for incorporating the preferred model into their teaching. The assumption underlying this “how to teach” approach is that teachers lack certain knowledge and beliefs which make it possible to adopt alternative approaches. They may not be using historical inquiry because they haven’t had enough exposure to that model of teaching or they don’t have the disciplinary knowledge or the appropriate materials and strategies. Perhaps their understanding of how children learn is incomplete; they do not fully appreciate the extent to which children draw upon life experiences to construct historical understanding. It is possible that if David’s preservice education had taken a more intensive “how to teach” approach to historical inquiry, David might have been more inclined to adopt the model in his teaching. He might have re-directed his passion for big themes and commitment to sophisticated content toward helping students use primary source materials and weigh multiple interpretations.

But perhaps knowing how and why to teach historical inquiry isn’t sufficient. Perhaps one has to be drawn to historical inquiry like one is drawn to food or romance: because it meets a deeply-felt need. The “how to teach” approach identifies the problem for teachers; an alternative approach—“learning from practice”—begins with the problems teachers identify for themselves (Ball & Cohen, 1999). The “learning from practice” approach supports teachers in learning how to learn from practice, using student work, curricular materials and transcripts of classroom dialogue. The process of studying these artifacts may generate “openings,” opportunities for teacher educators to respond to specific, felt needs expressed by teachers (Ball & Cohen, 1999).
Although David was clearly thoughtful about his teaching, on his own he did not study what students were learning or reflect on his teaching in depth. However, the interview protocol which required him to analyze students’ work and transcripts of classroom dialogue, generated potential “openings.” It was when I asked David to comment on excerpts of classroom dialogue and students’ work that his concerns about his “concrete thinkers” surfaced. The thought that he might be overlooking their learning needs stimulated him to analyze his teaching. He was grappling with a self-defined problem: how to enable all students to learn rigorous historical content?

Although I did not work with David long enough to see where his insights and questions took him, I could envision how a mentor might make use of these openings. For example, if David continued to wonder about what various students understand and misunderstand, he might become interested in strategies that elicit more of his students’ thinking. If he began to notice that students’ understandings are diverse and build upon personal experiences, he might find it compelling to help students relate to multiple, scholarly interpretations of the same event. These are all knowledge and beliefs which enable teachers to use historical inquiry, but they are made available as answers to the questions which emerge directly out of the teachers’ notions of best practice.

There is no guarantee that treating openings as opportunities to introduce reform practices will lead any history teacher to embrace historical inquiry. Furthermore, “learning from practice” represents a major shift in the role of teacher educators. It requires teacher educators to work closely with their students from preservice through induction. It demands that they listen and observe teachers closely enough to understand their notions of best practice. It calls for strategic knowledge about how to use classroom artifacts to prompt teachers to identify deeply-felt problems of practice and once an “opening” arises, how to respond in an educative way. Educators have only recently begun to conceptualize and describe what this kind of mentoring entails (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Thomas, Wineburg, Grossman, Myhre & Woolworth, 1998). But the major appeal with a “learning from practice” approach in history education—as it relates to this particular case study—is that it takes into account divergent interpretations of history standards and the fact that history teachers—like their students—are sense-makers.

References


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Teachers' Perspectives on Real World Challenges for Social Studies Education

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Abstract
This paper presents qualitative research describing high school social studies teachers' beliefs about "real world" aspects of modern young people and society that were particularly challenging, and had a strong influence on their teaching. "Real world" concerns were loosely defined as factors outside of teachers' immediate control, which were significantly cultural or sociological in origin or nature. These included the life stage of students; social class, tracking, and cliques; parenting and family life; family subcultures and religion; the media and popular culture; and the economy. These concerns were described as affecting students' emotional and social orientations, as well as students' intellectual orientations and preparedness. In the current educational context of standardization, this study asks us to take seriously the authenticity, complexity, and range of unstandardizable factors, such as teachers' beliefs, school and classroom dynamics, and the sociological contexts which affect curriculum.

Throughout the history of American schooling, one of the primary goals of education has been to develop social ethics and to prepare students for participation in democracy. In fact, during important periods in the history of American education, such as the 19th century common school era and the progressive era of the early twentieth century, public school expansion was rationalized, in part, by a perceived need to socialize young people, and often immigrants, into the habits of democracy. At the same time, during both of these periods, preparing students for participation in democracy was understood to be a challenge, and visions of democracy and its relationship to education were debated.

This remains true today. The very social conditions which focus attention on the school's need to socialize young people can make the job difficult. Shocking incidents, such as the April 1999 shootings at Columbine High School and recent others in San Diego, California; Kentucky; Arkansas; and Oregon, draw attention to the alienation of certain segments of American youth. Though Americans have been
aware of the alienation of the poor and disenfranchised, such individual and social pathology among the suburban middle class has come as a surprise to many. For example, in one study, teachers identified “dysfunctional families, uneducated families, poor parenting skills, single parents, and drugs” as the top five reasons for low-self esteem and alienation among students (Cross, 1997). The attraction that some young people have for dysfunctional and violent solutions is popularly theorized to be stoked by violent mass media, dysfunctional family relationships, and a dysfunctional school climate (Coffey, 1999; Minerbrook, Poindexter, & Kantasingh, 1999; Noonan, 1999; Quinnan, 1999). Numerous schools have responded to such incidents by increasing their attention to crisis prevention strategies and treating “odd” and potentially violent students with particular punitiveness. As Cook, Ingwersen, Dillin, and Jones (1999) observed “the near universal response has been to beef up school security” (p.10).

Other educators, however, are taking a longer view and are considering the ways in which educators can respond to real world challenges provided by culture, media, family, and school environments on a daily basis. For example, schools can become more personal and responsive through size reduction, increased meaningful contact between students and adults, and a more supportive school and classroom climate (Abramson, 1999; Sylwester, 1999). Curriculum can also potentially address social conditions by teaching students healthy approaches to conflict and by providing perspectives on life which increase students' sense of understanding, control, community, and self-esteem (Carruthers & Carruthers, 1996; Richardson & Gray, 1998). Though lessons about social responsibility, about care and compassion, and about how individuals and groups work together to solve problems, can be effectively taught across the curriculum, these concepts are natural to the social studies curriculum (Berman, 1990; McCall, 1996; Oliner, 1983). Focusing on classroom level democratic relationships promotes both individual development and democratic social ethics (Becker & Cuoto, 1996; Dewey, 1916/1944; Gastil, 1993).

The need for a curricular emphasis on social conditions and on developing the ability to understand and respect others and to foster active citizenship is also considered to be particularly important for schools today because of a perceived decline in open-minded participatory democracy. Contemporary Americans are reportedly less involved than other generations in civic and political life. Voting rates continue to decline, few citizens show up for public hearings, and membership in a range of social action and volunteer groups has waned (National Council for Social Studies [NCSS], 1997; Putnam, 1995). At the same time, participation in clearly “antidemocratic” groups such as militia groups and neo-Nazi white supremacist groups is on the rise (Dees, 1996; Stock, 1996). In response to these trends, the
National Council for Social Studies, critical theorists (Apple, 1999; Giroux, 1991; Torres, 1998), and multicultural and global education theorists (Banks & McGee, 1997; Gay, 1997) are all calling for a return to a meaningful civic education that will enable students to "make reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world" (NCSS, 1996).

Yet not all social studies educators support this NCSS vision of social studies as civic education, in which the development of students' tolerance and ability to think, discuss, and relate is of primary importance. Many social studies educators support a more subject-oriented focus, in which social studies is understood primarily as a series of disciplines such as government, economics, and history. These purposes can be quite distinct. Some researchers in social studies education believe the inability to articulate a common vision or a practical purpose has characterized the field for years. Brophy and Alleman (1993) contend that as a profession "we have lost sight of the major long term goals that reflect the purpose of social studies" (p. 27). Kaltsounis (1994) shares this negative view, writing, "Considerable testimony from within as well as without the profession suggests that social studies as a subject within the school curriculum lacks a solid foundation, and is therefore in a state of crisis" (p. 176). There is also concern that the subject-centered focus has been further supported by social studies curriculum standards and standardized tests that emphasize facts and content over thinking and civic practice. This trend in the social studies has been criticized by a number of researchers. Nelson (1998) asserts that "standards emphasize content, not the human quality of how information is presented or discovered and by whom" and observes that "standards that reflect local citizen involvement are nonexistent" (p. 70). Ross (1997a) criticizes standards as "encouraging centralized curriculum making that makes teachers and schools conduits for the delivery of prepackaged curriculum" (p.34) and points out that promoters of standards champion an ideological consensus based on a highly conservative vision of European American culture (Ross, 1996).

It may be argued, however, that curriculum and instruction in social studies is affected by "real world" conditions whether or not teachers have an overt focus on civics, citizenship, and social responsibility. Furthermore, all social studies teachers must contend with the real world aspects of students, school, and culture. The teachers described in this study included both those who considered themselves to be subject specialists and those who considered themselves to be imparting a broader social studies teaching focused on more general principles. This paper presents research describing the "real world" aspects of modern young people and society which contemporary social studies teachers, with a range of approaches to teaching, per-
ceived as particularly challenging, and as inevitably influencing their
teaching. It is important to distinguish that this article presents re-
search on teachers’ beliefs or perspectives about the ways in which they
are influenced by real world factors. This is an important distinction,
highlighting the tensions between teachers’ freedom and teachers’
constraints. Teachers have a fundamental freedom to respond to situ-
ations in a variety of ways, and yet students, classrooms, schools, and
society provide the unassailable “fact” of context.

Teacher Perspectives and Socialization

Research on teaching in social studies was once focused prima-
arily on what teachers should know and how they should be taught.
Like other areas of educational research, it was “characterized by the
use of classical empirical scientific paradigms” (Dillon, O’Brien, &
Heilman, 2000, p. 15). More recently, however, researchers “in both
natural and social sciences, have become increasingly aware of the
role of context, subjectivity, interpretation, and social values in all as-
pects of what was earlier understood to be an objective research pro-
cess” (p. 15). Social studies has been influenced by these trends in
research. For example, the cognitive psychology movement contrib-
uted to a “renewed emphasis on conceptualizing teaching and learn-
ing as integrated, interdependent processes” in social studies
(Armento, 1991, p. 185). At the same time, the turn from positivism to
postpositivism in social science encouraged a more interpretive per-
spective (Armento, 1991). Finally, critical theorists drew attention to
the ways in which teachers are influenced by the school as an institu-
tion and the capitalistic social and cultural structures in which the
school is seated (Apple, 1979, 1982; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Foucault,

As the literature on teacher beliefs developed, it initially focused
primarily on teachers’ professional beliefs and practice-generated theo-
ries, their ideas about academic content, teachers’ relative sense of
efficacy, or their decision making and reflection processes (Jordell, 1987;
this literature tells us that teachers give their own interpretations to
the formal curriculum (Munby, 1984) and that they give personal sig-
nificance to the curriculum (Schulman, 1987), research on the dynamic
connections between teachers’ beliefs, the role of teacher education,
and the wider personal, social, and cultural world is less developed.
Carlgren and Lindblad (1991) describe the current body of research
on teacher beliefs as notably apolitical and as operating without re-
gard for the social and historical contexts in which teachers work and
come to have beliefs.

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Studies pursuing such connections in social studies include the work of Adler (1984), who found that in a study of four pre-service elementary teachers, two perceived institutional restraints on their practice. She emphasized, however, that these student teachers responded to implicit pressures. Extending this work, Goodman and Adler (1987) researched the perspectives of 16 elementary social studies teachers. They found that not only the student teaching experience but also the student’s personal biography and belief structures influenced outcomes. Ross (1987), in a study of 21 secondary social studies student teachers found that these novice teachers were clearly “active mediators in their relationships with socializing institutions.” The research reported here follows in the tradition of Ross, Goodman, and Adler by investigating the perspectives and experiences of teachers and also responds to Vinson’s (1998) call for more studies on “the role played by context” (p. 75) in social studies education.

**Methodology**

Because of the complexity of the inquiry, this study of teachers’ beliefs about the challenges of the real world was examined through the qualitative approach to inquiry known as phenomenography, which relies primarily on narrative inquiry or extended interviews. As Yin (1984) asserts, when research questions seek to uncover “how” and “why” answers, it is best to use non-experimental methods. Phenomenography (Marton, 1981, 1988) attempts to describe and understand how people conceive, experience, perceive, or understand different aspects of the world. As Carspecken (1996) emphasized, “Only a face-to face interview can adequately deal with the problem of layered subjectivity by facilitating the rise into awareness of subjective states routinely repressed or misinterpreted ... in most social settings” (p. 24). In an examination of a teacher’s beliefs, narrative interviews are not to be understood as second-hand accounts of a more real physical world, but, instead, as sources closely reflective of a person’s meaning-making processes (i.e., a primary source). As Berger and Luckman (1967) describe in their seminal work *The Social Construction of Reality*:

Put simply, through language, an entire world can be actualized at any moment. This transcending and integrating power of language is retained even when I am not actually conversing with another. Through linguistic objectification, even when “talking to myself” in solitary thought, an entire world can be appresented at any moment... Language is capable not only of constructing sym-
bols that are highly abstracted from everyday experience, but also of “bringing back” these symbols and presenting them as objectively real elements of everyday life. In this manner, symbolism and symbolic language become essential constituents of the reality of everyday life and the common sense apprehension of this reality. (p. 121)

In addition, beliefs, in this research, are considered as fluid constructions. As Greene, (1968) has described in *Typology of the Teaching Concept*:

We can, for example, believe something strongly or not, with passion or not, for good reason or not. Two persons may hold the same belief system with a different measure of strength, with more or less adequate reasons, or on more or less adequate evidence. They may on the contrary, believe different things with equal strength, reason, or evidence. (p.38)

Greene also observed that it is not uncommon for people to “hold strongly to certain beliefs which, if ever set side by side, would surely conflict” (p. 41). Because of this complexity, it would be problematic to claim, therefore, that teachers hold such an entity as “a” single consistent belief or a belief that is easy to compare to another teacher’s belief.

Seven social studies teachers were interviewed and observed over a six-month period in two Midwestern high schools located in a small city. In addition, most were also contacted after the primary data-gathering phase with further questions of clarification or detail. In each interview, broad inquiry topics, such as the influence of society on schooling; the most important lessons of social studies; the greatest challenges to the social studies teacher; the nature of high school students; the nature of the high school; and teaching social studies in the high school setting were addressed and reintroduced many times by participants, creating circular and zig-zag narratives, rather than a neat series of responses to a list of questions. Most topics covered arose naturally from narration, not in response to a question. Mishler (1986) described the value of such interaction in which the respondent reaches the point where they are relating stories with rich detail, instead of generalizing. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) called this “getting words to fly” (p.63).

Discussion of ethics and politics in American culture have come to be identified as sensitive areas in the popular imagination. A familiar homily warns people against conversations on “sex, religion and
politics." This study makes reference to the latter two areas of teachers' beliefs, as well as other sensitive topics. It was important, therefore, that I was particularly attuned to my role as a sensitive listener. I was also aware that my research would be influenced by my experiences during 15 years of teaching in both schools and universities on topics related to curriculum and social studies, and by my personal preference for social studies as what Martorella (1995) and Vinson (1998) describe as "reflective inquiry" and "informed social criticism." As Dewey (1938a) wrote "all inquiry proceeds within a cultural matrix" (p. 481).

The students in these high schools lived in both rural and suburban settings. The school populations were similarly distributed across class and culture. One school reported approximately 13.25% minorities and the other, 15%. The ethnicity of the teachers was less diverse, about 5% minority in both schools. Central administrators estimated that the poverty level was around 20%, though free lunch participation was under 10%. Pseudonyms are used for all personal and place names, and quotes attributed to pseudonyms do not correspond fully to individual teachers. Attributing quotes to a single real voice makes some of these teachers rather easy to identify. It is important for ethical considerations that this not happen, allowing for the inclusion of the sometimes critical comments teachers made about their school experiences. Occasionally combining data from two teachers into one voice or mixing the attribution of related quotes makes clear identification of the author of the comments less likely. Thus, anonymity is protected while using extensive and often highly specific quotations. Furthermore, all identifying details and references were omitted.

**Analysis**

Field notes and transcribed tapes were analyzed using constant comparison to identify emerging categories. In qualitative research, "there is no particular moment when data analysis begins. Analysis is a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations" (Stake, 1995, p. 71). With guiding research questions in mind, informal data analysis began immediately through the creation of reflective field notes. A more formal analysis involved coding data from these field notes and reviews of printed transcriptions of taped interviews, highlighting emerging themes (Bryman & Burgess, 1994). Informants clearly had somewhat differing perceptions of commonly employed words and phrases such as "justice" or "community." These words cover an array of meanings based on experience. In order to carefully attend to meaning, teachers' narrative stories have been included whenever possible. The final analysis revealed several themes
of concern to teachers. “Real world” concerns were loosely defined as factors outside of the teachers’ immediate control, which were significantly cultural or sociological in origin or nature. For these teachers, “real world” or sociological factors that significantly affected their social studies classrooms included the life stage of students; social class, tracking, and cliques; parenting and family life; family subcultures and religion; the media and popular culture; and the economy.

The Life Stage of the Adolescent

One of the most commonly described challenges in nurturing democratic citizens that teachers reported was the mind-set and general characteristics of the adolescent. Teachers described contemporary adolescents as overly peer centered and too rooted in the present. They were also described as too interested in clothes and sports and too immature—all qualities which hampered students’ capacity to engage in serious critical thinking and debate on social issues. Though it may seem as though “adolescence” could be understood as a limit intrinsic to high school teaching, in this work, adolescence is considered more as a sociological condition. Adolescence is not a fundamental and permanent condition, and teachers did not describe students as equally affected by it. Adolescence was typically described as a force to which students were more or less susceptible.

This suggests the extent to which the concept of adolescence is a cultural construction. As Lesko (1996) pointed out in a historical examination of the concept of adolescence, the peer orientation of adolescence “has been naturalized as a universal, naturally occurring characteristic of teenagers” (p. 157). This peer orientation, however, is certainly influenced by, if not created by “the socio-historical segmentation of teenagers into organizations with narrow age bands” (p. 157). The characteristics teachers described as “adolescent” were described less as inevitable, biologically driven developmental traits, and more as behaviors conditioned by social, cultural, and institutional forces. This supports Lesko’s report on the historical origin of the concept.

Wally, for example, described teenaged students as “very stubborn, self-centered individuals.” Similarly, Steven felt that teenagers were strongly rooted in both teen culture and the present, making it hard for him to present issues related to democracy as relevant to them.

These are teenagers. They do not understand really what the future means for them because tomorrow’s date or the potential fight this week between so and so is of far more immediate interest, and I fight that constantly. I really don’t, at this point, know how to get past that real well. Relevancy, which is so important in teaching why
democracy is important, is very difficult with the kids that I am dealing with.

As Thomas explained, adolescents also had an aversion to academic rigor. “Students, given a choice at this age, are not going to choose, in general, the tough, hard types of things to do.” Similarly, Robin felt that students’ preoccupation with peers, status, appearance, and gender identity could be limiting their capacity to understand the world beyond their immediate experience and described such attitudes as “a teenage thing” but also “part of our culture.”

I see the boys conforming to a pretty narrow set of identities. You know the groups - the jocks, the skaters, the homeboys. They are very careful to act and talk in ways that are acceptable to the guys, whichever group they associate with. The girls too. They look like they are dressed pretty casually, but there is a lot of anxiety about appearance, about weight, about conforming. There’s certain shoes that everybody has... So much energy goes into this. And it’s all inward focused. Controlling the look, the voice. Very superficial. Power for Sarah means everyone thinks she looks cool. This is a teenager thing, but it’s part of our culture too... Democracy asks people to take control and have power to make real changes. To care about something beyond their own little worlds.

Louis described, with some frustration, giving up the idea of having students choose groups to research and discuss social issues of common interest because of students’ focus on sociability.

I thought it would be good to let them choose their topics and the people they would work with. But I realize, if I let them choose groups, the friends end up all in one group. All they do is talk about what they did the night before and at Friday night’s basketball game. They wouldn’t talk about the class.

Unlike Robin and Louis, Thomas was much more resigned. Though his perception of students was similar to what Louis and Robin described, and though he described it as limiting his ability to teach citizenship, he wasn’t frustrated by it.

I don’t really think of them as future citizens because I realize their certain needs. They’ve got a lot of things on
their minds, like cars, fishing, baseball, and basketball. Besides, I'm a realist. I am not an idealist. Kids aren't adults. You aren't going to be able to teach every kid, and they aren't going to learn every single day. If somebody believes that, they are in the wrong profession. Kids bring in problems every day, whether it's a girlfriend or boyfriend problem, or whether the girl comes in and her hair looks bad. There are issues that come in and they just can't concentrate and they are not going to learn.

Though teachers described different ways in which adolescence affected their teaching, there was a shared belief that teenagers presented unique and sometimes insurmountable problems for teaching social studies and democracy. In particular, adolescence as a life stage was understood to contribute to or cause a focus on the self and peers that limited students' ability to have an interest in political topics and the wider world. Furthermore, this self and peer focus was understood to affect classroom behavior, particularly students' willingness and ability to identify important social issues and discuss and debate issues. The supposed adolescent preoccupation with peers was also described as inhibiting teachers' abilities to have group work and group discussions. None of the teachers in this study supported the perspective of Avery and other researchers (Avery, Bird, Johnston, Sullivan, & Thalhammer, 1992) that adolescence could potentially be an ideal developmental stage for teaching about individual rights.

**Social Class, Tracking, and Cliques**

Just as the “the socio-historical segmentation of teenagers” (Lesko, 1996, p. 157) seemed to highlight and perhaps exacerbate adolescent characteristics, the tracking and social sorting functions of the school were described as highlighting and perhaps exacerbating social class tensions and as a system of highly delineated social cliques that left many students feeling like outsiders. In each school, at least two or three tracks were identifiable for each social studies course offering. Courses were offered with distinctions such as ACP or advanced college project, which provides “an opportunity for high school students to succeed at college level work,” AP or advanced placement in which “it is expected that students enrolled will take the [subject] advanced placement exam,” and “Honors Diploma,” which is distinguished from the regular course by a much more detailed and challenging curriculum description. Though students could choose to be in most of the courses with honors designations, with the exception of the ACP classes, Steven describes how students were still in classes according to social class:
Many of those courses like our honors geography are self-selected; kids can choose to be in or not. There is not a requirement in terms of actual IQ or anything like that, which there would be in a true, what do you call it? In a true, sort of gifted and talented program. Still the end result is that the better students will take the honors stuff. You certainly have seen most of my students, and they wouldn’t even think about taking an honors class. Even if they were mentally capable, they’d just think too much work, too much hassle, and my friends are not in there. By this time they are set in their peer groups....They would feel out of place in the higher classes, looked down on.

Steven believed the students didn’t understand the implications of choosing their peer and social groups when it resulted in a less demanding and prestigious course or curriculum. Steven also admitted that he was afraid to critically discuss the politics and social ramifications of such choices with students, though he felt that students “should see that as a bad thing.”

I don’t know that they think of it in terms of being denied something. They would probably think that if they were put in an HD [honors diploma] class they would be with people they didn’t like and they would think they were being stiffed because they would lose that social contact. If they thought of that, if they understood it, they might be upset. I’ve never explained it and probably would not have the guts to try. I don’t know at this age that they would see that as a bad thing. They should. Again, that would require them to see into the future, and to see that if I got the better grades and the better courses and went to the better schools, I’ll get a better life.

Social, cultural, and economic divisions were seen as having a particularly detrimental effect when reinforced by the tracking of students. Taken collectively, the pattern at these schools was representative of what prominent researchers on tracking have found - that education which leads to power, voice, and position in society is available to advantaged classes and withheld from the working classes (Aronson, 1980; Apple, 1979; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Oakes, 1986). Tracking “places the greatest obstacles to achievement in the paths of those children least advantaged in American society” (Oakes, 1986, p. 276). Jeannie Oakes’ research on tracking indicated that tracking doesn’t merely
reflect students' differences - it causes them. Her research showed that students in low-tracked groups experience access to "considerably different types of knowledge and had opportunities to develop quite different intellectual skills," (p. 281) with students in low-tracked classes generally restricted to memorization or low-level comprehension. Also, instructional time, teaching quality, and classroom environment were far superior in high-tracked classes. The net effect is differentiated education according to social class, which violates a fundamental precept of the purpose of education in a democracy, asserted by Thomas Jefferson, "that talent and virtue needed in a free society should be educated regardless of wealth, birth, or other accidental condition, and...the children of the poor must be educated to a common experience" (Padover, 1970, p. 43).

This type of tracking was understood by most teachers to be an undemocratic model that not only limited students' opportunities, but also limited all students' exposure to a wide range of ideas and social class perspectives and had a particularly negative effect on the learning environment of the would-be democratic social studies classroom. As Wally explained,

I don't like the idea of AP courses...I think the goal of social studies includes the context of the social learning that takes place through discussion with your peers at all levels. I think that's extremely important. And when you cut off the cream and put them in their own class, they certainly get a valuable education, but their views are important for other kids, and other kids' views are important for them.

Similarly, Michael commented on the effect of tracking on having class discussions where the social studies teacher would ideally like to draw on a wide range of student views and experiences.

After you get to know your students, you can tell which ones are the children of professionals and then there's your basic working class. There are stereotypical responses that you get. They exist. [For example], dealing with the homosexual issues, the kids that are considered more rural and that are working class [with] lower income levels are the ones that expressed more homophobic responses to questions in discussion. So tracking really limits dialogue.

In addition to limiting students' exposure to a wide range of views, Steven also felt that tracking limited the lower track students' expo-
sure to peers who felt a sense of social, political, or economic efficacy. Steven commented:

There are problems with having all heterogeneous classes, but certainly in social studies it gives a broader perspective.... honors diploma classes pull out the kids at the top and I’m getting the group that’s in the middle or less. The very fact they are together all day long reinforces their thinking. They don’t see role models that say “my vote will count.” And they don’t see people that think, “You can go out and make a difference.” They don’t hear people say that among their peers. I can say it all I want but I am an old guy. I don’t know about it. They don’t think I know about their life and I probably don’t. And they certainly don’t think what I say about my life is terribly relevant to them. So, you know, their school influences are simply reinforcing their own thinking. It’s not a change...so that’s kind of sad.

Steven also observed, somewhat paradoxically, that he was actually able to take more pedagogical risks with his low-tracked geography students because they wouldn’t complain. This contradicts Oakes’ (1986) general findings that low tracked students receive the least challenging curriculum. It also contradicts the findings of Rossi and Pace (1998), which revealed geography teachers’ difficulties in planning issues-centered instruction for low-achieving students. Steven understood these risks to result in a more lively, meaningful curriculum. However, his comments also illustrated that students in different tracks experience a dramatically different sense of power and agency within the school, which is consistent with research on the detrimental effects of tracking.

Some of the topics were probably controversial enough. I guess I could have gotten in trouble, but the one thing about the kind of kids I teach, is they do not play the power system. They don’t go complain to the authorities. So even if they were put off by something we covered, they’re never going to say anything, which is kind of weird. . . HD (honors diploma) kids will, if they are upset about something, they will go to the administration, they will go to their parents, and their parents will go to the school board in a heartbeat. Not always legitimate. You know. “Oh I didn’t like that picture, it made me queasy, so...” It’s not that the stuff wasn’t useful or important informa-
tion, it took another comfort zone. HD (honors diploma) kids are actually probably more used to being in their comfort zone than the kids I’ve got.

In spite of the many ways the teachers quoted above felt that tracking negatively affected their teaching of social studies and reinforced social class divisions already present, not all teachers disagreed with tracking.

**The Nature of the School Community**

Most teachers also observed that many students did not seem to be “a part of the school” and didn’t participate in activities or have “school spirit.” In addition to experiencing differential treatment in the tracked courses of the formal curriculum, teachers described ways in which extra-curricular activities further reinforced social divisions rather than contributed to a sense of community or camaraderie. In fact, most extra-curricular activities were understood to privilege a sub-group of students. As Steven said, "I teach regular classes and not too many do clubs and after school stuff. If they do, it’s the lower status stuff, like band instead of cheerleading, wrestling instead of football.” These teachers were concerned about the extent to which certain students were undemocratically rewarded in school activities. As Catherine commented, “The kids see unfairness modeled all around them. The student council is all upper middle class, and they don’t have to pay for tickets to the prom. That might be modeling the real world, but in this school, a few kids have a lot of privileges and most have none.” This depiction of student government is a far cry from what the NCSS (1999) advocates:

Effective student governments...are laboratories in which students can learn and practice essential citizenship skills, respect for human dignity, and the value of the democratic process. They provide students with effective forums for advocating new ideas and initiating school improvements. Effective student governments also provide a platform for the orderly expression of conflicting viewpoints and procedures for resolving conflicts when students disagree with policies and decisions that affect their lives...All students should be participants in the governance of their school community...Students participating in student government should be representative of the student body.

Many students were described by teachers as feeling alienated or hostile towards school. As Louis described, “When they started
playing the school song (at a pep rally), the principal had to yell to get everybody to get off their seats because nobody stood up. I can’t imagine. In my home town, school song, everyone stood up.” Teachers, however, observed that students generally lacked a sense of community about their school, which extended to their feelings about their town. As Thomas commented:

They are very aware of different parts of town having very different life styles. They are aware of how much different your lifestyle is if you live in the projects, or the housing area on the north side of town... They are aware of that, very aware of that. So they know, maybe more than the adults around here know. They know how different. The different communities are within Westfield. And they don’t feel any great sense of community, no locality.

Democracy would be best learned within a good community, teachers pointed out. As Michael suggested, ideally, school could provide “an example of a good community, a place where a student felt like a valuable participating member,” and learned about “the rewards and responsibilities of membership” in a community. Steven worried:

They feel very little ownership. That’s why I’ve got kids sneaking graffiti on my back wall back here. I had a sub (substitute teacher) two weeks ago and while the sub was here they were throwing my magazines out the window. No sense that this is their school. No sense of ownership or accountability. They use their anonymity to just sort of float through life. And I don’t want to point fingers at kids. This is all a situation created by adults. But look at what we are creating. We are creating kids who don’t feel accountable. Who don’t feel their vote matters. All those things are tied together in ways I feel we don’t understand very well.

As George Wood (1990) has written, “We take for granted that our schools are communities, when in fact they are merely institutions that can become communities only when we work at it.” To the extent that institutions are not participatory and equitable, they curb democratic development and can reinforce negative social conditions. As the NCSS asserted (1999):

Careful attention to the school culture is critical if schools are to foster moral and civic virtue. The hidden curricu-
lum of the school has the potential to teach important lessons about authority, responsibility, caring, and respect. The principles and values underpinning the day-to-day operations of the school should be consistent with the values taught to young people.

However, the fact that most teachers offered substantial critiques of school climate, tracking, and social cliques was both hopeful and worrisome. If these teachers, some in their jobs for more than twenty years, were so critical of tracking and of privilege, then why hadn’t they done anything to change it? Wally felt like he had a voice in how things happened in the school he taught in, and that it was an adequate place to work. Yet he disapproved of tracking. When asked about this he said, “Well, it’s a combination of pragmatism and laziness. You pick your battles. We’ve certainly made changes in this school. Tracking is a hard fight.... You get used to school being a certain way and putting up with things.” Robin pointed out that “the increase in school violence has teachers thinking about all the kids that become outsiders in some way, but we haven’t begun to think seriously about how to change.”

**The Quality of Parenting and Family Life**

Along with concerns about the difficulties of teaching adolescents and the problems of a school climate marked by social and educational stratification, teachers in the study also described poor or non-supportive parenting and family stress as real world factors that seriously affected students in the social studies classroom. Teachers described a lack of basic nurturing, a lack of meaningful discussion in the home, a lack of support with homework, and a tendency for some parents to communicate disrespect for education in general and for social studies subject matter in particular. Parenting was understood to affect students both in terms of their emotional and psychological orientations as well as their practical preparation for classwork in social studies.

Catherine, for example, described the negative classroom effects of emotional insecurity. “If I have kids who are not feeling basically safe and loved, I’m going to have a pretty hard time getting them to respect each other.” Catherine went on to explain that mutual respect was a necessary foundation for good class discussions and group work in her social studies classroom. Similarly, Steven understood many students to be insecure and isolated and perceived this type of insecurity to be related to a decline in the quality of family life. As Steven explained, “Often there is only one parent and that parent, almost
certainly, is working. I don’t have that many kids, I’ll bet, with a parent at home.” He went on to describe the implications of this.

These kids have a lot of free time. And so they live in their own little world. They don’t have that much contact with mom and dad. When mom and dad get home from work, mom and dad are tired and don’t really want to deal with them. I know because I am mom and dad when I go home. I am tired and I don’t want to deal with them.

Robin compares the stability of her childhood to the instability of the lives of her students, portraying very different worlds.

I grew up with my mother and father, my brother and my sister in the same house, never moving. We had pretty regular routines. We ate dinner at 6:30. We did homework right after dinner. We were your basic happy family. Sounds kind of hokey, but it’s true. My parents went to back-to-school night and to all of our school-related events. It’s so different for a lot of my students. Not a lot of involvement in activities. A lot of divorce. A lot of stepparents. A lot of parents who work in the evening. High stress. A lot of job changes and moving.

Like Robin, most teachers described their personal experiences as adolescents to be very different from the home lives and values of their students. This perception of the differences between generations was described by all teachers regardless of their age. Even teachers in their twenties described their students as coming from a very different generation or set of experiences.

Several teachers also saw a relationship between students’ poor communication skills when discussing issues in social studies and less-than-adequate parenting. For example, these teachers speculated there was little discussion of social studies-related issues at home. Wally compared today’s students’ family environments with his experience growing up. “When I was a kid we used to talk all the time. My parents challenged me to think and to defend my ideas. I don’t think many of my students are exposed to that kind of home environment and it’s too bad.” Robin also pointed out that parents might not be modeling active citizenship, making it harder to teach active citizenship as an ideal.

We’d like them to get a sense of the ideal citizen who is an ordinary person [but] who is aware of what is going on at
a lot of levels, like the community, the state, nationally, and who participates, who is involved in things like the local PCB clean-ups and national campaign finance reform. But what makes this hard is that they [students] can’t relate to this idea very well if they have never met somebody like this, if mom and dad and the neighbors are totally inactive in any community or civic sense.

Furthermore, not only were in-depth discussion and modeling of civic participation seen to be missing at home, but help with both routine social studies homework and with more complicated projects was missing as well. Louis was particularly frustrated by a lack of parental support for students’ major projects. “What really bothers me is for the few projects that take a little parental help, I still don’t get support. Kids don’t get rides to the library or the Xerox place.” Michael speculated that parents offered more support for other subject areas, specifically that parents are more concerned with their children’s English or math grades. “They [parents] want to make sure they [students] can write and add. Core subjects. That’s my sense. They don’t think a good or bad grade in social studies is as important.” Many studies have supported these teachers’ contention that social studies is unpopular. For decades, it has been ranked by students as one of the least popular subjects in the curriculum (Shaughnessy & Haladyna, 1985) and is also not valued by elementary teachers when considering social studies among the subjects they teach (Houser, 1995).

The decline of family life and support for education that these teachers report has been well-documented by sociologists and is often discussed in the media. Since half of all marriages now end in divorce, three quarters of parents with school-aged children are in the work force, and moonlighting is on the rise, parents have less time and energy for parenting (Rubin, 1995). In spite of a growing economy, many families have comparatively less money than in previous decades as real wages have declined for the average family since the mid 1970’s and income distribution is increasingly unequal (Freeman, 1996; Krugman, 2000). School children have fewer hours with parents, often are exposed to parents’ financial worries, and relocate and change schools more frequently than in recent decades. For example, one study indicates that “parental contact hours with the average American child dropped by an estimated 43 percent between 1965 and the late 1980’s” (Gill, 1997, p. 238).

It is also currently estimated that “before they reach eighteen, more than half of all children in the nation will live apart from their fathers for at least a significant portion of their childhoods” (Gill, 1997,
A number of researchers have documented a relationship between financial strain and insensitive parenting behaviors that result in lowered emotional and practical support for adolescents (Harter, 1983; Mayhew & Lempers, 1998; Patterson, 1982; Wills, 1990). In addition, researchers have discovered that when parents are under financial strain, many adolescents are also likely to experience social self-consciousness and rejection (Simons, Whitbeck, & Wu, 1994). As the teachers in this study described, students’ abilities to debate comfortably and to conduct independent research was particularly weak, and the teachers understood this to be related to self esteem, confidence, and parental support. As the teachers described, the overall effects of these real world changes in family life can mean that students are more insecure and are less well-prepared for both the interpersonal and the academic challenges of social studies and civic education.

Family Sub-Cultures and Religion

These social studies teachers also pointed to the specific nature of particular family sub-cultures, rather than to parenting as contributing to a mind-set in which students were unprepared for debate and critical thinking. Several teachers worried about the capacity of students who were from relatively intolerant cultural or religious backgrounds to think in new ways about ideas. As Catherine described:

We have what you might call a sizeable good old boy population. They might even be red necks. They parrot a lot of what they’ve heard from grandpa and daddy, and they have no facts, but they are very adamant. Now I respect their right to believe that’s what they should believe...but I say, okay, you are repeating yourself. Would you please find some facts and bring it in?

Thomas provided a very different cultural example of the same kind of intolerance to ideas:

I have a group of PC [politically correct] kids with PC parents who can really be hard to work with. They are sure they’re right. Sometimes they might be. It’s not even their views that I have trouble with, it’s their attitude. They act like they don’t need to be in class because they know what’s going on. My dad’s professor so and so or my mom writes for the newspaper and .... I don’t feel like they ever really consider ideas on their own.
Teachers also described students who would not offer any opinion at all. Thomas described being frustrated with students’ “focus on niceness” that limited real debate in his social studies teaching.

Many of them don’t like to argue or discuss at all. The very idea is upsetting. I wonder if that is a part of our culture, that everyone should focus on being nice, not having a heated discussion, even if it means never really saying what you believe or want.

Family fundamentalist religious beliefs were also understood by teachers to contribute to an unwillingness to debate or engage in critical thinking. As Michael observed, “There is a strong Christian fundamentalist subculture in this area... These parents have taught their kids to think of social issues as religious issues, and let me tell you there’s no democracy! No debate!” Although Michael was making reference to Protestant Christian fundamentalists, other teachers also mentioned the cultural background of Muslim and Catholic students as sometimes providing barriers to social studies teaching. Michael, however, went on to describe how, in spite of this tendency towards intolerance, fundamentalist students sometimes participated in open discussions of issues. “But, you know, sometimes they contribute and listen to others and I think that’s good. They hear all the reasons for another way to understand... I feel good about that happening, but in a way guilty because I know their parents are afraid of that.”

According to the teachers, among the most worrisome cultural attitudes in the social studies classroom were the overtly prejudicial and intolerant. Teachers were concerned with overt prejudice in students as it appeared on a case-by-case basis and also overt prejudice that was reinforced by peer and home cultures. As Thomas described, “I’m dealing with a group of skin-head type kids that are really out there... We have a pro-Nazi group during discussions of WWII. I have to wonder where they get these ideas, how they get into it.” These students presented difficult pedagogical challenges to teachers. As Robin learned, correcting misinformation rarely has any impact on the prejudices of such students.

I can talk all day about human equality and explain the historical reasons for certain groups to have low status, how they were exploited, but it doesn’t seem to really connect to some kids’ ideas about racial groups. They think they’re being generous when they say ‘Black people have talent in music and sports’... they learn it [equality] on one
level, they can even pass a test, but it doesn’t really sink in.

Misperception, then, is a separate phenomenon from prejudice. As Pate (1988) emphasized by quoting Moreland (1963), “We need to realize that, although sound knowledge is necessary to combat false information, it is not sufficient to change attitude. Facts do not speak for themselves; rather they are interpreted through the experiences and biases of those hearing them” (p. 288). Ethnocentrism, which is “an exaggerated preference for one’s own group and a concomitant dislike of other groups” arises out of a need to enhance self-esteem by projecting one’s negative qualities onto others (Aboud, 1988, p. 47). Prejudice can be expressed toward any out-group, and out-groups are often not defined by ethnicity. For example, teachers cited cases in which jocks were prejudiced against “homeboys” or rural students and Seniors in class were prejudiced against Sophomores and Juniors.

Supporting Robin’s observation that overt social studies instruction didn’t easily increase tolerance, studies on highly prejudiced individuals indicate that certain emotional and psychological factors that have their origin in the family may be significant in causing prejudice. Skillings and Dobbins (1991) described the power of parents to educate children towards intolerance:

Children frequently observe their parents’ ability to conduct their lives in a way that is generally unruffled by concerns about inequities...Parents are able to do this despite if not overt, at least pervasively covert, emphasis on the immorality of oppression. The parents as a secure base cannot be easily construed by the child as holding the “wrong” view”...[and so] children form a rule...that data from and about members of target populations, when they conflict with existing schemata, are irrelevant. (p. 73)

Skillings and Dobbins go on to explain that this tendency to bond through accepting the beliefs of parents appears to be strongest in children who are not bonded to parents by unconditional acceptance and love. Considering the emotional insecurity and lack of parental attention described by teachers, some of these students seem to be particularly at risk for intolerant views. Regardless of the origin of prejudice in students, it presents an inescapable real world challenge for the classroom social studies teacher.
In addition to weak parenting and exposure to intolerant views at home, teachers were also concerned about the power of the media and popular culture in socializing young people. For some teachers, this was a particular concern since the media was understood to serve as an especially powerful socialization force in the absence of strong parenting. Wally was concerned with the effect of the mass media as potentially limiting his students’ ability to think and deliberate by discouraging reading.

They don’t like to read. Very few read for pleasure anymore. I notice the kids who do, and it’s like, “Oh this is great.” This is one of [their attitudes], “Give it to me, give it to me quick. Let me see it.” And I think kids are visual learners, much more than relying on the written words. I think it’s an impact of media.

Wally speculated on the long-term implications of a generation that was reluctant to read, preferring information supplied through television and film.

You know at what point do you take the written word, or access to the written, out of society? [At that point] you begin to think critically only for what you view. I think it’s a part of where society is. A lot of important information is written, whether we like it or not, whether we read it or not. I think the newspaper or the written word gives you a different slant on what you see, so not reading is going to impair your ability to become a critical thinker. [People say] “I never read that article...I saw it here or on Hard Copy [the television show] or even the nightly news.” You get generic kinds of things or sensational kinds of things, but if you don’t read, you don’t get an editorial. And you have to be well aware of what editorials are. Relying on television is really going to impair critical thinking.

Teachers also described television as encouraging students to have the attitude that everything has to be fun, or that the entertainment value of an experience is its most important quality. As Thomas complained, “Sometimes I feel like, if they are really going to pay attention, that I have to put on a show...an MTV variety show, say, of the ‘Depression Era and the New Deal’...” Louis noted, “When we discuss current issues in class, I’m finding that they actually get news
from MTV." What these teachers describe as "news as entertainment" has been called "New News," and was depicted by journalist Katz-Leavy (1992) as follows:

In place of the Old News, something dramatic is evolving, a new culture of information, a hybrid New News - dazzling, adolescent, irresponsible, fearless, frightening, and powerful. The New News is a heady concoction, part Hollywood film and TV movie, part pop music and pop art, mixed with popular culture and celebrity magazines, tabloid telecasts, cable and home video. (p. 33)

Frequent television watching contributes to a short attention span among students. Michael explained he'd heard that if teachers take little breaks at the same timing that TV offers commercials, students learn better because they have been conditioned by TV not to listen for more than eight or nine minutes without a distraction. Steven described students' difficulty in maintaining attention as related to a cultural value on speed and immediate gratification, one example of which was television.

Everything about their existence outside of school is very here and now. They eat fast food; they watch things on TV. All these things that are very immediate gratifications. These kids do not know how to wait. They do not know how to think about the future for the most part, in general. There are always exceptions, but I think that our society is certainly teaching everybody to deal with it that way. You know? Why wait to buy something? You can get it on credit now.

Some teachers felt that TV also encouraged kids to admire people just for being rich or famous regardless of the values and ethics that person had. For example, Wally said:

Their heroes really shock me. Their hero is Michael Jordan or some rock star. What has he ever done besides become famous and earn a lot of money... And the fashion models and actresses? Don't even get me started. They just don't admire people like Martin Luther King or Ghandi.

Similar to Wally, Steven also felt that his students' ideas of goodness and heroism were distorted.
It's not character that matters, it's the talent. So they can justify when a talented person does something stupid. That person should not be persecuted or prosecuted or held accountable. My students...they are mostly white...totally applauded the OJ Simpson ruling because, I think, they were primarily interested in him because he was famous.

Steven went on to elaborate on this point and, similar to Robin's frustrating experience in teaching equality, described students learning about the value of civil behavior on only a superficial level, in an "objective sense." Like Robin, Steven also reflected on himself as a teenager, and reported a dramatic experiential gap.

I showed some clips from CNN. It dealt with the end of civilization. It talked a lot about the loss of civil behavior. I showed a little bit of that clip, and we talked about it...we talked about why it's important that people not act this way. The kids could certainly talk in an objective sense about why civil behavior was important, but at the same time applauded and emulated rap stars who were thugs...They really mix the idea of fame and popularity up with the idea of being good or being heroic or whatever. And I get real offended, because...from what I read when I was young, my ideas of heroes are very, very different from theirs, probably old fashioned.

In addition, Steven pointed out that in the media "we are constantly tearing down our political figures," which contributes to students' lack of respect for them and a lack of respect for government, thus affecting his ability to teach in this social studies content area.

We are constantly looking for dirt on famous people, fascinated by it when they find out about it...And it's really kind of weird, you'd think authority is something you could certainly appeal to. A lot of these young kids are not really very respectful of authority. They are respectful of money and fame...If I bring up Bill Clinton, they are gonna mostly laugh.

Returning to the theme of parental time and supervision, several teachers also expressed concern that parents didn't or couldn't monitor exposure to media. As Catherine said, "I'm surprised at what
they watch. They watch everything. Awful stuff, violent, you name it, stuff I'd never see, stuff I'd never let my kids see.” Catherine went on to speculate that because kids are home well before their parents, “they have a lot of unsupervised time with the TV or the Internet.”

Neil Postman (1992) described a family of the past as having been “required to take charge of the socialization of children; (and thus) the family became a structure, albeit an informal one for the management of information.” Currently, children are exposed to an array of media messages which even concerned parents struggle to control. Postman believes that “a family that does not or cannot control the information environment of its children is barely a family at all” (p. 75-76). Controlling children’s exposure to information is difficult, however, if not impossible in a cultural environment inundated with media. Hepburn (1998) reports “54 percent of children have a television set in their bedrooms...[and] the average weekly viewing time has increased annually in American households, from 43 hours in the early seventies to 50 hours in the mid-nineties” (p. 73). Americans, then, spend more time watching TV than working a standard 40-hour week. Parents and teachers may not fully grasp the influence of such media inundation. As Steinburg and Kincheloe (1998) explain:

Young people live in a new world. The world of hyperreality shapes and reflects youth’s subjectivity in ways that could not have been imagined fifty years ago...The omnipresence of parent-child alienation, so often perceived as an individual problem, can better be understood as a social phenomenon...In the midst of these generational misunderstandings, even the families that physically stay together often find themselves culturally and emotionally fragmented. Tuned into their different “market segments” of entertainment media, they retreat to their own virtual realities. (p.104).

As these teachers emphasize, television and other media are powerful educators, both competing with and influencing the school-based social studies curriculum.

The Economy

As teachers reflected on changes in family and cultural structures, the effect of a changing economy on students was a recurring theme. Though unemployment levels are currently low in many areas, many newly created jobs do not pay a living wage, and the middle class is shrinking (Ciscel, 2000; Rubin, 1995). Teachers worried that
family economic stress combined with a high interest in products led many students to spend too much time at after-school jobs, leaving inadequate time and energy for school work. Some students feared that they wouldn’t be able to get decent jobs, and this fear seemed to inspire an overall pessimism towards life. Other students responded by becoming competitive and valuing grades over learning since good grades would help them compete for a good college and a good job.

Teachers felt that civics education was most successful when students saw the country in an optimistic light and saw themselves with positive futures, but many teachers commented on what they understood to be the “pessimism of generation Y—Y stands for why bother?” The current generation is the first since the Depression to witness large-scale downward mobility. For example, Louis told this story:

We get Channel One, and in one of the polls they had, they asked students, do you feel like you would have a better standard of living than your parents did? In other words, would you make more money or would your life be better? And I asked that of every one of my classes, not just one or two. And believe it or not, now these aren’t figures, but I would say at least 85 to 90% of those students said they would not have it better.

In fact, many of today’s students will not do as well as their parents, particularly the working class and lower middle class students who constitute nearly half of the national student body. Thomas also saw pessimism even among his top students.

I asked this class how many of you feel that you can make a real difference in your community, or even in the country? Not one of them raised their hands. I was really surprised because a lot of these kids are good students, headed for college.

Teachers reported that many of their high school students experience a generally negative or cautious outlook. The themes of their generation are cynicism and apathy. Brown (1997), in researching this generation, noted, “They are more pessimistic about their capacity to make any impact on society, more pessimistic about the direction in which it is heading, and more pessimistic about their capability to grab the brass ring early in their careers” (p. 40).

Michael observed that job uncertainty led some students to focus on education primarily for its connection to future employment
and was concerned that many of his students were more focused on grades rather than learning.

I wish that more of the students would be interested in history because it is interesting! So many of these students think of education just as something to be gotten through, something to take them to the next step and get them a job...Most of my better students want to go into business or computers or things like that. Sell stock. They want to be sure that they have a good job. They're already nervous! It's nuts! What happened to the kids who want to be writers or save the world?

Michael's observation about his students' interests and ambitions is consistent with reported changes in the fields of study college students choose to major in. More than ever, students view the main purpose of higher education as economic, and thus, majors such as history, English, and philosophy have dramatically declined, while business and accounting are now often the most popular majors on campus (Burns, 1991; Flacks, 1998).

Similarly, Robin worried that students' interest in money goes deeper than a pragmatic interest in being able to earn a good living or simply pay the bills when they are older. "I realize that I'm a bit of a sixties idealist, but I see these kids as being real consumer babies. Their product knowledge is amazing. I think my generation was more interested in solving social problems." Once again, her observation is consistent with research. High school seniors polled from 1976 to 1990 displayed a waning interest in "finding purpose and meaning in life" and an expanding appetite for the artifacts of consumer society. The percentage ranking "having lots of money" as "extremely important" rose from less than half in 1977 to almost two thirds in 1986, making it first on the list of life goals (Durning, 1992, p. 34).

**Discussion**

This paper has demonstrated the many, often complex, ways teachers believe that life stage, social class, tracking, school climate, as well as the family, cultural, and economic contexts of students' lives affect learning in social studies. This study leaves us with a number of important ideas to consider. In particular, this study asks us to reconsider how we construct or understand the role and agency of the
teacher, as well as the role and agency of the student in the social studies classroom to account for both the importance of beliefs and the pressures of the real world in curriculum as it is enacted in the social studies classroom.

Reconstructing Ideas about Teachers and Curriculum

This study asks us to take seriously the contexts, complexity, and range of teachers' beliefs which affect curriculum. According to many educational visions, teachers can keep (and in many writings should keep) their personal beliefs and the pressures of the real world out of teaching. Furthermore, current educational reform and standards initiatives focus on curriculum from the perspective of what students know (or need to know), rather than what teachers know (Grant, 1997). By contrast, this study indicates that teachers' perceptions of the social and political world; their beliefs about adolescents, families, and culture; and their experience of the school as an institution are profoundly entwined with their pedagogical beliefs and practices. Teachers' beliefs about a very wide range of phenomena, including real world factors, serve as a scaffold of the curriculum. The teachers serve as what Ross (1987) calls "active mediators" (p. 237). The nature of the influence of beliefs, however, depends very much on the classroom, institutional, or cultural context under discussion as well as the nature and strength of the beliefs of the individual teacher.

Though real world factors do have a certain objective reality, the wide variety of responses among teachers suggests that both the strength of the potential obstacle and the strength of the teachers' beliefs about the obstacle need to be considered. Catherine and Thomas, for example, talked about their decision to give up more open-ended discussions in which students choose their topics because students were too immature and focused on peer cliques. However, when questioned, neither teacher expressed a social or pedagogical vision which would seem to make such a concession very difficult. How strong was their will to overcome these potential obstacles? How strong was their desire to rationalize a choice? Both had colleagues, such as Wally and Robin, teaching the same "adolescent" students, who made different choices. So, was the decision to give up open discussions related to a belief in students as incapable, or was it related to a more core belief that open discussions were not a necessary part of preparing students for democratic citizenship according to Thomas's and Catherine's visions of social studies? Which was a stronger belief? Is "adolescence" a label that unjustifiably lowers teachers' expectations, just as "remedial" or "low track" have been proven to do? If these conditions are truly limiting, shouldn't they limit all teachers?
Though Catherine and Louis limited the amount and quality of
discussion in their classrooms due to adolescent irresponsibility and
immaturity, Wally and Robin did not. There are many explanations
for such differences among teachers. Are Michael's students more
stable and mature? Or, is Michael more optimistic? Multiple aspects
of his personal autobiography could have contributed to this view.
Does Robin have a naively positive view of sociological real world
contexts of teaching and the possibilities for democracy, or are other
teachers overly negative? To what extent do these sociological factors
truly limit teachers, and to what extent do these conditions justify a
weakened pedagogy? Teachers teaching the same types of students,
in the same school, sometimes next door to each other, simply had
very different understandings of themselves as teachers and of the
nature of their work.

Thus, this study indicates that not only are real world contexts
very important, the complexity, range, degree, and contexts of teach-
ers' beliefs matter. To what extent is a particular teacher's social vi-
sion and pedagogical vision important? In what situation is a teacher
required to act on a belief? Teachers can have a multiplicity of both
beliefs and of their experiences of the school. Teachers' varied narra-
tions in this study indicate that there is not one teacher vision or be-
lief, nor is there a single school climate. Teachers often have multiple
identities, and certainly "school" is more than one experience, even
for the same person. It is a highly complex place. This is consistent
with Zeichner, Tabachnick, and Densmore's 1987 study of perspective
and beginning elementary teachers, in which they observed, "There
were several different and often conflicting versions of the informal
school culture within a single school" (p. 54). There are also multiple
beliefs systems and rationales for behavior for a single teacher. For
example, teachers can be dedicated to both a vision of themselves as a
democratic reconstructionist teacher and also to a vision of themselves
as controlled professionals who are well rewarded by their bosses (i.e.
a success). This is similar to what Ross (1987) observed, describing
how teachers are multiply influenced by personal biography, socio-
structural variables, interaction processes, and their own "teachers' perspec-
tives." Furthermore, each of these areas is itself multifaceted.
This complex, and ultimately both personal and political set of influ-
ences, goes well beyond the typically limited depiction of teachers' beliefs described in the educational research which Fang (1996) sum-
marized as including "implicit theories about students, the subjects
they teach and their teaching responsibilities" (p.51).

When school climate and teacher vision do conflict, it highlights
the reality that there are certain gradients in school climate as well as
gradients in strength of vision. Steven made more concessions in his
teaching than Robin and Wally. But as a much younger teacher work-
ing in a school in which the teachers who shared his vision were also young, he felt stronger administrative pressures. This observation is consistent with the novice teachers' need for what Ross (1987) has called "impression management." Of course, again, Steven's concessions could also reflect less confidence in his opinions. There is also the question of energy. Progressive democratic teaching takes more time and energy. Under current conditions in these high schools, teachers have a certain amount of freedom to create or not create meaningful curriculum. The latter choice might reflect neither a lack of belief nor the presence of irreconcilable constraints, but simply a choice not to expend the required energy, or a different level of available time and energy than another teacher may have.

The clearly different subjective realities of teachers remind us of their essential human freedom. The teachers in this study can best be understood as functioning at the intersections of a complex set of objective limitations and subjective interpretations - functioning at the intersections of what Sartre (1956) calls freedom and facticity. Facticity relates to the necessary connections with the world and one's own past, which limit freedom. However, to understand ourselves either only in terms of these facts (limits) or only in terms of our intentions (freedoms) is in "bad faith." Though there were commonalities among teachers, each created somewhat different theoretical and practical constructions of social studies curriculum, which were more or less well thought out and articulated. Each understood cultural, sociological, and institutional forces to affect their beliefs and their teachings in somewhat different ways. For each teacher, the organic mixture between their beliefs, their circumstances, and their beliefs about circumstances, produced unique curricular expressions as the mixture was eventually presented to students in their classrooms.

This differs from some of the research findings in the educational literature employing a traditional Marxian view, untempered with existential or postmodern conceptions of identity, and features what could be called (to borrow a term from Sartre), the "expulsion" of the teacher. These works assert that school climate is the single most significant factor affecting curriculum (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; McNeil, 1988; Rosenhotz, 1989) and that school climate is itself a direct reflection of capitalist power structures and values. Implicit in the works of the scholars listed above is the suggestion that teachers are best understood primarily as victims of school bureaucracies that impose authoritarian ways of doing school, even though teachers are sometimes depicted as resisting constraints. There is also a suggestion that if they were only freed from institutional oppression, teachers would embrace liberatory pedagogy. Yet, this study indicates that teachers are both better and worse than that. Sometimes teachers who do not teach with vision or flair, teach the way they do
not because their more democratic and creative notions are being frustrated, but because their beliefs are not in such dramatic conflict with the beliefs of their school. To view them simplistically as victims of Marxian "false consciousness" is to deny them a fundamental aspect of their humanity, their free will.

**Reconstructing Ideas about Students and Curriculum**

This study also suggests that educators need to bring complex thinking to the students' experiences of the real world. Many of the teachers' observations about students in this study, for example their relationship to family, to peers, and to popular culture, were tentative. Yet, as Steven pointed out: "Because I want them to have certain social and cultural and even emotional capabilities, I have no choice but to think about the ... orientations that they bring to my class." For these teachers, it didn't require a crisis like the shootings at Columbine High School to make them aware of the many ways in which troubling social and cultural forces enter the school and classroom. The same forces that create tragic headline news - dysfunctional teenage problem solving, inadequate family support, too much attention to media, the devastating effects of social sorting and cliques - were forces which affected teachers daily in profound ways. Teachers described compelling real world effects on both students' emotional and social orientations and effects on students' intellectual orientations and preparedness.

These teachers' suggestions that some students were emotionally unprepared for civic education and social studies raise interesting questions. Do democratic dialogue and activity require a certain amount of psychological stability and perhaps a spirit of generosity that can be related to both the quality and context of one's home life and upbringing? Are adolescents less capable than adults of engaging in democratic dialogue? Are lessons about democratic dialogue and social equality impossible to teach in a heavily tracked school? Does exposure to media contribute to a focus on entertainment and consumer values at the expense of a serious interest in community and world affairs? And, if some family environments don't foster an interest in the world, an emotional stability and/or tolerance in young people, what should schools do to compensate? To what extent can social studies realistically address factors that "interfere" with "the ideals, principles, and practices" of citizenship? The difficulty and inherent conflict in presenting students with alternative views was described by several teachers who had different comfort levels with challenging the values and ideas of a student's home culture. For both social studies educators (Engle & Ochoa, 1988) and political theorists
(Ackerman, 1980) exposure to a diversity of viewpoints is a core principle of democratic education. As Bruce Ackerman (1980) described:

The entire educational system will, if you like, resemble a great sphere. Children land upon the sphere at different points, depending on their primary culture; the task is to help them explore the globe in a way that permits them to glimpse the different meanings of the life dramas passing on around them...The problem with public schools is not that they are insufficiently responsive to parental views but that they are already overly concerned with reinforcing, rather than questioning, the child’s primary culture...It is not enough to indoctrinate the child into the patterns of life he happens to find at hand; what is required is a cultural environment in which the child may define his [sic] own ideals with the recognition of the full range of his moral freedom. (p. 159-163)

According to this view of education, the teacher has a responsibility to challenge the worldviews of students, not to reinforce the worldviews of parents. Furthermore, the democratic state has an interest in developing citizens' capacity to think critically and question the legitimacy of authority. Teachers such as Wally and Steven believe they can help to provide a critical distance among the family, the economy, the political world, and the mass media in which students can understand, deconstruct, and reconstruct their emerging identities. Using student lives as an important source for curriculum is consistent with the classic progressive view of education (Dewey, 1938b; 1916/1944) as well as with the views of many social studies educators. This research suggests, however, that all social studies teachers, progressive or not, must grapple with the relationship between the real world of students' lives, and the social studies curriculum.

**Conclusion**

Social studies teachers and their curricula exist in the space between freedom and facticity. There are many outside influences on curriculum including real world factors such as the life stage of students; social class, tracking, and cliques; the school community; parenting and family life; family subcultures and religion; the media and popular culture; and the economy. Even if a teacher wishes for a straightforward teaching situation in which curriculum is delivered plainly and easily, this cannot happen. Teachers must consider a wide range of contextual factors from both school and society. This is the
facticity of teaching. And yet there is freedom as well. These influences are mediated by individual teachers in dynamic and changing contexts in reference to complex and changing belief structures. As a result, it can be true that some teachers can easily maintain their pedagogical vision and practice, while others feel defensive and uninspired by the institutional and real world contexts of their profession.

Failing to acknowledge this complexity and individual variety can create frustrating situations for teachers, who may not expect to negotiate curriculum amidst a culturally, institutionally, and personally complex environment. It is important, therefore, for teacher educators to take political and personal discussion out of the closet and to emphasize personal, philosophical, and contextualized reflection about teaching. This can help teachers both to develop a vision and to maintain it when practicing in the real world. Though a number of researchers (Grimmett & Erikson, 1988; Schön, 1983) have been calling for serious reflection in teacher education, this study supports arguments for more overtly political and ethical reflection (Beyer, 1991; Zeichner & Liston, 1987; Zeichner, 1994), particularly for social studies teachers. Both the influence of real world sociological forces and the complexity of teacher beliefs are areas in need of further research among both pre-service and in-service teachers. For teachers to equitably teach what the NCSS (1996) calls “the ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic” and to “affirm the importance of good character and good citizenship,” the social and cultural factors which affect curriculum and the nature of teachers’ beliefs need to be carefully examined in multiple research contexts.

Furthermore, curriculum reform, which takes a sanitized view of education and does not address the central role of the teachers, their perspectives, and their teaching contexts, is likely to fail. Ross (1997a) criticized standards which make “teachers and schools conduits for the delivery of prepackaged curriculum” (p. E4). Teachers and schools are not mere conduits, nor are students mere receptacles. Curriculum reformers as well as teacher educators must abandon apolitical technical conceptions of curriculum in order to see the ways in which teachers’ full personal, political, and cultural selves, in all of their messy subjectivity, and with all their contradictions, affect curriculum. Standards which disregard teacher’s perspectives and teaching contexts are also undemocratic because they “severely restrict the legitimate role of teachers and other educational professionals as well as the public in participating in the conversation about the origin, nature, and ethics of knowledge taught in the social studies curriculum" (Ross, 1997b). As Tyack and Cuban (1995) pointed out, “Change where it counts the most- the daily interactions of teachers and students- is the hardest to achieve” (p. 10). We have hope of transformative change.
only if we embrace and explore complexity, and honor teacher freedom.

References


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Thinking Out of the Box: Rethinking and Reinventing a Moribund Social Studies Curriculum


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For more than a century, the social studies curriculum has been relatively unchanged, and yet ironically, for more than a century, social studies has had an identity crisis. During the past century, the social studies curriculum has remained somewhat static and discipline-bound (especially in history), and its scholars have been trapped in what Barr, Barth and Shermis (1977) called an endless maze, "to project some order or pattern on the chaos around them" (p.1) E. Wayne Ross has developed and edited *The Social Studies Curriculum, Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities*, that attempts to rethink and reinvent what truly has been a century of chaos, contradiction and controversy in the social studies curriculum that has resulted in a curriculum that has remained relatively unchanged since 1916.

Ross has gathered no less than seventeen scholars in the field of the social studies in this compendium to discuss their conception of the social studies curriculum at the turn of the century. What emerges is wide range of provocative essays that thoughtfully encourage social studies educators to rethink what is taught in the social studies classroom. Somewhat predictably, most of the essays in this edition advocate a particular political or pedagogical sensibility toward social studies-related topics such as standards, multicultural education, racism, and feminism. Most of the authors, either directly or indirectly, support a social justice perspective toward teaching the social studies. They all seem to argue for a social studies curriculum that addresses the real problems of 21st century society.

From a pedagogical point of view, this collection of essays focuses on aspects of a critical pedagogy that help teachers with strategies that get students to think and act responsibly and thoughtfully, only independent from what the teacher believes, or the community may support. From an intellectual point of view, this collection of com-
positions will challenge social studies educators to rethink their own positions regarding why, what, and how, they teach in the social studies classroom. Perhaps most importantly, *The Social Studies Curriculum, Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities,* will emend educators knowledge about specific issues and understandings in the social studies curriculum. In his introduction to this, the second edition, Ross provides insight into his perspective on the social studies curriculum and the driving forces behind this edition:

“As with the world itself, it is impossible to provide one true representation of what the social studies curriculum is. However, in the concluding section, I argue that the conceptions of the purposes problems and possibilities of the social studies curriculum as depicted in this book provide an effective starting place for educators who believe social studies should help children transform their world....The curriculum is what students experience. It is dynamic and inclusive of the interactions among students, teachers, subject matter and the context. The true measure in any social studies program will be found in its effects on individual students’ thinking and actions as well, as the communities to which students belong. Teachers are the key component in any curriculum improvement and it is my hope that his (sic) book provides social studies teachers with perspectives, insights, and knowledge that are beneficial in their continued growth and professional educators.” (p. 14)

**A Democratic Community of Inquirers**

Ross has organized a thoughtful examination and review of the social studies curriculum from the perspectives of social transformation and participation in a democratic society. The focus for this second edition is on the unique problems and issues that social studies educators face in contemporary society, and specifically in today’s schools. This collection addresses such important issues as citizenship as a impetus for oppression and anti oppression; the influence of, and resistance to, standards and testing in the social studies; building community; and assessment in the social studies. In the concluding chapter, “ReMaking the Social Studies Curriculum,” Ross states that the aim of social studies curriculum is not merely preparing students for simply living in a democracy, rather, “our aim should be to create a social studies curriculum that fosters broad participation in a democratic community of inquirers” (p324). Ross forwards as a framework for achieving this goal the work of Rich Gibson and Michael Peterson in chapter 5, “Whole Schooling: Implementing Progressive
School Reform." This framework for a social studies curriculum provides significant insight into the kind of citizens and society Ross believes social studies educators should produce:

“1) empowers all citizens in a democratic society; 2) includes all those living in the democracy; 3) engages citizens in meaningful, authentic activities rooted in the real world problems of diverse learners with divergent needs, interests and abilities; 4) intentionally build learning support strategies; and 5) fosters partnering and builds collaboration within the school, with the families and within the community.” (p.325)

It is the perspectives of democratic inquiry, transformation and authentic participation that form the conceptual glue from which Ross and his contributors have constructed *The Social Studies Curriculum, Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities*. What emerges from this collection of writings is a social studies curriculum is more seditious than orthodox, but certainly not definitive. In the final chapter, Ross provides a very clear view of the what the social studies curriculum ought to be at the turn of the century, and he explains how the various perspectives that the authors discuss in the volume are combined to make a coherent social studies curriculum. To gain a clearer understanding of the vision that Ross has for the social studies curriculum and this book, I recommend reading chapter 16, before reading any of the other chapters. Reading the final chapter first will help the reader understand Ross’ notion of what the social studies curriculum is, and what it can be, for today’s schools.

The remaining 15 chapters of *The Social Studies Curriculum, Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities* are a clear effort by these social studies scholars to begin to rethink and build a social studies curriculum for all who believe deeply in education for social justice. It is positioned in a social studies curriculum that teaches critical pedagogy, supports opposition to the status quo, encourages transformation, and the insists on the interrogation of purposes, positions, and practices in the social studies.

The book is divided into three parts: 1) Purposes of the Social Studies Curriculum; 2) Social Issues and the Social Studies Curriculum; and 3) The Social Studies Curriculum in Practice. Ross opens part I with a brief, but informative, essay that presents an overview of the origins of the social studies and some of the debates that have determined the nature of the social studies since its origins. While attempting to provide an historical perspective on the social studies, Ross addresses three penetrating questions about the social studies curriculum: 1) What is the social studies curriculum?; 2) Who con-
trols the social studies curriculum? and 3) What is the social studies teacher’s role in relation to the curriculum? If one’s beliefs center around the importance of transformation, social justice and participation as being central to the social studies, then the reader will find this chapter illuminating. Ross’ assumptions for this chapter center around values rooted in social justice and change, and they color his view of the history and nature of the social studies. This chapter offers an engaging point of view regarding what has not, and what ought to be done with the social studies curriculum. My only wish is that other contributors in their essays would have addressed one or more of the three penetrating questions that Ross poses for the social studies curriculum. These are good questions to ponder for those who are seriously interested in rethinking and rebuilding the 21st century social studies curriculum.

**Purposes, Issues and Practice**

Parts I and II include chapters that argue strongly for a particular point of view in the social studies. Most notably in Part I, Michael Whelan in “Why the Study of History Should Be the Core of Social Studies Education,” argues the timeworn, and tired position that history is the soul of the social studies; an important question to historians perhaps, but one that becomes passe to those whose attention is seriously dedicated toward issues of an integrated social studies curriculum. Kevin Vinson in “Oppression, Anti-Oppression and Citizenship Education” asserts that as we think critically about citizenship education. The concepts of oppression, marginalization, exploitation, and violence must be studied as a means by which to interrogate various interpretations of citizenship, and citizenship education, as well as a mechanism by which to uncover both oppressive and anti-oppressive possibilities - a point of view that signals the limits, and even obsolescence of, a 20th century Deweyan perspective toward citizenship and democracy.

In Part II, societal issues such as the influence of standards and testing, multicultural studies, racism, gender and feminism, are presented as ideas that ought to be central to a social studies curriculum. Sandra Mathison, E.W. Ross, and Kevin Vinson in “Defining Social Studies Curriculum: The Influence and Resistance to Curriculum Standards and Testing in Social Studies,” states that among the powerful forces in education, the standards-based education reform movement is one that enjoys both favor and disfavor across the political spectrum. They boldly declare that there is “every reason to believe it will fail.” (p.101). Their essay counts the many ways that the standards movement and its failure is imminent, and its existence is harmful to the social studies curriculum. Jack Nelson and Valerie Ooka Pang in their passionate chapter on “Racism, Prejudice and the Social Studies
Curriculum” contend that racism and prejudice continue at a serious and frightening level in American society. They state the social studies curriculum does “a poor job of examining the disparity between the American credo [liberty, justice and equality for all] and the pervasiveness of racism in the American experience.” (p157) They maintain that “the time to act is now” if social studies educators are to have a serious impact on the social fabric. Nel Noddings – “Social Studies and Feminism”- and Jane Bernard Powers – “Gender in the Social Studies Curriculum” - agree that gender and feminist issues have had minimal, but important, impact in the social studies curriculum. Bernard Powers states that there are profound “gendered issues” that belong in the social studies curriculum: teen pregnancy and death from gunshots among African-American males are among but two of these issues. Noddings discusses the current state of affairs regarding feminism and gender in the social studies:

“Feminism’s initial effect on social studies changes the surface to some degree: more female faces and names now appear in standard texts...Women have gained access to a worlds once exclusively maintained for men. On the negative side, social studies as a regular school subject has been flooded with trivia and is threatened by continuing fragmentation. Further, the women’s genuine contribution have been glossed over because they do not fit the male model of achievement” (p.174)

Part III ‘s intent is to provide more of an “how to” perspective on designing culturally relevant curriculum, moving toward authentic assessment in the social studies, the place of the arts in social studies, understanding science in social studies, providing for a world-centered global education, and teaching social studies using social issues. Taken separately, there is little that revolutionary in the essays; all state the importance of incorporating a particular perspective into the social studies curriculum; many of these ideas are not new and have been discussed before as essential elements of a social studies curriculum. Taken as a whole however, if these ideas were actually placed into a single social studies curriculum, that curriculum would be very different from what we currently have, and, in fact it would be a bold step towards a truly integrated social studies curriculum—something that exists in too few schools at the turn of the 21st century. In section III, Gloria Ladson-Billings in “Crafting a Culturally Relevant Social Studies Approach” makes a compelling argument for the need for social studies teachers who will make social studies teaching more culturally relevant. She lists several dimen-
sions of what a contemporary social studies teacher should possess. Social studies teachers whose teaching is culturally relevant:

- believe knowledge is continuously recreated, recycled and shared by teachers and students
- view knowledge critically
- are passionate about content
- help students build bridges (scaffold) knowledge and skills
- see excellence as a complex standard which may involve some postulates but takes student diversity and individual differences into account. (pp. 210-213)

Ronald W. Evans, in "Teaching Social Issues: Implementing an Issues Centered Curriculum," presents an approach to teaching social studies that has as its focus an interdisciplinary approach. Evans makes a cogent case for interdisciplinary social studies that uses an issues-centered focus for instruction. In the chapter, Evans provides an example of an issues centered, decision making lesson and discusses how such lessons could form a unified, interdisciplinary social studies curriculum. His vision of a social studies curriculum is one that is truly interdisciplinary and rejects the current mediocre, history centered, disciplinary practice in which we currently are enmeshed. Instead of building a social studies curriculum based in the social science disciplines, Evans engages in imagining the social studies curriculum from an issues based perspective:

Imagine a semester-long high school course titled 'Race and Ethnicity in American Life'; another titled 'Social Class, Stratification and Social Responsibility'; another on 'Gender in Social Life and Culture,'; another titled "Power in America"; another on 'Ideology, Government, and Economic Life,'; still another, The Border Mentality: Nationalism and International Relations,'; another on 'Philosophy in Personal and Public Life,'; another on, 'Media and Social Understanding,'; another titled 'Utopian Visions and Competing Ideologies,'; yet another on 'Technology Society and the Environment,'; another titled 'Sex, Marriage, and Family Life,'; and, of course, 'The School as an Institution,'; ...This incomplete list could go on..."(p.303)

Thinking Out of the Box

Evans' issue-centered social studies curriculum incorporates significant strands from all of the essays offered in part III (e.g. designing culturally relevant curriculum, moving toward authentic assess-
ment in the social studies, the place of the arts in social studies, understanding science in social studies, providing for a world-centered global education). And while Ross argues that there is no one way to organize the social studies curriculum, the issues-centered approach goes a long way to help those who may be locked in a traditional curricular conception of the social studies to think out of the box. Such thinking is desperately needed at the beginning of the 21st century to reinvent the currently moribund social studies curriculum.

One could argue that important topics such as economic education, legal studies, literature, and technology have been omitted from this volume. In fact, any listing, or collection of essays, will undoubtedly overlook some ideas that others deem to be important. However, social studies educators who are committed to preparing social studies teachers to be thoughtful intellectuals, and caring instructors dedicated to democratic ideals, transformation and participation, will find that the second edition of *The Social Studies Curriculum* to provide a strong foundation for them, and for those teachers seeking to enrich and broaden their curricular understanding of the social studies.

Society has changed remarkably since 1916 when the report of the National Education Association Committee on Social Studies was issued. From transportation to technology, from social life to sexual mores, life at the turn of the 21st century would be virtually unrecognizable to those living in 1916. Incredibly, during the same period of time the social studies curriculum has remained virtually static. Contemporary social studies is ensnared in a history-centered, discipline bound, non-partisan, moribund curriculum developed almost 100 years ago, designed for a particular time and society, situated at a particular intersection of class, race, and gender, and immersed in an industrial revolution.

At the turn of the 21st century, some educational thinkers are starting to take a critical view of social studies icon John Dewey's notion of democracy, and question its applicability to oppressed and marginalized groups in our complex, and diverse age. (Greene, 1997, Schutz, 2001²) Such analyses are healthy for the field of social studies and critical to its long term existence. Now is the time for some serious thought be given to a revolution in the social studies curriculum. Ross, and his collection of social studies scholars, have made an admirable attempt to do exactly that, and have provided an excellent example of "thinking out of the conventional social studies curricular box." One can only hope that this second edition of *The Social Studies Curriculum, Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities*, will encourage a plethora of new scholarly perspectives on the social studies curriculum.

This collection of essays is must reading for anyone who interested in social studies curriculum theory and design, and those who
wish to "think out of the box" regarding curriculum practice. I would hope that social studies educators will spend the next decade debating new approaches for the social studies curriculum that could be introduced into public school practice in the 21st century. Perhaps an even more significant outcome from such a debate is the idea that there may be many ways to conceptualize the social studies curriculum, rather than singular set of state or national standards for the social studies curriculum. That indeed, would be thinking out of the box at the beginning of the 21st century.

Notes

1 There is general agreement among social studies educators that the 1916 report of the National Education Association Committee on Social Studies produced a tremendous impact on the social studies curriculum. It produced the scope and sequence of courses that, some 85 years later, still defines the contemporary social studies curriculum:

- grade K: self, school, community, home;
- grade 1: families;
- grade 2: neighborhoods;
- grade 3: communities;
- grade 4: state history, geographic regions;
- grade 5: U.S. History;
- grade 6: western hemisphere;
- grade 7: world geography or world history;
- grade 8: U.S. History;
- grade 9: civics;
- grade 10: world history;
- grade 11: U.S. History;
- grade 12: American government.


2 See "John Dewey's Conundrum: Can Democratic School Empower?" in Teachers College Record, Vol. 103, Number 2, April 2001 in which Aaron Schutz makes a compelling argument that Dewey's educational approach fails to equip students to act effectively in the world and that Dewey's model of democracy is inadequate to serve our contemporary society. Schutz argues that Dewey genius was situated in a time very different from contemporary society, and that Dewey drew from his own experiences a philosophy that "made sense of that experience and that matched with his own way of being in the world" (p. 297)

References

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Harvard-trained sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois published the inspirational collection of essays, *The Souls of Black Folk*. In it, Du Bois named the moral problem of the twentieth century as “the problem of the color line” (1903, p. 5). At the outset of the twenty-first century, we read in the foreword of *Souls Looking Back: Life Stories of Growing Up Black*, “race” again “promises to be the most challenging issue facing the United States” (p. ix). The only word from the title of Du Bois’s original work that is missing in the title of the present volume is “folk.” *Souls of Black Folk* provided something of an ethnography of the black population of the South, whereas *Souls Looking Back* provides something of a psychology of black college students uprooted from and missing their folk.

**Downstairs, Upstairs**

Edited by Andrew Garrod, Janie Victoria Ward, Tracy L. Robinson, and Robert Kilkenny, *Souls Looking Back* offers a two-storied view of the lives of young Americans who are gifted and Black. *Downstairs, Souls Looking Back* is an uncommon collection of contemporary narratives, written by sixteen remarkably honest young women and men of color when they were students at prominent historically white universities. *Upstairs, Souls Looking Back* is a collection of substantive reviews of social psychological theory and research on Black adolescent development. These narratives and literature reviews are organized around three concerns in relation to the overarching theme of race: social class, identity, and resilience.

**Social Class and Race**

In Part I, Peter Murrell discusses how race and class interact in adolescent development. He tells us that the student narrators “are coming to terms with their social class conversion at the same time they are confronting issues of racial identity” (p. 4). He locates the
first set of narratives by Prince, Maria, Alessandro, and Rob in the adolescent struggle to develop critical consciousness. Prince grew up in a poverty-stricken community where, he tells us, boys learned “how to use drugs and beat women” (p. 26). With impetus from his determined mother, the Big Brother she found for him, and his own yearning for challenge, he decided to strive and “reach for the moon” (cf. Ellison, 1952). In contrast to Prince, Maria grew up in suburbia where “I was just another happy, self-confident, smart kid who happened to be black” (p. 32). She was stung when she heard her high school classmates put down her academic achievements as an artifact of affirmative action. Maria’s narrative explores her attempts to understand herself while trying to resolve the expectations of different social classes in an academic setting. Alessandro’s biracial narrative explores the interaction of his Latin cultural heritage (Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico) and the very different meaning of being African and dark skinned in the United States. Rob’s experience of privilege parallels Maria’s in one sense, but, unlike Maria, he is not the first generation in his family to join the upper class. His mother went to medical school after his father died. He carries on a long family tradition and is all too conscious of his role within the Black community as a member of the Talented Tenth. All four narratives, Murrell observes, reflect the experiences of Black adolescents as their identity emerges and is transformed in a political landscape still marked by “dual consciousness” (p. 8). Prince provides Du Bois’s explanation in his story: “It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of other, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his ‘twoness’ — an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (p. 29). Overall, these first narratives illustrate the ways that race, racism, and social class shape the authors’ perceptions and color the ways in which they negotiate the developmental hurdles of late adolescence.

**Identity and Race**

Two essays, one by Jewelle Taylor Gibbs on the social construction of race and one by Tracy Robinson on stage models of Black identity development, introduce the six narratives in “Part II: Identity.” This second group of narratives is particularly touching and provocative. Christine, Liz, Claudio, Susanna, Steve, and Scott each face existential questions of how they know who they are and know what is good and right in an unfair world. From various perspectives — biracial and bicultural, bisexual and gay — each describes her/his challenges, conflicts, and approaches to creating an individual identity.
and a sense of belonging. Each of these young people addresses universal themes: Scott wonders how he can separate who he wants to become from who his parents want him to be. Liz wonders how she can be fully herself in a world that sees "Black first and me second" (p. 117). Each speaks from the struggle of one soul to make sense of the illogic that requires them to acknowledge America's threats and evils. Susanna, for example, had a White best friend in high school whom she lost to a skin head movement. As a middle class Black child of a White mother, Susanna felt like an outcast from her college's Black Student Organization. Only as an exchange student at Spelman, a college for Black women in Atlanta, did she have the freedom to experience her personhood. Claudio, too, sought community in college. The son of a mixed race family of privilege in Curacao, Claudio was not prepared for the nowhere land he faced coming to America. His mother told him he was not African American yet his dark skin clearly marked him in the eyes of whites. For Black American teens, Claudio's homosexuality proved difficult. For Latinos he was "too black." Claudio locates his struggle for freedom, identity, and belonging in the gay liberation circle on his campus and in his community.

Susannah, the biracial child of a Swiss mother and an African American father, claims a bicultural identity. In her essay, "Becoming Comfortable in my Skin," she comments: "I'm tired of explaining. I often wonder why more black people haven't gone into international relations; we have more practice at diplomacy than anyone. Our relationships with whites require such constant diplomacy that we should get diplomatic immunity from the U.S. government" (p. 134).

Resilience and Race

The final six narratives, "Part III: Resilience and Resistance," are introduced by Janie Victoria Ward. She notes that "though economic success may mediate its intensity, no dark-skinned individual is completely immune to racism" (p. 175). For the young people in this section, the titles of their self-portraits suggest the range of their struggles: "Gotta Keep Climbin' All de Time" (Chantal), "Finding Zion" (Viola), "Feeling the Pressure to Succeed" (Rick), "Running Hurdles" (Stacey), "Reflections on my Survival" (Malik), and "Quest for Peace" (Denise). Viola, for instance, refuses to split off either part of her racial heritage — her mother is a White Canadian and her father is a Black Jamaican. She writes, "I know racism; I know how many mixed people choose to be Black because it's easier. I know white people who prefer it that way too. I am reluctant to resign myself to one side or the other, which shows up in many aspects of myself. I am neither Black or White, but I can be both" (p. 217). The "souls" in Part III all grew up through hardships and triumphs, to gain a better understanding of themselves, and the liberation and con-
nections that come from working for social justice. Of course, as Ward also observes, “not all resistance strategies” adopted by these youth were “liberatory and psychologically healthy,” but, nevertheless, all were survivors (p. 182).

**Some Concern, Some Strength**

Even as the reader experiences the book’s substantial strengths, some concerns may occur. The first relates to the reference to W. E. B. Du Bois. The title and introduction lead the reader to expect that Du Bois will serve as an interpretative lens to frame the book and decode the stories or that occasional links would be made between the two volumes. Such is not the case. Although Du Bois’s two most prescient statements are quoted, one on the color line and the other on double consciousness, his insights are otherwise left implicit.

Nevertheless, there are numerous potential links between *Souls of Black Folk* and *Souls Looking Back*. In fact, social studies educators would do well to assign both books during a course in order to discuss and reflect on their similarities and differences. This pairing might be most illuminating in considering such issues as: the Talented Tenth and the role of higher education in Black liberation movements in the twentieth century; integration (assimilation) and separatism (nationalism) as social goals and psychological realities; and the universal alienation that Black American students confront in being educated in a white world (Du Bois, 1963).

The second concern is the politics of skin color. The inclusion of five avowedly biracial students in a book of sixteen Black educational success stories might appear to illustrate continued racial bias in higher education. Indeed, if the selected sixteen Black voices reflect the general Black population of first-ranked Ivy League colleges, then this seems to suggest that color continues to be a formidable filter in college admission and success. For three hundred years of African-American history, lighter skin has generally assured a head start toward upward social mobility in the larger society (Du Bois, 1940).

On the other hand, including the stories of biracial students immensely enriches our understanding of growing up as a person of color in the United States. Historically, people of mixed race in the United States have been Black by virtue of both the “one drop of black blood” rule and by the inclusiveness in African American culture. People were Black with “some white in them” or “some Indian Blood.” Rarely have people been identified as white, with some black in them. Although most African Americans are of mixed racial heritage to some degree, only the generation of children born after the legalization of “interracial marriage” have had the opportunity to choose to embrace their own biracial heritage in a community in which racial mixing is legal and out of the closet. The biracial youth who contributed
to *Souls Looking Back* question the validity of the previous racial classification system and demand an end to our dependence upon outdated, mutually exclusive categories. They cope with their Du Boisian double consciousness, typically, by claiming an inclusive identity and refusing to be identified as simply Black, as simply Latino, or as simply White, and by claiming bicultural skills that enable them to negotiate both Black and White social worlds. Viola and Susanna provide interesting contrasts with Du Bois who, although he too was mixed (African, Indian, French, and Germanic) and had grown up in a predominantly White community (Great Barrington, MA), resented the echoes of the master's genes in his son's "eyes of mingled blue and brown" (1903, p. 131) and chose fiercely and tenaciously to identify himself as Black, and to die in Africa (Lewis, 1994, 2000).

Related to the question of complexion is a third concern—social class representativeness. The background information embedded in the narratives suggests that 75% of the sixteen students came from middle class or upper class backgrounds. The students, therefore, are again unrepresentative of all African American adolescents and their stories cannot illuminate the more arduous paths to educational success followed by working class African American youth.

However, the personal narratives of these seemingly privileged African American college students teach us a surprising and critically important lesson that would have been lost in another group of students. That is, even economically and socially privileged African American students attending the most elite liberal arts colleges remain marginal in their sense of attachment and belonging and are very much at risk for dropping out, being pushed out, or flunking out of college. Why is this and what can be done about it? The narratives suggest a variety of answers. Although educational institutions normally provide care for their students, for instance, this potential support fails to make it over the hurdles of cultural differences and racism, never reaching many African American students. The stress experienced by African American students attending predominately white schools is, for many, quite palpable. University administrators and faculty need to realize that even highly successful African American students attending their elite colleges need and deserve their caring support. Several of the narrators are quite clear that having *Black* faculty, administrators, counselors, and mentors made a critical difference in their courage and in their confidence.

**A Seat in the Rehearsal Hall**

The value of *Souls Looking Back* is precisely in its particular peculiar skew. *Souls Looking Back* offers us a seat in the rehearsal hall where sixteen young adults are giving voice to their stories. These narratives are not twisted clinical portraits of painful adaptations to
race and racism. This collection is not *Black Rage*, updated (Grier & Cobbs, 1980). Rather, *Souls Looking Back* challenges our complacency and comforts and supports those who feel alone in their struggle. Little attention has been paid in the past century to the similarities and differences among the Talented Tenth. Yet here are the spiritual descendants of Du Bois, the ripples in the placid lakes, that reflect from Great Barrington, Harvard, and Ghana to Dartmouth College, Simmons College, and McGill University. Garrod, Ward, Robinson and Kilkenny have given us a gift in sharing their students' souls.

**References**


Making the Commonplace a Question


Review by RICH GIBSON, College of Education, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182.

As perhaps the sole prominent Marxist philosopher in the U.S. who has tried hard to mix what he thinks people need to know with how they come to know it, a central problem in curriculum and instruction, Bertell Ollman has sought to cross common academic boundaries of profundity and humor (his book Alienation and his board game Class Struggle), to move from the esoteric to the accessible, with the kind of humanness that marks a good teacher.

Who else is going to produce a funny book, How 2 Take an Exam and Remake the World, about testing in schools, and the class struggle? Who else is going to include the Fugs’ Tuli Kupferberg, poet-author and Fugs band-leader of the 1960’s, as an advisor and illustrator and admit it? Who, but the more dangerous of the dialectical materialists, is going to cover the book with upside-down pictures of Groucho Marx, Einstein, and Karl Marx? Who else is going to offer an index that readily directs the reader to "frog jumping," and, "chicken, headless," a special index of where to find the great cartoons by luminaries like Huck and Robert Miner, as well as the tragic Rosa Luxemborg and Brecht?

Ollman did it.

The book is an amalgamation, a mess of a fruit and nut cake as Ollman describes it, that anyone who has sweated an exam, or wondered about their academic and social powerlessness and guilt and the mysteries of capital-- will enjoying chewing through. This is dead-serious good fun, erudite scholarship easily read, and a how-to-scam-the-big-exam guide that is as good as most of the marketeer’s test-prep courses. It's surely for every teacher, and every student, and plenty of workers who want to know more about how the school and the workplace intersects as a challenge to normalcy and a call to action for a more humane way to live.

Ollman leads us joyfully through the sometimes daunting warrens of the Old Mole of historical materialism, from alienation to exploitation to reification to commodity fetishism, all the while chuckling at what he sees as the fizzle-wits who insist upon tests about the
fonnics of skaircity and choyse, the academic mask of political economy that Marx sought to rip off 150 years ago.

Along the way, we learn how to take multiple-choice tests (if it says, "all," four out of five times it's false), essay exams (write clearly), and the fearsome oral examination (get a good night's sleep). There are better test maneuvers here too. For those, you pay. But we also get bigger treats: not always tentative answers to the questions, "Is it better to get rid of the bosses, or capital?" and, "Why have school?" or "What might be the relationship of tests, grades, money, and wearing the Yellow Star?" or, "Why have government?" One that he does not pursue much, unfortunately as he is so well positioned to do it, is: "What is the relationship of struggling for the truth and movements for social justice, and why have they so often parted?"

Making the Commonplace a Question

Ollman understands that a good education leaves a student with memorable questions, not necessarily good answers, but not rudderless either. Rigor is mixed with freedom here; with this recipe we chew down on both at the same time. But this is not just pedagogical theory. Like all teaching, it is both analysis and a call to action. The point is: "RESIGNATION SUCKS." He thinks social justice can win.

We also get the clarity that Ollman cultivated over a lifetime, the humor that underpins the understanding that we all just might be a little wrong. Still, Ollman has some answers he wants to underline. He goes at the de rigueur notion of globalization, or neo-liberalism, head on: this iscapitalism, imperialism, but on a world scale never seen before, no holds barred, absolute freedom for the movement and accumulation of things, especially the main thing, more capital; utter degradation for human beings and the perfidious scientific divisions that the Big Tests require. Globalism's freedom and tolerance become the liberty to tolerate hierarchy and inequality. Globalization has its demands and, in school, where the key products are knowledge and hope (real or false) it's: More Exams Everywhere. The Big Tests prepare us for life, quantified and segmented beneath capital, unconsciously ruled by things that people created and governed by process so habituated that they are usually unnoticed. This is where Ollman truly enters, laughing. He plans to outwit the appearance of the invincibility of capital and the humorless wreckage of reason which marches with the high-stakes exam fever that infests all of schooling today. Like a good social studies educator, he wants to make the commonplace a question.

How shall this be done? What are the limits to capital, and to testing? Does Ollman himself give tests? Grades? It's all in the recipe Ollman is playfully offering, tongue not so much in cheek, but right out between the teeth. Yes, there are limits to capital, and like Istvan
Meszaros (Beyond Capital), David Harvey (The Limits of Capital), and others, Ollman thinks we approach them now, in the environment, in the pending crises of overproduction, and in the nearly unthinkable chances of war (more unthinkable to Ollman than many others).

But there is no guarantee that crisis of capital, whether through over-production, the declining rate of profit, war, or the last monster sewage spill, will ever lead people to conclude that the forces which propel us together as social beings must overcome the forces that drive us apart—that social production, exchange, and distribution must transcend racism, nationalism, authoritarianism: irrationalism. This is where Ollman probed what he called the subjective factor, in his earlier book, Dialectical Investigations, where he examined how it is we can investigate the processes of transition from individualist consciousness to class consciousness. The subjective factor is where, in practice, the battle for justice has broken down, and Ollman's contribution in the text under review can only be considered partial. Even so, there is a parallel between Ollman's paraphrasing of Wilhelm Reich's question, "The issue is not why the hungry workers steal, but why they do not," and the moth-to-flame behavior of many educators who are lured to the Exams by promises of educational equality, or who simply march to the Tests out of habituated obedience.

There is tradition here too, within the authentic radicalism of the entire text. There are traditional cartoons (the organized bee-hive and Miner's Headless Soldier) worth the price of admission alone. Ollman's tradition wants abundance as a basis for equality and democracy, a dubious requirement for a society run by elites who don't shrink from poisoning the air their own children breathe and who bomb their own factories in their death throes. The sole limit to capital is, as Ollman has said, the conscious decision of masses of people to live better, in the connected interests of each for all. Those interested in education and social justice will see the link made but perhaps not as deftly as some might desire. There remains a gap between what Ollman thinks people must know, and how they must come to know it, curriculum and instruction, that cannot be excused as merely a dialectical transition, but needs sharper investigation. Perhaps that task falls to people mainly concerned about pedagogy.

Ollman writes with urgent sense of patience here. With all that the mainstream press will probably call the strident pointing to crisis levels of structural limits and injustice, there is the fortitude that understands the requisite role of reason, changing millions of minds, in order to make the struggle for a better world worthy, and defensible. How we do that is in the book too, and so is the passion the sets the stage for reason.
Finding Ways Around Those Exams

Social studies educators should be drawn to this book in part for the questions it will raise, in part to the challenges to even left discourse it offers. Ollman is struggling with issues common to the social studies: What is social justice, citizenship, and what do people need to know to win democracy and equality all of the people? How can we conduct serious investigations of things as they change, while at the same time we are mired in those things, both trapped and freed by issues of necessity (publish, pass the test, give the test, win the grade, give the grade, pay the rent) and power (where is tenure within an academic world that appears none of us really made?). Social studies educators interested in challenging questions, and answers, might do well to adopt this text and find ways around those exams.
What’s Love Got To Do With It?
Charity as Repression in America


Review by RAHIMA WADE, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242

“Perhaps the most overrated virtue in our list of shoddy virtues is that of giving. Giving builds up the ego of the giver, makes him superior and higher and larger than the receiver. Nearly always, giving is a selfish pleasure, and in many cases is a downright destructive and evil thing.”

John Steinbeck

Wagner’s book title, “What’s love got to do with it?” is just one of many important and perplexing questions posed in this book that are important for social studies educators to consider as we think, talk, and write about democratic citizenship. As a professor of social work, Wagner looks at the history of charity from a unique lens; his insights expose a decidedly negative view of the generally revered notion of American philanthropy.

Repressive Benevolence

How can giving possibly be destructive or evil? In his book, Wagner plays David to a Goliath among American values—charity—through disclosing how philanthropy in the United States has repressed those in need, mitigated guilt among the “haves,” and too often preempted real social change. Wagner’s analysis is at once psychological, historical and sociological; his treatise challenges us as social studies educators to consider how charity figures (or doesn’t) into the notion of what it means to be an informed and active citizen in contemporary society. His work also offers social studies educators additional perspectives beyond the textbook and other status quo sources for analyzing various aspects of U. S. history.

In the first part of the book, Wagner explores how, historically, claims to altruism have often coincided with cruel and violent action toward those who were different. Wagner calls this phenomena “repressive benevolence” because those who believed they were actually helping spearheaded it.
Repressive benevolence can be used to describe the actions and attitudes of those who claim to do good, but because of cultural and power differentials often harm their intended subjects. Underlying repressive benevolence is the strong American ideological belief that its churchgoing, white, middle-class citizens know what is best for others as well as themselves, and hence are summoned to 'do good' by spreading their gospel of living to others. Such spreading of the good life is considered well-meaning and constitutes a strand from the Puritans of old to American soldiers in Vietnam or the Middle East in the twentieth century. (p. 18)

While the examples above are well taken, Wagner focuses his lens primarily on two other groups: Indians and the poor. He notes that charitable acts by the "Friends of the Indian" led to the disenfranchisement of native peoples from most of their land, to the removal of hundreds of thousands of Indian children from their families, and to the destruction of native languages, religions, and cultures. In regard to the poor, the widely held belief that poverty is a moral flaw that is only made worse by providing material aid led to poorhouses, workhouses, auctioning poor individuals, use of the lash, and other punitive measures. Like Indians, poor people were seen as undisciplined, deviant children who needed education, rehabilitation, and, in extreme cases, punishment in order to reform their character for the better.

The Ideology of Charity

In the second part of the book, Wagner traces the success of charity as both an American ideology and a set of institutional arrangements. Beginning with religious roots in Christianity, philanthropy in the United States came to be the province of the rich and powerful. In the twentieth century, "a huge apparatus of ostensibly caregiving institutions and organizations has arisen and been glorified as 'non-profit.' Though funded by wealthy sponsors, nonprofit organizations have been severed from these origins in the public mind" (p. 74).

Wagner's discussion of the differences between charity and social action is particularly illuminating. "Charity belongs to a totally different class of social action than economic or political action...We are comfortable praising the volunteer who enters another's life because we understand such action to be in the (idealized) realm of personal communication between giver and receiver" (p. 81).

While Wagner does allow that at times charity has contributed to the common good (such as through providing disaster relief and working for the rights of the blind and deaf), he asserts that most of our important social movements and legal victories have come about
through other means, such as social unrest and ensuing structural mechanisms to channel (and often weaken) social protest. For example, protests surrounding the rights of people of color, children, women, those with disabilities, gays and lesbians, prisoners, and the environment have led to some positive changes.

But these gains have not been consistent or as considerable as they might have been. "Those in power strive not only to repress and control rebellions. They also try to organize and channel disorder into less threatening forums" (p. 154). Thus, the government has given representation to individuals from previously excluded groups in ways that would adhere to the law and the normal channel of politics. Government has also moved "to replace substantive economic and political changes with vague service and therapeutic goals that were less costly and ultimately less challenging to the status quo" (p. 155).

**Doin' Good**

In Wagner’s view, volunteer and service activities are characterized by sentiment rather than social change. "Today’s younger generation of activists, human service workers, and volunteers has seen no major radical movements in two decades and consequently has come to mistake the missionary zeal of service work with politics...‘Doing good’ has become, in the absence of active oppositional movements, the ‘only game in town’ for those who want to embrace some cause broader than themselves” (p. 169). Wagner’s questions to advocates of community service should give us pause. "What if the challenge was seen as attempting to change society for the better rather than merely ladling out soup at a kitchen or making sandwiches at a shelter? What if Ghandi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Eugene V. Debs, or Cesar Chavez had been content to ladle soup?” (p. 177).

While Wagner’s critiques take down two of America’s most revered civic endeavors (charity and community service), his arguments are not devoid of positive suggestions for how we can make a difference. In just a few brief pages at the end of the book, Wagner at least gives us a glimpse of how we might create more widespread and meaningful social change. In Wagner’s view, only two major alternatives to the charitable project exist: first, completely transform our social organization into an egalitarian (read: socialist) society and second, accept the outlines of a capitalist system but seek to limit the excesses of a free market by providing a welfare state. Admitting that the latter is probably more doable and citing Sweden and Holland as two examples, Wagner offers several specific aims toward societal reform: stronger unions, higher rates of corporate taxation, family allowances, paid maternity leaves, and national health insurance.
The United States has the sharpest rates of income inequality in the Western world, the sparsest public social welfare system in the industrialized world, and festering social problems that produce much violence and more prisons than elsewhere... Why do most societies provide their citizens with family allowances to support children, free health care, and other services as a basic right while the United States does not? (p. 4).

This question, posed at the beginning of the book, also is fittingly where the book ends. It is a critical question for social studies educators to ponder and then reflect on how we might "get there from here." While never light or easy reading, Wagner's treatise on American charity provides some assistance to those of us endeavoring to figure out how to most effectively teach for meaningful and significant social change.
Numerous reasons exist today, as always, for promoting the concept of justice within social studies education. Entrenched problems such as racism, sexism, and homophobia stubbornly persist. Globalization offers a new round of assaults on the environment and human dignity. Violence, consumerism, and narcissism threaten to undermine whatever vestiges of civil society still exist in this country. In the last chapter of this book, Andra Makler offers a further rationale: While most social studies teachers say they consider social justice issues in their teaching, her research shows they do not. What they are teaching about instead is social injustice, without considering explicitly what social justice actually means.

Defining Justice

The problem of what justice means is a thorny one. As John Rawls (1999) points out in *A Theory of Justice*:

“Now let us say that a society is well ordered when it is not only designed to advance the good of its members but when it is also effectively regulated by a public conception of justice. That is, it is a society in which (1) everyone accepts and knows that the others accept the same principles of justice, and (2) the basic social institutions generally satisfy and are generally known to satisfy these principles...Existing societies are of course seldom well-ordered in this sense, for what is just and unjust is usually in dispute.” (p. 5)

Correspondingly, when we move to the cross-cultural arena, we find that understandings of justice pose even greater difficulties for consensual definition. Martha Nussbaum (1999), in the introductory chapter to her work, *Sex and Social Justice*, presents a critique of relativism as regards women’s status worldwide:
To express the spirit of this chapter very succinctly, it is better to risk being consigned by critics to the “hell” reserved for alleged Westernizers and imperialists—however unjustified such criticism would in fact be—than to stand around in the vestibule waiting for a time when everyone will like what we are going to say. And what we are going to say is: that there are universal obligations to protect human functioning and its dignity, and that the dignity of women is equal to that of men.” (p. 30)

Readers of this journal will perhaps remember Makler’s own effort to uncover what meanings social studies teachers bring to the notion of justice in her article, “Social Studies Teachers’ Conceptions of Justice,” published in 1994. In this research, the author found teachers teaching about injustice (for example, lessons about the treatment of minority groups in U.S. history, women in other cultures, civil liberties, etc.), yet reluctant to frame this instruction as about justice. In-depth interviews with two teachers revealed them to be well aware of their reluctance to engage the concept directly. It would be tempting to speculate about the reasons behind this reluctance and whether the phenomenon is widespread.

Not surprisingly, therefore, these teachers’ students did not recognize their lessons as concerned with justice. Makler asked students to “imagine a just country” (p.213). She describes their answers as reflecting cynicism, realism, and relativism. What she finds missing in these classrooms, and disturbing as omission, is the expression of a theory or theories of justice that help students develop a sophisticated, critical approach to social injustice while supporting their construction of an understanding of a just society.

Thus, Makler entitles her chapter, the last in the book, “What Does Justice Look Like?” The approach taken overall by this wonderful book, co-edited by Makler and Ruth Shagoury Hubbard, is to answer the question by allowing teachers to share their stories of teaching for justice. Readers encounter a set of definitions, a variety of considerations, and fourteen examples of teaching for justice in social studies classrooms, written chiefly by teachers at the middle and high school levels. The subtitle of the book, “millions of intricate moves,” comes from chapter 1 in which Kim Stafford, a writing instructor at Lewis and Clark College, describes vividly how his own sense of justice began in childhood. His father, the poet William Stafford, often documented family events like car trips into the Cascade Mountains of Oregon through poetry. One particular Sunday, the Stafford family car became the setting for an expression of racism that provoked William Stafford to scold the passenger, silence the children in the back
seat, and pen the following: “We live in an occupied country, misunderstood; justice will take us millions of intricate moves.” (p. 13)

The Framework

In the introductory chapter, Hubbard reviews the legacy of issue-centered education in the social studies and the daily contributions to that tradition made by the intricate moves of teachers struggling with how to bring social justice into today’s classrooms. She talks about “teaching from the center of the circle” (p. 1) and social justice as “good work in action” (p. 1). Clearly, John Dewey’s pragmatism is at work here, as is Nel Noddings’ emphasis on caring as central to the educational enterprise.

Hubbard’s adept use of language reflects the sensitivity to writing that makes this book a pleasure to read as well as a prescription for good social studies education. Writing also serves as one among a range of teaching strategies to be used in addressing social justice issues by fostering introspection, reflection, and a sense of inquiry. Developing a sense of membership in a professional community, respecting the disciplines, varying teaching strategies, and using the Internet—all figure in the teaching stories told here. Four of the chapters contain extensive appendices of teaching materials for use in conjunction with the approaches described by their authors.

The chapters complementing Hubbard’s introduction and Makler’s conclusion include: writing as a path to social justice by Kim Stafford; immigration by Linda Christensen; collective action by Sandra Childs; Guatemalan history by Jessie Singer; sweatshops and child labor by Bill Bigelow; social protest movements in U.S. History by Daniel Gallo; the Vietnam War by Michael Jarmer; community service by Mary Burke-Hengen and Gregory Smith; peer mediation by Russell Dillman and Geoffrey Brooks; gangs and street justice by Theresa Kauffman; mock trials by David Molloy; market failure by Paul Copley; Nigeria and oil companies by Sandra Childs and Amanda Weber-Welch; and migrant farm workers by Dirk Frewing. Two authors, Linda Christensen and Bill Bigelow, write regularly for Rethinking Schools; all are social studies or language arts teachers or teacher educators at Lewis and Clark College. To give a better sense of the book’s approach, I’ll describe four chapters in more depth.

Jessie Singer’s chapter is entitled “Looking Through Layers: A Study of Guatemala.” Singer says, “I wanted to teach a way of seeing” (p.43) Guatemalan history in her high school global studies class. Having lived there for a number of years and because “Guatemala is a country grappling with questions of how to create social justice for its people,” Singer used a post-holing approach by looking at four segments of its history: the Mayan period, 2000-1000 BC; the Spanish conquest of the 1500s and 1600s, the “Liberal Revolution” of 1871-
1900; and a period of land, social reform and US-backed coup, 1944-1954. Her theme over all aimed at having students understand "how control and outside influence can lead to complex social and political divisions that are not easily erased" (p. 44). Singer used writing workshops to encourage students to think about the idea of a “people’s voice” and the multiple perspectives necessary for understanding history. In particular, she had students write “interior monologues” from the perspective of persons of Mayan descent when the Spanish invaded (p. 47), so they would better understand the issues of autonomy, oppression, helplessness, and poverty that have shaped Guatemalan history.

Looking at poverty closer to home, Mary Burke-Hengen and Gregory Smith of Lewis and Clark College were motivated by the question: “How many of our graduates...had the knowledge and understanding of poverty that would even begin to prepare them to serve this population?” (p.100). Prompted by a belief in the “insufficiency of abstractions,” they took their student teaching interns into places in Portland where they would encounter the poor face to face: “For us, the willingness to work for social justice is based on the capacity to care” (p. 100). The two instructors required students to meet for five 3-hour blocks on Fridays between September and December. Their semester began and ended with whole-group sessions of all those enrolled. In between, students volunteered in small groups at a number of local organizations dedicated to caring for the poor. Journal writing offered a means of coming to terms with the students’ experiences and documenting whatever transformation, if any, occurred in their thinking about the poor. Remarkably perhaps, students seemed to achieve a new understanding that the poor are people like themselves and that the sources of poverty are rooted in injustice.

Like service learning, conflict resolution is an educational strategy often found within social studies curriculum. Russell Dillman, a high school social studies teacher, and Geoffrey Brooks, the “integration specialist” for the Portland School District, shared an interest in making peer mediation work in their school. They write:

We believe power and conflict are concepts central to a discussion of justice. Conflict resolution programs in schools provide a venue in which power is more evenly distributed than historically has been the case in schools as well as the larger society. (p. 119)

The authors describe the successes and failures of their peer mediation program. On the one hand, the program has been successful in reducing school violence by empowering students “to find justice on their own terms” (p. 119). On the other hand, the authors la-
ment the fact that those who apply to become peer mediators are over-
whelming European-American females. Very few males apply and few
conflicts between male students or between African-American stu-
dents get handled through the peer mediation program. Differences
in racial attitudes about justice more generally are also manifest in the
African American history class Brooks teaches. Together, these expe-
riences bring the authors to reflect on what they call "the color of jus-
tice"—in both schools and life.

The last example comes from a student teacher, Dirk Frewing,
who wrote a unit plan for the study of migrant living and working
conditions in the United States. Frewing taught one week’s worth of
this unit at a large suburban high school, which he describes here. The
author correctly notes the hidden nature of this subject in the Ameri-
can history curriculum, even when a unit on civil rights gets taught.
He offers this rationale for his unit: "Today, migrant workers are inti-
mately and fundamentally connected to everyone who eats fruits or
vegetables. They are an integral yet socially invisible component of
U.S. society" (p. 200). Yet growing up in Oregon, Frewing, like so many
others, had "no idea that migrant farm workers were suffering many
similar types of abuses just across the mountains in the sunny orchards
and fields of the Northwest" (p.200). As he taught this subject, the
beginning teacher found students concluding that bringing justice to
migrant workers was almost impossible in the face of agri-business
and American citizens’ demands for cheap produce. While Frewing
may not have succeeded in moving his students to social action, he
concludes his chapter by sharing his own move for social justice: His
students today are the "sons and daughters of migrant farm
workers...sitting in the graffiti-scarred desks of my basement class-
room" (p.207).

Making even small moves towards justice, the authors of this
book suggest, will help convince students that action is never futile.
These teachers stand in contrast to the teachers described in Makler’s
original research by helping their students actively engage the con-
cept of justice at the beginning, middle, or end of teaching units. They
also understand that teaching about justice demands that sensitivity
to justice begin in the classroom, in the interactions between a teacher
and his or her students. As Hubbard correctly notes, teaching for jus-
tice means treating students fairly as well as respecting their differ-
ences of opinion about the meaning of justice in a society.

Social Justice and Teacher Education

Of course, if teaching for social justice is to occur, teacher educa-
tion programs need to produce graduates sensitive to these concerns
and skilled in providing the means of enacting such goals. As a teacher
educator, I hoped I would find something more here about the ap-
proaches of other teacher educators to motivating and developing teachers committed to social justice within social studies. Further, I would have liked greater consideration of the problems of resistance from parents, administrators and communities, the issue of time constraints, and the scourge of high-stakes testing and its impact on curriculum. Beyond the many fine stories here, more direct consideration of the question posed by Sandra Childs, “How do you turn the situation in the Delta from a lesson about social injustice to a lesson about social justice?” (p. 3), would have been helpful. Perhaps a companion volume for teacher educators could be Makler and Hubbard’s next project.

Nevertheless, I recognize that, as befits a book on such a complex issue as teaching for justice, no simple prescriptions, formulas, or definitions can be offered. Those looking for a critique of the structural conditions that impede social justice in classrooms, schools, or society will likewise be disappointed. Nor do the editors promote a particular model of justice, although Makler’s conclusion reminds readers of feminist approaches to justice as caring that balance notions of justice as fairness. In short, this is a book filled with stimulating models for teaching and enacting social justice in social studies classrooms. As with good parenting, effective instruction in this realm has more to do with setting a good example than with preaching, prescribing, and nagging. Readers can surely be satisfied with that.

References
The End of Critical Thinking?


Review by JONATHAN LEE, State University of New York at Binghamton, Binghamton, NY, 13905.

In his autobiography, *A Call to Assembly*, jazz bassist Willie Ruff recalls being told that 'music don't mean a thing, unless it tells a story'. Quickly switching scenes, this phrase can be highly illustrative for social studies educators. Primarily, it speaks directly to our role and the project of our discipline: a sort of calling-into-being (or calling-into-assembly) of the vast and temporal facets of history and social life, inflating them with space and meaning derived from a critical analysis of, and self-reflection on, everything within our reach. If this sounds vague, it should. In many ways, social studies has become 'the discipline without a definition', 'the subject without a subject'. It is nowhere and it is everywhere; it is grounded in its groundlessness. Much like the 'world religions' that it claims to study, social studies is very much an academic attempt to make us feel confident by supposing to have a handle on the unknown. Still, history happened, and we live social life each day, right? So are we really studying the 'unknown'?

Studying the "Unknown"

Of this 'unknown', it is easy to convince ourselves to the opposite (we just need to look at the institutional calligraphy framed and hanging proudly on our walls). What is the true challenge, then, is to convince our students in the same manner. We must introduce them to the 'unknown'. More importantly, we must train them to walk that fine tightrope (or tripwire) that translates into the 'known' while, at the same time, informs the critical moment when we realize that, by claiming to 'know', we are only giving ourselves time to investigate the 'unknown'.

Paul Bove, literary critic at the University of Pittsburgh, is currently undertaking a project that focuses on the retrieval of, what he calls, 'the end of thinking' (Bove, 2001). Essentially, this is a project spawned by what Bove sees to be a 'poverty of thinking' in contemporary global theorizing, where intellectuals (such as Fukuyama and Greenblatt) eagerly put out-of-date theories to use in reference to something completely new, rather than attempting to come to grips with their intellectual roots, and devise new strategies and insights towards
this ‘new’ arena. [The newness of this global arena is, of course, a prime example of the ‘known versus unknown’ dilemma referred to above. Its particular debate, however, is reserved for another time.]

In many ways, we are at a point in social studies education where we are asked to tackle the same halfback. Nichols and Good (2000) make the claim that, at the core, there is very little difference between education in 1900 and the same 100 years later. This is quite an unfortunate presumption, one of the very same manner that Bove disclaims. The pressures, borders, realities, and goals of contemporary education far exceed what any educator in 1900 could imagine. Sure, in theory, we rely heavily (and justifiably so) on educational philosophers such as Dewey and Du Bois, who began their thinking even prior to 1900. But to put their seemingly timeless words into use today requires a completely different set of rationales and applications than these ‘knowers’ were dealing with at the time of their writings. What this all means is that we must not fall into the trap of those social educators before us; we must devise the new to deal with the new. Plainly, before we can even begin to think about curricula, standards, and students, we must think about us; we must be students before we can teach them.

As students of social education, we are in a unique position: we embody our subject, immediately becoming constant examples for reflexivity. This position cannot be pushed asunder. Along with being active learners, students of education (of social education in particular) need to be openly critical of the sources of their learning. Here, ‘critical’ is not meant to call for massive and unfounded source-bashing. Rather, we should turn our sources on their ends, allowing, in a sense, the sources to critique themselves. Stephanie Wasta, (2001) for example, puts to use a teaching strategy that she has modified from Ogle’s K-W-L formula: For Ogle, teachers should go about their business by keeping three student-oriented questions in mind: 1) What do I know? 2) What do I want to know? 3) What have I Learned? Wasta transforms K-W-L into T-W-L, changing the first question-step to ‘What I think I know’. This relates directly to our relationship with the unknown. Never do we admit to be experts or knowers. Instead, we are driven by a self-reflective desire to learn. In a sense, we follow a very Kuhnian thoughtline, where progress is seen to be an improvement on the past, rather than an increased nearness to a concrete goal (Rorty, 1998). Although we should not rule out short-term goals, we can never allow our goals to be wide-ranging to the point where we consider knowledge to be outside of this realm of the ‘unknown’. To see and self-admit this is primary to our unique position as learning teachers.

It is with all of this in mind that I introduce the main character of this text: Jack Zevin’s Social Studies for the Twenty-first Century. Aimed at offering some clearly-drawn and fresh perspectives on a
discipline that has, historically, been a muddled watercolor of old habits, this text (hereafter signified as ‘SS21’), rather, illustrates a problematic ‘end of thinking’ in academia, especially dangerous considering its potential usage as a model with which to instruct future educators.

**Framework**

We are so selfish. We want it all now, never patient or meditative. Case in point: how do we approach the books we read? Do we sit right down and hammer away at chapter one (looking for style in introduction) or chapter four (looking for continued textual excitement as the book rolls along)? Or do we pull the book off the shelf, look at the cover and back-jacket, and quickly browse down the table of contents before turning to the index and setting up camp, looking for the ways that this book is going to help us? Or worse, do we affix our gaze at the bibliography, looking for clues as to the amount of research undertaken (illustrating an immediate, yet unfounded, distrust of the author)? Personally, I fall along the lines of the latter. As ignorant as this way of text-approach may be, it remains the most concise method for introduction.

Before I even pulled the book’s first edition off the library shelf, I notice the strange combination of the title (21st Century), and the dated (1992), library-code sticker - an eight-year time disparity. In light of some major disciplinary shifting during the late 1980s and early 1990s [whose particulars need not be indulged here], SS21’s assertion that one can skip right over what was turning into (and turned to be) a revolutionary 1990s, aiming an instructional program at the next century, is certainly problematic. Why not title the book Social Studies for the 1990s or Social Studies at the End of the Twentieth Century or Social Studies: The First Century. Of course, hindsight is the critic’s best friend. But in the simple matter of an illogical title for a textbook, SS21 appears to have closed the old mental orifice before even starting, opening itself to harsh criticism.

Eight years later, the second edition is nothing more than a slightly-angularized modification of the first. Zevin’s agenda, which will become clear through this essay, is still intact, and he has made little amends for major problems in the earlier edition. While new sections appear at the end of various chapters (ie. ‘globalism’), the only major adjustments deal specifically with technological advances made, over the span of the 1990s. In other words, rather than attempting to deal with some of the large-scale changes that have occurred since the first edition of this mal-titled text, Zevin prefers to focus on changes that are not specific to social education - internet and new media, for example.
In frame and structure, SS21 attempts an emphasis on promoting active learning. The appendices are thoroughly-researched and well-organized, listing sources for ‘further reading’, along with a variety of social studies-oriented organizations and journals. However, Zevin has eliminated a more detailed ‘further reading’ appendix that appeared in the first edition - one of the sole shining moments in that edition. In another fashion, the text promotes active learning with the inclusion of in-text ‘activity boxes’. These come, generally, in two types. The first are sub-divided into ‘To Do’, ‘Let’s Decide’, and ‘What Do You Think’ - ranging from a series of questions related to developing both objective and subjective relations with a set of given information, to a set of questions for interpretation of a given picture, poem, or historical prose. The second type, ‘Research Report’, gives a few paragraphs of primary source material, but asks nothing of the reader. Perhaps it is the second type of activity that best suits the active learner, in that it requires the learner to formulate their own queries and responses. Either way, these activities closely resemble their ‘7-12’ counterparts, in scope and difficulty (or more precisely, in shallowness and ease). While this is good in its ability to give the learning teacher a chance to develop a certain ‘expertise’ at attacking these types of activities, it is simply a regurgitation of an old strategy that can only lead toward formulaic responses to generic questions. In short, while this teaches the reader to cope with present textbooks, it says nothing of what changes in the scope of the title (21st Century) may bring - or has brought already.

**DRA, or The Pros and Cons of Simplicity**

Underlying the whole mission of SS21 is a reliance on a three-part schema for organizing knowledge, a plan that could be called the DRA format. This strategy is all-inclusive, and embodies a sort-of X-Files shape-shifter, able to be aimed at everything from student learning to teaching style to subject analysis. And like the shape-shifter, within the pleasant and familiar DRA format lies a potentially-harmful creature. It is simply, well,...simple.

The DRA format combines the following: the didactic (referring to factual memorization), the reflective (referring to the objective analysis of the facts), and the affective (referring to the subjective conclusions based on the objective). At the most basic level, SS21 considers these three components as being “different but not exclusive” (p. vii). They are meant, taken together, to act as a framework for a holistic approach to studying the social. Unfortunately, SS21 has broken the concept of ‘holistic’. Zevin, in the very first chapter, clearly states that, although the best lessons will, in some capacity, combine all three facets of DRA, a more ‘realistic’ lesson will be centered on one ele-
ment of the three. The reason given: we don't want to confuse the children. Seems to me, moreso, that we don't want to confuse the teachers. DRA segregation (the pick-and-choose method of lesson knowledge) fully opposes any attempt at either holism or critical instruction on the part of the teacher.

Zevin fashions a wide range of potential action for this format. First, DRA is utilized as a means of ranking student thought processes [didactic = lower processes, reflective = middle, and affective = upper]. With no disclaimer emphasizing individual ability, this sort of oversimplified generalizing that falls along the lines of Bove's critique. In a second sense, the format is used as a marker of teacher roles in the classroom [didactic = 'authority, resource, guide'; reflective = 'questioner, scientist, artist'; affective = 'dramatist, socialization agent, devil's advocate']. This clear-cut distinction sticks to the 'separate but equal' notion regarding DRA, thus also betraying SS21's claim to 'holistic instruction'. Elsewhere, the analysis of role differentiation has been undertaken in both 'periphery' (Turner, 1962) and 'center' (Bourdieu, 1996), each of which discusses the interrelatedness of the different roles. More importantly, they discuss the ranging effects that both the separation and integration of the roles each play into the society in which they are performed. SS21 prefers more of a self-appointed schizophrenia, suggesting that the instructor should select one or two roles, so as to create a more centered and, in Zevin's words, 'dramatic' lesson or learning environment. Where Turner and Bourdieu speak of roles as becoming internalized within the actor, SS21 intends to produce actors in a more Hollywoodesque vein. It all just appears to play right into the false nature of teaching based on corporate standards and constructed histories.

Inscribing Ignorance

Throughout the text, Zevin constructs a pattern of bias and forgetting, centered around two aspects: dominance through mentioning and passive acceptance. Loewen (1995) defines 'dominance through mentioning' as a process by which an author keeps the reader in the dark by briefly or broadly alluding to a subject or event, seemingly giving it voice in the overall picture. In actuality, the author likens the reader to a 'cultural dope' [a creation of the anthropologist Clifford Geertz], assuming control over the reader in a power dynamic that relates directly to the author's appropriation of limited information and the reader's assumption that they are receiving the 'full picture'.

SS21 accomplishes this in two diverging ways. First, throughout the text, Zevin drops phrases onto the reader that are somewhat unique, only to give them a distorted discussion - or no discussion at
all. Two cases in point. In the first, he mentions how the humanities and the natural sciences have recently become ‘vital elements of the entire social studies curriculum’, and proceeds to give them a single (and brief) in-text citation - and never mentions them again. His archaic definition of anthropology, for instance, says nothing of archaeology or physical anthropology [many of whose texts are located, respectively, in our own Fine Arts and Science libraries]. Secondly, Zevin lays out three different notions of self among social educators [the good citizen, the critical thinker, the expert], calling them ‘tensions’ within the discipline, affecting ‘everyday teaching in important ways’. He then sinks back into his DRA safety-blanket, talking about how didactic thinking can develop accurate lessons or how reflective thinking can develop a sense of critical-mindedness among the students - rather than elaborating on this critical distinction among educators. Here would be an excellent time for Zevin to refute his refusal to think critically or force the reader to do so. But, unfortunately, here was an opportunity wasted. In these two examples, Zevin clearly takes the reader for a ‘cultural dope’, who simply nods their head to accept whatever they are fed, without asking ‘please, sir, can I have some more?’.

A second example of ‘dominance through mentioning’ relates to an exclusion of information by providing the reader with an extremely uneven topical framework. Where the subject surrounding the first ‘dominance through mentioning’ example impacts the teachers, this second example weighs in quite heavily on the students, asking the teachers to regard primary issues as having less importance than some rather secondary issues. For example, Zevin’s treatment of multicultural education is exceptionally limited, even given that the book was written when this topic was still, very much, in the developing stages. In this 300-plus page textbook, less than six full pages of text are given to multicultural education, and a majority of this deals with the inclusion of material from the Middle East or bilingual education. Compounding this, the phrases ‘African-American’ and ‘Native American’ are each mentioned barely more than once - and often in the very same sentence! In fact, Zevin claims that “changing ethnic population mixes are alone an insufficient justification for adopting a pluralistic conception of society” (p. 56). This shows the exact nature of Bove’s critique of current social thought, in that Zevin sees changing populations simply as changing ratios - regardless of the deeper effects and social responses to these changes. Clearly, he is treading on thoughtless (morally and professionally) and dangerous ground!

Similarly, Zevin deems it possible to discuss the processes of adolescence in less than four pages and the vast variety of ‘special students’ [ranging from those confined to Special Education classrooms to those considered ‘gifted’] in five pages. In other words, Zevin ac-
counts for multicultural education (including ESL), problems of adolescence, and all students with ‘special needs’, in less than fifteen full pages of text. Elsewhere, Zevin spends six pages on a single in-text citation [examples of letters from the late 18th Century] and its potential for in-class discussion, as well as fourteen pages on describing the differences between T-F, multiple choice, matching, literary analysis, and essay questions on tests. In other words, SS21 spends significantly more textual space and time on information that either could be accessed in any social studies textbook or that learning teachers have been dealing with for the whole of their academic careers [historical citations and the nature of examinations], than on information that is both vital and probably new to a student of education [multicultural education, adolescence, and ‘special students’]. This is more like ‘dominance through slighting’.

Zevin has also accepted a philosophy of ‘passive acceptance’ of information throughout the text, using language that makes SS21 appear to have a critical turn while, at the same time, refusing to take a stand on the information itself [sources of, usage of, responses to, and so forth]. While not promoting historical inaccuracies or other common problems within social studies [thus not demonstrating ‘active acceptance’], Zevin does very little to actually critique them [thus not demonstrating ‘resistance’, actively or passively]. Some of this has been alluded to above, where SS21 relies on some very ‘old school’ in-text activity boxes as catalysts for thought. Elsewhere, Zevin appears confused on where to take a stand, choosing to fall to the easy position of accepting the material and critiquing the program. For example, in the chapter entitled ‘Teaching World Studies’, he recalls numerous past critiques of Western-oriented world history - the absence of the feminine or minority voice, for example - and how these critiques can be useful in developing an objectively-drawn picture of global interrelatedness. But elsewhere, Zevin makes some glaring subjective assertions:

You might ask students to compare the American nuclear family with the extended family common to the Muslim Middle East; students may perceive advantages in the large networks of relative, and they may also begin to understand the origins and rationale for polygamy and purdah...in Saudi Arabia and other places, even if they disagree with such practices...[Similarly], by studying relatively wealthy and poor societies side by side, students can begin to develop their own theories of political development - ones that see the correlation between juntas or dictatorships and weak economies and political or ethnic hatred, and between democracies and relative wealth,
strong beliefs in the rule of law, and histories of political compromise (p. 214).

Here, while appearing to exhibit fairness, Zevin makes assumptions about lack of acceptance on the part of the students, and uses language that clearly favors the West. In a related fashion, SS21 describes studying ancient Greece or the Viking tradition in Scandinavia as being ‘cross-cultural’ in nature. Though true at the base level, the refusal to go deeper is troubling. I call it passive acceptance, or the ‘end of thinking’.

A Reluctant Justification

To claim a critical stance by arguing with the one-sidedness of a text cannot be countered with a one-sided critique. My problem with liberal and conservative die-hards has always been their reluctance to accept anything the other side claims as truth, evidence, or reality. A few weeks ago, I was within the broadcast realm of WABC Radio (770 AM - New York City) - the home of Rush Limbaugh, the ‘Excellence in Broadcasting Network’, and a markedly conservative format - to hear an interview conducted by WABC’s Sean Hannity and Malik Shabazz, the leader of the New Black Panthers. It was remarkable to hear how different their arguments were, while exhibiting similarities in tactic, tone, and justification. Point is, rather than ignorantly fighting fire with fire alone, I feel obligated to mention three aspects of SS21 that are of use to social studies teachers.

As mentioned previously, Zevin does engage in the beginnings of giving the learning teacher a point of departure into the realm of critical analysis. Especially in his introduction, Zevin includes sections comprised of several questions related to the critique of source material, of past teaching techniques, and so forth. If not discouraged by Zevin’s lack of continuance on this arena, the reader will go on to make their own critical analyses. This leads into the second point, SS21’s emphasis on other source material. The final two chapters, along with a lengthy series of reading lists at the end of each chapter in the form of bookend appendices, give the reader ample chance to do their own investigation. But only if they can get past Zevin’s limited (and biased) understanding of source material, which relegates, for example, Zinn’s *People’s History*...to a text only aimed at multicultural education. Similarly, SS21 lists problematic sources for ‘African-American’ topics, including a 1961 text called *Slums and Suburbs* and a 1986 text entitled *Black Children: Their Roots, Culture, and Learning Styles*. The problem here is in the lack of disclaimer or rationale, which could lead to deeper economic, social, racial stereotypes and barriers. Finally, Zevin appears to be openly critical of textbooks and turns this critique into something positive., Zevin mulls discusses
several ways to successfully utilize even the poorest of textbooks. He maintains that one can only do this if taking textbooks to be ‘open to critique’, thereby taking historical inaccuracies or conflicting social assertions and turning them on their head.

**Are We There Yet?**

The intended audience of this text is comprised of future educators, and learning from this text immediately induces a non-productivity that, at times, plagues current education. As a graduate student, majoring in secondary education, I count myself among this intended audience.

For one, by making statements such as that “so far, there is no single view” (p. 296) of curriculum (especially in terms of multicultural education), Zevin pushes the reader directly past a process of critical revisionism (such as the process invoked in Peter McLaren’s *Revolutionary Multiculturalism*), calling for an ignorance of national conservative agendas that push for national standards and high-stakes testing. Similarly, the statement that “most teachers tend not to view the classroom as a place to design and conduct experiments” (p. 318) not only further turns the reader away from insisting that compliance with standardized assessments *is* willingness to be a catalyst for a *nationalist experiment*, but Zevin ignores projects such as a school involvement with the Peace Corps, as reported by Syracuse teacher James Miller in a recent *Social Education* (Miller, 2001).

Perhaps the most undermining aspect of this text, is a “between-the-lines training” of the ‘whining teacher’ syndrome. For example, in discussing the role of textbooks in social education, Zevin asserts that teachers are likely not to be inclined to go beyond the text due to a variety of time demands and constraints on them. What about over 180 days of paid vacation, standardized exams, required coherence to curricula, and a general lack of productivity facilitated by the safety of tenure? Of all professions, teachers have the time! But in making students believe that they have no time and are under constant demand before the even begin to teach, Zevin installs a negative ignorance that will be difficult to remove. Similarly, the comment that, in terms of new media, ‘too much knowledge is being offered...with a speed that may be overwhelming to both the average student and to us teachers’ (p. 335) reifies this inscribed complaining. First there is not enough information. Now there is too much. Does this mean we actually have to work? Does this mean we actually have to think?

Over the course of reading SS21, I found myself feeling like one of those classic *Family Circus* ‘on vacation’ episodes. They always start out with calm parents, eager kids, and in relation to the vacation destination, the inevitable question ‘are we there yet?’ But, they al-
ways end with frazzled parents and fighting kids, each whining (in relation to home) ‘are we there yet?’ It is discouraging to find a textbook, aimed at teaching future teachers, to be so full of hypocrisy, academic reluctance, and of Bove’s ‘end of thinking’. Still, the text is very much an illustration of itself. By reading this text as is, and in doing little thinking, one is left with an incomplete and illogical methodology for teaching social studies. However, by taking a critical eye (moreso, by taking it upon oneself to do this), the learning teacher will engage in a program of active learning, self-reflection, and critical thought. Of course, this does not excuse or rectify the fact that a text such as SS21 can be quite dangerous, problematic, and harmful to the radical project embodied by social studies as a whole.

References

Zevin Responds to “The End of Critical Thinking?”

Jack Zevin  
Queens College, City University of New York

I always appreciate reviews of my books, particularly if these offer ‘constructive criticism’, offering a balance of positive and negative remarks that assist me in improving my ideas and my communication skills for readers. However, in this review, my reaction is that the message is predominantly inaccurate, confusing, contradictory, and hostile.

My book was developed and written over many years with my own and other colleagues’ methods students, and many of the ideas and techniques in the book were honed in the classroom by, with, and for future social studies teachers. To give the book coherence and unity, I have followed what I believe to be a pragmatic philosophy very much in the tradition of Dewey, Bruner, Taba, Gardner and others who have written with a ‘progressive’ bent. The tripartite system espoused in 21st Century, teaching by implementing didactic, reflective, and affective goals (that the reviewer derides by the acronym DRA) in each and every social studies lesson is really a version of reaching the greatly desired goal of having teachers in our field give roughly equal weight to what have been called facts, reasons, and values.

Ask, don’t tell

I try to show readers practical ways of defeating the pressures in our field to cover, cover, cover; test, test, test. The whole point of the book may be summed up as, ‘Ask’, question, don’t operate in the ‘Tell’ mode. To this end I offer three overlapping goal sets, and six instructional strategies of my own invention, based on the work of many educators. These six strategies, data-gathering, comparison & contrast, drama-building, mystery, frame-of-reference, and controversy, refer to different ways of engaging students in social studies materials that will move them forward by enhancing their research and critical thinking skills at increasingly challenging levels of interaction.

Although I consider the strongest part of the book my chapters on instructional method, the reviewer seems to have little to say about this, but does observe, contrary to the overall tone of the writing that, “students have an ample chance to do their own investigation.” This sounds very much like a compliment to me, one that I take very seriously since the overall philosophy and orientation of my text is that future social studies teachers and in-service teachers, CAN and DO make their own decisions.
Throughout the book, I invite participation through questions, activities and a series of ‘boxes’ using quotes from texts, research studies, and historical documents, to spark thinking and decision-making on a wide swath of issues. Certainly, I do NOT, as the reviewer says, treat readers/students as “cultural dopes”. You will nowhere find that phrase or anything like that in my book, and I am deeply insulted by the idea that, in a book inviting the reader/teacher to develop a sense of self-definition and choice, they are treated as too stupid to make up their own minds! This is one of many contradictions in the reviewer’s essay in which she/he also notes that the book is, “thoroughly researched and well-organized.”

The reviewer found it somewhat strange, for example, when I recommend books from the 60’s and 70’s dealing with race relations and ‘Black Power’. In a social studies methods text, shouldn’t readers have a sense of history and be invited to look at some of the novels, texts, and books of the time themselves and get a feel for the arguments and issues then current rather than read summaries of what these were about? Some of these are well worth reading, and might someday be considered classics, or at the least worthy historical documents.

Defensible partiality

In any case, this is a minor matter compared to the overall philosophy of my book which I would describe as integrative, open, and balanced; integrative or holistic because I espouse a position that history and the social sciences, as well as related fields, can be viewed as mutually overlapping sets of ideas which can be sources of borrowing providing there is a productive fit; open because I seek to influence teachers to keep their own minds open, to employ open questions in the classroom, and to be willing to revise their ideas about both content and process based on student feedback, experience, and research; balanced because I believe that a quality lesson, unit, or course should give equal time to providing information (didactic), reflecting about theories, causes and effects, underlying reasons (reflective), and taking positions on a issues or controversies that are important to our social well-being.

In 21st Century, I argue that is not for us, professors or teachers, to tell either each other or our students exactly what values and positions they should believe in, however right to ethical we believe these to be in our hearts. That is simply teaching as polemics, the one right answer syndrome, and denies to others and to students the struggle to decide for themselves, to adopt a position as their own, without coercion or approval from their teacher/professor. The reviewer’s tone and style has just a touch of fascism in it, to my way of thinking, since it accuses 21st Century of avoiding stands and backing away from the ‘right’ positions. Philosophically, I have staked out a method as my
position, a method that allows me ‘defensible partiality’ (an area totally unnoticed by the reviewer) in giving views, which I do freely, but demands that I provide explanations for others to evaluate en route to their own formulations.

The reviewer attacks my philosophy (but I am still not sure about his, are you?) and offers little in its place except to say that, "the false nature of teaching is based on corporate standards and constructed histories". 21st Century’s basic view is that social studies teachers need to reflect on their goals, methods, curriculum, and testing, so as to tie it together in a coherent way that improves student reasoning and judgment. In no way do I either take ‘popular’ corporate’ positions or opt for ‘constructed histories’, nor do I demand that readers buy into justice, goodness, and mercy of a particular brand, although I believe in those values. To me, social studies is all about helping others to make their own choices and take action based on a solid understanding of evidence. I offer choices, provocative questions, and some answers, carefully guarded, which the reader has a responsibility and an invitation to disagree with whenever they like to do so. It would be very depressing to me if anyone slavishly followed my book or another’s without question, since that would defeat its entire purpose and pedagogy.

The reviewer particularly complains that I have not treated certain topics in sufficient detail or coverage, especially adolescence and multiculturalism; and that I manage readers’ understanding by practicing, “dominance through mentioning”, a process in which topics are emphasized or downplayed skewing one’s understanding to suit my purposes. It is amusing to me that a book like mine, dedicated to keeping options open, should be accused of managing the mental maps of readers, as though that is possible in our rather critical and contentious field.

As an example, I think the reviewer often misunderstands or misquotes the text, particularly in the case of multiculturalism. You will see that multicultural topics are spread out throughout the book, not just in one chapter, and reach into world/global and American history as well as into trends in the field, but it is not a book about multicultural topics which have been more ably covered in detail by others such as Banks. Furthermore, the reviewer quotes me as saying that, "changing ethnic population mixes are alone an insufficient justification for adopting a pluralistic conception of society." (p.56) This might not be my most felicitous sentence, but if you will read the whole section, I argue that all of us need to know about each others’ cultures whether or not folks from these groups are present in large numbers or small numbers. In other words, I take the view that pluralism, diversity, multiculturalism, should and must be part of social studies instruction to provide students with a sense of respect for each and
every group and its history, particularly those with whom we are in direct contact in our own neighborhoods, towns, and cities. Consistent with my overall integrative, 'holistic', approach, I don't particularly like to have cultures treated in their own little section of a book separated by hyphenated designations. Rather I would like to see culture, gender, race, and ethnicity viewed as part of American and global society as a whole, looking at the world as an interlocking system. Otherwise, how can we understand how our history and social structure and economy work, and how can we teach these subjects to others?

To sum up, I believe that the reviewer has misunderstood and mangled the basic intent and philosophy of my book, and has distorted rather than critically reviewed its contents and strategies. I offer my response as a correction to the confusion and contradictions of the review, and I invite social studies professionals to read the volume and make their own independent judgments on the text *Social Studies for the 21st Century*. 
IN SOCIAL EDUCATION

Statement of Purpose

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 and understanding of the purposes, conditions, and effects of schooling and education about society and social relations. Manuscripts reporting conceptual or empirical studies of social education are welcomed.

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All material submitted for publication must conform to the style of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (4th ed., 1994). Manuscripts should be typed on 8.5 x 11-inch paper, upper and lower case, double spaced, with 1.5 inch margins on all sides. All manuscripts should be sent with an abstract of 100-150 words. The first text page of the article should have the complete title, but no list of the authors. Subsequent pages should carry only a running head. Subheads should be used at reasonable intervals to break the monotony of lengthy texts. Only words to be set in italics (according to APA style manual) should be underlined. Abbreviations and acronyms should be spelled out at first mention unless found as entries in their abbreviated form in Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition. Pages should be numbered consecutively. Manuscripts should typically run between 15-30 typed pages.

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The Choice is Not Between Tyranny and Terror

E. Wayne Ross
University of Louisville

Rich Gibson
San Diego State University

In the wake of the vile terrorist attacks of September 11, it is important to critically examine our roles as social studies educators. What are we uniquely positioned to offer our students and fellow educators in a time when the choice presented to the public is one between tyranny or terror? The tension between freedom and security as long been part of the dialogue on democracy. How might we respond to the choice given to us in the context of a promised long war on terrorism?

One response—the choice we advocate—is rejecting the dualism of tyranny and terror and instead choosing social justice. In the midst of financial collapse and perpetual war, educators in the US are pivotally positioned to fight for social justice, democracy and equality. This pursuit, once led by the industrial working class, must now be led by educators.

Schools are the centerpieces of US life, replacing the factories of an earlier era. Just as industrial workers won, by direct action on the job and in their communities, key reforms like the right to join unions (e.g., the Wagner Act), child labor laws, social security, and the eight-hour day in the midst of the Great Depression—and through illegal strikes like the mid-war miners’ strike of 1943—school workers should be prepared to take action to protect reason against racism, to stand for rationality against madness, to work for social justice, equality, and democracy to overcome the fascist tendencies on the horizon.

Choosing to work—to teach—for social justice is particularly challenging in times when genuine debate about terrorism, the war in Afghanistan, and US imperialism is equated with disloyalty or even sedition and treason. Since September 11, even mild forms of dissent from the official stance of the US government have been condemned by many in government and out. For example, less than a week after the attacks, White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer warned, “people have to watch what they say and what they do.”
In December 2001, Attorney General John Ashcroft warned those who advocate debate and deliberation on current events or who argue against government policies that roll back civil rights (e.g., the USA PATRIOT Act) this way, “to those who scare peace-loving people with phantoms of lost liberty; my message is this: Your tactics only aid terrorists—for they erode our national unity and diminish our resolve. They give ammunition to America’s enemies, and pause to America’s friends.”

Ashcroft’s comments follow the lead of President George W. Bush who soon after the attacks declared that there is no room for debate or dissent, “either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.”

Beyond the chilling effect of their comments as political leaders, the Bush administration officials have launched an attack on one of the pillars of a democratic society, the free flow of information. Under the guise of protecting national security, President Bush issued an executive order prohibiting the release of presidential records; and Attorney General Ashcroft has ordered federal agencies to limit Freedom of Information requests. All the while, corporate news outlets willing perform their role as conduits for government propaganda, offering little or no critical analysis of governmental actions that restrict information or reduce civil rights.

A key measure of the health of democracy and education in the US is the extent of genuine debate in classrooms and on campuses about tyranny, terrorism, and social justice. Teachers for democracy must now work in a climate where debate has been stifled and many teachers are under attack for advocating critical thought and reflection (see the American Council of Trustees and Alumni pamphlet “Defending Civilization,” http://www.goacta.org).

Educating students to be effective citizens in a democracy requires that they have an opportunity to question, understand, and test the reality of the social world and to work towards change, seek justice, and create carrying communities. We must teach democratic citizenship in ways that promote explorations of the social, economic, and political conditions in which we all live. People, who in the name of “security,” stifle debate, attack academic freedom, or restrict civil rights and the free flow of information in our society are enemies of democracy and freedom. And the choice they offer between tyranny and terror is a false one.

People are already fighting back. Well before September 11, school workers, students and parents in Detroit, Oakland, Los Angeles, New York and Ontario were boycotting tests, leading wildcat strikes against both their union and government bosses, identifying their common interests: “Books! Supplies! Lower Class Size!” in Detroit; “Schools Not Jails” in Oakland; “Schools Should Teach About Fascism, But Not By Example” in New York.
The ideas that give life to this movement must be underpinned by an understanding of the system of capital, the war of all on all, the system that thrives on greed and fear. Social studies educators are uniquely positioned for this work. In the course of this struggle, we must create caring communities where people can unleash their creative capacities, so we can build a new society in the heart of the old. The real choice is justice or barbarism.

There are good resources available, many on the internet, to support work for social justice. We recommend two.

The University of Louisville Committee for Peace and Justice has completed work on a collection of alternative news sources, information, and teaching resources on events since September 11. It’s called "What’s Going On—and Why?" You can find the compilation on the web at: http://complicity.english.louisville.edu/peace. The resources are organized around a variety of topics including: general news resources; media literacy/civil liberties; US foreign policy, economic and political violence; women’s rights; and racism, tolerance, diversity. The web site has a link to a print-ready packet containing a selection resources from the web site.

The Rouge Forum’s “No Blood For Oil” web site contains a long list of links to references on the oil war, which examine the historical and contemporary contexts of the current war. In addition, there are a number of links to articles written by educators about war, terrorism, and tyranny in relation to teaching, learning, and living democracy.