

Spring 1990

## Theory and research in social education 18/02

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# **THEORY AND RESEARCH** *in Social Education*

**Vol. XVIII**

**No. 2**

**Spring 1990**

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College and University Faculty Assembly

Associate Editor: Donald Johnson  
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## **Theory and Research in Social Education**

**Editor: Millard Clements**  
**Associate Editor: Donald Johnson**  
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March, 1990

## A Note From The Editor

Gregory Bateson was an unusual figure in western social science: he never even held what one might call a “regular” academic position in a university. His research was supported by grants from private foundations and government agencies. Although he lived from grant to grant, it would appear that he was at least unencumbered by the vicissitudes of committee responsibilities and university politics. More than many other researchers, his life was his work. He was multidisciplinary: he studied traditional people of New Guinea and Bali; he used an anthropological approach to the study of schizophrenics in a veterans’ hospital. He observed monkeys, otters, and dolphins. He was interested in cybernetics, learning, evolution, art, and literature. He believed that poetry, philosophy, and art provide important perspectives on scientific thought about the natural world. Bateson’s science was much more concerned with aesthetics than with a self-conscious effort to manipulate people in therapy, education, or public policy.

If you are not particularly familiar with Gregory Bateson’s work, you may still know that he is responsible for the “double-bind” hypothesis of schizophrenia; that he was once married to the anthropologist Margaret Mead; that he was the author of *Steps To An Ecology of Mind* (1972); and that he was appointed to the Board of Regents of the University of California by then Governor Jerry Brown. You may not know that he was born in England and grew up in a family in which science, scientific work, and scientists were features of everyday life. His father, William Bateson, coined the word “genetics” and was responsible for bringing Gregor Mendel to the attention of the English-speaking world. The explication and development of Mendel’s theories was a major scientific achievement of William Bateson. Gregory Bateson was named after Gregor Mendel; an apt name considering the centrality of evolutionary theory to Bateson’s thought.

*Steps To An Ecology of Mind* made Bateson what might be called a cult figure. Students flocked to his lectures, but he seemed oftentimes unsure about why they were there. “Touchy-feely” students appeared to cherish what he had to say, even if they may not have understood the argument in which he was engaged. This argument, the work in which he was engaged, may best be thought of as a contribution to an extended conversation with Darwin, William Blake, Samuel Butler, R. G. Collingwood, Lamarck, and William Bateson. Blake, Butler, and Lamarck were people whose work commanded his attention; much more so than did the work of his contemporaries. He was interested in what he saw as the great questions of science, of which he saw little discussion among therapists, educators, and social scientists.

In *Mind and Nature* (Bateson, 1979) he formulated one such great question this way:

What is the pattern that connects all living creatures? (p. 9)

He went on to ask, How are you related to a crab or a lobster? What patterns connect you to it? All living things exist in some ecological system that involves communication, change, and adaptation. How do families, schools, or societies work? How may they be studied? What are substantive and what are trivial approaches to explanation? It was with questions such as these that Bateson was engaged throughout his life.

In his last years he was a distinguished, even famous, public figure. He admonished the Board of Regents of the University of California on their responsibility for concern with excellence in education. He participated in conferences with therapists, communications theorists, and philosophers. In 1978 a malignant tumor was discovered in his lung; too large to remove. He declined radiotherapy treatment and devoted his energy to completing his last book *Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity* (Bateson, 1979). Shortly after finishing it, he moved to the Esalen Institute at Big Sur, California, where he remained until his medical condition became more acute. He died in a Zen Center in San Francisco on July 4th, 1980. He was 76 years old.

I participated in a seminar with Gregory Bateson at Stanford University in the early 1960s. That experience changed my entire professional life. In the course of the seminar I read *Naven* (Bateson, 1958), *Communication: The Social Matrix of Society* (Jurgen-Ruesch & Bateson, 1968), and many of the essays now to be found in *Steps To An Ecology of Mind* (Bateson, 1972). During this time, I began to think about three things: 1) the historical background of contemporary science; 2) the hazards of reification in social analysis; and 3) the importance of assumptions or presuppositions in scientific thought. I read Collingwood and William Blake. I reexplored authors I had read before. I found a richness, a complexity, and a concern for clarity in Bateson's writing and seminar discussions that had never before been available to me.

I began an adventure that took me out of the mainstream of educational thought as it was to be found at Stanford at that time. I discovered that the ritual of the analysis of variance is as fascinating as a rain dance; that arguments about behavioral objectives or performance-based education were as exciting as origin myths. I experienced professional education as a costume party, and if I still wear a mask now and then, it is sometimes difficult to keep it on straight.

Reading Bateson can be both an adventure of the mind and a hazard to your health. It may be a voyage from which there is no return. The sweet comfort of improving education or engaging in the science of education may dissipate in the discovery that professional expertise may only be one of the mores of our tribe; our science may only be our particular ritual chant. Rather than thinking of science as some sort of applied intrusion into the lives of children or teachers, Bateson argued that any school, traditional cultural



group, rose, or lobster may, upon careful examination, illuminate life, nature, and the processes of change which all life-forms undergo. Efforts to improve education that are not in such a science of nature may be expected to contribute to our problems, rather than to illuminate possible solutions.

What does Bateson have to offer us? He certainly provides no finished system of thought. He offers only “steps toward . . .” a way of thinking about the natural world. Although Bateson did anthropological work, wrote about communication theory, and studied communication in various animal groups, he was always engaged in the same study: he experimented in thinking about data. In his words, he was involved in the effort to “learn something about the nature of explanation, to make clear the process of knowing” about the natural world (Bateson, 1958, p. 290). This effort is explicit in *Naven* (1958), the first book he published, and in the last of his published books, *Mind and Nature* (1979).

For many of us in education, research involves a ceremonial genuflection to theory, statistical manipulations, and some management objectives such as reading skills or social studies achievement. Even ethnography and anthropology may be adapted to serve this end. For Bateson, the purpose of science is the increase of fundamental knowledge. In his sense of the word, there is little science of education today. Applied studies are usually based on what Bateson called appraisals of “forces and impacts.” That sort of analysis is appropriate to billiard balls and bombs, but sadly inappropriate for studies of the living world, including human life. What Bateson called science is almost never done in education. It is alien to the sensibility of most educators.

If we are to explore what Bateson may have to offer as a way to think about educational matters, we must begin with his conceptions of living systems. These may appear to be arcane and irrelevant to the concerns of educators, but they have direct implications for what we might do to discover how schools work.

In order to think about the living world of roses, lobsters, and schools, we must distinguish between the non-living (abiotic) world of rocks, water, light, air, and stars; and the living (biotic) world of people, plants, and animals. In the abiotic world we may talk about the cause of an event as a force or impact that is exerted on one component by another. The abiotic world is a system of forces and impacts. The biotic world is entirely different. It is a system of communication and sense organs that responds to differences or change; it is made up of relationships. A science of the biotic world must be explicitly concerned with what Bateson calls codification of information, context, and meaning; all qualities of relationships. Words, body language, and gesture have no meaning without context. Components of the abiotic world can exist independently of one another. The biotic world is interdependent, composed of relationships. It is in the study of these relationships and their qualities of information exchange that Bateson found his life's work.

Gregory Bateson's view of science contrasts sharply with that of many behavioral scientists today. The behaviorist view of the ultimate purpose of science is that science is an inductive procedure. Induction involves attending to what may be observed in schools, devising constructs or concepts that may explain or predict what can be observed, and then engaging in empirical investigation of hypothetical propositions about matters that may be observed. This appears to be a plausible approach, and it is a customary approach to research, but Bateson rejects it completely.

He argues that the business of science is to map data onto fundamentals. This means to appraise data in light of some fundamental conceptions of the biotic world, the abiotic world, and the interactions between the two. This is *not* an inductive approach. This approach involves an explicit identification of presuppositions about both the living world and science. He argues that to do science without a consideration of fundamental principles is simply trivial; his major criticism of inductive science is that it is based on unidentified and unconsidered presuppositions about the living world.

What then are fundamental ideas? One of Bateson's examples involved surveying. In this case there are two bodies of knowledge: empirical measurements and Euclidean geometry. If these two cannot be made to "fit" together, then either the data are wrong, the argument is incorrect, or a major discovery has been made. If we think about how schools work in this light, there are two bodies of possible knowledge: observations of school life and fundamental principles of the biotic world. We do not have a Euclid to provide us with formal principles of school life, but Bateson suggested a number of principles that may be candidates for consideration. One way to appraise the validity of such principles is by working with them. In any case, the deliberate effort to think about what may be fundamental is at least a departure from what may be merely culturally naive studies of behavior management.

### **Principles That Relate To the Pattern of The Biotic World of Plants, Animals, People, and Schools**

1. The world of plant, animal, and human life is interactive and evolutionary; it involves change and adaptation.
2. Human communication as it takes place in schools and elsewhere involves words, gestures, body language, intonation, and other physical mannerisms.
3. Human communication always involves paradox: one function of body language and intonation is to reduce paradox.
4. Paradox arises from errors of logical typing; a) there is discontinuity between a class and its members; b) a class may not be a member of itself; c) a class (say of nonchairs) cannot be classified as a member of the class (say of chairs). The class of chairs is not a chair. The class of nonchairs is not a chair.

5. Double-bind aspects of communication (i.e., contradictory messages of importance which involve words, gestures, intonation or other signals in an environment from which the recipient cannot escape. An example would be the parental admonition “Keep away from other girls; they are backstabbers” in tandem with the admonition of the other parent to “Keep away from boys; they are only after one thing.”). Such communication may be the source of many troubles in communication in families, schools, or other social contexts.

6. There are levels of learning: there is learning, learning to learn, and learning to learn to learn. Each level of learning may be important to therapists and educators.

7. The unit of analysis in the living world is a context in which interaction, change, and adaptation takes place.

### **Principles That Relate to Explanation of the Biotic World of Plants, Animals, and Humans**

1. There are different ways to know about social life. These different ways to know are to some degree mutually corrective.

2. The language of explanation should not reify, should not attribute causation or empirical reality to abstract concepts invented by scientists.

3. Without context, words and actions have no meaning. The explication of context is a central task of scientific scholarship.

4. Attention to logical types in scientific discourse and everyday conversation in schools is a necessary aspect of scholarship.

5. Living processes (say school life) do not lend themselves to unambiguous descriptions. It is difficult to say, for example, exactly how schools work or what they should be.

6. No system of school life may be regarded as permanent.

7. Scientific analysis of social life may not use linear notions of causality or syllogistic logic.

8. Scientific arguments involves the use of explicit presuppositions about both the character of the living world and the method of inquiry that is followed.

9. Scientific analysis of social matters must change from a “forces and impacts” conception to an informational analysis of the interdependent relationships, non-uniform in character, which typify the biotic world.

These principles are by no means complete; items could be added, dropped, or changed. They represent my attempt to make theory about education on the assumption that Bateson’s conception of the living world is correct. What are schools? How do they work? If we use Bateson’s principles of explanation as our “methodological basis,” what would we do?

To begin with, if we would explore Bateson’s perspective, we would experiment in thinking about *data*. We would seek to invent theoretical accounts of school life that would be interesting, that would generate new and

different questions about the meaning and character of school life. If we think about the schools with which we are all familiar, if we think about students and teachers, about tests and books, about classrooms, and about notions of achievement and failure, we can then formulate some fundamental conceptions of schooling. An example is this description by Sowards and Scoby:

. . . the elementary school is primarily responsible for developing certain common learnings in our child population; the learnings sought and the educational experience provided in the elementary school are for all children. (1961)

This conception is reasonable; it affirms the common sense of our culture. It is the basis upon which applied research in education for many years has been conducted.

An experiment in thinking about school might begin with the question: Is there another way to think about these matters? For example, Where is learning? Or, where does learning take place? The common-sense answer to this question is that students learn. Some students seem to learn a lot. Some seem to learn much less. In any case, the locus of learning is individual children. To use one type of educational discourse, the business of education is to change behavior of individual learners in some desirable direction.

Now let us try to think about this question of the location of learning in a different way. According to Bateson, the world of plant, animals, and human life is interactive and evolutionary. In addition, learning, learning to learn, and learning to learn to learn all involve change and adaptation. If this is true, where is learning located? Learning is not "in" the students. Learning is not "in" the environment. Learning is immanent in both the students and the environment. *Learning is a characteristic of a social system.* What does this imply for the ordinary way we think about and know schools?

If learning is not "in" the students, then we cannot explain why some kids do well in school and why others do poorly simply by identifying student characteristics, e.g., a socio-economic class, race, gender, or even intellectual capacity. If learning is not "in" the environment, then one cannot explain school life by identifying characteristics of teachers, schools, or school materials because this would imply a one-way determination; something not found in the biotic world. In social systems there is always information exchange and adaptation. If we are to explore learning as immanent in a social system we will have to be concerned with information exchanges.

Some students, we say, do well in school and some, we say, do poorly. This is a system characteristic, although the normative judgment about success and failure is not analytically helpful. All students in school learn, learn to learn, and learn to learn to learn. School failure is a learning achievement just as school success is a learning achievement in a social situation. Both school success and school failure are appropriate learnings maintained by

persistent information exchanges and interactions (adaptations) in school life. A problem of science is to discover something of how such systems work.

Bateson's double-bind hypothesis provides one possible way to think about how success and failure are achieved in school environments. His hypothesis suggests:

1. *There are Authorities and Students.* Some students, let us say, are to fail—to be victims. How is this to be done?

2. *There are Repeated Experiences.* Let us assume that a system characteristic of the “double-bind” is a recurrent theme of the educational experience of the proposed victims.

3. *There is a Primary Negative Injunction.* This may have one of two forms: a) Do not be late, messy, restless, or talkative—you will be punished for disobeying; and b) If you do not get your work in on time, do your homework, or finish your assignment, you will be punished. Punishment may be emotional disapproval, or any of the array of standard school punishments, e.g., bad grades, detention, segregation, or humiliation.

4. *There is a Secondary Negative Injunction.* This injunction conflicts with the Primary Injunction at a more abstract level. It too is enforced by punishments that threaten school survival. This Secondary Injunction is usually communicated by body language, intonation, gesture, or other nonverbal means. It may impinge upon any element of primary prohibition. The secondary injunction may “say”: a) Do not see this (bad grade, restriction, humiliation) as punishment; b) Do not see the school, teacher, or principal as the punishing agent; and/or c) Do not question the teacher's, principal's, or school's concern or regard. Of course, these messages may be in conflict.

5. *There is a Tertiary Negative Injunction.* This injunction prohibits students from escaping the school environment. The force of law prevails.

6. *There are Victims Who Punish Themselves.* Once students perceive their school environment in double-bind terms, any part of a double-bind sequence may provoke panic, rage, failure.

This double-bind hypothesis may provide a way to think about school life that goes beyond the customs and mores of the tribe of dedicated participants in the professional culture of education.

The hypothesis suggests that dealing with a school environment in “sane” or “productive” ways involves developing explicit awareness of the different levels of meaning of the various messages that impinge upon students. Double-bind situations may lead to extraordinary creativity, profound insight, or a learning to learn adaptation that is often called failure. Failure may be expected to occur:

1. When students are involved in intense relationships in which the determination of the content of messages and their relative importance is difficult to discern;

2. When students are caught in a situation in which authorities in the relationship are expressing two orders of messages, one of which denies the other; and

3. When students are unable to comment on the message being expressed or to correct their discrimination of what order of message to respond to. Students will tend to “fail” when they cannot make metacommunicative determinations.

This theory of failure locates learning in an interactive ecological context. It calls attention to ostensible communication and metacommunication. It avoids the reification of such concepts as social class. It provides a theoretical perspective that may be explored empirically.

This is one example of an experiment in thinking about how schools work. It has implications for empirical studies. Can this conception of communication be used to describe information exchanges in schools? It has implications for theories of change. What may lead to change in a system of communication that involves circular or more complex chains of causation?

Whatever the merits of Bateson’s work as a positive contribution to the development of theory in education, his life work, as represented in his published works, demonstrates the importance of:

1. Fundamental presuppositions about the living world;
2. Careful argument, which involves avoiding reification and attending to the levels of abstraction that characterize messages of both science and everyday life;
3. Experimenting in thinking about data. Without an adequate theory of school life we are likely to follow the fads and fashions of the moment regarding the improvement of schools;
4. Understanding the pattern that connects aesthetic and scientific achievement; and
5. Connecting theoretical work with the intellectual heritage to which we are privy. To ground one’s work in a limited array of inductive concepts, to cite a small number of fashionable contemporaries, is simply to be trivial.

I would like to close with a few lines of Wordsworth which Gregory Bateson often quoted. We must not, as we think of schools, ideas, and science, be like Peter Bly of whom the poet sang:

A primrose by the river brim  
A yellow primrose was to him;  
And it was nothing more.

Milliard Clements  
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## **Teacher Conceptions of History Revisited: Ideology, Curriculum, and Student Belief**

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### *Abstract*

*The central purpose of this exploratory investigation is to describe and analyze the teaching of history in five classrooms, each representing one of five typologies developed earlier, the storyteller, scientific historian, relativist/reformer, cosmic philosopher, and eclectic (Evans, 1989b). The study focuses on the effects of each teacher's conceptions of history on the transmitted curriculum and on student beliefs. Data collection included interviews with teachers, in-depth observation, and interviews with students. Results suggest that the impact of teacher conceptions vary considerably, that the teaching of history has little impact on student belief in four of the classrooms, and a profound impact in one, and that approaches to the teaching of history are linked, implicitly, to competing ideological orientations.*

### **Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

The recent report of the National Commission on Social Studies in the School calls for replacement of current social studies offerings with history and geography (1989). This call for a return to the curricular paradigm of an earlier era gives the revival of history greater viability nationally, and must be seen within the context of the educational reform movements of the recent past, as part of an era of retrenchment in schools and society. The Commission's report contributes to the national trend toward making history the keystone of civic education and makes more attention to history in schools a strong likelihood. Thus, research and critical reflection on approaches to the teaching of history become more important than ever.

Among social studies educators, the Commission's report has been greeted with considerable hostility. This may be due to the fact that the report does little to promote the goal of reflective teaching and the reflective testing of belief, an aim which many social studies theorists have long held as the *raison*

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*d'être* of social studies instruction. Although I share the concerns of my colleagues about the revival of history (Evans, 1989a), at this juncture in curriculum history it may be most advantageous for us to ask, What approaches to teaching history are most likely to promote sustained critical reflection in students?

The commission's report, when viewed in historical perspective, may not seem as disastrous as we are inclined to think. Despite periodic outbreaks of concern over the teaching of history in our schools, teachers tend to go about their tasks in routinized ways that have changed very little over the years. The teachers discussed in this exploratory research paper teach, for the most part, in the same ways that teachers have always taught (Cuban, 1984). Yet each teacher offers something slightly different, a nuance, an angle of vision, a philosophy, an ideology, or a technique different from the ways other teachers have taught. Do certain approaches to teaching history promote the reflective testing of belief more than other approaches? What effects do various approaches to teaching history have on student beliefs? The central purpose of this paper is to explore the impact of each of these teacher's way of seeing history on his or her teaching, and to explore the effects of his or her teaching on student beliefs, beliefs about history and beliefs about society.

It is worth noting that this investigation is part of an emerging body of research on teacher thinking, teacher knowledge, and teacher perspectives and its impact on school curricula, some of it focused on the teaching of history or social studies (Elbaz, 1983; Goodman & Adler, 1985; Shulman, 1986; Wilson & Wineburg, 1987, 1988). Teacher perspectives are important because they guide the curricular decisions of teachers within the larger context of schooling. In his recent review of research on teacher perspectives, Stephen J. Thornton suggested that, "Within a societal and institutional context, teachers serve as curricular-instructional gatekeepers. Their beliefs about curriculum, how they plan, and how they teach, in large measure, determine both the subject matter and experiences to which students have access . . ." (1989). How teachers conceptualize history, how their conceptualizations are transformed into classroom activity, and how those activities affect students, therefore, should be a central concern for social studies researchers.

Two characteristics distinguish this particular study from much of the existing research. First, much of the data, and many of the insights reported, are based on interviews with students, a data source too often neglected. Students spend more time observing teachers than anyone else and deserve more attention from researchers because they can provide a rich source of information on class activities and invaluable insight into the effects on students. Second, the emerging focus on ideology, exploring the links between a teacher's ideological orientation and what occurs in his or her classroom, is an element that has also been neglected in much of the research on teaching, and which sorely needs further exploration.

Approaches to teaching develop within a value-laden context and are inherently ideological. (Ideology is defined as manner or content of thinking on matters social and political.) Whether conscious or not, teacher perspectives and practice represent curriculum theories played out in classrooms. By their nature, curriculum theory and practice are negotiated, compromised, contingent, and flawed; they are socially constructed. While discourse in the field is fragmented, contradictory and incomplete, often responding to professional and political forces beyond our control, debates on schooling represent discussion over visions of a preferred future, conversation on what kind of society and schools we want (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 143). Therefore, discourse among curriculum theorists and practice in particular classrooms are inherently ideological and correspond to competing conceptions of purpose, competing commitments, and competing visions of a good society.

Conflicting conceptions of purpose and differing ideological orientations seem to be played out most poignantly in history and social studies classrooms. My previous exploratory research on conceptions of history suggests that: teacher conceptions of history vary; student conceptions are poorly formed; teacher conceptions help to shape the transmitted curriculum or that which is observable in classrooms; and student conceptions may be influenced by their teacher's conceptions (Evans, 1988). Phase one of the present study found that teacher conceptions of history tend to fall into one of five typologies: the storyteller; the scientific historian; the relativist/reformer; the cosmic philosopher; and the eclectic (Evans, 1989b), findings somewhat similar to the results of a research project on teacher perspectives in elementary social studies (Goodman & Adler, 1985). The earlier phase of the present study also found that teacher conceptions of history seem related to teacher ideology and pedagogical orientation (Evans, 1989b).

This paper is a continuation of that earlier study of teacher conceptions of history, and draws on selected portions of the same set of data while exploring the possible impact of a teacher's conception of history in five representative classrooms, each representing one of the five typologies generated in the earlier phase of the study. Questions guiding the research and data analysis include the following concerns: How do teacher conceptions of history affect the transmitted curriculum (that which is observable in classrooms)? In what ways might teacher conceptions of history as played out in classrooms influence student beliefs about history and student beliefs about society? Are the teaching of history and political ideology linked? If so, how?

Although the breadth and depth of the data collected may prohibit generalizable conclusions, it should be sufficient to generate grounded theory on the impact of these teachers' conceptions about history, their pedagogical and ideological orientations in the particular classrooms studied. Because it is exploratory, this study will provide few generalizable answers. Instead, it will provide grounded insights into what is happening in particular

classrooms with particular teachers and their students. From these classrooms we can all learn.

## **Method**

This investigation draws on qualitative data from three primary sources: interviews with teachers; observation of classrooms; and interviews with students. The study is focused on five teachers, each representing one of the typologies developed earlier. Selection of the five representative teachers was based on fit with the typology; in each case, the teacher most representative of each typology was selected from the original sample of 30 teacher interviews. Six student informants were selected from each site at random, two students from the upper third, two from the middle third, and two from the lower third of the class roll based on the previous semester's grades. This selection of student informants was made in an attempt to get a somewhat representative sample.

Data collection included follow-up interviews with each teacher, in-depth observation of at least eight classes at each site, and interviews with student informants. Classroom observations focused on holistic collection of relevant data on the transmitted curriculum including transcripts of class discussions and documentary evidence. Student interviews, each lasting approximately 20–30 minutes, were conducted after classroom observations and follow-up interviews with teachers were completed. Each student interviewed spent at least six to seven months in their teacher's class. Student interviews probed student knowledge of their teachers' teaching style, student attitudes, student conceptions of the purposes for studying history, student knowledge of their teacher's political beliefs, and student beliefs. For example, interview questions on student knowledge of the curriculum included: "Tell me a little about your history class. Describe what you do." Follow-up and probing questions were based on initial informant response, and, in some cases, on category probes. For the example above, category probes included, "Tell me about your assignments," and "Tell me about some of your class activities."

Data were analyzed by qualitative analysis of interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and transcripts of class sessions. Data were coded according to pre-planned categories of informants and organized by their relevance to the original research questions. Student data are presented in charts, remaining as faithful to interview transcripts as possible. Patterns and themes which emerged were then developed in an effort to create a portrait of each of the five classrooms studied.

## **Results**

### **Portraits of Practice**

Each of the five teachers studied had a different approach to the teaching of history. Although their conceptions of history overlapped considerably,

each had a dominant tendency. The five teachers described in this article are each representative of one of the five typologies developed earlier (Evans, 1989b). These include the storyteller, scientific historian, relativist/reformer, cosmic philosopher, and eclectic.

Data on these teachers' classroom practice from observations, interviews, and talks with students, generally supported the notion that the teaching of history is influenced by teacher conceptions of history. However, the impact is more pronounced and more readily observable in some classrooms than in others. In two cases, the storyteller and the scientific historian, teacher descriptions of what they do in class were very similar to what I observed and to what their students reported. In each of the other cases, the connections among what teachers *said* they did in their classrooms, what I observed, and what students told me, seemed more distant. As I spent time in their classrooms I discovered that two of the five teachers spent a good deal of their time and energy managing student behavior problems. Thus, my initial impression was one of disappointment. I had not found exemplary practitioners of each typology.

Both the storyteller and scientific historian did just what they said they did in class. Their interview descriptions of their teaching and the teaching that I observed, and that their students reported, were consistent. The relativist/reformer's conception of history and description of his teaching were reflected in his classroom, but to a lesser degree, due perhaps to poor execution and (some severe) discipline problems. The cosmic philosopher's teaching was more or less consistent with his conception of history and his description of his teaching style, but he was "burned out" and moonlighting as an evening bartender at a local sports bar. The eclectic's teaching reflects some elements of his eclectic philosophy, though his teaching was much less varied than he had reported in his interview with me.

Student comments on what they do in classes and on their teacher's style confirm my observations. Students of both the reformer and the eclectic had fewer clues about the purposes for studying history, and history classes seemingly had little or no effect on their beliefs about history or about society. Students of the cosmic teacher had somewhat better developed conceptions of history. This led me to the belief that teachers enjoy telling researchers, especially university professors, about the lessons they are most proud of, and often present a portrait of their teaching that is much more varied and more exciting than the day to day routine.

On the other hand, students of the storyteller had a much clearer conception of history, while students of the scientific historian had the clearest notions about history and reported that their history course had an important impact on their thinking about history and on their beliefs about society. Of course, there were some complicating factors. The classes taught by these teachers were tracked. It is possible that this factor mediated teacher curriculum decision-making, limiting what some teachers could do, or thought

they could do. The scientific historian taught an Advanced Placement group, one of the storyteller's classes was an elective, the cosmic philosopher had above average classes, and both the relativist/reformer and the eclectic taught "vocational" students. Accordingly, the teaching techniques employed seemed contingent on the group as well as the teacher. These differing clienteles may have had a profound impact on the degree to which each teacher's conception of history influenced his or her teaching, though the scientific historian, who had the A.P. group, also taught a variety of other levels, and seemed to consistently draw on the conception of history which he described in his interview.

### **The Storyteller**

As described in my earlier paper, storytellers teach history by telling stories about the past (Evans, 1989b). Their classrooms are typically teacher-centered, teacher talk is dominant, and storytelling is the common mode. Susan<sup>2</sup>, the storyteller I will focus on in this section, fit this typology quite well, as illustrated by the following quotes:

History is an escape. It's fun. It's like a gigantic soap opera. I talk about events and the kids love it because it's a story, and that's what history is. . . . What it's for is to better understand ourselves.

I basically talk to the kids. I'm not good at groupwork, a lot of confusion and a lot of noise just won't work. But, what I generally do is lecture a lot and I tell a lot of stories, because I do think history is fun and I read a lot and know a lot of things. If you can give them a little personal sense that makes something come alive for them, tell the story and turn it into a movie, and turn it from black and white into technicolor.

Susan's teaching reflects this description very closely. Every lesson we observed followed a similar format. She stood at the lectern, opened the textbook to the appropriate section, and lectured, peppering her lecture with interesting stories, in "technicolor." She occasionally asked questions, mostly of a factual nature. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of her stories was their graphic nature. These were not boring stories, but juicy descriptions of characters in history, stories spiced with sex and violence, peppered with colorful adjectives and lively, present-day slang. For example, a U.S. history lesson on relations with Mexico began with the following story about Napoleon III, Maximillian, and Carlotta, his wife:

In France, there was a dictator who named himself president and then Emperor by the name of Napoleon III. A politician, this guy could charm a little old lady out of her shopping bag. He was a charmer with the ladies. . . . Probably today he would be a very popular politician no matter where. . . . After Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo in 1815, French pride and national spirit kind of hit the skids and so when he came along

and said, "I will make you great again," they said terrific, let's go for it . . . He was real smooth and he got into power.

Then, after describing the appointment of Maximilian as emperor of Mexico:

So now we have a situation where Napoleon decided he didn't want to spend any more money over there. He said, Max, you better come home. Max said no and he stayed. And what did the Mexicans do? Shot him full of holes. They took him prisoner and executed him in front of a firing squad. I'll tell you a little story. The description in your book says that Carlotta, his wife, went crazy and lived until 1927. She lived in an asylum. She never knew her husband was dead. He had sent her away when things got real tricky. He sent her to Europe to raise some money and get some help. . . . She went to see the Pope because they were Catholic, and at that point she was thinking everybody was trying to poison her. She wouldn't eat anything. She was losing weight like crazy. She was running around telling everybody about how poor Max was going to get killed in his own house. She went in to see the Pope and was crying all over his shoulder and he was trying to calm her down. Come nightfall when everyone is supposed to be out of the Vatican, she wouldn't leave. She was in the Pope's private conference room and she wouldn't leave. You couldn't stay overnight in the Pope's private residence so what they did is they fed her some hot chocolate and the Pope drank it first to prove to her that it wasn't poison and then they gave her a cup of chocolate and slipped a mickey in it and hauled her out, bodily, out of the Vatican. She lost it and didn't know what was going on. Never knew her husband was executed. It was all stress and being in Mexico and being constantly afraid that they were going to get attacked by Mexicans and so forth and the fact that there was a mental instability in the family. Her father ran around in high heels and lipstick, so it kind of ran in the genes, so to speak.

Stories during other lessons talk of "carousing" officials who had mistresses and illegitimate children, businessmen who "played on the side," and sailors who were "slimeballs, real skuzzbuckets," who "went berserk" when out of the sight of land.

Susan's students seem to enjoy her class and confirm the above description of her teaching. As one student said:

She'd be wonderful as a tabloid editor. As I said earlier, she has a story for everyone and everything. She'll never keep any stories from us. She'll share them with us all and most people seem to remember them. It's a fun way to learn because everyone is laughing and chuckling about what this guy did and what that guy did. Little do we know we are learning U.S. History in the process.

As illustrated in Appendix 1, students all mentioned her stories and said “we take a lot of notes.” One did suggest that “it gets kind of monotonous because every day you go in and take notes.” But even that student said, “she teaches it well.” Students also mentioned “reading the chapter” and “doing the section reviews in it,” homework on map skills, book reports, filmstrips, and movies. Sometimes her questions pose problems for students to think about, as one student said, “Pretty much what we do is we’ll take notes and she’ll try to get answers out of us and have us predict the history by facing us with the problems at hand and say, ‘if you were this person, what would you do?’”

But, in general her students seemed pleased with her teaching style. As one student said, “She is fairly organized and full of information. But again, she doesn’t just blurt out information, she makes it interesting.”

*Student Conceptions and Student Belief.* When queried on the purposes for studying history, Susan’s students generally echoed her emphasis on knowledge. Four of the six students interviewed mentioned “knowledge” or learning about “ancestors,” and several discussed both. For example, one student said: “Just to increase your knowledge, basically, so you can have an idea of what has happened so we won’t make the same mistakes that the earlier people had.” Another student said, “to learn about ancient people and how they evolved and how we do things.” One student suggested that we study history to “learn from our mistakes,” another, “so we can understand what is going on today.” Finally, another student said, “It’s fun!” When asked, “What makes it fun?” the student responded:

Mrs. —. She knows so much about everything. She has a cute little story for every event in history and for every person. She always has the latest gossip on the affair that they have had with so and so and how that is reflected in this battle and this one which was really caused by all these different funny things. It is easy to remember things in history just because of the funny little stories she tells us.

All six students interviewed reported a positive attitude toward studying history, and made comments like the following: “I enjoy it. It is hard but I think it helps and it doesn’t hurt to know about the past.” It’s fun because of the way she teaches it.” “I like it. I do a lot of reading outside on my own.”

Most of Susan’s students could identify her conception of history, stating that she would probably say that history is for “knowledge,” or to “learn how people lived.” Two students said that history can help us “understand the world,” or help us “fix the future.”

Most could not identify her conservative political leanings. (Each teacher was asked to describe his or her political beliefs in the survey conducted during phase one of the project.) Most said, “I don’t know,” or “she really doesn’t express any favoritism.” Further, most reported that their history course with Susan had not changed their beliefs. But one very perceptive student said, “I would say she is a conservative. She is a liberal teacher, but

as far as politics are concerned I would say she is conservative. She can always understand the big business point of view, and a lot of my other teachers can't." When asked whether her beliefs had changed as a result of being in Susan's class, the same student said, "Yeah, they have. I am a solid Republican conservative, business oriented, and we did a lot of work with the third parties and talked about what might bring them back and all that, and it got me thinking. I'm still Republican but I think about those things."

So, Susan's style of storytelling is enjoyable to students, but may be having little impact on student beliefs other than giving them an image of history as story with the concomitant focus on knowing for the sake of knowing. Ultimately, Susan's teaching may be functioning to acculturate students by giving them an appreciation for their ancestors. Graphic and entertaining stories transmit an interest in the past on a human level and a belief that history is fun. Unfortunately, because of the basic conflicts it leaves out, and because of its didactic style, this kind of history teaching may tend to foster non-critical acceptance of the powers that be.

### **Scientific Historian**

The scientific historians typically suggest that historical explanation and interpretation make history most interesting and argue that understanding historical processes and gaining background knowledge for understanding current issues are the key reasons for studying history. They also find it most important for students to gain insight into historical generalization and the process skills of historical inquiry, and usually play the role of impartial questioner, facilitating student insight into historical problems while maintaining an attitude of detachment. Rusty, the scientific historian selected for this report, exemplifies most of these characteristics, as shown in the following quotes:

Right from the beginning in any level course I teach, I make it real clear that . . . that there are the facts, and that your interpretation of them is yours and . . . and theirs is as valid as mine at any level and I encourage them to, you know, challenge and confront the book and to confront me and to put things in their own order, and often at the beginning of the year I'll ask some question which is interpretive and then read two totally different answers and try to get them to understand that both answers are valid as long as they're supported, as long as they're based on evidence.

In my years of teaching I've only had a couple of kids who were real aware of my political persuasion . . . I usually make it to the end of the year and they don't know whether I'm a Democrat or a Republican . . . We work hard on understanding that everybody has a position and they are entitled to that, but I think it's part of my job to keep my opinions at home.

I try to have a relaxed and warm classroom . . . and I'm traditional



in the sense that in most classes kids are sitting in rows and we're just discussing. I don't lecture. I try to get maximum involvement from the students. We do simulations and I have the kids have debates. We did a simulation the other day that I designed on the strike at the mill.

Rusty's teaching exemplifies this description. All eight lessons observed involved students thinking about history and either asked students to make historical judgements or generalizations based on evidence. Though the format varied, all lessons also involved extensive use of discussion. Regardless of format or student clientele (classes ranged from A.P. to academically at risk) Rusty's teaching was remarkably consistent with his basic orientation, asking students to muck about in the raw materials of history, with the teacher as guide rather than fountain of knowledge. Rusty doesn't lecture. He teaches by asking questions and by asking students to grapple with the stuff of history.

An example from his A.P. "American Experience" class perhaps best exemplifies his approach in practice. The class was team taught by Rusty and a colleague in English in a 1½ hour time block and had only 12 students. In talking with Rusty, he stated that the class best exemplified his vision of what the teaching of history should be. Though this format and clientele are obviously extraordinary, we can still learn a great deal from Rusty's approach. Thus, I intend to focus mostly on describing what went on in this class, though I will make a few comments about Rusty's other classes as well.

During every visit we made to Rusty's American Experience class, the group was seated in a circle, with the teachers seated at opposite sides of the circle. One representative lesson, the immigrant roundtable, had students reporting to the class in the form of first person testimony, role-playing the immigrant life they had studied, with teachers and other students questioning and discussing the life of each immigrant. The following transcript will give the reader some insight into the lesson.

**S1:** My name is George. I left Czechoslovakia at the age of 16. My brother and I walked from Hungarian countries to Hamburg and then took a boat to the United States, quite a long trip. We finally arrived in February, 1912. I got a job in a mine. I made \$2.15 for ten hours and that was before they took off seven cents for the lamp and you had to buy your own tools. I left for work at 5:00 a.m. and I arrived home at 5:00 p.m. and two of these hours were spent walking and a lot of the time I worked on Sunday but I didn't get overtime, it was just like any other day. There wasn't very much safety in the mines and a lot of men got killed, but if you killed a mule you would get fired, but if you killed a man it would be no big deal. We didn't have to buy men. I worked for five years in the mine and when I was 22 I enlisted in the army in May. I was in the military for two years, and when the war was over I decided not to re-enlist. I then went back to the mine and they were now paying \$7.50 instead of \$2.15 for ten hours . . .

**T1:** Do you know why you left Czechoslovakia?

**S1:** To avoid the Army.

**T2:** Comments on this immigrant's life?

**S2:** It's interesting that he left Czechoslovakia to avoid the army, then enlisted in the U.S. Army.

**T1:** What's going on at this time?

**S3:** World War I.

**T1:** Does anyone have a theory that could explain his choosing not to fight for the emperor?

Later on . . .

**T1:** We want to look for some patterns, and what our experiences meant to you as individuals and to the country as a whole. What is a pattern?

**S1:** America was different than they expected.

**T1:** How many said, "This isn't what I expected?"

**S:** [Several said yes . . . ]

**T2:** So there was a difference between perception and reality?

**T1:** What was the common thing about what you expected?

**S4:** We expected gold on the trees, and in the streets.

**T1:** So you had very high expectations.

**S2:** How many came for non-economic reasons?

**S5:** The dominant motivation was opportunity, jobs.

**T2:** Good! What are some others?

And later still, during the same lesson:

**T1:** If we back up, and wrote a topic sentence for your experiences . . .

**T2:** Write a thesis statement that captures the pattern, or a dominant pattern for what we have seen.

**S2:** As a second person?

**T2:** As a student.

[after passage of some time . . . ]

**T1:** Topic sentence, [S10].

**S10:** Immigrants came to America for gold streets, but found it wasn't that way.

**S9:** It was not as they expected. They were able to build up the quality of their lives over time and make it better for their children.

**T1:** [S3 . . . ]

**S3:** Many came by free will and were successful and happy.

**S4:** Many were from poor backgrounds and hoped to shovel up the gold they thought was flooding the streets. The majority were stuck in factories or survived on middle class jobs.

**T1:** I notice something interesting happening. You all heard the same stories, but you all have a different interpretation. That is the whole point of the course, to draw different conclusions about what history has to

say. What is fact? What is a pattern? What is culture about? Can we switch now to the consequences for the country?

T2: Let's look at the big picture.

And the discussion continued. Every lesson we observed involved students actively, and exemplified central elements of Rusty's conception of history. For example, another lesson from the American Experience class involved students in a teacher-led discussion of Upton Sinclair's novel, *The Jungle*. Students were asked to share "interesting, important aspects of the novel." In another lesson, a regular feature of each unit the teachers called "contemporary echoes," students were asked to bring in something from the media related to the topic under study, the teacher and other students would ask questions, and the students were asked to develop analogies.

In a much larger class of average students, an historian's question was the focus of the lesson. Rusty began the introduction to a unit on the age of reason by stating, "On page 269 is the road map. In each unit we've looked for some kind of pattern. We'll talk about some big ideas in the next three units, liberty, freedom, and nationalism. Look at the introduction and see if you can figure out how the people writing the book are going to explain the changes? [pause for students to read] What are they trying to tell you?" The lesson consisted of Rusty leading his students through a discussion of the explanations that the text might offer.

Then, in a small experimental class for students at risk of dropping out (funded by an innovative instructional grant from the state) students worked individually to write papers on historical topics of their choice, usually starting with something of interest in their lives. Students were encouraged to engage in the process of writing history, exploring a topic, and writing about it. In keeping with Rusty's conception of history, they were also challenged to go beyond the "facts" to get at explanations for change.

Perhaps the most telling testimonials to the efficacy of Rusty's approach to teaching history can be seen in the comments of Rusty's students in the American Experience class. In short, all the students I talked to had very positive feelings about the course. Typical were comments like, "I like it. I think it is exciting . . . I have never had a class like this," and "It has been like a total opening of the government and it is like analyzing the government this year and it is really new and I really appreciate it."

When asked to describe the class, students were equally exuberant, and made comments like, "It is a very open setting. I think they want students to learn to think for themselves," and "They like to make a statement or ask a question and let the students discuss it. They don't like to lecture to us. They like us to do the teaching."

Student comments also provide additional information on the kinds of lessons used. For example, students mentioned studying "both sides of the argument," reading novels, doing simulations, and "contemporary echoes."

Two comments in particular seem to summarize Rusty's style. One student said, "It's hard to describe what we do . . . It's up to us to participate . . . The students do most of the talking. It's like we're trying to teach the teacher something" and another said, "They give you evidence and you have to synthesize and build your own interpretation."

Thus, Rusty uses a wide variety of techniques to engage students in the stuff of history and to relate past to present. Judging from student comments, it is an enjoyable learning experience. But, what impact is this having on student conceptions about history and on student beliefs?

*Student Conceptions and Student Belief.* All four students interviewed cited a present-tense reason for studying history, but some mixed that with notions drawn from the process of doing history. When queried on the purposes for studying history, students made the following sorts of comments, as shown in Appendix 2. For example, one student said that we study history, "To see if history has changed over time, you can test that theory. See what things change and what things stay the same and hypothesize why things have changed or why they haven't," succinctly summarizing the scientific historian's approach. Other students said, "To know about past mistakes so you don't make them again," and, "It helps me to understand society today." So, among Rusty's students, a present-centered purpose seems dominant.

Two of the four students interviewed from Rusty's American Experience class had trouble describing their teacher's conception of history, and none were quite sure, (probably because he doesn't lecture and generally refrains from telling students what they should know). One student summed it up nicely by saying, "He is a little reserved." Students don't know where Rusty stands politically. Though a few had some hints, their perceptions were often different. For example, one said, "I think he is conservative," while another suggested, "I suppose that he is not extremely conservative." Perhaps the most telling comment was, "In class we talk more, the students. I don't really know what he thinks."

Students also report that the course is having an impact on their beliefs. As illustrated in Appendix 2, students report becoming more "critical," more "analytical," and more "aware." Judging from student comments, Rusty's American Experience class is having a profound impact on students' notions about history, and perhaps an even stronger impact on students' beliefs about society. Perhaps the key reason is the questioning, process-centered orientation to history and pedagogy employed in the class. It seems a powerful mix. Though Rusty is not telling students what to believe (if anything he is doing the opposite) the course seems a liberating experience, especially when contrasted with the other teachers described in this study. As one student said, "He doesn't sit there and tell us why. I know he could but he doesn't. If we don't want to learn it, then we are not going to. I'm sure if he said it I would feel like I was scolded and go against it."

## **The Relativist/Reformer**

This typology emphasizes the relation of the past to present problems and suggests that history is background for understanding current issues. Generally, these teachers endorse developing lessons from history to guide current decisions, and stress that it's most important for students to grasp the relevance of history to the present (Evans, 1989b). Jeff, the relativist selected for detailed study in this paper, offers a fairly typical example of the relativist approach to history and teaching, as shown by the following quotes:

The reasons that I see for teaching social studies is [*sic*] to help young people understand the present and it seems to me the past is actually the key to understanding what is going on today. . . . People in a democracy have the ability to determine our own personal future as well as to help determine the future of the country and its effects upon the world as a whole. We have a clear obligation to generate involvement on the part of our students. We have the opportunity to determine our own future.

I tend to use a very practical approach. We don't just talk about it and read about it . . . we have visitors and field trips and can begin to explore issues directly. I have them read a variety of sources, then I ask questions . . . to relate issues to the present.

In another class, instead of following the traditional textbook approach, we started with economic history primarily because of the strike going on with the International Paper Mill in Jay. So we could deal with those historical issues and fall back right through to the present and bring in representatives from the mill. I was not able to get management to come in, they refused, but strikers did come in and so the students could discuss that, then we can go back and we can relate and talk about history. . . . So what I'm basically suggesting is the approach that we're using here does generate interest in kids that certainly are not going to further their education at least in an academic sense, but to whom history can be made real and they can see and can relate primarily, again, what is happening in Jay through its historical roots.

The administration has insisted that I use the textbook. They find that I'm too controversial and I present too many ideas and the textbook is a way of simply assuring that the kids are going to learn what they have to learn . . . I do use a textbook and they do have worksheets, but that doesn't mean that we're going to follow the textbook chronologically. We just jump around in the textbook and find other aspects of that that will fit into the pattern that I am involved in. Secondly, I use a variety of different kinds of reading. Particularly primary sources or other accounts that go into more detail than the textbook does . . . I don't particularly like to use the lecture method because I find they get more bored so I try to get them to read an assignment and then to discuss it and occasionally give them some notes, which I guess you could call lectur-

ing, to give them further background on matters and more discussions and more questions. I always use these kinds of methods.

Though his teaching was hampered by discipline problems, Jeff's images of history do seem to have a major influence on his teaching. Every lesson we observed included some reference to the relationship between past and present, and in many lessons, the central focus was on students' lives in the present. Unfortunately, the historical connection was sometimes lost in the shuffle. But, most of the time, connections were attempted. In discussing Jeff's teaching, it is of primary importance that we keep his audience in mind. His teaching style combines an image of history and perceptions of his clients.

A few brief examples will illustrate Jeff's teaching style. A lesson on the general topic of government regulation of business and bank crises exemplified his approach. Though the lesson contained a good deal of historical content, it centered around the then current savings and loan crisis and bailout. The class period began with students entering the room and taking folders containing their notes from a box. Jeff had a list of economic terms on the board, and most of the students began writing down notes, chattering while writing. Terms on the board included: "interest, collateral, corporation, common stock, monopoly, trust, outstanding stock, marketing, profit, net profit, dividend." As students wrote, Jeff announced:

**T:** I'm going to go over it, tie in to you.

**S:** We're still writing.

**T:** [After a few minutes] O.K., I need to begin now. The first point in relation to all this is money. [Student chatter continues unabated. Jeff, in a booming voice, simply talks over the chatter.] What this is going to lead to is Savings and Loan Banks are in serious trouble. Why hasn't the federal reserve system worked as well as we hoped? These terms [on board] relate to forming a business. Many of you will work in business or even start your own. How is it that people get rich [S1]? How is it possible for you?

**S1:** Steal from a bank.

**T:** Are there other ways of stealing money? There are illegal ways of stealing, but there are also more refined ways of making money. Something like that happened in terms of the bank crisis. How else can you people earn money by not stealing?

**S1:** Get a job.

**S2:** Sell drugs.

The discussion continued, centering on ways students could make money, borrow money, find loopholes in the system, and ended with Jeff stating, "to tie things up, these are the legal ways our system works and how our system makes money legally. The economy is run by people with ideas to make money legally." So, most of the discussion was only tangentially related to the intended lesson focus, though the attempt to relate to students' lives was presumably the teacher's motive.

Another lesson, in a world history class that was much quieter, centered around excerpts from Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Jeff sat at the front of the room, and began by stating:

**T:** I want to explore the ideas of a book called *The Prince* . . . Let's begin on the second page, explore what's going on. Machiavelli wrote a book exploring ideas, just like the artists we've studied. What are the factors that make a leader successful? How do these ideas work in relation to our school and country?

**S1:** Force is not as good as trust.

**T:** Take some quotations. First, read #6.

**S:** "Those who have become princes through their own merits, I regard as the greatest . . . It is necessary to examine whether these innovators are independent or whether they depend on others. Whether in order to carry out their designs they have to entreat or are able to compel. . . . the character of peoples varies, and it is easy to persuade them of a thing, but difficult to keep them in that persuasion. And so it is necessary to order things so that when they no longer believe, they can be made to believe by force."

**T:** O.K. What is this saying?

**S:** If leaders didn't have arms, people wouldn't fear.

**T:** How can arms be helpful, how can they hurt?

**S:** It depends on how they use the army.

**T:** What creates a leader? Let's look at the U.S. How was it that Reagan was liked?

**S:** He was sensible. He usually did what he said.

**T:** How else do people manage to hold power. What makes for success?

**S:** Brains.

**T:** Say [S2] lost her charm while president of the class . . .

**S:** She wouldn't be president again.

**T:** Does personality have an impact?

**S:** You have to disguise emotions.

And the discussion continued, with students and teacher reading brief selections from *The Prince*, and trying to understand it in today's terms, using examples from American politics, school and classroom life. The lesson ended with Jeff asking, "Think of ways you'd like this school to be run so there are rules, but people would be satisfied." Throughout, the emphasis was on the present, on relating material from the past, in this case from the Renaissance, to the student's present life situation.

Jeff often switched back and forth, from present, to past, to present as a means of getting students interested in the past, or making issues from the past more understandable, and as a means of relating historical content to the present. Other good examples include his use of the film "Footloose," about students who rebelled against their small town's restrictions on dancing in 1980s America, as a means for students to reach some understanding

of the issues which led to the Protestant Reformation. He asked, "What were the similarities of the issues represented in 'Footloose' to those of the reformation?" Also, he used the Chaplin film, "Modern Times," as a means to introduce labor/management relations. In each lesson we observed, students' lives were the starting point. History was important mostly for what light it would shed on present day dilemmas and problems. Unfortunately, the relationship between past and present was sometimes murky, not powerfully drawn. Jeff's teaching suffered from a lack of clarity as well as student disruption. Yet, his conception of purpose was always present.

Jeff's students describe his teaching style as a mixture of seatwork, discussion, movies, and guest speakers. As shown in Appendix 3, they described the class as following one of three or four routines: "We will either have a speaker or a movie to watch or he will give us some papers to do on some movies that we watched and some questions, and usually he will bring up a discussion about something . . . about current events relating stuff that happened before, things in history." From our observations, on days when there was no movie or guest, the typical routine was, "We'll pass out our folders, do our work, and pass back the folders . . . he tries to get all of us to talk." As another student summarized nicely, "Mostly we do our homework and then we will go over it and talk about things that happened . . . If we agree with how everything was back then."

In general, the class gets a mixed review at best. Four of the six students interviewed had only negative comments, as illustrated in the following student comments shown in Appendix 3—perhaps as much a function of Jeff's discipline problems as his way of thinking about history. Typically students said things like, "History class ain't no use for me," or "It can be fun at times, sometimes. Sometimes it get boring," or "I don't care for the class. It don't interest me, that's all."

Jeff's teaching style is problematic for him, yet, because of his beliefs about history and his commitment to improving society, he persists. In brief interviews he told me, "I don't eat lunch, I eat after school. I'm too keyed up to eat anything . . . At the end of the day I'm totally exhausted because of this teaching style."

*Student Conceptions and Student Beliefs.* Student conceptions of the purposes of studying history seem very similar to Jeff's aim of relating past to present. Most of the students interviewed said that the purpose of studying history was to improve our lives, to prevent more bad things from happening. For example, one student said, "So like there were wars back then. We can learn about them, how they started and stuff like that without it ever happening again." Another said, "It's important because they say that everything that went down in history will come back some day, sooner or later."

Most students were able to identify their teacher's views on the purposes for studying history, except one student who stated, simply, "I don't have



no idea.” Another said, “Basically what I said. Everything rotates around and I know that he likes to compare.” Another said, “To relate to today.” Thus, it is possible that Jeff’s approach to teaching history is contributing to student conceptions of history.

Two students could identify Jeff’s political beliefs as liberal, but others didn’t know. For example, one said, “He already stated that he is a liberalist. He would tell us what he thinks, but he doesn’t downgrade anything or upgrade anything.” Another stated simply, “He is a liberal.” More typical was a student who said, “I have no idea.” Another said, “I think he voted for Bush.” Though Jeff does share his opinions with the class, many students either don’t listen, or don’t remember.

According to student interview responses, their beliefs about history and about society were not influenced much, if at all, by Jeff’s class. When asked whether their beliefs had changed in any way as a result of the class, students simply said, “No,” or “Not really.” But one student did say the class had “brought them out more” and confessed to “watching the news more,” and another said “when we are in the class we discuss our feelings and it helps us to realize more.”

Jeff’s reform message, calling for social participation through his teaching, is not powerfully presented. This lack of power is reflected in the management problems that beset his classes. His teaching is apparently having little impact on student beliefs. One wonders what impact a more gifted teacher might have on students, given a similar typology. A reformer I reported on in a previous investigation seemingly had a much more dramatic impact on his students’ ideas about history (Evans, 1988).

### **Cosmic Philosopher**

The cosmic history teacher has several distinguishing characteristics. First, the cosmic teacher sees generalizations or “laws” connecting events as the most interesting aspect of history. Second, the cosmic philosopher sees definite patterns in history, and most suggest a cyclical view of history. Like the metahistorian, these teachers see grand theory as an essential part of history and believe that history has a profound meaning with implications for the future. David, the cosmic teacher examined in this study, embodies elements of cosmic thinking in his conceptions about history as illustrated by the following quotes:

History is the study of the human condition. The human form hasn’t changed much, it’s more or less the same. We still have rich and poor, we still have mysticism, war hasn’t changed, societies still go through various stages quite similar to those that went before. It’s all connected, humans have thought about the same things for centuries.

There are patterns in history. The example I use is that civilization emanates from a single human being, [who] forms a group, which then goes through various states, the tribe, the community, the city-state, the

nation, and eventually the empire. Empires reach a certain point when they become cumbersome, then they disintegrate . . . and the cycle starts over again. It is a cyclical pattern, entwined with nature like the life and death cycle of a human, or a tree, or the seasons.

Although elements of David's cosmic approach to history come through, his teaching is eclectic. Generally, his teaching reflects the comments he made during my interview with him:

My courses have a standard text. I supplement that with anything and everything that I can get my hands on, depending on what I think the students need. I lecture, engage in discussion with the students, engage in debate. Very often I play the devil's advocate. I challenge their values, their morality, whatever they think is right or wrong. I use a critical thinking process. I demand that they write essays, that they read X number of books, write critical book reviews and that they present these to the class.

Observation of David's classes bears out most of his description. Of nine lessons observed, two involved student oral reports, several involved brief student writing exercises, and most included teacher lecture or teacher-led discussion of the topic under study. One lesson involving student book reviews on topics in U.S. History went like this:

**T:** [S]?

**S:** [at the podium] I read a book called *Out of the Sweatshop*. It was interesting. It told about how workers who had jobs formed unions and wanted their rights and stuff. They worked long hours for \$1 a day. One story told about a woman, a needle went through her finger, and they made her pay for the needle. Sometimes they worked until 3 a.m. and then had to return at 6 a.m. There were lots of horror stories. The book goes to 1968 and shows how the labor unions progressed . . .

**T:** Was the Triangle Shirtwaist factory in there?

**S:** Yes.

**T:** Could you explain what happened.

**S:** The door to the stairs was locked, so none of the workers could get out during a fire. They all burned to death.

**T:** Who were the muckrakers?

**S:** They got the facts out.

**T:** Why did Stein write the book?

**S:** To let you know how awful it was and what you've got today.

**T:** Why did parents send their children back to factories day after day?

**S:** Teenagers then were more set on helping their families . . .

**T:** What did the book tell you that the text didn't?

**S:** This told a lot more detail. There was death everywhere.

A similar procedure was repeated for each student. On a different day in the same 20th century America class, David began class with a brief writing exercise as follows:

**T:** Today we have a little exercise to do on a reading assignment we discussed yesterday. I want you to write on two different questions. This side [motions at left side of room] What caused the Great Depression? Did it start abroad or in America.? Other side: What caused the stock market to collapse in 1929? Is it likely to collapse in the same way again? O.K. You have 15 minutes.

**T:** [after passage of time] Why did the market collapse? Will it do the same thing again?

**S1:** The market crashed because there were too many imports. The same thing could happen today.

**T:** Is that similar to yours?

**S2:** It's the same.

**T:** Where do you differ?

**S2:** America got into trouble with too much building on money they didn't have . . . people were gambling with money on Wall Street.

**T:** You hit on some of the key issues. The stock market, gambling, credit, inflation. The key reason was people were buying stocks on credit, with nothing to back it up. [S2] hit the key point, you have to put your money into business or investment. When you have money, buy . . . it keeps the economy healthy. [S3].

**S3:** The depression was caused by overproduction . . . America was producing too much, and couldn't sell it. Europe added to the problem . . . President Hoover's ideology was that government should stay out of the economy.

**T:** People were starving, standing in bread lines, and yet we had surpluses. Money didn't get down to the lower classes. Hoover said, "We'll give money to the big boys, and it will trickle down," but the money didn't trickle down. But don't blame the depression on one individual, Hoover. His actions were coming from an ideology, individualism. Where have you heard that before? Bush, *à la* Reagan. That philosophy is perhaps outdated.

Thus, a lesson employing a writing exercise and beginning with the kinds of questions that historians ask became something of a soapbox for David to express his views, which he did with regularity. In a lesson on the role of the church in the Middle Ages, David remarked, "Today a theocracy is absolute power. Controls political and spiritual life. It is the most frightening form of government . . . So you may have problems if you combine the state with the church."

As shown in Appendix 4, David's students seem to confirm this general description of his teaching, though they say he also has them read in class

quite often—something we didn't observe. Several mention his discussion style, work on writing skills, and doing oral reports, though it is interesting that he seems to lead more discussions with his freshman European history class, and, conversely, seldom starts discussions with his American History class, and seems to be led into discussions by the students.

*Student Conceptions and Student Belief.* When asked about the purposes for studying history, David's students generally took a presentist orientation, suggesting, as five of the six interviewed did, that by studying the past we can "avoid mistakes" or "improve our future." It is also interesting to note that four of the six students said that there are patterns in history, thus relating to David's cosmic orientation. One student said, "Certain things will happen over and over again and that triggers other things like a chain reaction," another said, "There are patterns but it is kind of a gradual thing," though one who said there weren't patterns said, "history is really kind of random."

Given David's tendency to sometimes use his lectern as a soapbox, it seems a bit surprising that only two students could describe his political beliefs. Based on student interview responses, it seems that David's class is having little impact on student's political beliefs, but may be having some influence on their knowledge of the past. For example, several students (four of six) remarked that they know more now, or are learning a lot about history. Perhaps what is most interesting about student responses is that they reflect a lack of critical reflection on present-day issues, despite their teacher's frequent attempts to relate past to present.

David's style of teaching reflects his cosmic orientation in minor ways, but his approach is largely eclectic, and seems to devote a good deal of attention to relating past to present. What are students taking from the class? It is difficult to say. They seem to be gaining some knowledge of the past, and a belief that history can help us in the present, though connections do not seem powerfully drawn. It's similar to his students' attitudes. They like the class, but generally aren't excited about it. That lack of excitement reflects David's fatigue, and the overload he experiences as a teacher, coach, and part-time bartender. Cosmic philosophy may be present in his teaching (his students say that he sees everything "connected" to everything else), but it is not a powerful presence, nor does it seem to dictate much of his pedagogy.

### **The Eclectic**

Though most of the teachers I've studied were eclectic in teaching style, most displayed a dominant tendency, and thus fit one of the typologies described above. Yet, a significant number of teachers were truly eclectic, and seemingly had no dominant tendency, and fit no typology. When asked about the purposes for studying history, these teachers usually gave multiple answers. Sumner, the eclectic represented here, was no exception. As evidenced by the following quotes, his approach to history combines storytell-

ing for knowledge with the relativist/reformer's purpose of relating past to present:

I think it's important that students have a knowledge of how this country came to be. So many things hinge on the government, people need a good background in American history. Maybe we can learn by our mistakes. I use history as a good way to tell stories and emphasize how things can relate to us today.

When I teach it's a combination of lectures, student participation, and audio-visual. . . . We do mock trials, and we talk about current events and how they relate. I tell stories about personalities and pretend to be them . . . I do anything to get the kids interested.

For most eclectics, getting the kids interested seems to be the overarching concern. Yet, if Sumner is any indication, the lack of a deeper and more consistent philosophy may lead to a lapse into the most basic and least sophisticated type of teaching, a style based on teacher talk and student recitation. Each of the nine lessons we observed followed a similar format. Sumner talked, students listened. Sumner asked factual questions, students tried to answer. Usually, he tried to relate the past to something in the student's lives, such as a radio station or the rivalry between two towns. Occasionally Sumner spiced up his presentations with an overhead transparency, a drawing on the board, or an artifact, which usually served to heighten student interest only temporarily. An introductory lesson to a unit on the Middle Ages was fairly typical:

**T:** Yesterday we started looking at a new chapter. Why'd they call it the Middle Ages?

**S1:** Because of the time period.

**T:** Time period? What did they call the time period that came before it? [draws timeline on board] If this is known as the Middle Ages, this is going up to modern times. How many listen to the radio? TOS? Doesn't always play the latest hits, but plays classics from an earlier time, a classical time. What happened in here? [points at middle years on timeline]

**S1:** No advances in technology or culture.

**S2:** What kind of school system did they have then?

**T:** One you'd agree with. Only practical things, they didn't learn in schools, there was no social studies. At this point [points at timeline] you start seeing the beginnings of the Renaissance. The title of your chapter tells you it's about feudal lords and churchmen. You've probably seen films on knights. The feudal lords were militaristic. What are we talking about, [S3].

**S3:** [waking] Military.

**T:** How you gonna keep the army in line?

**S1:** Shoot 'em.

S2: Pay 'em.

T: You pay 'em. What do you let your soldiers do when you conquer some territory?

S: Get booty, loot . . .

T: So, we see early governments were military governments . . . created by force . . . [the lesson continued]

Another lesson, on the Vikings, Norse gods, and mythology, followed a similar pattern, but included two additional features. It began with a story Sumner read to the students of the Norse gods and later included an artifact, an English version of a battle axe, which was passed around the room and seemed to generate a good deal of interest, though mostly in the axe itself. The basic form of the lesson was very similar, with the teacher doing most of the talking. It was primarily a lecture peppered with questions designed to maintain student interest.

Student interview data on Sumner's teaching style, as presented in Appendix 5, confirms this description of his teaching. Students said that, "He talks and we take notes," and confirmed that this was the basic routine. Students also mentioned his tendency to relate the past to present and his use of questions (recitation) to draw the answers out of students. Finally, several of the students mentioned his use of artifacts from the time being studied, usually weapons, as one of the more interesting parts of the class, though some didn't seem convinced. It is interesting that some of the other styles of teaching Sumner mentioned in my interview with him (mock trials, pretending to be personalities) were not observed, nor were they mentioned by students. This suggests that Sumner may have said what he thought the interviewer wanted to hear, and that his use of innovative approaches is fairly infrequent.

Though it may be a function of these particular students (in the vocational track) student attitudes toward history seemed fairly negative. Four of the students expressed either negative or ambivalent attitudes toward studying history. The general attitude seems to be summed up by one student who said, "I don't really mind it all that much. History has always been there so it's just routine." Another said, "I just think it's a waste of time," and another, "I don't feel that we use it all that much."

*Student Conceptions and Student Belief.* Student conceptions of the purposes for studying history seem equally ambivalent, though most mentioned knowing or relating past to present, consistent with the strongest strains in Sumner's conception of history. Three students mentioned the fact that it is a requirement, saying "I don't see why we have to take it," and "you have to have it for school . . ." Two students did mention the purpose of relating past to present, or avoiding mistakes.

Perhaps the single most interesting aspect of the data from my interviews with Sumner's students was student responses regarding their teacher's political beliefs. Given Sumner's content orientation perhaps it was predict-

able that most students would say “he doesn’t express his opinion very often,” but one student offered an interesting explanation when he said, “This is a world history class so you don’t really get into politics that much. . . . There aren’t a whole a lot of politics involved.”

This response suggests that Sumner’s rendition of history is failing to reach that student, and I suspect many others, at a very basic level. He is failing to make the stuff of history much more than useless drivel. His approach is apolitical. Students aren’t really asked to think, only to recall. Thus, such a comment is understandable. Data on student belief suggest that Sumner is having very little impact on student thinking—the one exception being a current events topic (the presidential election) on which multiple perspectives were apparently presented.

On the whole, Sumner’s approach to teaching history seems far removed from the reflective testing of belief. His students do not seem more likely to vote or to be thoughtful citizens as a result of this class. In fact, it could be having just the opposite effect, a routinization producing apathy. Although one could imagine an eclectic teacher having a more profound impact on students’ lives, it is possible that the lack of strong commitment exemplified by eclecticism could stand in the way of lively or provocative teaching, could contribute to a kind of blandness brought by lack of purpose.

### Discussion

This has been a depressing study, a sobering study. In my earlier study (Evans, 1989b), based on interviews with teachers, I concluded that the teaching of history seemed to be in good hands. The teachers I talked to seemed, for the most part, to know what they were doing. Furthermore, they described conducting interesting activities with the students in their classes. Data from classroom observation and student interviews offers a painful lesson, and it is this: What teachers *say* they are doing and what an observer or students may *see* are often quite different. A lack of consonance often exists (Thornton, 1988). Perhaps teachers have to cope with their reality by remembering the good parts. Perhaps they like to impress interviewers, particularly college professors, with the job they are doing. In any event, the portraits of history teachers contained in these pages, though somber, offer reason for hope. One teacher in particular, Steve Smith (Rusty), of Belfast Regional High School in Belfast, Maine (he wanted me to use his name) proves that it is possible to inspire student reflection on social life through the teaching of history. Unfortunately, for the other teachers portrayed here, what is most striking is the lack of reflection reported by their students.

In what follows I will summarize and interpret what I see as some of the central patterns present in the data reported above by discussing the questions posed in the introduction.

1. *How do teacher conceptions of history affect the transmitted curriculum?*

Teacher conceptions of history seem to have a profound impact on the transmitted curriculum in two of these classes, the storyteller and the scientific historian, with less impact in the other three. This suggests that the impact of teacher conceptions may vary. At this point I don't have sufficient evidence to use in speculating on the reasons for such variation, though I suspect that teacher efficacy may be strongly related. Both the storyteller and the scientific historian seemed clear about what they were doing, and effective at reaching those ends. This consonance, between their conceptions of history and the curriculum transmitted in their classrooms, reflects both the clarity of their images of history teaching and their skills as teachers. Each of the other teachers portrayed, the reformer, cosmic philosopher, and eclectic, had lower levels of consonance due to several factors including the difficulty of effective discussion-centered teaching, less effective teaching skills, lower student motivation, constant difficulty with classroom management concerns, or teacher burnout.

*2. In what ways might teacher conceptions of history as played out in classrooms influence student beliefs about history and student beliefs about society?*

Students in several classes reported that their teachers had influenced their understanding of history and had contributed to their knowledge of the past. Based on their comments, most students seem to learn that history can help us solve problems and help us avoid mistakes. However, students are seldom given much help in applying these ideas. Often, connections or links between past and present aren't given much explicit attention, or sufficient time to allow full exploration of analogies through socratic discussion. Just as often, similarities between historical events of different eras are raised without much discourse on differences in historical context, and, even more troublesome, without explicit, in-depth discussion of the ethical dilemmas or decisions posed by the events under study. Thus, relevance to students' lives often becomes a superficial justification for learning the stuff of history. Without more powerful links, and more powerful discussion strategies, it seems a rather empty justification.

Most students report no change in their beliefs about society. This is not surprising given the content orientation of most of their teachers, and their weak attempts to connect past to present. If these teachers are at all representative, the teaching of history and social studies generally may be having little impact on student belief or thinking, except on knowledge of the content studied. Other research on teaching supports this notion (Goodlad, 1984; Shaver, Davis & Helburn, 1979). Nevertheless, a few teachers may be having a more profound impact on their students. For example, Steve Smith's students reported that their history class had made them more analytical, had forced them to ask reflective questions about their lives, their government, and their society. Though it would be wonderful if more teachers could emulate such teaching, the reality of schooling suggests that the prospects



are not all that hopeful. Even Steve has not found a way to make his larger classes with students of mixed academic skills fit his ideal vision of teaching. Small classes and sustained innovation are costly.

Despite the few exceptional teachers who are having a serious impact, what passes for citizenship education in most classrooms may be counter-productive, helping to create and sustain student apathy and lack of caring about our society and the world. It may be better to simply cut social studies and history from the curriculum rather than continue to produce such a lack of reflection. Current practice, which is generally not reflective, only makes sense if we assume that schools exist to transmit cultural norms of selfishness and conformity, if we assume that the underlying purpose of schooling is to teach students “how not to question and how not to doubt” (Kozol, 1975).

*3. Are the teaching of history and political ideology linked? If so, how?*

In most of these classrooms, judging from student comments, they really aren't, at least not in an explicit way. But if we look beneath the surface they may be. The storyteller, a conservative, is passing on our traditions and an understanding of the past as cultural knowledge which undergirds our way of life. As Hayden White has suggested, history is the conservative discipline par excellence, and narrative its dominant, most traditional mode (1978). The scientific historian, a liberal, is liberating students, causing them to ask questions about their world, many for the first time in their lives. He is transmitting the scientist's skepticism about knowledge and with it a questioning attitude. His approach seems to mirror a structuralist, neo-positivist framework, yet the outcome, in terms of student reflection, seems to partially fulfill the poststructuralist argument for critical pragmatism (Cherryholmes, 1988).

The reformer, a liberal, though a miscast and apologetic teacher failing to succeed with most of his students, is trying to improve the world through his teaching. In that intent, he has much in common with relativists and poststructuralists, the pragmatist approach which Rorty might call “history as politics”—an attempt, only lightly veiled, to build the kind of society in which every human potentiality is given free rein (1989, p. 22). The cosmic philosopher, also a liberal, imparts his truths, that all things are connected, that individualism is outdated. This is an approach which Putnam has called the “God's-eye view” (Rorty, 1989, p. 15), and represents an attempt to have a God-like grasp of the realm of possibility and to have a pigeonhole ready for every event in history. Finally, the eclectic, a moderate, seems most interested in making it through the day; an approach which emphasizes functional efficiency, or a “vulgar pragmatism” which is “socially reproductive, instrumentally and functionally reproducing accepted meanings and conventional organizations, institutions, and ways of doing things for good or ill” (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 151).

Thus, of these teachers, only one seems to produce sustained critical reflection in students. And in the case of Steve Smith, much of what he is doing

rests on an unexamined orientation, as he wrote in a letter commenting on my description (Evans, 1989b) of his views:

Thanks for the disturbing but accurate paper . . . Your accuracy is precisely what's disturbing about your work, because for the most part I have not thought about the issues you dealt with. You're right, there is a philosophy underlying my teaching, but it's the worst kind of philosophy, unexamined and unarticulated, even to myself. And, if I understand the thrust of your work, you imply that without that examination it becomes impossible to evaluate and eventually to improve what history teachers are doing, since no one, even the teachers, seems to know what they are trying to do. In my case, I have little knowledge of the 19th century historians or the New Social Studies movement, and none about the analytic positivist philosophy of history. Yet what I do know suggests that you are correct—making me an unwitting dupe of people and philosophies I don't even know. Ruefully, I must agree with you.

Though I shared my earlier findings with each of the teachers discussed in this investigation, Steve's letter was the only reaction I received. If his philosophy is "unexamined and unarticulated," what of the other teachers I studied? For the most part, these teachers are part of the seamless web of schooling helping to create a denatured social life, void of controversy, void of causes, void of deep caring; socializing, but not countersocializing (Engle & Ochoa, 1988). For most of their students, the teaching of history may function as a softened, diffused means of oppression. The boredom and routinization in most history classrooms produces a sense of well being, a drowsy feeling that life is acceptable as it is, and that history has little to do with our lives and the decisions we face.

Without explicit attention to the philosophical and ideological questions embedded in the teaching of history, without sustained critical reflection on our purposes, reform movements such as the revival of history and reports like the National Commission's will likely serve to reinforce the use of history as a bland form of cultural transmission. They will do little to foster reflective or critical approaches to the teaching of history, and that is very sad.

### **Endnotes**

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2. All teacher names used in this paper are pseudonyms.

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Well, it is fun because the way Mrs. — teaches it is away from the book and things are more interesting and she goes into lifestyles more and stuff. I like it, and it's optional.

At first I didn't want to because I thought it was kind of boring, but I think it is kind of interesting now.

Fun, as I said. It is really interesting. There is [sic] a lot of neat things that you can pick up.

I like it. I do a lot of reading outside on my own.

### *Student Conceptions of Purposes for Studying History*

Just to increase your knowledge, basically, so you can have an idea of what has happened so we won't make the same mistakes that the earlier people had. So you can learn about the ancestors and what has gone before.

To learn what people did and how we developed over the years . . . To learn from old habits and how people did things . . . To learn about ancient people and how they evolved and how we do things.

In order to understand what is going on today and to understand everything that happened before.

I've always thought of it as more of a personal interest . . . Common ancestry.

I guess we study history to learn from our mistakes.

Having knowledge of history is respectful to your predecessors and to understand a lot about human nature and politics and things that relate to us in everyday life.

### *Student Knowledge of Teacher Political Beliefs*

I really couldn't answer that. We really don't get into that.

She really doesn't express any favoritism . . . with what is going on in the world right now.

I don't know. I guess I don't really know much about her political beliefs. She gives us information but she is not biased about it.

She doesn't really discuss them much. She doesn't say who she is for or not.

I would say she is a conservative. She can always understand the big business point of view, and a lot of my other teachers can't.

### *Student Beliefs (Have your beliefs changed as a result of this class?)*

No.

They really haven't changed too much.

Not politically I haven't changed, but I know more now about history. Now when I'm watching the news and I see something going on it makes more sense to me and it is more interesting.

I know I have learned more about the United States, and it kind of became more interesting and not all that bad.

Yeah, they have. I am a solid Republican conservative, business oriented, and we did a lot of work with the third parties and discussed bringing them back and all that, and it got me thinking. I'm still Republican but I think about those things.

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### **Appendix 1—Storyteller (Student interview data, Susan)**

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#### *Teaching Style*

She'd be wonderful as a tabloid editor. As I said earlier, she has a story for everyone and everything. She'll never keep any stories from us. She'll share them with us all and most people seem to remember them. It's a fun way to learn because everyone is laughing and chuckling about what this guy did and what that guy did. Little do we know, we are learning U.S. History in the process.

We take a lot of notes. It is kind of hard but you pay attention so you learn a lot more that way, I think . . . It gets kind of monotonous because every day you go in and take notes. It's kind of expected but she teaches it well.

We take notes and listen to all the questions she is lecturing about. Sometimes we will have a homework assignment like the end of the chapter section review.

She'll take a section of the chapter and review it thoroughly with the class, we take our class notes and discuss it and then it comes time for the chapter test.

I like the way she teaches. I think she is very good. She tells us little stories and it makes learning everything more interesting. Like if we learn about the presidents she tells the funny things about them. We watch a lot of movies because that kind of helps us understand without boring us to death and she talks about it and she kind of relates stories . . . but basically all we really do is talk about history and take notes.

The teacher asks questions and we get involved in discussions and she explains things to us . . . She will come up with stories to tell and make comparisons. Mostly we take notes . . . she doesn't just blurt out information, she makes it interesting.

#### *Student Attitudes*

I enjoy it. It is hard but I think it helps and it doesn't hurt to know about the past. It can only help you.

## **Appendix 2—Scientific Historian (Student interview data, Rusty.)**

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### *Teaching Style*

It's hard to describe it. We are responsible for doing it . . . The students do most of the talking. It's like we're trying to teach the teacher something, but you don't think about it until you are out of class. There is no typical day, everything is different. Every unit there will be something different.

I think the class is fantastic in that instead of studying the facts and maybe discussing them we get put into that frame of mind of both sides of the argument . . . Sometimes we examine the dominant voice, what the majority of the country was believing in, and then the subservient which is non-popular . . . Class participation is very important, I think, and I really enjoy it. We do contemporary echoes where we have to find an event or a song or a movie or anything that we see that we think reflects the time we are working on . . . It is very fun. It is a great learning atmosphere and it is also very informal. I don't know how they created it, but I am comfortable when I'm in there and I always talk.

We have class discussions over what we have read usually. There is a lot of reading in the class . . . They give you evidence and you have to synthesize and build your own interpretation and actual historical events like letters, quotes and stuff.

It is a very open setting. It is not the typical teacher lectures and the kids raise their hands. We are allowed to say what we want, and have our own opinions. That's the reason for the class, to get opinions going. To teach that things aren't always as they seem. There aren't just facts, there are different ways to look at a situation and it is okay to have an opinion, not to just accept something as right and not question it . . . We read a lot of novels and relate them to the historical period that we are studying. We do simulations, like trials. We did a trial on slavery and we do immigrant roundtables. We have reading assignments in our history books, we have to read novels, and usually we have two or three essays to do for each unit . . . They like to make a statement or ask a question and let the students discuss it. They don't like to lecture to us. They like us to do the teaching.

### *Student Attitudes*

I like it. I think it is exciting, probably because I never had a class like this. They let us say what we want to. It makes the class fun and you want to study history, you want to do your homework.

It is very interesting to me, what we have learned this year. It has been like a total opening of the government and it is like analyzing the government this year and it is really new and I really appreciate it. You have to take everything that (the teacher) says with a grain of salt. That is a new thing for me. Otherwise we would have been doing like, here is the Revolutionary War and here are the reasons they did it. It was all basically one sided. They give you the reasons but they didn't go into it as much as this class does and I really love it.

History just like chronological order is pretty boring, but American history and everything that is related in society, I like. It's not just straight history or straight English. It is the culture as a whole.

I enjoy it because I like to compare the past with present. I don't like the study of wars and names and dates. I like to study issues and concepts that keep occurring.

*Student Conceptions of Purposes for Studying History*

I like the class. I never really thought about why we are studying it. It helps to understand it now.

So you can know how to face what is going to happen. It is important to know where we have been and how the government has been run . . . so that when it is our turn we can do a good job too. It is a part of yourself, this history, and a part of what you want to do with your life.

To know about past mistakes so you don't make them again. To know about your heritage.

To see what things change and what things stay the same and hypothesize why things have changed or why they haven't . . . I think it is to give us an idea of where we come from and maybe where we are going.

*Student Knowledge of Teacher Political Beliefs*

I don't really know what he thinks.

Well, I don't know. I suppose that he is not extremely conservative . . . Both of them came out of the 60s. They do kind of reflect, like they will make a jar against Reagan. . . . He is kind of quiet.

I think he is conservative.

I'm not really sure. He doesn't like Bush. I know that.

*Student Beliefs (Have your beliefs changed as a result of this class?)*

Definitely in the area of politics. This is the first year that if I could vote I know who I would vote for and I know the reasons. Before, I wouldn't have thought about it, I would have gone with what my parents thought automatically. I didn't criticize like I do now . . . The world doesn't seem like it is everything I thought it was. Like how the government acts now and how it could be acting but is not.

No, I think that they have developed . . . It has made me more aware, if anything.

We are always analyzing things, and I think I have become more analytical.

I never thought about people that were lower in society being trapped there. It has always seemed to me that if you want to move up in society you could, and now I see that it's not that easy.

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**Appendix 3—Relativist/Reformer (Student interview data, Jeff)**

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*Teaching Style*

Mostly we do our homework and then we will go over it and talk about things that happened and then we talk about how we feel about the homework. If we agree with how everything was back then.

We have class discussions. We are allowed to voice our feelings. We learn and we tie it to what is going on right now and a lot of it is history repeating itself. We take tests but we can use our notes. Mostly it is just discussion and our opinions.

Mostly we talk about things that have happened in other countries and we do activities like we talk about things that happen now compared to what happened before and we watched a movie the other day . . . Mostly we get into big arguments. Mr. — will try to relate and sometimes people don't agree with it. So that starts an argument . . . He is usually boring, but sometimes he is fun . . . I don't understand what he is saying most of the time. Some people don't even pay attention to it. Others get right into it.

A typical day we let ideas float around, bring up a subject and we talk about it and get a discussion going and we battle why people want to do this . . . Usually everybody likes to go one way. We split up and people will fight against people and Jeff will be just sort of the interpreter . . . Assignments is [*sic*] just a piece of paper and there is just questions on it. It doesn't come out of a book. It is something that he made up. He'll say compare the coal miners with what is happening in today's news. It is real interesting . . . He is strange, but he is a good teacher. He has to learn to be more disciplinary.

We'll pass out our folders, do our work, pass back the folders. That's it . . . If we have a speaker, the speaker will talk about the subjects we are on. He tries to get all of us to talk.

Usually we will either have a speaker or a movie to watch or he will give us some papers to do and some questions, and usually he will bring up a discussion about something . . . Sometimes current events relating to things that happened before, things in history . . . He's different. He tries to be easy with everybody but it really doesn't work . . . some people get sick of it.

### *Student Attitudes*

Some things I don't like, some of them are boring. I like to do some things that are interesting.

I don't like it. I like studying it a lot more when we tie it into everyday life because if you just think of it as something that happened a long time ago it is boring, but when you think about it in real life then it has a lot more to it . . . When you just sit there and get lectured, it is very boring.

Most of it I don't really understand that well. It is kind of complicated. Social studies is my least favorite subject.

I think it is interesting. I like the Revolutionary War . . . Jeff does a pretty good job in there, he brings up points from now and then things that happened way back, and he compares it and everything like that, and that is pretty good.

I don't care for the class. It don't interest me, that's all.

It can be fun at times, sometimes. Sometimes it gets boring . . . like when



you learn stuff you already know and they just repeat it. When it repeats it is boring.

*Student Conceptions of Purposes for Studying History*

Because I would like to learn some of the things that have happened before I was born. I think it's kind of neat how they lived different than we do, the way they dress and the way they do other things.

If we can learn about it, and then if something bad happened in the past we can learn to prevent it.

So that we can know more about it. To learn about all the things that happen.

It gives you a background to know where you are living and everything. It's important because they say that everything that went down in history will come back some day, sooner or later.

Probably to stop war. It can tell us how the past went and change it for the better instead of for worse. History class ain't no use for me. I'm not really interested in it.

Mostly to learn about our past and what happened and how we got to where we are now and the wars and stuff like that . . . without it ever happening again, mostly. So you know what happened.

*Student Knowledge of Teacher Political Beliefs*

He doesn't really talk that much about it.

He is not into government a lot, except when he has to.

I think he voted for Bush. I'm not sure.

He is a liberalist. He don't believe in capital punishment, he always goes for the least side. When he brings up a discussion he more or less will tell the weak side of the story and everybody will disagree and then he will say, "Why?" and we tell him why and we have a big discussion.

I don't have no idea.

He is more liberal.

*Student Beliefs (Have your beliefs changed as a result of this class?)*

No or not really. (Four students.)

Not really, because when we are in the class we discuss our feelings and it helps us to realize more.

They have brought them out more. I started to watch the news more.

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**Appendix 4—Cosmic Philosopher (Student interview data, David)**

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*Teaching Style*

He gives us an assignment to read, and then we take notes over it for a couple of days then we have a test. We discuss things and he explains them . . . He doesn't just tell you what happens. He goes into it like he is really trying to figure it out, trying to understand. He likes to talk about present day problems and relate it to what we are studying.

We do a lot of reading and we have some discussion . . . and we write essays. We do too much in class reading. I wish the teacher would take our

tests and essays and stuff and grade them at home . . . He is a good teacher but he is also a coach. He takes his outside time to do his coaching. We do a book review four times a year, one every quarter, where we have to read a book and make a critical analysis on paper and then an oral report. He is a good lecturer, but he doesn't lecture enough. That reading in class bit just doesn't make sense . . . Maybe he is just too lazy.

We watch movies sometimes too, and most of the time we are reading. We read a lot in class, or we take notes while he talks. Sometimes kids bring up a topic or something that they are interested in talking about and he will talk about it for the whole period, but usually he doesn't have any set discussions unless we ask.

We read a chapter and we talk about history and how the same kind of things are going on today, like we were talking about absolute power and the church with the Ayatollah and it's like history repeating itself. We have discussions a lot and we have writing to improve our writing skills . . . He shows that all the classes tie in.

We have to do an oral project where he gives you a specific person and you are supposed to find some information on that person and give a report. We also had to do generations, like where we came from, different cultures and we had to put it down on a map. After we read the chapter he reviews it . . . Some days we can raise our hand and have a class discussion.

We have a rather interesting teacher who puts out things like free writing. He will say, describe how Elizabethans controlled the parliament or something like that and he will give you ten minutes to write. We have notes, and we might have a class discussion. He'll start with a basic question.

#### *Student Attitudes*

I enjoy it. I like the people that are involved. There are neat characters, like George Washington. I like politics . . . It's just interesting.

It's fun to learn about people that you hear about once in a while like Nixon, Ford, and Carter and we learn more in-depth things.

I think everyone should know about it, because it helps us learn how we live, the rules that are set.

I think it's neat. I'm just interested in history.

I like studying it. I think about it, but sometimes I don't want to hear any more of it.

I find it rather interesting most of the time. That is, if I can keep tuned in.

#### *Student Conceptions of Purposes for Studying History*

Lots of mistakes and errors. So they won't happen in the future.

To find out about things that happened and to learn from the good things. We learn from mistakes.

I think it is important because how we live now is because of what happened back then.

To know how things happen and why, so we don't make the same mistakes. So we can have a better idea and we can improve our history.

So we don't repeat mistakes that we have already made. To find what was going on to cause today.

*Student Knowledge of Teacher Political Beliefs*

He's a Democrat. He doesn't like Reagan or Bush.

Democrat. He doesn't really hate George Bush, but he could do without him.

He doesn't get into it. He just talks about history like it is and doesn't try to bring his beliefs into it.

I really don't know, he keeps everything pretty much open.

I don't have a really clear view of what he thinks, but he wants us to connect life back then with today.

I'm not exactly sure about that.

*Student Beliefs (Have your beliefs changed as a result of this class?)*

No. I'm learning a lot in his class and it is helping, but I still wouldn't change my opinion.

They haven't changed, but I have realized a little more. I'm more conscious of my views now. I think I know more about history.

No.

Yeah, I think so. More important, there are days I like it, but there are days it seems like a drag.

Sometimes. I didn't used to think that religion had any importance at all and now I see why it's important for finding out what people believe now.

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**Appendix 5—Eclectic (*Student interview data, Sumner*)**

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*Teaching Style*

We take notes and read a chapter at night and we do quizzes. Sometimes we watch a movie. He makes things interesting, some of it. He might be talking about one thing and then he might relate it into now times, things that are happening now, we kind of relate more to what we are doing now with history.

We sit there and we listen mostly. Sometimes he brings in a film and sometimes we take notes . . . We draw maps of countries. He will go right over it until you catch on to what he is doing. He doesn't sit there and bore you all class. He makes it fun once in awhile.

He talks mostly about history and stuff. The teacher does most of the talking. We read the book. Sometimes it can be fun but mostly it is boring. He gives quizzes and tests and that isn't all that hard if you study for it, but that isn't something I do all that much is study. When he is having fun teaching it makes it fun, like he was describing ships that Vikings used and . . . He drew it on the board and it made it real clear.

He usually talks about it, writes stuff on the board and you have to write it down. Pretty much the same every day. Sometimes you get to draw maps in class . . . He asks a lot of questions. Filmstrips. He brings in a demonstration, like the battle axe he brought in yesterday. It livens up the class. You

get more interest when you can see it with your own eyes . . . His teaching is the same basic routine every day.

You sit there and he expect you to read what is in the book. Most people don't. If you pay attention in his class you can pass. If you take notes you're all set because he lets you use notes for the quizzes. Sometimes you listen but in that class there is a lot of fooling around going on. He lets a lot get by. People in the back throw something across the room and it just keeps going . . . The stuff he brings in. He shows us like what they used for weapons in medieval times. Stuff like that is interesting to some people I guess. He tries to get the answer out of you and once you find out the answer like that you don't forget it.

We learn from it, but everyone acts out and fools around. He gives a lot of lectures and once in a while he will make up some kind of a game, like Jeopardy, to get more people interested, and he does demonstrations in class. He brings in artifacts and shows us how they were used. He draws pictures on the board. I think he ought to give a little more homework. He gives a lot of notes. You study the notes you'll pass the test. Maybe once or twice a semester we have to write a long report.

#### *Student Attitudes*

Some of it is boring, but some of it is kind of interesting.

I like it. I like the idea of studying history. I find it interesting, especially stuff you find out about like kings and what they did and what went on during their times.

I don't feel really bad about it. I just think it is a waste of time.

I don't mind school that much. History has always been there so it is just routine.

I don't really see much sense in it because I don't feel that we use it all that much.

I don't mind it. Some of it is pretty fun. Like when we were studying about the Greeks, that was pretty fun. I like to see how they lived back then.

It's just interesting, you know. Like when they fired Hiroshima, maybe they won't do it again.

#### *Student Conceptions of Purposes for Studying History*

So you will understand your ancestors and know how they started all this stuff that they do. Most of us weren't alive back then and when people tell you about it some of them don't tell the whole truth, and then you read it out of a book and you get the truth and really know what went on. If something happens in the future, you can relate it to something that happened before. It might come in handy.

To see what mistakes were made back then so then we don't do them over. It's for fools, I guess. I don't see why we have to take it.

To learn about our ancestors and how our country grows. If you need to know it in your job it would help or if you go to college.

I guess you just gotta know it, you have to have it for school and college. I don't see any other reason to have it. It's not like you have to use it all the time.

I guess to know what happened before and how the world was built up, who the people were.

*Student Knowledge of Teacher Political Beliefs*

I don't think he really involves them too much. He will have the good points and the bad. I don't think he takes sides.

It's hard to say.

He doesn't express his opinions very often, not in that class.

This is a world history class so you don't really get into politics that much . . . There aren't a whole lot of politics involved.

*Student Beliefs (Have your beliefs changed as a result of this class?)*

I might not be so bull-headed about some areas that I have been. Like the political race we just had. He showed that they both had good sides which helped me understand a little better.

No. It hasn't changed anything. Not that much. (Three students.)

Not really. I mean, because I don't think that much about world history. I can't get interested in it.

## **A Comparison of Oral and Written Techniques of Concept Instruction**

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### *Abstract*

*Two key social studies concepts were taught to 24 classes of eleventh-grade students using oral and written instructional modes. Conjunctive and relational concepts were taught in three different ways: definitions and critical attributes only; definition and critical attributes followed by four examples; and four examples followed by definition and critical attributes. The concepts, sovereignty and comparative advantage, were chosen because they were examples of two primary conceptual classifications. Students scored better when examples were presented first. Sequence was important only in the case of the more complex relational concept. There was no difference when oral and written techniques were compared.*

### **Introduction**

What is the association between the characteristics of the learner, the concept, and the instructional situation? Are certain techniques sufficient for teaching concepts of lesser complexity, but inadequate for more complex concepts? Are teachers wasting time giving too many examples of a concept, or placing these examples in an inappropriate sequence?

Recently, a great deal of attention has been given to the importance of concept learning in the social studies. "During recent years social studies educators with very different points of view about instruction and learning

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have been able to agree that concept learning is important” (Ehman, Mehlinger, & Patrick, 1974, p. 157).

Despite this general agreement as to the importance of concept learning, there is a great deal of misunderstanding and relatively little research demonstrating how concepts are learned. This is especially true about the more complex type of concept which is frequently taught in secondary schools. “Terminology is, at best, fuzzy, and definitions usually are absent or lack precision” (Martorella, 1972, p. 5). The research that has been done on the techniques of instruction of concepts appears to have been focused primarily on elementary education by Herbert Klausmeier, and post-secondary education by R. D. Tennyson.

Klausmeier states that three factors affect concept mastery: (a) characteristics of the learner; (b) characteristics of the instructional situation; and (c) characteristics of the concept (Klausmeier & Harris, 1966). Since teachers have little control over the characteristics of the learner and the concepts, it is obvious that research on development of appropriate instructional situations is of value. That is the subject of this study.

The study varied the three factors of concept instruction: characteristics of the learner; the concept; and the instructional situation, in an attempt to locate the most effective means of instruction for each concept type and learner style. Specifically, the study taught the two key social studies concepts of sovereignty and comparative advantage to 24 classes of eleventh-grade students. Two instructional modes were used, oral and written. Three techniques of presentation were employed: definition and critical attributes only; definition and critical attributes followed by four examples; and four examples followed by definition and critical attributes. The two concepts were chosen because they are examples of two primary conceptual classifications, conjunctive (sovereignty) and relational (comparative advantage). The effect across different learning styles was examined.

### **Characteristics of the Concept**

Research on characteristics of the concept has provided considerable information about the learning of different types of concepts. The type of concept may be more important in concept attainment than the method of presentation (Schwartz, 1966). According to Bruner (1956), concepts separate themselves into three classifications: conjunctive, disjunctive, and relational.

A conjunctive concept is one in which there is a joint presence of two or more attributes. That is, conjunctive concepts have more than one characteristic (attribute). All of the objects are events which are identified as being a particular concept and must have every one of the attributes to be a conjunctive concept. If any one of the attributes is missing, the object event is not a member of that conceptual set.

Example: the geometric concept “square”

Attributes: 1. a closed plane figure,

2. four sides of equal length,
3. four angles of 90 degrees each.

All of these attributes must be present if the shape is to be a square. The absence of any of these attributes would cause the shape to become something other than a square.

A disjunctive concept, on the other hand, is a concept in which there is the presence of one or another attribute. That is, disjunctive concepts have any one of a list of various attributes. Several attributes may make up a concept, but if any one of the attributes is present and the concept is still valid, then the concept is a disjunctive concept.

Example: the baseball concept "strike"

- Attributes:
1. a batter swings and misses a pitched ball,
  2. the umpire calls a pitched ball a strike,
  3. the batter hits the ball outside the field of play.

Only one of these attributes need be present for the event to be considered a strike. In fact, only one of these attributes can take place at one time, for each of the three attributes is exclusive of the other two.

The third type of concept is a relational concept which is defined by a specifiable relation between attributes, rather than their presence or absence.

Example: The geographic term "mountain"

- Attributes:
1. an elevation of land on the earth's surface,
  2. which is higher than a hill,
  3. and less uniform than a plateau.

The concept mountain is not definable simply by the presence or absence of attributes, but rather by the relationship with other attributes.

Conjunctive concepts are the most easily attained, while disjunctive are the most difficult (Conant and Trabasso, 1964; Schwartz, 1966). The ease of concept attainment increases as the number of critical attributes decreases (Bourne, 1956; Haygood, 1965). The difficulty of attainment of this type of concept is limited. Disjunctive concepts are often modified over time into more easily comprehended conjunctive forms (Bruner, 1956). Even when disjunctive concepts and their properties have been fully explained, students studying disjunctive concepts regularly followed patterns of solution suited only for conjunctive concepts because of the infrequency of disjunctive concepts in the social studies curriculum. For example, of the 18 major concepts listed in the Syracuse Study of Major Social Studies Concepts, none were disjunctive (Price, Hickman, & Smith, 1967). For those reasons no disjunctive concepts were used in this study.

### **Characteristics of the Instructional Situation**

Research concerning characteristics of the instructional situation indicates that the technique of presentation has an impact on the success of concept learning. Carroll (1964) and Klausmeier (1976) state that concept definition should be presented to the student prior to the examples. The definition should



be stated in terms of its critical attributes (Markle & Tieman, 1969), and these attributes should be presented as a list rather than in sentence form. Students presented with concept definitions score better on attainment tests than students who have only been presented examples (Tennyson, 1980).

Research done on characteristics of the instructional situation has used either individualized instruction or computer instruction to provide for control or variables (Tennyson & Park, 1984). Another common technique to control outside variables has been to teach concepts which would be a part of neither common knowledge, nor a normal part of an educational curriculum (e.g., nonsense syllables). While these research findings have been invaluable in constructing a solid theoretical base for concept instruction, they are not readily applicable to practical classroom use.

There is a need for research using typical classroom techniques, materials, and curriculum. Such research would be more readily adaptable to the needs of the typical classroom teacher. It is for this reason, in this study, that certain control aspects will be sacrificed in order to study concept instruction in a more real-life manner. The selection of teaching technique, number of students per section, teacher preparation, and concept selection will attempt to duplicate, as closely as possible, the typical high school classroom.

### **Key Questions in This Study**

The primary questions to be considered in this study include:

1. Does technique and mode of instruction have a significant effect on concept attainment?
2. Is there an identifiable relationship between technique or mode of instruction and student learning style?
3. Are definitions and examples necessary for concept attainment for students of all learning styles?
4. Are definitions and examples necessary for concept attainment of both conjunctive and relational concepts?
5. What effect does the sequencing of examples and definitions have on concept attainment?

### **Steps in the Study**

The study involved nine steps: (a) the identification of two key social studies concepts to be taught and tested; (b) the identification of common techniques employed in classroom teaching; (c) the identification of a group of students to be tested and the collection of background information on these students; (d) the construction of lessons to be employed in the teaching of each concept; (e) the construction of tests for each of these concepts; (f) the administration of a learning style instrument; (g) the analysis of the test results; (h) the administration of the lessons and the tests; and (i) the identification of significant differences in the amount of concept attainment for students of different learning styles on each of the instructional techniques.

## **Method**

### **Sample**

Three metropolitan area schools were used in this study. Each of the three schools served a different purpose in the study. School A served as an experimental school to determine which concepts would be the most appropriate concepts to be taught. One hundred eighty-seven eleventh-grade students from School A were given a questionnaire designed to identify student familiarity with 29 social studies concepts (see Table 1). The purpose of this questionnaire was to insure that the material taught in the experiment would be new material to which the students had not previously been exposed.

School B was a pilot school used for the purpose of determining if the presentations and tests were appropriate. Five separate classes of students were presented the material (or presentations) and tests. Following the presentations and tests, students were asked for suggestions to improve the methods used.

School C was the site of the actual experiment. The entire junior (eleventh-grade) class participated in a four-day study. Two concepts were taught to all students. Neither concept was considered to be a regular part of the school's curriculum.

The actual study sample comprised those students in the eleventh-grade social studies class in the experimental school. A total of 24 classes were scheduled with four different teachers teaching five classes each and a fifth teacher teaching four classes. Schedules were arranged so that no teacher used the same technique/mode combination more than once for each of the concepts.

Students had previously taken the California Achievement Test. The experiment lasted four days. On days one and three the concepts of sovereignty and comparative advantage were taught. On days two and four attainment tests were administered.

Students were told in advance that they would be participating in an experiment and that their participation was voluntary. They were informed that there would be tests on the material presented, but that grades would not be used for the determination of a course grade. It was assumed that this would minimize differences caused by student anxiety.

## **Design**

### **Concepts**

Three criterion were used in the determination of concepts to be used in this experiment. The first criterion was that the concepts be of importance, and normally a part of the curriculum designed for high school juniors. The second criterion was that the concepts be relatively different from each other. The final criterion was that students participating in the experiment not be familiar with the concepts.

In order that the experiment satisfy the first criterion, that of using concepts normally considered to be important, it was determined that both concepts were to be chosen from a list of essential social studies concepts, as determined by the Social Studies Curriculum Center at Syracuse University. In order to satisfy the second criterion, that concepts be substantially different, it was determined that, if possible, one concept would be a conjunctive concept and the other would be a relational concept. To satisfy the third criterion, that they be concepts with which the students were unfamiliar, a survey was distributed to students in Schools B as described above. Three reasons exist to allow one to safely assume that if the students in School B were unfamiliar with a concept, the students in School C would also be unfamiliar with the concept. First, both of these schools were from the same district, using the same district-wide curriculum plan. Second, the schools were geographically adjacent, with student populations of similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Finally, approximately 30–40% of the students in each school attended the same junior high school, which acted as a feeder to both high schools.

The survey used in School B listed 29 concepts, 16 of which were listed as essential by the Social Studies Curriculum Center. The survey is reproduced in Table 1. Numbers following each of the concepts identify the number of students who identified the degree of familiarity they had with that particular concept.

As Table 1 indicates, the least familiar concept on the survey was comparative advantage, a relational concept. The second least familiar concept was sovereignty, a conjunctive concept. Thus, these two concepts met the criteria of importance, unfamiliarity, and difference of classification of concept.

### **Manner of Concept Instruction**

As a result of the research on teaching techniques, the concepts of this study were presented using an expository approach. Both of the two most common expository modes of instruction, the lecture and the use of reading were employed. Each of these two modes were divided into three techniques: (a) a statement of the definition; (b) the statement of the definition followed by four examples; and (c) the presentation of four examples followed by the definition. When definitions were presented, the concept attributes were presented in a list form. When examples were used, the concept's label was incorporated in the examples as frequently as possible so that the learner tied together the attributes of the definition with the examples. Overhead projection transparencies illustrating the definition, attributes, and examples were employed when appropriate. After teachers presented the material no additional information was provided. Students were free to ask questions and teachers were free to respond, but only to restate information previously provided. No new material, discussion, or elaboration was allowed.

**Table 1**  
**Student Familiarity with Selected Social Studies Concepts**

	I am not familiar with the term	I am familiar with the term but do not know what it means	I know what the term means
Checks and Balances	4	55	124
Comparative Advantage*	117	57	14
Compromise*	2	23	158
Confederation	4	82	98
Conflict*	0	0	185
Culture*	0	13	170
Diplomacy	2	90	92
Economics	1	45	150
Embargo	12	65	116
Empire	2	17	160
Federal	1	55	127
Habitat*	2	12	171
Independence	1	6	178
Industrialization*	1	24	160
Input-Output*	7	64	137
Institution*	4	19	162
International	0	19	163
Interaction*	8	57	120
Market Economy*	40	97	47
Morality*	10	74	99
Nationalism	7	64	114
Power*	0	6	179
Savings*	0	2	184
Security	0	3	184
Scarcity*	41	43	107
Secular*	88	61	34
Social Change*	25	82	51
Sovereignty*	91	68	24
Urbanization*	5	25	155

\*Price, R.A., Hickman, W. & Smith, G. (1966). Major concepts for the social studies. Syracuse: University of Syracuse Press.

Examples of how each of the modes and techniques were presented are shown below. The techniques and modes for both sovereignty and comparative advantage were nearly identical.

*Technique 1, Mode 1 (Definition only, oral.)* Teachers were provided a one page reading which listed the definition and critical attributes of the concept. After the teacher had introduced the lesson, he/she was instructed to

show a transparency while explaining the definition and attributes in his/her own words. Teachers were asked not to provide the students with any examples to further explain the concept. Finally, teachers were instructed to answer any questions, being careful not to use any examples or new material in the answers.

*Technique 2, Mode 1 (Definition followed by four examples, oral.)* Teachers were provided a reading of approximately three pages, listing the definition followed by critical attributes and four examples of the concept. After an introduction, the teacher was to show a transparency illustrating the concept while explaining the concept's definition and attributes. Next, the teacher was to describe each of the four examples from the reading and discuss whether the example was an instance or a non-instance of the concept. Overhead transparencies were used wherever appropriate.

*Technique 3, Mode 1 (Four examples, followed by definition, oral.)* Teachers were provided a reading of approximately three pages, listing four examples of the concept followed by the definition and attributes. After an introduction, the teacher described each of the examples in the readings and discussed whether they were instances or non-instances of the concept. Next, the teacher showed and explained the definition and attributes using a transparency.

*Technique 1, Mode 2 (Definition only, reading.)* After an introduction, the teacher handed out a one page narrative listing the concept definition and critical attributes. Students were allowed sufficient time to finish the reading. The readings were then returned. No discussion took place.

*Technique 2, Mode 2 (Definition followed by four examples, reading.)* After an introduction, the teacher handed out a reading of approximately three pages, listing the definition, critical attributes, and four examples of the concept. Students were allowed sufficient time to finish the reading. Students then returned the readings. No discussion took place.

*Technique 3, Mode 2 (Examples followed by definition, reading.)* After an introduction, the teacher handed out a reading of approximately three pages, presenting four examples of the concept. These examples were followed by the statement of the definition and critical attributes. Again, students were allowed sufficient time to finish the reading, and then were asked to return the reading. No discussion took place.

### **Treatment of Data**

The analysis had two purposes. The first phase of the analysis was to prepare the data for the tests of statistical significance. The first step in the preparation was to determine the reliability of each of the tests of attainment for the concepts and for the learning style questionnaire. The reliability study sought to determine the internal consistency of each of the tests.

The second step in the preparation of the data was to identify the response patterns through a factor analysis. When a factor analysis and a reliability

study are used together, it can be determined which portion of a test possesses the greatest internal consistency.

A third step in the preparation of the data was a Pearson correlation study. A correlation such as this involves the determination of the strength of association. If the tests were valid there would be a high positive correlation between the items. A high correlation was defined as one in which the correlation approaches the reliability of each of the tests.

The final step in the preparation of the data was to determine if the test results were normally distributed, in order to determine the number of students in each of the learning styles, and technique and mode categories. This information was developed through a frequency distribution.

Following the preparation of the data and the adjustments indicated by the findings in the study of the reliability, correlations, frequency distributions, and factor analyses, the study's hypotheses were tested. The hypotheses were tested through the use of a four step operation involving observation of mean scores, a three-way analysis of variance, a one-way analysis of variance, and an analysis of covariance.

Mean scores for each technique and mode of instruction were assembled and observed.

## **Results**

### **Preparation of Data**

This data preparation involved, primarily, a series of steps to determine the internal consistency of the teacher-made concept attainment instruments. Since this process, while necessary, was cumbersome and detailed, it is summarized only briefly here. For sovereignty, although two distinct clusters emerged from the factor analysis, the reliability for the entire 17 item set was .82. This alpha was higher than either of the two clusters that emerged from the analysis. Thus, concept attainment was measured by the results from the entire test. The case was nearly the same for comparative advantage. Here, the internal consistency for the entire set was slightly lower, but still respectable at .66.

Two further checks of the concept attainment tests were conducted. A Pearson correlation determined the degree of correlation between each of the achievement tests and selected portions of each of these tests. If the correlation approached the reliability, then it could be argued that the test should be analyzed by using all the questions rather than its specific parts. The results of these correlations were .63 for sovereignty and .57 for comparative advantages.

Next, frequency distributions were used to test the spread of student test scores to determine if there was a ceiling effect, i.e., if a large number of students had received very high scores. The frequency distributions showed that the test scores were not appreciably skewed. Therefore, no correction of either of the concepts was necessary.

*Analysis of Group Differences on Concept Analysis of Variance for Sovereignty (Three-way).* The mean scores for students in each of the subgroups defined by technique, mode, and style are reported in Table 2. The three-way analysis of variance (Table 3) showed no significant mode effect ( $p = .88$ ). It also showed that there were no significant two-way interactions ( $p = .68, .54, .09$ ) nor a three-way interaction ( $p = .49$ ). The analysis does show, however, a significant technique effect ( $p = .03$ ), and a significant style effect ( $p < .001$ ). The significance of the technique and style effects require further investigation.

**Table 2**  
**Means and Standard Deviations for Sovereignty**

Tech	Mode 1			Mode 2		
	I + II	Style III	IV	I + II	Style III	IV
1	4.91 (2.47)	5.04 (2.25)	5.95 (2.32)	6.20 (2.48)	4.81 (2.11)	7.61 (1.95)
2	5.90 (2.88)	5.95 (2.28)	7.14 (1.96)	5.74 (2.35)	5.67 (3.06)	6.96 (2.13)
3	5.88 (1.89)	6.14 (1.74)	7.64 (2.31)	5.00 (2.14)	5.80 (1.54)	7.06 (2.46)
Technique 1 = 5.58 (2.23)		Mode 1 = 6.06 (2.27)		Style I + II = 5.54 (2.46)		
2 = 6.24 (2.45)		2 = 6.10 (2.32)		III = 5.58 (2.18)		
3 = 6.43 (2.13)					IV = 7.08 (2.22)	

*Technique (One-way).* In order to determine which of the technique groups were significantly different from one another, a one-way analysis of variance by technique was run, using the Least Significant Difference (LSD) test and TukeyB test at the .05 level of significance. Techniques 2 and 3 were both found to be significantly different from Technique 1, using either the LSD and TukeyB tests of significance, but not significantly different from each other.

An interpretation of this analysis leads to the conclusion that when a conjunctive concept such as sovereignty is presented to students, the students will do significantly better if they are provided with examples as well as a

**Table 3**  
**Analysis of Variance for Sovereignty Achievement Test**

	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	Significance of F
Main Effects	226.1	5	45.2	8.9	.001
Technique	37.4	2	18.7	3.7	.026
Mode	.1	1	.1	.02	.9
Style	178.0	2	89.0	17.9	.001
2-way Interact	42.2	8	5.3	1.0	.4
Tech Mode	24.9	2	12.5	2.5	.09
Tech Style	11.6	4	2.9	.6	.7
Mode Style	6.2	2	3.1	.6	.5
3-way Interact	17.5	4	4.4	.9	.5
Total	2061.9	368	5.6		

definition, rather than simply a definition. The order of the examples and definition, however, does not make a significant difference. Although students in the sample did better on average using an inductive approach (examples prior to definition), one can not generalize that the inductive approach is superior to the deductive approach (definition prior to examples) in the instruction of conjunctive concepts. ARI, a 24 item likart scale, was the learning style inventory used in this study. It reflects equal parts of the individual's perceptions of both their self-concept and cognitive ability.

*Learning Style for Sovereignty (One Way).* As a result of taking the test individuals are placed in one of four categories: I. The individual has a high degree of self-concept and relies heavily on internal information sources; II. The individual receives very little information either internally or externally and has low cognitive development; III. The individual has high cognitive development and is highly receptive to external information; IV. The individual is open to both internal and external information, has a high degree of cognitive development, and a high self concept. These categories are the basis of the statistical analysis of this study.

In order to determine which of the learning style groups were significantly different from the others, a one-way analysis of variance by learning style with auxilliary multiple ranges test was run using the LSD test and TukeyB test at the .05 level of significance. Both Learning Style I + II and Style III are significantly different from Learning Style IV, but not significantly different from one another.

*Analysis of Covariance.* It was suspected that style and other student characteristics were highly interrelated. It was, therefore, necessary to deter-



mine if the statistically significant results related to style were independent of more traditional student characteristics such as past student achievement. This was one of the questions of this study. In order to determine the extent to which the learning style effect is “explainable” by intelligence differences among learning styles, an analysis of covariance was run with the California Achievement Test (CAT) as a covariate. The results of this analysis are reported in Table 4. The analysis of covariance indicates that the learning style effect is still present, but not nearly as great as prior to the adjustment for difference in the CAT scores. In the analysis of variance, style accounted for approximately 8.7% of the difference. In the analysis of covariance, style accounts for only 1.6% of the difference.

**Table 4**  
**Analysis of Covariance for Sovereignty Achievement Test**  
**with CAT as Covariate**

	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	Significance of F
Covariates	545.3	1	545.3	137.7	.001
CAT					
Main Effects	79.9	5	15.9	4.0	.001
Technique	40.2	2	20.1	5.1	.007
Mode	.5	1	.5	.1	.7
Style	34.5	2	17.3	4.4	.01
2-way Interact	36.1	8	4.5	1.1	.3
Tech Mode	16.0	2	8.0	2.0	.1
Tech Style	14.3	4	3.6	.9	.5
Mode Style	6.6	2	3.3	.8	.4
3-way Interact	14.8	4	3.7	.9	.4
Total	2062	368	5.6		

*Analysis of Variance for Comparative Advantage (Three-way).* The technique, mode, and style effects of instruction of the relational concept of comparative advantage were also subjected to an analysis of variance. Mean scores for students were also determined. The mean scores for students in each of the subgroups defined by technique, mode, and style are reported in Table 5. The three-way analysis of variance (Table 6) for comparative advantage showed no mode effect ( $p = .98$ ). It also showed that there were no significant two-way interactions ( $p = .19, .94, \text{ and } .81$ ), nor a three-way interaction ( $p = .61$ ). The analysis does, however, show a technique effect, as it did in the instruction of sovereignty, ( $p < .001$ ). There is also a significant style effect ( $p < .001$ ), which is again similar to the instruction of sovereignty.

**Table 5**  
**Means and Standard Deviations for Comparative Advantage**

Tech	Mode 1			Mode 2		
	I + II	Style III	IV	I + II	Style III	IV
1	6.22 (2.23)	6.59 (2.45)	8.05 (3.12)	6.59 (1.73)	6.94 (2.18)	8.17 (2.23)
2	9.33 (2.25)	8.29 (3.23)	9.74 (2.64)	8.67 (2.72)	9.08 (2.61)	10.18 (2.79)
3	6.55 (2.50)	8.00 (2.75)	9.10 (3.13)	7.06 (2.53)	7.13 (2.15)	7.92 (2.06)
Technique 1 =	7.10 (2.44)		Mode 1 =	7.93 (2.84)	Style I + II =	7.11 (2.49)
2 =	9.17 (2.81)		2 =	7.85 (2.39)	III =	7.63 (2.62)
3 =	7.68 (2.54)				IV =	8.77 (2.73)

**Table 6**  
**Analysis of Variance for Comparative Advantage Achievement Test**

	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	Significance of F
Main Effects	402.9	5	80.6	12.6	.001
Technique	242.8	2	121.4	19.0	.001
Mode	.006	1	.006	.001	.98
Style	142.8	2	71.4	11.2	.001
2-way Interact	30.9	8	3.9	.6	.8
Tech Mode	21.3	2	10.7	1.7	.2
Tech Style	4.8	4	1.2	.2	.9
Mode Style	2.7	2	1.3	.3	.8
3-way Interact	17.3	4	4.3	.7	.6
Total	2693.2	368	7.3		

*Technique (One-way).* Again, in order to determine which of the technique groups were different from one another, a one-way analysis of variance with auxiliary multiple ranges tests (LSD and TukeyB) was run. The results of this one-way analysis indicate that Technique 2 is significantly different

from both Techniques 1 and 3, but 1 and 3 are not significantly different from each other.

The results of this test are quite different from the results of the sovereignty test. In this case, using a relational concept considered more difficult, it was not the use of examples that made the difference in concept attainment, but the order in which the definition and examples were presented. In this situation, when the examples were presented prior to the definition, they appeared to be of minimal value (7.10 with definition only, 7.68 with examples followed by definition). This would indicate that with a difficult concept, examples are much more valuable when they follow the definition rather than precede it.

*Learning Style for Comparative Advantage (One-way).* Again, a one-way analysis of variance by learning style with auxiliary multiple ranges tests was run using the LSD and TukeyB test at the .05 level of significance. Again, as in the case of the concept of sovereignty, both Style I + II and Style III were significantly different from Learning Style IV, but not significantly different from one another.

*Analysis of Covariance.* The style effect which was determined to be significant in the analysis of variance for sovereignty again requires further investigation. As in the case of sovereignty, the relationship between style and achievement level was tested. An analysis of covariance was run to determine this relationship. The results of this analysis are reported in Table 7.

As one can observe from this table, style effect, when related to the student previous achievement record, although much weaker, is significant at

**Table 7**  
**Analysis of Covariance for Comparative Advantage Achievement Test with CAT as a Covariate**

	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	Significance of F
Covariates	288.6	1	288.6	49.1	.001
CAT					
Main Effects	297.5	5	59.5	10.1	.001
Technique	249.9	2	124.9	21.2	.001
Mode	.04	1	.04	.007	.9
Style	35.4	2	17.7	3.0	.05
2-way Interact	26.6	8	3.3	.6	.8
Tech Mode	18.8	2	9.4	1.6	.2
Tech Style	2.8	4	.7	.1	.98
Mode Style	3.2	2	1.6	.3	.8
3-way Interact	23.1	4	5.8	.98	.4
Total	2693.2	368	7.3		

the .05 level ( $p = .05$ ). Again, this is a similar result to that which was achieved in the analysis of covariance for sovereignty.

### **Summary of Primary Findings**

The primary findings are summarized below.

1. Concept attainment was greater when examples were provided. This level of attainment was significant regardless of the placement of examples in relation to the definition, when the conjunctive concept, sovereignty, was tested.

2. Concept attainment was significantly greater when the definition was given prior to the examples only in the case of the relational concept of comparative advantage. In the case of the conjunctive concept of sovereignty, there was no significant difference in test results in cases where examples were provided, regardless of the placement of the examples and definition.

3. There was no significant difference in the level of concept attainment for students who received the oral mode of instruction as opposed to the written mode of instruction.

4. Learning style appears to be a learning characteristic separate from intelligence and previous student achievement. Although there appears to be a certain relationship between these characteristics, learning style was shown to be significantly different.

### **Discussion**

Some important conclusions can be drawn from an interpretation of the analyses. First, while students in the sample learned both the relational and the conjunctive concepts better when examples were provided along with the definition and critical attributes, the sequence in which those examples were presented resulted in some differences.

With the simpler conjunctive concept of sovereignty, simply the presence of examples was sufficient. The placement of these examples made no statistically significant difference. Apparently, the concept was simple enough that the students inferred the definition from the examples, thereby simply reinforcing an inference they already had made.

With the more complex relational concept of comparative advantage, students were unable to detect the critical attributes through the discovery (inductive) method of examples followed by definition. Without the definition given before the examples, the examples became meaningless. For this concept, students did nearly as well without any examples at all, as they did with the examples prior to the definition. In this case, providing the examples appears to not be worth the effort. Although further research needs to follow, a case can be made from this study that the more complex the concept, the greater the need for expository instruction.

A second conclusion drawn from this study concerns the relationship of intelligence and learning style. In both situations in this study, the effects of style and intelligence had some independence. That is, when intelligence was used as a covariate, the style effect remained significant. There was,

however, a relatively large amount of overlapping, indicating that perhaps there is a certain relationship between intelligence and learning style—at least learning style based on the ARI questionnaire. When one considers that the learning style categorizations are based on self-concept and cognitive development, it appears somewhat natural that there would be a certain relationship with intelligence. Perhaps intelligence at an early age greatly affects one's self-concept, thereby causing one to favor a certain style of learning. Certainly, one's cognitive development will be affected by one's intelligence, again causing a relationship between learning style and intelligence.

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## **Teaching Twenty-First Century Citizenship: Social Psychological Foundations**

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### *Abstract*

*Effective American (U.S.) citizenship in the Twenty-first century may require a shift in the value orientation which currently characterizes American life. Two components of the American value system are becoming increasingly dysfunctional. American social science, and accordingly the social studies curriculum, has become narrowly focused on an economic model of human decision-making. Such a one-dimensional model of man, because it invalidates by omission justice-based models of decision-making, leaves American society with a reduced capacity for addressing social dilemmas, particularly commons-type problems. Secondly, American cultural life has been dominated by a heavy and one-sided commitment to primary control. Such an imbalance, which invalidates secondary control as a means of meeting basic control needs, leaves American citizens with no normatively sanctioned motivational dynamic for addressing social dilemmas. Social studies, as the discipline most explicitly charged with promoting citizenship, may become increasingly ineffective in meeting this challenge unless teachers at all levels and in all curriculum domains can correct the values imbalance in American culture.*

### **Introduction**

As we approach the 21st century, planet Earth and its inhabitants are undergoing massive transformations. The collapse of communism as a viable economic system, the dissolution of the Russian hegemony over the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the diminished threat of nuclear conflict between the great powers can be seen as progress toward a more hopeful future for humankind. Similarly the belated recognition of the hopelessness of apartheid as a long term social system in South Africa can be seen as progress toward a more humane and less racist international order. These hopeful indicators, however, are counterbalanced by concerns for the environment, indications of a growing gap between rich nations and poor nations,

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spreading crises in drug use, and other indicators of social disorganization in the developed world.

The problems of the future which are clearly evident at present provide a worthy and valid guide for reflection on citizenship education. Among these problems perhaps the most troublesome, because it is the most all-encompassing, is the worldwide ecological crisis. In the Third World environmental degradation accelerates as nations like Brazil and the Philippines exploit their rainforests for lumber or agricultural expansion. In the developed world energy consumption continues to accelerate as the hard lessons taught by OPEC in the 1970s are forgotten. The threat to the ozone layer continues to be a problem, with Third World nations pushing to develop industries which produce chlorofluorocarbons, as the developed nations ban their use.

The accumulating evidence that these and other trends pose massive threats to the habitability of the planet suggests content for the public school curriculum. Certainly young people need to know how any ecosystem works as a network of interdependent components, and how imbalances affect all elements in the system. Instructional models for teaching such content are currently available (Novak, 1980; Novak & Gowin, 1984), and can be appropriately incorporated into the design of science curricula.

The less obvious curriculum imperative, however, is appropriately part of social education. The ecological crisis is finally a people problem. One person's decision to act in an environmentally irresponsible fashion has a negligible impact on the environment; the individual decisions of three billion people to pollute will, in the aggregate, destroy the environment in short order. The problem for an environmentally sound social studies curriculum is how to design instruction which will impact on the individual decisions of students far into the future. This problem, while easy to verbalize, is resistant to solution because of long held and deeply cherished social and cultural values of Americans. Because of the complexity of the problem, this paper can provide only a broad outline of the problem for pedagogy. This outline is offered in the hope that it will lead to more detailed consideration of the many facets of the problem.

### **Social Studies and Education for Citizenship**

There is a long association of the social studies curriculum with the responsibility for preparing youth for responsible citizenship. Most rationales for teaching history, civics, economics, government, and geography share an explicit claim that the study of these disciplines will provide the knowledge base for the informed decision-making of future citizens. Given that role for the social studies, curricular decisions in social studies must be influenced by the nature of the problems which future citizens will confront. Curricular work must include a concern for defining those problems in terms of the value systems of society.



In the past much of the work in social studies curriculum has taken the approach of identifying basic explicit and implicit value systems of American society, and designing curricula for inculcating youth with those values. Thus the principles embodied in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights have served as explicit cornerstones for the design of curriculum. The traditions of English Common Law and the ideologies of competitive individualism and free enterprise have served as an implicit framework for much social studies curricular work. Building on these cultural foundations and working within these ideological frameworks, social studies educators have tried to select that knowledge from history and the social sciences which will help young people learn to function within American society as adults. Such an approach had considerable legitimacy as long as American society functioned in a physical environment of low complexity.

The challenge of the 21st century, however, is fundamentally different. American ideology has always presumed similarity between the sum of the individual interests of citizens and the collective interest of the society as a whole. Under this presumption free competition between individuals yields the ultimate good of the society as a whole. While that presumption may have had validity in Jefferson's world of small farmers, or in small New England villages, its validity in a complex interdependent world of high technology and mass consumption is clearly questionable. In the complex world of the late 20th century it is already evident that many problems of society can only be addressed through collective cooperative action. Social studies curriculum workers will increasingly need to challenge existing ideological premises of society and balance them with values based on cooperative group behavior.

The "tragedy of the commons" metaphor serves as an effective illustration of the nature of the challenge in the context of environmental crisis. Accordingly the tragedy of the commons will be used to focus discussion on the inadequacy of traditional American ideology.

### **The Tragedy of the Commons:**

#### **An Advance Organizer for the Environmental Crisis**

One basic belief of the American political-economic culture is that when each pursues his or her own best interest, the best interest of society as a whole is also secured. As Hardin (1968) demonstrates in his essay, "The Tragedy of the Commons," this assumption is unwarranted. He describes a situation in which a common grazing field is shared by a group of shepherds. Each shepherd is free to use the commons, and is faced with the decision of whether to increase the size of his herd. The situation is such that if one or only a few shepherds increase herd size, the commons is not endangered. However, if all choose to increase herds, the commons will be overgrazed and destroyed. In this situation, no individual shepherd's actions can influence the final outcome. This can only be effected by collective action.

The tragedy of the commons serves as an appropriate metaphor for the environmental problems facing the human race. The atmosphere is the commons shared by everyone. Each individual is free to pollute the atmosphere with auto exhaust, pesticides, and fluorocarbons, in the pursuit of such personal benefits as private transportation, more marketable produce, and air conditioning. Yet if everyone contributes to the pollution of the atmosphere at the rate Americans have been doing, the environment cannot handle the load.

The tragedy of the commons illustrates a class of problems we call social dilemmas. Three elements are shared by all social dilemmas; (1) collective effort will provide some public good; (2) securing the public good is costly in some fashion for the individual, but less costly than the loss of the public good; (3) the individual acting independently cannot either secure or condemn the public good (Lynn & Oldenquist, 1986). While environmental degradation is being used as an illustration for this article, other societal problems are readily identifiable as social dilemmas, e.g., declining levels of informed political participation in a democracy, socially destructive mass media programming, and overpopulation.

### **Social Dilemmas and Economic Models of Citizenship**

Social dilemmas have always been problematic for American culture, because Americans have traditionally accepted an economic model of human behavior and human psychology. The coincidence of the founding of the American Republic with the intellectual models of man and society of Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham may have contributed to the informal institutionalization of the economic model of man in America. More importantly, the conditions of life in America, particularly the mobility of American life, put the qualities of self-reliance and economic independence on a pedestal. As a result, American citizenship values are characterized by an excessive form of egocentrism, which is most clearly delineated by the utilitarian models of Smith and Bentham. Most recently, American social science has adopted these utilitarian models for the study of individual decision making in society. The conceptual structure of society which underlies many current high school social studies texts is grounded in this economic ideology of human nature.

The economic model of citizenship is composed of two elements, a theory of utility and a theory of judgment or choice (Tyler, Rasinski & Griffin, 1986). The elements of the theory of utility are: (1) maximization of personal gain; (2) emphasis on material rewards; and (3) focus on short-term gains and losses. Of these, personal gain is the dominant element. The theory of judgment proposes that individuals make decisions based on a more or less adequate calculation of probabilities that action will lead to subjectively favorable consequences. Such a socially validated view of humankind presents a quandary for a society confronted with social dilemmas, as the very structure for

thought about social problems is too narrowly focused on the individual's pursuit of self-interest. A social studies curriculum which attempts to work within this economic framework to prepare young people for their future roles as citizens will necessarily be inadequate.

### **An Alternative to the Economic Model of Man**

In recognition of the inherent limits of the economic model of man as a basis for policy-making regarding social dilemmas, several alternatives have been proposed (Tyler, Rasinski & Griffin, 1986). Those alternatives have been labelled the *distributive justice* and the *procedural justice* models. The distributive justice model focuses on the decision-maker's application of principles of fairness in the allocation of outcomes. The procedural justice model focuses on the decision-maker's application of principles of fairness in the procedures which led to the allocation of outcomes. These models of human decision-making provide a worthy alternative for shaping social studies instruction consistent with the goals of citizenship. Their utility lies in their superior applicability in the solution of social dilemmas. By focusing attention on principles of justice, attention is focused away from a narrow concern with immediate self-interest, the hobgoblin in the tragedy of the commons.

How well do the justice-based models of human decision-making match up with our knowledge of human nature? A number of social psychological studies provide evidence that human beings do respond to issues of justice in making decisions, but conditions surrounding the situations may limit the tendency toward considerations of justice. Tyler et al. (1986) report 14 studies which explored the comparative influence of justice-based judgments and gain-and-loss judgments on political evaluations and behaviors (Rasinski, 1984; Rasinski & Tyler, 1985; Tyler, 1984a; 1984b; 1984c; Tyler & Caine, 1981; Tyler & Folger, 1980; Tyler, Rasinski & McGraw, 1985). They concluded that: (1) fairness judgments are distinct from judgments for personal gain; and (2) fairness exercises an independent influence on political evaluations and behaviors in studies including indices of both gain/loss and of fairness.

Other research throws light on the conditions under which judgments of fairness presumably will operate. Kahle & Beatty (1987), in a study of the effect of the Oregon bottle return bill on cognitive dynamics, reported evidence that subjective norms and attitudes are determinants of behavior in response to social dilemmas. Rapaport (1988), in a study of decisions to contribute to the public good, provided evidence that such decisions are dependent upon the perception of the collective good and altruism. Schwartz & Tessler (1973), in a study of intentions toward organ donation for transplant purposes, provided evidence that personal normative beliefs (beliefs tied to potential loss of self-esteem) are powerful influences on intentions. Elsewhere, Schwartz reports that the conditions necessary to the activation of moral

norms include: (1) the belief that the action will impact on the welfare of others; and (2) the individual must ascribe responsibility for the act to him/herself. An eloquent validation of the truths of these conclusions was witnessed by millions via television in the heroic acts of individual citizens in the wake of the collapse of Interstate 880 in the San Francisco Bay area earthquake of 1989. These studies indicate that the psychodynamics which underlie the effective institutionalization of principles of justice, because of the value element, are far more complex than those which underlie the teaching of knowledge and skills.

### **The Instructional Problem Posed by the Inadequacy of the Economic Model of Man**

While the economic model of man is inadequate for dealing effectively with social dilemmas, it is adequate for many areas of decision-making. It is thus inappropriate to entirely replace the economic model with a justice-based model. Rather, the justice-based model is needed as a supplement, so that young people have a socially validated alternative when confronting citizen decision situations for which the self-interest model is inappropriate. This implies a need for experience in distinguishing between decision frames for which self-interest is the most adequate criterion, and those for which justice-based criteria are more appropriate. This is a relatively minor instructional problem. It is easily addressed by case studies conducted under a social simulation rubric. When students are placed in choice situations where the self-interest model leads to failure, the experience, appropriately mediated conceptually by the teacher, may create an openness to consideration of the argument for justice-based rationales. Experience with these rationales, if structured so as to require resolution of intergroup conflict, could equip young people with a cognitive foundation for identifying appropriate grounds for decision-making.

The really difficult problem for a science of pedagogy, however, concerns the conditions under which individuals extend justice-based consideration to other individuals and groups who are perceived as outsiders. In many social dilemmas facing American society in the 21st century, such as environmental protection, the crisis arises because the citizens of other societies are attempting to do those very things in which we as a society have long engaged. Cutting down forests for lumber or agricultural ground is a case in point. American pioneers in the 19th century did this with abandon, clear-cutting timber for farm land. This activity was not seen as a serious problem as there was always more land over the next hill. In the late 20th century, however, clear-cutting by South Americans is seen by many Americans as an imposition on the shared environment, as cutting of the Amazon rain forest threatens to change climate patterns world wide.

Before justice-based models of decision-making in social dilemmas have a chance for normative acceptance, all parties to the dilemmas must be accorded equal moral consideration. The environmental crisis is one in which

every citizen of the planet is a party to the dilemma. The fact that resolution of the environmental crisis involves all humanity working cooperatively may strain the human capacity for conflict resolution. There has seldom been a test of the capacity of human beings to extend moral consideration to every other human being. Most nation-states have difficulty securing cooperation within their own citizenry.

It remains to be seen whether Americans can accept a position of equality with other nations, particularly Third World nations. How readily will Americans recognize that South Americans have no less right to cut their rain forests than American pioneers on the frontier had a right to clear the forest for farms? It is unrealistic to expect people in other nations to forgo their own development in order to preserve the atmosphere's capacity to handle the pollution generated by our high levels of consumption. It is always easier for individuals to blame outsiders for their problems than to acknowledge that they are themselves part of the problem.

If Americans are to secure international cooperation in the resolution of the environmental crisis, it will be necessary for the American public to accept the need for self-restraint. Without evidence of good faith demonstrations of self-restraint on the part of the American public, it is doubtful that Third World peoples will be agreeable to restraining themselves to accommodate our profligate consumption. The political difficulties of the leaders of Colombia in suppressing the growers of coca is a case study illustration of this kind of problem. The Andean peasants see cocaine addiction as an American problem. They see no reason why they should forgo producing their cash crop because North Americans lack the capacity for self-control. The American problem with self-control, however, may very well be deeply rooted in American cultural values.

### **American Cultural Values and Self-Control**

One of the principle forces driving human behavior is the need to feel in control. This need is variously conceptualized by psychologists as efficacy or competence. While there are differences in the meanings of these terms, both refer to the mental state associated with success in achieving one's intentions.

There are many different ways that individuals can meet their needs for feeling in control. One useful distinction has been labelled primary vs. secondary control (Weisz, Rothbaum & Blackburn, 1984). In primary control the individual experiences satisfaction by imposing a change on the physical or social environment. In secondary control the individual experiences satisfaction by choosing to exercise control over the self. In crude terms a culture which places exclusive value in the experience of primary control could be associated with the cult of machismo; in such a culture the individual who achieves the satisfaction of being in control by exercising control over the self (secondary control) may be classified as a wimp.

American cultural values have traditionally emphasized the machismo

outlook, as evidenced by popular mythology. The movies and television have much more often idealized the John Wayne character or Rambo than the David Carradine character in the television series *KungFu*. It is telling that the KungFu character was trained in the Orient. Many East Asian cultures place a premium on the capacity for self-restraint. As reported by Azuma (1984), Japanese culture balances the value placed on primary and secondary control, granting the practice of secondary control respectability and cultural legitimacy. Japanese children learn to distinguish more effectively between situations in terms of the form of expression the control need should take, rather than feeling the normative pressure to pursue primary control motives exclusively. Thus Japanese children learn how to control the destructive effects on the psyche of situations which cannot be controlled. In contrast, American cultural values bias Americans toward primary control, so that normative influences operate to prevent the development of a capacity for self-control.

One negative consequence of this cultural bias that has been cited in the literature is the capacity of a culturally pervasive single-minded pursuit of primary control to provoke "commons dilemmas" (Weisz, Rothbaum & Blackburn, 1984). What is suggested here is that in the United States a cultural value complex, driven by the primary control motive, operates to encourage an impulsive commitment to the pursuit of self-centered gratification of the felt need of the moment. Because the satisfaction of the control need through secondary channels has been closed off by cultural values, individuals have no normatively acceptable basis for justifying any personal efforts to control their behavior. In a cultural climate in which everyone else is perceived as rapidly pursuing self-interest, the individual who does not do so experiences self-doubt, and loss of self-esteem.

Several social problems of epidemic proportions among adolescents document the operation and consequences of such a cultural value system. Currently, the major problems facing public schools include drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, adolescent lack of self-discipline for assuming responsibility for one's actions, and physical violence. All of these can be explained in terms of an incapacity of young people to exercise effective self-control. It can be argued that they are operating in consistency with the implicit American cultural value of pursuing self-interest. Of course, it is short-term self-interest, and long-term disaster. Yet our society, while decrying these social ills, continues to promote the virtues of primary control.

If Americans are to reach the point where they can realistically apply principles of justice to addressing the commons problem of the global environment, we must first address our pervasive cultural value problem with the control motive. It is not sufficient to attempt to legitimize justice-based decision-making; as a culture we must also provide motivational support for that kind of approach to social dilemmas. The public schools may be particularly well situated for advancing this agenda.

## **Curriculum Support System for Citizenship Goals**

Implementing changes of the magnitude indicated above requires broad-based transformation of the curriculum. An explication of those transformations can be organized under four headings: (1) changes in the disciplinary content of the curriculum; (2) changes in curricular focus; (3) changes in the instructional strategies employed; and (4) changes in the psycho-social context of instruction.

The curricular content of the social studies is currently imbalanced toward the economic decision-making model of humankind. Over the past two decades, academic and consumer economics has become commonplace as a course offering. An economics curriculum necessarily assumes an economic model of humankind, and is accordingly limited. There is a need to balance this focus with a jurisprudentially oriented curriculum, constructed on a justice-based model of humankind. Ideally, a civics course would provide this balance. The existing civics curriculum, however, has been unequal to this task. It should therefore be reworked to focus on moral issues in relation to problems current in society.

The curricular focus of a moral issues curricula should be on problems current in society. As moral issues are valuational, their consideration is authentic experience for students only to the extent that the issues have consequential implications for them. Problems that are current in society can be more readily related to consequences for students and can thereby become more authentic learning. By focusing the discussion of moral issues on current problems of society, there is the additional benefit that the moral curriculum can be embedded in the context of the larger culture, and extracted from the culture of the school. By drawing the issues for a moral curricula from the popular media, students will more readily associate issues in the media with a moral dimension. The potential for transferring learning out of the classroom is enhanced when learning occurs in authentic context. Of even more significance for effective citizenship is the potential for helping students learn to distinguish between decision frames in which self-interest should be the guide, and frames where the public interest is the more appropriate guide to behavior. This is a metacognitive capability, and will not develop from learning experiences which have been decontextualized.

As a further consideration, it is important to recognize that a civics course cannot stand alone. Ideally, it should be a culmination of a multiplicity of curricular threads which have been woven through prior social studies, science, and literature curricula. A moral issues curriculum must be implemented in developmental context. Moral dilemma discussions can and should be a part of social studies, science, and literature curricula beginning as early as the fourth or fifth grade. Adolescents with several years' experience discussing moral issues in curricular context should be more adequately prepared to benefit from a moral issue focused civics course.

An effective moral issues curriculum also implies particular types of in-

struction. Research on moral reasoning development supports the efficacy of structured moral dilemma discussion as instructional strategy. Accordingly, a move from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction is warranted. The concern for changes in instructional strategy, however, is broader than this. Instruction in American schools is still largely dominated by an individualistic, competitive orientation. There is a need to balance this element of school culture with cooperative interdependent learning experiences. Recent interest in cooperative learning suggests the viability of these instructional formats as a balance to existing competitive patterns. What is needed now is research to determine what approaches to cooperative learning will most effectively counterbalance the effects of a pervasive competitive curriculum. Possibly some forms of cooperative learning will foster and legitimize secondary control as a counter-balance to primary control oriented behavior. At the very least, cooperative learning will promote the values of team work, and the benefits of subsuming one's immediate personal interest to the larger group interest.

Finally, there is a need to address classroom climate as a curricular issue. There is a long-standing debate in American education over the issue of permissiveness in the schools. When schools are perceived as failing to meet societal expectations, one of the first responses of the public is to accuse the schools of permissiveness. Unfortunately such accusations fly wide of the mark. Permissiveness is not the core of the problem, although permissiveness is more problematic when primary control is the dominant cultural value. Permissiveness implies that constraints have not been placed on the behavior of youth. Countering this problem by cracking down on young people, and projecting a hard line, in effect imposes controls from the outside, when internal control, self-control, is needed.

Since the primary control imbalance is a culturally pervasive phenomena, then efforts to correct the imbalance must be broadly based in the curriculum. Such efforts must be long-term, beginning in elementary school, and cross-curricular, incorporated into the hidden curriculum of all subjects. In short, the efforts must be school-wide and elemental to the curriculum. It is imperative that teachers recognize the centrality of secondary control to the ultimate resolution of environmental, and other, social crises. If teachers can learn to value secondary control as an important personal quality in its own right, then it will become an implicit part of the motivational dynamic they project in the classroom. As elementary school students sense that teachers place great value on the students' capacity to control themselves, the legitimacy of secondary control as a cultural value can be restored.

### **Conclusion**

The 21st century is less than a decade away. The kind of curriculum change envisioned here, however, is a long-range strategy, and would require decades to produce results in changed citizen behavior. Even under the best of cir-



cumstances it would be unrealistic to expect this curriculum change to impact on American values before the second decade of the 21st century. Yet if this analysis of American culture is sound, there is little reason to expect resolution of our current environmental problems without a sea change in American values and culture. It is imperative to begin rethinking the fit between traditional American culture and values, and the emerging realities of the 21st century.

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## **Studying Peace in Elementary Schools: Laying a Foundation for the “Peaceable Kingdom”**

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Peace education in the United States is a patchwork of activities and inactivities, or routine and invention—like so much else in American education.

Much of the emphasis in peace education is on avoiding nuclear war. This is particularly the case with secondary and junior high school students. It is understandable that nuclear destruction hangs oppressively over all of us. The United States is one of the world's great nuclear powers and the decision to use, to control, or to eliminate nuclear weapons will be decisions in which the U.S. must be a principal participant. Disarmament and the avoidance of nuclear war are only a part of the solution to the problem of creating a peaceful world. A world at peace is not, and can not be, a world without disagreement and conflict. Resolving, in a peaceful way, conflicts that occur between nations, between interest groups, and between individuals, is a key part of living in the “peaceable kingdom.” It is also possibly the most important part of peace education aimed at elementary age children.

DeKeyser and VanHoof (1983) propose to rationalize curriculum about peace by representing the curriculum as a cube. Along one dimension are knowledge, attitude, and action. Along another dimension are social contexts, a micro-context involving personal and interpersonal relations, a meso-context, involving interactions within broader boundaries (for younger children these might be within schools, but could also be within a city or a country), and a macro-context, which involves interactions on the international scene. The third dimension identifies two views of peace, “negative peace,” that is, an absence of war, and “positive peace,” that is, cooperative attitudes and interactions and non-violent solutions to conflict (Galtung, 1984).<sup>1</sup> One of the useful purposes of this kind of model is to help us keep track of the emphases which we give in our teaching, for example, to see whether all our activities and analyses in peace education tend to be at a micro-level or conversely, deal only with questions of international conflicts and overlook the need to live and work in a positive way with the people who

are near to us. It also helps us to see whether our emphasis remains on understanding viewed as making statements rather than expressed in some kind of action relevant to belief and attitude.

Whenever anyone proposes to deal in the elementary school with topics or problems that cause us adults a great deal of anxiety, a question is raised: "Why should we shatter the secure innocence of little children by imposing our fears and worries on them? There is time enough for that when they are older and we can no longer isolate them from the world's misfortunes." Johan Galtung in the preface to his book, *There Are Alternatives!* tells about his daughter, Irene, who said to him, "Papi, in kindergarten they say there is a terrible, very strong bomb. Will that bomb kill us all? They also say that you are against it. But are you strong enough?" Galtung is shocked and angry that his child should have to confront such ugliness. "And what right," he asks, "do these people have to make my little daughter, a little miracle of joy and energy, feel that something horrible is coming and can come any day? That we live on borrowed time?"

It is nearly impossible to insulate children from the bad things that *are* happening and the anxieties of adults about the even worse things that *might* happen. Children are watching and listening. They know that we all live in danger though they may not know what the danger is exactly, or where it will come from exactly, or exactly what to do to prevent it. That is not so different from us adults, of course. But adults have better mechanisms for deluding ourselves and better mechanisms for discovering more about the realities of the situation and creating responses to some of the problems that endanger us.

Children have heard about THE BOMB, about the possibility of world destruction. They are also bombarded with images of violence and models of violent resolutions of conflict. We wait for the hero to punch out the villain and feel a sense of relief when the blow is finally struck and evil falls to the floor.

We can take some encouragement from the fact that if children have models for violence and war, they also are aware that peace exists and they have images of peace as a desirable and joyful way to live. Kindergarten children draw pictures filled with rainbows and flowers, children on bikes and with balloons. Smiley faces announce that "peace is good," "peace is when I ride bikes," "peace is when you are outside in the fall." Third-graders draw couples playing and hugging and write words like "peace is love," "peace is helping," "peace is hugs," "peace is pink." But one third-grader frames her drawing of a bird in flight with the words "peace is . . . like an eagle, almost extinct." A fifth-grader writes, "Taking a hike on a nature trail is peaceful because you can listen and hear the sounds of nature. Mike is peaceful because you can disagree with him and make up with him and say 'Let's go play!'" For a seventh-grader the vision is more subtle when she writes, in her poem entitled *Peace*:

Peace is more than happiness.  
Peace is more than silence.  
Peace is what we all need.  
Those who have no peace, grieve.  
Peace means seeing another day . . . seeing it with expectations.

Abroad has come to the innocents.

Children have optimistic visions but they sense a dark underside to those visions and some children are troubled. In a poll reported on national public radio some time ago, most American children thought that war was coming, but overwhelmingly they thought that they would survive. Most Soviet children thought that a war was not coming and overwhelmingly they thought that if war came they would be killed.

Most teachers want a peaceful classroom. From surveys such as those by Weiss (1978) we learn that the highest priority for most teachers is pupil control, socialization to habits of self-control, and quiet obedience (Shaver, Davis, & Helburn, 1979). Weiss reports that social studies is dominated by the use of textbooks. Knowledge about social events and social interaction, is, typically, transmitted as information to be received, stored, and recalled upon demand. Techniques of lecture and class discussion, closely controlled by the teacher, are followed by short-answers or multiple choice items on worksheets testing recall.

Peace education at the elementary level typically emphasizes developing knowledge, attitudes and action in the micro-context of personal interactions for younger elementary children. It extends to broader contexts for children in grades 4 to 7. The emphasis is usually on “positive peace” rather than merely being aimed toward an absence of violence.

Several characteristics that are common to many of the curriculum guides in peace education for elementary schools are:

1. An attempt to raise pupils’ consciousness about peace as an idea, as a way to feel, as exemplified in certain ways of acting: for example, sharing, helping others, trying to think how the other person feels. Typical activities are to develop a network of associations to the word “peace” or responses to stem phrases, for example “Peace is . . . ” Responses tend to be oral and use art and dance with younger children, and to lead to more extended discussion and short essays and poems with older children.

2. Problems of choice and action become the focal point for learning a language for disputes; practicing words and phrases that express disagreement but respect the people with whom one disagrees, phrases that identify a solution as a compromise (“I’ll give you this, you give me that”) or that identify a solution as taking turns or sharing (Madison Metropolitan School District, 1985).

3. Some problems suggest the invention and analysis of strategies for resolving conflicts.

4. Some problems lead children to move from understanding to appropriate action. This can mean refusing to cooperate with injustice, sending folded paper cranes to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Hall in Japan, writing to share friendliness with pen-pals in other countries, or raising money and collecting school materials to send to poor rural children in a sister village or to aid the victims of a natural disaster.

Even for children in kindergarten, first, and second grades—certainly for older children—thinking positively about peace means getting beyond the personal level of interaction. Some kindergarten children heard their teacher read about Rosa Parks' decision to sit where she wanted to on a bus. When their teacher asked them what they would do if they were Rosa Parks and were told that they could not sit in any empty seat, but had to fill the bus from the rear, someone said, "Kick the driver," and some pupils agreed; others found more gentle responses. Then they heard what Ms. Parks' solution was. They learned that peace is more than acquiescence. In discussion after that lesson, their teacher (Kate Lyman) said "Peace is any empty concept without justice."

The conventional histories of America and other places center around conflict and competition for scarce resources. Older children can invent potential alternatives to violence. In the peace education curriculum for Madison, Wisconsin (grades preschool to five), children are asked to remember incidents of interpersonal conflict where someone was a peacemaker. They are also encouraged to explore instances of injustice in history, to propose alternatives, and then to discover what happened in history and try to analyze the consequences of the violent solutions commonly taken, as well as some of those that were non-violent, e.g., by M. K. Gandhi, by Martin Luther King, Jr.

This is not only a utopian exercise in wishful thinking. It is aimed at exposing children to the possibility that there may be non-violent solutions to conflicts, if we are imaginative enough to invent them and courageous enough to try them. There are still relatively few schools and school districts that work systematically through a curriculum in peace education. Many of the activities that form part of a peace education curriculum fit easily into activities that might be planned in social studies, language arts, and reading. But they are rarely found in textbook series. If Weiss' results still characterize social studies teaching, then peace education is absent from most U.S. classrooms.

The growth of organizations like Educators for Social Responsibility and Beyond War, and the continued existence of such establishments as the Peace Education Foundation in Miami Beach, suggest that teachers' *interest* in peace education at least remains constant.

Some teachers save their attention to these matters for Peace Week, where that is celebrated. For others children are continually involved in resolving classroom conflict by thinking through and feeling into these situations. They are stimulated to imagine ways to create a vigorously disputatious, but

peaceful world of different groups and nations. These ongoing activities are not reserved for special times but they infuse most parts of the curriculum and strengthen it.

#### Endnote

1. This cube is mentioned by Professor Steven tenBrinke in Preparation for peace education in secondary schools, in *Teacher education: An overview of recent research on teacher education in the Netherlands*, Vosbach and Price, (Eds.), Brussels, 1985. Dr. tenBrinke was chair of the international Association for the Development of Adolescent Schooling (IADAS), a group involving secondary schools from seven West European countries, aiming to prepare future teachers for teaching about “war, conflict, and peace.”

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## Book Review

Shirley H. Engle & Anna S. Ochoa. (1988). *Education for Democratic Citizenship*. New York: Teachers College Press.

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At the 1975 NCSS Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Anna Ochoa co-presented a paper titled "A Social Action Curriculum: An Initial Description of Skills." Drawing extensively on Etzioni's *The Active Society* (1968), Ochoa's paper accepted the preferred society as one in which citizens use communication and power resources to implement action toward goals. The term "potency" then substituted for the current "empowerment" as a goal, seeking development of ability to persuade, to form alliances with other sympathetic groups, to use media effectively, to capitalize on discontent from social imbalances, and other forms of exerting power. The portrait painted of the good society was one of democratic pluralism in which citizens organized into interest groups to exert power on the political process, thus giving direction to social change. Good citizens in such a democratic pluralistic society appeared to be ones who were clear about their goals, skillful in organizing groups and actions to exert power, and *having a strong sense of political efficacy*, or confidence in their ability to influence change. This is the same Anna Ochoa who co-authored the NCSS "Social Studies Curriculum Guidelines" (1971). The rationale for those guidelines saw the enhancement of human dignity and rational processes as the dual goals of social studies, where human dignity meant that each person should have the opportunity to know, to choose and to act. Action was crucial because without action neither knowledge nor rational process were of much consequence. The good citizen would say, "I know what's going on, I'm part of it, and I'm doing something about it." The good society prized human dignity, and since taking action on decisions was essential to human dignity, therefore social studies must include action skills as one of four inseparable ingredients in its citizenship goals.

Ochoa's vision of the good society and the good citizen contrasted markedly to that set out in Shirley Engle's 1960 article "Decision Making: The Heart of Social Studies Instruction." Engle's good citizen was known by "the quality of decisions which he reaches on public and private matters of social concern" where decision making requires "weighing in the balance, a synthesizing of all available information and values" (p. 302). The good society would appear to be one in which people were aware of social issues, informed about the relevant facts and values, and capable of making informed and principled decisions on those issues. Period. Engle's decision-maker definition of good citizen had no provision for empowerment, development of skills in exert-



ing power and influence, or enhancing a sense of political efficacy. The good citizen knows and judges, but stops short of taking action.

With these two differing conceptions of social studies, good society, and good citizen in the back of my mind, I sat down to read the book Engle and Ochoa co-authored, wondering how they had sorted out these discrepant ideas and beliefs. If one searches diligently, occasional references can be found to active citizenship, as when the authors critique the social science conception of social studies by pointing out that it fails to provide that “citizens learn to engage in the political process and how to pursue power and influence government” (p. 51). They want citizens who can not only decide on the dependability of information, but also “must decide how to deal with complex social problems . . . what actions should be taken with respect to social concerns” (p. 61). Teachers also need to model concerned and involved citizenship so students “know that their teacher is active in community groups or political parties or belongs to social cause organizations . . .” (p. 167). Further, students are to be active in school governance, but should not study such issues as whether students should be allowed to have a special student lounge in their school where “they may even decide to take action” (p. 169). Rather they should study issues which “apply more broadly and involve significant content” (p. 169), such as “What can be done to reduce poverty?” and “Were Japanese-Americans treated unfairly during World War II?” (p. 170).

These scattered references to active citizenship goals are heavily outweighed by advocacy of a decision-making process which emphasizes the citizen as thinker and knower, but not doer. Repeatedly the text outlines the process of reflective and democratic decision making where students learn to decide the validity of truth claims and to make decisions related to public actions and public policy. The latter breaks down into the familiar steps: 1) identify and define the problem; 2) identify value assumptions; 3) identify alternatives; 4) predict consequences; 5) make decisions; 6) justify decisions; and 7) hold decisions tentatively. Strikingly absent from the process is taking action on the problem, which is reinforced by the suggestion of such historical problems as the treatment of Japanese-Americans in World War II.

Readers are then left with a conception of the citizen who knows about issues and can apply values in making decisions about issues, but stops there. Unlike the model in Ochoa’s earlier work, here the good citizen is a passive knower; here, the social studies program contains no social action component to make students themselves capable of, and responsible for, taking action to make their communities better places to live. Lest there be any doubt of their priorities, Engle and Ochoa state the ultimate goal of social studies:

The key to a curriculum that proposes to prepare citizens of a democracy is its capacity to encourage young citizens to think and to make considered decisions. . . . [Therefore] improvement in the ability of young

citizens to make intelligent and socially responsible decisions is the ultimate goal of the social studies. . . .” (pp. 127–128)

Engle and Ochoa condemn the current social studies programs for resulting in citizens who “have a low estimate of their own ability to affect public policy or exert control over government” (p. 110). They consider it disgraceful that frequently a majority of citizens fail to vote in elections. One wonders how it was so easy to drop Ochoa’s commitment to social action as one of the ultimate goals for social studies.

Engle and Ochoa further worry about the domination of the nation by a wealthy elite, warning, “We are perilously close to the time when candidates can simply buy their way into power when the control of the government passes from the people to the money powers” (p. 111). However, they do not go on to relate this problem to the literature linking the school to the social function of reproducing a capitalist society dominated by a small, wealthy elite as Bowles and Gintis (1976) have done, or to the solution to that problem presented by Newmann in 1975.

Newmann (1975) has argued that the principle of consent of the governed is a central requirement of a democratic government. He bases that claim on the ethical value of equality, turning to the moral premise that every human being is entitled to respect and dignity. Dignity, Newmann asserts, is possible only if the claims and interests of each person are treated impartially, which in turn requires that society be organized so that power is distributed as equally as possible through rights to participate in periodic selection of leaders and direct participation to affect the outcome of specific issues. This emphasis on equal access to power minimizes the chance that equal rights can be violated. Newmann concluded, however, that the consent ideal was not being realized, and that “education is, in part, responsible for its failure” (p. 46). He cites Verba and Nie’s study, indicating that 11% of citizens are extremely politically active and 47% are relatively inactive, and that “high participators are overwhelmingly upper-status, wealthy, white, middle-aged citizens taking a ‘conservative’ stand on such issues as welfare” (p. 50). Further, Newmann reported, government leaders in the Verba and Nie study

were more responsive to active than to inactive citizens. That is, they were more aware of the activists’ views, tended to share those views, and spent more of their efforts trying to implement them. Views of the inactive citizens were not as consistently known, shared, or pursued by government leaders. (pp. 53–54)

Newmann’s solution is similar to that advocated by Etzioni (1971) and by Ochoa’s (1975) works, namely to develop skills, predispositions, and self-concepts needed for active participation in public affairs by all citizens, not just those who have developed a strong sense of political efficacy from seeing their upper SES parents exert power and influence. Programs which stop

short at reflectively inquiring into issues and making decisions on them offer a version of citizenship which models knowing and deciding, then not acting: passivity. Hence, education à la Engle and Ochoa would seem to still bear responsibility for the failure of the consent principle and the continued inequality revealed in elite domination of political affairs.

Wood (1984) also has argued the case for a conception of active citizenship rather than the “passive knower-decider” reflected in Engle and Ochoa’s model. Wood advocates participatory democracy, in which citizens take “direct action on social issues—picketing, protesting, democratic takeovers” (p. 226) as necessary if the hidden curriculum of the school is to change from one which promotes working-class passivity to one which nurtures a sense of political efficacy among all classes. Wood suggests we learn from reproductive theorists such as Apple, the school’s social role, namely “that schools teach a limited, very limited vision of democracy. . . . Removing from the curriculum any mention of citizen action or resistance, schools seem to limit our vision of democracy to an occasional trip to the ballot box. Gone is the active participant, enter the passive consumer” (pp. 224–225).

### **An Alternative Model of Citizenship Education**

Ochoa’s, Etzioni’s, and Woods’ activist conception of citizenship was built into the provincial curriculum in Alberta, Canada during the decade 1978–1988. It added the step of “acting on your decision” to the reflective decision-making model Engle and Ochoa advocate. Consequently some Alberta teachers have had their students inquiring into a wide range of social issues, culminating their inquiry with varied forms of direct and indirect action. Some examples will provide a contrast to Engle and Ochoa’s method and to their implicit vision of good citizen and good society.

*Spraying Mosquitos.* Taylor and Moore (1983) described a 4½ month study of the use of chemical sprays for mosquitos by their grade five and six students which culminated in some students preferring increased use of chemicals, some wanting to replace chemical use with spraying insect predators of mosquito larvae on ponds and ditches, and a third group advocating no control programs at all. The two classes requested time to present their findings and recommendations during a city council meeting, and, using effective forms of persuasion Etzioni would approve, put predators into an aquarium full of mosquito larvae to show how voraciously predation followed. They read passionate poetry concluding “please spray not, we’d rather swat,” and showed a slide-tape presentation on the effects of chemicals on the food chain and ecosystem. These teachers were influenced by the Hungerford and Peyton (1976) conception of a citizen who is both competent to take action on issues and willing to take that action. After the project, many of these students had a stronger sense of political efficacy than they’d had 4½ months before. When asked how likely it was that they would really do something about changing an unfair school rule, they made statements such as the following:

I think it would be likely because after the mosquito project I learned that even Grade 5 kids can change councils' minds.

Very likely, because I have had experience with my school.

We learned that you have to stick up for your rights, so I would go out and do it.

Well, now that I know how to go about trying to get something done right that I think is wrong, I would probably try and change it. (Chamberlin, Connors and Massey, 1983, pp. 34-35)

Further, parents who were interviewed at the city council meeting were very positive about the depth of knowledge students had acquired, and their confidence in making their cases before the august authorities on city council. The hidden curriculum in this program had involved learning roles and self-concepts, but not the passive ones of Engle and Ochoa's knower-decider.

*Ban the Bars.* Bev Priftis had gotten to the section of Bruner's *Man—A Course of Study* where they learn about the behavior of baboons when she decided to take her Calgary grade seven class to the zoo to observe the nature and behavior of a baboon troupe. When her students found the primates kept in individual cages, they were upset by how this contradicted what had been learned about the social organization and territoriality of these animals. They wrote letters of protest to the Zoological Society, the Mayor, the Queen, and the editors of the *Calgary Herald* and the *Albertan*. At first, the head of the Zoological Society charged that the students were uninformed, childish and irresponsible. The "Ban the Bars" movement grew in the city, however, and eventually the baboons were removed from the zoo because a suitable environment could not be provided. Students' sense of political efficacy was reinforced by seeing that their actions could be effective in making their community a better place for all to live in (Dueck, Horvath and Zelinski, 1979).

*Clean Up the Dump.* Three grade six and seven classes in rural Rimbey spent two months learning about provincial law on solid waste disposal, surveying other towns to learn about their dumps, observing the dripping pesticide cans and lamb carcasses in their dump, reading newspapers and magazines, surveying residents for their opinions, interviewing the district agriculturalist, home economist, and mayor, as well as reading government studies on disposal. Finally they were ready to propose a set of solutions. They wrote letters to the *Rimbey Record*, entered a float in the rodeo parade, wrote several letters to the town and county councils, put out more garbage cans on the rodeo grounds, made posters to advertise the issue, and presented their proposals at a town council meeting (Johncox, 1983).

*Save Our Park.* When city planners proposed putting a freeway through a ravine in an Edmonton community, the whole school set out to prepare a submission to the Transportation Task Force hearings. Teachers from grade one to grade six worked with their students to write letters, draw posters,

and speak to the hearings. Eight student representatives carried the school messages to the hearings, gave brief speeches on why they didn't want the ravine destroyed, and submitted picture books bearing their submissions. Later, the Task Force recommended the ravine be developed as a community park and that no freeway be routed there. City council later incorporated these recommendations into their transportation and parks plan, and today the ravine is preserved as a park (Chamberlin, 1979).

Many more examples could be added to this list to illustrate how Alberta students have learned that the desired role of a citizen is, as Ochoa and her colleagues wrote in 1971, to know what's going on, be part of it, and do something about it. The "decision-making only" model of citizenship seems to ignore the importance of a sense of political efficacy and its class-based distribution. In failing to include it, Engle and Ochoa also fail to adequately strive for the moral principle of equality which Newmann argued is essential to human dignity. The Engle and Ochoa knower-decider model of citizenship leaves the school and social studies open to the charge that they do too little to end the role of the school in reproducing a society in which a rich, well educated elite dominate a passive working class. They seem to have ignored the work of such critics of the school as Apple, Bernstein, Bowles, Gintis, Giroux, and Friere who point out how it transmits passivity and acceptance of the status quo to working class students. The Engle and Ochoa omission of an action component in their decision-making model also seems to ignore the work on developing a sense of political efficacy and an internal locus of control done by Ehman, Verba and Nie, Massialas, Peyton and Miller, and others.

If students learn that it is enough to make an informed decision on an issue, how can we expect them to say, "Well, now that I know how to go about getting something done right that I think is wrong, I would probably try and change it."

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Response to Mr. Chamberlin's Review of *Education for Democratic Citizenship*.

Reviewed by Shirley H. Engle, 101 Hidden Oaks, Slidell, LA 70461.

Mr. Chamberlin has written a very fine essay on the importance of actively involving students in civic and governmental affairs. Perhaps *Education for Democratic Citizenship* (Engle & Ochoa, 1988) should have laid more stress upon its action-based component. However, Mr. Chamberlin has hardly reviewed the work; in his zeal to put forth action as the means of civic education, he has almost entirely overlooked the virtues of the book at hand which lays out in balanced fashion, possibly more clearly than ever before, the full range of components of civic education in a democracy.

The book is a reaction to the unthinking nature of much, if not most, instruction in the social studies today—including some action-based programs. It is a reaction to the superficial understanding which follows mere narration and attempted memorization of large quantities of information without stopping to dig out and deal with the issues and controversy contained in the content. It is a reaction to the inconsistency between these ground-covering methods and the needs of democratic civic education.

The book sets out a rationale for democratic education which recognizes that the development of independence of thought (we call this “counter-socialization”) and the development of grounded conclusion about controversial matters are the life blood of democracy. Our book presents a clear plan for accomplishing these ends and offers numerous illustrations of how they may be achieved.

Many of the approaches we recommended would contribute directly to the success of Mr. Chamberlin's action curriculum. Some of these follow:

1. The replacement of survey courses, which make up most of the social studies curriculum at present, with in-depth study of selected episodes in history, geography, etc., each containing some of the volatile and controversial issues in our society.
2. The utilization in this study of many more facts than are ordinarily covered in lectures or textbooks.
3. Emphasis on discussion and debate of the issues rather than on recall and testing.
4. At least once every school year, the study of a broad social problem in the greatest possible depth. We suggest that all students in a school at all grade levels working in the same time frame study one such problem during each school year, with the principal of the school heading up the study.

Though we agree with Mr. Chamberlin that action is a proper element of civic education, we would remind him that if we are going to have children marching in the streets, manning the barricades, sending letters to congressmen, and lobbying the local city council, we had better be sure that they

know *why* they are marching. We must be sure that they understand the origins of the problem they seek to resolve and that they have done some independent thinking about the issues that are at stake.

While we recognize the merits of Mr. Chamberlin's argument, we respectfully suggest that the program of study proposed in our book not only leads quite naturally to active and intelligent citizenship, but is a necessary prelude to it.



Response to Mr. Chamberlin's Review of *Education for Democratic Citizenship*.

Reviewed by Anna Ochoa, School of Education, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405.

1988, the year *Education for Democratic Citizenship* (Engle & Ochoa) was published, differed sharply from 1970, the year NCSS issued the *Social Studies Curriculum Guidelines*. Most of us would agree that the world and this society changed dramatically and surprisingly in the intervening years. Furthermore, ideas and practices surrounding the social studies also changed. If, as Mr. Chamberlin suggests, the views of this author have shifted, it should not be surprising and may well reflect an attempt to reconcile changes in society to changing needs in the preparation of democratic citizens for the 21st Century.

In the 60s and early 70s work on social studies curricula experienced a heyday. Social studies curriculum developers were generating materials that departed markedly from the traditional in numerous variations. At that time the social studies literature exhibited new dimensions. It moved beyond its focus on concepts and generalization in the social sciences to give salience to social problems, social inquiry, decision making, and social action. Fred Newmann's pioneer works (1970; 1977) gave the field a qualitative leap forward with their powerful conceptions of social action curricula.

However, by the mid-70s the back-to-basics movement had established a strong foothold. The social studies, which never enjoyed the status of being basic, took a back seat position as a curriculum priority. It received less time and fewer resources. Increased use of sterile textbooks that shunned social controversy marked this period. Lecture-recitation modes and coverage of content rather than in-depth treatments of controversial issues were the order of the day in social studies classrooms. The onset of state-wide testing programs that emphasized minutia, facts in limited contexts, and student memorization further exacerbated the problem. Social studies was in deep trouble. In fact, it was in retreat. Not only were innovative curricula abandoned (recall the tragedy of *Man: A Course of Study*), but learning and teaching in the social studies regressed to a point where it did not contribute to the quality of democratic life. In fact, it ran counter to the preparation of informed, thoughtful, and concerned citizens.

These regressive practices were sustained in the mid-80s as Bloom (1987) Finn and Ravitch (1987) and others issued recommendations for curricula consistent with the teach-recite-memorize formats in classrooms; ones that emphasized factual knowledge and completely ignored the centrality of informed decision-making to the education of democratic citizens.

With great speed the social studies clock was spinning backward. These recent proposals violated the essence of the curricular ideas advanced by such social studies leaders as Hunt and Metcalf (1955), Massialas (1966), Oliver

and Shaver (1966), and Engle (1980). In this context, where citizenship education was being emasculated, the Engle-Ochoa book was written. In it we have advanced our ideas, ones that clearly present *informed decision-making* as the centerpiece of the social studies, with the deep hope that a view of citizenship education that had been virtually forgotten would resume its rightful place in the dialogue concerning the social studies. More specifically, we state on page 131:

This book is written in the belief that reformers in the field who followed Dewey's educational philosophy were on the right track. It is a modest effort to push once again at the frontier of transforming the social studies into something more meaningful and useful in preparing citizens to become the participants and intelligent decision makers they must become if democracy is to survive.

Further, it should be emphasized that the ideas advanced by the Engle-Ochoa book are not at odds with a social action perspective. In fact, Mr. Chamberlin has cited a number of instances where we make references to social action. However, in our view, there is no question about centrality of *informed decision-making* to the education of democratic citizens. It is this capacity that protects citizens from falling prey to non-rational appeals, to superficiality of the media, to peer pressure, and to the seductiveness of charismatic leaders. Without informed decision making a social action component has no substance. While I share Mr. Chamberlin's commitment to and interest in social action, I also have deep concern that he gives short shrift to the importance of informed decision-making. He oversells action at the price of informed decision-making. In the last analysis, what we must remember is that the purpose of both the social studies and of the schools is not solely to create activists, but to be sure that those who choose to influence public affairs do so intelligently.

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Reviewed by Jana Staton, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

*A child sits on the floor, talking to herself as she constructs a three-dimensional continent out of clay, working from a two-dimensional drawing. "Where are the An-dees?" she whispers to herself. "I thought they went all the way to the bottom, but the map changes color at the bottom." She calls out "Jerome, where do the mountains stop?" Her team partner drops his work on the rain forest and comes over. They puzzle over the map their group made yesterday, trying to decide where the Andes flatten out into the highlands of the Tierra del Fuego. Their teacher walks by and they stop her to ask her judgment. She looks carefully at their work, and then sits down to help them figure out the proportional length of their mountains from the two-dimensional map, "like we did yesterday in our large group."*

The behaviorist looking at this scene sees the children "practicing" specific skills in geography which the teacher has first taught. The Piagetian sees inside the child's mind where the gradual accommodation of old schemas involving two-dimensional representation as new knowledge about topography is assimilated. A developmentalist with a Deweyian background sees the children's emerging abilities to cooperate and communicate with each other in order to solve a problem. But none of these familiar perspectives on learning describes the learning situation as a unified whole, connecting the physical setting, the meanings and purposes teacher and child each bring to the task, the linguistic and social interactions among the children and their teacher, and the physical tools they are using to represent concepts. For that kind of perspective, one needs to look at the situation with new eyes, from what has come to be called a Vygotskian point of view, after the work of the Soviet psychologist L. S. Vygotsky.

In this view, the children's learning occurs in an *activity setting*; the children and teacher are jointly accomplishing a meaningful task. Specific skills are being practiced in a functional, meaningful way in order to solve a problem. Simultaneously, the children are learning to direct their own behavior by self-guiding verbal instructions and cognitive strategies, through conversations with the teacher or other peers. The teacher's role is to assist the performance of the child in achieving a socially negotiated goal. The outcome is the ac-

quisition of higher, specifically human mental functions through mediated activity: the mediation is accomplished by interpersonal communication.

Vygotsky was an original, creative psychologist and educator, who worked in the 1930s in Moscow, and died at an early age in 1934. His work was largely ignored or unknown in both the Soviet Union and other countries until the 1960s. Only in the last ten years, since the publication in English of a collection of Vygotsky's articles called *Mind in Society: the Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Cole, et al. Eds., 1978), have American educators and researchers been given access to a new and very different set of lenses with which to view the process by which children acquire knowledge. Now, M.I.T. Press has published a new and complete translation of Vygotsky's most celebrated work, *Thought and Language [Myshlenie i rech]*. Not only is this translation and editing faithful to the original, unlike the earlier 1962 version, but the introduction by the translator and editor, Alex Kozulin, provides a much-needed, succinct introduction to Vygotsky's work in the context of Soviet psychology then and now.

### **Why Read Vygotsky?**

Although an increasing number of articles and books by American educators are now available representing a neo-Vygotskian perspective, there is good reason for reading the original works. Vygotsky developed an original, constructivist perspective on human learning at a time of strict behaviorist and associational paradigms in both the Soviet Union and this country. Educators and researchers interested in the new research on "situated learning," cognitive apprenticeships, and higher order complex thinking will benefit from encountering directly the full force of Vygotsky's viewpoint in these two major works, to accompany the recent work of neo-Vygotskian scholars in this country (most notably, Brown, Collins and Duguid, 1989; Rogoff & Lave, 1984; Tharp and Gallimore, 1988).

The difficulty with reading only Vygotsky's American interpreters is that it is all too tempting to pick out those ideas that are most readily absorbed into a traditional positivistic-reductionist paradigm and experimental methods, and fail to understand the fundamental differences in assumptions. For example, the Vygotskyian concept of "instructional scaffolding," which refers to the various activities of the adult in assisting the performance of child, is fundamentally different from the behaviorist "shaping" of desired behaviors by contingency management and rewards, even though to the untrained eye, the behaviors in the classroom might look the same.

There is something fundamentally different about what Vygotsky and his colleagues after him, principally Leonti'ev, saw when they looked at learning and development. Instead of seeing skills learned one at a time and then miraculously assembled into a higher-order schema or concept, Vygotsky's constructivist perspective begins with the complex social setting which provides socially negotiated or constructed goals for the child, and the necessary

support for achieving them. The skills American educators worry about so much are not ignored, but Vygotsky points out that acquisition of complex cognitive functioning begins with a goal-driven, situated activity for which skills, and their polished, coordinated use, gradually become more and more necessary.

In the first chapter of *Thought and Language* Vygotsky explains the way in which his approach differs from the conventional psychological work of both his own Soviet colleagues of the time (Pavlovians all), and certainly of the American research tradition, then and now:

To cope successfully with the problem of the relation between thought and language . . . two essentially different modes of analysis are possible in the study of psychological structures. . . . The first method analyzes complex psychological wholes into *elements*. It may be compared to the chemical analysis of water into hydrogen and oxygen, *neither of which possesses the properties of the whole*. . . . In essence, this type of analysis, which leads to products in which the properties of the whole are lost . . . leads us into serious errors by ignoring the unitary nature of the process under study. (pp. 4–5, emphasis mine)

Psychology, which aims at a study of complex holistic systems, must replace the method of analysis into *elements*, with the method of analysis into *units*. . . . Unit analysis points the way to the solution of these vitally important problems. It demonstrates the existence of a dynamic system of meaning in which the affective and the intellectual unite. (p. 10, emphasis mine)

By “unit,” Vygotsky meant a unit of the phenomenon that is further unanalyzable and yet retains the properties of the whole. This perspective changes one’s vision from studying physically discrete events, actions, and persons, to studying functionally connected goal-driven activities and activity settings across time.

*Mind in Society*, containing Vygotsky’s later papers, is the more accessible of the two works, in part because these papers were written with a more general audience of educators in mind. This book has already had a great impact on American educators, particularly in the area of early literacy. The “emerging literacy” research and its widespread applications in American classrooms the 1980s is directly traceable to the influence of Vygotsky’s essay “The Prehistory of Written Language” on research on children’s acquisitions of writing. Starting with the papers in this volume for the novice reader makes sense, especially the essays “Internalization of Higher Psychological Functions,” and “Interaction between Learning and Development”.

But for those educators concerned especially with the social sciences, and with the development of concepts, the long chapter in *Thought and Language* on “The Development of Scientific Concepts in Childhood” represents a

gold mine of starting points for re-seeing classroom activities, curriculum and children's learning, and for new research.

Vygotsky traces the interconnections between the development of "spontaneous concepts" arising out of everyday experience, such as "brother," and the acquisition of "scientific concepts" (which is perhaps best understood in modern terms as "schooled" concepts)—concepts not available to the child from concrete, sensory experience, but provided through schooling. Unlike other theorists, Vygotsky does not assume that such abstract or more decontextualized ideas are acquired "whole," in a ready-made form, but undergo substantial development in a process dependent on the child's general level of comprehension, a level developed in turn by the child's spontaneous concepts:

Scientific concepts, like spontaneous concepts, just start their development, rather than finish it, at a moment when the child learns the term or word meaning denoting the new concept. (*Thought and Language*, p. 159)

The development of a spontaneous concept must have reached a certain level for the child to be able to absorb a related scientific concept. . . . In working its slow way upward, an everyday concept clears a path for the scientific concept and its downward development. It creates a series of structures necessary for the evolution of a concept's more primitive, elementary aspects, which give it body and vitality. (*Thought and Language*, p. 194)

He points out that the strength of everyday concepts is their deep rootedness in the child's lived experience. This strength contrasts with the "weakness" of schooled or scientific concepts as the child originally encounters them: they are purely verbal formulations. To gain strength, that is, depth of understanding, the concepts encountered first in the school must be connected to and built on the child's concrete experience, so that they have "body and vitality."

One reads Vygotsky now not for the particular research he carried out in the 1930s, but for the opportunity to see the familiar world of human development and classroom instruction whole, with the rich, but too often unobserved connections between child, teacher, materials, and setting restored and described.

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NCSS/CUFA 1990 Annual Meeting  
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## **An Invitation**

I would like to invite all readers of this journal to contribute to *TRSE* and to encourage friends or colleagues who are engaged in important research to do so as well.

It is my hope that during my editorship *TRSE* will publish many different kinds of scholarship concerned with social studies education. Publishing recent doctoral research is quite appropriate for the journal. Scholarship dealing with women's issues, racial issues, environmental issues, economic issues, peace issues, political issues, historical issues and or philosophical issues of social studies education are all appropriate for this journal. Scholarship concerned with curricular materials and instructional activities have an important place in this journal. My intention is to include rather than exclude different perspectives on research and scholarship.

We all share a common faith that something we think of as research is at least one way we should seek to improve social education. We, as social studies teachers, want our students to come to some understanding of society and history, to be effective citizens, to avoid the aberrations of racial, religious and sexual prejudice. Through social studies education we hope to contribute to the development of a saner, more just, less polluted, less violent world.

Whatever this hope and aspiration, the actual world we live in presents a darker aspect: savage conflicts in Central America, Africa, the Middle East, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and East Timur. Torture, assassination, arms races, world wide environmental degradation and homelessness, poverty and despair in many United States cities are everyday realities. Often torture and assassination are claimed to be progress, or the defense of democracy or a struggle for social justice. The truths of our planet are infinite and many of them are painful. On our troubled planet what is wisdom in social studies education?

What research is vital to our professional concerns? What should we seek to know that we do not know? About social studies education? About human society? About being human? About the conduct of social inquiry? What research is relevant to our highest aspirations and yet grounded in an awareness of our human condition? What issues should be explored in *TRSE*?

I would like to invite all readers of this journal to join in the exploration and clarification of ways we may seek to make social studies more honest in its treatment of issues, more significant in its intellectual challenge, more important in the lives of students.

Millard Clements  
*Editor, TRSE*

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