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THEORY AND RESEARCH IN SOCIAL EDUCATION

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REVIEWER ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The editors would like to thank the following individuals for their time and for the attention they gave to the manuscripts they reviewed for this issue and upcoming issues of *TRSE*.

Susan Adler
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Don Bragaw
June Chapin
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Richard Gross
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Call for Papers on
Multicultural Issues in Social Education

The editor of *Theory and Research in Social Education* invites submission of manuscripts for a special issue of *TRSE* scheduled for publication in the spring of 1995.

Manuscripts should respond to the issue's theme, *Civic Competence in a Multicultural Society: Issues of Individualism and Community.*

Authors are invited to submit manuscripts that address historical analyses, contemporary concerns, or theoretical dimensions of race, class, and gender in the American experience. In particular, we encourage manuscript submissions that explore the relationship between an increasingly diverse community and the need for a common set of core values and beliefs. Book reviews on these topics are also welcome.

Send manuscripts to: Professor Valerie Pang
                          School of Teacher Education
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IN THIS ISSUE...

Editorial

In this issue, we introduce something new: four lengthy reviews of selected chapters from the 1991 *Handbook of Research on Social Studies Teaching and Learning,* presented together as a special book review section. Perry Marker has done an outstanding job soliciting the authors who prepared these reviews, and we believe that you will find what they have to say both informative and enlightening. Their comments constitute the first of two special sets of reviews that will appear in this and the next issue of *TRSE.*

Our feature selections in this issue include an article by William Wraga on citizenship education and another by Rahima Wade on content analysis of social studies textbooks. Wraga proposes, and seeks to defend, the argument that civic competence requires both the ability and the inclination to integrate and apply knowledge from a variety of subjects. We'll be interested in what readers of *TRSE* have to say in response to his argument. Wade presents a longitudinal review of social studies content analysis research which reveals that many of the problems noted in other types of social studies research are present in content analysis research as well.

As always, we urge our readers to send us manuscripts that describe their current research, offer perspectives for the members of our profession to consider, or present reactions to articles or reviews previously published in *TRSE.*

Jack R. Fraenkel
August, 1993

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dr. Perry Marker, Book Review Editor
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Dear Dr. Marker,

I was pleased to discover and read the review of Jesse Goodman's book, *Elementary Schooling for Critical Democracy* by H. John Kornfeld (*Theory and Research in Social Education*, 20(1), pp. 75-83). I agree with Kornfeld that Goodman's book is a useful and valuable resource for elementary social studies educators.

Of equal importance, especially to California social studies educators, is Kornfeld's subsequent critique of the California State Board of Education's "History/Social Science Framework." As a social studies educator who arrived in California to the overwhelming plaudits of this curricular model, I am heartened by Kornfeld's refreshing and necessary perspective. Along with recognizing the widely advertised strengths of the framework, we must also recognize its limitations. It is, after all, a state document that imposes both a political and curricular agenda on California social studies teachers and students. Although the framework calls for teaching multiple perspectives, its curricular outline varies little in its prescribed and very specific content. Kornfeld, a former elementary school teacher in California, offers what the framework seemingly embraces: an alternative perspective, one deserving serious attention by the architects of this or any future state framework.

Sincerely,

Devon Metzger
Professor, Department of Education
CSU—Chico

THE INTERDISCIPLINARY IMPERATIVE FOR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION[1]

William G. Wraga
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Abstract
The interdisciplinary imperative for citizenship education stems from the reality that in order to understand and to act upon complex societal issues effectively, citizens must be able to integrate knowledge from a variety of subjects. Since this integration does not happen automatically, it must be taught. This article develops a rationale for the interdisciplinary imperative by examining educational limitations of the disciplinary curriculum, historic precedents in interdisciplinary efforts in which the social studies played a central role, theoretical concerns, and recent developments in interdisciplinary studies. It also explores problems associated with past interdisciplinary efforts, and offers recommendations for enacting integrative studies.

Introduction

Social studies education is concerned primarily with preparing students for active citizenship in a democracy. Civic competence involves, among other things, the ability to identify a pressing social problem, to examine it in its widest dimensions and implications, and to act upon it accordingly. These basic tenets are featured prominently in the statements on the *Essentials of the Social Studies* and the

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[1]This article grew out of a paper titled "The Social Studies and the Macrocurriculum," presented at the annual meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies held in St. Louis, Missouri, on November 13, 1989. The author wishes to thank James A. Beane of the National College of Education, National-Louis University, for his comments, and Dagmar A. Durish of the Bernards Township Schools for her editorial suggestions.

Essentials of Education, the latter endorsed by 19 educational organizations (NCSS, 1980). Because societal problems are complex and they transcend conventional subject divisions, civic competence depends upon integrating knowledge from a variety of subjects; therefore, the ability and the inclination to integrate and apply knowledge constitute an essential civic competence. Since such integration is rarely spontaneous in youth or in adults, future citizens must be taught how to achieve it. This is the interdisciplinary imperative for citizenship education and for the social studies.

The following rationale for the interdisciplinary imperative has its sources in (a) the educational limitations of the disciplinary curriculum; (b) historic precedents in which the social studies played a central role in interdisciplinary efforts; (c) theoretical concerns; and (d) recent educational developments that point to the advisability of interdisciplinary curriculum and instruction. To support this rationale, an attempt is made to draw from pertinent literature outside the field of social education, particularly from the curriculum field. Problems associated with past interdisciplinary efforts are examined, and recommendations for enacting interdisciplinary curricular organizations are offered. Hopefully these considerations will encourage social studies and other educators to begin to reappraise both the prevailing and the possible roles that interdisciplinary curriculum and instruction can play in the education of democratic citizens.

The Perils of Disciplinarity

In a fundamental way, the dominance of disciplinarity (Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Morrissett, 1984) flies in the face of efforts to educate an enlightened citizenry for a democratic society. The disciplines were created to organize and systematize knowledge in order to enhance communication and action among researchers (Vaihinger, 1935; Alberty, 1953; Taba, 1962; Tanner & Tanner, 1980; Evans, 1992). Often, however, the disciplines are considered as ends in themselves. Ironically, this tendency seems as prevalent in the primary and secondary schools as in the colleges—where teachers often derive their professional identity from their subject rather than from a sense of a wider educational purpose (e.g., education for democratic citizenship)—despite the absence in schools of any responsibilities to undertake specialized research. The emphasis on disciplinarity often results in a fragmented curriculum that generally neglects the application and synthesis of knowledge necessary for effectively addressing personal-social problems and issues (Tanner & Tanner, 1980, pp. 518-519; Tanner, 1983).

Periodically, university educators attempt to address the neglect of application and synthesis that are characteristic of the discipline-

centered curriculum. The general education movement at midcentury was one such example. Clarence H. Faust (1950), then dean of the College of the University of Chicago, defined general education as "the kind of education that will prepare men to deal with the problems which confront all members of a democratic society" (p. 3) and as "the preparation of youth to deal with the personal and social problems with which all men [*sic*] in a democratic society are confronted" (p. 6). Faust viewed general education as a means to overcome the tendency of the disciplines "to mistake the lines that have come to circumscribe the activities of academic departments for divisions in the nature of reality" (p. 8).[2] Despite such interest in promoting interdisciplinary connections, clearly the discipline-centered curriculum remains firmly entrenched at the university level, as it does in the schools.

Scholars working in the curriculum field have long examined both the strengths and weaknesses of the discipline-centered curriculum and have advocated the implementation of interdisciplinary curricula to mitigate the drawbacks of disciplinarity (Alberty, 1953; Taba, 1962; Tanner & Tanner, 1980). Working in this vein, Beane (1990) identified three contributing factors in the origin and maintenance of the discipline-centered curriculum. In short, the idea emerged from the classical humanist tradition that everything we need to know and therefore everything the schools need to teach has been handed down in classical subjects (which later included science, modern mathematics, art, and other modern subjects). The psychological theory of mental discipline, or "faculty psychology" with its compartmentalized conception of the mind as a storehouse of segmented information, complemented the separate-subject orientation inherent in the classical humanist tradition. The resulting disciplinary organization became the province of intellectual elites who were interested in preserving that structure. Beane observed that the subject-centered curriculum "has come to be seen as the way the curriculum is *supposed* to be organized; it is construed to serve the common 'needs' of young people" (p. 29, emphasis in original). So strong is the hold of the discipline-centered curriculum on our imaginations, Beane concluded, that "other possibilities seem almost preposterous, nearly unthinkable" (p. 29).[3]

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[2]Faust's views on general education were confined to the university. Faust (1950) depicted the schools as concerned primarily with laying general foundations in order to prepare prospective college students for general education studies. Despite such views, the general education movement thrived in the schools and in some ways predated its cousin in the colleges. (See Commission on Secondary School Curriculum, 1938, Chapter 2, "The Purpose of Education in a Democracy"; Alberty, 1953, Chapter 6, "The Emerging Design of the General Education Program in the High School"; and Tanner & Tanner, 1980, Chapter 11, "General Education and the Search for Synthesis".)

[3]This prevailing discipline-centered view is manifested in the separate chapters devoted to individual subjects, including the social studies, in the recent *Handbook of Research on Curriculum* (Jackson, 1992). The single chapter (Goodlad & Su, 1992) that

Beane summarized the educational shortcomings of pervasive disciplinarity in the following way:

> To begin with, it suggests a distorted view of real life as it is commonly experienced by people, including the young and probably most academicians when they are off campus. Life and learning consist of a continuous flow of experiences around situations that require problem solving in both large and small ways. When we encounter life situations we do not ask, "Which part is science, which is mathematics, which is history?" and so on. Rather, we use whatever information or skills the situation itself calls for, and we integrate these in problem solving. Certainly such information and skills may often be found within subjects, but in real life the problem itself is at the center, and the information and skills are defined around the problem (p. 29).

In the least desirable form of disciplinarity, subjects are presented simply as bodies of disconnected facts to be committed to memory rather than as fields of inquiry devoted to testing hypotheses about social or natural phenomena (Engle & Ochoa, 1988).

Dissatisfaction with the curriculum and instruction in which subject information is memorized painfully and forgotten painlessly by students (to parapharase Dewey) is a staple of the literature of the social studies field (Griffin, 1992/1942; Oliver & Shaver, 1966; Hunt & Metcalf, 1968; Engle & Ochoa, 1988). Proposed remedies for this condition typically involve treating information as evidence for testing subject-related hypotheses or for examining persistent social issues. Recent debates about the place of history in the school curriculum have surfaced similar criticisms of disciplinarity, pointing to the tendency for subject-centered curriculum and instruction to involve uncritical transmission of information and to narrow knowledge sources to select subjects (e.g., Evans, 1992). The rationale for a discipline-based curriculum has also been challenged on the grounds that current so-called legitimate disciplines enjoying relatively high prestige are more ideological constructs than fields of logically principled modes of inquiry (Nelson, 1990).

Given these shortcomings of the discipline-centered curriculum as it is implemented commonly in our schools, it could serve more to hinder

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addresses interdisciplinary studies is discussed below. Further, in the *Handbook of Research on Social Studies Teaching and Learning* (Shaver, 1991), separate chapters are devoted to each of the social sciences as well as to other related topics. Section 7, "Interrelations between Social Studies and Other Curriculum Areas," is an effort to overcome this problem, but even the connections here are generally limited to social studies and one other subject.

than to help the education of citizens who need to be capable of tackling complex public issues. While specialized discipline-centered courses clearly rate a place in the curriculum (if only to introduce students to organized bodies of knowledge), they need not exist at the expense of interdisciplinary studies.[4] Disciplinary and integrative studies should be offered in concert as component parts of the total school curriculum.

Historic Commitment

Despite the dominance of subject organization in schools, educators have worked throughout this century to design and implement interdisciplinary curricula. As early as 1899, for example, Dewey (1956/1899) advocated unifying the curriculum through an interdisciplinary study of occupations. Historically, the social studies has played a consistently important role in innovative interdisciplinary efforts.

Hertzberg (1981) noted that the initial transition in this field from social sciences to social studies resulted in the genesis of the Problems of American Democracy (POD) course created by the National Education Association (NEA) Committee on the Social Studies (1916) as part of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education. The POD course was intended to focus instruction on "actual problems, issues, or conditions as they occur in life, and in their several aspects, political, economic, and sociological" (p. 53). Problems or issues would "be selected on the ground[s] (1) of their immediate interest to the class [students] and (2) of their vital importance to society" (p. 53). The course aimed at "giving a more definite, comprehensive, and deeper knowledge of some of the vital problems of social life and thus of securing a more intelligent and active citizenship" (p. 52). The interdisciplinary—or intradisciplinary, as the case may be—nature of the course was recognized when the report observed that "in actual life, whether as high school pupils or as adults, we face problems or conditions and not sciences. We use sciences, however, to interpret our problems and conditions" (p. 54). Discussing the recommendations of the 1916 report, Shermis and Barth (1979) observed:

> The essential reason for advocating the study of problems was tied in with the idea of the integration of knowledge. Problems recommended for study were to help young people

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[4]Advocates of interdisciplinary studies usually call for implementing such a program in concert with traditional subject-centered courses (e.g., Educational Policies Commission, 1952; Alberty, 1953; Tanner & Tanner, 1980; Jacobs, 1989). For an exception, see Beane (1990), who calls for a provocative total program of interdisciplinary studies for middle school students.

> learn to integrate knowledge, data, and information....To summarize then, *integration* in the early twentieth century social studies sense meant integration from any source of knowledge. *Use* meant use in the solution of whatever problems face humanity and have been defined as such (p. 3, emphasis in original).

In other words, the POD course aimed to develop in students the ability to synthesize and apply knowledge and methods from the social sciences toward the resolution of personal-social issues and problems. The interdisciplinary, problem-focused course had its roots in the work of Dewey and in the origins of social studies education itself.

During the 1920s and 1930s, interdisciplinary, problem-focused studies received fuller consideration and application at the Lincoln School of Teachers College, Columbia University, and in the work of the Progressive Education Association (PEA) Eight-Year Study.[5] The Lincoln School experimented with many effective interdisciplinary units of study at both the elementary and secondary levels (Cremin, 1961, pp. 283-286). Experimental schools in the PEA study employed a variety of nontraditional curricular organizations including broad fields, fusion, and core approaches. One goal of these schools was to break down "artificial barriers which unfortunately separated teacher from teacher, subject from subject" (Aikin, 1942, pp. 52, 49-62). Most of these curricula focused on personal-social concerns of adolescents (see Giles & McCutcheon, 1942). Typically, social studies played an integral part in interdisciplinary courses conducted in participating schools.

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[5]In 1932, the Commission on the Relation of School to College, founded two years earlier by the Progressive Education Association, obtained cooperation from more than 300 colleges and universities to waive standard requirements for college admission for graduates of some 30 schools around the country. The major purpose of what later came to be known as the Eight-Year Study was to free secondary schools from "the obstacle of rigid college prescriptions" to enable substantive experimentation with alternatives to conventional subject-centered curriculum and instruction (Aikin, 1942). Released time and access to outside consultants were some of the resources the 30 schools provided to enable teachers to develop innovative solutions to perennial curricular and instructional problems.

In 1933, the 30 secondary schools set out to revise their curricula as they chose, and they implemented a variety of changes that ranged from minor modifications to conventional courses to interdisciplinary, heterogeneously grouped, problem-focused programs. After four years of curricular experimentation, 1,475 students from participating schools were matched with peers from traditional high schools and followed through four years of college. The fundamental conclusion of the Eight-Year Study was that no particular program of study is the best preparation for college. Probably overshadowed by World War II, the results of the Eight-Year Study received little attention when they were released in the early 1940s and to this day remain obscure for most educators, despite the powerful challenge they present to the prevailing subject-centered curriculum.

Graduates of the most experimental schools in the Eight-Year Study, i.e., those with the most interdisciplinary curricular organizations, were found to match or better their college peers from conventional secondary programs in areas such as academic achievement, involvement in cocurricular activities, and knowledge of and concern for the world around them (Aikin, 1942, pp. 111-113).[6] In effect, the study not only challenged the assumption that a discipline-centered curriculum was the best preparation for college, but also provided a powerful empirical argument in favor of an interdisciplinary component of the secondary curriculum.[7] The success of these often neglected programs is well documented and deserves renewed attention (Tanner & Tanner, 1980, pp. 370-71; Strickland, 1986; Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992).

The American Historical Association (AHA) Commission on the Social Studies, another milestone in the development of the social studies field, also recognized the interdisciplinary imperative for the social studies. In its summary volume, *Conclusions and Recommendations*, the commission (1934) suggested:

> The program of social science instruction should not be organized as a separate and isolated division of the curriculum, but rather should be closely integrated with other activities and subjects so that the entire curriculum of the school may constitute a unified attack upon the complicated problem of life in contemporary society (p. 48).

Although the AHA commission apparently viewed the POD as insufficient (Commission on the Social Studies, 1933, pp. 42-46; Hertzberg, 1981, p. 45) and displayed a clear reluctance in *A Charter for the Social Sciences in the Schools* to integrate the disciplines, the

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[6]A number of criticisms have been leveled at the Eight-Year Study. These include charges (a) that the study failed to control for self-selection inherent in the generally progressive schools that participated and for important teacher characteristics, given the generous inservice and consulting support available to participants; (b) that the liberal leanings of the evaluation staff biased the findings; and (c) that the more experimental schools enjoyed higher per pupil expenditures than their less experimental counterparts. The validity of each of these criticisms has in turn been challenged (Tanner & Tanner, 1980, p. 370). Educational historians have dismissed or revised the significance of the Eight-Year Study by focusing exclusively on the academic outcomes identified by the college evaluation staff (Krug, 1972; also Bestor, 1953) or by portraying the study as a manifestation of narrow social efficiency/control in American education (Kliebard, 1986; see Wraga, in press). Significantly, the fundamental conclusion of the Eight-Year Study— that no particular program of studies is the best preparation for college—has gone unchallenged.

[7]Although Goodlad and Su (1992) indicated that "most of the writing and reporting on curricular organization is either conceptual or descriptive" rather than experimental (p. 327), they failed to point out that the most successful schools in the experimental Eight-Year Study employed interdisciplinary curricular organizations (p. 340).

commission nevertheless acknowledged that the understanding of complex societal problems prerequisite to intelligent action required some degree of interdisciplinary study (Commission on the Social Studies, 1933, pp. 6-7, 13-21).

During the 1940s and 1950s, interdisciplinary study was advanced through the core curriculum movement. Growing out of the work of the Eight-Year Study, the term *core curriculum* was used to designate a variety of curricular organizations. A common aim of core courses was to break down barriers that separated conventional subjects. In practice, most core courses correlated subjects; that is, combined them while retaining disciplinary identities—most often with English and social studies and less frequently with science—and collaborated to address central themes (Wright, 1952, p. 8; 1950, p. 13). True core courses, according to Wright, were characterized by "complete disregard of subject boundaries and the development of problems [for study] without regard to classification according to traditional subject content" (Wright, 1952, p. 6).

True core courses embraced "the importance to youth of acquiring skill in democratic living through actually practicing it in the classroom" (Wright, 1952, p. 6). Purely problem-focused, true core courses were widespread, but less frequently found than those that retained disciplinary identities (p. 8). Subsequent research on core curriculum programs consistently has demonstrated important educational benefits of interdisciplinary studies. Over 80 normative or comparative studies of core curricula have yielded findings consistent with those reported by the Eight-Year Study (National Association for Core Curriculum, 1984). Vars (1991) summarized one dimension of these findings by observing that "in nearly every instance, students in various types of integrative/interdisciplinary programs have performed equally well or better on standardized achievement tests when compared with those enrolled in the usual separate subjects" (p. 19). Despite these findings, core programs are not a common feature of middle and secondary schools. While the National Association for Core Curriculum founded in 1953 remains active (Vars, 1987), a rich literature about the core curriculum today lies dormant for most educators (Vars, 1969, 1972, 1991; Wraga, 1992a).[8]

In addition to the efforts just described, other examples of interdisciplinary curricular arrangements are available in the educational literature (Cohen, 1978; Tanner, 1989). Again, it is significant that in the interdisciplinary efforts summarized above, the social studies almost invariably played a prominent role. Unfortunately, this is no longer always the case. Whereas the 1916

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[8]Goodlad and Su (1992) also overlooked the bulk of theory and research on the core curriculum (p. 338).

report represented the shift from the social sciences to the social studies, the new social studies of the 1960s reversed this trend. The new social studies was part of a larger Sputnik-inspired educational reform movement that placed priority on the structure of the discipline as the principal organizational element for the school curriculum (Hlebowitsh & Wraga, 1989; Klopfer & Champagne, 1990; Massialas, 1992). While some of these projects (e.g., the High School Geography Project and the Harvard Social Studies Project) integrated knowledge from two or more social sciences and therefore could be characterized as intradisciplinary, most embraced Bruner's (1960) structure of the discipline rationale by promoting the perspective of a particular subject and neglecting to seek connections with disciplines outside of the social studies realm. Shermis and Barth (1983) summarized the impact of the new curriculum projects on the initial conception of the social studies as the place for the integration and use of knowledge for the purpose of active citizenship in a democracy:

> The new, allegedly intellectual[ly] superior social science education, however, became fragmented into specific training in geography, economics, law, anthropology, and sociology; that is, the historic concern for *integration* disappeared as social science disciplinarians attempted to create curricular materials and generate expertise in their own disciplines (p. 83, emphasis in original).

Like most of the discipline-centered reforms of the post-Sputnik period, the new social studies projects tended to exalt the disciplinary priority above the interdisciplinary imperative, and had the effect of maintaining the dominance of disciplinarity over the social studies curriculum as well as over the wider curriculum (Hlebowitsh & Wraga, 1989; Klopfer & Champagne, 1990).

Interdisciplinary Studies: Theoretical Considerations

Notable scholars in the fields of education, science, philosophy, and the social sciences have asserted the educational imperative of interdisciplinary studies. These theoretical perspectives of scholars from diverse backgrounds should not be dismissed summarily. Consideration of such views may yield significant insights into the issue; for example, in an essay on *Objectivity in Social Research*, the late economist Gunnar Myrdal (1969) maintained that "in reality there are not economic, sociological, or psychological problems, but simply problems, and that as a rule they are complex" (p. 10). Similarly, John Dewey (1985/1927), in *The Public and Its Problems*, criticized the backwardness of the social sciences for their tendency to "go their own

ways without constant and systematized fruitful interaction" (p. 171). Both scholars insisted that the social sciences serve society best when used to resolve complex problems in an interdisciplinary fashion.

In 1931, Dewey (1964/1931) claimed that the most pressing need of the school curriculum was for a "reorganization of subject matter that takes account of outleadings into the wide world of nature and man, of knowledge, and of social interests and uses" (p. 425). For Dewey, this was best achieved through "the interrelation of subjects with one another and with social bearing and application" (p. 426). Nuclear physicist Alvin M. Weinberg (1965) put it another way:

> Our society is mission oriented. Its mission is resolution of problems arising from social, technical, and psychological conflicts and pressures. Since these problems are not generated within any single intellectual discipline, their resolution is not to be found within a single discipline....In society, the nonspecialist and synthesizer are king (p. 145).

The fact that these scholars were willing to put aside the priorities of their specialized fields to call for greater integration and application of subject knowledge perhaps attests to the imperative for interdisciplinary studies in the curriculum.[9]

The case for the interdisciplinary study of societal problems is supported further by a brief consideration of the foundations of education in the United States. The preparation of enlightened, active citizens for participation in democratic forms of government was the primary motivation for early advocates of American education, among them Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and Horace Mann. Preparation for democratic citizenship was in effect the historic national goal of education in our country (Wraga, 1992b). As noted at the outset, the sheer complexity of the issues that students will face as citizens requires interdisciplinary studies as a component of citizenship education in order for schooling in the United States to be true to its historic mission.

The need for interdisciplinary studies in preparing future citizens to address complex social issues also has been identified by some social studies scholars. Hunt and Metcalf (1968), for example, endorsed the interdisciplinary core program as a curricular organization conducive to engaging students in reflective examination of a problem or issue. They cautioned, however, that the core should "not integrate for the sake of integration" but rather for the sake of crossing "subject-matter boundaries" for the express purpose of addressing life problems not

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[9]Dewey may be misplaced in this discussion since it can be argued that integration was his specialization. The author thanks James A. Beane for this insight.

confinable to a single discipline (pp. 290-292). Evans (1992), too, sees integration serving the study of social issues largely. While integration should not happen for its own sake any more than change should take place simply for the sake of change, integration solely for the purpose of examining social issues is unnecessary as well. As discussed below, there are benefits of integrating disciplines regardless of whether a life problem or social issue is under scrutiny. To limit interdisciplinary connections to the task of examining social or life issues would be to forego other opportunities for fruitful interdisciplinary connections.

Engle and Ochoa (1988) also based their call for interdisciplinary connections on a conception of citizenship education that emphasized equipping students to tackle controversial issues they will face inevitably as adult citizens. Engle and Ochoa recognized that the sheer complexity of controversial issues transcends the knowledge and perspective offered by a single or even by several social science disciplines. They advocated drawing connections among the social studies and other areas of the school curriculum, but focused predominantly on the humanities in their examples and prescriptions. They recommended devoting a block of time annually (at least two weeks) to a social studies department-wide study of a selected social problem. They mentioned (only in passing, however) that all departments should participate in this endeavor. Unlike Hunt and Metcalf or Evans, Engle and Ochoa did not limit curricular integration to the study of social issues, recognizing the valuable connections that can be made with other subject areas, although again they emphasized collaboration with humanities subjects over science and mathematics subjects. Social studies educators commonly tend to emphasize integration within the social sciences and to a slightly greater extent, the humanities, and they neglect integration with other areas of the curriculum. Exceptions to this include advocates of Science-Technology-Society (STS) education (Patrick & Remy, 1985) and of statistical applications in social studies (Laughlin, Hartoonian, & Sanders, 1989).

In summary, educational theory and practice have long embraced interdisciplinary studies as a powerful means of educating students for enlightened democratic citizenship. The results of the Eight-Year Study and of numerous studies of core curriculum programs have demonstrated that interdisciplinary experiences for youth indeed promote a wider range of learnings than disciplinary studies. It must be acknowledged, however, that despite the attention interdisciplinary and issue-focused instruction often enjoy in the scholarly and professional literature cited above, the actual incidence of such curricular organizations in schools remains relatively meager. Interdisciplinary block-time programs probably never enrolled more than 5% of students nationwide (Wright, 1958). The most recent tally of offerings and enrollments omitted core programs from its survey.

Similarly, POD courses enrolled 5.2% of students nationwide in 1949 and have lost enrollments ever since.[10] This reality presents an awesome challenge for advocates of these curricular organizations.

Lessons from the Past

We can learn from the failures of past interdisciplinary efforts as well as from their achievements. What are the problems involved with interdisciplinary studies and how might they be resolved? Several social studies researchers have shed light on the perils of interdisciplinarity.

In her history of the social studies, Hertzberg (1980) briefly described the core curriculum approach and the problems associated with its implementation. She identified teacher workload, scheduling, lack of an agreed upon conceptual framework, and triviality of content as major problems of the interdisciplinary core, characterizing it as "ranging from imaginative and well-based curricula involving active student participation to blatant anti-intellectualism" (p. 80).

Elaborating Hertzberg's criticisms, Patrick and Remy (1985) identified five pitfalls encountered by past attempts at interdisciplinary studies. Citing Hertzberg's reporting of the core curriculum movement, they concluded that a principal pitfall of interdisciplinary studies is that "there is no broad theory of knowledge that incorporates the sciences and the social studies" (p. 42). "There is no universal framework," they continued, "that could be the foundation for a comprehensive interdisciplinary curriculum" (p. 42). Earlier in their discussion of connecting science, technology, and the social studies, Patrick and Remy defined science as "a process of inquiry that yields knowledge about physical, natural, or social phenomena," and referred to science as "a way of knowing and a producer of knowledge" (p. 7). The poor organization pitfall perhaps could be overcome by using the scientific method as a starting point for establishing the broad theory of knowledge that they advocate. Patrick and Remy themselves recommended a decision-making model as another fruitful starting point for establishing a conceptual framework for integrative studies (p. 46). Furthermore, they failed to acknowledge the variety of interdisciplinary curricular organizations that have been developed to serve as frameworks for interdisciplinary studies and that have been recognized by the curriculum field for about half a century (Hopkins, 1937; Giles et al., 1942; Smith, Stanley, & Shores, 1950; Alberty, 1953;

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[10]According to periodic surveys of offerings and enrollments in high schools in the U.S., POD courses enrolled the following proportions of the national student population: 1.04% in 1928; 3.46% in 1934; 5.2% in 1949; 4.6% in 1961; 2.5% in 1973; and 0.3% in 1982 (Jessen, 1938; Federal Security Agency, 1951; Wright, 1965; National Center for Educational Statistics, 1975; National Association for Core Curriculum, 1984).

Taba, 1962; Tanner & Tanner, 1980). These organizations are discussed below.

Second, Patrick and Remy (1985) noted that "students in poorly organized interdisciplinary courses often floundered" (p. 42). This pitfall often plagues discipline-centered courses as well, despite the prevailing traditional organizational patterns available for them (e.g., chronology, major concepts, or areas of investigation). While no curricular model has a monopoly on poor organization, the issue is undoubtedly more common in courses with a weak or nonexistent organizational history. Hertzberg (1980) observed that "when well conceived and well taught, the core, like other fusionist attempts, could result in a stimulating course in which students were able to grasp new relationships" (p. 81). Careful structuring and organization of interdisciplinary curricula can overcome this pitfall.

The third problem identified by Patrick and Remy (1985) involves the overwhelming demands placed upon teachers of interdisciplinary courses.[11] This is perhaps the most pressing problem facing any effort of this kind. A problem-focused POD or core course requires the investment of substantial time, materials, and funds and the commitment of administrators, supervisors, and teachers from each participating subject area. In far too many school districts, resources of this extent are unavailable. This problem has long been recognized and addressed by advocates of interdisciplinary studies.[12]

Fourth, Patrick and Remy (1985) reiterated "the pitfall of failing to provide appropriate conceptual and factual foundations for studies of problems, issues, and values" (p. 43) identified in the 1980 report of the Commission on the Humanities. This pitfall raises the question of which is more important to the citizen-student: a good understanding of the various academic disciplines or a facility to address a problem or issue from a variety of perspectives, to make a decision, and to act on it.[13] Obviously, in ideal circumstances, the answer is that these two goals are both desirable. In fact, advocates of interdisciplinary studies usually appeal to the complementary natures

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[11]Franklin (1985) drew a similar conclusion in his case study of the POD course in the Minneapolis schools. His depiction, however, of the POD course as "inextricably linked with the social efficiency movement" seems to imply that efforts to integrate conventional subject matter in order to examine critically contemporary societal problems and issues were narrowly "functional" and demonstrated "a special fondness for the practices of early twentieth century American business and industry" (pp. 242, 239, 240). Franklin did not view the POD course as an effort to advance citizenship education in the Jeffersonian sense of preparing citizens to serve as a check against the power of the government.

[12]See Faunce & Bossing, 1951; Wright, 1952; Vars, 1972.

[13]Again, this is not and should not be viewed as an either/or issue. Jacobs (1989) calls this dilemma the polarity problem. Efforts to conceive of disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies as mutually exclusive generally fail to view these curricular organizations in the context of wider educational goals and functions and in relation to other components of the secondary curriculum.

of the two approaches. Engle and Ochoa (1988), however, point out that citizens are often required to make decisions even before they have all the available information at hand. From this perspective, issue-focused, interdisciplinary studies would likely better prepare students for this reality than would a conventional versing in the traditional academic subjects.

Finally, Patrick and Remy (1985) identified the frequent "lack of historical perspective" that plagued "courses based on contemporary social problems and issues" (p. 43). This problem, obviously stemming from poor organization, resulted in a course that reverted to a cursory glance at current events from a problem-focused investigation into persistent and pervading social problems and issues. The reverse criticism, of course, can be leveled at history courses that never reveal the relationship between past and present. Thoughtful curriculum development that ensures the examination of contemporary societal issues in a variety of contexts could avert this pitfall.

Shermis and Barth (1979, 1983) have studied problem-focused and interdisciplinary curricula in great detail. They identified as the most puzzling paradox in American education the apparent fact that despite the extraordinary influence of Dewey's educational thought on theorists, there is scant evidence that his ideas impacted social studies practice in any appreciable way, particularly with respect to his conception of problem solving. They concluded that "the twentieth century social studies establishment simply superimposed the democratic, humane, and scientific vocabulary of theoreticians upon the accumulated educational practice of the past" (Shermis & Barth, 1983, p. 76). The traditional emphasis on the transmission of information prevails, despite rhetoric valuing the application of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes to socially responsible action.[14]

The pitfall for interdisciplinary studies that Shermis and Barth (1983) identified is "the practice of labeling something a problem without providing problematic treatment" in Dewey's sense, which "illustrates the tendency to treat problems as traditional content" (p. 81). In practice, problems were usually no more than conventional exercises prescribed at the end of textbook chapters labeled as such or at best traditional content topics labeled as a problem (Shermis & Barth, 1979, p. 11). Shermis and Barth (1979) maintained that "if there is no problem solving, there is no integration" (p. 12). Even attempts at problem-focused curriculum and instruction were foiled often by the inertia of the dominant discipline-centered mindset.

The criticisms that Hertzberg as well as Patrick and Remy raise seem to reveal a latent bias on their parts in favor of the subject-based

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[14]The recommendation of the AHA Commission could also be taken as an example of this tendency.

curricular organization or at least of traditional subject content. In fact, almost all of the criticisms they raised can be leveled also at conventional subject-centered courses. Hertzberg admitted that her perspective on interdisciplinary efforts was influenced by her experience "as a former core teacher of social studies and English who did not wish to throw the disciplines overboard" (p. 177). Again, few who advocate interdisciplinary studies would dispense entirely with subject courses. The critical question is what disciplinary and interdisciplinary curricular designs have to offer to the education of future citizens.

Curricular Functions and Forms

In his classic course syllabus, *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (1949), Tyler maintained that when developing the school curriculum, the question subject specialists should address is: "What can your subject contribute to the education of young people who are not going to be specialists in your field; what can your subject contribute to the layman, the garden variety of citizen?" (p. 26). Subject specialists generally respond to this question in ways that exalt their respective specialized knowledge areas over general education considerations; that is, many educators, both university and school personnel, find it difficult to distinguish between academic priorities and educational imperatives. It is instructive to examine this distinction with particular respect to interdisciplinary curricular organizations.[15]

The distinction is essentially a matter of what one holds to be the fundamental ends and means of schooling. Those who insist that the primary purpose of schools is to prepare students for college, and/or that college prep programs are the best preparation for life can be said to embrace the academic priority for the schools. Those who maintain that schools are responsible for a wide range of purposes, chief among them preparation for citizenship, vocation, and further learning, can be said to embrace the educational imperative for precollege education. The former obviously exalt academics over other educational means and ends while the latter view academics as one component of both educational means and ends. Without debating the merits of each perspective, suffice it to state for present purposes that both of these positions support a case for interdisciplinary studies. How can this be?

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[15]Of course, this distinction is drawn at the risk of appearing to contrive an artificial dualism. Yet staunch defenders of the disciplines who exalt traditional subjects and explicitly or implicitly ignore, dismiss, or discourage interdisciplinary studies are easily found (e.g., Bestor, 1953; Adler, 1982; Bennett, 1987), as are educators who profess a wider perspective of the curriculum (e.g., Dewey, 1966/1916; Educational Policies Commission, 1952; Taba, 1962; Tanner & Tanner, 1980). While the former usually neglect the latter approach, they usually regard their own as one component of the total curriculum.

As noted earlier, curricularists have developed several alternative designs for interdisciplinary studies, as well as schemes to classify them. Several of these schemes and designs are represented in Table 1. The boldface line suggests a distinction between the academic forms of interdisciplinary studies and the educational forms. Table 2 describes several interdisciplinary curricular designs.[16]

In interdisciplinary designs such as correlation, fusion, and broad fields, subjects typically retain a sufficient degree of their identities that they remain intentionally recognizable. These designs make sense from an academic standpoint not only because academic identities are retained, but also because the content of the respective subjects is often mutually complementary—the understandings each subject is attempting to promote are reinforced by various aspects of related or allied fields. The examination of literature in historic context, for example, lends a deeper understanding to a particular text, as a text can serve to illustrate a dominant characteristic of a particular era. Similarly, the complementary relationship between mathematics and physics is well established. From the student's viewpoint, curricular correlation or fusion can eliminate overlap and redundancy and add meaning to the separate courses through the newly apparent connections between and among them. Thus, interdisciplinary studies yield an intrinsic academic value.

In interdisciplinary designs such as the structured and unstructured (or open) core curricula, the distinctions between and among subjects virtually vanish as knowledge is applied to examining problems as needed and without deference to the disciplines. These designs make sense from an educational viewpoint because a wider range of purposes can be addressed more easily in this way (e.g., matters of health, vocation, and of course citizenship) than through the traditional subjects, because students can develop the facility to address complex societal issues, and because research and practice have demonstrated that students who experience the core approach generally match their peers when it comes to conventional measures of academic performance (Aikin, 1942; National Association, 1984). In summary, a case can be made for interdisciplinary studies from both academic and educational standpoints.

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[16]Table 1 serves the sole purpose of illustrating the academic/educational distinction with respect to interdisciplinary curricular organizations, and presents a representative sample, not a comprehensive overview of work in this area. Further, chronology does not necessarily indicate efforts to build purposefully upon previous interdisciplinary work. Jacobs, in particular, apparently created her scheme and categories independent of prior work, since she made no reference to past efforts. Other schemes intentionally sought to clarify or expand on related proposals. The definition of terms in Table 2 is intended to be informative, and is not representative or definitive of work in this area.

	Academic Forms			Educational Forms		
Table 1 **Interdisciplinary Curricular Organizations: Academic and Educational Forms**						
Eight-Year Study (1942)	Broad Fields	Fusion	Culture-Epoch	Core Program		
Alberty (1953)	Informal Correlation	Formal Correlation	Fusion	Preplanned Core	Unplanned Core	
Wright (1952, 1958)	Block-time Correlation	Fusion		Prestructured Core	True Core	
Vars (1969)	Subject-area Block time	Unified Studies		Core Program (Structured/Unstructured)		
Tanner & Tanner (1980)	Correlation	Fusion	Broad Fields	Core Program	Activity	
Jacobs (1989)	Parallel Disciplines	Multiple Disciplines		Inter-disciplinarity	Integration	Complete Program

The Current Scene: Obstacles and Opportunities

Most social studies activities and reform efforts are characterized by competing disciplines vying for more instructional time devoted to their particular content and perspective. During the last few years, crisis pronouncements and subsequent prescriptions for reform have been issued for history (Ravitch & Finn, 1987; Bradley Commission, 1988), economics (Walstad & Soper, 1988), and geography (Joint Committee on Geographic Education, 1984). Reform calls such as these typically work independently of other subjects, consider their respective subject area of primary importance to the social studies and even to the wider curriculum, and issue the obligatory admission that interdisciplinary connections are desirable academically and educationally, yet offer few if any guidelines for integrating with other subjects within or outside of the social studies domain.[17]

The report of the Curriculum Task Force of the National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools, *Charting a Course: Social Studies for the 21st Century* (1989), clearly manifests the characteristics just mentioned with its occasional references to multidisciplinary studies and its concomitant firm reliance on history and geography for providing "the matrix or framework for social studies" (pp. 3, 9). Despite pointing to the perennial problem of fragmentation within the social studies (p. v) and the need for students to understand the interrelationships among the social sciences (pp. ix, x) and even between social studies and other subjects (pp. 3, 9), the task force proposed a discipline-bound curriculum that exalted history and geography over other social sciences and failed to consider interdisciplinary (versus multidisciplinary) arrangements in any substantive fashion. Furthermore, the listing of a course that examines contemporary issues merely as a minor option for half of the twelfth grade (p. 20), the failure to discuss available research on interdisciplinary studies in the research section of the report, and the spotlighting of perspectives on the social studies from eight social science organizations in a lengthy appendix, further attest to the deference the task force accorded to specialized disciplines. In summary, the task force's reluctance to recommend interdisciplinary

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[17]Tryon's (1929) discussion of the origins of POD suggests that the course was at least as much an effort to appease competing academic interest groups as it was to advance education for citizenship in a democracy. Interestingly, even today's advocates of issue-focused education in the social studies rarely look to subjects outside the social studies for pertinent information and perspectives (see for example "Issue-Centered Education," 1989; "Defining Issues-Centered Social Studies Education," 1992). Again, social studies educators generally tend to think of interdisciplinary as denoting connections chiefly or exclusively within the social sciences and the humanities.

Table 2 **Illustrative Definitions of Selected** **Interdisciplinary Curricular Organizations**	
Open or True Core	"The scope of the core program is not predetermined. Pupils and teacher are free to select the problems upon which they wish to work. Subject matter content is brought in as needed to develop or help solve the problems" (Wright, 1958, pp. 9-10).
Prestructured Core	"Predetermined problems based upon the personal-social needs of adolescents—both needs that adolescents themselves have identified and needs as society sees them—determine the scope of the core program. Subject matter is brought in as needed in working on the problems. Pupils may or may not have a choice from among several of these problem areas; they will, however, have some responsibility for suggesting and choosing activities in developing units of study" (Wright, 1958, pp. 9-10).
Broad Fields	"The attempt is made to develop some degree of synthesis or unity for an entire branch of knowledge," e.g., American studies, general science, fine arts (Tanner & Tanner, 1980, p. 473).
Fusion	"Related subjects are merged into a new subject," e.g., earth science, biology (Tanner & Tanner, 1980, p. 471).
Correlation	"Relationships are developed between or among two or more subjects while still retaining the usual subject divisions" (Tanner & Tanner, 1980, p. 468).

studies as a key component of the social studies curriculum seemed to corroborate Beane's (1990) observation that alternatives to the subject curriculum "seem almost preposterous, nearly unthinkable" (p. 29).[18]

Another recently popular approach to social studies reform has been the generation of competing scope and sequence proposals. The initial round of these proposals (Task Force on Scope and Sequence, 1984) generally recognized the benefits of integrating the disciplines within the social studies, but tended to de-emphasize the need for curricular articulation across department boundaries, particularly at

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[18]See Whelan (1992, p. 11) for a different interpretation of the *Charting A Course: Social Studies for the 21st Century* report.

the secondary level. Instead, most merely acknowledged obligingly the need to integrate curriculum and instruction in the social studies with other disciplines in the school, and balked at recommending significant curricular integration. Significantly, however, two of the three scope and sequence proposals later endorsed by the Task Force on Scope and Sequence and published in 1989 in revised form (Hartoonian, and Laughlin & Kniep) gave slightly greater emphasis to interdisciplinary studies than did their earlier versions, yet they still stopped short of advocating substantive horizontal articulation of the curriculum.

Meanwhile, renewed attention is being paid to the importance of interdisciplinary studies by other subject area groups within the education profession. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics called for the development of the ability "to use and value the connections between mathematics and other disciplines" (p. 146). Similarly, the American Association for the Advancement of Science maintained that in order for science education to "equip . . . [students] to participate thoughtfully with fellow citizens in building and protecting a society that is open, decent, and vital," traditional disciplinary lines must be weakened or eliminated (p. 5). The Science-Technology-Society (STS) education embraces the interrelationships and complementary aspects of conventional subjects, particularly science and the social studies (Hofstein & Yager, 1982; Rubba, 1987; Wraga & Hlebowitsh, 1990).[19] Rubba (1990) summarized the implications of the accumulated research on STS education by asserting that it "supports use of issue investigation and action-based STS units that focus on locally relevant issues for helping students develop the knowledge, skills, and affective qualities needed to take action on science and technology-related societal issues in a responsible manner" (pp. 202-203). Significantly, calls for interdisciplinary studies are tied almost invariably to calls for education for democratic citizenship. Renewed interest in interdisciplinary studies can also be discerned in the recent increased attention to integrative curricula on the part of leading education associations and journals ("Interdisciplinary Instruction," 1987; "Integrating the Curriculum," 1989; "Integrating the Curriculum," 1991; George et al., 1992; Jenkins & Tanner, 1992; "Integrating Language Arts & Social Studies," 1992).

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[19]The STS movement in the U.S. began around 1980 and was championed initially by science educators. While some social educators eventually began to advocate STS education, there are relatively few who are involved significantly with the approach currently . In essence, STS education seeks to provide students with the context to integrate concepts and processes from science and the social studies to involve them in decision making about science-related societal issues (see Yager, 1990; Wraga & Hlebowitsh, 1991).

The Interdisciplinary Imperative and the Curriculum Frontier

The increasing attention paid to interdisciplinary studies by social educators and by educators in other fields suggests that the scope of the social studies must extend beyond the traditional social sciences framework to include disciplines in the humanities and the sciences—indeed, all disciplines—for personal-social, problem-focused learning. Ironically, while the *Essentials of Education* (1980) statement asserts that "all disciplines must join together and acknowledge their interdependence" (p. 4), the *Essentials of Social Studies* ignores the interdisciplinary imperative. Students as future citizens must be able to examine various societal issues and problems in a reflective, widely-informed fashion that attends to the complexity of human activity. If the school curriculum is to be organized to achieve this end, attention must be paid to the integration and application of knowledge for social problem solving. Curricularists Tanner and Tanner (1980) maintain that "the need for interdisciplinary and social problem-focused curricula cannot be denied in a society that holds to the democratic ideal of an enlightened citizenry. How the curriculum can be made consonant with this ideal has been one of the most persistent problems in education throughout the twentieth century" (p. 556).

While Hertzberg (1980) recognized the failure of interdisciplinary efforts to depart completely from the subject curriculum (p. 176), she identified the synthesis of subjects as an imperative for the social studies field:

> If I am correct, problems of synthesis will have to be directly addressed. Synthesis does not happen automatically. It is much easier to take things apart than to integrate them. Whether or not social studies reformers address themselves to the problem of synthesis, classroom teachers must do so, and it is insufficiently recognized that they are making the attempt with few models and little help (p. 177).

The interdisciplinary imperative for citizenship education is part and parcel of the perennial problem of the relationship among the social sciences in social studies education. It seems then that social studies educators committed to the preparation of enlightened, active citizens need to embrace and subsequently build upon the recommendations for interdisciplinarity that have emerged recently.

Tanner (1990) characterized the need to integrate learnings from the traditional subjects through interdisciplinary, problem-focused projects as the curriculum frontier. How can interdisciplinary curricular organizations be implemented? What might a curriculum that

opportunity to participate in sustained study of problem areas that would include issues of personal and community health, interpersonal relationships, cultural diversity, racism and prejudice, economic change, global interdependence, the environment, communications and the media, among others. Problem-focused units would correlate with the discipline-centered subjects of the school curriculum as well as integrate subject knowledge and perspectives appropriately to the particular problem under study. Such a course would provide the crucial opportunity for students as future citizens of "democracy [to] obtain those common ideas, ideals, and common modes of thought, feeling, and action that make for cooperation, social cohesion, and social solidarity" (Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, 1918, p. 21).

Enacting Interdisciplinary Curricula

Like the musician who longs to play everything he or she can imagine, the educational theorist is frustrated often by the discrepancy that exists between what he or she professes as the ideal curriculum, and what really happens in schools. Research and experience about general curriculum implementation (Cuban, 1984; Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992), efforts to implement issues-centered instruction in the social studies (Shaver, 1989), and efforts to implement interdisciplinary and core programs (Faunce & Bossing, 1951; Wright, 1952; Vars, 1962, 1969) offer useful insights for resolving this dilemma. Some of these insights are summarized below.

Any effort to increase the incidence of interdisciplinary curricular organizations in a particular school or district must take account of the local educational situation. To what extent are interdisciplinary connections already being made? Have interdisciplinary programs been attempted in the past? If so, what happened? What knowledge of or experience with such programs do the local teachers and administrators have? How prevalent is the interest in pursuing interdisciplinary programs? These and other questions must be answered before significant steps can be taken to implement interdisciplinary curricular organizations.

Successful curriculum implementation requires special roles for local administrators and teachers. Efforts to implement interdisciplinary core programs have met with greatest success when administrators, particularly principals, demonstrated a high-profile commitment to the realization of the programs (Vars, 1962). Experience and research have demonstrated that curricular reforms yield the most significant and lasting changes in classrooms, when teachers are given genuine opportunities to participate in curriculum and instruction

decisions that affect their work (Cuban, 1984; Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992).

Identifying the appropriate pace of change for a local school or district is critical to the success of reform efforts. Should participants be immersed in an endeavor to launch directly into a core program (Vars, 1962), or should changes be pursued in an incremental fashion, moving eventually from correlated to core arrangements (Wraga, 1990)? Again, the answer depends on the local educational situation. Once the pace of change is determined, teachers must be provided with opportunities to study literature pertinent to the local change effort and to develop curricula and lesson plans that will serve as the basis for the experiences they will provide students. Pilot units and courses should be conducted, evaluated, and revised continually. These tasks require plenty of time (e.g., common planning periods, released time, after-school meetings, and summer curriculum workshops) and a variety of materials, since prepackaged interdisciplinary materials are scarce.

Given most teachers' lack of experience with interdisciplinary programs and the specialized nature of most college and teacher education courses (Wright, 1952; Vars, 1969; Shaver, 1989), teachers must be given ample opportunity to examine, discuss, and experiment with the theory and practice behind integrative curricula in order to develop the mindset prerequisite to enacting interdisciplinary studies on a pervasive scale (Faunce & Bossing, 1951). This obstacle would be easier to confront if preservice teacher education programs introduced students to the possibilities of interdisciplinary studies.

Social studies educators should play a special role in advocating interdisciplinary curricular organizations. Reconsideration of the POD course would be a good place to begin such an effort. After all, the social studies in effect invented—pioneered, if you will—the course that aims especially to develop student ability to synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse sources toward the resolution of personal-social problems. Beyond the domain of the social studies, a national commission for general education should be established to generate a thorough rationale and appropriate guidelines for interdisciplinary studies in the schools. Composed of educators noted for their work with integrative studies (many referenced here), representatives from the various subject fields, and endorsed by leading educational organizations (as are the *Essentials* statements), such a high-profile effort would draw attention to the interdisciplinary imperative not only for the social studies, but also for the effective preparation of enlightened, active citizens capable of addressing and acting upon increasingly complex societal issues facing our democratic republic and the world. It is time for social studies educators to recognize that the ability and inclination to integrate and apply knowledge constitute an

essential civic competence and that we must enact interdisciplinary curricular arrangements to foster that competence in future citizens.

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CONTENT ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOKS: A REVIEW OF TEN YEARS OF RESEARCH[1]

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Abstract

Many researchers have criticized social studies textbooks for being biased, superficial, or poorly written, yet little attention has been paid to the quality of the textbook studies. This article presents the findings of a review of social studies content analysis research over the last 10 years. Studies reported in Theory and Research in Social Education, The Social Studies, *and* Social Education *(N = 25) were evaluated on the basis of their sampling, methodology, findings, and recommendations. The results of this review reveal that many of the problems noted in other types of social studies research are evident in content analysis research as well. The discussion focuses on recommendations for researchers to improve the quality of content analysis studies and to collaborate with other educators and organizations in promoting textbook reform and creative social studies teaching.*

Introduction

Textbooks are a pervading presence in the lives of teachers and students. A number of studies have found that students engage in textbook-related activities 70 to 95 percent of the time that they spend in classrooms (Armento, 1986; Durkin, 1983; Morrisett, Hawke, & Superka, 1982; Shannon, 1982); thus, it is important for social studies researchers to analyze the content and construction of social studies textbooks and the impact texts have on classroom teachers and children. Quality content analysis research has the potential to

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mobilize textbook reform efforts, to point toward effective recommendations for creative teaching, and to serve as a standard for other text analysis studies.

Many researchers have criticized social studies texts for being biased, superficial, or poorly written, yet little attention has been paid to the caliber of the textbook studies themselves. Although content analysis research is one of the three most common types of research in the social studies (Fraenkel, 1987), few researchers have focused on the quality of social studies content analysis studies. Wallen and Fraenkel (1988) analyzed 46 research studies reported in *Theory and Research in Social Education* over an eight-year period, but due to the nature of their review, content analysis studies were not included. As such, it is unclear whether or not the shortcomings they noted in other types of social studies research—inappropriate methodology, insignificant questions, and sampling bias, among others—apply to content analysis studies as well.

Garcia and Tanner (1985) assert that attempts to analyze racial and social issues in social studies texts have not been systematic. They criticize research that relies on the reviewer's perceptions and opinions rather than on empirically validated investigation, concluding that "the substitution of one bias for another is not the answer" (Garcia & Tanner, 1985, p. 201). While they raise some important issues, their discussion does not address the question of how pervasive the deficiencies are in social studies textbook studies on other topics.

Two recent reviews of social studies content analysis research reveal some useful information, yet they also have their limitations. Siler (1987) reviewed 14 content analysis studies on high school U.S. history textbooks published between 1961 and 1983. He found that most studies indicated little use of content analysis methodology. He cites problems with sampling, defining terms, analyzing data, and reporting results. Siler, however, did not incorporate some of the criteria he specified as important for content analysis studies in his own review of the research. There was no information about how the studies he reviewed were chosen and no indication of the sample's representativeness; thus, it is unclear how prevalent the problems are that Siler notes in the social studies content analysis literature as a whole.

Beck and McKeown (1991) discuss considerations for productive textbook analysis, and review many content analysis research studies as well. While their review provides social studies educators with an excellent survey of the recent research related to literary factors impeding or enhancing student comprehension of text information, they do not adequately address other types of content analysis studies on social studies texts. The primary purpose of this study was to assess systematically the quality of content analysis research reports

published in three major social studies journals from January, 1982, through October, 1992. A secondary purpose is to provide social studies researchers interested in conducting content analysis research with descriptive information about social studies textbook studies over the last 10 years. The findings from this study raise key issues for social studies textbook research, and they provide standards for conducting quality content analysis research on social studies texts.

Procedure

Sample

In this study, I chose to analyze all of the content analysis studies over the last 10 years in three major social studies journals, *Theory and Research in Social Education,* the primary research journal for the field and *Social Education* and *The Social Studies,* two practitioner-oriented social studies journals. The study sample was limited to these journals for two reasons. They are the most widely read in the field, and an ERIC search revealed that they are the primary vehicles for publishing content analysis research in the social studies.

Together with a social studies doctoral student, I conducted a manual review of all issues of the three journals from January, 1982, through October, 1992. We located 25 articles that reported content analysis research studies: 7 in *TRSE,* 7 in *Social Education,* and 11 in *The Social Studies.* The sample does not include articles that discussed issues involved with textbook adoption, textbook reform, or the use of textbooks in the social studies classroom, unless the articles also included a report of a specific content analysis study.

Analysis

Prior reviews of both content analysis research (Siler, 1987) and social studies research (Wallen & Fraenkel, 1988) were useful in identifying initial categories for analysis. Literature on the conduct of content analysis (Berelson, 1952; Holsti, 1969; Weber, 1990) also contributed additional ideas for category development. We developed final categories by testing their usefulness and then modifying them in light of the data, a process recommended by writers on content analysis methodology (Berelson, 1952; Holsti, 1969; Weber, 1990) and used in the review by Wallen and Fraenkel (1988). The social studies doctoral student was trained in the coding procedures for this study. Both of us coded the entire sample; the interrater agreement for coding of the sample was 92 percent. We discussed any differences in coding until we achieved consensus. The final categories, listed in the Appendix, are justified and defined below.

Because much of the quantitative data revealed shortcomings in the use of content analysis methodology, I decided to include

illustrations of exemplary practice in the narrative report of the findings. I attempted to draw these examples from as many different studies as possible, using no more than two examples from any one study. Readers should not infer, however, that a study's excellence in the area cited means that the study as a whole was well designed and executed. More than half of the studies excelled in one or two areas, but only a few were superior in all aspects.

Categories

Topics of research. Siler (1987) notes that the social studies content analysis literature focuses primarily on three types of topics: themes, groups, and historical events. Evidence of all three is present in the sample for this study. The *themes* category includes topics such as propaganda and nuclear war, as well as issues such as the superficial nature of the primary social studies curriculum. Studies focusing on specific groups, intergroup relations, cultures, or countries are classified under the *groups* category. Two other categories not used by Siler were added. The *comprehension* category includes recent research on literary aspects of textbooks that impede or enhance student learning and comprehension of main ideas. The *social science discipline* category encompasses studies focused on general treatment of a particular social science or on examination of social science concepts from more than one discipline.

Primary purpose of the study. Holsti (1969) outlines three different purposes in content analysis research relevant to this study. The first and most prevalent purpose is to describe the attributes of a given topic. Holsti subdivides this category into three areas: to compare changes in text content over time; to compare content on the same topic in two or more texts of the same time period; or to compare text content to a standard of adequacy defined by an expert source. The second major purpose is to make inferences about the causes of the findings; for example, Anyon (1978) discusses socialization and the legitimating function of textbook knowledge as explanations for why textbooks avoid controversy and promote traditional values. The third purpose, to make inferences about the effects of the text upon students, is the goal of many recent studies analyzing the literary aspects of social studies textbooks.

Framing the study. The validity of a study's findings and its usefulness to the educational community depend in part on its connections to relevant and related literature. Valid studies should be based in particular upon any textbook research on the topic. The category *other relevant literature* includes literature on the topic under study, literature on content analysis methodology, and literature on social studies education.

Type of sample (text). Textbooks under study were categorized according to level; a few studies included both elementary (K-6) and secondary (7-12) level texts. Secondary textbooks were further classified according to discipline: U.S. history, geography, government, world history, or economics.

Choice of sample (text). Bias or error in the sampling design can render an otherwise well-designed study invalid (Holsti, 1969). Siler (1987) found that many of the studies he reviewed did not attempt to survey school districts or otherwise determine which textbooks were used widely or frequently. This category establishes how the authors describe their process for choosing the textbooks under study.

Categories for analysis. Fraenkel (1987) asserts that the categories selected or developed for content analysis research should be clear and meaningful. Siler (1987) cites a number of studies that do not provide adequate definitions for important terms or criteria in the study. Given that the choice of categories can enhance or diminish the likelihood of valid inferences (Berelson, 1952; Holsti, 1969), it is important to define the categories and whenever possible to include a source outside the researcher, such as an expert in the field, to validate their appropriateness. We did not count categories as listed unless they were described as such prior to the findings section of a report.

Type of sample (unit of analysis). Another important sampling decision in content analysis research is the unit of analysis (Berelson, 1952; Holsti, 1969; Weber, 1990). Studies can examine words, sentences, paragraphs, pages, page columns, or passages of varying lengths that include information on the theme.

Choice of sample (unit of analysis). This category addresses how the unit of analysis was chosen. Fraenkel (1987) maintains that random sampling of the data is vital; however, other researchers contend that purposeful sampling, in this case consciously choosing specified portions of the text, can be more appropriate, particularly for qualitative studies (Beck & McKeown, 1991).

System of enumeration. The most common procedure for counting units of analysis involves tallying the frequency of items in the text passages under study (Holsti, 1969). Occasionally, researchers will count only the appearance of the units. A third and more difficult system of enumeration is noting the intensity of the unit as it occurs in the text (Holsti, 1969).

Reliability. Many researchers have noted that establishing the reliability of the categories and data analysis procedures is vital to ensuring the reliability of the study as a whole (Holsti, 1969; Fraenkel, 1987; Siler, 1987; Wallen & Fraenkel, 1988). An excellent way to establish reliability is to have two or more coders use the categories and data analysis procedures to analyze the same data (Fraenkel, 1987). Ideally, interrater reliability should be high. Detailed

descriptions of the categories, the unit of analysis, and the process used to analyze the data are critical to establishing the study's reliability. Other researchers who want to confirm the study's findings or use the analytic process on another data sample should be able to follow the procedures from the author's description.

   Reporting findings. In analyzing the data in this category, we included any references to numbers as quantitative information and any references to descriptions of the text content as qualitative findings. The most difficult areas to distinguish between were subjective narrative and thorough qualitative analysis. Berelson (1952) notes that qualitative content analysis leaves a "considerable opening for the collection of selective evidence, usually unconsciously...and there is often no assurance that this has not occurred" (p. 119). We labeled a study as subjective narrative if the unit and process of analysis were unclear, and the texts were discussed using vague words such as *most, rarely,* and *usually.* A study reflecting thorough qualitative analysis included depth and detail in reporting the findings (Patton, 1980) and a clear explanation of how the texts were analyzed. The use of quotes from the text was coded separately, as text passages were frequently included in both subjective narrative and thorough qualitative treatments.

   Conclusions. This category was included in the review to determine points of convergence and disagreement in findings among textbook content research studies. Findings in this category will assist content analysis researchers in comparing their conclusions with prior study findings as well as in establishing the validity of their research.

   Recommendations. The educational significance of a study will be enhanced if researchers use the findings to inform individuals and groups who can actively influence textbook reform and teaching in the social studies classroom. Only those recommendations specifically directed to groups by using such words as *teachers should* or *it would be helpful if textbook authors would* were counted in collecting data for this category.

Findings

Topics

   Table 1 shows the breakdown of the 25 studies according to topic. The categories of themes and groups were predominant. Themes included topics such as nuclear war (Fleming, 1983) and propaganda (Fleming, 1985), as well as issues such as critical thinking (Reyes, 1986), the "back-to-basics" trend (Birchell & Taylor, 1986), and ideological bias (Romanish, 1983). The groups category included studies focusing on commonly studied groups such as women (Hahn & Blankenship, 1983; Tetreault, 1984) and African Americans (Garcia &

Tanner, 1985), as well as less frequent topics of study; for example, the Maya (Lemmon, 1990), Australians (Birchall & Faichney, 1985), and white ethnic groups (Garcia, 1986). Although reading researchers have conducted many social studies content analysis studies, only two of these reports were published in the social studies journals under review. Finally, four studies examined how particular social sciences were addressed in social studies texts.

Among studies published during the last five years, there is a noticeable lack of focus on familiar cultural groups (e.g., African Americans, Latinos, women) and greater emphasis on issues such as comprehension, relevance, and specific social sciences. This is likely due to changes in social studies texts, particularly with regard to greater inclusion of issues relating to women and people of color (Bernstein, 1985; Graham, 1986), as well as a growing interest in examining texts from an instructional perspective.

Table 1 Topics	
Themes	8 (32%)
Groups	7 (28%)
Historical Events	4 (16%)
Comprehension	2 (8%)
Social Science Discipline	4 (16%)

N=25

Purpose of the Study

Content analysis researchers appear to be interested primarily in comparing how a small number of widely used texts address a given theme, group, or historical event. Most studies (68%) compared text content in two or more social studies textbooks. All of the studies that compared text content over time (12%), compared content to a standard (12%), or made inferences about the effects of texts on students (8%), were published between 1986 and 1991; thus, it seems that in recent years some content analysis researchers are examining social studies text content within a larger context and with an eye towards how the structure and content of the texts might affect student comprehension in the social studies classroom. The results in this category are reported in Table 2.

Framing the Study

All of the researchers framed their study with at least one reference to literature on the topic or to related issues. All but four of

the studies (84%) referred to textbook research on the topic. In a few cases, the author stated that there was no prior research on the issue; however, although most researchers referred to prior content analysis

Table 2 Purpose of the Study	
Describe the attributes of the topic by:	
Comparing content over time	3 (12%)
Comparing content in two or more texts	17 (68%)
Comparing content to a standard	3 (12%)
Making inferences about causes of findings	0 (0%)
Making inferences about effects of text	2 (8%)

N=25

research on the topic under study, many of the studies cited were flawed in their methodology. An astute reader will question the value of basing additional research on prior findings that are dubious at best.

One excellent example of relevant literature is Lemmon's (1990) in depth presentation of the recent research findings on the Maya. Lemmon's research added validity to her criticisms of the current content on the Maya in social studies texts. Results in this category are reported in Table 3.

Table 3 Framing the Study	
Literature on textbook research on the topic	21 (84%)
Other relevant literature	25 (100%)

N = 25

Type of Sample (Text)

In choosing texts for analysis, content analysis researchers as a group slightly favored the secondary level (60%); however, of the 11 studies on elementary-level texts, 8 were published in the latter part of the 10-year period under review (1986 to 1992). There may be a growing interest in examining the content of elementary-level texts. U.S. history was the most frequently studied type of secondary social studies textbook (40%). Studies on secondary-level geography (12%), world history (16%), and economics (12%) were less frequent. Very little attention has been paid to government and civics; only one study focused

on analyzing the content of government texts. Another area of need is the exploration of themes or events in K-12 textbooks. Only one study examined both elementary and secondary texts. Detailed information on the text samples is provided in Table 4.

Table 4 Type of Sample (Text)	
Elementary	11 (44%)
Secondary	15 (60%)
U.S. history	10 (40%)
Geography	3 (12%)
Government	1 (4%)
World history	4 (16%)
Economics	3 (12%)

N = 25 *
*Some studies used more than one type of text.

Choice of Sample (Text)

The great majority of the studies (80%) provided some justification for their choice of specific texts. Most of these were simple references to the texts being *major, widely used,* or *current.* Researchers often referred to the fact that the texts under study are on the adoption list for a given state, usually the state where the researcher resides. A few studies (12%) provided no information on how the texts under review were chosen. None of the studies attempted to choose a random sample of texts or to examine all texts in a given discipline.

It is important to provide a thoughtful justification for the selection of texts. Unfortunately, only two researchers conducted some type of survey or study to determine their choice of texts. Schug et al. (1989) provided a particularly detailed description of the process they used to determine which texts to include in their evaluation of middle school economics curricular materials. The researchers checked 14 bibiliographies, ran an ERIC search, and wrote to 128 profit and nonprofit producers of economics curriculum materials. After locating 109 materials, they narrowed their selection to 13 textbooks and 14 supplemental materials on the basis of five clearly defined criteria. Table 5 provides complete information on the choice of text category.

Categories for Analysis

Almost half (44%) of the studies did not list any categories for analysis. While 56% of the studies listed categories, only 36% defined them clearly or offered any type of external validation by an expert

source on the topic. These findings point to a serious shortcoming in social studies content analysis research. Without clearly defined and validated categories for analysis, it is too easy for researchers to make subjective judgments about the texts under review.

Table 5 Choice of Sample (Text)	
No information on choice given	3 (12%)
Some justification for choice	20 (80%)
Study or survey conducted by author(s)	2 (8%)
Random sample of published texts	0 (0%)
Attempted to include all texts dealing with topic	0 (0%)

N = 25

A superior example of category explanation and development is found in a study by Garcia and Tanner (1985). In examining the portrayal of African Americans in U.S. history books, Garcia and Tanner used a series of questions arising out of Blauner's (1972) discussion of the treatment of minorities in America. These questions, which formed the categories for data analysis, are clear, thorough, and were used by Garcia successfully in a previous study on textbook evaluation. Data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 Categories for Analysis	
None listed	11 (44%)
Listed	14 (56%)
Defined	9 (36%)*
Validated by some external, expert source	9 (36%)*

N = 25
* Only some of the studies that listed categories also defined or validated them.

Type of Sample (Unit of Analysis)
Most of the studies (68%) did not specify a particular unit of analysis. Of those that did, three studies each examined words, sentences, and text passages on the topic. One study used page columns of text as the unit of analysis. It is likely that more than three researchers looked at text passages on the topic, but only these few

explicitly specified text passages as the unit of analysis for the study. Table 7 lists the findings on the units of analysis.

One particularly comprehensive study used multiple units of analysis. Hahn and Blankenship (1983) detailed their selection of sentences, illustrations, and key words on women's issues in economics texts. Their thorough description of the data chosen for analysis provides a model for other researchers interested in extensive examination of a topic.

Table 7 Type of Sample (Unit of Analysis)	
No unit of analysis specified	17 (68%)
Individual words	3 (12%)*
Sentences	3 (12%)*
Paragraphs	0 (0%)
Page columns	1 (4%)
Text passages on the topic	3 (12%)*

N = 25
* One study used three units of analysis.

Choice of Sample (Unit of Analysis)

Table 8 presents how the researchers chose the data sample for analysis. In the majority of studies (68%), there is no information provided on how the data were chosen. Reading these studies, it is unclear if the researchers read all of the texts under study or if they

Table 8 Choice of Sample (Unit of Analysis)	
No information on how data was chosen	17 (68%)
Random sampling of data	0 (0%)
Purposeful sampling of data	8 (32%)

N = 25

chose passages selectively to support their arguments. Approximately one third of the studies (32%) employed purposeful sampling of the data, usually involving text passages on a given theme, group, or historical event. Miller and Rose (1983) presented a thoughtful justification of their choice to examine all text passages dealing with the Great Depression. Haas (1991) chose to focus on social science concepts either as single words or phrases in her quantative study. Both

of these studies provide excellent examples of purposeful data sampling.

System of Enumeration

Table 9 provides information on the systems of enumeration used in the study sample. Three fourths of the studies (76%) provided no system for enumerating the findings. Only 6 of the 25 studies reviewed used some system of enumeration. In one study, the researcher counted the appearance of units. In the other five studies, the frequency of the units was reported. Of course, this category is not applicable directly to purely qualitative studies; however, many studies presented the numbers or percentages of texts supporting a given finding without further quantification. In these studies, researchers could have counted the frequency or appearance of units to give the reader a clearer understanding of the text content.

An excellent example of data quantification is found in a study analyzing the social science and history concepts in elementary texts (Haas, 1991). Haas counted the appearance of social science concepts and reported both the number and percentage of concepts by discipline. The study also included tables of the most frequently listed concepts in each social science discipline. These tables provided the reader with thorough information about the types of concepts in social studies texts and the relative emphasis on each social science discipline.

Table 9 System of Enumeration	
No system of enumeration	19 (76%)
Appearance of unit	1 (4%)
Frequency of unit	5 (20%)
Intensity of unit	0 (0%)

N = 25

Reliability

Findings in the reliability category are listed in Table 10. Most of the studies (84%) did not present data on interrater reliability; only four studies provided this important information. Only about one third of the studies (32%) described the data analysis procedure in sufficient detail for replication of the study by others. In a study on the sexism present in economics texts, Hahn and Blankenship (1983) effectively established reliability by providing explicit details about their analytic process and their instrument, used by the same researchers in a previous study. The two researchers practiced using the instrument until

they achieved an interrater reliability of a .99 Pearson product moment correlation coefficient.

Table 10 Reliability			
Is interrater reliability on the use of categories provided?			
Yes	4 (16%)	No	21 (84%)
Is the procedure used in analyzing the data specific enough to be replicated?			
Yes	8 (32%)	No	17 (68%)

N = 25

Reporting Findings

While slightly more than half of the studies included text passages to illustrate the author's arguments (56%), few provided a thorough qualitative or quantitative treatment of the data. Only six of the studies (24%) included a detailed qualitative analysis of the findings. The same number of studies provided adequate quantitative

Table 11 Findings	
Quantitative	
Percentages or numbers of texts reported in narrative	10 (40%)
Units counted and reported in narrative	0 (0%)
Units counted and reported in tables and narrative	6 (24%)
Qualitative	
Subjective narrative	16 (64%)
Thorough qualitative analysis	6 (24%)
Includes quotes from text	14 (56%)

N = 25 *

* Some studies reported the findings in more than one way.

results with units counted and reported in both tables and narrative. Most of the studies (64%) were subjective narratives. Many of these reports gave no details about the unit of analysis or how the data were chosen. The descriptions of the findings were not particularly detailed, often including vague references to numbers of texts supporting a particular point. Thus, readers cannot be sure that the findings of these

studies represent anything other than the author's bias or subjective impressions. The results in this category are shown in Table 11.

Of the exceptions to this trend, a study on place vocabulary in the primary social studies curriculum (Smith & Larkins, 1990) provides an illustration of exemplary practice. The authors counted geographical terms and reported their results in tables. They also provided a detailed qualitative description of their findings, including quotes from the text. While not all content analysis research studies lend themselves to both quantitative and qualitative analysis, the combination of data analysis procedures in this report resulted in a clear and valid presentation of the authors' findings.

Conclusions

Almost all the researchers (88%) concluded that the topic under study was not given the attention it deserves. Other frequent conclusions were that the text avoided the controversial aspects of the topic (56%), presented biased or stereotypical information (40%), or was written in such a way that it interfered with student comprehension of the material (40%). Three of the studies (12%) concluded that there was less bias than in previous studies on the same topic. Eight studies asserted that there were factual errors about the topic in the texts. In general, the studies were largely critical of the texts under review. The results in this category are listed in Table 12.

Table 12 Conclusions	
Limited coverage of topic	22 (88%)
Factual errors	8 (32%)
Avoidance of controversy	14 (56%)
Stereotypical or biased presentation of topic	10 (40%)
Less bias than in previous studies on this topic	3 (12%)
Factors impeding comprehension	10 (40%)

N = 25 *
* Many studies reported more than one conclusion.

Recommendations

It appears that most content analysis researchers are addressing teachers (80%) and to a lesser extent text publishers and authors (28%). Very few made recommendations to researchers (8%) or teacher educators (12%), an interesting fact given that these individuals are

frequent readers of the journals in this study. Slightly more than one third of the authors (36%) included recommendations to a variety of other individuals and agencies including curriculum committees, state departments of education, school districts, social studies supervisors, and organizations such as the National Council for the Social Studies. Two of the 25 studies included no explicit recommendations.

Most authors recommended that teachers supplement inadequate text with creative teaching methods and supplementary materials. Some authors neglected, however, to provide specific suggestions about what teachers should do to compensate for problems in the text. White (1988) asserts that "social studies teachers quickly dismiss ivory-tower types who smugly write of bias and blandness if they do not suggest classroom practices that could alleviate these problems" (p. 120). A few authors provided these needed suggestions; for example, Smith and Larkins (1990), in their study of place name vocabulary in primary social studies, included a list of 50 important place names developed by geographers from 14 countries. Logan and Needham (1985) provided teachers with an excellent list of children's books, curricula, and community resources to supplement instruction on the Vietnam War. The findings in this category are reported in Table 13.

Table 13 Recommendations	
Teachers	20 (80%)
Text publishers/authors	7 (28%)
Teacher educators	3 (12%)
Researchers	2 (8%)
Others	9 (36%)
No explicit recommendations	2 (8%)

N = 25 *
*Many studies made recommendations to more than one group.

Discussion

A number of important questions are raised in reviewing the results of this study. What is the overall quality of content analysis research? What changes have taken place in social studies textbooks over the past 10 years? What trends currently exist in social studies content analysis research? Given the consistency of text study conclusions and recommendations, is there any productive purpose in continuing to engage in content analysis studies? What new directions in content analysis research might be of value to the social studies

community? The following discussion will address these and other related concerns pertinent to social studies content analysis research.

First, the overall quality of content analysis research during the 10-year period under study is decidedly disappointing. The results of this study substantially support the findings of Siler (1987), Garcia and Tanner (1985), and Wallen and Fraenkel (1988). The problems with sampling, defining terms, analyzing data, and reporting results that Siler (1987) notes are clearly evident in this study. It also appears that some of the problems Wallen and Fraenkel (1988) observed in other types of social studies research, notably inappropriate methodology, sampling bias, and unfounded conclusions, are evident in content analysis research as well. While content analysis researchers adequately frame their research in the context of related literatures, most studies fall short of successfully addressing other important methodological issues.

Content analysis researchers need to be explicit in their choice of texts, units of analysis, analytic procedures, and categories for analysis. Too often these aspects of the research process are either given scant attention or are ignored all together. The issues of reliability and replicability also deserve greater attention. Many content analysis researchers are examining worthy topics and making important recommendations, yet their findings often rest on shaky foundations. Admittedly, it is somewhat difficult to determine which texts are most widely used given publisher silence about shares of the market. Woodward (1982) asserts, however, that "anything less than analyzing textbooks that were widely used in schools must result in less than reliable data" (p. 40).

A key issue in content analysis methodology is the decision about whether to count occurrences of a unit of analysis or to employ a more comprehensive, descriptive approach. The qualitative/quantitative debate rages as strongly in content analysis research as anywhere. Holsti (1969) warns against unsystematic attempts at content analysis research—what he terms "going fishing" for information without a preconceived methodological plan. Siler (1987) observes that many studies report findings as subjective narrative, consistent with the findings in this review. Yet some researchers defend their choice to use qualitative rather than quantitative methods. "Prior experience convinced us that qualitative reviews of texts are more informative" assert Larkins, Hawkins, and Gilmore (1987, p. 302). Romanish (1983) notes that "while the investigator is not free of certain value choices when setting up and conducting an analysis of texts, such a subjective process provides opportunities to examine, probe, and analyze in a way purely quantitative and experimental methods cannot" (p. 4).

Most content analysis researchers advocate a balanced approach, employing systematic procedures that address both manifest, easily-

counted content as well as the hidden meanings behind words and pictures that are more suitable for qualitative analysis (Beck & McKeown, 1991; Fraenkel, 1987; Holsti, 1969; Siler, 1987). In content analysis research, quantitative methods serve to limit the influence of the researcher's subjectivity, while a qualitative approach allows for in depth description and a deeper understanding of the topic under study. When a researcher has a particular point to prove, as is often the case with textbook analysis studies, it is imperative that a systematic approach to content analysis be employed.

This does not preclude, however, the possibility of qualitative analysis if researchers explicitly detail their analytic procedures and become thoroughly familiar with the passages chosen. In addition, detailed descriptions of the text are important to substantiate findings. Many researchers assert that the inclusion of text passages to support their findings provides a "much richer picture for the reader" (Beck & McKeown, 1991, p. 508).

The interest in qualitative approaches to content analysis research has increased over the last 10 years, in concert with expanding efforts focused on the literary aspects of social studies texts. New knowledge about reading comprehension and cognitive and linguistic processing form the backdrop to these investigations (Beck & McKeown, 1991; Bernstein, 1985). While most of the instructional design research on social studies texts has been published in other than social studies journals (e.g., Armbruster & Anderson, 1984; Armbruster & Gudbrandsen, 1986; Beck, McKeown, & Grommoll, 1989), this research effort has made a significant impact on the social studies community.

Changes in content analysis research are, of course, partially a reflection of the changes in the texts themselves. There has been some improvement in the inclusion of gender, and ethnic and cultural diversity over the 10-year period (Bernstein, 1985; Graham, 1986; Schissler, 1991), although some educators assert that bias is still present, only more subtle to detect (Schissler, 1991). This period also reveals changes in the appearance of texts. Publishing companies have added glossy photos, literature-based inserts, and a variety of supplementary materials to further the appeal of their series to textbook adoption committees.

In spite of these changes, textbook research over the 10-year period has produced remarkably similar conclusions. Almost every researcher finds that the topic chosen for study has not been given adequate attention or is presented in a biased, stereotypical or otherwise innaccurate manner. Even the messages about poor organization and other factors impeding comprehension are becoming a familiar refrain, and for decades social studies researchers have been lamenting the conservative nature of text content.

Given these consistent messages, is there any point in continuing content analysis research? One can pick up a study, for example, on women in economics texts or on the treatment of the Vietnam War in high school history texts and predict the results fairly well without ever reading it.

I would argue that if social studies content analysis research is to go beyond simple recommendations for creative teaching or improved topic coverage, textbook researchers need to address larger, more substantive issues in their work. First, it appears that content analysis researchers may be working at cross purposes in their textbook reform efforts. Researchers often cry out for more depth and fewer topics while at the same time lamenting that their own topic of interest is not given enough attention in the curriculum. The result of these conflicting messages is the inclusion of more, not less, material in textbooks (Tyson-Bernstein, 1988). Clearly, textbook publishers are put in a bind when they are told to limit the number of topics and to make sure they cover every special interest in depth. How can this dilemma be resolved?

One approach is for social studies researchers to work together to formulate cooperative research agendas and seek creative ways to enhance social studies instruction. The quality and long-range effects of content analysis research will be enhanced if social studies researchers work with one another to develop systematic plans for exploring text content. In addition, we should join with those advocating measures likely to increase the prevalence and quality of social studies instruction, including thematic teaching in the elementary school (Fredericks, Meinbach, & Rothlein, 1993), abolishing the redundant and superficial primary social studies curriculum (Larkins, Hawkins, & Gilmore, 1987), and promoting teaching for conceptual understanding rather than just topical coverage (Kniep, 1989). At the high school level, we should add our voices to those calling for restructuring the schedule, away from 47-minute periods and towards interdisciplinary team-teaching efforts with fewer students for longer time periods (Sizer, 1984).

We also need to expand our horizons in terms of whom we work with and where we do our work. Research efforts coordinated with classroom teachers or national groups in the social science disciplines hold promise. Recent studies have shown that teachers can be thoughtful and discriminating reviewers of texts (Brophy, McMahon, & Prawat, 1991; Schug et al., 1989). Textbook reform efforts will be more effective if we work collectively with teachers, curriculum committees, teacher educators, and national organizations interested in textbook issues.

We also need to go beyond simply analyzing the content of social studies texts and to undertake more studies in classrooms focused on understanding the effects that textbook learning has on students

(Zahorik, 1991). Social studies researchers can learn some valuable lessons in this regard from reading researchers. Beck, Gromoll, McKeown, Anderson, and Armbruster, among others, have developed a systematic research agenda which includes text analysis as well as research in the classroom (Beck & McKeown, 1991). These researchers build on each other's work and connect their text analysis studies with empirical research to assess the effects of texts on students; for example, one study found that students who read revised versions of a textbook understood why events occurred, and saw connections between events more often than students who read the original text version (Beck, 1991). Hopefully, more studies on the literary aspects of such texts will be published in social studies journals. Their findings provide an important adjunct to the thematic and group studies conducted by social studies researchers, and their modus operandi is one that social studies researchers should emulate.

Above all, content analysis researchers must question the value and usefulness of their work before beginning a text study. What is the purpose of conducting this study? What significant contributions might the results of this study make to both practice in the social studies classroom and to the collective research efforts of the social studies community? Studies that connect content analysis research with classroom use—for example, by having students and teachers critically assess bias in the text—could make valuable contributions to the field.

Finally, content analysis researchers need to broaden their scope and look at the larger purpose of schooling in society and the ideological basis behind the use of textbooks in schools. Schissler (1991) notes how the debates about text content often serve as a smoke screen that can lead us to important understandings about society:

> To all appearances, the disputes deal with the actual contents of textbooks; however, real political and social disagreements are frequently aired by shifting the debate to an area where the subjects seem less explosive and more manageable. Textbooks are one such area. Opinions and controversies can collide violently in a discussion of textbooks without harming the political and social power structure of society (p. 82).

In light of Schissler's argument, content analysis researchers might also ask how their work will contribute to illuminating and ultimately changing the social and political inequities reflected in the social studies texts.

Both Anyon's (1978) and White's (1988) discussions of these and related issues are essential for content analysis researchers who wish to frame their studies within the larger societal context. Anyon (1978)

asserts that because schools are an agent of socialization, textbook content will likely continue to contain "highly positive evaluative statements that justify and protect prevailing social arrangements" (p. 42); therefore, we should not be surprised when we find that textbooks largely support mainstream values (White, 1988).

Instead, we need to acknowledge the legitimating function of social studies textbooks while persisting in understanding and evaluating text content and engaging in studies that offer new and important insights to both practice and research. These actions, coupled with a critical examination of our research methods and collaboration with other educators to accomplish our collective goals, can only enhance social studies textbook reform efforts and the quality of social studies research.

Appendix
Categories for Coding

Topics (choose one)
- Themes
- Groups
- Historical events
- Comprehension
- Social science discipline

Purpose of the study (choose one)
- To describe the attributes of the topic by comparing content in texts over time
- To describe the attributes of the topic by comparing content in two or more texts
- To describe the attributes of the topic by comparing content to a standard of adequacy
- To make inferences about the causes of the findings
- To make inferences about the effects of the text upon students

Framing the study (choose one, two, or none)
- Literature on textbook research on the topic
- Other relevant literature

Type of sample (text; choose as many as apply)
- Elementary
- Secondary
- U.S. history
- Geography
- Government
- World history

- Economics

Choice of sample (text; choose only one)
- No information on how sample was chosen
- Some justification for choice of texts
- Study or survey conducted by author to determine choice of text
- Random sample of textbooks published
- Authors attempted to include all textbooks dealing with the discipline or topic under study

Categories/criteria for analysis (choose as many as apply)
- None listed
- Listed
- Defined
- Validated by external, expert source(s)

Type of sample (unit of analysis; choose as many as apply)
- No unit of analysis specified
- Individual words
- Sentences
- Paragraphs
- Page columns
- Text passages on the topic

Choice of sample (unit of analysis; choose only one)
- No information on how data to be analyzed was chosen
- Random sampling of data
- Purposeful sampling of data

System of enumeration (choose only one)
- No system of enumeration
- Appearance of unit
- Frequency of unit
- Intensity of unit

Reliability
- Is interrater reliability on the use of the categories provided? yes/no

- Is the procedure used in analyzing the data specific enough to be replicated? yes/no

Reporting findings (choose as many as apply)
- Quantitative

- Percentages or numbers of texts supporting a given finding reported in narrative
- Units counted and reported in narrative
- Units counted and reported in tables and narrative
- Qualitative
- Subjective narrative based on impressions
- Narrative based on a thorough qualitative analysis
- Narrative includes text passage(s)

Conclusions (choose as many as apply)
- Limited coverage of topic
- Factual errors in coverage of topic
- Avoidance of controversial aspects of topic
- Stereotypical or biased presentation of topic
- Less bias in this study than in previous studies on this topic
- Factors impeding comprehension

Recommendations (choose as many as apply)
- To teachers
- To text publishers/authors
- To teacher educators at colleges and universities
- To researchers
- To others
- No recommendations

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BOOK REVIEWS

Essay Reviews

Shaver, J. P. (Ed.). (1991). *Handbook of research on social studies teaching and learning.* New York: Macmillan. ISBN 0-02-895790, $75.00, hardcover.

Comments from the Book Review Editor

This special section of *TRSE* presents essay reviews on the *Handbook of Research on Social Studies Teaching and Learning* edited by James Shaver, a project of The National Council for the Social Studies in conjunction with Macmillan Publishing Company. The handbook contains more than 50 chapters by leading social studies education professionals related to the historiography of the social studies, to teachers and students in the social studies, to components of instruction, to the interrelations between social studies and other curricular areas, and to international perspectives of research on the social studies. Few sources in existence offer social studies educators or those in other disciplines who are interested in the social studies such a comprehensive and current view of research on social studies.

In his preface to the handbook, James Shaver writes that the book is intended for use by a wide variety of people such as "university professors, graduate students, and persons in local, state, regional, and national agencies—as they seek to identify research problems and plan investigations on social studies education" (p. ix). With this audience in mind, the authors of these essay reviews were chosen from diverse areas of education-related expertise: research and evaluation, teacher education, curriculum development, global education, education policy, classroom teaching, reading, the arts, and technology.

Authors of the critical essays were asked not to reiterate the research in their area of interest, but rather to read each article and consider how connections are drawn between research and the larger context of the social studies. They examined the section(s) assigned to them through their own respective lenses, and were asked also to consider how the research presented might support or contradict their own experiences and the experiences of their colleagues in social studies classrooms. Finally, the reviewers were asked to point out any gaps or omissions, and discuss how these could begin to be addressed.

Just as the handbook was a major three-year effort that involved authors from a variety of areas, the effort required to review such massive work is also sizeable. All of the authors enthusiastically

accepted the challenge of writing an essay review. They agreed, however, that writing a cogent review of chapters that span broad-based areas in the field was a difficult task. I appreciate their hard work and their prompt attention to deadlines.

In this issue, individuals specializing in research and evaluation, global education, education policy, and curriculum and instruction present essay reviews.

Giselle Martin-Kniep is Assistant Professor of Education at Adelphi University. She teaches courses in action research, curriculum integration, and educational research. She is working currently with 29 school districts across the United States helping teachers develop alternative assessment techniques. She has published numerous articles on alternative assessment and educational research.

Eric Luce is Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Southern Mississippi. He holds a Ph.D. in Asian Studies and International Education from New York University. He has written extensively on Vietnamese students in American high schools and has served as an educational consultant in Japan.

Mary Jane Turner is Senior Education Advisor and Director of Curriculum at the Closeup Foundation. She has taught at every level from middle school to higher education. She is the author of several textbooks. Prior to working with Closeup, Turner served as associate director of the Center for Civic Education and as senior staff associate for the Social Science Education Consortium. Both of these positions involved her extensively in teacher education, education policy, and curriculum development.

Alan L. Lockwood is Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A 1970 graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, he has served as a social studies curriculum consultant to many schools and national organizations. He authored *Reasoning with Democratic Values* with David Harris. Published by Teachers College Press, *Reasoning with Democratic Values* has successfully infused U.S. history courses in secondary schools throughout the nation.

We hope you find these reviews instructive and insightful. As the book review editor, I would be delighted to print any comments that you may have regarding these essay reviews in a future issue of *TRSE*.

Perry M. Marker
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Opening Different Doors

A critical review of the section "Issues of Epistemology and Methodology."

GISELLE MARTIN-KNIEP, Adelphi University.

This section addresses critical questions such as: What are the historical and philosophical contexts of the social studies? How does social epistemology help us understand knowledge in social studies? How is the distinction between scientific and educational research useful in analyzing research in social studies? How do qualitative and quantitative research methodologies along with metaanalysis inform social studies research?

The specific lens that I used in my review and analysis of these chapters was that of an applied researcher who conducts inquiry with the ultimate goal of impacting curricular decisions and classroom practices. While moderately versed in traditional and quantitative research methods, my experience observing classrooms and working with teachers at the precollege and university levels tells me that there is much depth and substance in the issues that concern social studies teachers and educators, issues which cannot be fully described or assessed using such methodologies. As a result, for several years now, I have relied increasingly on qualitative research methods to answer the questions that concern me and the teachers with whom I jointly conduct research. Some of these questions are: What are the essential skills and concepts within social studies education? How can research methods help teachers and researchers to document the ways in which social studies education helps students respect, tolerate, and even understand individual and cultural differences? To what extent do teachers make explicit their conceptions of social studies to their students? It is with these and other questions in mind that I examined the chapters in this first section of the handbook.

The Status of the Social Studies

The first three chapters of the book provide the reader with a historical and philosophical context for the social studies. The first chapter, by Michael Bruce Lybarger, highlights the three different traditions in the historiography of American education: the celebratory history of Cubberley and his followers; the revisionist history of Cremin, Bailyn, and their school; and the radical histories of Katz, Karier, and their followers. Lybarger states that while the historiography of the social studies curriculum is poorer than that of

curricula in general, it has roots dating back to the 1916 report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, "The Social Studies in Secondary Education." The author provides evidence that many of the key features of social studies education—vocational civics and community civics courses in the seventh and eighth grades; high school courses in the problems of American democracy and in European and American history; and the use of the term social studies as inclusive of economics, history, political science, sociology, and civics— have their roots in this report.

This chapter also provides us with a historical context for understanding the ambiguity embedded in the term social studies. According to Lybarger, the debates over the nature, scope, and definition of the field may be understood "as a manifestation of intellectual vitality or as a consequence of the inability of social studies professionals to understand the nature of their field" (p. 9). This interpretation appears prevalent in several of the other chapters within this section.

The second chapter of the handbook, by Robert Fullinwider, addresses the area of philosophical inquiry on social studies. Fullinwider discusses the contributions of philosophical inquiry to the research and teaching of social studies, and he highlights the value of raising philosophical questions about the direction, procedures, and worth of the social studies. He illustrates the use of these questions in his analysis of the fundamental assumptions of social studies, as represented by the report of the National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools (1989), "Charting a Course: Social Studies for the 21st Century." In this chapter, Fullinwider also examines the notion of citizenship as embodied in the social studies. He analyzes the predominance of history within the social studies curriculum, and explores the term critical thinking. In terms of implications for research in social studies, the most valuable contribution of this chapter is its acknowledgment of the fundamental place of values within the social studies curriculum, values which, as stated by many of the authors in this section of the handbook, do not lend themselves to traditional and positivistic research methodologies.

The third chapter, written by Thomas S. Popkewitz and Henry St. Maurice, considers the social and historical contexts in which various forms of knowledge are articulated. The chapter begins with the premise that social epistemology is based on the assumption that various ways of knowing overlap and are reconstructed continuously through the interactions of researchers with their colleagues, sponsors, and their audiences. The authors state that social studies theory and research are impacted by a social epistemology based on the following assumptions: (1) Truth can be obtained through the identification of facts; (2) descriptive and interpretative research should be separate;

(3) the contexts of justification (procedures used to determine what is true) are different from the contexts of discovery (the process by which findings and theory emerge); and (4) scientific writing is evaluated in terms of standards based upon these assumptions.

This chapter as a whole highlights the problematic nature of knowledge and truth, and calls for the use of social epistemology both as a continuous inquiry into the past and present possibilities of science and education and as a way to demonstrate that truth and inquiry are always qualified by social relations. A significant contribution of this chapter to social studies research lies in its emphasis on the constructive nature of knowledge, on the process of knowledge acquisition, and on theory building.

Chapters four, five, and six address a number of significant methodological issues related to social studies research. Chapter four, on critical research and social studies education, written by Cleo H. Cherryholmes, underscores the distinction between scientific research and educational research. The former is defined as a systematic, controlled, empirical, and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relationships among natural phenomena. On the other hand, educational research focuses on socially constructed phenomena. According to Cherryholmes, all research occurs in a historical context and cannot be separated clearly from philosophy. Critical theory and interpretative analysis allow researchers and social educators to examine the historical and political context of their work in both theory and practice.

The chapter addresses the role of criticism in different kinds of research, namely quantitative studies, structuralism, critical theory and research, interpretative research, and poststructuralism. Based on his analysis, Cherryholmes concludes that social studies research has not included much criticism of any kind; for example, social studies research has rejected fundamental assumptions related to hermeneutics, as well as those held within reader response theory. The reasons for this rejection include the prevalent assumptions among social studies educators that social studies textbooks are univocal; that gaps in social studies textbooks are structural flaws or political statements, but not part of the text itself; and that teaching and learning are based on the value of convergence of truth. In general, Cherryholmes highlights the importance of realizing that not all educational research must be quantitative to be valid, and that even quantitative research is embedded and dependent on interpretations which themselves are always problematical.

This chapter also calls attention to the fundamental linkages between social studies goals and social science research, and it invites social studies researchers and educators to use critical theory as a way of analyzing the phenomena in which they are interested and the

world in which we live. The goal of this inquiry is to enable researchers, educators, and students to become not only critical consumers of old knowledge, but also producers and actors of new knowledge.

The fifth chapter, "Qualitative Research in Social Studies Education," written by Judith Preissle-Goetz and Margaret Diane LeCompte, examines the characteristics of different kinds of qualitative methodologies such as ethnography, field study, and life history. It also describes different ways of examining the differences between qualitative and quantitative designs. While Preissle-Goetz and LeCompte state that a paradigmatic view of the two methodologies may have some heuristic value for students trying to make distinctions between the two, they criticize this distinction on the grounds that such a characterization is artificial, is not inclusive (does not fully accommodate interpretative, empirical-analytic, and critical research), and restricts researcher creativity. Instead of a paradigmatic characterization, the authors propose a multidimensional view of research as a way of understanding the differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods. This view includes six dimensions: (1) philosophical underpinnings; (2) purposes of research; (3) methods of gathering information; (4) modes of analysis; (5) the relationship of researchers to those studied; and (6) the characteristics and uses of the evidence. This characterization of research compensates for some of the limitations inherent in a multiparadigmatic view, and is very useful in terms of expanding the scope and possibilities of research methodologies.

In this chapter, the authors point to significant problems in establishing the boundaries for using qualitative research to examine social studies education. The first problem faced by researchers using qualitative research concerns the ambiguity and loose definition of the term social studies. An additional and related problem concerns difficulties in identifying and locating research specifically directed to social studies education.

In their review of research in social studies, Preissle-Goetz and LeCompte support the use of qualitative research in social studies, because qualitative methods include (1) attention to context using systematic, yet rich techniques and approaches in the study of classrooms, practices, and curricula—significant in social studies education; (2) attempts to construct holistic views of phenomena and of events, permitting the analysis of relationships among students, teachers, and curricula; (3) considerable attention to the generation, refinement, and examination of theory, a critical component of research missing in many conventional studies in social studies education; and, (4) frequent and sustained interaction with research subjects, leading to the development of trust and rapport and a greater likelihood that

data and findings generated in the research can be of use to the subjects and sites under study.

While qualitative research is expensive in terms of time and other resources, requiring considerable will and commitment, it appears to be more consistent with a broad conception of social studies education encompassing values, context, and multiple interpretations. "Qualitative research calls into question the existence of correct, absolute solutions to human problems and treats knowledge in tentative, skeptical, and relative ways" (Preissle-Goetz & LeCompte, 1993, p. 63). Qualitative researchers recognize that there are multiple answers to their research questions and possibly multiple and very different solutions to the problems we face as researchers and human beings.

The sixth chapter of the handbook, written by Jack R. Fraenkel and Norman E. Wallen, discusses quantitative research in social studies education. In this chapter, the authors provide a summary of quantitative research methodologies, examine the nature of quantitative research in social studies, and draw conclusions about the ways social studies researchers have employed quantitative research methods in the past. They comment that while quantitative research "continues to be the most common type of research conducted by social studies educators" (p. 68), much of this research is atheoretical and flawed in both conception and execution. Some of the factors contributing to the atheoretical nature of social studies research include the fact that the field itself is applied and has many poorly defined variables. Conceptually, many social studies research studies fail to include clearly stated hypotheses or variables, and they do not attend always to the rigor of research in other sciences and disciplines. In terms of implementation, reliability is often unchecked and threats to internal validity are not addressed explicitly in many studies. According to Fraenkel and Wallen, in two thirds of existing social studies research, authors generalize to indefensible target populations, or do not even identify the target population. Furthermore, many researchers do not distinguish between statistical and educational significance, and rarely report data on effect or magnitude size.

This chapter raises a question regarding the extent to which quantitative research methods constitute an appropriate means to deal with the objects and subjects of the social studies. Clearly, many of the technical flaws of existing social studies research, such as the failure to define a target population or the lack of attention to threats of internal validity, could be addressed and corrected. This chapter and others in the handbook, however, raise basic epistemological issues about research, about social studies, and about social studies education. These issues concern the inconsistencies inherent in conceptualizing social studies and social studies education as context bound and value

embedded, and using quantitative research methods that embody technological and positivistic views of the world.

Chapter seven, written by James P. Shaver, deals with the use of meta-analysis as a means to summarize and integrate knowledge derived from research on a given subject. Shaver reviews some of the problems inherent in using narrative reviews of research, and then describes the possibilities and limitations of quantitative reviews. Much of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of magnitude size, effect size, and related concepts. Emerging from this discussion, Shaver (1993) states that "the use of quantitative methods for reviews can provide a greater measure of objectivity and especially the capacity to review systematically large bodies of literature that might overwhelm a narrative reviewer...; however, issues of subjectivity, interpretability, and replicability remain" (p. 93). After his thoughtful review, Shaver raises the possibility others also raise that the phenomena and issues of concern for social studies education may not be knowable in a scientific sense.

The final chapter of this section is written by Ted T. Aoki. It describes four different evaluation orientations that broaden our conceptualization and understanding of social studies goals and curricula. This chapter begins with the assertion that social studies evaluators have "been prone to approach their evaluation tasks with their favorite evaluation models, approaches, and techniques. In education, the prevailing research ethos is technological" (p. 98). Aoki provides readers with a clearly formulated description of four different evaluation orientations, namely: (1) ends-means evaluation; (2) praxical evaluation; (3) emic evaluation; and (4) critical-hermeneutical evaluation. This description is organized in terms of the evaluation interests within each of the orientations, the world of knowing to which the evaluation orientations subscribe, and the mode of evaluation used. The chapter as a whole is influenced highly by the work of Jürgen Habermas, and underscores the importance of expanding the views of social studies evaluators to comprise more than the prevalent use of ends-means evaluation.

Four Assertions for the Social Studies

Altogether, the chapters in this section of the handbook, while diverse in terms of focus and conceptual framework, suggest some emerging consensus regarding research in social studies. This consensus can be translated into a number of important assertions. First, the examination of social studies curricula and social studies education from a historical and philosophical perspective can yield significant insights about the definition and purposes of the social studies. Second, the loose and amorphous definitions of social studies and social studies

education pose problems for quantitative and qualitative researchers alike. Third, research relying primarily on quantitative methods has not generated much knowledge of value in social studies. Fourth, a social epistemology that is constructivist rather than positivist may be more appropriate for describing and interpreting social studies issues and curricula. Finally, qualitative research methods are more consistent with broader and emerging conceptions of social studies and should be used in their further definition, inquiry, and interpretation.

This section of the handbook opens different doors for researchers interested in the further study of social studies and social studies education. It does not discourage the continued and more systematic use of traditional methodologies, and it clearly supports the additional exploration of different ways of knowing and interacting with concepts, curricula, and instructional practices in social studies and in social studies education. Furthermore, while some of the chapters address at least peripherally some of the questions that researchers interested in application and practice might have, much of their emphasis is on justifying and explaining a transition between different conceptualizations and methodologies for conducting research in social studies. Perhaps the next handbook of research in social studies will do otherwise.

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Through a Global Lens

A critical review of the section "International Perspectives on Research on Social Studies."

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Examining this section through the lens of a global or international educator, I wanted to learn more about the study of and the ways to teach about complex worldwide problems and issues. I was interested in the relationship among various cultures of the world, as well as in their differences.

The handbook is lengthy, and Section VIII contains the last four of the book's 53 chapters. I wanted to show the context of this section within the entire handbook, but feared I might be overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of research in the volume. I was apprehensive about losing sight of human beings in the masses of data reporting how subjects acted when they filled out questionnaires, but not how they responded in their real lives. Also, I expected to encounter problems with concepts and generalizations developed from work done in particular societies and elaborated in the form of abstractions, for which outsiders might not have enough necessary, small-scale, inside knowledge to really understand what was happening.

Cross-National Research in the Social Studies

Torney-Purta (1991) provides a broadly based survey of research that both draws on the ways in which young people acquire cognitions, attitudes, and skills preparing them for political participation, and also focuses more explicitly on civic education and social studies. This chapter makes at least three valuable contributions to the handbook, helpful not only to those interested in conducting social studies research involving international dimensions, but also to teachers who wish to provide stimulating and effective classes for their students.

First, Torney-Porta shows that research and practice need not be mutually exclusive categories and she offers hope that good research and good teaching can result when researchers and practitioners collaborate and inform one another. In this chapter she demonstrates that cross-national research can help to identify strengths and weaknesses in educational programs through the examination of underlying educational assumptions. Familiar theories and practices sometimes appear to be strange after cross-cultural comparisons have been made and after cross-national research has been conducted. Improved social studies education could result from this stimulus for

reflection and examination of both the theory and practice of conventional wisdom if understood from the perspective of others.

Second, the chapter provides a helpful review of criteria for judging cross-national research in social studies, reminding researchers to avoid the pitfalls of overgeneralization, and it includes suggestions as to how qualitative comparative research could be conducted on a small scale through cooperation in data collection between local school districts in the United States and "equivalent units in another country" (Torney-Purta, 1991, p. 600).

Torney-Purta contributes also by demonstrating a need for more current cross-national research. Many of the studies in this chapter "were conducted at least 15 years ago and should be replicated to assess possible trends such as the heightened women's movement or increased political conservatism" (p. 597). Further, she reveals the relative lack of cross-national research that examines relationships among educational variables and social studies outcomes, and she shows how few cross-national studies have explored the impact of educational practices upon achievement in civics or social studies.

Torney-Purta also cites the need for a coordinated body of research that could help to describe children and young people in the United States in comparison with other nations. She notes as well the need for research concentrating on immigrant and minority groups existing in many societies. Trueba (1991), for example, has warned:

> With the rapid demographic changes in the Western world, the importance of understanding the needs of minorities is becoming the most crucial of contemporary educational research. The fact is that the minorities are rapidly becoming the majority (p. 137).

Research on Social Studies and Citizenship Education in England

Since World War II, migrants and refugees from the peripheries of Europe have immigrated to wealthier, developed metropolitan centers in search of better opportunities for themselves and for their children. It is estimated that by the year 2000, one third of the population under 35 in urban Europe will have an immigrant background. There is a growing concern that the future character of European society might be determined by what happens with this significantly increased population of new immigrants (Suarez-Orozco, 1991, p. 101).

Lister (1991) articulates this concern by asserting that in England, "there is a fundamental uncertainty about what it is in the late 20th century 'to be British'" (p. 608). The problem of school functioning among ethnic and immigrant minorities is not a new issue in the United

States, but "at the end of the 20th century, Britain is a multicultural and multifaith society in search of a pluralist approach to civic education that might achieve social coherence and accommodate diversity" (p. 607).

Gay (1991) has drawn attention to research on cultural diversity relating to cultural-classroom discontinuities, noting the negative effects that the "mismatches in the structural and procedural elements of teaching and learning can have on academic achievement of culturally different students" (p. 144). It is interesting to note that social problems facing some ethnic and immigrant minorities in the U.S. seem to be similar in important ways to issues facing new immigrant minorities in Europe and in the United Kingdom. These problems include:

> lack of equal opportunity resulting in higher unemployment and underemployment rates (particularly among youths), conditions of domestic poverty, disparagement from the majority population, generational conflict, the emergence of peer reference groups fostering a countercultural identity among youths, high minority dropout rates from school, high grade "retention rates", and "high delinquency rates" (Suarez-Orozco, 1991, p.103).

Lister (1991) laments that "unlike in the United States, both social studies and citizenship education are highly contested categories" (p. 608), and curriculum development initiatives "have been embroiled in passionate debate, characterized by assertion versus counterassertion, with little appeal to evidence derived from research on actual practice" (p. 602). A closer look, however, might reveal that social studies controversies confronting educators and researchers in England may not be that dissimilar from those with which social studies educators in the U.S. have had to contend.

In England during the 1960s and early 1970s, social studies curriculum projects were developed to address the needs of less able and nonacademic students, as well as those who were early leavers. Curricular initiatives have also tried to promote social, political, and civic education by drawing attention to content objectives such as political literacy, development, peace, environment/ecology and human rights studies as well as multiculturalism. Yet many of these projects have come to be marginalized (Lister, 1991, p. 602) by their dissociation from the mainstream curricula in which most students participate. In England the traditionally dominant social studies curriculum for high status students has been and continues to be the study of history and geography. Scholarship, not citizenship and

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academic knowledge, rather than preparation for social life have been dominant.

In the U.S. during the 1960s, teachers and students expressed enthusiasm for an experiment in curricular design, *Man: A Course of Study*, which attempted to teach young people to think like social scientists by employing nondidactic approaches to instruction and by replacing conventional textbooks with primary source material and a wide variety of media. By the mid 1970s, *Man: A Course of Study* was driven from U.S. schools largely as a result of conservative criticism directed at its content and methodology (Dow, 1991). More recently there have been heated arguments over the perception that the U.S. Department of Education favors traditional, history-focused approaches over multicultural approaches to school social studies programs (Viadero, 1991), and President Bush's *America 2000* education reform plan has been criticized for not adequately addressing problems related to cultural and racial diversity as well as to poverty (Howe, 1992).

Three questions have served as recurring themes in recent curriculum development work undertaken in England: How is social knowledge organized and presented in the schools (and how might it best be presented); how might all citizens be guaranteed access to socially useful and powerful knowledge; and what might be the nature, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship appropriate to a postindustrial, multicultural, pluralistic society in an interdependent world (Lister, 1991, p. 609). Suarez-Orozco (1991) has also suggested a number of questions for future research that relate closely to and could be used to build on these three themes and that invite cross-national, cross-cultural comparisons along the lines suggested by Torney-Purta (1991, p. 603). They include:

> How are the children of European Economic Community (EEC) and non-EEC immigrants adapting to schooling in the new setting? Are there important differences in adaptation patterns between non-EEC immigrants such as Spaniards and Southern Italians? What are the differences facing the foreign-born generation and the so-called second generation immigrants? How are these patterns to be accounted for? How do gender and class considerations relate to schooling processes and outcomes? What programs are being developed on European soil to respond to the special needs of immigrant children in the context of the 1992 unification? What is the meaning of education in a host society among those immigrants who hope to return home in the future? What are the prospects of cross-cultural comparison with research conducted on immigrant and

ethnic minority groups in the United States (Suarez Orozco, 1991, p. 99)?

Research on Social Studies in Eastern Europe

Fresh approaches to understanding the world situation are needed badly in light of recent unexpected developments. Why were we surprised when the communist system collapsed in central and eastern Europe? Why does Szebenyi (1991) find it necessary to defend his use of the term Eastern Europe with the explanation that

> Western readers have become used to thinking of socialist countries when they read about Eastern Europe....However, the usage can be criticized with good reason, from the scientific point of view. Geographically, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary are not eastern but central European countries, and historically a 1,000-year history connects these countries more to Western than to Eastern Europe (p. 610).

One answer may be that the study of certain areas of the world has long been neglected; for example, Asia is barely mentioned and Latin America is not included at all in the research surveyed in Section VIII. This suggests the need for new approaches for research and teaching grounded in the study of culture and the nature of long-term historical change. Connor (1991) has suggested that

> cultural issues are central in many societies, including our own. The division that relegates art, literature, philosophy, religion, and so forth to an essentially private sphere and equates the public realm with economics, foreign relations, military matters, and other "important" issues has flagrantly failed. If we understand that the term *cultural* concerns official languages, schooling, freedom of artistic and religious expression, and ethnic or national identity, then cultural issues are clearly as central to political life as the economic ones with which they are often inextricably intertwined (p. 178).

Szebenyi (1991) would probably agree with this assessment since he also uses the term social studies reluctantly, in a narrow way that relates to the study of history, social science, and other society-related topics as they occur in the form of educational activities within school systems. Not truly satisfied with a narrow definition of social studies, Szebenyi reminds us:

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Young people gather information about society from a variety of sources: from national and foreign mass media, from family and friends, and from youth organizations. In many countries, the influence of the church and of nonofficial political groups is also significant (p. 610).

It is said that history should be used in schools to bring the lessons of the past to bear on the challenges of the present, as Americans continue to extend and refine the ideas and practices of liberty, equality, and democracy. Renewed emphasis on the study and comprehension of history is part of the *America 2000* program (Kaye, 1992, p. 36). The utility of history, however, may not be found in its predictive power.

A historical analogy properly drawn does not foretell the course of events, but it alerts the observer to possibilities that might be overlooked in other forms of examination (Connor, 1991, pp. 180-181). In the closely interconnected, modern world in which we live, changes that occur in one region reverberate in other parts of the world. Fuentes (in Garcia, 1992) has referred to the Latinization of the United States:

We are going to resemble each other more and more. Take Detroit or Caracas, Mexico City, or Atlanta—you're going to find the same problems of pollution, crime, drug abuse, homelessness. The U.S. must see itself in that buried mirror of otherness, of tragedy, of bearing up to difficult times, of survival. Mexico is an expert at survival. The U.S. can learn much from the Mexican moral (p. 78).

Perhaps there is also much that the United States can learn about liberty, equality, and democracy from the Eastern European mirror and moral. In the period of the Kruschevian thaw (Szebenyi, 1991, p. 614), inquiries into the history of teaching began in the Soviet Union. Revision of "the ossified system of educational aims" gained momentum when educational psychologists conducted empirical studies blaming the "untenability of dogmatic history teaching" for "children's poor knowledge of historical concepts" (p. 613). While Communist Party politics dominated educational aims from the early 1940s to the late 1950s, by the 1960s, researchers in Eastern Europe were emphasizing the history of culture, intellectual history, and ways of life in their studies of curriculum content, rather than focusing on topics such as revolutions, wars, movements of independence, and worker movements that might be categorized as topics serving political ends. The best schools of historical methodology came to be characterized by their "efforts to deal with issues of epistemology, historiography, and educational psychology together" (p. 613).

Geography education had a standing that was considered relatively independent from politics until a "crisis of aims"(Szebenyi, 1991, p. 613) precipitated by the onset of school reforms in the 1970s sought to "establish optimal relations between (a) student productive and reproductive activities, (b) education inside and outside school, and (c) acquisition of knowledge and development of abilities and skills" (p. 613).

By the 1980s, use of video and computer technology increased in social studies subjects, but Western and Eastern European experts voiced more or less the same worries regarding the applicability of video in educational contexts while also expressing "many uncertainties in relation to the use of computers, too" (Szebenyi, 1991, p. 615). Possibilities for modeling social alternatives on the basis of substantial social and historical facts using computers received little attention, and sharp debate over the best application of video technology was common. Experts disagreed as to how videos could best be applied in education, whether they could be used to explain topics as teachers would, to make sociohistorical phenomena more tangible, or to direct student attention toward contradictions, creating problem situations to help children learn to view visual historical sources critically. Even now "the convergence of computing and communications technology is characterized by a wealth of possibility and a dearth of direction" (Wright, 1990, p. 94).

Teachers bring beliefs into their classrooms about what knowledge is of most value, about how teaching and learning should occur, and about the role of the school, and these are transformed into classroom practice in spite of state curricular and organizational mandates to the contrary (Cuban, 1991, p. 208). Given the history of recent events in Eastern Europe, it may be reassuring or sobering to consider the implications of results from research on political socialization in Hungary. The research indicated that schools seem to educate children for political passivity and conformity, rather than for active political participation (the declared aim of education); however, it also revealed that young people seem to have a "double consciousness" and a "double system of values" lurking in the background (Szebenyi 1991, p. 615).

It may be that "Marshall McLuhan was right. No island is an island anymore: The earth itself is decisively the island now" (Morrow, 1989, p. 96). The world watched as the people of Eastern Europe tossed out decades of history, and in Tiananmen Square:

> Many of the demonstrators' signs were written in English. The students knew they were enacting a planetary drama, that their words and images in that one place would powder into electrons and then recombine on millions of

little screens in other places, other minds, around the world (Morrow, 1989, p. 96).

New and perhaps unanticipated cultural problems, however, remain to be overcome on the path to the global village. The information economy seems to threaten the erasure of national borders, and it has caused economists to struggle to redefine concepts of value. Conventional economic axioms are based on concepts of property that emphasize that property by nature is scarce, while information has no inherent scarcity. "We have yet to figure out how much information, and the shuffling thereof, is worth" (Wright, 1990, p. 94). Telephone companies are not accustomed to transporting data, and computer companies are not used to the idea of universal service. The global village could prove to be illusory if technology suppliers, users, and regulators fail to agree on questions relating to technical standards such as "bit rates, switching mechanisms, software protocols, and so on" (Wright, 1990, p. 92).

Research on Social Studies in Africa

Johnson (1991) observes:

The world has moved beyond Newton and even Einstein's relativity. History has probably not ended with any final triumph of a particular ideology. The world we live in is now more like a diamond turning in the light. It is now pluralistic and multicultural, and it always was. How we see it depends on how the light is refracted and our own position as we view both the world "out there," and at the same time contemplate ourselves while viewing it (p. 23).

In their chapter, Merryfield and Muyanda-Mutebi (1991) mention directly problems and issues that confront social studies researchers who work in Africa. It requires both humility and practical intelligence to cope successfully with the "ambiguities and sensitivities that are the nature of social studies" (p. 628), and they warn that problems related to cross-cultural inquiry "comprise serious obstacles for even the experienced researcher" (p. 628). In Africa, "although some Africans may carry out research totally within their own culture, most researchers, including foreigners, will cross cultures" (p. 628).

Merryfield and Muyanda-Mutebi (1991) offer three suggestions for researchers entering cultures new to them which may help them to understand what is going on around them. These suggestions are sensible, and they have practical utility for curriculum developers,

federal and state agencies, school policy makers, and social studies teachers:

> (a) Learn as much about that culture as possible, including the language, before conceptualizing the study; (b) use a variety of strategies and sources; and (c) involve local people in the process of inquiry (p. 629).

It is hard to disagree that research on social studies in Africa is a challenge, desperately needed, and that "potentially, there is no more powerful subject in the African curriculum than social studies" (p. 630). In Africa just as in the U.S., teachers need to be educated in the rationale, the instructional methods, and the content of social studies; inadequate instructional materials are a major obstacle to effective social studies instruction, and the development of social studies is inhibited by the force of tradition and other restraints on educational systems.

As in the United States, confusion exists in Africa about the conceptualization of social studies. West (1992) warns that just as obsessions with identification such as Eurocentrism can conceal the moral content of a society by selecting some elements and suppressing others, similar concerns can be expressed about multicultural perspectives including Afrocentrism. It may be that "Afrocentrism must be acccomplished without competing with whiteness" (p. 3). Citing jazz as an example of a major cultural achievement resulting from the transcendence of cultural competition and the creation of a new synthesis of African rhythm, European instruments, and African-American sensibility, West cautions that it would be wrong to ignore that the Egyptian pyramids were built under conditions of slavery and social misery while still agreeing that black people can point with pride to their existence.

In Africa and in the United States, research needs to focus on how social studies teachers make their instructional decisions and how students use what they learn in social studies. Important work also remains to be done investigating the degree to which social studies programs actually build national consciousness, develop pride in local communities, address environmental problems, and develop problem-solving skills. Neither Africans nor Americans can afford to be complacent in these regards, since paths and directions for the future depend on what happens after this moment. It is not enough to look just to the past or to a map for answers. Our world demands an awareness of complexity, a respect for limits, and the "wiliness that maneuvers through careful observation and thorough acquaintance with one's potential adversaries and by imagining the unimaginable" (Connor, 1991, p. 184).

Conclusion

Based solely on a review of Section VIII in *the Handbook of Research in Social Studies Eduction* (Shaver, 1991, pp. 589-631), it may be a stretch to recommend that all social studies educators purchase a personal copy; however, I have no difficulty in commending the entire volume for inclusion as soon as possible in the collections of school district, college, and university libraries for use by students, practitioners, researchers, and the public at large.

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Nagging Fears and Doubts

A critical review of the section "Contexts of Social Studies Education."

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I have been involved in one way or another in social studies education for more than 30 years. I have seen fads come and go. I have interacted with thousands of professionals and I continue to do so. Social studies consumes my time professionally and my interest generally. I was both pleased and gratified to be asked to join the other reviewers. I was pleased to have an opportunity to visit or revisit the most relevant research in our field, and I was gratified that I would have my own biases supported or refuted by definitive studies and scholarly proclamations.

My visit turned into a painfully slow trudge that has convinced me that I know more than I thought I did, and that my nagging fears and doubts about definitive results emerging from social studies research are justified fully. I do not state this to impugn the intent of the researchers or to criticize the quality of research findings reported. The reports were selected by the various authors obviously as the best of what is available. At the same time, what is available is so disparate and diffused that implementers would and should find it difficult to move ahead with a new approach, completely confident that they are aiming in the correct direction.

Based on the chapters that are included here, it seems that classroom teachers ought to be more tentative about everything they are doing and be more aware of the effect outside influences and context have on the instructional task. This insight is a major contribution to the field.

It is in this regard that Catherine Cornbleth's chapter, "Research on Context, Research in Context," is instructive. Teachers may and often do question the results of research. They seldom consider the working assumptions or paradigms that mobilize the researcher, and these seldom are explained explicitly; thus, readers are left to their own devices trying to sort out researcher intent.

Equally instructive to research users is Cornbleth's proposition that one can never understand social studies classroom practice and consequently act to change it without taking into account the multiple contexts in which the practice takes place. Recognition of this may be debilitating to users. To the extent that culture, social movements, demographic trends, organizational structures, and other contextual factors impinge on achieving desired instructional goals, the role of the individual teacher could be perceived as diminished and marginal; for

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example, simply knowing that preexisting norms, values, and beliefs limit acceptance of curricular change could encourage inertia, retrenchment, and unwillingness to engage in schoolwide reform initiatives. Factors beyond teacher control could easily be viewed as overwhelming.

Social Studies and the Resistance to Change

The stability of the social studies scope and sequence, noted in the chapter "Scope and Sequence, Goals, and Objectives: Effects on Social Studies" suggests that educators have been unwilling to change markedly patterns established as long ago as 1916. This is remarkable in the face of hundreds of critiques written by professionals positing that the social studies is in disarray.[1] Reports show that social studies is among the least favorite school subjects (Shaughnessy, 1985), and students continue to score poorly on tests that assess understanding of the cognitive skills at the heart of the field (Anderson, 1990; Hammock, 1990). Nonetheless, teachers appear steadfast in their fidelity to what has been in place for some 75 years.

The question one must ask is why. One possible explanation put forward by James Shaver (1979) is that "research to date is not a particularly useful source of prescriptions for schooling practices in social studies" (p. 40). It may be that teachers over the years have known this or have at least suspected it intuitively, making them reluctant to modify their practices. We have been told often that resistance to change may be a function of "the inertia of textbook publishers, teachers, school districts, and the National Council for the Social Studies itself" (Morrissett, 1980, p. 306). Certainly there is no field of study as fraught with the clash of values, examined and unexamined, as the social studies. Nor, I suspect, is there a field in which the propositions of the experts are challenged as routinely by lay people who consider themselves perfectly competent to recommend proper courses of study. Because the recommendations of many of these people are derived from their own educational experiences, typically remembered as better than they were, the result in the best case scenario is considerable lag time before accepting new practice and in the worst case, no change at all.

Change Options—Opportunities for Teachers

We work in a highly politicized field marked by a multiplicity of competing models and outcome expectations. We know that the paradigms of researchers can skew the research findings to such an

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[1]For example, see National Commission on Excellence, 1983.

extent that they may be misleading. Even though there appears to be a paucity of research on contexts, the number and kinds of contexts that have an impact are staggering.

In light of the lack of national consensus on appropriate social studies outcomes and the flawed or inadequate research that exists, what options are available to dedicated educators (National Council, 1989; Hartoonian & Laughlin, 1989; Kniep, 1989)? Definitive research regarding all the factors that affect educational outcomes will take time, energy, and resources to produce. So let us take it from there, work with what is available, and begin to test some of the propositions elucidated in our own settings. I have a few recommendations to make in this regard.

First, teachers must be aware that research on context means exactly what it says. It takes place *in* contexts and *on* contexts that may or may not be similar to the ones of the teacher. Thus, teachers must decide for themselves the extent to which the findings are salient for them. This does not mean that the research is flawed necessarily, but that it may not be relevant or applicable.

Second, it seems to me that teachers should not be appalled by the sheer number of contextual possibilities. They should choose one that seems particularly interesting or powerful in their case, carefully review the literature, and then begin to test the research findings, or develop strategies to diminish or enhance contextual factors in order to achieve instructional goals.

Peer Groups and School Structure

Philip Cusick's chapter, "Student Groups and School Structure," describes a number of school studies conducted over a several-year period from the 1920s through the 1980s. The chapter examines the nature of interactions between peer groups and school structure and the traditional citizenship education goals that attempt to establish an intelligible articulation of the norms and values among peer groups, school structure, and the nation-state.

The most remarkable conclusion one can draw from the data relates to the similarities found among peer groups over time, regardless of school size or setting. Furthermore, the requirements for order and compliance of bureaucratic and hierarchical organizations, in this case schools, appear to reinforce the norms of the peer groups rather than of the total community, determining how students spend their dead time and offset tedium. At the same time, the presence of peer groups in classes may encourage teachers to avoid group projects and cooperative endeavors and rely on individual seat work to discourage peer group influence. Both practices negate typical citizenship objectives.

Although the evidence from the cited studies suggests that students are unlikely ever to identify with the norms of the larger social and political structures of which they are members, there are some reasonably promising new approaches teachers might try. First, if students actually learn how society and the groups in it work in the school setting, teachers might structure their lessons deliberately to give students an explicit understanding of that process. Second, those aspects of education that are clearly dysfunctional in a democratic society—for example, tracking, and rewards and punishments based on class or status, both of which support existing peer groupings—should be avoided. Third, it might be possible to develop alternative modalities around which students could group differently. Academics, athletics, community service, music, and so on were among those suggested. Finally, consideration might be given to Grant's (1988) moral learning community, which calls for building-based control and teacher autonomy in establishing norms and standards. This proposition dovetails nicely with the recommendations calling for site-based management, and it might indeed give restructuring coherence and integrity.

Parents and the Home

The research reported in the chapter "The Influence of the Home on Social Studies," much of it 20 or more years old, strongly supports the contention that parenting and home influence are powerful indicators of student prosocial behavior. It appears almost a given that social studies educators can do little more than build upon or try to negate to some degree what is learned at home. Parenting classes or frequent interaction with parents might be modestly helpful. Unfortunately, such interventions should start by the time a child is two or younger— not a very practical option for most teachers.

The author suggests a variety of things that social studies teachers can and should do; for example, supporting students and maintaining a stable environment to provide a measure of security could help motivate greater achievement. Teachers can assist students in developing competence in social relationships. These are reasonably low-level expectations, ones in which every teacher should be engaged regardless of research.

On the other hand, the idea that it would be useful to introduce an open discussion of conflict as early as the primary grades might be new. Similarly, teachers can and should devise strategies for reducing prejudice. In this regard, it appears that open yet guided discussion, cooperative projects, and frequent exploration of the cultures of many different ethnic groups are promising strategies. In sum, the individual teacher should create a curriculum that increases self-reliance by

encouraging inductive reasoning and establishing high standards of achievement. This would either enhance positive parental experiences or negate to some extent those that are negative.

The Influence of the Media

All of the chapters discussing contexts outside the formal structures of education almost leave one with the hopeless feeling that teachers are in the position of having to play catch up, of having to counteract the potentially negative impact of factors beyond their control. It is possible to argue, of course, that the converse is also true. Teachers might be able to build upon positive influences if they could identify them. Having said this, most of what has been revealed in the research is negative. The data concerning television support this contention.

We are told that growing numbers of young people are spending more and more time involved with the electronic media and that heavy viewing reduces the interest in and time spent reading. This is particularly troubling in light of the evidence that "television viewing does not significantly increase learning, is inferior, and is less likely than print to cultivate higher-order, inferential thinking" (Postman, 1985, p. 152). Because of the media's power and influence in developing social understandings, it is troubling that sexual stereotyping, racial and ethnic bias, and programming that depicts violence and aggression as acceptable continue to permeate the airways. Given the sheer volume of what children watch, teachers cannot possibly debrief much of what their students see, encourage reflection, or assist directly in differentiating between what is real and unreal.

What teachers can and should do, however, is teach children *about* television programming and technology. Students need to understand how television news is put together, what the characteristics of those who set the agenda for programming are, and how to view television more critically. Teachers could also encourage young people to discuss what they are seeing on television and to reflect on its meaning and influence.

Testing: How Does It Influence Teacher Behavior?

At a time when the educational community is faced with increased demands for accountability and with the spectre of rewards and punishments tied to test results, it behooves educators to gather as many insights as possible about the intended and unintended consequences of student evaluation. The first pitfall that teachers should try to avoid is allowing their instruction to become measurement driven; by this I mean modifying the curriculum to address test

objectives and test-taking skills. This problematizes the four questions with which curriculum developers should be concerned: (1) What educational objectives are desired? (2) What experiences and strategies will achieve these objectives? (3) How should instruction be organized? and (4) How can achievement be assessed? The assessment should be used either to modify objectives, learning experiences, or organizational design. It should not, however, be the source of new objectives.

Although little data are available, it would seem logical that test results could also be used diagnostically. In this instance, teachers would adjust their instruction to provide remediation for those students who could benefit.

Conclusion

It is quite clear that we have too often and for too long engaged in research that has made no consideration of potential contextual factors. Thus, our conclusions have tended to be partial, but also destructively misleading. Research on social studies education in context and studies of the different aspects of context on social studies education are imperative.

The data are disturbingly sparse concerning the various factors that can facilitate or more likely make it more difficult for social studies educators to achieve their curricular objectives. Nonetheless, there are hints—clues—in the research that could help teachers adapt what they do in the classroom to negate or build upon external factors. It would be helpful if teachers themselves assessed the effects of their efforts or cooperated with outside evaluators. Trying to make sense of multiple contextual variables and their interactions will take time and careful hypothesis testing. The more data available, the better.

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Being Overly 'Aimful'

A critical review of the sections "Teaching for and Learning Social Studies Outcomes" and "Components of Instruction."

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To what extent does social studies research provide useful guidance to curriculum developers? This is the general question I was asked to consider in reviewing two major sections of the *Handbook of Research on Social Studies Teaching and Learning* (Shaver, 1991).

Compiling the handbook was a daunting task and its publication is the first systematic effort to provide a comprehensive and critical review of research on social studies. The primary purpose of the handbook is to aid social studies researchers in understanding past research and planning future research; however, "a secondary audience was in mind: curriculum developers, instructional leaders, and school policy makers interested in using research information in addressing their questions and tasks" (p. ix).

The two sections ostensibly of most relevance to curriculum developers contain 18 chapters covering topics such as the teaching of geography, the promotion of affective aims, and technology in the social studies. It is impossible, of course, to consider carefully each of the diverse chapters within the constraints of this review. Neither is it possible to assess the soundness of the reported research. Instead, I pose some central questions that curriculum developers must address, and I consider the degree to which these chapters provide direction for answering them.

In practice, curriculum developers must consider a variety of questions. As a curriculum developer myself, I have identified four central questions that I believe we must all address. These questions provide the lens through which I will focus on the chapters under review: (a) What goals should the curriculum pursue? (b) Why are these goals educationally worthwhile? (c) Are the goals attainable by students? (d) What methods are likely to be most effective in reaching these goals?

Curriculum developers cannot confront these questions or begin examining research without some prior knowledge and set of commitments. We should be clear headed but not empty headed; for example, we all know that citizenship education is an overarching goal of the social studies, that multiculturalism is a current thrust in social studies curricula, and that cooperative learning is a methodology with demonstrated promise. Reviews of research will not be especially helpful if they merely remind us of such generalizations. Instead, I would hope that they will sharpen our thinking about curricula by

elaborating upon, refining, or refuting our general knowledge of and our commitments for the social studies.

What Goals Should the Curriculum Pursue?

Although this is a pivotal question for curriculum developers, I would not expect reviews of research to address it. Reviews of research normally present empirical data about goals rather than philosophical arguments about which goals should be pursued. It is remarkable to note the number of goals, however, that abound in the 18 chapters under review.

More than any other school subject, social studies is home for a copious array of educational goals. While this is not an original observation, the reviewed chapters clearly substantiate it. The following is a sampler of the goals referred to: "ethical decision making on public and private matters" (Parker, 1991, p. 345); "empathy and prosocial behavior" (Scott, 1991, p. 359); education "for various forms of political action" (Ferguson, 1991, p. 385); "the ability to apply an economic perspective to public and private concerns" (Schug & Walstad, 1991, p. 411); "the understanding and appreciation of pluralism" (Nelson & Stahl, 1991, p. 420); and "develop global understanding and concern" (Massialas, 1991, p. 448).

The chapters also refer to critical thinking, higher-order thinking, and goals related to the teaching of history, geography, government, social science, and multicultural education. Such a profusion of goals may lead one to characterize the social studies as an exemplar of helter-skelter direction. Given this cornucopia of purposes, it may be more accurate to say that the problem with social studies is not that it is aimless, but rather that it is overly 'aimful'.

As expected, the reviews of research do little for curriculum developers in establishing education goals. Their goal-related value lies elsewhere. Developers who have established their goals will find these chapters useful guides to research relevant to virtually any social studies goal.

Why Are These Goals Educationally Worthwhile?

The curriculum developer must not only set goals, but he or she must also offer a sound justification for why such goals are worth pursuing. This is important for at least two reasons: (1) As we know, the social studies is afflicted (or blessed) with a multitude of goals. Even if a reasonable argument can be made for each goal, it is impossible to pursue them all within the physical and time constraints of schooling. Consequently, we must determine which goals are most worth pursuing. (2) Curriculum developers must also respond to the legitimate concerns

of their constituents. Taxpayers, administrators, students, and others have a right to know not only what we are trying to accomplish but why we are aiming at particular goals.

It is not the intent of reviews of empirical research to elaborate philosophical justifications for the goals examined. This is the case with the chapters under consideration here; the review chapters are thin on the explication of rationales. The rationales that are alluded to, however, give a further glimpse of the lack of consensus within the social studies.

Setting aside the obligatory and abstract obeisance to the promotion of democratic citizenship, presented justifications reveal the abiding diversity within the social studies. Mentioned rationales include such matters as the importance of giving "students an accurate depiction of the development of U.S. society and culture" (Banks, 1991, p. 459); engaging "students in activities to enhance their understanding of other countries and (promoting) active participation in the solution of world problems" (Massialas, 1991, p. 448); and benefitting "from education in the concepts, method, and logic that help in the analysis of economic issues" (Schug & Walstad, 1991, p. 411).

As with goal setting, curriculum developers will find little guidance for the task of rationale building from these chapters. Assistance for these vital tasks must be sought elsewhere.

Are the Goals Attainable by Students?

Regardless of which goals are selected, curriculum developers must have reason to believe that most students can attain them. It is Sisyphean folly to pursue the unreachable. I would expect reviews of research to help us understand the extent to which various social studies goals can be learned by young people. As I examined the research with this question in mind, a puzzling pattern emerged. Of the successful interventions reported, most were undertaken with elementary-age students. This generalization held for virtually all of the instructional goals considered.

Parker (1991), for example, cites studies claiming positive effects on logical reasoning with upper elementary students and effects on selected thinking abilities with children in grades 3 through 6 (pp. 347-350). Downey and Levstik (1991) identify Blake's (1981) "striking qualitative" effects on 9- to 11-year-olds' understanding of historical problems (p. 403).

Stoltman (1991) mentions significant effects of computer games on fifth and sixth graders' place-location recall found by Forsyth in 1986 (p. 438). He also indicates that "no comparable studies of the effectiveness of computers in geography teaching for secondary students were found" (p. 439). Massialas (1991) critically describes Mitsako's

(1978) findings of a significant effect on third graders' international understanding (p. 450). He also identifies Hamilton's (1982) unsuccessful global education intervention with high school subjects (p. 451). Banks (1991) reports numerous successful multicultural education interventions with elementary children's racial and gender attitudes and understandings (pp. 459-469). He also concludes that treatments "appear to be most successful with young children" (p. 467).

I do not wish to overstate this general finding. There are occasional reports of interventions that are modestly successful with high school students. Nonetheless, the overwhelming number of successful treatments cited are done with younger children. Assuming my observations are correct, it is difficult to explain this phenomenon. One possible explanation is that the great majority of intervention research may be conducted with younger subjects. If true, statistically this would increase the probability of more successful interventions with that group rather than with high school subjects. As more treatments are done with one age group, the chances that some treatments will appear effective are greater.

Another relatively technical explanation might follow from the generalization that successful interventions are more likely to be published than unsuccessful interventions; that is, even if the number of studies conducted with high school subjects were comparable to the number conducted with elementary subjects, whichever group had the most successes would be reported in journals. If treatments with younger children were more effective, those findings would be published more often, regardless of the number of studies done with each age group.

A third explanation, more substantive than technical, may be found in the comparative psychology/sociology of children versus adolescents. Perhaps younger children as a group are more malleable, more responsive to authority, and more eager to please adults than are adolescents. If true, they may then be more responsive to interventions. Conversely, perhaps adolescents as a group are less malleable and more responsive to nonacademic concerns such as sexuality, peers, jobs, and issues of personal independence. If true, they may be less likely to be engaged by interventions. This would be exacerbated in the case of social studies interventions if, as has been frequently noted, social studies is one of the least popular of the high school subjects—something to be endured rather than savored.

Regardless of what explanation is most plausible, and the three suggested by no means exhaust the possibilities, curriculum developers should consider carefully the implication that interventions may have less potency with adolescents than with younger children. Although it is difficult to state precisely what the implication might be, we certainly should not assume that a treatment proven successful with one age group will also be effective with other age groups.

It should be noted that historically, reforms were more likely to occur at the elementary school than at the high school. In his exploration of the history of teaching, Cuban (1984) found that in the 1920-1949 era, "a core of progressive teaching practices did penetrate a considerable number of elementary schools" (p. 135). Conversely, "few progressive practices appeared in most high school classes" (p. 135). His findings for the 1965-1975 decade are virtually identical. Of the innovations he examined, "they appeared more frequently in the elementary grades, particularly in the primary years, and virtually disappeared by high school" (p. 200).

What Methods Are Likely to be Most Effective in Reaching These Goals?

In addition to setting and justifying goals and determining the feasibility of teaching toward those goals, curriculum developers also need to identify ways of organizing instruction that show the greatest promise in helping students reach the desired goals. Reviews of research should aid us in answering this general question. I did not, however, expect the reviews to provide precise descriptions of how specific methods promote particular goals. Instead, I examined the reviews to determine if there are certain types of instructional practices that have been identified as most effective in meeting social studies goals.

The approaches to instruction most frequently cited as effective are those that engage students in discussion of important issues and in constructing meaning. This is not a surprising discovery. For decades social studies leaders have argued for instruction that actively involves students in efforts to make sense out of complex social problems both current and historical. Much of the reviewed research supports this persistent curricular refrain.

Scott (1991) contends classroom discussion is "a critical variable in moral education" (pp. 364-365). Following Oser (1986), she then outlines how moral discourse is necessary for a variety of moral education goals. Ferguson (1991) was unable to find methods that had a consistent, demonstrated impact on the goal of civic participation. From his review of research, however, he did conclude that "an inquiry-based, activity-oriented approach to instruction is somewhat more effective in promoting participatory attitudes and skills than are expository, didactic teaching methods" (p. 392).

The promotion of key attitudes toward and understandings of democratic citizenship is also associated with classroom discussion. Patrick and Hoge (1991) found that "teachers increase student potential for development of democratic attitudes and values when they provide systematic instruction on critical thinking about public issues, and

create classroom conditions conducive to the free and open exchange of viewpoints" (p. 433). Similarly, Hahn (1991) reports that "courses without controversial issues had little or no effect on students' political interest or orientation toward participation" (p. 471). Wilen and White's (1991) comments summarize the foregoing points:

> Discussion was generally effective in promoting higher-level thinking, changing students' attitudes, advancing students' capability for moral reasoning, and engaging students in group problem solving—important citizenship education goals (p. 489).

Effective discussions should not be assumed to occur simply because students are allowed to talk. The students must have something challenging and worthwhile to consider. Also, teachers must create a classroom climate where students can debate and question freely. The topics that students address should be treated in depth. Regarding history, Downey and Levstik (1991) conclude, "Courses that emphasize coverage and memorization are probably not useful settings for the development of either hypothetical, deductive thinking or autonomous, historical reasoning" (p. 407). Parker (1991) states the general case firmly: "The fate of thinking and decision-making objectives in social studies, or the possibility of ever making the trip from paper to practice, very well may rest on the matter of depth versus breadth of content coverage" (p. 352).

Engaging students in the examination and discussion of challenging topics in depth appears necessary for the benefits of discussion to be realized. This, however, is not enough. Teachers must establish a classroom climate that permits discussion to flourish. Hahn (1991) cites a number of classroom climate studies and concludes "all climate variables were positively associated with all student outcome variables, thus suggesting the benefits of controversial issues discussion in an open, supportive environment" (p. 472).

Conclusions

Curriculum developers working on selecting social studies goals or developing the philosophical justification for those goals will not find much assistance from the reviewed chapters. As mentioned earlier, this is not surprising. We would not expect reviews of empirical research to focus significant attention on these two important issues. Taken as a whole, I believe the chapters present curriculum developers with two general conclusions: (1) Implementation of curriculum development strategies at the elementary and secondary schools needs to be carefully assessed; (2) instructional activities that engage students in analysis

and discussion of challenging problems continue to show the most promise for reaching social studies goals.

From the reviewed chapters I get a picture, admittedly not sharply focused, of greater curricular impact on young children compared to adolescents. This may mean that the high school is more resistant to innovation than the elementary school. Some researchers (Leming, 1989; Lockwood, 1988; Onosko, 1991) have analyzed barriers to curricular change and argued that these must be confronted directly if significant reform is to occur. If this is the case, social studies curriculum developers should address broad issues of reform recalcitrance as well as issues unique to social studies.

Discussion and inquiry-type instruction when properly implemented are associated regularly with progress toward a variety of social studies goals. For me, this suggests that curriculum developers would be wise to consider the approach to curriculum and instruction generally known as "constructivism." While subject to a number of specific definitions, constructivist approaches actively involve students in the generation of knowledge. "In a classroom faithful to constructivist views, students are afforded numerous opportunities to explore phenomena or ideas, conjecture, share hypotheses with others, and revise their original thinking" (O'Neil, 1992, p. 4).

This essay was intended to assess the value of 18 reviews of research for social studies curriculum developers. Speaking generally, I find that the chapters provide us little guidance for some development tasks. On the other hand, while no firm answers are given, I believe two related questions are raised by the reviews: How can we provide curricula to engage students actively in discussion and other constructivist activities? What broad, nonspecific subject strategies can we find that increase the chances that worthwhile innovation can occur in the social studies?

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Curricular Visions and Social Education: A Response to Ronald Evans' Review of *Curriculum for Utopia*.

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After more than 27 years as a social educator, I am more impressed than ever with the complexity of the field and the difficulty involved in trying to establish a coherent rationale for social education. Still, I have come to find certain ideas that I think make sense as guidelines for practice. I will mention two.

First, one's intellectual framework plays a critical role in shaping how he or she conducts educational practice, be it teaching, research, or reform. Certainly many other factors (e.g., student characteristics, instructional materials, teacher training, the structure of schooling, cultural trends, etc.) have an effect on social studies education. Nevertheless, I believe the ideas one holds regarding students, instruction, society, culture, and the purpose of social education still have an important influence on how he or she approaches social studies, other factors notwithstanding.

Second, we need to maintain a critical and utopian attitude toward the possibility for educational reform. Without a utopian view, we risk embracing a cynical form of complacency (the present system is the best we can hope for) or what is worse, nihilism (we have no principled way to determine if any particular form of society is better than any other). In either case, one has abandoned the hope required for reform and reduced the role of schools to mere agencies for the status quo. It might be that the current social order is worth preserving, but there is no way to determine if this is so without a critical comparison with other social possibilities. I use the term critical to refer to forms of social analysis that involve a consciousness of the various frameworks (e.g., linguistic, cultural, social) that shape how one goes about the business of inquiry.

My recent thinking on these issues is expressed in *Curriculum for Utopia: Social Reconstructionism and Critical Pedagogy in the Postmodern Era*, which was reviewed by Ron Evans in a recent issue of *TRSE*. I appreciate that Evans has taken the time to try and explain the rather complex and extended arguments presented in the book. I also appreciate his effort to present a fair-minded and balanced

critique. While I agree with most of his review, there are some topics that might be better clarified by further comment.

Evans raises a number of issues and concerns in his review, but I will restrict my comment to two of his concerns. First, he argues that the curriculum I recommend will incline educators to use critical dialogue to impose a view of a preferred social order on students and thereby pose a threat to genuine inquiry. Second, while he acknowledges that he learned much from my book, he concludes that my recommendations for a reconceptualized, reconstructionist pedagogy are not significantly different from those posed by mainstream advocates of reflective inquiry/social issues-centered approaches to social studies. Let us examine each of these concerns in more detail.

Evans (1993) asserts that social educators following my approach to curriculum would be inclined to " impose their views [of a preferred social order] through a critical dialogue," although they would "maintain an openness to alternative views and contradictory evidence" (pp. 169-170). In contrast, mainstream proponents of reflective inquiry would present the teacher's voice as only one among many to be analyzed in the process of problem solving. While this is a reasonable description of the social reconstructionist position and many of the approaches taken within critical pedagogy (including some of my earlier views), it does not correspond to the curricular position I develop in the book.

Among my reasons for writing *Curriculum for Utopia* was to present a reexamination of both reconstructionism and critical pedagogy. In the process, I found reasons to question and reject some of my earlier views on reconstructionism as well as similar views held by many proponents of critical pedagogy. The revised conception of reconstructionism presented in the book is derived from an interweaving of ideas from pragmatism, critical pedagogy, feminist thought, postmodernism, and poststructuralism. Indeed, some might question if it should still be considered reconstructionism.

I agree with the reconstructionist view that all forms of education tend to be more favorable to the interests of some groups than others. The differential (and unequal) education given women, the poor, African Americans, Hispanics and other minorities since the birth of our nation has been well documented. Furthermore, education always involves some viewpoint or frame of reference, and it can never be a neutral institution or practice; however, I now argue that the aim of social education should not be to impose or persuade students to embrace a preferred social order or set of values.

Although education cannot occur outside some framework, it should not be the purpose of social educators to seek to impose such a framework on students. Instead, the primary purpose of social education is to enable students to become competent citizens. Put another way, we

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need to help students acquire the ability to make critical judgments regarding the nature of their society and how they might act, if necessary, to make it better. The task to determine what our society should become belongs to the students. It is proper for social educators to ask students to examine if social change is required, but it is not our task to solve this problem for them and then persuade them to embrace the proposed solution. To do this would be to undermine the very competence students need to become effective citizens. One might note the paradoxical nature of this position. To argue that social education should not impose a particular social framework is itself a framework. The acceptance of such paradoxical reasoning is intrinsic to curricular theorizing and to philosophy in general. The point to keep in mind is this: There is an important difference between seeking to impose a particular social order and identifying a set of social conditions required for humans to develop the critical competence necessary to determine and act to realize their interests. While both positions are derived from particular frameworks, the former promotes a form of social stasis; the latter seeks to create the possibility for social transformation. The reader may or may not agree with my position, but it should be clear that the curricular position proposed in *Curriculum for Utopia* is not the same as the characterization of reconstructionism described in Evans' review.

The second issue I wish to consider is Evans' contention that my proposal for curriculum reform is, in the final analysis, only a slightly enhanced version of the reflective inquiry/social issues approaches proposed by several mainstream social educators, including Evans (1989), Hunt and Metcalf (1966), Oliver and Shaver (1966), and Engle and Ochoa (1987). More specifically, Evans argues that my proposal is in basic agreement with mainstream reflective inquiry/social issues approaches in terms of how each describes the uncertainty of knowledge, the tentative nature of truth claims, the goal of general human betterment, and the attempt to empower students via the reflective study of social issues (Evans, 1993, p. 169). True, my curricular proposals are rooted in the reflective inquiry/social issues legacy he describes, particularly the influence of pragmatism as exemplified in the work of Pierce and Dewey. Still, I believe that my position differs from mainstream reflective inquiry in several important ways.[1]

For example, Evans argues that mainstream reflective inquiry/social issues proponents and the curriculum I propose posit essentially similar views regarding the uncertainty of knowledge and the tentative nature of truth. There are at least two problems with this argument. First, very different philosophical arguments have been

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[1]Readers are encouraged to consult *Curriculum for Utopia* for an expanded discussion.

made for the tentative nature of truth and the uncertainty of knowledge. I argue that most (if not all) mainstream approaches to reflective inquiry are grounded in a neopositivist account of knowledge. This account is similar to Carl Popper's notion of falsification. Popper (1968, 1976) argued against the earlier positivist view that certain or scientific knowledge is accumulated via a process of inductive validation. At some future point, any validated knowledge claim (e.g., swans are white) might be rendered invalid by the discovery of new knowledge (e.g., the existence of black swans); thus, the only knowledge claims available to humans are those we have not been able to falsify, i.e., those claims for which we have yet to find disconfirming evidence.

What Popper claimed as certain was the availability of a general process or method to determine if knowledge could be falsified. Without such a method, we would be faced with the spectre of radical relativism or the impossibility of making one knowledge claim more reliable than any other. Popper was concerned that relativism like totalitarianism might also pose a threat to democratic society. But as I discuss in *Curriculum for Utopia,* a considerable body of scholarship has emerged that has undermined most neopositivist knowledge claims, including the argument for a universal method for falsifying knowledge (Fish, 1980; Foucault, 1980; Culler, 1982; Norris, 1985; Cherryholmes, 1988; Rorty, 1979; Hilley et al., 1991). Richard Bernstein (1983), for example, uses the term *Cartesian anxiety* to describe the view of those who like Popper fear that either we have some objective means of establishing human knowledge or we face the abyss of nihilism (anything goes). Bernstein makes a persuasive argument for moving beyond this either/or form of neopositivist thinking.

The claim to some universal or transcendental method for falsifying knowledge is not possible because all methodologies operate from some particular vantage point or framework, and what does or does not count as evidence in one framework might not be relevant in another (Fish, 1980; Culler, 1982). Humans do not have access to some metadiscursive or universal vantage point from which knowledge questions might be resolved once and for all. Lacking an awareness of these arguments, our students remain mired in the discourse of neopositivism and its distorted view of knowledge. Evans makes no mention of these ways of looking at the issues related to the uncertainty of knowledge in his review. Yet such issues form an important part of the argument in my book.

A second example of a significant difference between my curricular proposal and mainstream reflective inquiry/social issues approaches is how each deals with values. I argue that mainstream reflective inquiry/social issues approaches to social studies are

characterized by two prevailing views of values: (a) that facts and values are distinct entities, and (b) that an *a priori* set of values exists to provide the standards against which we should judge human institutions and behavior. Given the latter assumption, rational humans are always confronted with a choice between a set of good (democratic) values and bad (nondemocratic) values. The good set of democratic values is derived usually from our fundamental national documents (the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights) and is expressed in what Gunner Myrdal (1944) called the American creed (i.e., a cultural commitment to human dignity, diversity, human rights, and freedoms, etc.). While there are occasions where these core values might conflict (e.g., free speech versus the right to a fair trial), the assumption is that humans should not act in ways that are antithetical to our fundamental values.

It is interesting to note that while most proponents of critical pedagogy have done a good job explaining why the neopositivist fact/value dichotomy is not correct, they often appear to agree with their mainstream colleagues regarding the existence of a positive core of democratic values (Stanley, 1992, pp. 206-216). One might recall the frequent arguments made by critical educators for emancipation, justice, democratic freedom, and equality as taken-for-granted standards against which we can judge the current social order and reform proposals. It seems that many critical educators, much like their reconstructionist predecessors or current mainstream social educators, harbor a deep fear of relativism. The Cartesian anxiety referred to above runs wide and deep.

In contrast, I claim that social values are always the products of human judgment; thus, it is not possible to posit some *a priori* set of values as a basis for all further human judgments. In other words, we cannot take any values for granted, and we must ask certain questions: How did our current values originate? Can we conceive of other values or value systems? What grounds do we have for assuming the relevance or superiority of particular values? If we pursue such questions, we can begin to understand the role critical thinking plays in establishing and selecting those values that will help guide our social action. To the extent we fail to do this, we are in danger of accepting and imposing values on faith. This is one possible approach to values education, but it should never be confused with reflective inquiry.

Clearly, social studies education never occurs in a values vacuum. There always already exist certain values that hold a prominent position in the current social order. But no matter how strongly we as social educators have come to feel about particular social values, it is our professional obligation to help enable the the next generation to claim its own set of values, even if we hope the values reflect those we presently hold. If education does not enable our students to embrace

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values via critical reflection, it is little more than a form of dogmatic cultural transmission. However noble the intent, this approach to instruction will serve to undermine the very basis for the democratic culture it seeks to impose.

While mainstream proponents of reflective inquiry/social issues approaches do not usually seek unreflective cultural transmission, they generally fail to explore this issue in depth or to provide some approach for dealing with it. In fact, several social educators do propose the imposition of core democratic values (e.g., Oliver & Shaver, 1966; Leming, 1981). Even the recent work of Engle and Ochoa (1988), cited with approval by Evans, proposes an approach to reflective decision making that seems to assume the availability of a core set of democratic values to orient all decisions.[2]

Another important difference between my curricular proposal and mainstream reflective inquiry/social issues approaches concerns the incorporation of practical reasoning. The practical tradition can be traced to ancient Greek philosophy, especially the work of Aristotle. More recently, the importance of practical reasoning as opposed to technical and theoretical reasoning has appeared in writing on American pragmatism, critical theory, and philosophical hermeneutics. Unfortunately, contemporary English usage reflects an impoverished understanding of terms like *practical* and *pragmatic*. Over the past 400 years, the emerging positivist tendency in Western culture has reduced the meaning of practical, as well as the related term pragmatic, to something like "having instrumental utility." The problem we face, however, goes beyond the need to restore the original meaning of practical, as well as the balance between practical and more technical or instrumental forms of reasoning. We also need to show how human reasoning can never be reduced to purely technical competence.

Practical reasoning refers to the inherently social and interpretive mode of behavior characteristic of human beings and required for praxis (to use Aristotle's term), defined as action for human betterment. The Greek word for the form of competence was *phronesis*. Unlike technical reasoning, which aims at achieving prespecified objectives (e.g., conducting a poll of public opinion), praxis aims at human well being, which by its nature must be open to continual reinterpretation. Thus, we can see why practical reasoning can never be reduced to judgments about what we should do in accordance with certain values. Rather, practical reasoning is as much a matter of the competence to reformulate conceptions of our fundamental goals (or values) as it is a matter of the ability to carry out appropriate action in pursuit of those goals. Consequently, practical reasoning is simultaneously both an ethical and interpretive (intellectual) activity

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[2]See Engle & Ochoa, 1988, pp. 23-24 and chapter 5.

that cannot be assigned to any of the distinct cognitive or affective domains that permeate the mainstream discourse on education, including social studies.

There are two additional points to be made regarding practical reasoning. First, practical reasoning is not simply another kind of reasoning but a primary form of reasoning required for the exercise of other kinds. Put another way, practical reasoning is necessary for the determination of subsequent instrumental or technical tasks to be performed. So while public opinion polling is itself a largely technical activity, the decision to assess public opinion in a particular context as well as the judgment required to construct the instrument used are each products of practical reasoning. Second, practical reasoning is not merely something humans can do more or less well but a fundamental part of what constitutes us as human beings. As such, practical reasoning is simultaneously a basic human interest as well as required competence for the further identification and realization of other human interests. Defined this way, it can also be understood as a primary aim of social studies education. In my reading of the social education literature, I see little or no discussion of the practical tradition.[3] In *Curriculum for Utopia*, I have tried to present an argument for the restoration of this tradition, and for how it should form both the basis and distinctive character of reflective inquiry.

Finally, I should say a few words about the contribution of poststructuralism to a reconceptualized approach to social education. Evans agrees that the poststructuralist analysis holds several insights that have the potential "to advance the conversation regarding curriculum for the future," but it also seems full of commonplace insights such as the lack of certainty regarding knowledge (Evans, 1993, p. 167). Not surprisingly, there are connections between poststructuralism and other intellectual traditions, and some of the poststructuralist insights (e.g., uncertainty) might seem familiar. But I would argue that the elaboration and reinterpretation of other intellectual traditions are essential to the growth of human thought. Poststructuralism among other things involves a critical reinterpretation of the earlier structuralist tradition as the structuralist ideas relate to the possibility for human agency and betterment. An understanding of the

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[3]In the curriculum field, Reid (1978, 1981), Schwab (1965, 1978), and Westbury (1972a, b) have all discussed elements of the practical tradition as part of an effort to restore a practical dimension to curricular theorizing. However, these writers have stressed primarily the relationship between theoretical and practical knowledge while neglecting the equally important relationship between practical and technical or instrumental reasoning.

More recently, Whitson (1991, 1992) has discussed the relation of practical reasoning to social education. I am deeply indebted to Tony Whitson for his many valuable insights on curriculum theory.

structural determinants (e.g., linguistic, cultural) of human behavior forms an essential part of the knowledge required for improving the human condition. But poststructuralism has also revealed the problems and limitations inherent in the structuralist analysis. While this does complicate the process of human understanding, it is a critical insight, without which we might continue to misdirect our efforts to better understand human society. Poststructuralism has also helped us to understand how the structures of human agency are no less important than the more general deterministic structures (e.g., language) in which agency is exercised. Here we have a way to better understand the problem of resistance to forms of social domination, since poststructuralism helps to explain how the apparent opposition between human agency and social structures is in fact often part of a wider hegemonic order. To the extent this happens, apparent forms of opposition work to support rather than contest the social order. It seems to me that these are important insights, and again, such ideas do not appear to have made much headway in the mainstream discourse of social education. Indeed, the recent backlash against relativism and multiculturalism in social education are at least in part a direct rejection of poststructuralist insights. These developments make the incorporation of poststructuralism even more important to social educators.

To conclude, I think the combined insights of reconstructionism, critical pedagogy, philosophical hermeneutics, poststructuralism, and other ideas discussed in *Curriculum for Utopia* do present the outline of an alternative to the mainstream reflective inquiry/social issues approaches to social education. I do not posit a radical break with that tradition. Such a break is neither necessary nor possible. What I hope for is a continued discussion of these issues that will lead to the progressive reconstructions of social education. Of course we will need to work through what we mean by progressive in this context. Perhaps we can at least agree that the competence to define both what we mean by terms such as progressive or human interest and how we go about realizing them should be a central purpose of social education. Once again, I welcome Ron Evans' participation in this discussion and his thoughtful analysis of my work. I hope this response to his comments has established the basis for further dialogue.

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