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Kennedy  Assessing the Relationship between Information Processing Capacity and Historical Understanding

Larkins and Puckett  Issues in a Relatively Nonrationalized Study: Suggestions for Interpretive Research

Dailey  Educational Attainment and Political Attitudes: An Effect of Schools or Schooling?

Milton and Bickel  Teaching by Exemplar: On the Dialectical Nature of Social Science

Oliner  Putting "Community" into Citizenship Education: The Need for Prosociality

Book Reviews

Gordon  Long Memory — The Black Experience in America

Snarey  The Chaneyville Incident
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Assessing the Relationship between Information Processing Capacity and Historical Understanding

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Western Australian Institute of Technology
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1. Introduction

The assessment of historical understanding in adolescents has represented a significant area of research over the past two decades. One writer has referred to this work in terms of the "Piaget-Peel-Hallam model of historical cognition" (Zacarria, 1978, p. 335). The model has influenced researchers in both Australia (Jurd, 1973; Collis and Biggs, 1979) and the United States (Sleeper, 1975). A recent study conducted by the writer has attempted to test a number of propositions relating to the existing research. By refining and extending this research it is hoped that a greater degree of reliability and validity can be attached to the theoretical approach that has been suggested to date.

2. Background to the Present Study: The Piaget-Peel-Hallam Model

The studies referred to previously can be conceptualized within a common psychological framework. The cognitive developmental theory of Jean Piaget has been used to test the processes of logical thought in academic disciplines. Curriculum workers in areas such as mathematics and science have used this theory since many of Piaget's initial experiments were con-
cerned with the subject matter of these two areas. Such applications are generally accepted. The extrapolation to history, however, calls for some verification with reference to both the discipline of history and the logical structures of thought applied to it. This can be done with reference to specific studies.

Hallam (1967) used Piaget’s system of stages of development as the criterion against which inferential thought in history could be measured. This study was not concerned with attempting to explain the nature of historical thinking. Rather, it aimed to test the assumption that methodologies used to identify stages of development in other subject areas (Peel, 1960; Lovell, 1961; Goldman, 1964) could also be applied to history. The basic approach of these other studies was to present students with short passages of prose in a subject-related area such as religious studies or literature, ask questions regarding the passages and classify students’ answers. Hallam (1967) adopted a similar approach using passages containing information about historical events or people.

In classifying answers, Hallam (1967) identified three broad categories. First, there were answers that indicated students had completely missed the point of the questions. Such answers were usually fragmentary and inconsistent. Often they would concentrate on one aspect of the problem and ignore other salient aspects. Second, there were answers that indicated students had understood the question but were nevertheless limited. Such answers were usually correct as far as they went but were tied to information presented in the passages. Third, there were answers that indicated students had considered a range of alternatives concerning a possible correct answer, weighed conflicting evidence and then made a judgement. Such answers were usually expressed tentatively since the students were aware of alternatives. These three categories were identified with the pre-operational, concrete operational, and formal operational stages described by Piaget (1960). This was the first step in linking the development of historical cognition in children with psychological developmental theory.

In a subsequent study, Jurd (1973) accepted the basic premise of Hallam’s work that Piagetian thought structures could be identified in students’ verbal reasoning about historical events. She added a further dimension, however, by analyzing some of the assumptions of Piagetian theory as they apply to historical understanding. In particular, she pointed out that the criterion for formal operational thinking has usually been the deduction of laws based on the observation and manipulation of phenomena. Yet the law giving hypothesis cannot be the test for formal operational thinking in history. Historical evidence cannot be treated in the same way as scientific evidence. Any single statement about historical events is likely to be altered with a different perception of the elements of the situation that are being studied. Once this is recognized, then the criteria for formal operational thinking in history, or any social science for that matter, must take this per-
sonalistic element into consideration. While formal operational thinking in history will exhibit the same structure as in scientific disciplines it will take into account the nature of historical evidence and interpretation. In this way more account is taken of the nature of history.

Jurd's (1973) attempt to incorporate knowledge about the nature of history with the notion of developmental stages in historical thinking was followed up and supported by Collis and Biggs (1979). They placed particular emphasis on the 'open' structure of a discipline like history compared to the 'closed' structure of subjects like math and science. This led them to the view that the historian's role, and hence the school's function in teaching history, is to interpret the past in the light of personal judgment and experience. Such an approach is in complete opposition to the scientific view of history in which the historian is an objective observer, piecing together 'facts' to form a 'true' picture of what really happened. Thus, student responses to questions concerning historical events and people are expected to be highly personalized and there is no 'right' answer.

Jurd (1973) and Collis and Biggs (1979) have attempted to reconcile a Piagetian psychological framework and notions relating to the philosophy of history. Other researchers (Lee, 1978) have also identified qualitative differences in student reasoning about historical material although they have not been tied to Piagetian stage theory. The bulk of such research in history education, however, has been based on the premise that the Piagetian concept of cognitive structure is the main determinant of the way in which students think about historical material.

It is important to understand that "structure" as used in this sense really refers to a set of operations which allow a student to process information in a particular way. An example from Case and Collinson (1962) will help to explain this point. Students were asked three questions after they read the following passages:

**TEXTS AND QUESTIONS**


He was a wise and honest adviser to those who asked for his advice and followed it. He had two great ambitions—the one to make England great and powerful; the other to make the Church rich and powerful. He was a stern, harsh man, and always anxious to have his own way; to those who disagreed with him he was rough and cruel. Such a man was sure to make enemies, but he did much that was good and is remembered as a great Englishman.

As Abbot of Glastonbury, he had learnt that many of the monastaries were in bad order, and that priests and monks were leading lives that brought shame on the Church. He caused inquiry to be made, drove out the evil-doers, and put better men in their places. After his death, men
called him a saint, and many strange stories were told of the wonderful things he was said to have done while he was still alive.

**Question Number:**

1. Was Dunstan a good man? Why?
2. Did he improve the Church of England or not? Why?
3. Would you regard Dunstan as a great Englishman? Why, or why not?

Answers to these questions were classified as:

**Intuitive:** e.g., (Question 1) He was a good man and did as he was told so that made him good.

**Concrete:** e.g., Yes, because he made the Church better. He drove out the evil-doers.

**Formal:** e.g., He was in some ways but not in others. He was trying to make England the Church and the Church powerful, but I don't think he was right in being cruel to those who disagreed with him.

From a theoretical view, each of these answers was determined by a particular set of operations (or the lack of them). The student who provided the answers assessed as "formal" was assumed to have a set of formal operational structures which allowed him to process the information in that way. The student who provided the intuitive answer did not possess that set of operations and his processing was assessed as deficient in some way. Of course, there are other possible interpretations. Students may possess alternative structures but still choose to process the information in ways inconsistent with those structures. In either situation, the concept of cognitive structure is accorded a crucial role in determining students' performance on tasks related to historical understanding.

**Extending the Piaget-Peel-Hallam Model: Information Processing Capacity**

Another development in the field of cognitive psychology raises questions about Piaget's approach. Pascual-Leone and Smith (1969) and Pascual-Leone (1970) have argued that it is the structural and physical capacity a student has to process information which influences the quality of thinking. The analogy being used is between the human mind and the computer. Most computers usually have limitations on the amount of information that can be processed at any one time. Pascual-Leone argues that similar limitations exist for people.

He refers to a "central computing space" which he calls M and which is responsible for processing all information presented to an individual. In terms of the passage referred to previously, such information might include the passage itself, the questions, existing knowledge concerning the content.
of the passage, etc. For efficient processing to occur all relevant information must “fit” into the limited space available. Processing deficiencies may occur because of an information “overload” so that all relevant facts and understandings could not be considered.

The answers provided to the Case and Collinson (1962) passage referred to earlier can now be examined in an alternative way using the approach of Pascual-Leone. Take, for example, the answer that was classified as intuitive:

“He was a good man and did as he was told so that made him good.”

The reason the student does not provide a fuller answer is that his information processing capacity is very limited. He does not have a lot of “space” in which information can be processed. In the same way, the formal answer demonstrates that the student has considered the passage, the questions, his own personal sense of what is right and wrong and has been able to bring all of these into some kind of equilibrium. Pascual-Leone would argue that such a student had available to him a large information processing capacity.

Pascual-Leone and his workers have developed this theory to some degree of sophistication. They have not worked completely outside a Piagetian framework. It has been hypothesized that M-space (i.e., the amount of space available at any one time to process information) grows in an all-or-none manner as a function of age in normal individuals. That is to say, there is a capacity limit on the amount of information that an individual can attend to at any one time and this limit is a direct function of age. Furthermore, it is argued by Pascual-Leone that this M-measure is to be considered a quantitative characteristic of developmental stage as defined by Piaget. While earlier information processing theorists have paid some attention to capacity limitations, Pascual-Leone has gone further in suggesting an actual structural limitation which is linked with Piagetian developmental theory.

Collis and Biggs (1979) have recognized the usefulness of Pascual-Leone's 'capacity construct' to explain the qualitative differences in student understanding of historical material. They use the term 'working memory' rather than M-space to mean that mental space which is available at any time to process information. They have attempted to show the relationship between working memory, developmental level as described by Piaget, and answers which students provide to questions based on historical information. The suggested relationship is shown in Table 1.

It can be seen that the preoperational (or intuitive) answer requires minimal space since the only piece of information (or cue) kept in mind is the question itself plus a confused and undifferentiated response. At the formal level, however, more space is needed since the cue and relevant data and inter-relationships and hypotheses must all be kept in mind at once. For levels in between these two, varying amounts of space are used, depending on the complexity of the answers given.
Table 1: Suggested Relationship Between Developmental Level and Size of Working Memory*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Level</th>
<th>Size of Working Memory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Operational</td>
<td>Maximal: Contains question + relevant data + inter-relationships + hypotheses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete Operational</td>
<td>Medium: Contains question + isolated relevant data and is often centered on one piece of datum only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preoperational</td>
<td>Minimal: Contains question, and response is confused.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on Collis & Biggs (1979).

While Collis and Biggs (1979) have suggested that there might be a relationship between information processing capacity and level of historical understanding in students, no attempt has been made to demonstrate such a relationship empirically. The purpose of the present study, therefore, was to test the hypothesis that there is a positive and significant relationship between the information processing capacity of students and their level of historical understanding.

3. The Study

(a) Students. It was not possible to select a random sample from a well defined population for this study. Accidental sampling provided students from two private schools in the western suburbs of Sydney, Australia. One hundred and thirty-nine students took part in the study, 24 from one school and 115 from the other. The smaller group was made up of 11 boys and 13 girls ranging in age from 12 years 5 months to 17 years 1 month. Within the group there were four subgroups made up of Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9 and Grade 10 classes. All groups in the study were of mixed ability. It was realized that sampling problems such as non-random selection, sex bias and between school differences would need to be taken into consideration when interpreting results. In particular, caution needs to be exercised concerning the generalizability of the results.

(b) Measures and Instruments. Three main measures were used in this study.

Information processing capacity. The reader will recall that Pascual-Leone's theory requires a measure of the central computing space or working memory in which all cognitive processing is assumed to occur (Pascual-Leone, 1970). Previous studies have used a number of measures: the Compound
Stimulus Visual Information Task (CSVI) (Pascual-Leone, 1970) and the Digit Placement Task (DP) (Case, 1972). These tasks were considered unsuitable in the present study because commercial versions were not available and there are only minimal instructions regarding their administration.

Recently, a number of studies have used Backward Digit Span (BDS) as a measure of working memory (Case and Globerson, 1974; Lunzer, Wilkinson and Dolan, 1976; Dempster, 1978; Hitch, 1978). The properties of BDS and resulting norms regarding its use have been noted in the psychological literature (Glasser and Zimmerman, 1967). Case (1972) has pointed out that the transformational requirements of the task make it a good measure of central computing space. In a subsequent study, Case and Globerson (1974) found significant cross-task correlations between CSVI, DP and BDS. A Backward Digit Span task was used in this study.

**Developmental level (DL).** Previous studies have not taken independent measures of Piagetian developmental level. It was thought worthwhile to do so for the purpose of this study. A number of attempts have been made to use group administered tests for measuring developmental level across large populations (Bart, 1972; Tisher, 1971; Rowell and Hoffman, 1975; DeAvila and Pascual-Leone, 1976; Lawson, 1978). These tests are diverse in nature, ranging from situations where each subject in the group has his own set of experimental equipment, to a set of experimental equipment being available at the front of the room, to paper and pencil tests and the use of cartoon scales.

McNally (1970) cautioned, in relation to his own work on assessing developmental level, that there was no empirical evidence linking the stages of thinking measured as verbal reasoning to those of Piaget. Nevertheless, all the tests referred to earlier have demonstrated varying degrees of convergent construct validity with more traditional methods of assessing developmental level. For the purpose of this study, a group measure of developmental level was adapted from existing measures.

The test of Tisher (1971) and Tisher and Dale (1975) was chosen for two main reasons. In initial field trials of the test Tisher and Dale (1975) reported a correlation of .77 between the scores of 232 students assessed by the group measure test and individual interviews. This suggested some construct validity for the test. At the same time the test had been piloted on an Australian population. Since this study was dealing with a similar population the test was judged to be appropriate.

One section of the test was selected for use in this study. This section had to do with the equality of angles of incidence and reflection and the operations of reciprocal implications.

For the purpose of the present study the format of the test was changed in two main ways. The first modification followed the advice of Modgil and Modgil (1976). They pointed out that Piagetian tests ought to define basic and general thought processes rather than rely on a single answer or product
as an indicator of a general competency. Thus, the revised test made provision for subjects to give reasons for their answers. Such an approach seemed more than justified when the test instrument was subjected to tryout.

Second, the test was divided into three separate parts. Each part corresponded to the three stages of development described by Piaget and referred to earlier. This allowed for a further validity check on the instrument since Inhelder and Piaget (1958) have suggested age ranges during which stages are usually reached. In addition, lower stages of development are claimed to be pre-requisite to higher stages. Subjects, therefore, should not succeed at higher levels of the test without demonstrating success on lower levels.

**Historical understanding.** Two measures of historical understanding (LHT) were devised. One was based on the traditional measure as described by Lunzer (1978):

> The technique is beautifully simple and consists of presenting the child with a passage followed by a question. The passage contains information relevant to the question. However, there are usually irrelevancies in addition, and the evidence is always ambiguous or inadequate so that a good answer demands evaluation and judgment.

Earlier versions of this general test format used an interview technique to solicit answers from subjects (Case and Collinson, 1962; Hallam, 1967). More recently, paper and pencil tests have been used (Collis and Biggs, 1979). The present study used a paper and pencil test.

In tryouts of the test instrument it was found that a more accurate assessment of responses could be made when subjects were asked to give reasons for their answers. The logic of such an approach is obvious when the nature of the interview technique is considered. Here the interviewer is able to probe the subject for reasons for any given response. Thus, each question asked permitted the subject to explain why a particular answer was given. Five questions in all were asked since the literature indicated that there is often considerable variance in subjects' level of understanding across questions (Hallam, 1967). This test will be referred to hereafter as LHT$_1$.

The selection of the questions to be asked was based on a priori analysis of task demands (Neimark, 1975). Rational task analysis (Resnick, 1976)—i.e., a description of what an idealized performance would be like—revealed that three main sources of information were necessary for a maximal answer to the questions. These included information from within the text, information from outside the text, and information generated by the subject from a calculation of the possibilities suggested from all sources of information. The latter type of information is more closely related to Piagetian formal thinking as it represents a move away from the strictly empirical. It was essential, therefore, that all questions provided subjects with the opportunity to indicate the use they had made of these sources of information.
Each question in the test was submitted to empirical task analysis (Resnick, 1976)—i.e., an interpretation of the data from human performance—to ensure that it met the criteria established by the rational task analysis. The proposed test was administered to subjects who were expected to perform at the maximal level. These subjects had a major in History as part of their undergraduate degree and were enrolled in the Stanford Teacher Education Program as pre-service social studies teachers. Their responses indicated that the questions were capable of eliciting the kind of thinking that could be classified as formal operational in Piagetian terms. In addition, the responses validated the findings of Collis and Biggs (1979), Jurd (1976) and Hallam (1967) that the most holistic answers are those which rely on the most diverse sources of information.

An additional measure of LHT was also used (LHT\textsubscript{2}). Raven (1977) used a multiple-choice test to assess developmental level. He found a significant correlation between the results of that test and the results of more traditional ways of assessing the construct. Bergling (1974) has also shown that a multiple-choice test especially designed to elicit developmental level in subject matter areas has high measures of reliability and validity. A multiple-choice test was therefore designed for this study as a second behavioral measure of historical understanding.

In designing the multiple-choice test the distractors had to meet one of the following criteria:
   a) tautological or imaginary reasoning
   b) perceptual or associative reasoning
   c) logical but limited to information in the stimulus
   d) formal reasoning (going beyond the stimulus).

Five distractors were chosen for each of five questions. In general, this was the practice adopted by Feldman (1971). It was recognized that the process departed from the principle of allowing subjects to explain their answers. It was felt to be worthwhile, however, as an exploratory technique and because of the success experienced by other researchers.

In tryouts of both tests of LHT there was the question of whether or not subjects had a basic factual understanding of the passages used in both instruments. It could be argued, for example, that subjects could not answer questions designed to elicit formal operational thinking if they did not grasp the basic information in each of the passages. Therefore, a short True/False test was included in each instrument to assess factual understanding. The results of such a test, it was felt, would indicate if students had grasped the basic ideas in the passages.

(c) Test Administration. Students were provided with a battery of tests as described earlier. There were idiosyncratic details of test administration at each school.

In School 1, there were two administrations of the battery of tests and
measures. The administrations were separated by a period of one month. The purpose was to gain estimates of reliability for the tests and measures on a test-retest basis.

Both administrations took place in the period after lunch and were supervised by the same examiner accompanied by the classroom teacher. Testing time was one hour, although students varied slightly in the amount of time it took to complete the tests. The general procedure for administrations was as follows:

1) The classroom teacher would say:

"Today we have a visitor who is trying to make sure that the tests students have to take are good ones. You will have to take some tests and these will be used to help design better ones. The results of the tests are not part of your school grades."

2) The examiner then said:

"You have the tests in front of you but before you start we are going to do some exercises to get our minds working. You can write on the front of the test booklets."

3) The measure of Backward Digit Span was then administered. It was appealing to subjects and seemed to reduce any anxiety with test-taking. Initially an example was given and the examiner wrote on the board to demonstrate what was required. Subjects were then asked to write down, in succession, a two item, three item, four item, five item, six item, seven item, eight item and nine item series of numbers that were read to them. The rate of digit presentation was approximately one per second.

4) As students finished the tests the booklets were collected and students were directed to go on with some other work. The allocated time was sufficient for all students to finish the tests.

In School 2, the same procedures were followed as in School 1 except that:

1) Each group was administered the battery of tests on a single occasion during early morning or mid-morning periods. The school administration advised that since the tests were being administered across grade levels there would be little chance of students exchanging information about the tests during the mid-morning break.

2) The examiner administered the test without the assistance of the class teacher. The examiner was introduced to the class by the teacher who then left the room.

(d) Scoring Procedures—Backward Digit Span. Scoring procedures adopted for the measure of Backward Digit Span were related to the concept of
“span.” Huttenlocker and Burke (1976) have pointed out that “span” can be used to designate the list length for which subjects get 50% of the lists completely correct or the mean number of items correct in ordered recall of lists of a given length. While the two measures are obviously related the latter was used in this study.

In scoring BDS an item is said to be correct when it is the correct item in the correct ordinal position. If an item is either omitted or intruded it is scored as incorrect. As well, if the usual scoring procedure is followed, all items that come after the omission or intrusion are scored as incorrect even if they are the correct item in the correct position. Huttenlocker and Burke (1976) have claimed that this procedure may well underestimate capacity and have recommended an adjusted scoring procedure. A number in its correct serial position is always correct and an omission, intrusion, or repetition is incorrect. This was the method of scoring used in this study.

Developmental level. Subtasks were arranged in a hypothetical sequence of difficulty based on the demands of the Piagetian tasks. Each subsequent subtask was designed to induce a response that would indicate a higher level of reasoning than the previous task. A measure of developmental level was obtained by counting the correct performance on the most difficult test as an indicator of a subject’s general competency. This allowed the following scoring procedure to be used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtasks Correct</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Developmental Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Preoperational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 + 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Concrete Operational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 + 2 + 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Formal Operational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Concrete Operational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 + 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Formal Operational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 + 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Formal Operational</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Historical understanding—Traditional test (LHT). The concept of modal cognitive reasoning stage was used in the assessment of this test. Warrant for this approach exists in the literature on historical thinking (Case and Collinson, 1962), as well as in the more general Piagetian literature (Rest, Turiel and Kohlberg, 1969; Feldman, 1971). Since the questions on the test were capable of inducing responses at three developmental levels, weighted scores were awarded to responses in the following way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses judged to be:</th>
<th>Weights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preoperational</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete Operational</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Operational</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scores were taken to be additive and the following cut-off points were used to indicate reasoning level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Level of Reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Preoperational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Concrete Operational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>Formal Operational</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Level of historical understanding — Multiple choice test (LHT₂).* The scoring of this test was based on the same conceptual principles as the scoring of the traditional test. Item distractors were assigned weighted values of 1 through 3 in the following way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic of Item Distractor</th>
<th>Weighted Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tautological/Perceptual</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores across tasks were assumed to be additive. Similar cut-off points to those derived for the traditional test were used to indicate reasoning level.

4. Results

(a) Descriptive Statistics.

*Means and standard deviations for the measures.* These are shown in Table 2 for School 1 and School 2 separately and for the total sample. A two group analysis of variance was carried out to test for significant differences in variables across schools. The F-ratios and their significance levels are also reported in Table 2.

Greater variability between schools might have been expected, given the size and student characteristics of each group. However, the two-group analysis of variance showed no significant differences between schools on any measure.

A number of other trends was indicated. The mean scores for the measure of Developmental Level (DL) were high, suggesting a predominance of concrete and formal thinkers in the sample. There were no significant differences between LHT₁ and LHT₂ within School 1 (F = 1.33, p < .29). In School 2, these differences were significant (F = 6.79, p < .001). As with DL, scores on the tests of Factual Understanding, FT₁ and FT₂, indicated
Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Measures for Each School and for the Total Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURES</th>
<th>SCHOOL 1 (N = 24)</th>
<th>SCHOOL 2 (N = 125)</th>
<th>COMBINED (N = 149)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DL</td>
<td>2.56 .59</td>
<td>2.39 .64</td>
<td>1.39 .379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDS</td>
<td>4.50 1.33</td>
<td>5.07 1.53</td>
<td>1.31 .543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHT₁</td>
<td>9.96 1.70</td>
<td>10.60 1.60</td>
<td>1.13 .638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHT₂</td>
<td>11.46 1.29</td>
<td>11.07 1.18</td>
<td>1.18 .548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT₁</td>
<td>4.83 .38</td>
<td>4.72 .60</td>
<td>1.14 .482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT₂</td>
<td>5.17 .87</td>
<td>5.34 .96</td>
<td>1.22 .593</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: DL = Developmental Level
BDS = Backward Digit Span
LHT₁ = Traditional measure of Historical Thinking
LHT₂ = Multiple choice measure of Historical Thinking
FT₁ = Factual Understanding (Traditional Measure)
FT₂ = Factual Understanding (Multiple Choice Measure)

that a large percentage of students gained marks at the top of the range. Since marked skewness can bias correlational analyses, frequency distributions and histograms for all measures in each school were examined. Table 3 presents the range and skewness of each measure in both schools.

The table shows the range of scores in School 2 was generally higher than the range in School 1. This was expected since in larger samples (School 1, N = 24; School 2, N = 125) there is more chance of including extreme cases. The range of scores for the measure of DL indicates the presence of ceiling effects; the range was limited (1–3) and all categories were used.

The degree of skewness for all measures indicated that only LHT₂ approximated a normal distribution and only in School 1 (to approximate a normal distribution skewness must be equal to zero). A number of distributions were seriously skewed in a negative direction (LHT₁ and FT₁ in School

Table 3: Range and Skewness of all Measures in Both Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>School 1 Range</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>School 2 Range</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.509</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>–0.387</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>–0.411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHT₁</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>–3.023</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>–2.316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHT₂</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>–3.518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT₁</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–1.910</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>–2.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT₂</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–0.781</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>–2.688</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 and LHT, LHT_Z, FT, and FT_Z in School 2) suggesting the presence of floor effects. The non-normal characteristics of the data need to be taken into consideration in correlational analyses, since marked skewness can bias a correlation downward.

(b) Reliability of Measures. An alpha reliability coefficient was calculated for Backward Digit Span, the measure of information processing capacity. The SPSS subroutine alpha 'Reliability' (Hull and Nie, 1979) was used and the result was an alpha of .82. The result was considered satisfactory and was consistent with other studies (DeAvila, Havassy and Pascual—Leone, 1976).

Inter-rater agreement coefficients were used for measures of Developmental Level and Historical Understanding. These do not tell us all we would like to know. Yet in view of the problems that have been referred to in the literature concerning the psychometric properties of development tests, inter-rater agreement coefficients seemed the most appropriate. For Developmental Level the agreement coefficient was .91; for the traditional measure of Historical Thinking, .90; and for the multiple choice measure, .92. These were quite high and considered satisfactory.

(c) Intercorrelations of All Measures. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for all measures for the total sample. These are shown in Table 4.

Correlations were also calculated for each school separately and for boys and girls within School 1. No significant differences were found between schools or between boys and girls.

A number of other patterns was also revealed by these results. Developmental Level (DL) correlated significantly with the traditional measure of Historical Understanding (LHT, .16, f < .01) but not with the multiple choice measure (LHT_Z). This might seem to indicate that LHT, was a more valid developmental measure than LHT_Z, at least for these data. Such an interpretation might be questioned by the correlation between the two measures of Historical Thinking (LHT, and LHT_Z) that was significant although weak (.27, p < .001). An interpretation of these results will be sug-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. DL</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. BDS</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. LHT,</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. LHT_Z</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. FT,</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. FT_Z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 149
* p < .01  ** p < .001.
gested later. Developmental Level did not correlate significantly with the measure of Backward Digit Span or with the measures of Factual Understanding (FT₁ and FT₂).

The measure of Backward Digit Span correlated significantly with both measures of Historical Thinking. The correlation with LHT₁ (.37, p < .001) was weak as was that with LHT₂ (.14, p < .07). The relationship between these measures was of considerable interest in this study and will be discussed later. Backward Digit Span did not correlate significantly with the measures of Factual Understanding.

The measures of Historical Understanding did not correlate significantly with the measures of Factual Understanding and this was expected. The purpose of the latter tests was to see if students understood the facts in the passages presented as distinct from being able to reason about them. The correlational pattern exhibited indicated that this had been the case.

**Discussion and Conclusions**

An interpretation of the correlational patterns exhibited by the observed data raised some important issues.

1. **The Relationship between Measures of Historical Understanding.** The present study used a multiple choice test as well as a traditional open-ended test to assess level of historical understanding. The correlation between these two measures (.27, f < .001) was significant although weak. This may indicate that the tests did not measure the same stable construct. Further trialling is needed before a multiple choice measure of historical understanding can be considered construct valid.

2. **The Relationship between the Measures of Historical Understanding and the Measure of Information Processing Capacity.** The measures of historical understanding correlated positively and significantly with the measure of information processing capacity. The weak correlation (.14 f < .01) between the multiple choice measure of historical understanding and the measure of information processing capacity can probably be accounted for by the weak construct validity of the multiple choice measure. The correlational pattern between all measures was not strong but nevertheless would seem to indicate that a common construct was being tapped by these measures. Previous studies concerned with historical cognition have not identified information processing capacity as a factor influencing historical understanding. The results of the present study have indicated in a tentative way that such an interpretation should now be considered subject to further testing.

Such an interpretation seems to make a good deal of sense. Individuals are constantly confronted with more information than they can process at any one time. Attention often becomes focused on those pieces of information that are either familiar or salient to the individual. These pieces will
probably determine the individual's interpretation of all the information, not only because they have stood out from the rest but also because the individual's limited attentional capacity will not allow him to consider everything at once. This is another way of saying that an individual's information processing capacity is limited.

As a cognitive process variable, information processing capacity as defined by Pascual-Leone (1970) and Case (1972, 1974, 1979) has not been explored at length in the literature. Using a measure such as Backward Digit Span (BDS) has probably only begun to tap that potential in an educational context. While the present results have suggested interesting patterns of relationships it would be misleading to assume BDS told the whole story on information processing capacity in a construct capable of being tapped by BDS and potentially predictive of level of historical understanding.

The exact nature of information processing capacity as a construct is still the subject of speculation by cognitive psychologists. There seems to be general agreement that it is best conceptualized as working memory yet whether it is structural or functional in nature remains open to question. Pascual-Leone (1970) has maintained that working memory is structural in nature, the product of biological maturation. The size of working memory increases as a direct function of age according to this view. An alternative view put forward by Case (1979) is that working memory may be a functional construct. That is, working memory does not grow at all. Rather, the amount of space needed for solving a problem decreases thus freeing space to attend to more complex problems. Case has acknowledged (personal communication) that it is probably not an either/or situation. Working memory does seem to have structural characteristics at least until adolescence but after that it is probably a matter of developing automaticity so that space can be freed for further processing to take place. The educational question, of course, is how best to promote automaticity in students. It is a profitable one for future research in the field.

3. The Relationship between Measures of Historical Understanding and the Measure of Developmental Level. The weak but significant relationship (.16 f < .01) between the traditional measure of historical understanding and the measure of developmental level suggests that the constructs being measured by both shared some characteristics. The non-significant relationship between the multiple choice measure and the measure of developmental level may be a further indication of the weak construct validity of the multiple choice measure. If it is accepted that the traditional measure of historical understanding was a valid one, there are a number of possible explanations for the weak correlation with the measure of developmental level.

First, one of the significant problems faced by Piagetian researchers in general has been the low inter-task correlation between tasks assumed to be measuring the same construct. Explanations have been advanced for this in
terms of the concept of “décalage.” That is to say, a logical structure used to solve one task (e.g., conservation of number) is often not used to solve a similar task (e.g., conservation of liquid volume). This also applies to tasks that are different (e.g., conservation and seriation) but related logically. Rather than an explanation, décalage is more often viewed as a major problem confronting Piagetian researchers since the theory is based on the efficacy of logical structures as the determinants of success on developmental tasks. It may be, however, that the weak correlation between the measures of historical understanding and developmental level in the study has provided further evidence for the existence of décalage amongst developmental measures. This, however, is not the only possible interpretation of the results.

An alternative explanation can be related to previous studies. The weak correlation observed in the data in this study was not inconsistent with the results of previous studies. These studies (Hallam, 1967; Jurd, 1976; Colles and Biggs, 1979) used Piagetian age norms as indicators of developmental level and found that age norms for historical understanding were three to four years higher. In this sense, then, the results from these studies would not have predicted a strong correlation between the measures. The purpose for including the measure in this study was to use a more theoretically valid measure of developmental level and test its relationship with historical understanding. It seems, however, that neither Piagetian developmental age norms nor a specific measure of developmental level are strongly related to measures of historical understanding. In previous studies these results have been interpreted to mean that historical understanding simply develops later than understanding in other subject areas. The results of this study, however, indicate that historical understanding may not be a developmental construct in the traditional sense. That is to say, the measure of developmental level and the measures of historical understanding were measuring different constructs. Previous research on historical cognition has not suggested such an interpretation. Indeed, it has been largely premised on the opposite view suggesting the significance of such a relationship. The results of the present study do not necessarily support that view unless “décalage” is accepted as the explanation for the weak correlation.

4. The Relationship between measures of Historical Understanding, Information Processing Capacity and Developmental Level. It seems clear from the results of this study that the measures of historical understanding and information processing capacity shared some characteristics not shared with the measure of developmental level. In particular, the weak, nonsignificant relationship (.05) between the measure of information processing capacity and developmental level suggested that information processing capacity was not a developmental construct. Given the strength of the relationship between the measures of historical understanding and information processing capacity, an interpretation of these results supports the point made pre-
viously that historical understanding may not be a developmental construct. Such an interpretation is tentative and subject to further testing.

Some further explanation is needed concerning the relationship between information processing capacity and developmental level. Previous studies have suggested that information processing capacity is a developmental construct that increases as a direct function of age (Pascual-Leone, 1970; Case, 1972; 1974). All these experiments, however, used preadolescent students. Yet it seems clear that beyond some age, information processing capacity will begin to stabilize. Once it has stabilized, unusual demands may have to be made on information processing capacity to create additional alterations. In the present study, for example, the low and non-significant correlation between the measures of developmental level and information processing capacity might be interpreted to mean that the information processing demands of the developmental tasks did not make demands in the same way that tasks of historical understanding did. That is, there may be a graduated scale of information processing tasks that are context bound. Tasks high on the scale in one context (e.g., in a science or mathematics task) may be low by comparison to other tasks in other contexts (e.g., a history or literature task). Thus, a student who has reached a certain developmental level (usually indicated by performance on a particular task) as had the students in this sample, may still be unable to process large quantities of information as required in tasks of historical understanding. Certainly if information processing capacity is a functional construct for adolescents it makes sense that automaticity on one set of tasks (e.g., Piagetian tasks) does not necessarily mean that automaticity has also developed for conceptually different, although logically related, tasks (e.g., tasks of historical understanding).

5. The Nature of Historical Understanding. The results of the present study lead naturally to a consideration of the nature of historical understanding. Previous studies have also been concerned with this topic. Each study has attempted to build on the next in extending and refining the meaning of the construct. Studies have paid particular attention to the nature of history as a discipline and stressed differences between history and the natural sciences. The uniqueness of historical events and the problems of deriving historical generalizations lend a subjectivity to historical understanding that is not part of understanding in the natural sciences. The results of the present study suggest that more emphasis could be placed on the role of cognitive processes in historical understanding. An appropriate redefinition of historical understanding might be: a process that transforms historical data into a means of understanding past realities and their relationships to the present and the future. The process is defined by at least three factors: the amount of data confronted at any one time, the manner of its presentation and the processing strategies available to and used by readers or listeners. The construct of historical understanding is thus defined in part by infor-
mation processing capacity but is also more than that. It makes sense that information processing capacity could predict but not fully account for level of historical understanding.

This process definition of historical understanding differs from the definition offered in previous studies. Those studies began with a definition of historical understanding derived deductively from previous conceptual analyses. The proposed redefinition derives from empirical results of the present study. This definition is, therefore, inductive yet based on prior conceptual (deductive) analyses.

A prominent school of historiography asserts that a fact only becomes an historical fact when an historian says that it is (Carr, 1964). Such an approach emphasizes the interaction of the historian with his subject matter. While this subjectivist view of history is not accepted by all historians it is compatible with the views of historical understanding articulated in the related research described previously. An historian must transform facts into historical understandings. So students of history learn their craft, in part, by such transformations. The present study has suggested such transformation takes place in working memory while a student listens to or reads historical information. We know from cognitive psychology that working memory is conceived as being that mental space which is available at any one time to process information (Anderson and Bower, 1973; Newell and Simon, 1972). Efficiency may be increased by directing attention to relevant information, by filling gaps left out of given information (e.g., necessary details) and by systematically chunking (i.e., integrating) and restructuring information into a storable memory structure (Newall and Simon, 1972; Tulving and Donaldson, 1974). How this knowledge from cognitive psychology can be used to aid understanding of how historical data may best be transformed by learners is a critical question for future research on historical understanding.

6. Limitations of the Present Study. Lack of variance in the measure of developmental level; non-normality in a number of measures; problems raised from pooling data across two schools; the validity of measuring instruments. These must be acknowledged as limitations in the present study. Any interpretation of the results must take these into consideration.

7. Future Research. Results of this study must be considered tentative given the limitations imposed by the measurement system and sample obtained as well as the problems involved in quantifying abstract constructs. Yet a number of directions for future research can be identified. First, further work is needed in building an adequate theoretical framework in which to identify relevant variables influencing historical understanding. Correlational patterns in this study were not strong and indicate that either more work needs to be done in validating existing measures or finding more adequate ones. Second, the extent to which students learn from text or learn
from instruction should be investigated. This is particularly important if information processing capacity is a variable influencing student understanding in history and if it is a functional construct. Certain arrangements of text or instruction may be more helpful than others. Third, the information processing requirements of other school subjects should be investigated. If the tentative results of this study can be accepted then further single and multi-disciplinary studies should assist in identifying the specificity and generality of information processing capacity as an influence on student understanding in other subject areas.

At the present time the work of Piaget and Pascual-Leone suggest considerable potential for contributing to history education. It must be recognized, however, that there is much intuition and speculation, as well as specific experience in that work. These authors have left the task of substantiating their intuitions and general experiences to others. Some attempt has been made in this study to graft such intuitions and experiences onto the field of history education. The process has yielded tentative results which, it is hoped, may provide a basis for future work in the field.

References


Introduction

A sizable minority of educationists are uncomfortable with current practice in educational research. TRSE papers by Van Manen (1975) and Shaver (1980), the growing awareness of the controversy surrounding the use of inferential statistics (Bakan, 1970), plus numerous conversations with faculty and graduate students, have reinforced our perception of discontent with standard research procedures. This paper is one response to that discontent.

This paper is an outgrowth of Puckett’s (1980) thesis, but it is not a report of his findings. It is an attempt, rather, to describe some potentially controversial decisions which he faced concerning research procedures. Our purpose is to outline alternative strategies which others may want to consider when planning their studies. The paper is organized around four major decisions. Those decisions focus on whether studies should be rationalized, empirical-analytic, interpretive and subjective.

Decision #1: Whether to Produce a Relatively Unrationalized Study

A narrow tradition of research dominates inquiry in education. The standard recipe for that tradition is spelled out in numerous introductory texts
(Best, 1959; Borg & Gall, 1979; Good, 1966; Moully, 1970; Van Dalen, 1962; Wiersma, 1969) and is familiar to virtually all who hold doctorates in education. The recipe requires that a research problem be identified which is amenable to empirical study, that relations between independent and dependent variables be hypothesized, that objective instruments be used as indicators of those variables, that a sample be chosen with an eye to generalizability, that a research design be specified which will enable the researcher to isolate the relationship(s) in question, and that the research data be analyzed using suitable statistical procedures. To many, the focal point of this recipe is reached when a judgment is rendered whether the difference between two or more means is statistically significant or whether the correlations between two or more sets of scores are statistically significant. One small indicator that this statistical tradition has become a standard recipe is the fact that most dissertations in education seem to have about the same number of chapters which are ordered in a fairly common sequence and are given similar titles, e.g., Chapter Three commonly deals with procedures.

The recipe for the statistical tradition provides a structure for rationalizing research. We are not using "rationalize" in the perjorative sense of inventing excuses for questionable behavior. We mean instead: A study which is logically tight from beginning to end, one in which the clear specification of a problem and the clear specification of procedures addressing that problem occur prior to gathering data. In the textbook version of the statistical tradition, if not in real life, a rationalized study progresses both chronologically and logically. In the research report the review of literature comes first, followed by the definition of the problem, followed by the selection of procedures which will address that problem, etc. Logically, the problem not only comes after, but follows from the review of literature, and the procedures not only come after, but follow from the problem, etc. But it is commonly known that real research is not so tightly rationalized a priori. Much of the apparent logical structure of actual research appears to be a function of writing reports to meet the standard recipe.

There is a body of literature which argues that research not only is but ought to be relatively unrationalized. Richter (1953), an early post-World War II advocate of free research design, cited with prescience the dangers of a lock-step adherence to design research. He argued that the researcher was "being reduced to the status of a technician who must follow out a definite plan of research" (p. 91). Simpson also debunked the notion of science by recipe:

There used to be a widespread notion—perhaps it still persists in some quarters—that science is a 'method.' . . . Now, of course, practicing scientists, and I hope most teachers, know that . . . science nevertheless is not a body of facts, not a method, not a technique (1968, p. 363).

In a delightful essay, Skinner (1968) claims that some of the most impor-
tant research has been unplanned, and that some of the most fruitful researchers cannot verbalize their procedures. He claims that researchers do not need formally specified problems, just the commitment to look for order. He praises the role of serendipity in research, recommends abandoning a current line of research, not once but often, if a more interesting problem suggests itself, and concludes his essay by saying: "It is time to insist that science does not progress by carefully designed steps called ‘experiments’ each of which has a well-defined beginning and end. Science is a continuous and often a disorderly and accidental process."

Perhaps Skinner goes too far when he describes the type of scientist "who achieves the fullest satisfaction from precise experimental designs and the intricacies of deductive systems" and claims that "such a person tends to be more concerned with his success as a scientist than with his subject matter . . ." (p. 378). Nelson (1978) argues that precisely this type of scientist now dominates the field of psychology in the United States. And psychologist John Holland indicates how this attitude limits the selection of research topics:

Back when I was coming through school, everybody was pretty much disillusioned with just sitting around theorizing about the human mind. They all kind of decided that to be scientific they needed to go get some data and let it speak for itself. What they meant was concentrating on the problems that were most amenable to data-gathering studies (Nelson, p. 54).

**Decision #2: Whether to Conduct an Empirical-Analytic Study**

The statistical tradition may be categorized under a broader research frame of reference which is sometimes labeled empirical-analytic (Van Manen, 1975; Popkewitz, 1980). One of the characteristics of the broader empirical-analytic tradition is that it contains a more or less mechanistic world view. Social reality is seen as ultimately similar to physical reality; it is reductionist and mechanical. Reality is reduced by analysis into its parts, which are called variables, and the relation between these parts is seen as mechanistically causal; they can be manipulated so that change in one variable produces change in another. For instance, altering manifest teacher enthusiasm changes the mean scores of pupils in social studies classes (Larkins & McKinney, 1982). Of course, a mechanistic causation may be either absolute or stochastic, i.e., it may hold only in a proportion of instances (Zetterburg, 1965).

It is commonly claimed that the goal of empirical-analytic research is scientific theory (Kerlinger, 1973; Larkins and McKinney, 1980), which is an attempt to describe the most parsimonious set of causal relations which explains some phenomenon. For instance, a theory of pupil learning might consist of the most parsimonious set of interrelated variables which explains how students learn.
Among educationists, empirical-analytic research having scientific theory as its goal is most often conducted within the statistical tradition, and the literature abounds with suggestions for improving that type of research. Campbell and Stanley's (1963) explication of experimental and quasi-experimental designs, for example, had a remarkable impact on educational research practice. It clarified and strengthened the statistical tradition, but did not expand our view beyond that frame of reference. During the past dozen years, however, a small but growing number of authors have described some of the characteristics and attractions of non-statistical studies. Smith and Goeffrey (1968) argued persuasively for using microethnography to generate scientific theory. Smith and Pohland (1969) illustrated the advantages of using participant observation in triangulation designs for assessing the impact of education innovations. Interest in research methods borrowed from anthropologists has even led to the formation of the Council on Anthropology and Education which publishes *Anthropology and Education*.

It should be noted that attempts by educational ethnographers to expand our vision of educational research beyond the statistical tradition have not transcended the empirical-analytic world review. Though educational ethnographers do not follow the recipe which is traditional in educational research and do not usually apply the statistical template to their studies, many of them are still primarily concerned with the generation or verification of scientific theory which does not differ in kind from the type of theory pursued by those in the statistical tradition. They intend to explain a more or less mechanistic social reality.

Despite the slightly derogatory language used above to describe the empirical-analytic tradition—i.e., mechanistic—we find some aspects of that tradition both attractive and useful. For instance, we like what Smith and Goeffrey (1968) attempted to do. Most of our records has been within the empirical-analytic tradition.

**Decision #3: Whether to Conduct an Interpretive Study**

A few articles are beginning to appear which challenge the assumption that educational research must be empirical-analytic (Van Manen, 1975; Popkowitz, 1980). Just as ethnographers have suggested that we step back from the statistical tradition in educational research to view other possibilities within the empirical-analytic frame of reference, Van Manen (1975) suggested that even that broader view presents researchers with a limit situation, a condition which he said occurs: "When a person is not aware that there are other options beyond the taken-for-granted practices of the familiar scene" (p. 2). He reminded the reader that other research frames of reference contribute to the accretion of knowledge. "What is needed in social studies research, therefore, is a recognition of the epistemological limit situation in which current research finds itself, i.e., a reflective aware-
ness that existent inquiry has had a limiting and, to some extent, distorting
effect on the possibilities of theory and practice in social education” (p. 2).

Van Manen identified two scholarly traditions which might be explored
by those who want to step outside the empirical-analytic world view. He
called them the interpretive and critical traditions. The interpretive tradition
provides one of the focal points for the rest of this paper. We do not, how-
ever, examine the critical tradition. Van Manen tends to identify it with
Freudian and Marxist analyses, and we are competent in neither of those
areas.

Given the mechanistic world view of empirical-analytic research, certain
approaches to inquiry seem to follow. One of the most prominent is that
research phenomena are treated as objects rather than subjects. An object is
a thing; a subject is a living organism. To study an object, we examine its
physical characteristics and its motion. Obviously, living organisms can be
studied as objects: we can assess their weight, color, odor and the frequency
and velocity of their movements. But to study a living organism as subject,
we try to know its experience, its thoughts and feelings, its perceptions, its
point-of-view.

Van Manen suggested that the interpretive tradition tends to treat people
as subjects, not as objects. This mode of research assumes the dualistic
nature of humanity; people are both subject and object, but inquiry is fo-
cused on subjective human experience. Intellect, emotion, and experience
are the subjects of analysis.

In critiquing Van Manen's discussion, Larkins (1975) pointed out that it
provided the novice with very little information about how to do interpre-
tive research. Ironically, those of us who find the prospect of interpretive
research intriguing are accustomed to the detailed discussions of the stan-
dard recipe for the statistical tradition; it is more than a bit discomforting to
find so few guidelines for traditions which might carry us beyond the em-
pirical-analytic view.

Decision #4: How to Conduct an Interpretive Study

With few guidelines available for conducting interpretive studies, we
have been forced to try out ideas of our own. In large measure, these ideas
about method have arisen during the course of a relatively unrationlized
investigation (Puckett, 1980). One way to order our notions about inter-
pretive methods is to classify them according to three types of objectivity-
subjectivity.

Objectivity tends to be one of the standards of empirical-analytic science,
but “objectivity” can have at least three different relevant meanings. We
have already touched upon one meaning, i.e., treating that-which-is-studied
as object rather than subject. This meaning focuses the researcher's atten-
tion on the issue of whether to attend to the subjective experience of that-
which-is-studied. A second meaning focuses on whether the researcher should attempt to reduce the subjectivity of the observer. This meaning has to do with objectivity of measurement. A third meaning focuses on the report of research; i.e., “Should the language of the report be relatively objective or subjective?”

It is our opinion that interpretive research must be subjective in the first sense; it must deal with the subjective experience of that-which-is-studied. It is also our opinion that subjectivity is often, but not always, desirable in the sense of subjective measurement and subjective reporting.

**Getting at Subjectivity in the First Sense.** In order to study others as subjects, we need to find some device for entering their perceptions. Interviews, diaries, creative stories, role playing, student art or music might help.

Another approach is for instructors to do interpretive analyses of themselves as teachers. For instance, one instructor developed a typology of students: dominants, latent dominants, nonentity (Puckett, 1980). In building that typology, the teacher deliberatively emphasized categories and category labels which reflected his perception of reality: The construct “dominants” meant “dominant in that teacher's perception.” The construct “nonentity” meant “nonentity to that instructor.”

Perhaps one way, then, to get at subjectivity in the first sense is to develop constructs which reflect teacher perceptions. Another way is to select issues, not just constructs, which reflect teacher concerns. For example, an instructor described his concern about being a liberal teacher in a conservative private school, and his attempts to modify his teaching strategies to reduce their offensiveness to parents and administrators. The instructor's concern derived, in part, from the fact that some of his materials treated such topics as sexual intercourse, incest, birth control, abortion, and infanticide in antiquity. In short, he experienced anxiety about two possible criticisms: (a) the charge of being doctrinaire, (b) the charge of being libertine. The focus of his explanation was primarily interpretive. It was an attempt to get at the instructor's perception of the problem involved in teaching controversial material.

**Getting at Subjectivity in the Second Sense.** Are subjective instruments necessary to get at the subjective experience of that-which-is-studied? Apparently, many people think not. A review of the literature on teacher perceptions for the period 1969-1979 indicated that perceptions were measured objectively, not subjectively, in the majority of studies. Several investigators tried to get at teacher thinking through rating instruments (Bolstad & Johnson, 1977; Kelly, Bullock & Dykes, 1977; Krebs, 1969; Motta & Vance, 1977; Solomon & Kendall, 1977). Studies by Pellegreno and Williams (1973) and Williams (1976), in which teacher perceptions were recorded by the Feshback Situation test, are also pertinent. Although these investigations attempted to get at teacher perceptions, they were not primarily inter-
interpreative studies. The purpose of interpretive study is not only to measure the subjective experience of that-which-is-studied, but to communicate some of the richness and breadth of that experience. One problem with objective instruments, such as rating scales, is that they tend to force a variety of teacher experiences into a single category. Although a rating may be based on a variety of rich, full-of-meaning experiences, which may be very different for different teachers who receive the same rating, the consumer of research cannot work backward from the scale to the experience. The experience cannot be recaptured and shared. For that reason, the researcher may opt for subjectivity in the second sense, subjective instruments. Instrumentation, for instance, may consist primarily of daily notes, certainly subjective, concerning what seems interesting or important about each day-at-work.

**Getting at Subjectivity in the Third Sense.** One of the canons of educational research is that reports ought to be objective. This objectivity is sought in several ways. The language of technical writing is deliberately impersonal. Every effort is made to remove biased or emotively loaded words and phrases. Narrative descriptions of research settings are limited to abstractions such as demographic, social class and racial data.

Thorough commitment to objective reporting is out of place in interpretive studies. The attempt to study and report meaningful experience is defeated by lifeless language. In some ways, objective reporting may also be dishonest. Researchers frequently investigate a topic because of burning personal interest in a problem, or because of fervent commitment to one side of an issue. Information which might help the consumer to interpret a study is denied when the researcher cloaks personal bias in the language of objectivity. The researcher, therefore, may decide to include material in a report which will seem out of place to many because it gives that report a decidedly subjective tone.

Several unorthodox sections may be added to reports to provide insights into the investigator's biases and commitments. For instance, one section may contain an autobiographical statement by the author. Another may contain first drafts of position statements which have not had the biases edited out. Other sections may include a subjective report of the school culture, or unedited field notes.

Space, of course, will limit the use of unorthodox material in reports. Some of this material may also be unsettling, either because it appears to be too personal for inclusion in a "scholarly" report, or because it contains statements about schools which are usually left unsaid or cloaked in euphemisms (see Puckett, 1980). In short, these unorthodox sections are sometimes just a bit raw for scholarly taste.

We do not know how much subjectivity should go into a report, but we think that it is desirable to provide a context within which the reader can interpret biases, commitment and values of teachers and researchers. The
decision to deliberately expose academic biases, rather than to edit them out of the report, may be based on the assumption that what the teacher teaches and how he or she structures the learning environment are a reflection of and a response to a personal frame of reference as well as to curricular demands. Teachers' biases may operate insidiously in the classroom unbeknownst to themselves and their students. A similar point could be made about the biases of researchers.

Summary and Conclusions

The authors were recently forced to think their way through a nontraditional research effort. In writing this paper our primary consideration has been to describe some of the decisions we faced concerning procedures. We focused on procedural issues because we sense a growing dissatisfaction with the emphasis on a single tradition of educational research, and because of the lack of guidelines for those who might wish to break with that tradition. We emphasize that this paper is not a handbook for doing interpretive studies, or for melding interpretive and empirical-analytic frames of reference. We hope, however, that it will serve as a point of departure for others.

We have taken a stand on several issues. Should educationists always conduct studies which are rationalized a priori? Our position is, “No.” We do not doubt that studies which are carefully and thoroughly planned in advance frequently yield the best results. We also believe that people who decide to do traditional research ought to do it right. But we also believe that studies which “just grow” have their advantages. Should educationists conduct empirical-analytic studies? That is, should they attempt to develop or verify scientific theory? We have found that conducting at least the first step in theory development, identifying constructs, is interesting and useful, but we do not think that educationists should be limited to theory-doing. There may be important kinds of meanings which are not captured by constructs, propositions and nomothetic nets. Which leads us to the next issue. Should educationists conduct interpretive studies? Our responses is that we ought to at least give serious consideration to the claim that interpretive studies are one of several legitimate research traditions. Our experience tells us that interpretive data can be an important source of meaning in studies.

We have found it useful to distinguish between three meanings of “objective/subjective.” These meanings are related to three issues: Should we treat that-which-is-studied as object or subject? Should we use objective or subjective measures? Should the research report be couched in objective or subjective language? Our stand on the first issue is that if we intend an interpretive study we must treat that-which-is-studied as subject. This is true by definition. Our stand on the second issue is that while subjective states might be measured objectively, it is difficult to communicate the richness and variety of subjective experience based on those measurements. Subjective measures are essential for interpretive studies, but it might be useful to
substantiate or validate subjective measures with objective ones. Our position on the third issue is likely to cause the most controversy. We claim that interpretive reports which are edited into an objective, technical style mislead the reader. For that reason, we recommend the inclusion of highly subjective material in some research reports, material which would not usually appear in scholarly works.

In closing we especially recommend some of these approaches to classroom teachers. By defining themselves and their students as that-which-is-studied, teachers are able to conduct research during the normal school day. By focusing field notes on that which is interesting or important to them, the research becomes relevant to the teacher who does it. To the extent that teachers share concerns and interests, it will appear relevant to others. By focusing on the subjective experience of teachers, the charge that research is abstract, meaningless and trivial might be mitigated.

References


Larkins, A. G. External validity, replication and some reflections on weak proce-


Educational Attainment and Political Attitudes: An Effect of Schools or Schooling?*

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Brown University
Providence, RI 02912

Objectives

The impact of schooling on political attitudes, values and behaviors has been documented: college graduates adopt more liberal viewpoints, have more political interest and participate more in community associations than their non-college counterparts. The processes behind this positive association between educational attainment and politicization have not been adequately specified. Is the positive association dependent only on years of schooling or do other factors such as tracking, extracurricular activities and academic performance affect students' political outcomes? This question is complicated by developmental changes in students' political attitudes as the students pass from adolescence into adulthood. Additional complications occur because various interpretations have been placed upon the positive association between educational attainment and political knowledge, inter-

*An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, 1980. I wish to thank the referees for their comments and suggestions. The data utilized in this article were made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. The data were originally collected by Jerald G. Bachman. Neither the original source or collectors of the data nor the Consortium bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.
est and trust of government. On the one hand, postsecondary education is seen as altering one's political attitudes, increasing one's political interest and decreasing one's political alienation. On the other hand, postsecondary education is seen as serving a selective certification function in which high-SES children are selected and certified for high-SES jobs; thus those students with high political interest and low political alienation are those who are selected for college. This paper investigates the relationship between school-based variables (years of schooling, track, academic performance, college plans and extracurricular activities) and the development of political attitudes from adolescence into early adulthood.

Perspectives

Since adolescents spend a large part of their time in schools and since adolescence is a time in which individuals establish their own autonomy, it is reasonable to expect that schools may affect their political attitudes. Both Dreeben (1968) and Eckstein (1966) have developed theoretical bases for the schools' impact on students' authority orientations. Dreeben suggests that students learn the norms of equality and universality through the hidden curriculum of the classroom. Eckstein views the authority structure of the school as consonant with the authority structure of the political system. This work suggests that adolescents' acquisition of political attitudes is conditioned by their school experiences. The impact of postsecondary education on political attitudes has been variously explained. Feldman and Newcomb (1969), Astin (1977) and Bowen (1977) report college influencing individuals to be more liberal and to have more political interest and less political alienation. Rich (1976) and Weiner and Eckland (1979) explain the positive association between political attitudes and college attendance differently. Rich claims that non-college individuals also become more liberal and gain more political interest and trust of government as they grow older. Weiner and Eckland point to self-selection as one mechanism by which college educated people appear to be different politically from those individuals who did not go to college. Given that both socialization and self-selection occur in postsecondary educational institutions, this paper uses longitudinal data to evaluate the stability and change in political attitudes from adolescence to young adulthood.

Data and Methods

The determinants of the variation in political attitudes are investigated through an analysis of the Youth in Transition data. These longitudinal data were collected by Jerold G. Bachman at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. The Youth in Transition project followed a nationally representative sample of 2213 males in 87 public high schools from the time in which these young men were high school sophomores until five years after the graduation of their high school class. The Youth in
Transition survey instrument focused on family background, psychological characteristics, and characteristics of these men's school work and military environments in an effort to trace the educational and occupational attainment processes for these individuals over an eight year period. The respondents were surveyed in the fall of their sophomore year (1966), in the spring of their junior year (1968), in the spring of their senior year (1969), one year after high school graduation (1970), and five years after high school graduation (1974).

The analyses reported in this paper are based on only the 729 individuals who were present at all five of the data collection points and for whom the relevant variables were not missing. Nonwhite students were excluded from these analyses because they are not representative of the nonwhite population. The political outcomes examined in this paper are restricted to political interest, political alienation, racial equality attitudes, and anti-Vietnam war attitudes. Other political outcomes included in the data are political knowledge and political party; these outcomes are referred to occasionally in the paper. The political items from the 1974 survey instrument are listed in Appendix A.

The first category for analysis is to factor analyze the set of dependent variables and their component items to determine if a more parsimonious clustering is possible. The second strategy for analysis is to examine the means, standard deviations and correlations for the various political outcomes at the five different time points. Here developmental trends in the change or stability of political attitudes across the years can be observed. The third analysis strategy is to use multiple regression to trace the development of these attitudes from adolescence into early adulthood and to assess the relative impact of school-based variables on the political outcomes.

Measures

Dependent Variables. Research on the political attitudes of young adults has shown years of schooling to be the best predictor of partisanship, political alienation, political interest, voting, campaign contributions, and liberal or conservative positions on domestic and foreign issues (Astin, 1977; Bowen, 1977). The longer a person has been schooled the more likely he is to be a Republican, have a high level of trust in government and a low level of political alienation, vote regularly, contribute to political campaigns and take liberal positions on domestic and foreign issues. Weiner and Eckland (1979) have recently given attention to the contradictions within this body of literature. For example Republican partisanship is not usually associated with liberal political views and yet both are presumably positively associated with years of schooling. Weiner and Eckland suggest that socioeconomic level may be operating differently for those with different levels of educational attainment.

Another possible explanation for the apparent contradiction in the rela-
relationship between years of schooling and political attitudes and behaviors is
that such attitudes and behaviors are distinct factors that develop and oper-
ate separately from one another. Indeed, Converse (1964) has shown that
American adults have little constraint in their political views. Therefore, it
seems unlikely that adolescents and young adults would have a high degree
of constraint among their political views.

If political attitudes are distinct from one another, they should evidence a
distinct factor structure. Because some of the political items in the data are
related to one another, the factor analysis was performed with an oblique
rotation. This type of rotation is appropriate here because it relaxes the
orthogonal constraint that would otherwise be placed on the factors (Ben-
nett and Bowers, 1976). It was evident from the inter-item correlations that
the items were not independent from one another and thus orthogonality
could not be assumed. This factor analysis was done at each of the five time
points (1966, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1974). The factor structures were nearly
identical at all five time points. The factor matrix of the political items in
1974 is displayed in Table 1.

Using a criterion point of 1.00 for the eigenvalues, four distinct factors
were found that were used as the dependent variables in this study. With the
exception of the anti-Vietnam war D item, the anti-Vietnam war items alone
load highly on Factor 1. Both the political alienation and the trust in gov-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Rotated (Oblique) Factor Matrix of Political Items in 1974</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Partisanship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alienation A</td>
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<td>Alienation B</td>
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<td>Alienation C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust in government A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust in government B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anti-Vietnam War A</td>
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<td>Anti-Vietnam War B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anti-Vietnam War C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anti-Vietnam War D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anti-Vietnam War E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anti-Vietnam War F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial equality A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial equality B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racial equality C</td>
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</tbody>
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Eigenvalues before rotation:  Factor 1 4.26477
Factor 2 2.04318
Factor 3 1.61252
Factor 4 1.11245

38
ernment items load highly on Factor 2. Factor 3 contains high loadings for the racial equality items. Both political interest and political party items load highly on Factor 4. At earlier time points, when items on political knowledge were present in the instrument, they also loaded highly on Factor 4.

Factors 1 and 3, anti-Vietnam war attitudes and racial equality attitudes respectively, substantively appear to be political opinions which could be scaled on a conservative-liberal continuum. Yet anti-Vietnam opinions are separate from racial equality opinions. The period between 1966 and 1974 was one in which both Vietnam and racial issues were highly salient in the media, so their distinctness cannot be attributed to differentially prominent political events or coverage by the media.

Factor 2, the alienation or trust factor, substantively taps affective political attitudes. The alienation and trust items do not measure objective positions; instead they ask individuals about their feelings toward politicians and the government. In contrast to this affective dimension, Factor 4 represents the cognitive commonality among political interest, partisanship, and at the previous four time points, political knowledge.

These findings show the presence of distinct factors at all time points. Therefore, anti-Vietnam, alienation and racial equality indices were constructed on the basis of the factor matrix presented in Table 1. The anti-Vietnam index was constructed from the five of the six anti-Vietnam items that loaded highly on Factor 1. Both the alienation and trust items were used to construct the alienation index. The racial equality index was constructed from the racial equality items that loaded highly on the third factor. Political interest and partisanship items were not combined into one index; the constructs interest and partisanship will be treated separately in this paper in keeping with their accepted differences in the literature.

Independent Variables. IQ and Bachman’s measure of socioeconomic level (Bachman et al., 1978) were used as background variables. School-based variables consisted of 1968 high school junior year measures of curriculum track, average grades, college plans, and number of extracurricular activities as well as a 1974 measure of years of schooling completed. It is regrettable that the data do not contain college variables that are comparable to the high school junior year measures. Since most of the sample did complete high school, the years of schooling variable functions as a measure of the amount of postsecondary education attained. It is fortunate that pre-1974 measures of the political attitudes are available and in some models these earlier variables are used as predictors of 1974 political attitudes.

Results

Change across Time. There are enough years in the time frame in which the data were collected to represent a historical period. Indeed the political events of assassinations, race riots, Vietnam and Watergate did bring strong
and varied reactions from the American public. Bachman, O'Malley and Johnston (1978) cite a national increase in political alienation during this period. Period effects are confounded with developmental changes in the Youth in Transition data.

Changes in the means and standard deviations of the political indices are shown in Table 2. As would be expected from surveys of the adult population during this period, there is a large increase in the mean of political alienation and a substantial increase in the mean of the anti-Vietnam war index. The means of political knowledge and political interest are relatively stable for this sample of adolescents and young adults.

Less stability is observed in the means of political party, political alienation, racial equality attitudes and anti-Vietnam war attitudes. That is, the sample as a whole has become more Democratic, more politically alienated, more in favor of government intervention to ensure racial equality and more opposed to the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war. Note that while the standard deviations show a convergence of attitudes concerning political alienation and racial equality attitudes, the anti-Vietnam war attitudes di-

<table>
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<th>Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Political Indices Across Time</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Political Knowledge 1966</td>
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<td>Racial Equality 1974</td>
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<td>Anti-Vietnam War 1969</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anti-Vietnam War 1970</td>
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</table>
verge over time. These averages are informative for general group patterns, but must be supplemented with regression analyses of the longitudinal data. Thus, information about patterns of development of individuals’ political attitudes, with consideration given to their school experiences, during this period can be obtained.

**Structural Contexts for Political Socialization.** Structural contexts for political socialization in schools are curricular tracks, extracurricular activities and the academic or nonacademic environment in which students attend school. While years of schooling has, in the past, been the most influential school-based variable for political outcomes, this paper also focuses on additional variables that may affect the process of political socialization. Here the influence of curriculum track, grades, college plans, extracurricular activities and years of schooling on political outcomes is considered. The equations statistically control for intelligence and socioeconomic background.

The longitudinal data permit the input of an earlier measure of the political outcome variable. In this way, an estimate of the effect of early political attitudes on 1974 political attitudes can be obtained. Thus, the longitudinal data are used in this paper to obtain a more accurate estimate of the effect of schooling on political outcomes. This increased accuracy occurs because individual student scores on earlier political indicators are taken into account.

In one model 1974 political interest is predicted from intelligence, SES, high school track, high school grades, college plans, extracurricular activities and years of schooling. A second model included political interest measured in the senior year of high school (1969) as an additional predictor. In the third model the senior political interest variable has been replaced by political interest measured one year after high school (1970).

The regression coefficients for these models are shown in Table 3. In the first equation intelligence and years of schooling have the largest regression coefficients. Socioeconomic level, high school track, and high school grades are not significant when years of schooling is in the equation. Political interest is independently related to one's cognitive skills and years of schooling completed.

Of interest among the other school-based variables is the negative relationship between high school extracurricular activities and adult political interest. It appears that students active in high school extracurricular activities have lower political interest than non-participants, once other characteristics and school experiences are taken into account. College plans in high school is a positive predictor of 1974 political interest. Neither extracurricular activities nor college plans have large enough coefficients to be of substantive importance.

In the second equation in Table 3 1969 political interest (during the senior year of high school) has been added into the equation. Once again intelli-
|                | Intell1 | SEL1  | Track2 | Grades2 | Collpl2 | Extrno2 | Interes3 | Interes4 | Yrschoo5 | Constant | R²   |
|----------------|---------|-------|--------|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------|------|
| Metric         | .017*   | .073  | -.034  | .008    | .162*   | -.038*  | .078*    |          |          |          |      |      |
| Standard error | .004    | .046  | .709   | .005    | .077    | .019    | .021     |          |          |          |      |      |
| Standardized   | .196    | .065  | -.019  | .064    | .086    | -.074   | .170     |          |          |          |      |      |

|                | .012*   | .061  | -.011  | .003    | .149*   | -.036*  | .348*    | .060*    |          |          |      |      |
| Metric         | .003    | .043  | .073   | .004    | .071    | .018    | .033     | .020     |          |          |      |      |
| Standard error | .138    | .054  | -.006  | .025    | .079    | -.072   | .353     | .130     |          |          |      |      |

|                | .010*   | .046  | -.010  | .001    | .141*   | -.028*  | .211*    | .270*    | .059*    |          |      |      |
| Metric         | .003    | .042  | .071   | .005    | .069    | .018    | .037     | .038     | .019     |          |      |      |
| Standard error | .114    | .041  | .006   | .004    | .075    | .054    | .214     | .272     | .128     |          |      |      |

*R*Coefficients are twice their standard error.

Variable abbreviations are: Intell, Intelligence; SEL, Socioeconomic level; Track, Curriculum track; Collpl, College plans, Extrno, Number of extracurricular activities; Interes, Political interest; Yrschoo, Years of schooling.

Time points are: 1, 1966; 2, 1968; 3, 1969; 4, 1970; 5, 1974
gence and years of schooling are statistically and substantively significant, and college plans and extracurricular activities are statistically significant but of minor importance. As might be expected, political interest in 1969 is strongly related to political interest in 1974. Note that the addition of 1969 political interest into the equation raised the variance explained from 15% to 27%. This can be interpreted to mean that schooling, ability, and college plans—all cognitive laden variables, have a continuous influence on political interest. Controlling on the earlier level of political interest enables one to see the effect of IQ and years of schooling on political interest. The decrease in these two relationships when earlier political interest is added is not severe.

The third equation in Table 3 adds 1970 political interest (one year after high school) as a predictor of 1974 political interest. The coefficients in this equation are similar to those in the second equation except that extracurricular activities is no longer statistically significant. The addition of the political interest predictor variable from 1969 to 1970 only resulted in a small increase in the variance explained.

The same basic equations were used in Table 4 to determine estimates for political alienation. Once again 1969 and 1970 political alienation measures are added into the second and third equations respectively. Only in the first equation is extracurricular activities statistically significant. The low amount of variance explained in the first equation suggests that the effect of high school extracurricular activities on 1974 political alienation is slight. Note that no other school-based variable is significant in any of the three equations.

Comparing the second and third equations it is evident that the 1970 political alienation measure is a much better predictor of 1974 political alienation than is the 1969 measure. While this finding may not be surprising in and of itself, it does differ from the pattern noted in the second and third equations of Table 3, where the 1970 measure was only a slightly better predictor of 1974 political interest. Once again the relative instability of political alienation across time contrasts with the more stable cognitive attitude of political interest. Year to year changes are more important for understanding political alienation. In that light, it is not surprising that high school variables have little impact on the post-college outcomes. Unfortunately there are no variables that permit examination of the effects of schooling at the college level to determine the influence of school experiences on political outcomes. It is also of interest that some school-based variables have impact on political interest but no impact on political alienation.

An examination of the estimates in the equations predicting 1974 racial equality attitudes in Table 5 reveals a striking similarity to the estimates for the political alienation equations in Table 4. The estimates in Table 5 show that neither the background variables of intelligence and socioeconomic level nor the school-based variables have significant relationships with 1974
### Table 4: Ordinary Least Square Regression Estimates of Political Alienation Equations (N = 729)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intelli</th>
<th>SEL1</th>
<th>Track2</th>
<th>Grades2</th>
<th>Collpl2</th>
<th>Extrno2</th>
<th>Polal3</th>
<th>Polal4</th>
<th>Yrschoo5</th>
<th>Constant</th>
<th>R²</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metric</td>
<td>.016</td>
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<td>.425</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>.134</td>
<td>-.165*</td>
<td>-.030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard error</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.159</td>
<td>.270</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.263</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.073</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standardized</td>
<td>.061</td>
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<td>.076</td>
<td>-.023</td>
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<td>-.101</td>
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<td>.234</td>
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<td>.306*</td>
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<tr>
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*Coefficients are twice their standard error.

Variable abbreviations are: Intelli, Intelligence; SEL, Socioeconomic level; Track, Curriculum track; Collpl, College plans, Extrno, Number of extra-curricular activities; Polal, Political alienation; Yrschoo, Years of schooling.

racial equality attitudes. Both the 1969 racial equality attitude and the 1970 racial equality attitude have significant and strong effects on the 1974 racial equality attitude. Here the high school 1969 attitude is a better predictor of the 1974 attitude than is the post-high school 1970 attitude. This pattern contrasts with the pattern in Table 4 where the post-high school alienation was a better predictor of 1974 alienation than was 1969 high school alienation.

The estimates for the anti-Vietnam war equations in Table 6 show that the background variables, school-based variables, and earlier anti-Vietnam war attitude explain 41% of the variance in the 1974 anti-Vietnam war attitude. Of the four political outcomes, political interest, political alienation, racial equality attitudes and anti-Vietnam war attitudes, socioeconomic level only has an effect on anti-Vietnam war attitudes. From Table 6 it is evident that while this effect is significant in equations one and two it does not operate in equation three. Intelligence and years of schooling are significant in all three equations. Curriculum track is statistically significant in the first two equations but when 1970 anti-Vietnam war attitude is added into the third equation, high school curriculum track is no longer significant. As with political interest and alienation the 1970 anti-Vietnam war attitude is better for predicting the 1974 attitude than the 1969 attitude.

Summary

School and schooling effects vary for the four political attitudes on political interest, political alienation, racial equality and the Vietnam war. Some modest school effects were found for political interest, political alienation and anti-Vietnam war attitudes. Political interest was affected positively by college plans and negatively by extracurricular activities. Political alienation was affected negatively by extracurricular activities. Anti-Vietnam war attitudes were affected positively by curriculum track. Schooling effects were investigated by estimating the impact of educational attainment, measured by years of school completed in 1974, on the four political attitudes. Number of years of school attained did affect political interest and anti-Vietnam war attitudes but not political alienation or racial equality attitudes.

Beyond the relationships between the political attitudes and the school-based predictors, relationships among political attitudes were studied. The political attitudes are distinct and operate differently with respect to the background factors of intelligence and socioeconomic level. Also, the means and standard deviations for these scales suggest different across-time trends for the different political attitudes. For example, the mean for political interest was relatively stable in comparison to the substantial increases in the means for political alienation, racial equality attitude and anti-Vietnam war attitude. The standard deviations show a convergence of racial equality attitudes and political alienation while anti-Vietnam war attitudes diverged during the eight-year period. Political interest, political alienation, racial
Table 5: Ordinary Least Square Regression Estimates of Racial Equality Equations (N = 729)

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*Coefficients are twice their standard error.

Variable abbreviations are: Intelli, Intelligence; SEL, Socioeconomic level; Track, Curriculum track; Collpl, College plans, Extrno, Number of extra-curricular activities; RaceEq, Racial equality; Yrschoo, Years of schooling.

Table 6: Ordinary Least Square Regression Estimates of Anti-Vietnam War Equations (N = 729)

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*Coefficients are twice their standard error.
Variable abbreviations are: Intelli, Intelligence; SEL, Socioeconomic level; Track, Curriculum track; Collpl, College plans, Extrno, Number of extracurricular activities; Antinv, Anti-Vietnam war attitude; Yrschoo, Years of schooling.
equality attitudes and anti-Vietnam war attitudes are predicted differently and are subject to different causal mechanisms.

High school political attitudes predict early adult political attitudes. The addition of earlier measures of the political attitude as predictors in the regression equations resulted in substantial increases in the amount of variance explained. Thus, the data analyses suggest a high degree of continuity between political attitudes of high school students in 1969 and of college and noncollege individuals in 1974. Thus, adolescents do indeed have meaningful political attitudes which are continuous and predictable. Moreover, their political attitudes reflect trends documented in the adult population. For example, the mean for political alienation substantially increased for both the adolescents in this sample and the adult population.

Discussion

One counterintuitive finding was the lack of association between educational attainment and two of the political attitudes. There was no association between educational attainment and low political alienation. Neither was there an association between educational attainment and liberal racial equality attitudes. Possibly this lack of associations was due to the dramatic increase in political alienation in the U.S. between 1966 and 1974 and the improvement in race relations in the early 70's. In addition the more educated who had not been politically alienated became alienated. And the less educated who had not been supportive of racial equality became supportive.

This interpretation suggests an accentuation of the trend that House and Mason (1975) found when they examined political alienation from 1952-1968. They reported that "the link between traditional demographic definitions of social position and issue-attitudes is weak in the late 1960's (and perhaps always)." (House and Mason, 1975, p. 145) In these analyses that link was found to be even weaker and perhaps absent. In 1972 Converse suggested that as equality of educational opportunity expands, education no longer predicts levels of political alienation. He hypothesized that education would continue to predict political interest. The data analyzed in this paper suggest that years of schooling affect the outcomes of political interest and anti-Vietnam war attitudes but are unrelated to the outcomes of political alienation and racial equality attitudes.

In conclusion, the traditional notion that schooling increases citizen involvement is not supported by these analyses. Although educational attainment does affect political interest and anti-Vietnam war attitudes, it does not affect political alienation and racial equality attitudes. Thus, this investigation supports neither the political indoctrination view of schools (Miliband, 1969; Bowles and Gintin, 1976) which suggests that schools inculcate obedience to the state nor the consensual political socialization view of schools which suggests that schools train participatory citizens (Langton, 1974; Dawson and Prewitt, 1969). Generally, these views have in common
the notion that schools are potent political socialization agents. Specifically, these views each presume that schools are seeking to indoctrinate political efficacy. This assumption is questionable.

The proponents of both the political indoctrination view of schools and the consensual political socialization view of schools ask the following question.—Do schools reinforce blind obedience to the state or do they make individuals autonomous political actors?—Both sides of the debate suppose that schools do have an effect on political efficacy or its reverse, political alienation. The data analyses in this paper show no clear effect. Schooling effects were found for the outcomes of political interest and anti-Vietnam war attitudes but were absent for the outcomes of political alienation and racial equality attitudes.

References


**Appendix A: Political Items in 1974**

1. Partisanship

   How would you describe your political preference?
   
   (1) Strongly Republican   (5) American Independent Party
   (2) Mildly Republican     (6) No preference, independent
   (3) Mildly Democrat       (7) Other
   (4) Strongly Democrat     (8) Haven't thought about it; don't know

2. Alienation A

   Do you think the government wastes much of the money we pay in taxes?
   
   (1) Nearly all tax money is wasted
   (2) A lot of tax money is wasted
   (3) Some tax money is wasted
   (4) A little tax money is wasted
   (5) No tax money is wasted

3. Alienation B

   Do you feel that the people running the government are smart people who usually know what they are doing?
   
   (1) They almost always know what they are doing
   (2) They usually know what they are doing
   (3) They sometimes know what they are doing
   (4) They seldom know what they are doing
   (5) They never know what they are doing

4. Alienation C

   How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right?
   
   (1) Almost always
   (2) Often
   (3) Sometimes
   (4) Seldom
   (5) Never

5. Interest

   Some people think about what's going on in government very often, and others
are not that interested. How much of an interest do you take in government and current events?
   (1) A very great interest
   (2) A lot of interest
   (3) Some interest
   (4) Very little interest
   (5) No interest at all

6. Trust in government A

Do you think some of the people running the government are crooked or dishonest?
   (1) Most of them are crooked or dishonest
   (2) Quite a few are
   (3) Some are
   (4) Hardly any are
   (5) None at all are crooked or dishonest

7. Trust in government B

Would you say the government is pretty much run for a few big interests looking out for themselves, or is it run for the benefit of all the people?
   (1) Nearly always run for a few big interests
   (1) Usually run for a few big interests
   (3) Run some for the big interests, some for the people
   (4) Usually run for the benefit of all the people
   (5) Nearly always run for the benefit of all the people

8. Anti-Vietnam War A

Fighting the war in Vietnam was damaging to our national honor or pride.
   (1) strongly agree
   (2) agree
   (3) disagree
   (4) strongly disagree

9. Anti-Vietnam War B

Fighting the war in Vietnam was really not in the national interest.
   (1) strongly agree
   (2) agree
   (3) disagree
   (4) strongly disagree

10. Anti-Vietnam War C

Fighting the war in Vietnam was important to fight the spread of Communism.
   (1) strongly agree
   (2) agree
   (3) disagree
   (4) strongly disagree

11. Anti-Vietnam War D

Fighting the war in Vietnam brought us closer to world war.
   (1) strongly agree
   (2) agree
   (3) disagree
   (4) strongly disagree
12. Anti-Vietnam War E

Fighting the war in Vietnam was important to protect friendly countries.
(1) strongly agree  (3) disagree
(2) agree       (4) strongly disagree

13. Anti-Vietnam War F

Fighting the war in Vietnam was important to show other nations that we keep our promises.
(1) strongly agree  (3) disagree
(2) agree       (4) strongly disagree

14. Racial equality B

The government in Washington should see to it that white and black children are allowed to go to the same schools if they want to.
(1) agree  (3) disagree mostly
(2) agree mostly       (4) disagree

15. Racial equality B

The government in Washington should see to it that people are treated fairly and equally in jobs, no matter what their race may be.
(1) agree  (3) disagree mostly
(2) agree mostly       (4) disagree

16. Racial equality C

It is not the government's business to pass laws about equal treatment for all races.
(1) agree  (3) disagree mostly
(2) agree mostly       (4) disagree
Teaching by Exemplar:
On the Dialectical Nature
of Social Science

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Robert Bickel
College of Education
The Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306

Introduction

Consider the following proposition: the more a topic in the social sciences has been researched, the more difficult it is to teach. We mean by this, of course, that it is more difficult to do justice to the topic, as well as to provide students with a reasonably accurate picture of the state of knowledge in the area. Given the extensive literature in policy studies which have enjoyed substantial funding over the years, a major job for the instructor is to select from a large array of studies a syllabus which is representative, yet manageable.

However, even a well-designed syllabus does not teach itself. It is commonplace to assert that the challenge to the instructor is not only to clarify the findings of a string of studies, but also to present a coherent synthesis. The instructor who fails to provide such an experience typically falls into the infamous category of "the professor who knows his or her stuff but can't get it across." Students are left not seeing the forest for the trees, or the gestalt for the findings.

Neither of these pedagogic challenges—designing a comprehensive syllabus or leading students through a synthesis of findings—is unique to the
social sciences. They are imperatives in teaching any academic discipline which makes empirical claims. Yet it seems that there is more disenchantment among students in social science courses than in other disciplines. The complaint is often heard that the studies never lead to concrete conclusions, or that the next study will always contradict the one before it.

Because of the claims of sociology, political science, and economics to "scientific" status, students often compare these disciplines with the "hard" sciences, and the social sciences seem to fail the test. Commonsense notions about the physical and biological sciences present students with a model for scientific success: an apparently linear accrual of knowledge, replicability of results, technical manipulation and control, to name just a few components.

When students follow a curriculum in an issue-oriented course in the social sciences, they typically receive a quite different version of "science." First, researchers seem to differ on their goals. Some seem committed to pure description, some to "verstehen" type explanations, some to the discovery of trans-historical truths, and some to "action-oriented" ameliorative work.

Second, researchers who ostensibly are concerned with the same questions work under various competing paradigms. Students are exposed to functionalists, conflict theorists, Marxists, exchange theorists, and so on. The perspective adopted by a researcher affects the results of his or her research, and students are troubled by the differences.

Third, researchers disagree on the kinds of information which constitutes "evidence." Ethnomethodologists, ethnographers, measurement experts, and human ecologists all gather data which would be unacceptable to each other as evidence to evaluate a theory.

Fourth, even when researchers agree on the type of evidence needed and the kind of analysis which is appropriate, they may still disagree on the interpretation of findings.

The Dialectical Nature of Social Science and Instructional Strategy

When students are left with the belief that competing goals and evidence, and conflicting models and interpretations indicate that the social sciences are in chaos, the problem may be one of instructional strategy (cf. Bickel and Milton, 1982). The instructor may have failed to provide a perspective which enables students to appreciate the fundamentally dialectical nature of the social sciences.

When we talk about the dialectical nature of the social sciences, we are acknowledging a process which discerning readers of social science literature readily recognize. Specifically, social science is more often an arena of rational dispute rather than collaboration; while proponents of conflicting views are rarely so persuasive as to change each other's minds, they do force mutual clarification of perspectives. The recent resurgence of interest in Marxist and neo-Marxist scholarship, for example, has compelled thought-
ful proponents of functionalist and similar noncritical perspectives to examine more clearly the rather sanguine assumptions which undergird their research (Coser, 1975). At the same time, the dominance of functionalism and the empirical research which it fostered during the past several decades has had a salutary influence on the dogmatic and sterile textual exegesis which too often has characterized Marxist literature (Wolfe, 1977).

The instructor must thus make clear that differing paradigmatic approaches will necessarily lead to differing interpretations and that divergent disciplinary goals imply a broad range of research options. He or she must also make clear, however, that issue-oriented social scientific research has led to greater scientific understanding of social issues, and that the dialectical nature of the social sciences is an integral part of this process.

The Use of Instructional Dialogs

While it is true that the first step to presenting a balanced and dialectical portrayal of the state of research on a given issue is the development of a good curriculum, we have found through our experience in upper-level course work a method which helps students organize and better appreciate the paradigmatic and methodological conflicts which permeate social science research. After the students finish their reading in the area, we prepare and present a dramaturgical dialog between two apocryphal representatives of the major competing research camps involved. Our goal in the preparation of these dialogs is to approximate the kind of debates one witnesses at professional conferences.

The debate serves several purposes. It enables students better to organize their readings conceptually. It adds credibility to both perspectives, thereby militating against trivialization of one side against the other (whether intentional or unintentional). And it also seems to eliminate much of the confusion concerning the state of knowledge in the area, by indirectly acknowledging the dialectical nature of such knowledge.

To illustrate this technique, we offer a dialogic exemplar which we have used in a course on the sociology of education and inequality. We developed it after attempting in various ways to present research in the area of education and its contribution to social mobility, specifically starting with Jencks’ (1972) often misunderstood finding that “schools don’t make any difference” in equalizing outcomes. Further references on which the dialog is based may be found at the end of the article.

Originally, we presented the dialog at the beginning of a course in the social foundations of education for advanced undergraduates. Our intention was to utilize the dialog as a “pre-organizer” for the material to be presented during the course of the semester. However, the material proved too difficult to be a useful introduction, and we now use it to provide a coherent overview toward the end of the course, after students have completed the major portion of their readings.
When presented at this point in the course, the dialog serves two purposes. First, it allows students to take stock of what they have read. For those who remain somewhat bewildered at the seeming contradictions in the literature, our own rendition of the state of the debate seems to provide the gestalt that they have been lacking. For those who have successfully kept up with the issues, the dialog provides the reassurance of letting them know they have it right.

Second, the presentation of the dialog represents a point at which we as instructors can begin to resolve some of the issues raised. While we first used the dialog presented here in a course on social foundations for undergraduates, we have since incorporated it in an advanced graduate course in the sociology of education and inequality. In the latter case, we proceed directly from the dialog to several articles which represent new approaches to resolving the paradigmatic conflicts presented in the dialog. For the undergraduate course, we do the synthesizing through lecture, since the students do not have the methodological sophistication to pursue these sources themselves. A discussion of this step follows the dialog.

The illustrative dialog presented below is an exchange between a rather traditional proponent of education as an effective means of social reform and a critic of such policies. Since the issues presented in the dialog are cross-disciplinary and involve a broad range of theoretical and methodological disputes, we chose to designate the positions of the discussants in as comprehensive a manner as possible: EDUCATOR and CRITIC. The EDUCATOR leads off with a response to what he takes to be the "new conventional wisdom" concerning the ineffectiveness of education.

**The Dialog: Educators and Their Critics**

**EDUCATOR:** It has become commonplace to argue that schooling does not make a difference. In his controversial book, *Inequality*, Jencks makes the claim that since the economic structure of American society is inherently unequal and unfair, then it is ludicrous to expect education to correct this. Further, he points to his own model of income attainment, which explains so little of the differences in income among individuals, and suggests that nothing in a person's background, including his or her education, seems to contribute much to success or failure.

On the face of it, however, the claim that education does not make a difference is preposterous. Ironically, one reason why the obviously nonsensical nature of this claim is not recognized is the pervasive success of schooling in effecting a broad range of very important differences. In fact, the educational homogeneity of American society has advanced to the degree that the beneficial consequences of schooling are masked by the overriding fact of our nation's educational sameness.

Insofar as educational "divisions" exist, where are we to look for them? Do differences in educational attainment separate men and women? Cer-
tainly not. If there is any difference between the two groups, women (typically designated the “minority”) have the advantage. What about blacks and whites? Clearly, an educational difference between the two groups is readily discernible. However, in the years since World War II this race-related educational “gap” has diminished dramatically. There is persuasive reason to believe that in the years to come it will narrow to the point of disappearance. At that point, blacks will equal the historical achievement of other immigrant and minority groups, whose educational experience has come to match that of the religious and ethnic “majorities” who preceded them to this country.

Even the educational difference separating the rich and poor has diminished substantially. It has not disappeared altogether, of course; but is there any reason why it should? After all, there are perfectly legitimate and practical reasons why educational homogeneity cannot and should not be perfect.

The point, of course, is this: educational homogeneity has been attained to such an unprecedented degree that the “differences” which schooling makes are obscured precisely because they are so widely shared. Almost all of us enjoy the benefits of schooling; we share with unprecedented equality in the differences that schooling produces, and it should come as no surprise that these differences are difficult to discern in a society which has committed so much to guaranteeing equality of educational opportunity for all its citizens.

CRITIC: One of the most troubling characteristics of proponents of the beneficial effects of schooling is the degree to which common sense assumptions form the basis of their supposedly scientific research. When asked how they know that schooling makes a difference, one suspects that the answer they would prefer to give is “Everyone knows that schooling makes a difference!” They invoke the ironic notion that the success of schooling is its own worst enemy. How convenient it is for them to point out that the consequences of schooling are so much a part of everyday life that they have become taken for granted. However, if schooling’s success is difficult to detect, its failures are not.

The persistent difference between the races in school success, for example, is sometimes treated as an historically specific quirk, a leftover from our racist past which will eventually disappear, not only because racism is unjust, but because it is “inefficient.” In other instances, the effects of race are attributed to cross-race differences in what some sociologists refer to as “cultural deprivation,” a piece of jargon which supports the usual racist conclusions: whites are smarter than blacks, and this is why they make more money, have more desirable jobs, and so on. Related to this, one of the most fundamental differences between myself and my esteemed colleague is his naive unquestioning acceptance of the assumptions of what economists call human capital theory.
Human capital theorists assume that schooling implies productivity, and that increased schooling implies increased productivity. Policy recommendations rooted in the human capital perspective, therefore, are easy to anticipate: in order to increase the productivity of an individual, increase his or her educational attainment. In order to increase the productivity of an entire society, enhance the educational opportunities available to large numbers of its citizens.

Moreover, according to ’50’s-style, true-blue human capital theorists, not only is investment in education a significant part of the total capital accumulation process, it also serves as “the great equalizer”: by equalizing educational attainment one equalizes occupational and income attainment, as well. However, years of research have provided very little support for these naive assumptions.

Surely, no one still believes that massive investment in education is a viable strategy for economic growth and societal development. Surely, no one still believes that schooling is the great equalizer, or that it is a versatile solution to a broad range of social problems. Nevertheless, significant vestiges of the naive optimism of the ’50’s and 60’s are still with us. Many Third World nations still expend large quantities of their scarce resources simply to meet the recurrent costs of their existing educational systems, rather than spending the money where it’s needed: for food, health care, and so on.

I concede, of course, that it is simply wrong to argue that schooling makes no difference at all. However, we know so little about the specific kinds of differences that schooling actually does make that it often seems best to emphasize what we know with certainty: schooling does not produce the kinds of progressive social and economic changes that many scholars and policy makers once expected.

EDUCATOR: In spite of the charges of my colleague, few of us ever asserted that schooling is sufficiently autonomous and powerful to “cause” deep and pervasive social, economic, and political change. We have argued, however, that processes such as industrialization might well be impossible without concomitant educational change.

Industrialization refers to the creation of new occupations, of course, but the more important fact is that these occupations are based on new technology. This new technology is intimately related to schooling in at least two ways. First, over the years new science-based technology has become more and more likely to be a product of research done in colleges and universities. Second, the occupations and positions created by industrialization need technically competent individuals to fill them. Thus, schooling not only generates the technology of industrialization; it also provides the personnel needed for the complex task of “implementing” that technology.

Historians agree that as industrialization proceeded during the latter part
of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth, the occupational structure was transformed. Physically brutalizing jobs came to make up a much smaller part of the total occupational distribution. At the same time, technically demanding and intellectually challenging jobs were created. In a sense, the broad base of the old occupational structure was sharply pinched, while the middle and upper levels expanded.

Surely, one cannot look at all this and persist with arguments as to schooling's lack of importance for societal change, economic development, and social mobility. Schooling, in fact, makes exactly the kinds of differences that we want it to make.

**CRITIC**: It is commonplace to claim that schooling and industrialization have gone hand in hand. However, this does not explain why investment in education pays off in some kinds of work but not in others and in some industries but not in others. The arbitrary nature of the relationship between schooling and income becomes especially clear in the work of researchers interested in labor market segmentation. After all, conventional sociological and economic perspectives cannot explain why education typically pays off much more generously for whites than for blacks, for men than for women, for the advantaged than for the less advantaged.

There are, of course, explanations of such phenomena, but they seem to be unacceptable to my esteemed colleague, perhaps because they are outside the purview of conventional social sciences. For example, many have argued that education has never had anything to do with job-related skills and has never promoted upward social mobility. Instead, the primary consequences of schooling may be the reproduction and legitimation of existing patterns of inequality. The poor remain poor, the rich remain rich. Schooling does nothing to change this fact. What it does do is teach the poor why they deserve to remain poor and why the rich deserve to remain rich. Inequality, in other words, is not rationally determined, but it is socially determined and educationally legitimated.

**EDUCATOR**: Legitimation has become a topic of prime concern for "radical" scholars. Perhaps this has something to do with their desire to retain their radical credentials while at the same time avoiding charges of "economic reductionism." It is well known, however, that legitimation has been a central concern of conservative and mainstream social theorists at least since Max Weber.

Radicals are fond of arguing that a primary consequence of schooling is the legitimation of inequality. This argument, they seem convinced, is a telling critique of mainstream views concerning the meritocratic character of schooling. However, when faced with the charge that schooling legitimates inequality, proponents of mainstream perspectives experience reaffirmation...
rather than threat. That is, if education legitimates inequality, then it is doing exactly what it should do in terms of the much-maligned "technocratic" framework. Legitimation is being accomplished, moreover, for readily interpretable, technically rational reasons, which is exactly what we've been saying all along.

And look at the relationship between schooling and stratification. If human capital theorists and status attainment researchers are correct in their assumptions, the observed relationships between schooling and other attainments are much as they should be. After all, while radical critics never tire of bemoaning the so-called correspondence between schooling and the workplace, there are good and sufficient reasons why educational and economic institutions should be organized in similar ways: they both value intelligence, achievement, and hard work. Moreover, if "correspondence" is so unfair, why don't its victims do something about it? Radicals, however, are so obsessed with the idea that America is a capitalist society that they forget that it is also a democratic society, whose citizens have the decisive voice in the way it's run.

CRITIC: Well, I am pleased to hear that my colleague finally admits to the presence of background advantages in school achievement. It appears that the only remaining difference between us is that he embraces the notion of status inheritance, which he seems to attribute to some sort of extra endowment of native intelligence among the rich. I deplore this state of affairs—not because I am a "Park Avenue radical"—but because I have directed my own reading toward research which helps me to understand that status inheritance has nothing to do with individual talent.

This is the meaning of a growing body of school ethnography, which focuses on technically irrelevant factors which are the true determinants of school success. For example, Rist and Gouldner, in their studies of elementary school classrooms, report that teachers unwittingly grouped students according to physical and familial factors. These included manner of dress, personal grooming, body odor, social workers' reports on the intactness and economic self-sufficiency of the family, and so on. Teachers then used this same information in making different evaluations of the same behavior for students with different characteristics. As a result, the same student behavior, such as taking verbal initiative, was reinforced for some students but discouraged for others. In these settings, differences in student performance were shown to be outcomes of unfair reinforcement practices of teachers.

It is clear that these processes are not dependent on collusion among professional educators. Instead, they are accomplished unselfconsciously and with the best of meritocratic intentions. After all, school personnel share the same culturally pervasive categories of social ascription as the rest of us. In a class-based society these will lead to class-linked outcomes. Under such
a system, what differences could schools, by themselves, be expected to make?

**Resolving the Issues in the Dialog**

Clearly, our exemplary dialog raises issues without resolving them. This is our intention, as it illustrates the contentious nature of social science discourse and the fact that social science conflicts often seem to defy resolution, at least in the short run.

After presenting the dialog, however, we provide students with material which clarifies the long-term positive consequences of scholarly conflict. For example, after discussing Jencks' (1972) very influential early work, *Inequality*, we counter with Fagerlind's (1975) less well known research, reported in *Formal Education and Adult Earnings*. Using longitudinal data, Fagerlind disputed Jencks' rather pessimistic findings by demonstrating that the explanatory power of education as a determinant of income increases dramatically between the ages twenty-five and forty-three. Because Jencks used cross-sectional data, he could not see this. Nevertheless, Jencks' challenge to conventional assumptions about education and income was clearly the impetus for the technical improvements which make Fagerlind's research so illuminating. This, of course, is by no means the end of the matter, as indicated in Wright's (1979) empirical work, which suggests that education and income are related much as Fagerlind describes, but only for what Wright terms the petit bourgeois class, and not the bourgeoisie or the working class. And so it goes, from critics of investment in education, to proponents, to critics.

We also clarify the positive consequences of social science conflict by illustrating the development of important issues through use of alternative methodologies. For example, Hollingshead (1949), Henry (1963), Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963), and Rist (1973) have reported ethnographic research which illustrates that success in school is effectively reserved for students of relatively high social status and systematically denied others. This, however, is inconsistent with the results of survey research reported by Rehberg and Rosenthal (1979), Sewell, Featherman and Hauser (1976), and numerous others, which suggests that educational attainment is based on merit. Recently, Dimaggio (1982) has sought to resolve this conflict by quantifying concepts developed by ethnographers and using them in much the same way as conventional survey researchers. In effect, Dimaggio has demonstrated that the dialectical development of social science theory is best served by a variety of methodologies, which scholarly antagonists borrow from each other.

Thus, through use of the dialog and clarifying examples we provide concrete evidence for the notion that progress does occur in the social sciences, but that such progress is often masked by its own dialectical nature.
References


Additional References for the Dialog


Putting "Community" into Citizenship Education: The Need for Prosociality

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Much concern has been voiced on the American scene regarding a loss of a sense of community. Critics point to the obvious signs—crime in the schools and in the streets, voter apathy, sluggish performance in the factories and in public office—as well as the more subtle ones expressed as a general lack of idealism, lack of quality or the absence of transcendent motivations. To be sure, multiple and complex factors account for these phenomena, factors rooted in powerful social forces and institutions. While no single social institution can by itself alter this course, it is nonetheless the case that schools might make some increased effort to ameliorate it. One way to do so would be to integrate the concept of "community" into their citizenship education programs.

Citizenship education has been an accepted responsibility in American education since the inception of the public school. Of course, the definitions of citizenship and the obligations of citizenship education have been subject to change, reflecting different societal interests and needs in different locations and times. One enduring characteristic, however, is its focus on the nation-state.

A nation-state is characterized by the central institution of the government. Citizens within the state are bound together by a formal set of obligations and privileges, usually but not always explicated in written law, and implemented by the actual or potential use of the power of the state, its po-
lice force. To be sure, some nation states are democratic, others autocratic; some are better liked than others. But the central relationship of individuals as citizens of the nation state is to their government.

A community, on the other hand, does not necessarily exercise sovereignty over its affairs, nor does it necessarily occupy an identifiable geographical space. It is a body or unit of individuals who identify with each other voluntarily. The focus of the community is its people, who share emotional linkages with each other. These may include, in varying degrees of intensity, a sense of common interest, shared value systems, beliefs, historical consciousness, mutual responsibility, fellowship, affection and love. Unlike the state, the central relationship in a community is the one that exists among its members—that is, relationships with each other are a central factor to members of a community.¹

A state could probably not exist without some sense of community among its citizens, regardless of the strength or efficacy of its police force. It is equally the case that a state is strengthened by a shared sense of community among its members. It is thus in the interest of the state to promote a sense of community among its citizenry; a task which is quite difficult when the state incorporates multiple cultures dispersed over a vast geography.

While citizenship education may be considered a shared goal of all the subjects in the curriculum, social studies has traditionally assumed primary responsibility for it. Hence, citizenship education as currently conceived and practiced is best sought in social studies programs. Evidence strongly suggests that social studies education focuses primarily on government. That is, citizenship education continues to be firmly wedded to the centrality of government in building the nation-state. Emphasis is rarely deflected from government and related political activities even among critics of current citizenship programs—many of whom advocate approaches of their own. While some of the above is vital in creating a sense of national cohesion among a heterogeneous population, it is argued that these are insufficient in building a sense of community. Indeed, in several critical ways, current approaches encourage feelings of alienation from the community. It is further proposed that the concept of citizenship education needs to include prosociality in order to overcome this severe limitation, and begin the essential process of “community” building.

It is the purpose of this article to develop the above themes by: (1) highlighting the major thrust of citizenship education in the social studies, (2) identifying some of the problems associated with this approach, (3) reviewing some supplementary citizenship education proposals, and (4) elaborating on the concept of prosociality and its potential contribution towards developing the “community” aspect of citizenship.

Citizenship and Social Studies

“Citizenship education is commonly considered to be a major goal—perhaps the major goal—of social studies education” says James Shaver in a
lead article of the November, December 1981 issue of *Social Education*. Shaver was merely reaffirming what is perhaps axiomatic within the profession—citizenship education is at the heart of the social studies. In implementing its objective, social studies education places the nation state at the center of student study.

The social studies curriculum is typically organized in what has come to be called an “expanding horizons” framework within a “spiral curriculum.” This means that students usually begin with the study of “self” in kindergarten, move on to families, communities, the state, nation and the globe as they ascend the grades. The “spiral” part refers to that portion of the curriculum which is studied more than once on different levels of complexity, such as United States history and government once in elementary school and at least once more in senior high. While the pattern is somewhat flexible, it is nonetheless the predominant one across the country.

Of all subjects in the social studies curriculum from kindergarten through 12, *history and civics* are dominant. That is, these subjects are generally required of all students and the total numbers of students at the high school enrolled in these courses tend to exceed all others. Hence, the content of these subjects as they relate to citizenship education is instructive.

The dominant concern of social studies programs in *history and civics* is *government*, expressed both in textbooks and in teacher practice. Textbooks remain the primary instructional vehicle throughout the nation, and the social studies is no exception. This is the conclusion of “Project SPAN,” a major study conducted by the Social Science Education Consortium and sponsored by the National Science Foundation (Superka, et al., 1980). Moreover, the dominant instructional modes continue to be “large group, teacher-controlled recitation and lecture, based primarily on the textbook” (Shaver, Davis and Helburn: 1981, 151). John Goodlad (1980) confirms this, adding only workbook, worksheets and quizzes to the routines. Hence, the content of textbooks determine most of what is taught in public schools—and the content of *history and civics* texts exemplify most of what is probably currently being taught about citizenship education.

*National political history is the dominant orientation of history texts.* Texts on United States history (encountered typically for the first time in the fourth or fifth grades) concentrate on the activities of government—its founders, heroes, leaders, officials and behaviors. Social and intellectual history is given some attention in selected books but the primary emphasis is unvarying. Figures prominently discussed include those who have contributed to the development of national political ideology, political activists, those who have helped expand national boundaries, and government officials—particularly presidents. Although allocated space and interpretations differ, figures like Paine, Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt are the “stuff” of history texts.

The implicit message communicated via this orientation is that the most important historical events of the nation have been concerned with the cen-
tral institution of the nation state—that is, government. If citizenship education is indeed the central goal of the social studies and history texts one of the key barometers of its classroom implementation, then it is fair to suggest that what is being taught is the centrality of government to citizenship.

The above message, implied only in history texts, is made more explicit however in those texts which are commonly used for courses whose purpose is explicitly "citizenship education," namely, civics texts.

"Civics" courses are generally taught in junior high school and then again in senior high. Both common parlance and social studies reflect the view that "civics," citizenship and government are integrally intertwined, frequently interchangeable and almost synonymous. The 1976 edition of Webster's Dictionary, for example, gives ten definitions of "government" and only one for "civics"—which bears out the point. "Civics," according to Webster's, is the "study of the workings of the national and local government esp. as the subject of a secondary school course suited as training for citizenship." Civics texts share this perspective.

For one thing, books which include the term "civics," "citizen" or "government" in their titles share similar purposes. For another, they share similar subject matter. The purpose of one text, for example, which includes the term "civics" in its title is "to teach you how to govern, or, in other words, to teach you the art of politics" defined as the "art and science of government" (Ball and Rosce, 1978:9). The purpose of another which includes the word "government" in its title is "... to describe, analyze, and explain the American system of government" (McClenaghan, 1981: Prefatory Note). And still a third text, which includes both "civics" and "citizen" in its title while excluding "government," says its purpose is to "provide a survey of the workings and development of our political processes from earliest times to the present" (Kownslar and Smart, 1980: Introduction).

All civics texts share an unvarying core of subject matter . . . the institution of government. Most commonly, this includes information about the federal government (executive, legislative and judicial), state and local governments, political parties and elections, the Constitution, and some basic American ideas such as representative government, democracy and citizenship. To be sure, there are some differences in emphases and some topical additions. Many civics texts include a section on the economy; some devote considerable attention to "social problems" or to civil rights. Some focus almost exclusively on the formal aspects of government; others include descriptions of the informal processes such as lobbying, protests and the art of compromise. But consensus clearly prevails that the proper focus for citizenship education is government.

Advantages and Problems. The genesis of this approach no doubt lies in our national history and its perpetuation may be the result of what appears to be a universal sense of its presumed usefulness and appropriateness. It has de-
cided advantages, but equally important are its disadvantages. Let us begin with the advantages.

At least four major advantages to the focus on government as the central core of citizenship education can be identified:

1. Government is probably the most powerful social institution for implementing change, hence individuals and groups interested in making a difference need to understand how it works. It can legislate anti-discrimination laws, for example, redistribute income and declare war. The impact of such power is enormous, both in effect and efficiency, although perhaps not quite as quick or as pervasive as some would believe. It is clearly in the interest of a citizenry interested in getting things done to use the power of government as it is able to do so. Knowledge of its machinery is mandatory in this regard.

2. Our form of government is a representative democracy. In order to maintain its representative nature, citizens must become activated in promoting their own interests through the political process. Citizens need both to appreciate this fundamental concept and be encouraged to vote, write letters and lobby on their own behalf.

3. The preservation of a democratic way of life depends on an educated citizenry alert and ever vigilant regarding potential abuses of government. Effective vigilance requires an understanding of the basic principles of government and the use of the corrective legal procedures as necessary.

4. Legitimating government, that is, making the institution of government acceptable to the citizenry at large, helps ensure national stability and harmony. If our government is perceived as responsible and responsive, potential sources of unrest and conflict can be channeled to peaceful means of resolution.

The above represent powerful arguments for the centrality of the institution of government in civic education. But an exclusive focus on government, or even a major focus on government, has the following disadvantages:

1. *It encourages feelings of impotence and alienation.* Governments are, after all, far away and, even if geographically close, frequently inaccessible. Moreover, government processes may be simply too complex for many to understand, let alone master or mobilize.

2. *It tends to externalize the locus of responsibility while minimizing personal accountability.* If government is the focal point of attention, it is an easy target to credit or blame, thus deflecting attention from other social institutions, as well as oneself.

3. *It leaves little for the average citizen to do.* As most civics texts explain, citizens need only obey laws, pay taxes, serve as jury members, testify in court if they have evidence, serve in the armed forces and attend school. Of course, they *should* also vote and support the candidates and issues that best represent their interest. In actuality, none of these activities takes too much time, unless one chooses to plunge into political work, which is not
likely to occur until the years of middle age and to a small percentage of the middle class.

4. It fails to direct students towards those citizen behaviors which build emotionally satisfying relationships and integrative community linkages. Since government is presented as the prime mover, then helping and caring urges, as well as anger and hostility, need to be channeled through its agencies which in turn will take appropriate action. This leaves citizens in the unsatisfying position of mediating some of their most intense feelings through a third party, namely government, and few articulated strategies by which to express these feelings directly to other citizens.

Some balance is required which can maintain the advantages and minimize the disadvantages associated with the conventional approach to citizenship education.

Supplementary Approaches

If undue focus on government and the nation state needs to be amended to include other elements—most particularly elements which serve to build a sense of community and eliminate some of the disadvantages identified above—what might these be? At least four are identifiable, of which the first three have several spokespersons in the field of citizenship education: (1) increased emphasis on communal values, (2) increased emphasis on the process of informed decision making, (3) increased emphasis on the practice of democratic behaviors, and (4) increased emphasis on prosocial citizenship behaviors.

All contribute substantially to the enhancement of community, yet with the exception of the last, all share a fundamental common weakness. Each is briefly described below and some of their potential benefits in the development of a sense of community are noted.

Emphasis on Communal Values. One way to enhance a sense of community and increase citizenship participation is to involve students in an active evaluation of the political process on the basis of clearly enunciated American values. Despite recent emphasis on cultural pluralism and diversity of values, our culture shares several "core" values. Liberty, freedom, representative democracy and equality, for example, are among them, as is diversity itself, although to be sure these concepts may not be identically understood by all.

In a recent publication emphasizing the communal heritage of America, R. Freeman Butts (1980) argues persuasively that at least ten values are key elements of the shared heritage of America. Five of them are designed to promote national cohesion (justice, equality, authority, participation and personal obligation for the public good) while the other five are designed to promote pluralism (freedom, diversity, privacy, due process and international human rights). Civic education, Butts proposes, needs to involve students in the evaluation of our political system (consisting of the political
community, the constitutional regime and the governmental authorities) in relation to these values.

The primary object of the evaluation process proposed by Butts is the "political system." While this concept appears to be broader than that implied by the term "government" alone, its central focus is nonetheless either government or activities which revolve around government. To be sure, however, the development of shared values is essential for any community, and there is reason to believe that a community commitment which is the result of a perceived congruity of values is the least likely to result in conflict or anti-social behavior. Students who use a consistent body of values as a measuring rod of activities are more likely to develop a shared value system than those who merely read about them; and certainly more likely to do so than those who do not hear about them at all. Properly internalized, these values may even be extended to an evaluation of other social institutions and interactions, as well as students' own behaviors.

The Process of Informed Decision Making. Informed decision making is composed of at least two elements: (1) the processes of decision making, and (2) relevant information. The processes are those which might be loosely termed rational public inquiry including communication skills, critical thinking and conventions regarding democratic procedures of discussion. Relevant information generally includes knowledge of the issues as well as the appropriate social science concepts and methods.

Many social studies educators subscribe to the idea that informed public discussion is critical for the maintenance of a democratic society. This point of view has had many adherents in the past and is reflected in at least three current publications on citizenship education. A recent issue of Social Education (November, December, 1981) is largely devoted to illustrating how the concepts of the social sciences might be applied to enhance citizen understanding of social problems. In his book titled Fit for Freedom, H. P. Constans says that responsible citizens are identifiable by five characteristics: they understand our system of government, support its basic ideas, stay informed about social issues, think critically about them and participate actively in society (1980:vi). Steve Cahn (1979) applies much the same thinking to citizenship education in the colleges. The ideal citizen, he claims, needs to possess communication skills, understand the fundamental concepts of history, science and mathematics and be able to think critically about social issues.

The object of "informed decision making" is to help students resolve issues, usually social issues. Social issues are generally public issues concerning matters about which government intervention is being considered. Like the "shared values" approach, "informed decision making" is thus also likely to focus on the political system, particularly as it relates to contemplated political action.

The values of informed decision making tend to be rational values — those
of reason, intelligence and information. The aspiration is that instruction in the fundamentals of the social sciences as well as the appropriate procedures for public inquiry will enhance intelligent and cooperative behaviors. Properly learned, these behaviors can become the norm around which the community at large may cohere as it faces the multiple concerns of its heterogeneous population.

The Practice of Democratic Behaviors. "Practicing" democratic skills in classrooms, schools and communities has been advocated as yet another means of enhancing civic education, although the behaviors emphasized have not always been the same.

Most advocates of this point of view agree that democratic behavior includes respect for all points of view, treating others with dignity, eschewing propaganda techniques in favor of "truth," and rejecting authoritarianism and the exercise of arbitrary power. Practices such as "student government," parliamentary procedures, group action and community service have evolved from this orientation. Among its most recent forms is the "just" school concept (a product of Lawrence Kohlberg's research in moral development) and "community participation" (a generally accepted goal of the social studies advocated by the National Council for the Social Studies and a variety of state and county offices across the country).

The emphasis in this approach is on "acting out" or "living" democratic values, rather than merely studying or talking about them. It is consistent with the "shared values" and informed decision making orientations, with attention shifting, however, from "talking" to "doing." Its justification lies in learning theory which says that participation is more conducive to behavior change than either discussing or reading.

By and large, the object of such behavior is the acquisition of democratic values and processes as they relate to the political system. However, the political system is here clearly extended to include the immediate environment of students; classrooms, schools and communities are experienced as political units in which democratic values can be violated or implemented. Ideally, students' interactive behaviors are most likely to change in this direct form of participation. Students are also more likely to see themselves and their behaviors as part of the political system, and thus subject to the same types of evaluative norms that they would extend to their friends as well as government.

Participation of this type can involve students in a network of positive relationships as well as promote valuable skills. A social climate characterized by mutual respect and esteem does have a powerful impact on attitudes as well as learning. If society members agree regarding the conventions of behavior in relation to personal dignity and status, they have begun an essential task in building a sense of community.

All the above approaches—developing shared values, practicing informed decision making, and democratic behavior—are indeed strategies for devel-
oping group cohesion. They add substantially to civic education by involving students in some type of active participation. But of themselves, singly or in combination, they nonetheless lack at least one ingredient essential for the promotion of an integrated community.

The Missing Element. The critical weakness which all the above share is that the relationships of students to each other are not of primary importance. To be sure, it is important that students conduct themselves properly towards each other and say the right things and share their knowledge—but the relationships are not personal. Students are not expected to assess their neighbors with a view towards responding to their individual needs or for the bestowal of some particular gift, for example. Indeed, individuals are largely replaceable—much like single birds in a flock or single fish in a school. Participation is based on knowledge of and adherence to the accepted conventions—be they agreement to evaluate values in an appropriate manner or making decisions rationally in a democratic fashion. Put another way, the relationships may be described as cooperative and reciprocal, but impersonal.³

Cooperation means working together towards a common goal—the basic relationship of the cooperators is to the goal and not to each other.⁴ Thus, when students evaluate values, share knowledge, or engage in student government, it is not for the purpose of doing something for each other, but rather for the purpose of making some decision.

In reciprocal relationships, the basic linkage is to the commodity or behavior being exchanged: A agrees to treat B with dignity in exchange for similar treatment by B, and A agrees to accept parliamentary procedures in regard to issues raised by B if B will do the same.

Cooperation and reciprocity are fundamental ways of organizing social relationships and communities could simply not exist without them. But relationships based on nothing more than cooperation, reciprocity, interdependence and exchange can result in exclusion and alienation. Exclusion may be the fate of those who have nothing of value to reciprocate (like the uninformed or ill-behaved schoolmate) and feelings of alienation can result from being viewed as a possessor of something of value as opposed to a person of value. An integrated society also requires social interactions in which the basic relationship is persons to each other, and which are characterized at least some of the time by “self-transcendence.”

Prosocial Education. Transcendence and direct relationships lie at the heart of “prosocial behavior.” Prosocial behaviors are those activities undertaken on behalf of others without expectation of reward (Mussen and Eisenberg-Berg, 1977:3-4; Rosenhan, 1972:153). They include such things as helping, sharing and giving and motivations such as care, concern and altruism. They go beyond cooperation, which is based on mutual benefit, and beyond interdependence, which is based on reciprocal satisfaction of needs or exchange.
The concept "prosocial" is relatively new. According to Wispe (1972), it was probably first used by Elizabeth A. Johnson in 1951 to distinguish between "contrasocial" and "prosocial" aggression. The term has evolved considerably since that time and is now generally used in psychological literature to include all types of positive social behaviors.

The range of behaviors included in prosocial acts is wide and diverse, and as is the case with complex social science concepts, there is far from complete consensus regarding meaning and behavioral manifestations. Psychologists tend to agree that prosocial behaviors involve positive social acts in which actors are giving up something to another without any apparent gain to themselves. According to Rosenhan, for example, prosocial behavior includes "concern for others, acts of helpfulness, charitability, self-sacrifice, and courage where the possibility of reward from the recipient is presumed to be minimal or nonexistent and where, on the face of it, the prosocial behavior is engaged in for its own end and for no apparent other" (1972:153). Mussen and Eisenberg-Berg define it in much the same way. "Prosocial behavior," they write, "refers to actions that are intended to aid or benefit another person without the actor's anticipation of external rewards" (1977:3-4).

The aim of prosocial citizenship education is threefold: (1) to encourage the development of caring and concerned citizens, (2) to promote prosocial behaviors, and (3) to develop the cognitive competence necessary for intelligent prosociality.

"Caring" and "concern" are internal feelings which are aroused by a number of factors, not all of which are nearly well-enough understood. Socializing techniques which emphasize explanation but nonetheless have prosocial behavioral expectations appear to be important. Concrete examples of people caught up in dramatic events, the general "humanization" of individuals from diverse cultures, the presentation of caring models with whom students can identify, analysis of the motivations of others as well as information regarding the needs of others can elicit them.

Prosocial behaviors, behaviors which include giving and helping, require among other things, directives and concrete examples. In schools, they might represent such things as helping younger children tie their shoes, or asking an angry or distressed peer "what's the matter?," carrying an object for the clearly overloaded or helping someone with a homework assignment. In communities, it might mean greeting the neighborhood newcomers, volunteering services at the recycling center or hospital, avoiding or aborting a "fight" between neighbors, or helping the proverbial "little old lady to cross the street." Extending to the nation or globe, it could involve a feeding project, a letter writing campaign on behalf of known torture victims, or volunteering time for the Red Cross or Easter Seal.

The third component, cognitive competence, must not be neglected lest prosocial concern and behavior become what John Dewey called "offensive
condescension, a harsh interference, or an oleaginous display of complacent kindliness" (1922:293). Kenneth Boulding calls them "pathologies." Without bounds or limits, integrative behaviors can result in "tyrannies of persuasion, unduly demanding parents or children, religious intolerance and persecution and xenophobia. . . ." (1978:17). At the very least, a lack of intelligence may lead to misguided efforts such as a food project which leaves potential recipients hungrier, or "human rights" efforts which result in abuses of the intended beneficiaries.

Cognitive competence in this context would include person perception, or understanding the role of the other, evaluating the nature of the contemplated behavior and its likely consequences, analyzing the cost and benefits, identifying the needed resources and predicting the response of the helpee. It would also mean distinguishing among prosocial concepts (such as the differences between generosity, sharing and altruism) and understanding generalized prosocial behavior patterns, such as that they are more likely to occur among family members than among strangers, or that most (if not all) societies exhibit some types of prosociality. Just learning deceptively simple things, such as who is the best contact in the event of a particular health emergency or a domestic quarrel, or even recognizing when intervention of some type is called for, require high degrees of cognitive competence.

**Extending Prosociality Through Study: Some Guiding Principles**

It is probable that prosocial behaviors are best learned through direct face-to-face participation with others—the mode in which a sense of community is most likely to be fostered. Yet, a sense of community restricted only to those persons with whom there is a direct relationship is indeed a limited one—hardly sufficient to develop the basis for a national community let alone a global one. To extend it so as to encompass strangers (past and present) within the nation state and the globe requires extending the student’s world through assorted instructional materials, particularly textbooks. While this offers many possibilities, we offer the following suggestions as examples of guiding principles:

1. **Prosociality should be added to the normative criteria by which the behaviors of national and global “heroes” are measured.** Was it helpful, caring, compassionate and did it serve the needs of others could become typical questions by which actions of figures such as Jefferson, Jackson and Lee could be assessed. Far less important than answering the question is merely raising it, for simply registering the norm of prosociality in the lexicon of evaluative criteria can exert a moral force in the same way that concepts such as justice and equality do.

2. **Students need to recognize that altruism and care are roots of political behavior as much as greed and ambition.** This means that concern for others should be shown as an existent motivation of some political figures at least some of the time. This does not mean of course substituting simplistic senti-
mentality for complexity—it does mean acknowledging the presence of prosocial motivations among others. It is thus important to personalize political figures—to present accounts of presidents, judges, lobbyists and political workers in such a way that students have the opportunity to infer multiple motivations—among which opportunism, ambition and self-centeredness may have as much credibility as altruism and compassion, even in relation to a single given act.

This implies personalizing the institution of government as well. The current pattern, exemplified by civics texts, is to attribute all kinds of helping behavior to this rather abstract institution. “Government,” for example, is credited with regulating unfair business practices, redistributing resources through income taxes, protecting the civil rights of minorities and “taking care” of the poor and the aged. But it is not quite clear whether this behavior is based on threat—the threat of citizen protest or insurrection—or simply doing what people expect as the price for remaining in office. Moreover, government itself is an abstraction—no more capable of compassion than anger. If students are supposed to recognize these as prosocial activities then they will need to be personalized so as to include the behaviors and motivations of identified legislators, civil servants and others.

3. Students need to become aware of the prosocial activities of ordinary people much like themselves, so that they perceive opportunities for directing their own prosocial impulses in potentially effective ways. Studying the purposes and activities of local, national and international helping agencies outside of government is one way of doing this. Amnesty International, CARE, the Red Cross and the Urban League, for example, are organized efforts to extend direct help to individuals subject to torture, hunger, hurricanes, earthquakes, disease, unemployment and educational deprivation. They represent the efforts of millions of volunteers as well as billions of philanthropic dollars (Reddy, 1980: 270-371). Descriptions of such organizations and the people who serve in them should be given prominent attention so that students not only learn about such resources, but may also choose to volunteer their own services.

4. Students need to learn prosocial skills. “Skills” basically refer to the “how to” of expressing prosocial behavior, whether in relation to a dramatic rescue activity, the application of first aid or the more routine composition of a letter of sympathy. In civic life, it should include the study of community relationships as they are manifested in the routine and not-so-routine kindnesses of neighbors, strangers, store keepers, teachers, friends, parents and children.

As the study of economic life is intended to alert students to the conventions of the market place, so the study of civic life should acquaint students with the conventions of expressing care and concern for others regardless of social role, age, sex, ethnic identification or occupation. Students need to learn about prosocial civic life, for example in an urban tenement house.
(where neighbors might mind another's children, or mend another's broken plumbing), or in street play (as it may relate to young children, the disabled or the old). They might study the behaviors of friends and siblings at varying age levels and within different subcultures. They need opportunities to analyze and evaluate these behaviors in relation to actors and receivers, as well as other members of the community. They need also to learn that prosociality characterizes the behaviors of individuals of all types, and that they are frequently quite satisfying both to the doers and receivers.

**Integrating Citizenship, Community and Prosociality**

Given the assumption of the responsibility to teach citizenship by educators, it is rather astonishing that so little attention has been given to prosociality. Does this represent an oversight or is it perhaps a deliberate exclusion? Is prosociality, for example, incompatible either with the American concept of "citizen" or "education"? Does it threaten core American values such as "individualism" or "liberty" or would it impose a sense of coercive virtue on what is now considered legitimate public choice? Might it substitute conformism for critical intellectual evaluation? We need to address these questions, but we may also need to act before they are fully answered.

According to John Agresto (1981), our founding fathers admired nobility of character and selflessness, and indeed believed government could not exist for long without them, but they also believed that a government organized around such ideals would fail. As Agresto observes, Alexander Hamilton believed "we must take man as we find him and the private vice of primary self-interest could be turned to public benefit if all could advocate their own . . . the consequence being a balancing of self-interests in which moderation and a "higher moral tone" would emerge. Agresto says these premises are essentially correct; citizens acting out of private interests "still often help their neighbors in order that their neighbors might, some day, help them," and as far as ourselves: "We are a nation that speaks of self-interest and repeatedly acts out of charity."

Yet, there are current signs which suggest that Agresto’s views may have been more appropriate when communities were indeed rural and small, and neighbors learned from each other as well as accessible political institutions how to negotiate the translation of private vice to public virtue. That this may no longer be the case is attested to by many observers. Upon returning to the United States after an absence of some years, Jerome Bruner, noted for his work on cognition, expressed shock at what he believed to be the saturation of American society with appeals to self-interest (1982). Amitai Etzioni (1983), social critic, deplores the decline of "civility" without which he feels a democratic society cannot long endure. Even religion, according to sociologist Robert Bellah, is suffering from an excessive privatism which abjures the public vision (1983:4). In this context, supplemented by the facts of a distant and complex government bureaucracy and a heterogeneous
population, it may be essential to introduce the concept of "transcendence" into the marketplace of democratic ideas, and into the concept of citizenship education in schools. As Kenneth Boulding points out, societies cohere for many reasons, including fear, mutual goals and interdependence. But as he so ably elaborates, only those relationships which have to do with love, status and identity serve to integrate societies by increasing the sum total of benevolence (1978:277). Prosociality is one of those integrative activities.

**Conclusion**

It has been suggested in the above that citizenship education, as currently practiced in the public schools, tends to concentrate on the institution of government. It has been further suggested that this emphasis is doing less than it might in the way of building an integrated community—indeed, it may actually be encouraging citizenship alienation. Reshifting some of this focus so as to incorporate prosociality in deed and in study may help encourage a greater sense of community.

The object of this paper has been to highlight the need for prosocial education and suggest at least one possible direction for incorporating it into the public schools. It has focused on social studies particularly, since it is this subject area which has generally assumed primary responsibility for citizenship education. Clearly, however, prosocial education has implications much beyond—extending to other subjects, teaching strategies, school climate and the relationship of schools to other societal institutions. This writer hopes that educators will increasingly turn their attention to the serious study of prosociality in educational settings. Such study should be considerably facilitated because of the pioneering efforts of psychologists during the past two decades.

In the meantime, educational practitioners—teachers, curriculum developers and textbook writers—have opportunities for incorporating prosociality into current practices and programs. An appropriate place to start may be the social studies. In so doing, they can begin to address one of the key problems of contemporary society—namely, the loss of community—in an acceptable academic context.

**Endnotes**

¹These distinctions are analogous to the concepts of *Gesellschaft* (society) and *Gemeinschaft* (community) developed by Ferdinand Tonnies (1957) to explain different types of social organizations. A *Gesellschaft* is characterized by instrumental relations in which persons are perceived as vehicles for satisfying other ends. In a *Gemeinschaft*, however, relationships are an end unto themselves. Instrumental relationships tend to dominate urbanized industrialized societies, whereas in small towns personal relationships as an end unto themselves are more likely to prevail. Martin Buber (1957) is probably the best known contemporary advocate for the values of community based on "I-Thou" dialogic relationships.

²This inference is based on the classic study of nineteenth century communes done by Rosabeth Kanter (1968) in which she identified three types of group commitments which formed "a
scale similar to that which may be proposed for the development of morality in children." The first form, "continuance commitment," is similar to the stage of moral obedience based on punishments and rewards; the second, "cohesion commitment," is based on "emotional attachments to others." The third, "control commitment," is morality resulting from an internalized code. Only the last involves an evaluation of the group's moral values and if perceived as congruent with those of the participant, is least subject to "defiance, challenge to authority, or ideological controversy...." (501-2)

This is not to deny that personal relationships may develop out of cooperative and reciprocal ones. In that event, they are a by-product of the relationship and not its goal.

The idea of a "common" benefit in the act of cooperation is probably generally perceived. However, the significance of the relationship in cooperative activities was noted by Margaret Mead some fifty years ago. "In cooperation," she wrote, "the goal is shared and it is the relationship to the goal (italics mine) which holds the cooperating individuals together...." Thus, if two men participate in a hunt (together or separately) "in order to obtain meat for a feast in which both are interested, this is cooperation" (1937:17).

See the thirtieth yearbook of the National Council for the Social Studies, Patterson (1960), Butts (1980), Cahn (1979) and Constans (1980) as examples of more recent emphases.

References


We are seeking critical reviews of scholarly works related to the concerns of social educators. This includes books on education, the social sciences, history, philosophy, research and any other works which might make a contribution to the field.

Normally, textbooks will not be reviewed with the exception of those which appear to advance theory and research. Essay reviews of two or more works on the same topic will be considered if they conform to manuscript guidelines for reviews. Reviews which exceed the guidelines for length must be handled on a case by case basis as space permits. Reviewers who have suggestions for reviews which might exceed the guidelines are urged to contact the book editor prior to submitting the review.

Reviewers should provide sufficient detail regarding the book's substance and approach, including positive and negative evaluations where relevant. Finally, the review should include the specific importance of the book for social educators.

**Manuscript Form**

The length may vary from 1,000 to 2,000 words; the manuscript must be typed, double-spaced (including quotes) on 8½" × 11" paper. The format is as follows for the top of the first page of the review, left side:

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Books


Reviewed by Beverly M. Gordon, Col. of Education, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210.

The political nature of social scientific communities and the paradigms they employ to explain reality has been well documented (Popkewitz, 1980). Because paradigms teach people to think in certain ways they influence and reinforce the societal normative structure, making it difficult for new paradigms and modes of rationality to emerge. In history, for example, the stated and unstated assumptions and frames of reference that a historian employs to structure his or her view of the world and to guide his or her historical account has critical impact on how he or she interprets a situation. Mainstream historical literature used from elementary to university classes embraces dominant social and cultural thought and institutions as its normative structure. Because of such normative structuring, the image of Afro-Americans in history as well as in educational research and literature has been interpreted as pathological and deviant (Gordon, 1982).

The reason such paradigms persist as commonsense thought and rationality is because of the bankruptcy of assumptions, models, hypotheses and conclusions in dominant social science paradigms regarding Afro-Americans. Part of this bankruptcy is due to the racism, stereotypes and ignorance that still permeate American society. Another reason, I believe, is that Black scholars of the past two decades did not participate to the extent that they should have in the societal critiques being waged in curricular reconceptualist thought (see for example Pinar, 1975). Finally, the most critical and difficult problem that must be addressed by Black scholars is their reliance on Euro-American cultural paradigms to guide their own social thought and political ideology. Although many Black leftists used socialist positions to frame their own political and ideological stances, the ideology they employed emerged out of western European culture and thought and was inappropriately applied into the American arena without major modifications. Others (i.e., Aronowitz, 1981), are also beginning to articulate the differences in American and European social, cultural and political contexts and the implications of these on neo-Marxist thought.

While critical theory has been a potent force in illuminating the ideological and political aspects of schooling such as the relationship between schooling and the reproduction of cultural, political and economic order and domination in society, it must be acknowledged that critical theory was generated in and greatly influenced by western European historical and in-
tellectual thought. What should be a concern to curriculum theorists and Black scholars alike is that critical social science itself could become another form of western cultural hegemony, because it is normative and substantive as well as formal (Popkewitz, 1980). The problem is that Black intellectuals themselves have not come to terms with formulating their own normative structures.

This observation of the necessity for Black intellectuals to participate in political and ideological debates and social theory construction is not new. It was raised as early as 1913 by Arthur Schomburg and most recently by Harold Cruse (1967), Turner and Perkins (1976), James N. Jones (1979) and Manning Marable (1981) among others. Contemporary Black scholars like Marable and Jones realize that socialism alone will not insure the abolition of racism. In fact at this moment, "there is not . . . a body of knowledge which could be described as a marxian theory of racism which can be directly applied to our understanding of American social reality" (Marable, 1981). What seems to be needed is an Afro-American epistemology—a mode of rationality generated out of the cultural context and thought of Afro-American society. Mary Frances Berry and John W. Blassingame's new book, *Long Memory, The Black Experience in America*, has provided an historical foundation upon which such an epistemology could be built.

Raymond Williams has stated that culture "is a record of a number of important and continuing reactions to changes in our social, economic and political life" (Childs, 1981:43). Furthering this in his study of DuBois' conception of culture within Afro American political thought, John Brown Childs suggests the emergence of a concept of Afro-American culture as "an historically grounded way of existence" (Childs, 1981). *Long Memory* speaks to this, as a provocative and illuminating interpretation of the Black experience in America. Berry and Blassingame have disseminated historical and cultural knowledge not often taught either in public schools or in teacher inservice training. This in itself is a commentary on the necessity for educators to reexamine the kind and quality of academic capital disseminated in their classes.

In the paradigm put forth by Berry and Blassingame, the history of Blacks is the dialectical relationship between Blacks and racism and capitalism from the sixteenth century diaspora of African people throughout the Americas to contemporary times. This provides an analytical framework that clarifies the nature of the Black experience within American society, and its importance cannot be understated. Previous interpretations of Afro-American history, while providing adequate historical accounts, raised inappropriate and biased questions, in part by employing paradigms based on a deficiency and inferiority theory that viewed the Black experience exclusively as a result of white oppression. Berry and Blassingame have dispelled such misconceptions of the Black experience by showing that Afro-American culture and life was forged out of the "complex combinations" of African
Tradition, Euro-American culture and "adjustments made to slavery" (p.71). *Long Memory* refutes those who argue that Blacks have no cultural foundations of their own.

Berry and Blassingame tell us the title *Long Memory* was selected to signify that Blacks were not "an atomized rootless people who began each generation without any sense of what preceded them. Whatever they do, black people talk to each other. They have always done so. The searing vignettes passed on by old sages to youth made memory itself an instrument of survival" (p.x.). One does not have to look far to find the cultural connection between this instrument and ancestral heritage of the griot (the village oral historian) in Western Africa, where the majority of slaves were stolen.

*Long Memory* provides the reader with a series of themes and issues in history, culture, institutions (from church and family to penal and educational), politics, economics and nationalism selected as the most revealing aspects of Afro-American history and allows Blacks to speak for themselves through the use of autobiographies, newspapers, theatre, poetry, music, cartoons, magazines, speeches, novels, and folklore. Each of the eleven chapters can be read as a self contained historical essay which traces the connection between past lessons and present day situations, and provides an understanding of why and how certain situations came to be.

The chapter on "The Battle For Education" is especially poignant. It points out historically that Blacks viewed education as a tool to fight oppression. It also points out the relationship of education (or the lack of it) to the economic and political structuring of societal hierarchical structure and domination. Moreover, it implies that the fight against racial discrimination in education has been a mixed blessing because it seems to have precipitated the takeover of traditionally Black institutions of higher learning by white administrators, faculty and students, while desegregation has put Blacks no closer to integrated quality education for equity and parity. Instead desegregated education has isolated Black students from their community, and from those who would teach them their history, lest Black schools ever again reproduce the kind of thought and leaders of the 1960's movements who were educated in those Black segregated schools. The message in this chapter is clear: if Blacks are to continue to view education as a means to advance and gain political power and economic parity they must take a long hard look at themselves, the knowledge which is, and is not disseminated to their children, and the necessity of Black controlled institutions that not only disseminate the linguistic and technical capital essential to adult competition in society, but that also preserves and disseminates a cultural mode of rationality for Blacks.

Despite its strengths, *Long Memory* does have some conceptual shortcomings. For example, the authors ignore the area of Black philosophy. A chapter on the history and thought of Afro-American philosophy would have been quite revolutionary and unique. While there is fleeting mention
of philosophy in the chapter on "Black Nationalism," Berry and Blassingame err in omitting the contributions of Black philosophers such as W.E.B. DuBois, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Carter G. Woodson, Oliver C. Cox, Paulin J. Hountondji, Edward Wilmot Blyden, Jerome R. Riley, Rufus Lewis Milford Perry, Aime Cesaire, Alain Leroy Locke, William Thomas Fountaine, as well as the contemporary and influential African philosophy of Ali Mazrui, Jordan K. Ngubane and John S. Mbiti among many others. Inclusion of a chapter on the history of such philosophical thought would help to correct the pervasive American misconception that philosophy was an unexplored domain for Blacks, or an exclusive intellectual domain only for whites.

Another weakness is the omission of a chapter that synthesizes the book and addresses the implications of this history for Blacks. The absence of an analysis and conclusions is disappointing, costly and unfortunate for several reasons. While Berry and Blassingame view "African liberation as the next assignment . . ." (p. 423) there are lessons yet to be learned in America that will provide the insight necessary to participate in the international arena in the 'next assignment,' especially with the advent of the post-industrial technological age which is now upon us. For example, ideological and technical questions about the equity of the industrialization of the Third World while the West advances into a technological era will have to be addressed by Blacks, and since America holds the largest concentration of educated Black scholars and technicians there is a communal responsibility for Afro-Americans to participate in this dialogue. By not taking the next step of analyzing the significance and implications of this history, we miss an opportunity to hear the two historians reflect on their own work and speculate on its meaning for the future of Blacks in America and in the international community.

The generations of underclasses now living in urban and rural centers across the nation are proof that the war of racism and capitalism continues, especially in light of the New Federalist ideology out of Washington. Moreover, with the dismantling of black schools, especially elementary and secondary, the current generation of Black children will not have accessibility to either high status knowledge or to their own history and its meaning within American society. A statement in the book sums up the situation rather well: "Unless we as a [Black] people do some writing of a historical nature, we may but expect that much that would be inspiring and educative to our youth, will be buried in the past, while much that is unfavorable, and depressing, will be exhibited as true history" (p. 275).

Long Memory is a biography that provides an education for all audiences. Those of us in curriculum theorizing and praxis, upon reading this work, should reflect on our assumptions concerning the conceptual handles that we legitimate for analyzing individual and group characteristics. We might also want to reassess the implications of our roles as knowledge producers
and disseminators in the relationship between schooling and societal reproduction.

References


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*The Chaneysville Incident* is a powerfully original historical novel that has the added appeal of being relevant and adaptable for social science educators to use in the classroom. It is the story of a young history professor’s brilliant and bitter search into the history of his family, the history of Bedford County, Pennsylvania, and the history of the United States. John Washington, the leading character, knows that something mysterious happened in Chaneysville, and David Bradley, the author, takes us on a bus trip back to Washington’s home town and a historical trip back through the generations and allows us to discover the tragic secrets of his heritage.
And so I settled myself in my seat and took another pull on my flask and looked out the window at the mountainsides black with pine, and thought about how strange home is: a place to which you belong and which belongs to you even if you do not particularly like it or want it, a place you cannot escape, no matter how far you go or how furiously you run; about how strange it feels to be going back to that place and . . . , even if you hate it, to get a tiny flush of excitement when you reach the point where you can look out the window and know, without thinking, where you are; when the bends in the road have meaning, and every hill a name.

In the course of this pilgrimage we are taught something about history, sociology, psychology, and ethics.

History students will see an historian at work doing what he loves most—research. They will learn about the need to “know it all” that motivates research and about the importance of choosing personally relevant subjects for study. They will learn the lesson that John Washington learned as a boy, “That’s when I learned about knowing nothing can get you humiliated and knowing a little bit can get you killed, but knowing all of it will bring you power.” Bradley’s descriptions of regional traditions and 19th century U.S. history, especially the institution of slavery, ring with power, as well as authenticity.

Sociology students will also do well to learn from Bradley’s sharp social class consciousness. As John Washington prepares to take the bus trip back to his home town in western Pennsylvania, for instance, Bradley compares the sanitary facilities of America’s three modes of public transportation—airplanes, trains, and busses—with the keen eye of a sociologist who thinks that the class system is systematically unjust. His astute powers of observation are also brought to bear on the tragic dynamics of black-white race relations as John Washington struggles to see the gray in his relationship with his black mother, his white lover, and his father’s friends, both black and white. The themes of social class and race are inseparably linked for John Washington as he deals with his black self in a white collar.

Psychology students, however, may point out that Bradley’s class consciousness has roots in Washington’s conflicted childhood. John Washington, as a child and as an adult, was caught between the middle class of his mother and maternal grandfather versus the lower class of his father and paternal grandfather. Both families thought he was “special” and thus gave him a special burden. His struggle to find a place for himself, and thereby to find himself, is intensified by his father’s death when John was nine years old. Will he become a Methodist mama’s boy or a moonshining father’s son? Out of this struggle evolves a conscious and almost mystical idealization of the father he never fully knew and of his paternal ancestors. John Washington’s daddy, Moses Washington, “Always thought things out, knowed what he wanted to do an’ what was the right way to go about it.”
Similarly, John uses intellectual anticipation as a coping mechanism with the utmost finesse and he is most helpless when the unanticipated happens. John Washington's unconscious or repressed identification with his mother and maternal ancestors, however, also has clear influence on his life choices.

It is the moral domain of social education, however, that is primarily addressed by his book. The evils of moral degradation and the power of personal moral principles revealed in the characters will not necessarily push students to moral maturity but will make them think. The following words of an old spiritual are quoted near the beginning of the book, “And before I'll be a slave I'll be buried in my grave, and go home to my Lord, and be free.” They are quoted again near the end of the book but, after wrestling with the moral issues involved in the tragic incident, few readers will fail to see added depths of ethical meaning in them.

Despite the book's broad appeal and pedagogical relevance, there is a weakness that must be noted. Bradley uses Washington's woman friend, a psychiatrist, in a contrapuntal manner. At times it works. When, at an intense point in the mystery, she shouts, “I don't want local color. I don't want good stories. I want to understand what you're doing and why you're doing it,” the reader cannot help but agree with her. At other times, however, her character is extraneous or annoying. Washington also discusses such topics as manumission and the underground railroad in a style that is reminiscent of superb college lectures, but lectures nevertheless. Washington is, of course, a history professor so the chunks of history dropped into chapters are not necessarily out of character. Rather the general problem is that these techniques and discourses are not integrated into the structure of the novel as well as some might prefer. Yet, *The Chaneysville Incident* is still a masterpiece on many levels. In terms of a black perspective, it equals James Baldwin's *Go Tell It On the Mountain* and Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*. In terms of the personal conflict from social mobility, it rivals D. H. Lawrence's novels and Thomas Wolfe's *You Can't Go Home Again*. In terms of class consciousness, it illustrates Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb's *The Hidden Injuries of Class*. If added to a course reading list, it should cause students to learn with pleasure.
Abstracts

Assessing the Relationship Between Information Processing Capacity and Historical Understanding

In the past decade a number of studies have been conducted relating to student understanding in history. These studies have involved a Piagetian developmental framework and have suggested that historical understanding is a developmental construct. Age norms for historical understanding have been found to be higher than for other subject areas such as mathematics and science. The conclusion has been that understanding in history develops later than in other subjects, and implications have been drawn for curriculum and instruction in history. The present study was designed primarily to test the theoretical adequacy of previous studies. In particular, it introduced a new variable into the existing research paradigm. That variable, information processing capacity, has been identified in the literature of cognitive psychology and the results of the study have indicated in a tentative way its potential for future research in history education.

Issues in a Relatively Nonrationalized Study:
Suggestions for Interpretive Research

Alternatives to common practice in educational research are discussed under four questions: Is it always desirable for educational research to be rationalized? Is an empirical-analytic research frame of reference always superior to other traditions? Can interpretive research be used to expand the limit situation of educational studies? What role ought subjectivity play in interpretive research? It is argued that sometimes the best research is not rationalized, does not follow a tightly structured plan. It is also argued that a dualistic view of reality requires that some educational research be interpretive and subjective. Multiple meanings of the term "subjective" are discussed, along with suggestions for their relevance to educational research.

Educational Attainment and Political Attitudes:
An Effect of Schools or Schooling?

This paper investigates the relationship between school-based variables (years of schooling, curriculum track, grades, college plans, and extracurricular activities) and the development of political attitudes from adolescence into early adulthood. Longitudinal data on the development of political interest, political alienation, racial equality attitudes, and anti-Vietnam war attitudes are analyzed. Multipole regression techniques are used to trace the development of these attitudes from adolescence into early adulthood and to assess the relative impact of school-based variables on political attitudes.
Teaching by Exemplar: On the Dialectical Nature of Social Science

The authors present a rationale, suggestions for use, and an example of the instructor-prepared dialog, an instructional technique designed to be used in social science courses at the advanced undergraduate and graduate levels. The need for this technique arose from the observation that students often have difficulty in grasping the fundamentally dialectical nature of the social sciences. In good part, this problem is due to the fact that students' commonsense notions as to science as an orderly enterprise contrast sharply with the conceptual and methodological disarray which seems to characterize social science. Instructor-prepared dialogs have proven to be helpful in organizing the state of paradigmatic conflict for students, and are an excellent point of departure for helping to resolve and synthesize conflicting perspectives and findings. The example dialog takes the form of a debate between a proponent of formal education as a vehicle for social reform and a critic of such strategies.

Putting "Community" into Citizenship Education: The Need for Prosociality

The nation-state, in which citizens are linked together by a formal set of obligations and privileges mediated through government, is the central focus of citizenship education. This does less than it might in the way of building "community," which is based on an emotional linkage of individuals towards each other. The social malaise of the times, as well as the remoteness and alienating factors associated with government, indicate that more needs to be done in the schools to develop a sense of community. One way of doing this is through the deliberate introduction of prosociality in citizenship education.

The aims of prosocial citizenship education are: (1) to encourage the development of caring citizens, (2) to promote prosocial behaviors, and (3) to develop the cognitive competence necessary for intelligent prosociality. Because it is based on the personal recognition of others and self-transcendence, prosocial education is a potentially powerful integrative source for the development of community bonds.

The major purposes of this article are: (1) to highlight the nation-state/government focus of citizenship education currently, (2) to elaborate on the problems associated with this approach, and (3) to suggest some alternatives based on the concept of prosocial citizenship education.
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