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Theory and Research in Social Education

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Images of Society and the Analysis of Ideologies in the Social Subjects

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Introduction

Curriculum research, once so moribund and insecure, has struggled to reach its present state of relative popularity and productivity. Nevertheless, it remains diverse and eclectic in its theoretical, political and educational practices, and has probably prospered more from its undeniable importance than its promise of a progressive and cohesive enterprise. This paper reviews a typical case—the critical analysis of ideological content in the social subjects. The argument traces the pitfalls of eclecticism, and seeks a more unified base on which concerted and fundamental work might be organized.

Analysts have long sought to criticize the ideational content of the curriculum for its political implications. In its earliest forms, such critiques focussed on overt value judgments and factual inaccuracies which may have revealed xenophobic or moral prejudices. Today, our understanding of how ideologies are reproduced is more sophisticated. Recent attention has been more concerned with the hidden curriculum than overt subject content. We are even willing to entertain ideas like repressive tolerance (Marcuse, 1969) in explaining how dominant ideologies are sustained.

This is a welcome and overdue reform, since the earlier conceptions of ideology formation were much too simplistic. But the pendulum may have
swung too far, for the analysis of subject content, having been forsaken for the study of other manifestations of ideology, has become a peripheral and fragmented aspect of curriculum analysis. This paper reviews this present state, and calls for a more comprehensive approach to the problem, and its restoration to the agenda of mainstream curriculum research.

**Approaches to social content analysis.** The following review will show that fragmentation has been a result of the diversity of motivating interests. The evaluator, the historian, the sociologist, the discipline expert, the social critic, have all analyzed the social content of the curriculum, but they have not developed a common approach which might use what is best in each. The evaluator has had the clearest task—to judge the suitability of the selection and organization of content in the light of curricular aims. Intrinsic and extrinsic assessments of content (Scriven, 1967) are both based primarily on criteria provided by the aims of the course, but at the risk of ignoring unintended effects of content which, perhaps peripheral to explicit aims, nonetheless impinge on other important issues. Analytical schema which do acknowledge these unintended aspects still face the problem of producing criteria by which they may be judged. Typically the formal schemes of analysis limit their specifications to identifying values, rather than evaluating them, with the untenable implication that there is some neutral position from which all values can be distinguished.\(^3\) Intended as instruments to be systematically applied to many different curricula, their formulaic nature can produce problems of categorization, as in the artificial but frequent distinction between cognitive and affective content.

No such predetermined schemes of analysis would satisfy the historian, of course, and the focus of historical interest is more likely to be drawn from the political and social values expressed in school texts, and what these reveal about the ideology of the times or the intentions of the school system (Chancellor, 1970; Goldstrom, 1972; Jones, 1977). While the ideological positions from which such analyses are made may be clear, if only implicit, the methods of analysis are less so. The first problem is that of determining themes or issues to be investigated.

Goldstrom's description of his methodology in analyzing nineteenth century English schoolbooks is an interesting example, not least for the number of questions it glosses over:

"After a pilot survey of the books involved in this study it became clear that the authors were concerned primarily with imparting religion, prescribing law and order, teaching respect for property and the existing economic structure, and giving children practical instruction of a kind useful to future workmen. The books have been analyzed on the strength of the information each yields on the following five points:

1. Christian instruction (this will be taken to mean theological instruction only . . .)"
2. the class structure
3. domestic and vocational training
4. the outside world
5. good and bad conduct" (Goldstrom, 1972, p. 7).

Just how "it became clear" we are not told, nor how these insights translated into the five categories, or how the categories themselves are related. The suggestion seems to be that these decisions somehow emanated from the text.

In fact, naive empiricism is impossible, and historians bring their own interests and assumptions, their "second-records" (Hexter, 1972) to the task, while nonetheless seeking to preserve the "integrity" of the source. The result will be an interactive process in which the researcher's interest and expectations sensitize him or her to aspects of the text, but also produce unanticipated content, all the while integrating these two elements to some ordered interpretation. Passmore, though misleadingly claiming a process of induction in describing his procedures for interpreting Hume, does illustrate the interaction:

"... an interpretation is suggested by certain passages in Hume; that interpretation is then confirmed by passages I had not previously so much as noticed, which the proposed interpretation serves to illuminate. Or I discover that passages which I previously could not understand now make good sense" (Passmore, 1974, p. 155).

It is the unstated interpretative role of the historian's interests and assumptions which makes the general run of historical curriculum analysis at once so rich in ideas but so inconclusive in solving problems, for the definitions of the problems and the rationale for confronting them often remain idiosyncratic and unclear.

Of those groups interested in the ideology of curriculum content, the most active in what might be called mainstream curriculum research has recently been the sociologists. In focusing on the school as an institution which teaches social relations by controlling them through the organization and distribution of knowledge, the new sociology of education has helped demonstrate that schooling is not transformed into a liberating experience merely by eradicating political indoctrination from history and civics lessons. But given their valid concern for social relationships, sociologists generally have not addressed the nature and role of ideas themselves, the content of the social subjects. Rather, they have analyzed how interpersonal relationships and models of behaviour are mediated through school organization and the language of interaction. "The popularity of the hidden curriculum concept has the effect of replacing knowledge with interpersonalism" (Wexler, 1982, p.276).

Notable exceptions include much of Michael Apple's work, though its level of analysis is often difficult to translate into specific reforms. Apple
proposes three questions as the starting point for studying the legitimation of dominant ideological configurations:

“(1) how the basic day to day regularities of schools contribute to students learning these ideologies;
(2) how the specific forms of curricular knowledge both in the past and now reflect these configurations and
(3) how these ideologies are reflected in the fundamental perspectives educators themselves employ to order, guide, and give meaning to their own activity” (Apple, 1979, p.14).

The sociological emphasis is clear, and even the second question is translated sociologically rather than, say, philosophically:

“The second question asks us to make educational knowledge itself problematic, to pay much greater attention to the “stuff” of curriculum, where knowledge comes from, whose knowledge it is, what social groups it supports, and so on” (p.14).

In similar vein, Gleeson and Whitty (1976) criticize the social studies curriculum from a perspective which advocates a “critical and meaningful” approach to pupils' contacts with their social environment. Emphasizing the process rather than content (to the extent that the two can be separated), their approach, though valuable, is difficult to apply to the problems of studying aspects of society with which pupils have little or no immediate contact, such as the abstractions of political or economic theory, or societies distant in place or time. Here a more rationalist, even scholastic concern for ideas, theories and concepts seems necessary.

But if sociologists have tended to abstract levels of analysis and concern for process, another group of critics has offered quite concrete treatments of specific issues. Motivated to rid the curriculum of discrimination and prejudicial stereotypes, a large literature has developed on the issues of racism, sexism, class prejudice, ethnocentrism and national stereotypes. The focus of this group has probably been closest of all to classroom practice. Committed to manageable reforms on clearly identifiable issues, the critiques seem to have been quite effective, at least at the level of syllabus and materials production. But their strength is also a weakness, for the fragmentary approach to separate issues prevents a comprehensive view of the common concerns fundamental to them all, producing, for example, the irony of sexist comments in books written to combat racism (Zimet, 1976, p.120). Further, limiting the focus to specific issues can lead to a superficial analysis, glossing over more subtle and pervasive manifestations or prejudice. For instance, texts making no reference to race may contain implicit psychological theories from which racist conclusions logically follow.

Finally, there is the long tradition of criticism of curriculum content within the discipline. Historians, geographers, economists constantly sub-
ject their syllabuses and materials to searching comment, and are in a strong position of knowledge and access from which to influence practice. Clearly the analyses they make will tend to be circumscribed by the concerns of the discipline, but this is a major fault only if the discipline itself lacks a variety of perspectives. For instance, radical critiques of ideology in economics courses have been quite frequent (Helm, 1979; Lee, 1974; Romanish, 1983; Szreter, 1972–3), reflecting the tradition of conflicting schools of economic thought (though their success in influencing school curricula is highly doubtful). But in the case of, say, geography, ideology has not generally been questioned, since only recently has there been a critical ideological alternative to dominant explanatory frameworks in social geography, with the development of radical and Marxist perspectives (Smith and Ogden, 1977).

This review of the main exponents of curriculum analysis raises important questions. Is it possible to draw these strands together to identify more comprehensive perspectives for analyzing the ideological content of the social subjects? What would be the main subject of analysis of such a perspective? How would it proceed?

The Nature of Ideology

The foregoing critique has established minimal criteria to which any model of analysis must adhere. It must be explicit in its goals, motivation and procedures, rejecting suggestions of the induction of objective meanings; comprehensive, avoiding the blinkers of single issue analysis; and oriented to the symbolic structure of the texts, so that cultural meanings are revealed to criticism and consequent change.

An explicit analytical procedure must derive from a theory of what it seeks to analyze—in this case a theory of ideology. One perspective on ideological discourse is to see it as a symbolic practice producing rationalisations of social relations and events; in short, as a constitutive language. Ideological discourses are not simply descriptions or concepts or models created from the application of stable categories; they are better seen as dynamic responses to problems in particular historical situations, subject to test and alteration in experience. Their function for individuals is as a system of ideas which creates order, explains, predicts, and justifies, but the process is one of interaction and adaptation rather than the simple application of beliefs. The analogy is the conduct of a conversation rather than the application of labels.

For students or text authors discussing social issues, any statement is constructed from some available system of ideas (most often the dominant one in the culture since it is the most readily available), but the construction is based on what the student or author understands in the system, how they interpret its relevance for what they see to be the issue at hand, and how satisfactory the construction is in providing viable explanations in par-
ticular contexts. Thus from any dominant system of ideas, however unified, can come diverse positions on any issue. However, the diversity drawn from any ideological system cannot be infinite or even comprehensive, for it must always exclude some points of view. In this way, individuals can be seen to be conversing with a system of ideas in an interactive and adaptive fashion, combining ideas to form answers, descriptions, opinions which seem to suit their purposes, but limited always by the extent of their contact with the basic concepts and ideas which constitute the ideologies.

This language analogy has been widely taken up, and provides some interesting methodological possibilities, for if operating in an ideological configuration is a process of combining and adapting elements of some available system of ideas, can we not identify that process by studying the regularities or rules by which people construct these combinations and adaptations? Accordingly, ideological thought can be viewed as a generative process in which interpretations are produced by the operation of a semantic system of symbolic meanings and a syntax of rules. Davis' sociological analysis of the class images research concludes: "The concrete statements or elements of discourse are the clues in a search for rules and regularities which represent an underlying structure" (Davis, 1979, p.48). In the tradition of political philosophy, we find a similar analogy: "... ideological thinking should be considered as the elaboration of a language rendering experience intelligible in the light of, or by reference to, some picture or conception of men as socially related beings" (Robinson, 1980, p.68).

This realization is in line with the recent popularity in social theory of structuralism and especially structural linguistics after Saussure (Giddens, 1979). Its application to how people construe and explain human nature and social events can be illustrated by two approaches which will act as starting points for the method suggested here.

The first is Larrain's (1979) explanation of Greimas' structural semantics. Ideological discourse is seen as having a manifest content of denotative meanings, and a latent content representing an underlying structure of connotations, what Greimas calls a mythical level. "According to this conception, if one can reach the logical model, if one can identify the structures which give coherence to the message, if it is possible to discover the principle which presides over the organization of discourse and which unifies its elements, the analysis of ideology has largely been completed" (Larrain, 1979, p.133). This procedure first establishes the principles of organization and combination of small units (such as identifying central or distinctive concepts or generalizations in the discourse), and tries to derive the rules by which these basic units combine. Larrain is critical of the arbitrariness of such analyses, and their tendency to objectify textual meaning beyond the analyst's interpretation. However, the ideas are suggestive and give some access to a method compatible with the linguistic analogy.

A quite different tradition has provided yet another linguistic interpreta-
tion of the explanation of social events. From the world of conceptual analysis and symbolic logic, a philosophical treatment of common-sense psychology achieves a very similar result. In analysing how people explain social events, attribute motives and character, Morton (1980) argues that commonsense psychology is neither a body of empirical principles like a scientific theory, nor a set of fixed concepts, but that “it consists in a constancy underlying innumerable improvisations and variations in the principles we apply and the concepts we use... It is like... speaking a dialect of a language” (Morton, 1980, p.1). Morton posits a surface pattern of explicit judgments, apparently independent of one another, and beneath it a stratification of implicit concepts, at some points organized by a body of principles. This scheme is subject to “a set of conditions on the ways in which the implicit concepts are related to one another and in which explicit concepts may be related to them... The main effect of the schematism is to constrain the possible combinations of beliefs involving the explicit concepts” (Morton, 1980, p.16).

The production of ideology is thus a cultural symbolic practice which can be deconstructed to reveal its elements and organization. To deconstruct a discourse is to identify its concepts, how their meaning has been derived in history, and what this history may have concealed or excluded. It is, further, to identify “the rhetorical operations that produce the supposed ground of argument, the key concept or premise” (Culler, 1983, p.86). While such a procedure may present a process of signification in an unsatisfactorily static manner (by suggesting that a text has a single essential meaning, rather than a variety of meanings produced by different readings), it can make explicit an underlying pattern of ideas, the images from which ideological statements are wrought.

A necessary part of any analysis is to identify the problem around which the discourse is organized. While descriptions and explanations in the social subjects may present themselves as objective and comprehensive renditions of “the way things are”, they are better understood as statements about problems thought important by the creators of the messages, in terms and concepts which reflect the creators’ ways of approaching and understanding the problems. Any statement can be seen as an answer to an implicit question, and both the statement and the question are constructed in a set of concepts, terms and metaphors. The process operates like a theory, and can be represented in a form here called images.

Images as used here are schema for representing the way theories construct and articulate problems by generating and relating elements such as facts, concepts and generalizations. These relations are constructed according to rules of combination, association and inference. The whole will be manifest in and operate through language with its devices of connotation and metaphor. To identify images in social discourse, analysis must seek the problems, elements, rules and language which comprise them.

The structure of an image can be represented then by these four com-
ponents. First, the image will contain elements whose combination creates the explanation or resolution of the problem. These elements may be relatively simple and discrete terms or concepts, or more complex entities like models, metaphors or other theories. Identifying them will normally be a relatively straightforward matter, beginning with the colligations of the discourse itself and then analyzing or combining them to identify more homogeneous and distinctive elements. This is of course not simply an inductive procedure, but will be guided by hypotheses about the relations between the discourse and typical problems of the field of discourse, and must be informed by knowledge of the history of the field and the social context to which it relates. Clearly, knowledge of the social context will itself be specifiable in terms of some theory, and the theoretical perspective from which any analysis is conducted should be made clear. No deconstruction can claim to be objective if by this is meant that it is free of a purpose and perspective of its own.

Second, the problem to which the discourse is addressed will be identifiable by inferring the question to which the discourse could provide an answer. There will seldom be only one such problem, though some will be more influential than others in selecting and organizing the text explanation. The problem will be formulated and therefore expressed through the terms and concepts of the discourse itself. It should be seen as the synthesizing element of the image which determines the relevance of the other elements.

The third component is the set of rules by which the elements are combined and sequenced for any particular explanation, for the image is a dynamic framework which can generate a multitude of particular judgments, conclusions, comparisons and explanations when called on in any specific situation. These rules are likely to be the most difficult component to identify, requiring in most cases extensive testing of hypothesized rules of combinations and judgment.

Finally, the problem, elements and rules will be embedded in a complex semantic system of jargon, metaphor and connotation, which will provide associations, tone and other elaborations of the structure. This component will pervade all the others, and is one reason why the analysis does not proceed in discrete steps as this outline might suggest. Rather the components form a complex whole, synthesized to varying degrees, but which is progressively outlined as the four components are identified in the analysis.

Examples of this system, implicit or explicit, can be seen in recent analyses of school text books. For instance, in their comparison of nineteenth century and contemporary texts, Barth and Shermis (1980) note that authors’ purposes and their selection of content will be explicable in terms of the “frame of reference” of their historical context, that major limits on the texts’ coverage result from the problems the authors recognize as important, and that terms are chosen and combined in such a way as to produce a judgmental tone favoring some social arrangements and groups over
others. Similarly, Romanish (1983) shows how free enterprise economics
texts in the United States use terms reflecting their origins in a particular
ideology, excluding alternatives, and selecting and presenting only problems
and solutions consistent with the ideology of neo-classical and macro-
economics. Anyon's thorough analysis of history texts identifies similar
processes of selection and omission in the treatment of economic and labor
history, showing again how chosen perspectives on problems dictate the in-
formation, organization and language of the text.5

The present author's analysis of curricula has sought to make explicit
these components of ideology in text book accounts across the range of
social subjects in English secondary schools (Gilbert, in press). In the case
of economics, an analysis of English texts reveals features similar to those
identified by Romanish, allowing for the different context. In looking fur-
ther into these ideological manifestations in economics, it is possible to
identify the basic components and structure of the underlying image. The
image is based on a concept of atomistic individuals with unique and
unlimited wants, and endowed with highly differentiated abilities, who are
regulated by the unseen hand of the market mechanism. This mechanism
ensures an appropriate division of labor and distribution of rewards. The
whole system is said to operate to satisfy community needs in a stable man-
ner through the economic concept of equilibrium. The basic components of
the image are identified, and the manner of their combination shown in
Figure 1. The fundamental problem around which the image is organized is
the satisfaction of individual wants, subtly transposed in the image to com-
munity needs. Around this basic framework are elaborated the selection of
issues and choice of terms similar to those noted by Romanish, as well as a
range of market metaphors and individualist explanations. The result is a
fully fleshed ideology of the capitalist market economy. By identifying how
the problem is defined; the elements of concepts, principles and issues
thought relevant to it; the way these elements are combined to produce
descriptions, explanations and arguments; and the language in which the
whole image is framed, we can represent the structure of the ideology.

Such a model of ideology goes some way to correcting the chaos of
disparate techniques identified earlier. Because it includes theories, problem
orientation, concepts, and the details of language in its purview, it goes
beyond the narrow focus on epithets, stereotypes, and the discrete ele-
ments of content analysis, to reveal the underlying system and its conno-
tative and selective operation. It does not, however, by itself ensure com-
prehensiveness.

**Fundamental Elements of Social Ideologies**

A comprehensive analysis must accommodate the pervasiveness of the
ideological function of social explanation. It is not enough to concentrate
on the surface features of racist, sexist or class interested discourse. All
social explanation constructs a view of the world and is the product of an
underlying image. The task for the curriculum analyst is to reveal the image and expose it to criticism.

Parekh (1975), in analyzing political doctrines, posits a tripartite structure: a general view of the universe which justifies its conception of the individual and society; a core of a specific conception of the individual and society; and a programmatic content intended to show how the view of the individual and society is to be realized. Parekh argues that it is the middle part of this structure which gives the doctrine its identity, and is the most fruitful point of entry for analysis. The implication for the present task is that the analysis of ideology in social explanation should seek the images of the individual and society underpinning the discourse.

Beliefs about people and society operate in three interconnected ways: by defining what is, what might be, and what should be. For instance, social theories which conceive of society as an homogeneous aggregate of discrete, independent atoms will find it difficult to acknowledge, much less explain, communal or class motivations and consciousness. They are likely to be pessimistic about philanthropic utopian plans and critical of concepts of justice or social welfare which have as a starting point some grand notion of a just society. Conversely, those who emphasize the social origins of consciousness will deny the idea of autonomous individuals exerting freedom of choice in full knowledge of their own interests, and will tend to see individual welfare in terms of a social organization which will provide optimum conditions for individual development. This classic dichotomy is manifest most clearly in the conflict between socialism and capitalism, but since it is a fundamental ideological issue, it is central to debates on ethics.
(Freeman, 1977), political theory (Wolin, 1961; Lukes, 1973), and theories of social knowledge (O'Neill, 1973).

It is fundamental to ideological curriculum analysis in two respects. First it is relevant to all the issues of curriculum criticism reviewed earlier—value systems, stereotypes, class and political bias, sexism, racism—and in most cases crucial. It will influence and often determine how value concepts of liberty, equality, opportunity, rights are defined; its connections with the free will-determinist debate place it at the center of legal and moral issues.

Secondly, it underlies the content of social subjects. How we conceive individuals and society, the theories we form about them, will determine what questions shall be asked, what evidence is relevant, what relationships are possible, what methods appropriate. Any theory of everyday social life, any academic discipline dealing with social questions, must include, either as a central, explicit and defended principle or as a background assumption taken for granted, a model of human beings. The model will contain assumptions about how individuals should be understood, what are their most potent or interesting characteristics, what motivates them or causes them to act, from whence derive their abilities, what is universal and what variable in them. Social explanation also requires some concept of society, how it is constituted, sustained, and how it creates or is created by its individual members. If views of the individual and society contribute to what people believe to be so, what they believe to be necessary or changeable, how they interpret their social relations, these beliefs become central aspects of their everyday lives, and critical analysis of them a major goal of social education.

For instance, in this author's recently completed study (Gilbert, in press), English school texts depicted society as an harmonious system in which institutions fulfilled their appointed tasks in a largely efficient manner, aside from occasional problems which, with patience, would be corrected in good time as the inexorable tide of progress continued. The functionalist view of society, represented through metaphors of machines or biological systems, allowed no structural conflict which could not be effectively resolved by the system, and had no need of a concept of power to explain events. Comprised of freely choosing individuals, who were inevitably differentiated by ability, greatness, intelligence (but not by opportunity, power or justice), society was an aggregate of atoms whose interactions were guided by an efficient and benevolent system. Individuals were socialized into this system, but their differences were not attributed to it, for they were unique units with naturally inherent characteristics. Individual "greatness" was enough to explain success, and material reward automatically accrued.

Aspects of these general images were found across the range of social subjects in the English secondary school. They can also be found in comments in the American studies referred to earlier. As such, they indicate a fundamental image of the ideology of capitalist democracies.
Ideological Structures in the Social Subjects

A model akin to the "image" proposed here, and an eye for fundamental conceptions of the individual and society, provide one way of integrating the concerns of those groups mentioned earlier. Racism, sexism, hierarchical discrimination of many kinds are justified by notions of inherent traits which make inequality natural and inevitable. Individualistic theories which can support such views are static trait theories of personality, the "great men" approach to history, biological theories of society. Only by acknowledging the creative role of power in history in producing current structures can such ideologies be identified.

Inevitability and fatalism can be implied by abstract mechanistic theories of society, where institutions are objectified parts of a social system, necessary to its viability and harmonious function. Or by deterministic theories of environmental, spatial or economic "laws". Such theories do not provide the kind of understanding needed by people who might seek to change the structures around them.

A useful strategy is to ask 'what is the implicit problem being addressed by this discourse?' Does it, as often in history, assume that the task is to explain the progress of society to its present high point of development, presented as the mixed industrial economy and the democratic way of life? Does it, as in many economics texts, seek to show how the system can accommodate competing demands from various interest groups, seeing them all as equally valid, and rejecting any role in the analysis of terms like justice, conflict or power? Does it, in the study of human values, accept that the bottom line is the autonomy of the individual and the right to choose, without asking about the historical and social origins of people's criteria for choosing and the options open to them? Such constraints on critical social understanding can operate quite unnoticed, since they are often built into the conception of the problem, establishing the limits to what alternatives are considered.

Finally, these structures will be indexed by the language in which the discourse is constructed. Did Europeans "settle" or "invade" Australia? Does "society" establish the goals of the economic system, or is this achieved by certain power structures within it? Are ethnic minorities, strikes, poverty seen as "problems", superficial blemishes on the system which can be corrected by some minor adjustment? Does "productive employment" exclude work in the home, without consideration of the values of such a categorization? These are the concrete and perhaps obvious bearers of ideology in social content, but they should not be seen in isolation from the deeper structures of the image, its assumed problems, its theories, concepts and metaphors, and how these elements are combined to present the apparently benign descriptions and explanations of the social subjects.
Conclusion

There are grounds for arguing that critical analysis of ideas underlying the social subjects has not received the attention it deserves. For whatever the potency of the hidden forms of power in the curriculum and society, the antidote for their defects must always include a critical understanding of their operation, and a willingness to explore new forms of social relations. This is an intellectual as well as an enactive task, and critical social education in the overt curriculum is an important arena for its development. In part, the neglect has been due to the diversity of interests of those relatively few educational researchers who have addressed the issue. To a large extent, each group has studied the social content of the curriculum from its own perspective, ignoring fundamental approaches through more comprehensive ideas.

The argument here has been that a deeper understanding of how ideologies operate requires a more comprehensive and fundamental analysis of the structure of ideological discourse. A model for such an analysis, based on a linguistic analogy and the key ideological conceptions of the individual and society, has been described and briefly illustrated.

Like all educational research, curriculum analysis must be promoted by and grounded in a tendentious concern for the outcomes of schooling. Ideological analysis must similarly be based on an explicit perspective. In the case of social education, it must be a concept of the person in a just society and the role of knowledge in creating both. Inevitably such notions are not easily defined, but it is part of the researcher's quest to clarify the destination en route.

Endnotes

1. The author wishes to acknowledge the helpful comments of the reviewers of this paper.
2. For instance, a 1961 quantitative content analysis of moral teaching in children's readers focussed on "statements of judgment between right and wrong" (de Charms and Moller, 1962, p.138). It would be churlish to dismiss in these terms E. H. Dance's perceptive study of the previous year, but, despite the subtle insights of his work, the focus remained on factual accuracy and judgmental language. The argument of the present paper is for analysis of the organizing structure of texts which can be seen to underlie the selection of information and epithets.
3. Examples of schemes which seem to make this assumption can be found in Eraut et al. (1975).
4. For example, in dealing with character, one has available a range of basic explanatory patterns, and a vocabulary of terms of character, mood, emotion. Each of these has its own subcategories containing terms which play a particular role in qualifying the basic explanatory patterns.
5. Taxel's (1983) paper is an interesting illustration of a related method in another context. In analysing children's fiction on the American Revolution, he shows how narrative structure through the ordering of character and events has a similar ideological result.
References


Delimiting the Problem of Generalizability of Research Results: An Example from a Trend Study of a Citizenship Education Project

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Introduction

In two articles Shaver and Norton (1980a; 1980b) analyzed research reports in the American Educational Research Journal, Theory and Research in Social Education, and the research section of Social Education. They found, in general, that most reports did not use random samples and most experimental research did not use random assignment. They concluded that the non-random nature of most research made the use of inferential statistics suspect and the generalizability of the findings unknown. Shaver and Norton made two major recommendations to overcome the problem of non-randomness found in the research reports analyzed. First, a more adequate description of the accessible population/sample is needed so readers could judge whether the results of a study could be applied to a target population of interest (Shaver and Norton, 1980a, p. 9). Second, replications should be done in order to determine whether chance or some other threat to internal validity (e.g., history, maturation, differential selection, etc.) had caused the original findings (Shaver and Norton, 1980b, p. 14).
Shaver and Norton did not make specific suggestions to social studies researchers on how to adequately describe accessible populations/samples or conduct replications—that was not the purpose of their articles. Most introductory research methods texts describe how replications are done (see Borg and Gall, 1979, pp. 430-432). However, no text could be found which describes procedures for linking accessible populations/samples to target populations. Further, examination of documents and articles cited in ERIC did not produce any writings on the subject. Therefore, the major purpose of this paper is to present through example a means to link accessible populations/samples to target populations. A secondary purpose is to demonstrate a means to examine the major internal validity threat in quasi-experiments of differential selection.

**Delimiting the Generalizability Problem**

**Rationale.** Most research in social studies education attempts to draw conclusions about the target population of ALL STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES. However, most studies in social studies do not start with all students in the U.S. and randomly sample from that target population. Rather some accessible population is found and random selection is made, or more often, some accessible sample is found (Shaver and Norton, 1980a, p. 7). Studies using accessible populations/samples are restricted in generalizability because it is not known whether the accessible population/sample is related to the target population. If a means could be found to show how the accessible population/sample related to the target population, then the generalizability of the results could be known or known within limitations (i.e., related to populations in a given region of the country).

The major problem in finding the relationship between the accessible population/sample and target population is obtaining comparison data. One means a social studies researcher could use is to employ standardized measurement instruments with normative data. Yet, most standardized instruments do not have normative data generated by random sampling of the target population of all students in the U.S. Thus, use of standardized instruments to show the relationship between accessible population/sample and target population is severely limited.

There is a set of data from a random sample of the target population of all seventeen, thirteen, and nine year olds in the U.S. These data were collected by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Until recently the use of the Social Studies/Citizenship NAEP data collected in 1975-76 has been cumbersome. In the past, the way NAEP reported the data (item by item percentage summaries) and made the items available to researchers made construction of scales for comparison impossible. Scale construction is important so more powerful descriptive statistics like means, standard deviations, confidence intervals, and correlations can be generated.
to compare accessible population/samples with random samples of the target populations. In late 1980, NAEP made documented data tapes available to researchers. Among the documented tapes was the 1975–76 Social Studies/Citizenship data. With these documented tapes, social studies researchers could construct scales and make comparisons with a random sample of all seventeen, thirteen, and nine year old students in the U.S.

**NAEP data.** In October 1980, a group of math, science, and social studies researchers met at the University of Northern Illinois and learned of the availability of the documented NAEP data tapes. Along with the information about the data tapes, for the first time, NAEP provided the research community with copies of the various booklets used during the assessments. A number of these booklets were restricted. That is, the items were available for researcher inspection but not for use in new research studies. The other booklets were released and could be copied and used in other research studies.

The documented Public Use Data File tapes contained a code book for each booklet and information on categorization of the various items and scoring procedures. The tapes also contained the individual item responses for every subject who completed a given booklet.

Because a test booklet covering all the objectives for social studies/citizenship was not feasible, NAEP developed a series of different test booklets which taken together covered all the social studies/citizenship objectives. To ensure that the responses to each test booklet were representative of all students in the U.S., NAEP used a complex stratified random sampling procedure in their surveys. Briefly, NAEP used a stratification system which: 1) divided the U.S. into geographical units termed Primary Sampling Units (PSU); 2) randomly sampled public and private schools within each PSU; 3) randomly sampled students from each school selected; and 4) randomly assigned booklets to students. In order to assure representation in the sample, minority groups were over-sampled. Based on the theoretical inclusion of a respondent in a true random sample, NAEP weighted each respondent to adjust for over-sampling. Thus, for each booklet, weighted subjects were theoretically a “perfect” random sample (and therefore representative) of the overall population of students.

The NAEP data have three important characteristics useful for comparison between accessible populations/samples and target populations. First, any combination of items from a given released booklet can be copied and used with the accessible group. Second, the NAEP subjects' responses to those same selected items can be analyzed. Thus, comparisons can be made between accessible populations/samples of seventeen, thirteen, and nine year olds and a random sample of these age groups in the U.S. Third, the NAEP data can also be subdivided by descriptive information on the sample for further analysis (e.g., different regions of the country).
Comparison procedures. The first step in using the NAEP data is to select the appropriate booklet and items within a booklet. In the introductory material for the various Public Use Data tapes, information on what booklets were released is given. However, to determine the nature of the items, the booklets must be examined individually. Most booklets are a combination of cognitive and affective items plus questions which obtain descriptive information on the respondent. A researcher selects only those items which best fit his/her needs. The second step is to examine the items selected and develop scales. Scales can be developed from logical examination (e.g., Walberg, Haertel, Pascarella, Junker, and Boulanger, 1981); using factor analysis procedures (Riley and Napier, 1982); employing internal consistency tests (Walberg, et al., 1981; Riley and Napier, 1982) or a combination of these procedures. The third step is to take the “validated” scales and have the subjects in a new study respond to them. The final step is to compare the results of the responses from subjects in a new study with the responses from subjects in the NAEP survey. To do the comparison, $t$-tests or confidence intervals could be used. When comparing accessible populations with the NAEP sample, the mean of the population can be compared to the confidence interval of the mean of the NAEP sample. When comparing accessible samples with the NAEP sample, $t$-tests or comparison of the confidence intervals of the two sample means could be utilized.

The Example

To illustrate the procedures for examining the generalizability of a research study to a target population as well as controlling the threat of differential selection, data from a three year study of the impact of the Improving Citizenship Education Project (ICE) were used. The ICE project was a locally developed curriculum change model which had as the ultimate goal the improvement of student citizenship knowledge and attitude. The meaning of citizenship knowledge and attitude is best represented by the specific objectives of the project listed in Table 1. The secondary level of the ICE project was validated for state-wide adoption in 1980 and the elementary level in 1981 (see Napier and Hepburn, 1982a). Although the project had been “validated”, the procedures used were not the most ideal (Napier and Hepburn, 1982b). The local school system had permitted the evaluators to collect trend data from third, eighth, and twelfth grade students (the average age of the students were 9, 13, and 17 years, respectively) in project and control schools in 1979, 1980, and 1981 to further examine the impact of the ICE project in the local school system. The school system also allowed the authors of this report to gather additional data using NAEP items during the 1981 data collection. However, the school system could only allow use of eighth and twelfth grades for collection of the additional data because of time restriction on data collection in the elementary schools. Therefore, the trend study data presented in this paper focused on only the secondary level of the ICE project.
Table 1
Specific Objectives for the Improving Citizenship Education Project

1.0 Know and apply specific facts, basic concepts, and processes related to government and politics.
   1.1 Identify specific facts, processes, and basic concepts of national government.
   1.2 Identify specific facts, processes, and basic concepts of state and local government.
   1.3 Identify specific facts, processes, and basic concepts of democracy.
   1.4 Identify specific facts, processes, and basic concepts of politics.
   1.5 Identify specific facts, processes, and basic concepts of law and individual rights.
   1.6 Identify specific facts, processes, and basic concepts of global affairs.
   1.7 Identify participation skills related to government and politics.
   1.8 Utilize analytical skills with government and political data and issues.

2.0 Demonstrate commitment to democratic institutions, principles, and processes.
   2.1 Express commitment to democratic institutions.
      2.11 Identify magnitude of agreement with statements about political institutions as others should view them.
      2.12 Identify magnitude of agreement with statements about political institutions as self views them.
   2.2 Express commitment to community democratic processes.
      2.21 Identify magnitude of agreement with statements about community democratic participation as others should view them.
      2.22 Identify magnitude of agreement with statements about community democratic participation as self views them.
   2.3 Express commitment to school democratic processes.
      2.31 Identify magnitude of agreement with statements about school democratic participation as others should view them.
      2.32 Identify magnitude of agreement with statements about school democratic participation as self views them.

Source: Margolis (1981)

Trend Study

Subjects. Originally, one eighth and one twelfth grade class were randomly sampled from each project school and each matched control school. However, by 1981 two project schools had left the project. One of these schools contained only a twelfth grade sample while the other contained both eighth and twelfth grade samples. In order to compare the same schools across the three years of the study, data from these two schools and their matched control schools were dropped from the reported data for 1979 and 1980. So, the final sample included a total of 12 eighth (6 project; 6 control) and 10 twelfth (5 project; 5 control) classes. The total number of subjects each year on each grade level for project and control groups is
presented in Tables 2 and 3. Only those subjects present on the day a test was given were included in the final sample because it was not administratively possible to collect missing data. Therefore, sample size varied between the knowledge and attitude results.

**Instruments.** The *Citizenship Knowledge Test* (CKT) and the *Opinionnaire on Political Institutions and Participation* (OPIP) were used to collect data for the trend study. The CKT is a 73 item multiple choice instrument, scored right/wrong, which measures the eight specific cognitive objectives of the project (Table 1). The OPIP is a 48 item Likert Scale scored on a 3-point scale (48 = low attitude; 144 = high attitude) which measures the six specific affective objectives of the project (Table 1). Both instruments underwent validation and this information is presented elsewhere (Hepburn and Strickland, 1979; Hepburn and Napier, 1980; Napier, 1982). These were the same instruments used in the validation study reported earlier (Napier and Hepburn, 1982a).

Data were collected in March 1979, March 1980, and again in March, 1981. The OPIP was given one day followed by administration of the CKT.

**Results.** The 1979 data were collected as baseline information. In 1980, the ICE project was implemented on a limited basis in the project schools by teachers involved in the validation study. Although little if any differences

### Table 2
**Means, Standard Deviations, and Number of Subjects for Project and Control Groups on Citizenship Knowledge**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trend Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>44.35</td>
<td>42.82</td>
<td>45.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>11.21</td>
<td>11.56</td>
<td>13.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>94</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>44.74</td>
<td>44.49</td>
<td>40.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>10.91</td>
<td>13.08</td>
<td>14.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>28.56</td>
<td>29.28</td>
<td>29.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>10.91</td>
<td>13.88</td>
<td>14.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>30.55*</td>
<td>28.28</td>
<td>27.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>10.56</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>8.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significantly higher at p < .05
were expected, 1980 data were collected to see if the ICE project had any affect after the limited adoption. In 1981 the project was fully implemented in the project schools, and data were used to monitor the expected differences between project and control schools.

Results of the trend study for the CKT are presented in Table 2. Using t-tests, no significant ($p < .05$) differences were found between the project and control students in the twelfth grade during 1979 and 1980. In 1981 the twelfth grade project students did have a significantly higher score than the control group. In 1979 the eighth grade control group had a significantly higher score, but in 1980 and 1981 the two groups were not significantly different (although the project group did score 2.2 points higher in 1981).

Results for the OPIP are presented in Table 3. The findings for the twelfth grade students are the same as found when examining the CKT results. There were no significant differences between groups in 1979 and 1980, but a significant difference in favor of the project group in 1981. For the eighth grade there was a significant difference in favor of the control group in 1979, but again no significant differences between eighth grade project and control groups in 1980 and 1981.

**Discussion.** The results suggest that the ICE project implementation was affecting twelfth grade students' citizenship knowledge and attitudes. How-
ever, there are limitations to this conclusion because of threats to both internal and external validity. The major internal validity threat is differential selection. Since the subjects in the project and control groups were not randomly assigned, data were lost because of student absences and schools leaving the project, and the groups changed each year; the results could have been caused by the selection procedures. It is obvious that the differences found between eighth grade project and control groups in 1979 were likely the result of differential selection. There should have been no difference if the two groups were matched. Thus, the differences found between twelfth grade project and control groups in 1981 could also be the result of differential selection.

In addition, even if differential selection was not a factor, generalizing to the target population of all students in the U.S. is still a problem. No data were given to show that the students in the trend study were representative of all students in the U.S. In fact, no data were presented to show that the students were representative of all students in the local school system. Although random cluster sampling was used, this does not assure that the sample is really representative of the accessible population of students because of the possibility of chance sampling error.

Without additional information on the subjects in each group, the conclusion that the ICE project affects twelfth grade students' citizenship knowledge and attitudes is severely restricted. This fact is exactly one of the major points of the articles by Shaver and Norton. The generalizability study reported in the next section was conducted to demonstrate how additional information needed to judge the impact of differential selection and to relate the accessible sample to the target population can be generated.

Generalizability Study

Subjects. The NAEP sample consisted of 2504 thirteen year olds and 2755 seventeen year olds surveyed in 1975–76. The ICE sample contained those eighth and twelfth graders who took the OPIP in 1981 (see Table 3). These ICE subjects were used because the NAEP instrument was administered the same day as the OPIP.

NAEP instrument. Items from Booklet 9 of the 1975–76 assessment were used in this study. This booklet was selected because it was the only one used with both thirteen and seventeen years olds, contained released items, and had items related to the ICE objectives.

Seventeen items were initially selected from Booklet 9 (see Table 4). The first set of 5 items (items 1–5 in Table 4) included attitude statements about voting. The second set of 2 items (items 6 and 7 in Table 4) contained attitude statements about legal activities. The third and fourth sets of 5 items (items 8–12 and 13–17, respectively, in Table 4) involved statements about the democratic nature of the school setting. The first two sets were chosen because they related to the affective objectives of the ICE project. The latter
Table 4
NAEP Attitude Items Selected from Booklet 9 for Thirteen and Seventeen Year Olds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number</th>
<th>Item Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A lot of elections are <em>not</em> important enough to vote in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>It is important to vote even if it looks like your candidate does <em>not</em> have a chance to win.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Some people should not be allowed to vote in elections because these people are <em>not</em> smart enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Should rich people's vote count more than poor people's votes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Should men's votes count more than women's votes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Should unfair laws be changed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Should the President have the <em>right</em> to stop the radio, television, and newspapers from saying bad things about him?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Have you ever worked individually or with other students to make changes in school rules?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Have you ever worked individually or with other students to make improvements in the building or grounds?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Have you ever worked individually or with other students to make changes in courses offered?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Have you ever worked individually or with other students to make increases in extra-curricular activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Have you ever worked individually or with other students to make changes in ways decisions are made?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Students are encouraged to make up their own minds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Teachers try to get students to speak freely and openly in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Students can feel free to disagree openly with their teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Our teachers respect our opinions and encourage us to express them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>In some schools the students help decide about school affairs; in others, the teachers and administrators make almost all the decisions. How is it in <em>your</em> school—do the students help decide about school affairs?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two sets were selected because they would be useful descriptors of the setting of the samples and were unrelated to the objectives of the project. Since the latter two sets were unrelated to the project, the responses from the trend students could be used to examine the likelihood of differential selection (the major internal validity threat). No cognitive items were chosen because a logical set related to the cognitive objectives of the project was not found.

The NAEP items were not originally designed to form scales. Although the selection of the 17 items and classification into four scales appeared
"content valid", factor analysis procedures were employed to confirm if the 
*a priori* classifications were logical. In addition, the reliability of the scales 
was examined since a low reliability affects the power of a scale to uncover 
differences or relationships.

The results of the separate factor analyses for the thirteen and seventeen 
year old NAEP data are presented in Tables 5 and 6. Principal factoring 
with iterations and oblique rotation (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner, and 
Brent, 1975) procedures were employed to generate the factor patterns in 
Tables 5 and 6.

The *a priori* scales were not totally confirmed by the factor analysis 
results. The analysis of the thirteen year old data indicated a four factor 
solution, but item 3 cross loaded on factors 3 and 4 and item 7 loaded on 
factor 4 with items 1 and 2. The analysis of the seventeen year old data 
indicated a five factor solution. Item 7 did not load well on any factor. Con-
trary to the thirteen year old results, items 15 and 16 loaded highest on 
factor 5 while item 3 loaded well on only factor 3. Taken together the two 
factor analyses indicated that two new scales and two original scales were 
supported. A new scale combining items 1, 2, and 3 seems supported (de-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Numbers</th>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.69</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Item numbers match those in Table 4*
Table 6
Factor Pattern Matrix of NAEP Attitude Items for Seventeen Year Old Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items*</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.01</td>
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<td>.41</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
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<td>.66</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
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<td>.02</td>
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<td>.02</td>
</tr>
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<td>.07</td>
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<td>.05</td>
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<td>.33</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.02</td>
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<td>-.60</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Item numbers match those in Table 4

spite item 3 loading strongest on a different factor in the seventeen year old results). This scale was termed Voting Participation. A second new scale combining items 4, 5, and 6 was named Legal Institutions. The third scale contained items 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 and was called School Influence. The fourth scale included items 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 and was labeled School Conditions. Since Item 7 did not load well in the seventeen year old factor analysis, it was dropped.

Subjects responded to the Voting Participation items by selecting Agree, Uncertain; or Disagree. Scores on this scale could range from 3 (low) to 9 (high). On the Legal Institutions scale, subjects responded to the items by selecting Yes, I don't know, or No. Scores on this scale could range from 3 (low) to 9 (high). For the School Influence Scale, students responded Yes or No. Scores on this scale ranged from 5 (low) to 10. Finally, on the School Conditions scale, subjects responded using Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, or Never. Scores on this scale ranged from 5 (low) to 15 (high).

Cronbach alpha reliability estimates were generated for the four scales using the NAEP data. For thirteen year olds, the reliability for Voting Par-
participation was .30; for Legal Institutions was .42; for School Influence was .65; and for School Conditions was .63. For the seventeen year olds, the reliability for Voting Participation was .39; for Legal Institutions was .33; for School Influence was .70; and for School Conditions was .74. The reliability values for Voting Participation and Legal Institutions were low. The major problem with such low reliabilities is the possibility that "real" differences between groups will not be detected.

Data Analysis. As mentioned earlier, the sampling procedures used by NAEP required weighting procedures to assure that the subjects who took a particular booklet were a random sample of the target population. In the Public Use Data Files, each respondent is given a weight value by NAEP. However, the statistical computer package used in this study (Nie, et al., 1975) interprets weights as sample size. Thus, recoding of the weight factor provided by NAEP had to be done. The procedure used was to divide the number of subjects who took the booklet by the total sum of weights indicated in the User Guide to the NAEP data tapes. In addition, this product was divided by 2 to adjust the individual respondent's weight. The division by 2 corrects for distortions in results from a stratified sample when employing statistical procedures based on a true random sample (Walberg, et al., 1981).

Confidence intervals of the mean were used to compare NAEP and ICE data. Confidence intervals were used instead of the traditional t-test or analysis of variance because the comparisons between NAEP and ICE data were ex post facto and the number of subjects differed for each comparison group.

The confidence interval of the mean indicates the probable range of scores in which the population mean falls. Given two confidence intervals from two different samples, the intervals can be compared to see if there is overlap. If the intervals overlap, it is likely that the two sample means have the same population mean and that no real difference exists between the two samples. If the intervals do not overlap, it is likely that the two sample means did not come from the same population and there is a real difference between the two samples. In this study a 95% confidence interval was calculated for each comparison.

Results. Tables 7 and 8 present the means, standard deviations, number of subjects, and 95% confidence intervals for the eighth and twelfth grade ICE subjects by NAEP scales. Also, the same descriptive statistics are presented for the thirteen and seventeen year old NAEP subjects for the total sample as well as regional samples by the four NAEP scales. There were differences in the number of subjects for each scale. Some NAEP and ICE subjects did not complete certain items on one or more scales and were deleted from the analysis of those particular scales.
## Table 7

**Means, Standard Deviations, Number of Subjects and 95% Confidence Limits for Eight Grade ICE Sample and Thirteen Year Old NAEP Sample on NAEP Scales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>ICE Sample</th>
<th>NAEP Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>9.9–11.1</td>
<td>10.4–11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Conditions</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>6.4–6.9</td>
<td>6.8–7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Institutions</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>8.6–8.8</td>
<td>8.6–8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Participation</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>8.2–8.6</td>
<td>8.2–8.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** C.I. = 95% confidence limit of mean (S.D./√N x 1.96)
Table 8
Means, Standard Deviations, Number of Subjects, and 95% Confidence Limits for Twelfth Grade ICE Sample and Seventeen Year Old NAEP Sample on NAEP Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>ICE Sample</th>
<th>NAEP Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Conditions</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>10.3-11.5</td>
<td>10.4-11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Influence</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>6.6-7.2</td>
<td>6.6-7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Institutions</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>8.3-8.7</td>
<td>8.6-8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Participation</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.I.</td>
<td>8.6-8.9</td>
<td>8.0-8.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: C.I. = 95% confidence limit of mean (S.D./√N × 1.96)
Comparison between the ICE project and control subjects was done to determine the likelihood that differential selection had caused the differences found in the trend study. Examination of Table 7 indicates that there were no differences between eighth grade project and control ICE subjects on the two scales unrelated to the ICE project, School Conditions and School Influence. Also, data from the twelfth grade project and control ICE subjects in Table 8 indicate no differences between project and control subjects on the same two scales. The results for the two scales related to the ICE objectives, Legal Institutions and Voting Participation, tended to support the findings in the trend study. No differences were found between the eighth grade project and control groups on either scale. There was a difference between twelfth grade project and control groups on the Voting Participation scale. Therefore, these data support the contention that the ICE project did affect students rather than differential selection.

Comparison between the ICE control subjects and the NAEP sample was done to determine the relationship between the accessible population/sample and the target sample. Only the ICE control subjects were used because their scores reflected the normal, untreated student population in the school system.

For the eighth grade ICE sample School Conditions and School Influence means were similar to the total NAEP sample mean. Legal Institutions means for the ICE sample were higher than the Total NAEP sample and higher than any regional sample. Voting Participation means for the ICE sample were lower than the total NAEP sample and most like the results from the Southeast and West regions. In summary, the eighth grade ICE sample appears related to the populations of thirteen year olds in the Southeast and West.

Examination of Table 8 indicates that the twelfth grade ICE control subjects were different from the total NAEP sample on all 4 scales. For School Conditions, the ICE sample was similar to the Southeast region NAEP sample. On the School Influence scale, the ICE sample was similar to the Northeast region NAEP sample. Like the eighth grade ICE subjects, the twelfth grade ICE subjects had a higher mean on the Legal Institutions scale and lower on the Voting Participation scale than the Total NAEP sample as well as any regional sample. Of all the regions, however, the ICE twelfth grade sample was closest to the Southeast NAEP sample on these latter two scales. Therefore, the twelfth grade ICE sample was most like the Southeast sample although not as related as the eighth grade ICE sample.

The result of comparison of the ICE subjects to the NAEP sample indicates that the generalizations derived from the trend study are limited to subjects in the Southeast region of the U.S. who score higher than normal on Legal Institutions. The results cannot be generalized to ALL STUDENTS IN THE U.S.
Discussion

The example of using NAEP data to delimit the problem of generalizability of research results did not completely exhaust all the possible comparisons to isolate the description of the accessible population/sample. However, the example does demonstrate the use of the suggested procedure to add more meaningful description to the subjects of a given study so consumers can determine the usefulness of the research findings.

In the example study, both the eighth and twelfth grade samples related to the same population. This finding implies that social studies researchers can claim that the results of a comparison between nine, thirteen, or seventeen year olds in a given study and the NAEP survey apply to all subjects in a given study. Thus, researchers do not have to restrict samples in a given study to only nine, thirteen, and seventeen year olds. As long as a sufficient number of the subjects in a given study fall into one or more of the NAEP age groups, the procedures described are still applicable.

The example also demonstrated a means to examine the possible effect of differential selection when non-random assignment is used in experimental studies. Postulating those variables on which comparison groups should and should not differ aids in clarifying the internal validity of an experimental study (Note 1).

The suggested procedures for delimiting the problem of generalizability and differential selection should be used in any study involving innovations in social studies curriculum and instruction. It is feasible for any researcher to create scales from the NAEP data and use the results to clarify the nature of the target population as well as the influence of differential selection. However, use of the suggested procedures is not limited to curriculum and instruction innovation studies. The procedure for estimating the target population would be of great help in survey studies in social studies. For example, a researcher could develop scales from the NAEP data and include the scale on the questionnaire or in an interview. Thus, the generalizability of the results can be determined as was done in the example study. Also, the procedures for determining the generalizability of results and effects of differential selection can be examined in pre-experimental (e.g., case study design), causal-comparative, and correlational designs. Basically, the suggested procedures apply to any quantitative research endeavor in social studies. Even if scales cannot be developed for a given study from the NAEP data, the NAEP data have demographic data from individuals and on environments which can be compared to similar information from a given study to isolate the target population.

The NAEP data used in this example is now somewhat dated. At the time the trend study was conducted the NAEP data were only 3, 4, and 5 years old. Fortunately, the Public Use Data File tapes for the 1981-82 NAEP survey of citizenship/social studies have been released. Social studies researchers can obtain these tapes (Note 2) and use them to delimit the prob-
lem of generalizability of research results. Social studies researchers can also use other more recent NAEP Public Use File tapes (e.g., Reading/Literature) since comparisons for describing relationships between accessible populations/samples and target populations are not restricted to social studies content.

It is important to understand that there are three main assumptions a social studies researcher must accept when using the procedures described in this paper. First, a researcher must accept the assumption that random sampling produces unbiased estimators of population parameters. Second, a researcher must assume that scales derived from the NAEP items represent meaningful constructs of sample behavior. Third, researchers must assume that accessible samples are random samples of some undefined population. If a social studies researcher cannot accept these assumptions, then the use of the procedures described in this paper are useless. These assumptions are not unique to the procedures suggested in this paper. Actually, they are basic assumptions of any quantitative research study that employs measurement instruments and statistics. So, rejection of these assumptions implies rejection of quantitative research methodology, and that is a discussion for another paper.

Endnotes

1. Although the trend study was considered a quasi-experiment because the project staff "administered" a treatment to the students in the local school system, others might view the study as using a causal comparative design. Still the major problem with causal comparative designs is differential selection and the procedures for examining the likelihood that differential selection "caused" the results is the same.

2. The Public Use Data Tapes are available from the new administrator of the National Assessment, Educational Testing Service. Individuals interested in more information on the tapes should contact the new administrators or the first author.

References


Biographical History: Microcosm of Meaning and Mankind

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Introduction

Writers in social education from John Dewey’s time to the present have advocated that history teachers use a “biographical method”. None of them, however, has identified a framework of underlying concepts or principles (Dewey, 1916; Schwarz, 1935; Johnson, 1940; Banks, 1951; Lodge, 1956; Brown, 1962; Lee, 1973). The purpose of the study reported here was to bridge this gap, to answer the questions: “Can one legitimately study history through individual lives? And, if so, how?” This paper describes the results of that study: a conceptual framework and guidelines for “biographical history”, i.e., for teaching history through individual lives. This paper also describes the procedure used in developing the recommended framework and illustrates a teaching strategy implied by the framework.

Procedure

The writer sought to answer the above questions about the legitimacy and structure of biographical history by studying the theories of history held by Karl Marx, Arnold Toynbee, Jose Ortega y Gasset, Max Weber, and Wilhelm Dilthey. The results of the study, the “theme and variations” of biographical history described below, are the major agreements and disagreements among these five theories.

The five theories have been chosen for three reasons. First, because no
generally accepted theory of history or of individuals’ role in it exists, some means of representing the field is needed. The five theories represent the full monistic-pluralistic spectrum of possible theories. Marx represents the monistic extreme, the single-factor interpretations (Marek, 1969; Tucker, 1972) while Dilthey represents the pluralistic extreme, the almost unlimited, multiple factor interpretations (Dilthey, 1962, pp. 79, 161). Toynbee (1961, pp. 237–242; 260), Ortega (1958, p. 60), and Weber (1968, pp. 53–54) represent intermediate positions between the extremes. A second reason for choosing these five theories of history is that, unlike many theories, their pivotal concepts are interactive, i.e., they conceptually interrelate the roles of individuals and society.

The third reason for choosing these five theories is that they represent divergent views of the nature of mankind and history. For example, Toynbee holds a Christian interpretation of history while the others’ theories are non-Christian. Marx sees man as a producer, an essentially socioeconomic being, while the rest see man as a symbolical being. Dilthey and Ortega place the greatest emphasis upon configurations of cultural factors, in the manner of many anthropologists. Marx emphasizes the economic, Toynbee the religious, and Weber the political aspects of history. But despite these divergent interpretations, basic agreements about the nature of historical events and the role of individuals in them emerge. This unity amidst diversity presumably makes their consensus, the theme of biographical history, particularly significant and useful.

The Theme of Biographical History

The five philosophers agree, directly or implicitly, with the following image of individual human beings in history:

INDIVIDUALS IN HISTORY are social, expressive, meaning-needing responders to ordinary and extraordinary social encounters, or challenges.

This conception includes two roles for individuals: (1) potential agents of change; and (2) representatives of the social system, which is both self-perpetuating and an expression of their individuality and sociality. The five philosophers also agree that over time individuals as well as societies have a tragic tendency toward dogmatism, i.e., they tend to respond to challenges in a progressively more dogmatic fashion. In sum, the theme of biographical history is this: Individuals in history (1) make or change the course of events in their responses (a) to the need for meaning, along with other needs, and to a social system which is both a product of their self-expression and independent of it; (2) are representatives of the social system; and (3) are potentially creative and (4) potentially tragic responders, especially in a transition or crisis period. Each of these points is discussed in turn below.
Point One: The Need for Meaning

The key concept of the framework is meaning. Meaning is defined as a sense of connectedness between oneself and the world. It includes a sense of identity, significance, and belonging. Individuals may not be conscious of the need to achieve or maintain meaning, but it manifests itself in every historical situation. It is one, though certainly not the only major explanatory factor in history. It is sometimes a small voice, but it eventually gains a hearing and cannot be completely denied. According to this view, which is held by all five philosophers in this study, history is the stream of events which continually returns to the individual for initiatives, and such initiatives are always motivated, in part, by the need for meaning. The five philosophers give different answers to the question of what shapes historical events, but in each case the interplay of factors which each discerns manifests the need for meaning. The confirmation of this thesis, along with the key concepts of each philosopher, is presented below.

Marx's better known works, *The Communist Manifesto* and *Capital*, focus upon the dialectical class struggle, the interplay of dominant and dominated economic classes. The class struggle also represents for Marx, however, the struggle between labor and alienation within individuals (Marx, 1966; Tucker, 1972, pp. 165-176). Marx believes (a) that all individuals have a deep need to produce, to give themselves objective form, and (b) that their responses to this need make history. "The whole of what is called world history," he says, "is nothing but the creation of man by human labor, and the emergence of nature for man. . . ." (Marx, 1966, p. 139). By "labor" Marx means "productive life" and the "life activity" through which the individual "fulfills himself" and "develops freely his spiritual and physical energies". (Schacht, 1970, p. 79).

"Alienation", on the other hand, is Marx's word for the frustration of the self-objectification process. It is separation from the products of one's labor, and therefore from one's true self and community, through surrender (Schacht, 1970, pp. 11 & 95). Alienation occurs, Marx contends, because one's work is merely a means to others' ends and under their control. Here one sees manifestations of the need for meaning, as defined in this paper. In Marx's view, work under capitalism blocks workers' achievement of a sense of identity and significance: it becomes self-denying rather than self-fulfilling because individuals cannot see themselves in the products of their labor. At the same time workers also lose their social connections: because they do not see themselves in what they produce, they are thrown back upon their isolated selves and come to see others as rivals and merely means to the satisfaction of their narrowly egoistic needs. In this way, Marx implies, their need for meaning, a sense of connectedness with the world, is not met.

By contrast with Marx, Weber contends that political considerations are more important than economic ones. In this theory as in Marx's, however, meaning is a central need. He holds that history is the product of the in-
terplay of charismatic individuals with traditional or bureaucratic officials and institutions. Weber defines charisma as

a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities (Weber, 1968, p. 48).

Persons perceived as having such exceptional powers, Weber says, are the "natural leaders" in a crisis, because the people believe that only such extraordinary persons can save them from distress and disconnectedness. In other words, the satisfaction of the need for meaning, as defined in this paper, is what charisma represents to human beings. For, as Shils points out,

The charismatic quality of an individual . . . lies in what is thought to be his connection with . . . some very central feature of man's existence and the cosmos in which he lives (Weber, 1968, p. xxv).

Individuals gain or re-gain meaning from charismatic leaders. Their identification with and personal devotion to the charismatic leader gives them a sense of identity and cosmic significance, as well as a sense of belonging. It should be noted that although Weber emphasizes that charisma appeals in a crisis, his contention that "the provisioning of all demands that go beyond those of everyday routine" calls for charisma suggests that the need for meaning is also present in more normal times (Weber, 1968, p. 18).

Ortega also implies that the need for meaning is present in all historical situations. One may infer from his key concepts of man and the generation that meaning is called for by the precarious human situation itself. Every individual, he says, is like a shipwrecked person — under the threat of not being, under the necessity of doing something in order to continue to exist as a human being. Because of this predicament, each individual has "the hunger to be . . . and the desire to be as he is, to realize his most individual 'I'" (Ortega, 1958, pp. 33–34). This need to realize one's unique self, i.e., a sense of identity, leaves one no choice, Ortega says, but to develop a concept of the world in which one lives and one's relationship to it, i.e., a sense of significance. Furthermore, the fact that, for Ortega, the achievement of a sense of identity and significance cannot be transferred to anyone else but can be attained only in stressful "solitude", suggests to him that all individuals have "a no less fundamental desire for companionship and society" (Ortega, 1958, pp. 76–77). What Ortega refers to, then, as man's "desire to be as he is" turns out to encompass the need for a sense of belonging, as well as the senses of identity and significance, the three elements of meaning.

Ortega's notion of the generation also suggests the centrality of the need for meaning. He argues that the course of history tends to be the product of
the interplay of the two ages of a historical generation, of those from about ages 30-45 and 45-60, respectively. These are the ages of "initiation" and "dominance" (Ortega, 1958, Ch. 2). History is kept on the move, he says, because these two groups are contemporaries but do not share the same stage of development in life. They do not have a common historic vocation (Ortega, 1958, pp. 160-161). In other words, the younger adults tend to find that traditional ways are never entirely authentic, or meaningful, for them and that circumstances seem to call for new responses and views which the older adults tend to resist, having created or settled upon certain ideas which gave them meaning when they were young. If the younger adults respond creatively to their calling, history tends to take a new turn. For Ortega, then, the need for meaning is both a central fact of human existence and a central factor in historical change.

Toynbee's central historical concept, challenge-and-response, also implies that individuals and societies are motivated, in part, by the need for meaning. He contends that the "essence of being alive", for both individuals and civilizations, is "the never-ceasing movement through challenge and response to further challenge" (Toynbee, 1946, p. 310). Each societal challenge confronts the individual with an opportunity to "be what he is":

Personalities that have succeeded in attaining self-determination through self-mastery find, in the act, that they cannot live and cannot die unto themselves; that, having been lifted up, they cannot rest until they have drawn all men unto them; because it is for this that they have come into the world. . . . No being can be what he is unless he is putting his essence into action in his field. (Toynbee, 1933, pp. 234-235).

In other words, to achieve a sense of self, as well as contribute to historical change, it is necessary not only to learn something from one's inner struggles, but also to tell others about it and attempt to convert them to what has been learned.

The effort to convert others in consonance with the change in one's self as Toynbee describes it is an expression of the need for meaning. The passage quoted above suggests the presence of the need for a sense of self-world connectedness which includes the three key attributes—identity, significance, and belonging: identity is the equivalent of "attaining self-determination"; significance is a by-product of achieving identity ("because it is for this that they are come into the world"); and a sense of binding or belonging is an essential in the achievement of identity and significance, Toynbee implies, because these personalities, he says, "cannot live and cannot die unto themselves". Here, as well as elsewhere in his works, Toynbee emphasizes that man is a being who has to belong, a "social animal" who "cannot permanently estrange himself without repudiating his humanity and becoming 'either a beast or a god'" (Toynbee, 1933, p. 248).

Unlike the other four philosophers in the study, Dilthey does not develop
a set of concepts intended to explain the ebbs and flows of history. His primary focus is upon the nature of historical knowledge. Nevertheless, he does imply or suggest some categories for describing historical events which imply that the need for meaning is crucial in the historical world. The central historical concept which he develops is worldview. He says that "life imperiously demands guidance by thought" and that the meeting of life and thought results in worldviews which represent the ways in which human beings make sense of experience (Masur, 1961, p. 164). Each individual discovers, Dilthey says, that he/she is an "I", a self living over time and within "systems of interaction" such as family, community, and nation. Because of this discovery, this "consciousness of identity", individuals experience the deep need to know themselves, to know who they are among other beings and things (Dilthey, 1962, p. 89). According to Dilthey, this need can be met, not by introspection, but by acting and then reflecting upon one's actions. Each action or product is an expression of individuality, but also of sociality because it is the result of the individual's responses to others (Dilthey, 1962, pp. 152–153). Each individual attempts, according to Dilthey, to assimilate such self-world encounters with previous ones in a way that makes sense of the whole. This process of building or learning a worldview, however conscious or sophisticated it may be, manifests the need for a sense of connectedness, or meaning. This is the case because one's worldview is, Dilthey says, a product of the need to achieve a sense of self (identity) and one's place in the whole (significance), a need which cannot be met except within a group which feels the "consciousness of belonging together" (belonging). (Dilthey, 1962, pp. 92; 162–163; 152).

Despite significant differences about the nature of history, then, the five philosophers agree that all individuals and historical situations are moved in part by the need for meaning, a sense of self-world connectedness.

Point Two: Representatives of the Social System

Representative individuals. Because the five philosophers in the study find, as previously indicated, (a) that the need for meaning is present in all individuals, and (b) that meaning cannot be achieved or maintained except by internalizing the society to which they belong, as well as externalizing one's unique self, it follows that all individuals are representatives of their social system. The five philosophers are not equally explicit on this point, but it is at least implicit in each case. Both Marx and Dilthey, who represent the extremes on the monistic-pluralistic spectrum of historical theories, are quite explicit. Marx says that each individual, while unique, is also a representative of society:

Though man is a unique individual . . . , he is equally the whole, the ideal whole, the subjective existence of society as thought and experience. He exists in reality as the representation of the real mind of social existence and as the sum of human manifestation of life (Marx, 1966, p. 131).
Dilthey is equally direct in describing individuals as embodiments, or representatives, of the system of which they are a part:

Each individual is...a point where systems intersect; systems which go through individuals, exist within them, but reach beyond their life and possess an independent existence and development of their own. . . . (Dilthey, 1962, p. 78).

The system itself. When Dilthey states that social systems which intersect and live in individuals also have "an independent existence and development", he is making a point about society on which all five of the philosophers agree, namely that society tends to be, to some degree, independent of individuals' direct influence or intentions. Weber says that this is the case because bureaucratization, "the exact execution of a received order, with a total absence of criticism" (Mommsen, 1965, p. 35), revolutionizes social institutions and makes them into a structure which tends to have a life of its own (Weber, 1968, p. 53). Ortega and Toynbee concur by saying, respectively, that "society" is "an anonymous subject who is no one in particular" (Ortega, 1958, pp. 39–40), and that social relations "extend beyond the furthest possible range or personal contact". (Toynbee, 1933, p. 223). Marx, while granting a role for both representative and creative individuals, emphasizes the independence of the social system more than any of the other four philosophers in the study. He takes the position, which is further elaborated below under Point Three, that there are long periods in history when individuals count for practically nothing in determining the course of events because it is the dialectical succession of economic classes which provides the momentum and general direction of history (Marx, 1959, pp. 339–348; Marek, 1969, pp. 16–17, 52, 41–42).

One may reasonably conclude, then, that despite substantive differences among the philosophers in this study, there is a consensus not only that the universal need for meaning is a factor in all historical situations and that all individuals are representatives of their social systems, but also that the systems themselves reach beyond matters of personal meaning and intentions and tend to become self-perpetuating.

Point Three: Creative Individuals in a Crisis

According to the five philosophers studied, individuals are not only social, uniquely-expressive representatives of the social system; they are potential agents of change in a crisis. This role may be described as follows:

The social encounters which individuals experience in normal times typically have little or no effect upon their world except to maintain its course. Such encounters are usually routine, appearing to call for actions repeated many times previously among familiar persons and surroundings. Individuals become potential agents of change, however, when they experience extraordinarily threatening or promising encounters. These are the crises in personal and social life, moments in
which one feels forced to act or decide. Such moments are usually times when most perceive, however dimly, that there are threats to their achievement or maintaining of meaning, though there are ordinarily other needs and factors as well. These times of crisis are the seeds of historical change.

The diverse views, as well as the consensus, among the five philosophers about (1) the role of creative individuals and (2) the nature of historical crises are presented below.

**The role of creative individuals.** Weber and Toynbee make a sharp distinction between the roles of creative and ordinary individuals in historical development and find that creative ones have a decisive part to play. Both contend that (a) creative or “charismatic” individuals are superhuman miracle-workers, or at least appear to their followers to be so, and that (b) their religious convictions are absolutely essential for bringing about change—for “all action and growth” in history (Toynbee, 1946, pp. 576 & 212) or for breaking through bureaucratized society (Weber). By contrast, Dilthey, Ortega, and Marx see less of a role in historical development for creative individuals and make less of a distinction between them and ordinary individuals. Dilthey contends that historical change is the product of the “dynamic energy” and “urgent needs” of the very many being “illuminated and heightened” by “great personalities” (Dilthey, 1962, pp. 145 & 147). Similarly, Ortega takes the position that change is the work, not of “a handful of outstanding men,” but of the interactions between the masses and the “more energetic” members of society, especially the younger adults of the generation who respond creatively to traditional values they find to be inauthentic (Ortega, 1961(b), pp. 14-15; and 1958, pp. 100-101).

By comparison with the rest of the philosophers studied, Marx sees the least distinction between ordinary and extraordinary individuals and the most limited role for the latter in bringing about change. Essentially he sees creative individuals as catalysts in a crisis. He contends that the responses of such individuals, while not providing the main momentum of historical development, can, however, decide the speed and content of the turns it takes. Furthermore, he argues, those individuals who are on the general track of the succession of socioeconomic classes and who have become conscious of being on it can project a particular course of action from a limited number of alternatives available. They can, in other words, provide the last link in a causal chain (Marx, 1959, pp. 339-348; Marek, 1969; Novack, 1972, p. 73).

Despite the significant differences regarding the role of creative individuals described above, clearly there is agreement that individuals can and sometimes do introduce a new element into events and thereby change history along with other agencies.

**The nature of a crisis.** According to the five philosophers in this study, a
crisis is a potential turning point or transition period which may be described and partly explained as a threat of meaninglessness. Although there is disagreement about what the deepest root of a crisis is, each philosopher in the group points to loss of meaning as one element. Marx sees a crisis as a time of total alienation (Marx, 1966, pp. 98–99); Weber sees it as a time of distress and a widespread sense of being lost which can only be relieved by charismatic saviors (Weber, 1968, p. 18; xxv); and Ortega sees it as a period in which the younger adults of the generation are unsure of their basic convictions and unable or unwilling to achieve an authentic, genuine sense of self (Ortega, 1958, Ch. 6). Although Dilthey makes less of a distinction than the other philosophers between a crisis and other periods of change, he also acknowledges that there are periods of exceptional stress characterized by "tensions which derive from the sense of urgent unfulfilled needs", including especially the need for a new worldview which makes it possible once more for members of society to make sense of their experience (Dilthey, 1962, pp. 145 & 147). Finally Toynbee, whose monumental Study of History gives major attention to crises in the growth and decline of civilizations, sees such moments as challenges to creative individuals and minorities to withdraw from action in order to find their true identity and faith and then return to attempt to convert the relatively uncreative masses to their newly discovered faith (Toynbee, 1933, pp. 233–235 & 248). For Toynbee, then, as for the other philosophers studied, a historical crisis entails meeting the need for meaning, among other needs, and calls for the efforts and creativity of extraordinary individuals.

Point Four: A Tragic Tendency Toward Dogmatism

According to the philosophers in the study, history demonstrates, in both individuals and societies, a tragic element: a tendency toward dogmatism. Although they find that such dogmatism may take many forms and for diverse reasons, they agree at least that this tragic element is a tendency to rely upon or hold on to past solutions long after new circumstances and events reveal them to be inadequate. They typically find, in other words, that when a creative person or group develops an idea which becomes widely accepted in society (e.g., a technique, religious belief, art form, or way of solving some problem), it is likely that over time the idea will be made into a dogma. This consensus notion is presented below through the somewhat different perspectives of Toynbee, Weber, Ortega, and Marx.

Toynbee finds such a tragic dimension among creative individuals and societies in all stages of history. There is a strong tendency, he contends, for individuals and groups to "rest on their oars" or to use force to defend their previously successful response to a challenge, despite new conditions (Toynbee, 1946, p. 309). Those who are successful in solving a basic problem in one era are not likely, he says, to be successful in the next era. At that
time, he says, they are likely to take dogmatically the side of tradition against change, the second stage in the “fatal chain of success-pride-catastrophe”. Pride, which Toynbee defines as the pretension to uniqueness—“an intellectual and moral aberration”, is the root cause which he finds behind the tragic tendency toward dogmatism (Toynbee, 1946, pp. 309 & 349).

Weber’s concepts of bureaucratization and the “routinization of charisma” suggest a similar tragic element. Charismatic individuals and groups must be “routinized”, that is, systematically integrated into the social structure, if the larger society is to benefit from their new insights or innovations (Weber, 1968, pp. 48–65). Weber points out, however, that the ordinary side effect of such routinization and of bureaucratization in general is a tendency to rely mechanically upon social institutions (Weber, 1968, pp. 75–77). Such a bureaucratic response may meet the society’s initial need for order, but tends to keep old ideas and officials in power at the expense of meeting society’s new challenges. This dogmatic tendency, which for Toynbee is a result of pride, is for Weber chiefly a result of power impulses and interests (Mommsen, 1965, p. 30).

Ortega identifies in the encounters of the younger and older adults of each generation a similar tendency to get bogged down in a previous, but subsequently maladaptive solution. Although he argues that the interaction of these two ages of a historic generation provides momentum for historical change if the younger adults respond genuinely to their particular circumstances, he finds in fact that the youth tend to rely on and accept the previous generation’s convictions about the world without placing their own peculiar stamp on them. In this way, he says, “man’s genuine self is swallowed up by his culture, conventional, social self” (Ortega, 1958, p. 99). Unlike Toynbee, Weber, and Marx, Ortega does not find this tendency toward dogmatism to be the result of pride, power impulses, or economic interests, but sees it rather as a part of human development which is not ordinarily permanent because the problem of not knowing one’s true self tends eventually to stimulate a search.

For Marx, the dialectical class struggle suggests a similar tragic element on both societal and individual levels. He argues that the dominant economic class in each historical era defends its power position and continues its alienating, self-destructive economic practices to the bitter, revolutionary end, despite the fact that such behavior has so obviously created crisis after crisis (Heilbroner, 1961, pp. 129–135). Such tragic inability to adapt to new conditions, i.e., dogmatism, is a result, he asserts, of individuals’ “urge to self-aggrandizement”, or egoism (Schacht, 1970, p. 95; Tucker, 1972, p. 234). This position appears to place Marx in agreement with Toynbee that pride is the root of the tragic tendency. Marx’s claim (as opposed to his argument), however, that such egoism, along with alienation, is entirely a product of the economic system, sharply separates his
position from those of Toynbee, Weber, and Ortega, all of whom find that the roots of dogmatism lie primarily within individuals.

One may conclude, then, that despite significant differences among Marx, Weber, Ortega, and Toynbee regarding the causes of dogmatism, they agree that such a tendency exists. Their divergent positions regarding the tragic element as well as the other key points in the "theme" of biographical history are summarized below under "Variations on the Theme".

**Variations on the Theme**

Although the five philosophers in this study agree that individuals are social, expressive, meaning-needing responders to the world, there are some disagreements, or "variations on the theme". As the previous discussions suggest, the variations are mostly incongruities between Marx on the one hand, and Ortega, Dilthey, Weber, and Toynbee on the other. These differences are essentially disagreements about the importance of external, institutional factors in the course of historical development (1) in relation to each other, and (2) in relation to inner events. On the question of institutional factors versus inner events, Marx sees man as, above all, a producer, while the rest see man as, above all, a symbolical being. These two views will be referred to here as the socioeconomic and symbolical perspectives, respectively. Inner events are important in both perspectives, but the system clearly has greater weight than the self in the socioeconomic view.

The difference between the socioeconomic and symbolical perspectives is evident at the individual or personal level in the contrasting concepts of meaning held by Marx and the rest of the group. Marx's definition of alienation as separation from the products of one's labor, and therefore from oneself, through surrender implies that meaning is blocked because the worker is under others' control. According to this view, meaning becomes lost if one does not maintain both connections with and control over the products of one's labor, or life activity. In other words, actual mastery, not just a sense of connectedness, is essential to Marx's notion of meaning, because, he says, "nature is the inorganic body of man . . ." and "to say that man lives from nature means that he must remain in a constant interchange in order not to die." (Marx, 1966, pp. 100-101).

By contrast with Marx, the rest of the philosophers in the group contend that a spiritual relationship to the world is sufficient for meeting the universal need for meaning. For Dilthey and Ortega this relationship is achieved through an authentic self-world interpretation, or worldview (Masur, 1961, p. 164; Ortega, 1958, p. 21). Toynbee says that meaning arises from spiritual self-mastery and self-articulation (Toynbee, 1933, pp. 234-235), while Weber holds that it comes from the sense of connection with the cosmos which one receives from charismatic individuals (Weber, 1968, pp. 18-19; xxv).
Variations on the theme of biographical history at the societal level arise from different answers to the question of the relative importance of key institutional factors in the individual's interactions with the world. These variations, which apply to both ordinary encounters and crises, are, in effect, debates over what is the most fundamental spring of historical development. The highest priority is placed upon different types of encounters, as follows:

(a) between representatives of the dominant and dominated economic classes (Marx);
(b) between officials and charismatic leaders (Weber);
(c) between creative individuals and the uncreative majority (Toynbee);
(d) between the older and younger adults of a generation (Ortega); or
(e) between traditional and emerging worldviews (Dilthey).

Variations concerning the nature of tragic encounters have been presented above (pp. 15–17). Although there is agreement that there is a tragic tendency toward dogmatism, there are disagreements over two issues: (1) over the sources of dogmatism and whether it arises primarily from the system (Marx) or the self (the rest); and (2) over which established group is the principal change-resister: “self-aggrandizing” capitalists (Marx); self-perpetuating bureaucratic officials (Weber); the dominant older adults of a generation (Ortega); or the uncreative masses in their interactions with all types of leaders (Toynbee).

The framework of biographical history must, of course, remain open to other alternative perspectives, or variations. This is the case because all points on the monistic-pluralistic spectrum are not represented by the five theories. Three sources of perspectives, as well as facts, which would be particularly useful within the framework are the following: (1) psycho-history (Manuel, 1971), which focuses upon extraordinary individuals' quest for meaning; (2) social history, which focuses upon representative and ordinary individuals and activities (Stearns, 1982, pp. 51–63); and (3) prosopography, or collective biography, which attempts to link the personal actions of individuals with the social system by generalizing from case studies or from a statistical sampling of individuals (Toynbee, 1961, p. 121; Stone, 1971).

**Guidelines**

A summary of guidelines for determining the content, methods, and sequence of studies within the conceptual framework of biographical history is presented below in Charts X, Y, and Z. These guidelines are implied by the theme and variations presented above.

The four focal points presented in Chart X are integral parts of the theme of biographical history previously presented and therefore are essential elements in any study of history which is centered in individual lives. It is, of course, not presupposed that all studies will reveal a tragic element. It is the testimony of the five philosophers merely that such an element is likely to be
Chart X
Essential Focal Points of Biographical History

1.0 Creative individuals in a crisis, including their responses to:
   1.1 the need for meaning;
   1.2 their followers; and
   1.3 the social system.

2.0 Representatives of the social system, including their responses to:
   2.1 the need for meaning; and
   2.2 the social system.

3.0 The social system,
   3.1 independently of individuals; and
   3.2 in its connections with individuals

4.0 A tragic episode, in the responses of:
   4.1 previously creative individuals to challenges of a new era; and
   4.2 institutions to creative individuals

Chart Y
Essential Methods of Biographical History

1.0 Apply the method of Verstehen to
   1.1 creative individuals; and/or
   1.2 representative individuals.

2.0 Empirically test hypotheses, including the products of Verstehen.

3.0 Employ a reflexive strategy.

4.0 Employ an interactive strategy.

5.0 Search for the key elements(s) by alternately applying interactive concepts to the
   study of individuals and the social system:
   5.1 socioeconomic man
       5.11 labor and alienation (Marx)
   5.2 symbolical man
       5.21 worldview (Dilthey)
       5.22 the generation (Ortega)
       5.23 charisma/bureaucratization (Weber)
       5.24 challenge-and-response (Toynbee)
present. Because the need for meaning is the central link in the conceptual framework, it is one topic required in any investigation, no matter whether the student is focused primarily upon a representative, creative, or tragic figure, or the society itself. Variations on the theme are included in Chart Y. The variations, as well as the study of at least one creative or representative individual and the social system itself, must be included if a study in biographical history is to be legitimate and comprehensive.

The methods of biographical history (Chart Y) are also implied by the theme and variations. If, as the five philosophers argue, the need for meaning influences every situation in history and is always to some extent an inner personal need, then all historical investigation and knowledge has a personal element. This element is both a necessity and a limitation. It is a necessity because individuals have somewhat unique perspectives and pursue lines of inquiry which others do not conceive of or relate to in the same way. The personal element is a limitation because it means that plausible perspectives are, in principle, inexhaustible and must be checked against evidence. It follows, therefore, that students should reconstruct individual lives as they imaginatively experience them (Verstehen). It also follows that, recognizing the limitations of personal images, they should test and extend their reconstructions by studying evidence (empirical tests), identifying and comparing their presuppositions and those of the historical figure (reflexive strategy), and employing alternative concepts to discover aspects they did not conceive of or consider. They would, of course, need to take clues from individual lives and test them against information about the social system and vice-versa (an interactive strategy). These, then, are the essential methods of biographical history. Many of these methods are explicitly prescribed by most of the philosophers studied, while the rest are implied by their positions regarding the nature of history or historical knowledge.9

The Teaching Strategy (Chart Z) is designed to connect the experience and standpoints of students with the facts and understandings of history. Its three stages, which are largely implied by the theme, variations, and methods of biographical history, are closely akin to Whitehead's stages of romance, precision, and generalization (1929, pp. 28-31). Each stage serves different, though complementary purposes. Stage I is for symbolic play, for stimulating the student to imaginatively take the role of other individuals (Verstehen) and to begin to speculate about and interpret their actions. Stage II is for using historical evidence, values analysis, and concepts to test and refine interpretations, and Stage III is for applying tested interpretations to the original situation and similar situations.

**Illustrations**

As the illustrations below suggest, the conceptual framework of biographical history may have a variety of applications. Studies within its framework may begin with any of the four focal points, move to the other
Chart Z
A Teaching Strategy for Biographical History

STAGE I: IMAGINATION AND INTERPRETATION
A. Stimulate students' curiosity about one of the focal points
B. Identify objectives
C. Apply *Verstehen* reflexively to one of the focal points
D. Speculate about and tentatively interpret the actions of the individual or society (I.C)

STAGE II: INVESTIGATION AND EVALUATION
A. Study the focal points interactively, including information about:
   1. consequences of individual actions for the social system and vice-versa, and
   2. responses to the need for meaning
B. Test and refine interpretations
   1. synthesize information (II.A)
   2. infer and compare implicit values
      a. of historical figures, and
      b. of the students themselves
   3. apply alternative interactive including:
      a. socioeconomic man, and
      b. symbolical man

STAGE III: DECISION AND APPLICATION
A. Decide upon a defensible interpretation of the original situation (I.A)
B. Apply the interpretation to situations
   1. in history, and/or
   2. in students' direct experience
C. Assess achievement of objectives

three, test hypotheses and interpretations, and apply results to the original situation and similar ones in the past and present.

Type A: Studies Starting with a Creative Individual in a Crisis
Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation

Teaching Situation. A high school world history class about to study the Reformation. Students have considerable information regarding great persons in history (e.g., Socrates, Jeremiah, Mohammed, Charlemagne, Justinian, Innocent III). Many students are preoccupied with role experimentation, i.e., with finding persons and values they can place their confidence in.

Objectives. Students will be able to do the following:
1. state and interrelate the major underlying and immediate causes of the Protestant Reformation
2. apply the concept of multiple causation to previously unencountered interpretations of incidents in (a) Luther's life (e.g., Peasants' War of 1524-26), and (b) their direct experience (e.g., a hall fight).
3. compare and contrast their own and Luther's values and worldview, using accurate information and sound reasoning to support their conclusions

4. confirm or refute an hypothesis regarding the role of individuals in history, using information from the life of Luther and at least two other individuals studied.

**Overview of the Unit.** This unit is a study of the individual in a personal and historical transition. It focuses directly upon Luther and indirectly upon adolescent students in their respective quests for meaning. It deals, in order, with the what, why, and so what questions, i.e., What was the nature of Luther's personal crisis and the expression of its resolution at Worms? Why did his stand ignite the Reformation? And so what? What can be learned from it in terms of applicable personal values and historical insights?

**Materials.** A. Primary and secondary sources

   a. a summary of Reformation interpretations (Bainton, pp. 1-10);
   b. Luther's description (1545) of his road to the Reformation, pp. 171-179;
   c. Luther's motivation (Holborn, Erikson, Bainton): rationalized class interests, search for identity, or struggle for religious faith?, pp. 81-82, 190-199, 204-205, and 209-212;
   d. socioeconomic interpretations of the Reformation, pp. 60-74, especially 65-70; and
   e. symbolical (religious) interpretations of the Reformation, pp. 88-97 and 81-84.


B. Secondary sources


Teaching Strategy.

Stage I: Imagination and Interpretation

A. Stimulate curiosity:

Ask each student, given limited information about Luther’s appearance before Emperor Charles V at Worms (1521), to put him/herself into two roles: Luther’s and then a historian’s. Ask each one (1) to decide whether he/she would recant or take a stand, and why, and (2) to predict the consequences—for Luther and others—of Luther’s actual stand, and say why. Record responses, including reasons, for future reference. Responses to #2 are used in Stage I, second cycle.

In describing the Luther-Charles V confrontation, emphasize the vast domain, political power, and ecclesiastical influence of young Charles V by contrast with Luther, a simple monk, a miner’s son. Point out that John Hus was burned at the stake for taking a stand like Luther’s, that Luther publicly burned the papal bull calling for him to recant, and that Luther had very good reason to expect to die for his “heretical” otherworldly faith and his criticism of Church abuses and centuries-old doctrines.

Some students will probably say “recant” and others “stand up for your beliefs”, but it is likely that almost all will reveal somewhat different reasons and values from those held by Luther or 16th century Germany. Such responses would presumably stimulate curiosity and set the stage for the unit’s focus on understanding Luther’s personal crisis and how it became the spark of the Reformation.

B. Identify unit objectives:

Indicate that the goal of the unit will be to understand why Luther took his stand, what the effects were, and so what.

C. Apply Verstehen reflexively:

Same as A., above. Asking students to project Luther’s actions (Verstehen) and their consequences identifies students’ implicit values. The teacher may help the students make these values explicit (reflexive strategy) at this point or wait until students become more aware of them.

D. Speculate/interpret:

Ask students to suggest tentative explanations for Luther's actions: “Why might he have taken such a stand? How does he see himself and why might he see himself in this way?”

Stage II—Investigation and Evaluation

A. Study the focal points interactively:

Lecture or have students read about Luther and his interactions with other individuals and society from his birth (1483) until his “rebirth” (1516), just prior to the indulgences controversy (Bainton, 1964, pp. 265–272). Focus discussion upon his struggle for faith through monastic self-sacrifices, confessions, and study; upon his identification with Jesus on the cross (“Why has Thou forsaken me?”); and his breakthrough, or “rebirth”, during preparations for his lectures at Wittenberg (“justification by faith” alone). Brief, or de-brief, students concerning medieval society in order to
identify the role and power of the Roman Church and its emphasis upon
good works.

B. Test interpretations:
1. Ask students to synthesize the above information (II.A) and use it to
test their hypotheses about Luther's motivation when he took his
stand.
2. Help students to make their values explicit, compare them with
Luther's, and adjust their interpretations if necessary.
3. Summarize, or ask students to read excerpts from, alternative inter-
pretations of Luther's impulse to reform himself and take a stand, in-
cluding economic, psychological, and spiritual views of his motivation
(Spitz, 1972, item c). Ask students to compare their interpretations
with these views.

Stage III—Decision and Application

A. Decide upon an interpretation:
Help students to develop a defensible conclusion about Luther's motiva-
tion. Have them defend their conclusions. Help students to compare and
contrast the motives of inner peace and objective truth.

B. Apply interpretations:
1. Have students complete and then discuss, for example, the following
written exercise: "Would Luther have approved of today's media em-
phasis upon the pursuit of personal happiness and "doing it my way"?
Would you agree with him? Explain your answer with facts from Lu-
ther's life, 1483-1516, and your own." Remediate errors of fact and
logic.
2. Describe the sale of indulgences in Luther's native Saxony (1517) by
Tetzel, a representative of the Archbishop of Mainz, to finance the
building of St. Peter's Church in Rome. Include Tetzel's promise to
prospective buyers of immediate release from purgatory. Ask students
to predict Luther's reaction and to give reasons and facts which will
support their answers.

C. Assess achievement:
The above exercises (B.1 & 2) should provide evidence of student
understanding of Luther's values and motivation as well as their own. The
second exercise should also prepare the student for the second cycle of the
three stages, which is focused on causes of the Reformation and multiple
causation.

During the second cycle of the three stages, students discover—contrary
to the expectations of many, presumably—that Luther's stand did not get
him killed, but instead gained him a following from people of many coun-
tries and social classes and started a movement which changed the structure
of Christendom and the course of European history. Students then for-
mulate, test, and defend their hypotheses about (a) why Luther's stand ig-
nited the Reformation, and (b) the role of individuals in history. Students
may then demonstrate their understanding of multiple causation by interpreting a situation in Luther's life and their own. (See Objective #2).

The unit on Luther and the Reformation proposed above does not include the study of any tragic episode. This is the case because the unit's focus on personal motivation, values, and multiple causation does not readily accommodate consideration of a tragic element. If the goal of a unit on Luther were to be to develop a defensible hypothesis regarding the relationship between otherworldly religious beliefs and society, then the study of Luther might include not only Luther's keystone principle of justification by faith alone and his stand, but also the tragic social intolerance reflected in Luther's dogmatic response to the Peasants' War (1524–1526) and in the subsequent religious wars.

There could be a variety of other studies of Type A, starting with a creative individual in a crisis. These would include the following: (1) Beethoven's development of his Third Symphony ('Eroica'), representing both his personal crisis over his becoming deaf and a bridge between classical and romantic styles in the history of Western music (1802–1804) (Sullivan, 1927; Anderson, 1961); (2) Lenin's event-making leadership of the Bolshevik Revolution (Wolfe, 1964; Hook, 1950; Pipes, 1965, pp. 196–234); (3) the road to the American Civil War through the somewhat parallel lives of Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis (Catton & Catton, 1963); (4) Gandhi and the Indian independence movement, centered upon the Salt March (1930) and its nation-rousing aftermath, a decisive moment in the struggle against British imperialism (Fischer, 1962, pp. 268–279); (5) Oliver Cromwell's struggle to achieve a new constitutional order in the English Civil War, 1647–1658 (Baxter, 1965, pp. 247–284; Bainton, 1964, pp. 322–325).

All of the studies mentioned above would, of course, require an independent study of society as well as a study of the creative individual's interactions with society and other representatives of the system. The Cromwell study would include focusing upon a presumably tragic element: despite all good intentions, the very aggressiveness which had been such an important element in his military victories isolated him from most of his countrymen and perhaps largely denied him his goal (Baxter, 1965, p. 282).

Type B: Studies Starting with Representatives of the Social System

During times of historical change or crisis only extraordinarily creative individuals can occupy the center of action as representatives of the system. For other times studies within the biographical history framework may begin with and center upon less exceptional individuals serving as representatives. "Representatives" need not be normal or average in the statistical sense. It is only necessary that their life activities be truthfully representative or characteristic of their times, or of some aspect of their times. The relatively recent burgeoning of social history, which focuses upon ordinary
individuals and activities, is a rich resource for Type B studies (Stearns, 1982). Such studies may focus upon (a) participants in selected past events who are still living, or (b) individuals in the past whose lives placed them at the crossroads of major societal concerns and historical developments.

The study of history which begins with the life of an individual in the past whose activities intersect with the major institutions and concerns of his time is illustrated below in the case of Enguerrand de Coucy, a member of a long-established noble family of medieval France. This French knight had a role, major or minor, in most of the important public events of his time and place. Tuchman (1979) uses his life (1340-1397) as a prism of western Europe in the turbulent fourteenth century. A teacher might use the encounters and experiences of Coucy, supplemented by secondary source accounts of European society, to illustrate and/or explain any or all major characteristics of medieval society in the fourteenth century, including the trends charted below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trends: Western Europe in the Fourteenth Century</th>
<th>Coucy's Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. decline in the Church's authority</td>
<td>1.1 was an envoy to the Pope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 visited England during the trial of Wycliffe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 founded a monastery</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.4 testified at a canonization</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 led the last Crusade, a fiasco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. an increased threat of violence and early death</td>
<td>2.1 lost his mother in the Plague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 put down a peasant revolt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3 led campaigns to Italy, Switzerland, and Tunisia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. unrest among the increasingly burdened peasants and urban poor</td>
<td>3.1 put down a peasant revolt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 freed his serfs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3 negotiated with urban rebels in Paris in 1382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. the increasing but not widely-established power and authority of monarchs</td>
<td>4.1 married and divorced the eldest daughter of the King of England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2 witnessed King Edward's Model Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.3 served as the Emperor's escort in Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4 was present when King Charles VI (of France) went mad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coucy provides teachers a vehicle for studying practically any aspect of fourteenth century Europe, because, as Tuchman points out, he supplies leads to every subject—marriage and divorce, religion, insurrection, literature, Italy, England, war, politics, and a wonderful range of the most interesting people of his time, from Pope to peasant (Tuchman, 1981, p. 82).

A history teacher could employ the following strategy utilizing Coucy as the main focal point:

**Stage I.**
1. Ask students to read a standard textbook account of medieval society which emphasizes the belief that the life of the spirit and the next world do not compare in importance with the active life in this world.
2. Ask students to predict what Coucy's daily life as a knight would be like and why.
3. Present incidents from Coucy's life which demonstrate the 14th century's worldliness.
4. Help students to formulate their hypotheses about the following:
   a. How Coucy saw himself and met the need for meaning;
   b. Why there was such a discrepancy between ideals and reality; and/or
   c. Why people of the 14th century had begun to lose confidence in traditional Medieval ideals and institutions.

**Stages II and III**
5. Help students to compare and contrast their own values with those of people of the 14th century, utilizing Coucy's experiences; and
6. Help students to test and apply their hypotheses, using information about Coucy's life, other primary and/or secondary sources, and alternative perspectives—socioeconomic and symbolical.

**Type C: Studies Starting with a Tragic Episode**

The tragic element is defined in this study as a tendency toward dogmatism in the historical system. Because such a tendency is not exemplified in every situation, not all studies under biographical history will include a tragic episode. All observers will not, of course, agree upon either what episodes are tragic or upon what causes them even when they accept the definition given here.

The teaching strategy for this type is essentially the same as the strategy for representative individuals or for creative individuals in a crisis except that in this case students' attention is directed back and forth between the other focal points, i.e., between the personal and societal events which lead a previously creative individual or creative society—or both—to become dogmatic or self-destructive. Two examples of studies of this type, centering
on Luther and Cromwell, were presented earlier. A teaching strategy, using the three stages (Chart Z), for another example of this type, focusing upon a tragic encounter between Socrates and Athenian society, is summarized below.

Stage I of the Socrates-Athenian society episode might be initiated by the teacher's asking students what they would do in Socrates' place, at the trial and later in prison, and why. Revealing that Socrates at his trial took the position, despite the likelihood of a death sentence, that he would obey his conscience and continue his life of teaching and questioning as long as he lived, would presumably provide the stimulation necessary to prompt students to speculate about Socrates' motivation, his and their values, and about why Athens might have sought to punish Socrates or put him to death. Revealing also that Socrates, when given an opportunity, refused to escape from prison—because he believed that it would simultaneously deny the validity of his own life and Athenian society's laws—should stimulate further curiosity and speculation about Socrates' values, including the perennial dilemma of individual freedom versus loyalty to the state.

Stages II and III of the Socrates episode could consist of testing hypotheses regarding the immediate and underlying causes of the tragically dogmatic response of Athenian society and applying the chosen hypotheses to history (e.g., 3rd century persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire), as well as analyzing Socrates' social values and applying them to a situation in students' direct experience (e.g., draft registration).

Type D: Studies Starting with the System Itself

Studies of history which begin with the social system itself often tend to move from abstraction to abstraction and rarely attempt to establish or maintain contact with life as it was actually experienced by persons. Studies of this type can be legitimate under the biographical history framework only if they move inquiry from social institutions themselves back to actual persons for the purpose of verifying hypotheses or extrapolations from social data. One appropriate strategy would be to do the following: (1) present social data (e.g., a set of public documents, a map of artifacts located at an archeological site, or tables of demographic and economic data); (2) ask students to infer a picture of what life was like for the average individual; and (3) use other primary sources (e.g., letters and diaries), secondary accounts, and the Verstehen method (a) to apprehend what life was like to actual persons, and (b) to check one's original extrapolations from social data. This sort of verification of social facts and concepts against personal facts and interpretations would be required at all three stages of the Teaching Strategy.

Concluding Comments

It should be noted, as the above illustrations may suggest, that studies in biographical history tend to emphasize the goals of self-understanding and
understanding the role of individuals in history. These emphases are essentially a result of the fact that the conceptual framework implies that more than the usual attention be given in historical studies to (a) how individuals met the need for meaning and (b) what the results were in the larger society. It should be emphasized, however, that many types of goals may be accommodated within the framework of biographical history. In fact, as the three stages of the Teaching Strategy indicate, biographical history for the purpose of self-understanding encompasses both understanding history (Stage II) and applying one's knowledge to the present (Stage III).

The theme and variations of biographical history provide teachers a conceptual framework for guiding the legitimate study of history through studies of creative and representative individuals. In fact, if teachers regularly focus such studies, in part, upon the need for meaning both in historical figures and their students, as the framework implies, then the smaller and larger worlds of students, along with those of historical figures, are actually part of the subject-matter of the course. Such a combination has the potential to generate interest, greater self-understanding, and applicable knowledge of history.

Biographical history no doubt has potential pitfalls also. Many teachers may find it too demanding for their students. Even those who have the confidence and resources to try it may fall into the trap of focusing almost exclusively on extraordinary individuals and periods of change or crisis, rather than finding a necessary balance between creative and representative individuals, and between periods of change and more stable times. In any case, the writer hopes that teachers will try out biographical history and find it exciting and worth their efforts.

Endnotes

1. Toynbee is quoting Aristotle.

2. All the philosophers in the study see society as a system, not a meaningless succession of unconnected events. Toynbee endorses a "configurative" view (1961, pp. 601–602). For Marx, see Marek, 1969, pp. 38, 44, 68. See also Weber, 1968, pp. xxv–xxx; Ortega, 1961(a); and Dilthey, 1962, pp. 150–151 and 163–168.

3. Marx is not consistent on this point. He takes the position in some cases that individuals were not economic class conscious, but still contends that their actions affected the course of events taken at a given juncture. See, for example, his analysis of Napoleon III and the crisis of 1848–1852 in France, in Marx, 1959, p. 348.

4. Dilthey has been omitted here because his views do not quite fit. He does say that human choice "annihilates potentialities" (1962, p. 118), but it appears that he regards this loss of potential not as the product of dogmatism but of the human necessity to choose, which opens new paths and simultaneously closes others.

5. The word "tragic" is used here because this tendency toward dogmatism has some of the characteristics commonly associated with classical tragedies: it has the result, for both individuals and societies, of making a great strength into a great weakness and it sometimes leads to self-destruction.

6. Marx makes this claim in his later work, contradicting an earlier position he had taken. He describes what he regards as manifestations of alienation, including money worship and
maniacal competition, but he never explains how the capitalist system gives rise to them. (See Tucker, 1962, pp. 240-242).

7. Key definitions—Chart X:
creative individual—one whose ideas or actions change a course of historical events.
crisis—a potential turning point; a time of exceptionally threatening or promising personal and social challenge.
meaning—a sense of connectedness—including a sense of identity, significance, and belonging—between oneself and the world.
social system—an interconnected, self-perpetuating set of institutions which tend to share a common culture.
representative individual—one whose life is truthfully characteristic of his/her times, or of some aspect of his/her times.
tragic—a tendency over time toward dogmatism in individuals and/or society.

8. Key definitions—Chart Y:
Verstehen—empathetic re-living; imaginatively transforming the experience of another into one's own.
reflexive—identifying, comparing, and contrasting the presuppositions of the investigator and the historical figure, as well as those of their respective societies.
interactive—moving the inquiry from individual to social system (or vice-versa) and back in a continuing cycle.

9. Marx's claim that his work is "scientific socialism" may seem to make his position regarding historical knowledge different from the rest of the group, particularly if he means that personal standpoints are of no consequence in coming to know social or historical events. However, his concepts of labor and alienation suggest, as previously indicated, that inner events may, and sometimes do, shape historical events. This personal element would presumably influence historical inquiry as well.

10. References related exclusively to the Martin Luther illustration are not repeated at this point.

References


Ortega y Gasset, Jose, *History as a System* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1961(a)).


Ortega y Gasset, Jose, *The Modern Theme* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1961(b)).


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Books


Reviewed by Nicholas C. Burbules, University of Utah

Giroux's is a fascinating and frustrating work. He offers to readers an impressive review and critique of the literature in radical educational theory, summarizing the key issues that have exercised educational critics over the last decade. Moreover, he analyzes the common assumptions and shortcomings of much of that literature, and argues vigorously for theoretical work which better explains the patterns of reproduction and resistance in schools, and which can motivate and direct transformative activities by teachers and students in challenging those patterns. His book reminds radical educational theorists of where we have been, and suggests paths of theoretical development for the future. Furthermore, Giroux's account is exceptionally well-informed—he seems to have read everything in the tradition—and he maintains throughout the book a high level of scholarship and intellectual synthesis.

Yet it is because this book does promise so much that one reads it with a growing sense of incompleteness. Giroux's chapter structure is quite consistent: he first reviews a body of work addressing an issue, then criticizes those works and assesses the inadequacies of their theoretical approaches, and finally concludes with a series of recommendations about "what is needed" for a more fully developed theory. In the early chapters of the book, one reads such comments with the hope that later chapters will culminate in an alternative theory. But as the calls for theoretical elaboration propagate, and spread more and more broadly into the areas of epistemology, ethics, political theory, research methodology, and pedagogy, the reader despairs of ever learning the specifics of the alternative Giroux means to present.

For example, in the first chapter Giroux presents an excellent review of four major themes (rationality, theory, culture, and depth psychology) from the tradition of Critical Theory: he discusses the ideas of Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse with clarity and insight. Particularly worth noting here is his discussion of theory as not only an intellectual construct, but as "a transformative activity that views itself as explicitly political and commits itself to the projection of a future that is as yet unfulfilled" (p. 19). But Giroux takes this point too seriously. It is a needed corrective to the belief that social and political research can be value neutral. However, a theory must also be articulated and coherent; it is an attempt to account for puzzling phenomena by interpreting, explaining, and relating these phenomena to one another in a systematic manner. Whatever else one can say against
"positivism" (and Giroux has much to say against it), at least it has a healthy respect for theoretical coherence and comprehensiveness. When Giroux ends this chapter—which I recommend to anyone who wishes to become acquainted with Critical Theory—with the admission, "... it is impossible to elaborate in any detail on the implications of [Critical Theory] for a theory of radical pedagogy" (emphasis added, p. 34), one gets a terrible sinking feeling.

Chapter two is similar: Giroux addresses the theme of the hidden curriculum—the original concept for critical educational studies, and a precursor to correspondence theory, reproduction theory, and resistance theory. Giroux reviews what he calls the traditional approach, the liberal approach, and the radical approach to analyzing and accounting for the hidden curriculum. Along the way he criticizes all of them, doling out particular scorn for Elizabeth Vallance and her "anti-theoretical posture" (p. 54), and concludes with a section entitled "The Hidden Curriculum: A Redefinition" (p. 60). Yet the reader will look in vain for Giroux's definition of the "hidden curriculum" here (he does squeeze one in, in another context, on p. 198). What one does find is a series of statements beginning with the phrase, "What is needed . . . ," and many broad elements for a "theory of radical pedagogy," but none of the detail work that structures a theory, fleshes it out, and makes it comprehensible. Giroux's critical theory is strong on critique, but weak on theory: in fact, one finds nothing that could be called a "theory" in the entire book.

Chapter three, dealing with theories of reproduction and resistance, and chapter four, dealing with theories of culture and ideology, follow the same pattern. In these pages Giroux promises a "theory of resistance," and a "definition of ideology," but what one finds is a review of literature, a critique of that literature, and a series of assertions concerning what should be included in such accounts, or what they must account for. What we want from Giroux, for example, is not only an account of what ideology does, but of what it is and how it produces such effects. To be sure, many of his observations are profound and illuminating, and one cannot read them without pondering their implications for educational theory and practice. But Giroux promises to be more than merely suggestive here (he criticizes Jean Anyon, as he did Vallance, for failing to "provide a theoretical understanding of what resistance as a construct actually means," p. 104), and for this reason one balks at his own lack of theoretical specificity. For example, when Giroux points out that we need criteria to distinguish acts of "resistance" from other kinds of opposition, the natural thing to expect is that he will suggest some, but he does not (p. 110).

Chapters five and six offer case studies of Giroux's mode of analysis, applied first to citizenship education and then to theories of literacy. Here in fact one wishes for less theorizing and more analysis, since his commentary on these topics is so interesting, and since his theoretical asides on "modes of rationality," "problematics," and the "theory of totality" are so sketchy
and unsatisfying. Chapter seven offers a discussion of schools as part of the "public sphere," and hence as part of an essentially contested domain. Giroux concludes with a peroration to teachers to become more self-critical, to work to create democracy in schools, to take the risk "of losing a job, security, and in some cases friends," and to struggle to create a better world (pp. 241-242). Unfortunately, very few school teachers will have stayed with his book this far.

Giroux has a basic program in this book, to establish certain issues at the heart of the radical debate. These include: a more dialectical theory concerning the relation of economy to culture, power to knowledge, and ideology to education; a reconciliation of structural social theories with those that emphasize the experience, activity, and "consciousness" of social subjects; a politicization of the schooling context, and a denial of the facade of objectivity and consensus which rationalizes school practices; an insistence that disadvantaged classes are not simply dominated, nor automatically reproduced from generation to generation via schooling, but engage in various oppositional and resistant acts that must be accounted for (and encouraged); and a recognition that ideology and culture must be reconceived as essential, and not simply epiphenomenal features of radical social theory. In fact, however, these issues are already at the heart of the radical debate, due in part to Giroux's earlier work, as well as that of Michael Apple. This book is more a consolidation of recent work in radical educational theory than an original contribution to that tradition.
Abstracts

Images of Society and the Analysis of Ideologies in the Social Subjects

This paper argues the need for a unified and comprehensive framework in analysing the ideological content of the social subjects. It develops a model of the theories people use to explain social phenomena, based on the traditions of structuralist linguistics and political theory. The model is represented as an image consisting of elements which are combined by a set of rules of discourse provided by the theory. The paper illustrates how such an approach might reveal important aspects of the social content of the curriculum.

Delimiting the Problem of Generalizability of Research Results: An Example from a Trend Study of a Citizenship Education Project

A procedure is presented which more adequately describes accessible populations/samples in order to determine the generalizability of research results. In addition, the suggested procedure provides a means to assess the threat of differential selection in quasi-experimental designs. The suggested procedure utilizes National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Public Use Data File tapes to compare accessible populations/samples with the representative samples used by NAEP. An example using data from a trend study of a citizenship education project was used to demonstrate the suggested procedure.

Biographical History: Microcosm of Meaning and Mankind

This article presents, justifies, and illustrates a conceptual framework and teaching guidelines for "biographical history", i.e., centering the study of history in individual lives. A conceptual theme and variations and guidelines were derived from the theories of a group of philosopher-historians representing a full monistic-pluralistic spectrum of theories—Marx, Weber, Toynbee, Ortega y Gasset, and Dilthey. They implicitly agree (theme), despite significant differences (variations), that individuals in history are representatives of the social system; potentially both creative and tragic responders in a crisis; and makers or changers of history in their responses (a) to the need for meaning and other needs, and (b) to a self-perpetuating social system.
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William R. Fernekes
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