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Theory and Research in Social Education

Volume XVII  Number 4  Fall 1989

College and University Faculty Assembly
Reviewers

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1919–1989
Founding member of CUFA, teacher, feminist, critic, scholar, advocate of social justice.
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A Note From The Editor:

Why should the Japanese or the Americans, or the Chinese or the Russians encourage or nurture global education or international education for its citizens?

One reason is that the Russians, the Chinese and the Japanese breathe air, drink water, eat food from the sea and ultimately they will experience the fate of our planet in health, misery, or catastrophe. We should know about our planet because we share its fate.

What then are the circumstances of our planet?

WHAT ARE FACTS OF THE PLANET THAT WE MUST FACE?

GLOBAL FACT 1. There are no environmental problems; there are no environmental solutions. There are various economic and political issues that we must understand and deal with.

Focusing attention exclusively on the environment is not helpful in understanding the issues of the environment. Environmental issues such as acid rain, ozone depletion, and global warming are industrial and energy issues. They are, therefore, economic and political issues.

If the environment is to be restored, students, farmers, workers, and citizens must be engaged in the task. Education and politics are the basis of environmental restoration.

GLOBAL FACT 2. We have resources we undervalue and do not preserve and protect.

The ozone layer, rivers, lakes, the air, and the seas have not been appraised as valuable economic assets to be preserved and nurtured. We have not learned to think of climate, forests, rivers, mountains, and sea shores as treasures, as a heritage to be cherished.

GLOBAL FACT 3. We produce waste products that we do not or cannot or do not know how to reuse and recycle and they are accumulating and we have no safe place to put them.

When we produce a plastic cup, that is said to be cheap, we do not include in the price of the cup the cost of its disposition. The deep truth of our earth is that there is no AWAY where we can throw things away.

Rich nations may dump toxic waste in poor nations of the world. Rich companies have dumped toxic substances into Minamata Bay, into the Agano River in Niigata, and into the Hudson River in New York. But there
is no safe place where we can put our toxic substances, the waste products of industry and plastic packages. We are one earth, one planet, and whatever we throw away comes back to us in the food we eat, in acid rain, in ozone depletion. The waste products of automobiles, industry, and nuclear power are a permanent danger to life on our planet. The danger is that there is no place to put them.

GLOBAL FACT 4. Our globe, our planet is finite. There are limits to its capacity to sustain human life.

Family planning, limitations on family size, limitations on the size of the population, and limitations on the production of human waste are necessary in the human community. We must reduce and reuse the waste products of human life if we are to continue human communities on our planet. If people do not exercise personal choice, if we do not regulate the size of families, and the disposition of our waste products, the life systems of our planet will die.

These are GLOBAL REALITIES that students in Japan, the United States, Brazil, and other nations of the world should come to understand. These are facts that people in all regions of the world must address.

IF THESE ARE FACTS, WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

THE FOLLOWING ARE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF GLOBAL EDUCATION AND POLITICAL ACTION:

1. The major environmental problem of the world today is economic inequality between the north and the south, the nations of the northern hemisphere and nations of the southern hemisphere. The planet's main environmental problem is also the main economic problem.

2. Development is necessary to reduce the economic inequity that contributes to environmental destruction. Environmental restoration, conservation, and preservation is necessary if development is to be sustainable.

If world poverty is to be reduced there must be development; but if sustainable growth is to occur, the environment must be preserved. Economic growth without environmental preservation is global suicide.

3. Sustainable development is ultimately a local activity. People on a local basis engage in sustainable development. Governments do not, can not do development, people do development. People will preserve the environment or they will kill it.

The life of our planet that includes men and women, trees, wetlands, lakes, rivers, oceans, atmosphere, bays, and fish is a precarious achievement.

4. Work for sustainable growth unites people across national boundaries. Governments regulate economic and environmental affairs within arbitrary national boundaries. A concern with development and environ-
mental preservation is a global or transnational activity. Governments may be expected to resist or ignore the development/environment connection.

6. The development/environment connection unites human rights advocates, women's rights groups, tribal rights, peace groups, family planning associations, and children's rights in the common struggle for development and economic equity with environmental restoration. These groups, private associations, and educators—rather than governments—must address issues such as these if we are to achieve sustainable growth.

Global education is important as a cultural experience: it is sensible for each of us to learn about and learn to be comfortable with the food, customs and languages of the various regions of the world.

But, knowing the facts of the world and trying to deal with them with wisdom and understanding is a necessity for the survival of life on our planet. International education, global knowledge is prerequisite of human survival on earth. Each nation in the world has its own role to play.

Social education must direct attention to principles such as these:

1. Industries must reuse, recycle and put no poison in the air, in the water or on the land. The price of an object should include the cost of its disposal.

2. Plan markets, products, services that take into full consideration the economic value of our ozone layer, our climatic system, our seas, lakes, rivers, forests, birds, animals, flowers, and our fellow humans.

We must learn not to use our natural heritage as a toxic waste dump.

In the north, in Japan, in the United States, in the USSR, citizens, farmers, teachers, and business people must challenge industry and government to convert to sustainable enterprise. In the south, citizens, farmers, and business people must be helped to develop sustainable enterprise.

Women, men, teachers, schools, community groups, parents, students, and colleges have a deep obligation to engage in global study, to clarify our global circumstances, and to restore the health of our global environment. That is a fundamental challenge of social education today that is frequently ignored in our scholarship, our research training, and in our professional affairs.

Millard Clements
Editor, TRSE
Layers of Historical Understanding

Kieran Egan, Professor
Simon Fraser University

Introduction

People have used accounts of the past for many different purposes. There is no general agreement about the nature of historical knowledge; neither about the social and psychological roles it should play, nor about its proper form and place in education. There is a richness and complexity to history that can make it of great educational importance but can also make it difficult for teachers to be sure they are successfully achieving that educational importance. Among the different purposes for which accounts of the past have been used, we can distinguish a basic establishment of identity, in which history is used primarily to justify present social conventions and locate individuals' rights and duties with regard to those conventions. We can also distinguish narratives of dramatic events which invite us to associate emotionally with heroic figures or great movements and partake in their triumphs, disasters, virtues, or vices. We can further distinguish texts that search for patterns or structures in history and strive to build grand theories of historical change or progress. Finally, we can distinguish inquiries that focus on historical particulars, claiming to be interested in uncovering what actually happened for its own sake.

These are four somewhat distinct kinds of history, and each represents a distinct kind of historical understanding. None of these kinds of history is necessarily truer or more proper than any of the others. Each uses the past for different social and psychological purposes. We tend to find all four mixed in our modern historical consciousness.

We can see the development of these four kinds of history in a chronological sequence through Western culture. In ancient Greece, mythical accounts blend into the earliest recognizable histories, which involved attempts to sort the stories and legends of families or towns into some sequential narrative, usually attaching the present to a divine past. The divine past was generally taken as a support and justification, and explanation, of pres-
ent privileges (Burkert, 1979, 1985; Fornara, 1983; Vernant, 1983). In this kind of historical understanding the past is used to emphasize the significance and validity of the present experience of individuals, groups, or nations, thereby establishing a sense of security and a sense of identity. This use of history and historical understanding remains common today. We do not usually refer to divine origins a few generations back, but in nearly all nation-states the history taught in schools emphasizes the significance and validity of the nation’s past experience and gives students a sense of their social and national identity. This telling of the nation’s story remains one of the commonest kinds of history in schools, and is one of the main reasons history is approved in the curriculum by modern nation-states.

Dramatic historical narratives that invite our emotional participation also appeared in ancient Greece. Herodotus tells a gripping story of the fight between freedom and tyranny. Freedom was represented by tiny and courageous Athens, and tyranny by the huge and arrogant Persian empire. The antagonists are personalized, exemplifying human characteristics like courage or arrogance, and the narrative is further personalized by the device of seeing events through the actions of great figures (Waters, 1985). Such figures are presented as larger than life, and history is full of vivid and dramatic events, rich in fascinating details, as when we are told that the Egyptians so loved their cats that when one died its owner shaved off his eyebrows. This kind of history remains popular today.

The pattern-seeking, theory-constructing kind of history first appeared in ancient Greece in the work of Thucydides. He was scornful of Herodotus’s entertaining narrative. Thucydides wrote not to charm a particular audience, he tells us, but for all time. His method was not just to describe particular events, but to uncover the underlying patterns or even the laws of history (Cornford, 1987; de Romilly, 1963). This kind of historical inquiry became prominent in nineteenth-century Europe, and is still common, forming part of modern historical consciousness.

The more austere interest in the details of history for their own sake seems to have been a modern European invention, articulated clearly by Ranke and developed as the dominant approach to academic historical research in the early part of this century (Stern, 1956; White, 1973). The appreciation of the uniqueness of the past and the desirability, and difficulty, of establishing “just what happened,” remains prominent in our historical consciousness. This approach to history is more common in the academic world, popular history books tending to narrate the past using one or more of the previous kinds of history.

I am suggesting that we see a sequential development of kinds of historical understanding when we consider the history of historiography. The later forms do not simply displace the earlier, which live on, sometimes quite independently, and sometimes coalesce with the later forms. This multiplicity of kinds of history helps to account for some of our uncertain-
ties about history’s role in education. It is all very well to agree that history is educationally important, but we must be clear just what kind of history we are talking about. What kind of history is educationally important? If we answer, as is reasonable, that all of them are, how can we go about ensuring that students and teachers can acquire what is important for them from the different kinds of historical understanding?

I want to outline a complicated argument and infer from it a history curriculum that seems to me able to teach the various kinds of historical understanding in an harmonious way, such that children and students may learn a kind of history that is logically and psychologically appropriate for their age as they grow older.

One part of the argument that I will pass over with the briefest mention is the claim that the sequence in the development of the kinds of historical understanding I have sketched above is caused by logical and psychological influences, and these same influences affect the sequence in which we can learn history today. That is, I argue a kind of recapitulation theory—what is recapitulated are the kinds of understanding I have sketched above. I will not pursue this argument here in detail (for that see Egan, 1988 and in press), but will try to make it plausible by showing how students in Western culture seem predisposed to acquire historical understanding by accreting it in a particular sequence.

History is complex, and each layer I will describe serves to bring certain kinds of historical phenomena into focus. I will consider just two of the kinds of history sketched above, because these are the ones which seem most relevant to school-age students. This should allow me to develop the character of each of the first two layers and to indicate why education following such a sequence is important for teachers. The first layers I call “mythic” and “romantic” and I will approach each through the mind of the student who has to make sense of history, rather than an analysis of the nature of historical understanding. My focus, then, will be on the sense-making techniques students have available to deal with history. In the conclusion I will also reflect on how this kind of analysis can be used to reinterpret some of the major findings of empirical research on students’ understanding of history.

The Mythical Foundations of Historical Understanding

In oral cultures people know only what they can remember. Once something is forgotten by living memories, it is lost forever. In oral cultures techniques that can assist the memory and so help preserve the tribe’s lore securely are thus of great social importance. It has been discovered in nearly all oral cultures that by using rhyme, rhythm, and meter it is possible to make messages and social lore more easily memorable. Similarly, all oral cultures have discovered that if lore can be encoded into stories, it can be made more memorable than by any other technique. It is not too much to say, then, that the story is one of the most important social inventions. It
ensures memorization of social lore and stimulates an emotional commitment to that lore, and to the social group, and so helps to establish individuals’ sense of identity. Education or socialization in oral cultures centers on learning the lore of the tribe as it was encoded in the sacred myth stories. All oral cultures that we know of use or used myth stories for this purpose (Blumenberg, 1985; Lévi-Strauss, 1966; Malinowski, 1954).

We tend to forget that until children have internalized literacy in Western culture they live in an oral culture, and they have available for use the techniques of orality. This does not mean that their thinking is generally like that of people in oral cultures, but only that they use certain techniques of thinking in common. But these techniques affect how people make sense of the world and of experience. It is not coincidental, then, that we find young children using in their activities such techniques as rhyme, rhythm, meter, and, very prominently, stories. We can see these at work whenever we examine the intellectual engagements of children (Egan, 1987). Let us consider just three features of the kinds of stories children seem most readily engaged by, and see later what we may infer from them about the kind of understanding of history that is accessible using these features.

1. The basic structure of the classic fairy stories or folk tales which engage children is binary. Children’s stories use powerful and abstract binary opposites, such as good/bad, brave/cowardly, security/fear. That is, young children deploy some of the most powerful abstract concepts in making sense of the world. We are commonly told that young children’s thinking is concrete; that they cannot use abstractions. Indeed, they commonly do not articulate abstractions, but clearly they use them prominently in making sense. If they did not have such abstract concepts available for use, they would be unable to make sense of the kinds of stories they find most engaging. This suggests that when developing curricula we need to be sensitive to what powerful abstract concepts we can structure in concrete content. It is not too much to say that only through connecting concrete content with powerful abstract binary opposites can we hope to make history meaningful to young children.

2. The character content of the fairy stories or folk tales that young children find engaging is rather odd, often made up of creatures like middle-class talking bears or rabbits. Why should children find such impossible creatures so engaging if their thinking is bound to what they perceive? Consider how children usually gain conceptual control over a wide range of phenomena in their environment. In learning conceptual control over the temperature continuum, for example, they learn first the binary opposite concepts “hot” and “cold.” Next, they learn a mediating concept, like “warm.” Subsequently, they mediate between “warm” and “cold” and learn the concept “cool,” and so on. This procedure works very well for all kinds of phenomena in their environment. If you look at the world through the eyes of a child you note some clear binary discrimina-
tions. Some things are alive and some dead, for example. If you use the same procedure that serves so well to make sense of the physical world, you seek a mediating category; that is, you look for things that are both dead and alive, as warm is both hot and cold. (So the category of ghosts and spirits is generated!) Similarly, between nature and culture, you generate a menagerie of creatures who are both natural and cultural, such as middle-class talking bears and rabbits. This procedure helps to account for the contents of children’s fantasy stories.

3. The story-form itself is worth reflecting on. What, after all is a story? Stories are narratives that tell their hearers how to feel about the events they relate. Life and history cannot do this very successfully, because we keep reassessing how we feel about things as new events affect us. But once a story is ended there are no further events to affect the meaning of the story’s events. It is a complete world which provides us with a security and satisfaction rarely available outside of the form of fiction (Frye, 1957; Kermode, 1966).

These are three techniques children use readily in thinking, which are easily verified by any observer. The phenomena are incontestible; the task is to infer from them what kind of history curriculum would be accessible and engaging to children on the one hand, and what method of teaching would stimulate the development of historical understanding on the other. I will turn to these after considering some of the techniques students use in making sense of the world and experience after they internalize literacy.

Romantic Understanding

With the internalizing of literacy, which commonly takes place around the age of seven or eight in the schooled cultures of the West, some further sense-making techniques come into play. By “internalizing” literacy I mean that students begin to take it and its capacities for granted in their intellectual lives. Again, I will consider just three characteristics of students’ sense-making, and will infer them from some of the commonest intellectual engagements that are readily observable.

1. A significant change occurs in the kinds of stories that students find most engaging after about age seven or eight. Perhaps the most general way to characterize this change is to say that students’ thinking becomes engaged with and constrained by reality. This is rather a general way to put it! To take a pervasive American example, male students commonly become interested in stories with characters like Superman. Superman differs significantly from Cinderella. While both are impossible characters, Superman requires a context of plausibility to make him acceptable. That is, we have to know that Superman was born on the planet Krypton and was sent through space to land in America, and that his superpowers are due to the
difference between his home planet and its sun, and those of earth and our sun. Children are quite unconcerned about the means of locomotion used by Cinderella's Fairy Godmother or the physical processes whereby she changes mice into horses and the pumpkin into a coach.

In the earlier layer of understanding, children's intellectual engagement with their fantasy worlds seems only incidentally concerned with reality. With internalization of literacy and engagement with reality we see their engagement with extremes—with what is most strange, exotic, and bizarre in the world and in human experience. In the English-speaking world one of the most engaging books for students during this layer is *The Guinness Book of Records*—lists of the extremes of the real world and of human experience. It is the biggest, the smallest, the fattest, the thinnest, the fastest, the slowest, and so on, that are most readily engaging.

2. Another characteristic of students' intellectual lives at this time is the development of associations with heroes and heroines. Perhaps it would be truer to say that the association is not so much with heroes or heroines as with the transcendent human qualities that they express. That is, students associate with qualities such as courage, ingenuity, patience, power, etc. These are human qualities required to overcome the threats of the everyday world that bear down on students. As they grow conscious of reality, and of its existence independent of their wishes, hopes, and fears, they build defences against this threatening reality. Students from about ages eight to 15 in Western cultures are relatively powerless in society, while becoming increasingly conscious of it and simultaneously developing a sense of their independent selves. By associating with transcendent humans—heroes or heroines, film stars or football teams—they associate with, and grow towards, those qualities best able to help them feel less powerless in society.

3. A further item might be noted. Students during these middle-school years tend to develop obsessive interests—hobbies, or collections, or diary-keeping. Students commonly engage in something in great detail, and they seek to complete sets of things, whether collections of dolls, football cards, postage stamps, and so on. Commercial interests are very good at exploiting this drive. I think we may see it as a part of students' discovery of reality. While on the one hand they search for the extreme limits of reality and its most strange and exotic features, they seem also to explore it by trying to get some sense of its scale. By finding out exhaustively about something, one gets a sense of the scale of things.

The search for extremes and details can be compared to the kind of interest we have in looking through telescopes and microscopes. Both give us a perspective on reality that adds to our understanding of its scope and scale. Students during their middle-school years seem inclined to do this as well, seeking macro- and micro-sopic views of the world they find themselves in.
Some Principles for Teaching History

I would like to list a few principles that we might infer from the above observations for teaching history or social sciences. Then I will try to design a couple of models or frameworks that teachers might use in planning their history or social science lessons. Most educational research that deals with students’ thinking tends to focus on their logical or logico-mathematical capacities. Important as this is, it tends to neglect those imaginative capacities, in which we see students’ intellectual activity at its most engaged and energetic. What I have tried to do is to focus on imaginative intellectual life, and so the principles I will note below are concerned with how we might engage students’ imaginations in history and social science material.

We might do so by using some of the following characteristics in our teaching:

1. **Affective orientation**: Children’s imaginations tend to be more readily engaged by materials that are organized and presented so that they not only convey information but also involve pupils affectively or emotionally. The most common and powerful technique to do this is to organize the material into the form of a story. This does not mean having to fit the content into a fictional story, but rather it invites the teacher to shape the factual content into a story shape. (I will indicate one method of doing this in the next section.) The teacher’s task, if this principle is to be used, is to first reflect on what is affectively engaging about the content to be taught.

2. **Abstract binary opposites**: We saw earlier that affectively orienting children’s understanding is achieved more readily if we organize our content using abstract binary oppositions. This tool is particularly useful in providing clear access to the meaning of the content. To use this principle teachers must reflect on what fundamental binary opposites can be located in the content to be taught—survival/destruction? fear/security? love/hate? cooperation/competition? and so on endlessly. I should perhaps emphasize that use of this principle does not require that we present the world to children in constant black and white or in simplistic terms. Consider that we all use such binary-affective orienting techniques constantly. They provide access to the content, and we can then mediate between them and make understanding more sophisticated. Initial access is crucial.

The following items are particularly relevant to students during the middle-school years, but may suggest ideas for teaching younger children too.

3. **The heroic**: This does not mean teaching about male heroes performing superhuman deeds. But the quality of heroism effectively captures our imaginations, particularly during early adolescence. Heroic qualities can be found in anything that overcomes the everyday constraints that hem us in. An institution can embody heroic qualities. Even a plant can be seen as heroic, as when we focus on a weed’s tenacity in maintaining itself in hostile
conditions. A rock formation can be "heroicized" by focusing on its stability, stubbornness, or towering strength and sheer persistence. This "heroicizing" is a matter of emphasizing those qualities of the chosen content that transcend the everyday and conventional sense of them.

4. **Detail and distance:** Another potential stimulant to students' imaginations is to shift perspectives. Teachers might take an opportunity in a lesson or unit of study to pursue some topic in great detail, occasionally standing back to see the whole area in a wider context. Remember how common it is for people to enjoy looking through microscopes and telescopes when they have a chance.

5. **The exotic, wonder, and awe:** Adolescents' imaginations are readily engaged by the extremes of reality, with what is most strange and exotic about the world and human experience. Teachers are often told to begin with what is familiar to students. This principle suggests that we might try quite the opposite. If we want to engage students' imaginations, beginning with the most exotic and least familiar seems a better principle. As with the heroic, there is potentially something strange and exotic about everything—if we can only see it in the right light. Even the most commonplace features of our environment can be seen as the products of amazing ingenuity, struggles, immense natural forces, and persisting energy.

Wonder is a kind of surprise mingled with admiration, curiosity, or bewilderment. A significant feature of wonder is the combination of exclusive attention to the object of one's wonder, and the desire to know more about it. Pointing up some features of a topic that can stimulate students' sense of wonder can be useful in keeping their imaginations engaged.

Awe is a little different from wonder. Awe is the emotion resulting from the perception of something mysterious underlying the everydayness of things. It can be evoked by pointing to some mystery within an object or a process that we might normally take for granted. Basically, we feel awe in response to the occasional clear and profound sense of there being something rather than nothing, existence rather than non-existence. The stimulation of a sense of awe also seems educationally important because it helps to provide a proper humility about the limited intellectual grasp we gain on reality.

6. **Humanizing knowledge:** The imagination helps students' understanding of knowledge if the knowledge is embedded in the context of human emotions, struggles, hopes, and fears. Whatever content we wish to teach has a place in human lives and human purposes. By locating it as meaningful in others' lives, students can gain a better imaginative sense of its meaning. In addition, we might note that knowledge will engage students' imaginations more readily if it is clear that the teachers are imaginatively engaged by it. So "humanizing knowledge" can be read in two senses; first, concerning the context of human lives in which the content is embedded, and secondly, concerning its place in the imaginative life of the
teacher. This suggests that teachers should reflect on the imaginative meaning the material holds for them.

Implications for Teaching

We might infer a number of implications for teaching, and for appropriate history and social sciences curricula, from these principles. I will try to outline frameworks that might help the planning of teaching, and then give a brief sketch of appropriate curricula. I will suggest two frameworks; the first, called the Story-Form framework, will be most appropriate for use with students up to about age eight, and the second, called the Romantic framework, from about age eight to 15. In each case the frameworks will draw on the principles outlined above, articulated in terms of a set of questions, the answers to which will produce a lesson or unit plan. These conflict with planning frameworks currently in use in English-speaking countries. These usually begin by requiring the teacher to state objectives, then to select content, then methods, and then decide on means for evaluating whether the objectives have been achieved. Such models are derived from industrial procedures, and in particular the assembly line method of production (Callaghan, 1962). The alternative frameworks I suggest are derived from educational considerations.

These are not intended to be rigidly followed in planning all teaching. Rather they are offered as heuristic frameworks that attempt to capture some significant principles of how students' imaginations can be engaged in learning. Teachers may find that parts of each of these frameworks might be drawn on in planning particular lessons or units. The combination of elements that I present here has worked well among those teachers who have used these frameworks so far.

The Story-Form Framework

1. Identifying Importance:
   What is of greatest important about this topic?
   Why should it matter to children?
   What is affectively engaging about it?

2. Finding Binary Opposites:
   What powerful binary opposites best capture the importance of the topic?

3. Organizing Content into Story Form:
   What content most dramatically embodies the binary opposites, in order to provide access to the topic?
   What content best articulates the topic into a developing story form?
4. Conclusion:
What is the best way of resolving the dramatic conflict inherent in the binary opposites?
What degree of mediation of those opposites is it appropriate to seek?

5. Evaluation:
How can one know whether the topic has been understood, its importance grasped, and the content learned?

The Romantic Framework

1. Taking a Romantic Perspective:
What images are brought into sharpest focus by viewing the topic Romantically? What transcendent human qualities, with which students can form Romantic associations, are prominent and accessible?

2. Organizing Content into Story Form:
Providing access—What content, with which students can best Romantically associate, most vividly exemplifies the Romantic qualities of the topic?
Organizing the unit/lesson—What content best articulates the topic into a developing story-form, drawing on the principles of Romance?
Pursuing details and contexts—What content can best allow students to pursue some aspect of the topic in exhaustive detail? What perspectives allow students to see the topic in wider contexts?

3. Conclusion:
What is the best way of resolving the dramatic tension inherent in the unit/lesson? How does one bring about a closure that opens to further topics to the Romantically important content of the topic?

4. Evaluation:
How can one know whether the topic has been understood and the appropriate Romantic capacities have been stimulated and developed?

Implications for the Curriculum

I suggested earlier that the principles about children's sense-making also had implications for the kind of curricula that could help to stimulate and develop appropriate kinds of historical understanding. Again, I will try to sketch such curricula in a brief outline. First I will sketch an outline for a "mythic layer" history curriculum, and then the main characteristics of a "romantic layer" history curriculum.

By referring to oral cultures and myths it may seem that I am recommending that we begin by teaching children myths. No. I mean that we should try to uncover the kind of understanding which is possible given the
intellectual tools and techniques available in an oral culture, and teach history using those. Myths establish and enhance the significance of the conditions in which one finds oneself by relating these to a more general context, or a "cosmic story." We can do this for children by telling them the dramatic stories of human cultures, particularly of the one of which they are a part and partial product. We can begin with the cosmological context, now available in a number of good accounts for children. Within this context history may be taught as the great stories of human struggles for freedom against oppression, for security against danger, for knowledge against ignorance, and so on. For each of the first three or four years of schooling we can tell students one part of the great story of the world from its beginnings to the present. In the first years, perhaps, as the struggle for security against danger, in the second, as the struggle for freedom against oppression, and so on. There is no shortage of vivid and dramatic material to use in telling such stories. We need not falsify anything; these are powerful and important stories. (In such a curriculum the teacher recaptures some of the authority and significance that goes with being the story-teller in a culture.)

A potential benefit of such a history curriculum is that it introduces children to their world in a dynamic and dramatic form, rather than through the ordered routines of their local customs. Children's early lives, we may forget, are full of titanic struggles and accommodations. What they see in a "great stories" history curriculum is that their own struggles have an analogy in human history. Young children, too, are engaged in struggles for freedom against oppression, for security against danger, for knowledge against ignorance, and so on. The historical dimensions of these struggles can provide a valuable context for making sense of one's own struggles and for enlarging the sense one can make of them.

During the "Romantic" layer students may explore particular events in more detail. The curriculum will include specific vivid instances of the struggles for freedom, the victories of oppressors, the temporary gains of security, the expansions of knowledge, and the persistence of ignorance, etc. The focus will be constantly on the people caught up in these events, and on their hopes, fears, purposes, strengths, and weaknesses. Such a Romantic curriculum need not be organized on the basis of chronological sequence, but could be thematic, structuring events on strong narrative lines. The exotic and dramatic will be prominent in this curriculum; it is the time for students to engage with the major Romantic themes, characters, and events. Thomas Carlyle described history as "the essence of innumerable biographies," and while we might be wary of such a sense of history in general, it catches an important feature of history that makes it engaging, meaningful, and of educational value to students during this layer.
The focus of the curriculum will not be on mass movements or institutions rising and falling, or diplomatic maneuvering, or on any of the depersonalized concepts that have been developed to describe and explain historical change. The Romantic history curriculum may include all of these but as incidental to the packed lives of many people acting in specific ways in response to their hopes, fears, intentions, and so on. In particular, it will be the transcendent human qualities and the actions that follow from them which will form much of a Romantic layer history curriculum.

As students come to understand the actions of particular people as motivated by their courage, fear, anger, love, etc., and examine the results, they are also exploring themselves. They do not just learn about Alexander the Great or Florence Nightingale and then admire their courage and energy. Rather, they come to recognize in them a reflection of their own developing courage and energy. Students recognize heroes and heroines as parts of their cultural roots, and by learning about their struggles, campaigns, adventures, and the opposition they faced, will gain some further definition of themselves as cultural beings.

This is the time for the more exotic features of history, which can trespass into what is commonly called anthropology. If students study the ancient Greeks, then we will want students to consider their alienness, rather than the domesticated Victorians in fancy dress who fill most textbooks. Students should explore their curious rites and rituals. This Romantic approach to history is ever-ready to lead the curriculum into the odder byways of the past, commonly absent from most textbooks. The aim is to enable the students to look at history through a particular "lens" and to provide much diverse knowledge of historical events. This approach should stimulate and develop the basic concepts of intelligible action in history. The more varied and diverse the topics studied during these years, the more likely is the student to develop sophisticated ways to make sense of their own and other people's actions and experience.

Conclusion

These two layers of historical understanding are obviously not the whole story, but they provide a good foundation for the more sophisticated kinds of historical understanding that can be built on them. The metaphor of foundations is not right: These layers are not left behind or beneath future developments in understanding, they are rather constituents of them. We all preserve our mythic and romantic approaches to history; they are an educational problem and social danger only if they are not added to by the development of further layers. Each layer has its own time, and we will not be successful in teaching history if we try to teach a simplistic, watered-down form of the most sophisticated kind of understanding to children.
Apart from being pedagogical good sense, it is a matter of courtesy to address things to students in the terms that they can best make sense of.

A final point concerns the relevance of an analysis of distinct kinds of historical understanding, to the research that has been conducted on students' ability to understand historical concepts. A common feature of this latter body of research has been the conclusion that students' understanding of certain kinds of historical concepts tends to occur relatively late in adolescence (Elkind, 1976; Hallam, 1969; Shemilt, 1980). A common inference is that history is not an appropriate area of study for younger children—an inference reinforced in recent decades by the elaboration of Piaget's theories in educational contexts (Wadsworth, 1978). This kind of research has generally used "history" and "historical concepts" as though these present no particular problems in meaning. Distinguishing different kinds of historical understanding might lead us to reinterpret the findings of this research, and the inferences for education drawn from it. Almost invariably, the focus of research has been on a limited range of logical concepts and associated skills, and has entirely neglected the kinds of concepts and skills explored earlier. That is, the most highly developed intellectual capacities that students seem to possess, have been ignored, and those things at which they seem to be worst have been the focus of attention. If we were to elaborate these layers, we would find that most research has been concerned with the kinds of conceptual underpinning to be found, not in the Mythic and Romantic layers, but in what I call Philosophic and Ironic layers—the Thucydidean, Rankean, or modern kinds of historical understanding (Egan, 1979).

My argument is that these later layers become accessible only through the earlier layers. We cannot begin with the most sophisticated kinds of historical understanding and expect students to grasp them. Yet this is the question that most research investigates and unsurprisingly concludes that, in the terms used above, students who have had little or no access to the earlier kinds of historical understanding have difficulties grasping the later kinds.

While my earlier analysis of layers of historical understanding may not provide the best characterizations, it seems incontestible that there are distinct ways of understanding and using historical knowledge. Students undoubtedly have a range of conceptual skills more commonly associated with imaginative than with logico-mathematical abilities, and these are particularly energetic in their earlier years. Currently well-developed research methods are quite good at dealing with the logico-mathematical abilities and rather poor at dealing with the imaginative. What I have tried to present above is a case for paying more attention to the imagination in understanding history, based on an understanding of how the more sophisticated kinds of historical understanding require well-developed prior forms, such as those briefly characterized above.
References


Human Ecology: A Suprastructure for Global Education

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Abstract

Descriptions of global education have tended to be either fragmented or nebulous. Consequently, the educator is left with little tangible basis for developing an instructional program. This paper advocates using fundamental ideas from the fields of geography and environmental sociology, which collectively contribute to the formation of “human ecology,” as a suprastructure for the analysis of current issues that are critical to global well-being. Related concepts were arranged on a flow chart, and subservient issues were factored out, resulting in a cohesive structure that reveals interrelated human/environmental factors that interface the social, physical, and natural sciences.

Human Ecology: A Suprastructure for Global Education

The rate at which the topic of “global education” appears in scholarly papers, journal articles and the theme of professional conferences, leads one to the distinct conclusion that it is a timely, even critical, issue that should be addressed by teacher education programs. Use of the “global education” concept has, however, created a semantic dilemma for at least two reasons. First, advocacy statements have tended to be of a general nature and rely on implied meanings to gain support (e.g., “We all live in the same world.”). Consequently, vague representations of global education have contributed to a state of bewilderment and have failed to provide a tangible basis for curriculum development. Although the existing discourse represents a first step toward program implementation, it lacks any sense of scope or sequence. Second, it is also apparent that different organizations (e.g., peace groups, international business conglomerates and

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environmentalists), who use the global education rubric, do not share the same primary motives or a common agenda. The issues projected by various interest groups contribute to the state of confusion surrounding the critical features of the global education concept and its implementation within the curriculum. This condition accentuates the need for a systematic approach to the delineation of conceptual attributes.

In an effort to clarify conceptual ambiguity, the National Council for the Social Studies produced a position statement in 1982. The focus of that statement, emphasizing the interrelatedness of physical and social factors operating within the biosphere, distinguished global education from associated instructional modules within the existing school curriculum (e.g., world history, world literature). That is, the earth should be viewed throughout the curriculum as a single system composed of interrelated elements. Despite the capacity of humans to reshape and control the environment, they are still an integral part of the natural world and risk survival as a species when this basic fact is ignored. Such an orientation, in the extreme, can be associated with "environmental determinism" and/or the "deep ecology" paradigm. However, such a movement toward intrabiospheric equity is antithetical to the fundamental Judaeo-Christian directive that humans should, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth (Genesis, 1:28)."

The perception of man as the righteous, top consumer in any resource chain leads to a justification of the profit motive based on maximum short-term gains as opposed to the establishment of a sustainable environment. Understandably, it is difficult for a group of people living amidst seemingly abundant resources, and having a high productive capacity, to identify with those who have no choice but to exist on significantly less. The orientation which segregates humans from other life forms has been identified by Catton and Dunlap (1980) as the "Human Exceptionalism Paradigm." Functional behavior within this paradigm is consistent with the conservative mind-set that equates provincialism and protectionist policies with patriotism. Despite suggestions to the contrary, the pursuit of global equilibrium is not a conspiracy to destroy national identities. In fact, one can support global well-being on strictly egocentric motives. For the single overwhelming argument in favor of eliminating the preferred status of selected human consumer groups is the survival of the species.

It is only within the past four or five years that concern for the biosphere has extended beyond what might be considered "hardcore organizations." Publications, such as the Global 2000 Report (1982), Our Common Future (1987), and the State of the World (1988), make it very clear that human social welfare can not be separated from environmental welfare; to do so is to engage in self-destructive behavior. Therefore, it is incumbent upon teacher education programs to identify and stress the global interrelatedness
of science and social studies. Such a union is supported by recommendations stemming from the First Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education which convened in Tbilisi, Georgia (USSR) in 1977. Twenty-two years later, the notion remains intact, but undeveloped.

Bubee and Mau (1986) surveyed 262 science educators representing 41 countries with the goal of determining the extent to which they were teaching global problems related to science and technology. The survey determined that there is a general lack of information regarding the possible function of education on international issues. Participants indicated that population growth, world hunger, air quality, water resources, war technology, and human health were the most pressing global issues. They also noted that population growth was a causal factor for all other problems. Over 50% of the participants indicated that they were only slightly knowledgeable about world hunger (the top ranked issue); 73% of the respondents recommended that both aspects of the science technology and society category be incorporated into one course. An analysis of the survey suggested a number of policy recommendations. Of particular interest was the need to research and develop models for integrating science and social studies.

A model for implementing the integration of natural, physical, and social sciences already exists within the fields of geography and environmental sociology. When the first departments of geography were established in U.S. universities shortly after the turn of the century, they were perceived as bridges between the natural and social sciences (Manners & Mikesell, 1974). Although the "environmentalist" orientation was replaced by distributional or locational studies, the original focus of geography established a precedent for the study of mutual relations between people and their natural environment or "human ecology." More recently, the Geographic Education National Implementation Project (GENIP) produced *K-6 Geography Themes, Key Ideas and Learning Opportunities* (1987). This document is consistent with the original focus of geography and can be utilized as a component within the study of human ecology. The major limitation of the GENIP is that it is based on Hanna's "expanding environments" model (1963) that doesn't introduce non-American units of study until the upper elementary grades. A desirable alternative, from a global education perspective, is described by Hartoonian and Laughlin (1986) in which themes are introduced in kindergarten and developed over subsequent levels through twelfth grade. Hartoonian and Laughlin's use of the thematic continuum accommodates Bruner's (1960) premise that the structure of a discipline can be taught to any child if it is placed in an appropriate context. The model also takes advantage of young children's exposure to the "world concept" derived from television and books. Consequently, the fundamental ideas of global human ecology can be adapted to the full range of student abilities found in public schools, as well as in teacher education.
programs. The task that remains is the identification of concepts, generalizations, and principles from human ecology which help explain current global issues. Once identified, the fundamental ideas can be structured according to the complexity of relationships, antecedents of instruction, and the abilities of various student populations.

The study of human ecology has resulted in the identification of stimulus-response patterns that persist over time and from region to region. The resulting principles and generalizations form a suprastructure against which specific current situations can be compared, as well as serving as a basis for making predictions and hypotheses about new situations. For example, the following three sequential principles from Campbell's (1983) *Human Ecology* serve as a reference for analyzing the practice, and consequences, of deforestation, particularly as it applies to regions such as the Sahel of Africa.

1. As people move away from the biotic diversity of tropical environments they become increasingly dependent on complex social structures and the development of technology.
2. A reduction in biotic diversity increases the use of existing resources because alternatives are not available.
3. When the size and/or the consumption patterns of a population exceeds the productive capacity of existing resources the complete ecosystem is placed at risk.

Consequently: Humans cut down trees for:

1. Lumber
2. Fuel
3. Paper and
4. Agricultural land

Resulting in Deforestation.

Deforestation becomes the focal issue from which antecedent and subsequent factors can be graphically displayed and readily identified. By factoring the focal issue, a working flow chart or relational web is produced (Figure 1). It should be noted that social, natural, and physical science categories occur within the display. Each time the components are analyzed, and reflected upon, new possibilities for extending the curriculum occur.

Approximately one-fourth of CO₂ released into the atmosphere is the result of deforestation. The significance of CO₂ release is probably too complex and abstract an issue for primary school children, but the role of CO₂ in the "greenhouse effect" suggests several antecedent concepts. For example, young children need to understand the concept of "cycles" because it is a fundamental idea that transfers across a variety of science and social studies topics. One may choose to introduce this concept with the cycle of seasons, or the cycle of life, followed by the hydrologic cycle. Once students understand how and why the hydrologic cycle operates, the concept can be
used in relation to climate, erosion, water contamination, and changes in rainfall resulting from global warming. At a more advanced level the nitrogen, phosphorous, and sulfur cycles can be associated with various forms of contamination and the social factors contributing to their detrimental effects. Thus the concept of cycles serves as a starting point for a logical sequence of instruction progressing from simple to complex categories.

A study of the hydrologic cycle also introduces students to transformations between states of matter, e.g., water's gaseous form. Experiences delineating the properties of another gas, air, can be generalized and applied to students' understanding of previously mentioned gas cycles. The warming and cooling of air, resulting in areas of high and low pressure, leads to the study of climate and weather patterns. Since climate is a major factor in determining the distribution of plants and animals, students should then be able to hypothesize why, for example, the colonial British preferred to settle in Kenya rather than Nigeria. The climate/habitat relationship would subsequently help explain why post-colonial conflict in Kenya was between indigenous groups and Westerners, while in Nigeria the struggle was between contrasting indigenous groups. It should be apparent to students at this point that substantive knowledge in science is not an end in itself, but serves as a means for explaining social "puzzles."

In the process of understanding how atmospheric CO₂ contributes to global warming, it would be beneficial to assess the properties of light, its polarization, and dual nature. It may be desirable to replicate Pasteur's experiments with polarizing crystals (a process used in the 19th century to discover chemical structures). The idea of a dual theory introduces still another avenue of pursuit; how a single physical phenomenon can exhibit two different physical states, e.g., how light can behave as a ray in one context while in another it functions as a particle. Are there any parallels in the social sciences?

African soils in the Sahel are particularly vulnerable to the process of desertification. The stability of soil in this region is dependent on a sustained protective cover of vegetation. Growing human and animal populations, coupled with unfavorable climatic conditions, have led to land degradation by excessive grazing, cropping, and gathering of fuelwood (note the application of Principles 2 & 3 from Campbell). In recent years, Sudan was able to increase its per capita food production, against the general regional trend of decline, by increasing the area under cultivation. However, the yields of both cereals and root crops declined (Harrison, 1987). Once the expansion into marginal lands reaches its limit, progress halts and productive capacity declines. The mismatch between the rate of human consumption due to population size and the productive capacity of the land is further complicated by economic and political factors. In 1988, for example, 250,000 inhabitants of Sudan died of starvation, primarily in
A Working Flow-Chart for the Concept of Deforestation

Human Health Hazard

Loss of Potential Medicine

Reduction of Species

Habitat Reduction

Possible Social Conflict

Possible Nuclear Weapons

Possible Nuclear Power

Need for Alternative Energy

Concept of Cycle

Release of CO$_2$

Properties of Gas

Social Conflict

Migration

DEFORESTATION

Loess

Erosion

Desertification

Possible Greenhouse Effect

Properties of Light
Air Pollution
  - Respiratory Problems
    - Run-off
      - Silting Rivers and Dams
        - Reduction in Commerce & Power
      - Soil Degradation
        - Intensive Cropping
          - Reduced Productivity
            - Increase in Chemical Use
              - Residue Build-up
                - Groundwater Contamination
                  - Human Health Hazard
                - Change in:
                  - Precipitation
                    - Plant Life
                    - Animal Life
                    - Human Demographics
            - Coastal Flooding
              - Destruction of City Ports
                - Glacial Melt
                  - Global Warming
                    - Change in:
                    - Precipitation
                      - Plant Life
                      - Animal Life
                      - Human Demographics
                    - Polarization
the rainy months between May and October, when inhabitants in the south were denied imported food by both rebel and government forces. Land degradation resulting in an inadequate food supply affects, and is affected by, the interplay of natural and human actions. It should be noted that the factors over which humans have direct control include the rapid growth of human and animal populations, detrimental land use practices (especially deforestation), adverse terms of trade, and civil strife (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

The flow chart identifies categorical content, but does not specifically indicate appropriate instructional strategies or target populations. However, an experienced elementary classroom teacher with an extensive background in children’s literature may readily associate the concept of deforestation with Dr. Seuss’ *The Lorax* (1971). There are, of course, additional values and concepts introduced in this outstanding environmental statement; not the least of which is overconsumption. Still another example of human egocentrism and consumption is found in Shel Silverstein’s *The Giving Tree* (1964). Both of these tradebooks have been used effectively with first grade children. Consequently, the process of associating an idea with its means of development may automatically result in the identification of a target population.

Teachers need some basis for making instructional decisions with regard to the substantive content of global education. The use of principles and generalizations from human ecology, coupled with the factoring of current issues that are critical to global well-being, results in a conceptual menu that is adaptable to any learning environment. Such a scheme projects systematic relationships rather than simplistic linear thinking. In conclusion, an ecological approach to global education can be justified because of its organization and content.

**References**


The Use of Groupwork
in High School Social Studies

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Is it reasonable to expect groupwork to be an integral part of social studies classrooms? Those who have long advocated the use of small groups (Chapin & Gross, 1973; Gross, 1951; and Martorella, 1976) consider it vital to any comprehensive program of citizenship education. Presumably, if students are to learn the necessary skills for effective citizenship, they need well-structured opportunities to participate and interact with their peers. But research on classroom practices in high school social studies indicates that groups are used no more than 10% of all instructional time. Given this nominal use of groupwork, under what circumstances are high school social studies teachers most likely to use this instructional strategy? The research described in the following pages explores this question, drawing on teaching practices of more than 40 high school social studies teachers.

The value of groupwork for certain learning objectives is no longer a matter of conjecture. Burgeoning research on cooperative learning substantiates what some teachers have long believed: improved social relationships and attitudes occur when students work in groups. Use of cooperative learning has been particularly useful in developing tolerance and inter-ethnic friendship in multi-racial classrooms. Robert Slavin (1983) examined 14 classrooms where cooperative learning was used and in 11 cases, more friendships had developed across racial lines than in instances where students had not worked cooperatively. Two other areas of interpersonal relations, empathy and altruism, have been positively associated with groupwork. Piaget (1959, 1960) hypothesized that when students work cooperatively they are better able to understand another's point of view. Based on their reviews of cooperative learning methods, Johnson and Johnson (1983) conclude that when students work in groups (as compared

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to working individually or in competitive situations), they are more likely to develop skills that help them take another's perspective. Bridgeman's study (1981) showed that after eight weeks of working in groups or alone, students in the former category were more successful at putting themselves in another's role.

Piaget (1963) also emphasized the importance of group interaction as essential to children's social development. "The peculiar function of cooperation is to lead the child to the practice of reciprocity, moral universality and generosity with his playmates" (p. 63). Although there are only a handful of studies which examine the effects of groupwork on the development of altruistic attitudes (Slavin, 1983; Sharan, 1980; Ryan and Wheeler, 1977), research does support the proposition that when students work cooperatively they are more likely to engage in helping behaviors.

This research base legitimizes frequent use of groupwork in any comprehensive social studies curriculum. But for several decades, and despite well-intentioned reform efforts, social studies teachers used lecture and recitation almost exclusively. Prior to the 1980s, a handful of studies (Campbell, 1964; Gross, 1952; Seimers, 1960; Shaver, Davis & Helburn 1979; Wiley & Race, 1977) showed a remarkable degree of similarity among social studies classrooms: A teacher-dominated learning environment with a very small portion of time allocated for student/student interactions. These studies were conducted before, during, and after the reform movement of the 60s, suggesting a social studies classroom impervious to reform.

The idea that repeated reform efforts had little effect was borne out in the 80s by in-depth research. In his study of classroom practices in the twentieth century, Cuban (1984) examines attempts at change by Progressive educators in the 20s and 30s and the "open" educators of the 60s. He concluded that despite these reform efforts, there has been little enduring change in the general practice of teacher-centered instructional techniques. Goodlad's study (1982) confirmed earlier findings showing that teacher-dominated curriculum held true for all subjects, in all grade levels, in more than 1,000 classrooms. In summarizing Goodlad's findings, Sirotnik (1983) concludes "the modus operandi of the typical classroom is still didactics, practice and little else" (p. 17). Focusing on social studies classrooms, McNeil's study of four high schools (1986) provides detailed descriptions of lecture-bound history teachers.

The deep entrenchment of teacher-centered practices is undeniable. In an effort to understand why previous reform efforts yielded few changes in instructional practices, I explored the question—under what circumstances do social studies teachers use groupwork? In other words, what conditions were missing during previous periods of reform? The conceptual framework for the study draws heavily on the work of Cuban (1982, 1984) and Giacquinta (1973). It consists of three perspectives or explanations for a teacher's instructional decision-making:
1. The teacher's background as well as his or her objectives in teaching high school social studies is referred to as teacher profile (Walker, 1971).

2. The formal policies and informal practices that affect instructional decisions and the physical structure of the school as it bears on classroom teaching are brought together under the heading school and classroom context (Cuban, 1984).

3. Meaningful groupwork activities require planning, management and evaluation and these aspects of instruction are referred to collectively as the technology of the instructional technique (Cohen, Intili & Robbins, 1979).

**Research Method**

The primary objective of this exploratory study was to develop a better understanding of those conditions which contribute to the frequency with which social studies teachers use groupwork. Because this study was exploratory, the research design consisted of both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative methods were necessary to show significant relationships, and, in some cases, trends between independent variables and a dependent variable. The qualitative methods, consisting of interviews with teachers and school administrators, observations of school environments, and reading of school documents, were necessary to help explain relationships that emerged from the quantitative analysis and to shed light on issues that required open-ended responses, e.g., when and where did you learn to use groups?

Drawing on the conceptual framework, three influences on a teacher's instructional decision-making (teacher profile, school and classroom context and the technology of the instructional technique) constituted the independent variables in the study. The dependent variable was the frequency with which teachers use groupwork—how often groups are used on the average in each class for at least twenty minutes or more. The choice of frequency as the dependent variable was necessary to explore the central question: Under what conditions do social studies teachers use groups? However, there was an obvious limitation in this approach. Frequent use of groupwork doesn’t necessarily mean that students are thinking critically or developing participation skills. The quality of groupwork activity is a compelling question, but one that was well beyond the scope of this study.

**Questionnaire Design and School Site Selection**

The questionnaire consisted of 50 questions pertaining to influences on a teacher’s instructional decision-making and the frequency with which a teacher uses groupwork. Ten open-ended questions were used in follow-up interviews. In the questionnaire design, where frequency of group use was the dependent variable, the primary consideration in school site selection was to have pairs of schools that would show contrast in the average fre-
frequency with which social studies teachers used small groups. Six high schools were deliberately chosen on a non-random basis; and in three of these, it was presumed that at least one teacher used groups with greater than average frequency. Although there are no precise figures on the frequency of small groups in social studies classrooms, using what data is available (Cuban, 1982; Goodlad, 1983; Sirotnik, 1984), I estimated that an average use of groups was probably around 7% of class time. Therefore, three schools were selected where at least one teacher used groups at least 10% of class time. In addition to meeting the criterion for use of groups, the three schools showed considerable variation in terms of ethnic mix and provided a broad range of student achievement levels. The schools selected for contrast with the initial three sites were in the same districts and were similar in terms of student achievement levels and ethnic mix.

**Modes of Analysis**

The quantitative data are based on responses from 43 social studies teachers (out of a possible 57) in six Northern California high schools. Although the data can be used to speculate about teachers who use groups frequently as well as those who do not, it is not valid for predicting why or how much social studies teachers use groups. In the quantitative analysis, a one-way analysis of variance was used initially; the dependent variable was the frequency of groupwork use, and the independent variables were the responses to survey questions. The ANOVA analysis showed a couple of statistically significant relationships described in the next section. It also provided direction for a more detailed look at the data which was gained from using contingency tables. Through the use of contingency tables, data could be collapsed, thereby eliminating certain gaps in data which often accompany exploratory studies. This method provided a greater number of meaningful findings than would have been possible using only a one-way analysis of variance.

Qualitative data consisted of interviews with 35 of the 43 teachers in the study and four principles, inspections of different aspects of school sites, and reading of school documents and groupwork lesson plans.

**Research Results**

As a result of the quantitative analysis, two items emerged as particularly important in illuminating the circumstances that contribute to the frequent use of groupwork: school and classroom context and teaching objectives. Concerning the former, a significant factor in explaining use (p = .01) is the school in which the teacher is employed (see Table 1).

As shown in Table 1, the school with the highest average use (School A) had a mean of over 11 occasions of groupwork use per class, per semester, approximately two and one-third times the average of the other schools in the sample.

The implications of this finding will be discussed in the next section;
meanwhile, three other issues concerning school context deserve mention:

1. The findings do not support the idea that large class size prevents teachers from using groupwork, since the two schools in which teachers’ average use of groups is the highest also have the largest class size, according to teacher self-reports.

2. Sixty-three percent of the teachers in the study said they were more likely to use groups with students who were easier to manage, and the interview data showed that a large number of teachers preferred using groups with upperclassmen and women because they found them more responsible and easier to manage.

3. Teachers who use groups infrequently would make more use of groups than they do at the present time if they had more classes where all the students were more or less at the same achievement level, \( .05 < p < .10 \). In other words, many teachers find it difficult to use groups when their classes are heterogeneous with respect to achievement level.

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION</th>
<th>Average Group Use Per Class Per Semester</th>
<th>Number of Responses Per School Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>11.25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School F</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Philosophy of teaching was the other item which appeared to be important in explaining a teacher’s use of groups. Teachers were asked to rank in order their three most important teaching objectives from a list of eight possible choices. Teachers who used groups frequently (at least once every two weeks) had first and second choice objectives that were quite similar to those of other teachers: essential concepts in history and government and critical thinking skills. As for the third choice objective, nothing emerged as a pattern within the group as a whole. However, teachers who used groups frequently were more likely to have participation skills as their third most important objective than teachers in the average or low group, \( .01 < p < .10 \). The more importance a teacher places on participation skills, the
more likely the teacher is to use groups frequently, \( .05 < p < .10 \) (see Table 2).

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Group Use by Teachers’ Consideration of the Importance of Participation Skills: How Important Do You Consider Participation Skills?</th>
<th>Important/ Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FREQUENCY OF GROUP USE</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To summarize, teaching philosophy and school environment showed a significant statistical association with the frequency of groupwork use. From these data and the qualitative information (see below), three testable propositions emerged:

1. High school social studies teachers who use groupwork frequently are most likely to include participation skills among their top three instructional goals than teachers who use small groups once a month or less.

2. High school social studies teachers who use groupwork frequently are more likely to be in supportive school contexts (e.g., contexts that include administrative support, on-site expertise and collegial relations) than teachers who use groups once a month or less.

3. High school social studies teachers who use groupwork frequently but work in a non-supportive school context are more likely to have a strong belief in the importance of participation skills than teachers who use groups frequently and work in a supportive school context.

While these hypotheses are based primarily on significant statistical associations, the study does not prove or disprove causality, which is well beyond the scope of this exploratory research.

As previously mentioned, the quantitative analysis showed that the school in which the teacher was employed was a significant factor concerning the use of groupwork, \( p = .01 \). A case study of School A (Bliss, 1986), where group use was twice as high as the average, illuminated the importance of the teachers’ workplace. It suggests that teachers are more willing to use groupwork frequently (once every two weeks or more) if the school environment has the following characteristics:
a. The support of the principal and the department chairperson.
b. At least one teacher who uses groups often and with whom colleagues are in frequent contact.
c. Strong collegial relations made possible through factors such as shared workspace.

Since school environment was the factor which appeared to have the strongest influence on frequency of groupwork, the three components deserve close attention. Administrative support, as defined herein, means that the school principal and the department chairperson encourage non-standard teaching practice (in this case, groupwork), and make this known to the teachers involved. Experts on educational change support the notion that the principal plays a vital role in successful innovation (Baldridge, 1975; Fullan, 1982) and imply that others in positions of authority, given the requisite personal characteristics, can be instrumental in change efforts.

A second feature of the supportive school context is the presence of on-site expertise, i.e., at least one teacher who is competent in the use of groups. Based on interviews with 35 teachers, the majority of teachers who wanted to learn more about using groups effectively emphasized the need for on-site expertise over traditional in-service training. For example, in School B one teacher commented, "We don't have anyone in the department who is a big user of groups, so there is no one to learn from." This teacher, like several others in the study, wanted an expert who was accessible on a regular basis and a learning situation that did not require a sizeable investment of time.

The third feature of a supportive school context is a collegial environment. At School B, the social studies chairman offered the following comment concerning the department's infrequent use of groups: "In general, more collegiality would really help. Team planning is essential for using groups, even if team teaching isn't possible. As individuals, we just don't have the personal or economic incentive to do creative planning." One of the distinguishing features of School A is that it was the only school, among those studied, where teachers had a shared workspace in addition to their individual classrooms. In most cases, teachers chose to work in shared space rather than in assigned classrooms. A beginning teacher commented, "A really great teacher has the same prep as I do; because we are in such close proximity, he frequently gives me suggestions and shares materials." The idea that peer support is essential if teachers are to use groupwork is borne out by Sharan's research (1979). This finding is illuminated by Cohen, Intili & Robbins (1979), who show groupwork to be a complex instructional strategy, requiring collegial interaction to reduce ambivalence and to share resources.

The following excerpts from the case study of School A illuminates the degree of interrelationship among the three characteristics of a supportive school environment, as defined above.
Half of the members of the social studies department had been teaching at School A since the mid-sixties when large classes and team teaching were used throughout the school. Those teachers who team taught a given subject generally used the same assignments and tests, occasionally making minor modifications to account for individual preferences; they met in formal planning sessions for a couple of hours per week and had frequent informal contact to discuss content, planning and evaluation; lunches were often spent sharing classroom experiences. Although team teaching was phased out in 1981, three teachers tried to maintain team planning by drawing on the individual strengths of each teacher. After two years, scheduling conflicts forced the teachers to give up on the team approach but informal discussions about classroom practice appeared to continue as the modus operandi of the department.

The department chairman, whose teaching career spans almost three decades, had been the chair since 1968. He characterizes his leadership style as democratic, i.e., he tries to show by example and working with people, but he does not prescribe how things should be done. Although he does not see himself as an apostle of groupwork, in the 1960s, he and a department colleague wrote a pamphlet for the National Council for the Social Studies on how to use groups effectively. He continues to use groups at least once a week or more in each of his classes. He learned about groups while attending Harvard Law School, and as a teacher began experimenting with the technique.

In this school context, the role of the department chairman seems indispensable. Although half of the department members did not know how frequently the chairman used groups, several of them commented that he had been a major influence on their teaching: "It was when I team taught with him that I really learned to use groups." Team teaching was the vehicle by which the majority of teachers at the school learned to use groups. However, team teaching in and of itself did not cause the use of small groups. Rather, through team teaching, teachers (a) had become aware of the chairman or another colleague using groups effectively; (b) saw the usefulness of groupwork in their seminar sections; and (c) shared ideas and materials on an ongoing basis. Team teaching helped create the collegiality that enabled members of the department to benefit from the chairman’s expertise.

Two of the newer teachers at School A (ones who had not been involved with team teaching) were enthusiastic about using groups. One remarked, "Because the department chair uses groups, I use groups more." The other said, "It's not just the chair's use of groups that influences me, but my other colleagues as well. I walk down the halls and see others using groups and that inspires me."

The principal at School A had led in-service training in groupwork and plays an important supportive role. He sees himself as a curriculum
leader—which did not appear to be the case with the principals at the other five schools. A department chairman at one of those schools commented, "The viewpoint of the administration is essential; the principal needs to be a curriculum leader and encourage innovation and that just doesn't happen here."

Discussion

Because this study was exploratory, the findings are certainly not conclusive, but the data does provide some insights into why instructional innovations have not taken hold in the high school classroom. This evidence is based on examination of a particular instructional technique in one subject area and in one time and place; it corroborates Cuban's (1984) analysis of why teaching practices have remained stable over several decades in all subjects and grade levels. The similarity of findings imply that some basic issues surrounding instructional innovations are universal, e.g., teachers need help when faced with novel teaching practices and this help is likely to be most effective if provided and encouraged within the school environment. More specifically, these findings also suggest that secondary social studies teachers need various types of help and resources when confronted with a complex instructional method like groupwork. Furthermore, for those teachers who want to use the technique, more assistance is necessary, though the type of assistance needed varies according to frequency of use.

Exactly what type of assistance teachers most need is one of three areas in which further research should be conducted. From the interviews, it was apparent that teachers who use groups frequently wanted more planning time to develop better materials in order to use groups more. It was not clear what type of assistance would best serve the needs of teachers who did not use groups frequently. Would instruction from peers, a how-to-do-it manual, better groupwork materials, or some combination of these and other strategies be most worthwhile? More interviews with teachers who use groups occasionally might be illuminating for those who are interested in promoting the use of groupwork.4

Another area of follow-up research would be a study that tested the propositions to see if there is confirmation of what emerged in the exploratory analysis. The sample in a confirmatory study would have to be much larger (probably a minimum of 250 social studies teachers) and should be drawn from a nationwide random sample. If such a study were undertaken, it should include a series of questions concerning social studies teachers' perceptions of the need to "cover" content, and sanctions for failing to do so. McNeil's work (1986) illuminates the kind of control that pace pressure, i.e., the need to cover the course adequately, exerts on the teacher and hence on the student. Discussions which are usually the substance of groupwork may be, in the view of some teachers, a major deterrent to students' comprehensive learning of history.

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The last, and perhaps most important issue for continuing research, concerns the structure of the school environment—its effect on how high school social studies teachers teach. As significant school renewal and restructuring efforts gain momentum, it is essential to increase our understanding of those elements of a school environment that have the most influence on teaching practices. If the use of lecture and recitation are ever to relax their stranglehold on social studies classrooms, a thorough understanding of conditions that promote a variety of instructional approaches is vital. The research reported here suggests some of the conditions that support innovative teaching practice; yet it was gathered from teachers in fairly typical high school environments. A more extensive study of this type, which would compare social studies teachers in regular school environments with those in schools committed to reform, is necessary. Extensive comparative data concerning the factors which most influence a teacher’s instructional decision-making will provide policymakers with much-needed data on the viability of current efforts to restructure schools.

Footnotes

1. For the purposes of this study, groupwork is defined as follows: When two or more students work together in a group with a common purpose and without the direct supervision of a teacher or aide. Classroom teachers frequently use the terms groupwork and cooperative learning interchangeably. However, the term cooperative learning as defined by Slavin (1983) refers to situations where students have been assigned interdependent roles for the completion of the collective task and receive group rewards based on the learning of the members.

2. This figure (7%) was a best guess and was complicated by the fact that in Cuban’s study individualized instruction and groupwork were lumped together as a single percentage of class time.


References


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Learning Unfamiliar Cultural Beliefs: 
A Descriptive Study

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This is a descriptive study compelled by the need for improvement in instruction about cultures unfamiliar to the learner. The study is a response to recent demands for full description and explanation of learning during the instructional process (Fraenkel, 1987; Nelson & Shaver, 1985). The purpose is to produce descriptive data which can be used to inform instructional planning and contribute to the accumulation of information about learners’ reasoning during instruction. The described lessons were designed in accordance with a model of expository teaching which maximizes the meaningful integration of verbal material into cognitive structure (Ausubel, 1963).

Background

Research Paradigm

For two decades, reviewers of research in social studies education have called for increased use of an interpretative research paradigm to explain teaching and learning (Armento, 1986; Shaver & Larkins, 1973). A past tendency toward isolation of single variables in research design has detracted from the study of instruction as a comprehensive process (Nelson & Shaver, 1985). Full description and insightful explanation of what students are thinking during instruction should replace a narrow focus on the outcomes of instruction. To collect the qualitative data which address this need, social studies educators must be active field researchers (Palonsky, 1987).

Studies developed from a theoretical framework are needed to facilitate replication. A large portion of the existing research on teaching social studies is criticized for being atheoretical in nature (Armento, 1986; Fraenkel, 1987; Shaver & Larkins, 1973). As a result, current researchers cannot build upon available findings by using previously explained

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theoretical constructs or principles as guides for design, procedure, and analysis. Shaver and Larkins (1973) recommend relating studies of teaching to theories of cognitive functioning. In keeping with their recommendation, the rationale for this study is derived from a cognitive psychologist's theory of the structure of knowledge, and learners' meaningful integration of new information (Ausubel, 1963).

**Instructional Goal**

Recognition of the demands created by rapidly increasing linkages between peoples and nations is a central theme of global and international education (Kobus, 1983; Tonkin & Edwards, 1981). Understanding diversity is imperative for effective support of the connecting systems which build the global network. Responsible individual participation in a global era requires analysis of differences, tolerance of diversity, and ability to recognize unfamiliar perspectives (Cleveland, 1986; Kniep, 1985; Kobus, 1983). Learners must be convinced that their own view of reality is composed of unconscious assumptions which are not universally shared (Braun, 1983; Hanvey, 1982). While this goal is commonly espoused, effective realization has not been researched (Stone, 1986).

It is important that social studies educators begin research using our best estimations of the potential of available theories of learning and teaching. I believe that cognitive adaptation allows effective integration of new information, and is necessary for personal development of the global perspective. Consequently, a theory of cognitive psychology, which offers an expository teaching model for the meaningful integration of information, was selected as the foundation for the instructional design used in the study. The study is exploratory with respect to the selection of the specific theoretical context for the global education goal.

**Researcher Assumptions**

Qualitative methodologists recommend explication of the researcher's background in the research report (Fraenkel, 1987; King, 1974; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Smith, 1987). During several years as an expatriate educator in Africa and the South Pacific, I gained first-hand experience of dissonances created by the social mixing of individuals with contrasting cultural expectations. Repeated observation of distorted interpretation in cross-cultural social acts provided convincing proof of the saliency of culture-specific thought. As a product of a foreign culture, I often had an uneasy feeling that my friends in the host culture did not rely upon the perceptions and presumptions that I had always taken for granted. Over extended time, I increased my knowledge of their culturally conditioned perspectives and improved my ability to use their beliefs and values for interpretation.

In addition to influencing the study's conceptualization, my cross-cultural background was an aid to data analysis and interpretation. Per-
sonal experience assisted my recognition of salient meanings in the data. The findings are influenced by researcher assumptions about cultural specificity of thought.

**Researcher Role**

I made the decision to accept the dual responsibilities of teacher and researcher. My purpose in doing so was to produce an account including both teacher's aims and researcher's analytical deliberations (King, 1974; Torney-Puta, 1986). As teacher, I wrote the lesson materials, planned teaching procedures, and conducted the lessons. As researcher, I analyzed and interpreted the data. Clearly, my predilections for global education and theoretical rationale are predominant in the entire conceptualization of the study.

**Research Question**

The research question was formulated for compatibility with the interpretative paradigm of the study and the focus upon students' reasoning. As students experience instruction which is based on a cognitive learning theory, and intended to facilitate a prominent global education goal, what indications of the following are manifested in their verbal participation and written response to open-ended questions: (a) explanation of differences between familiar and unfamiliar cultural beliefs, (b) use of unfamiliar cultural beliefs to explain and interpret unfamiliar events?

**Theoretical Context**

**A Theory of Cognition**

Ausubel's (1963) theory describes knowledge as structured in a hierarchical pattern with detailed perceptual data at the bottom of the hierarchy, and abstract concepts and principles at the top. He maintains that learners have the same pattern in their cognitive structure; a differentiation of abstract generalizations from specific related information. Meaningful incorporation of new material is possible when relevant concepts and principles are already established in cognitive structure. Learners use their available, top-level concepts and principles as anchors for newly received information.

As a discrete instructional strategy to facilitate establishment of top-level abstractions, Ausubel suggests the use of advance organizers. Advance organizers are statements of introductory material at a high level of abstraction, generality, and inclusiveness which precede the learning task (Ausubel, 1963; Joyce & Weil, 1986). The abstraction at the beginning of a lesson offers the learner a superordinate idea for stable incorporation of new or unfamiliar material. The intention is for the abstraction to become part of cognitive structure and function as a subsumer (Lawton & Wanska, 1977). If the learner is unlikely to activate existing concepts and principles, or does
not have available relevant concepts and principles, the advance organizer compensates for the deficiency (Mayer, 1979).

It is important to make advance organizers comparative when lesson material introduces unfamiliar cultural information (Mayer, 1979). A comparative advance organizer presents two sets of abstract ideas, each relevant to associated specific information. For example, Ausubel and Youssef (1963) used a comparative advance organizer to teach students to discriminate between the tenets of different religions. Religious tenets familiar to the students were compared with unfamiliar religious tenets in brief introductory reading passages.

**Reading Research**

Since lesson content was presented in reading passages, principles of reading comprehension are pertinent to this study. Reading researchers' assessments of learners' interaction with unfamiliar text emphasize the persistent influence of the learners' existing background knowledge. Successful reproduction or approximation of the intended meaning of text depends upon the fit between the reader's background knowledge and the author's meaning (Tierney & Pearson, 1981). Applied to cross-cultural instruction, this principle explains why readers tend to forget information and make inferences inconsistent with unfamiliar cultural text (Joag-dev & Steffenson, 1980; Reynolds, Taylor, Steffenson, Shirey & Anderson, 1982; Steffenson, Joag-dev & Anderson, 1979). The reader uses salient cultural knowledge to interpret information not previously encountered (Nicholson, 1984).

**Research Participants**

Seventh-grade students in a local middle school participated voluntarily in the study. An interested teacher agreed to release students from class for a series of four special lessons. Parental permission slips and questionnaires were distributed to parents. The questionnaire required parents to indicate the extent of their child's experience in countries other than the United States and with languages other than English. Four students in each of two classes were selected randomly from those who returned parental permission slips and questionnaires. These students had all tested above grade level in standardized reading measures. None was proficient in a language other than English, and none had spent more than a few days in a foreign country. Since the participating students had exceedingly limited experience in other cultures, it was assumed that they derived their cultural values and beliefs from their own Western, technical society.

Good readers are perhaps more adept at cognitive incorporation of abstract ideas than poor readers. Since this study did not include poor readers, no data applicable to a varied population of readers are presented. In addition, students of uniform cultural experience may express limited
meanings in comparison to bicultural individuals. The study is limited by these participant effects.

**Procedures**

**Materials**

*Comparative advance organizers.* The study required preparation of instructional materials for the four lessons (see LeSourd, 1988, for one complete set). Each lesson required a comparative advance organizer. Four paragraphs, averaging 135 words in length, were written to present familiar and unfamiliar cultural beliefs and values as generalizations without supportive detail. In each, readers were reminded of the familiar, and the unfamiliar was explained as a departure from their own assumptions. The specific cultural abstractions chosen for the comparative advance organizers were derived from anthropological sources corroborated by my experiences in other cultures (Hall, 1976; Hsu, 1983). They were selected for their prominent, easily recognizable influence upon daily life, and because they offered potential for depicting the relationship between beliefs and concrete actions. A full representation of a single culture is not the purpose of the materials.

In the comparative advance organizer for the first lesson, it is pointed out that ordinary social interaction is influenced by cultural predispositions. People in the culture familiar to the students are sometimes abrupt and direct in conversation, because they are motivated to accomplish a purpose. However, social contacts may be influenced by other cultural values. One such value is the preservation of harmony in communication. When this value pervades, people seek to avoid disagreement or unpleasantness between themselves and others. These two disparate abstractions about social communication are summarized in the comparative advance organizer.

Advance organizers for the other three lessons follow the same pattern of comparison of abstractions common to the familiar culture to abstractions common to other cultures. For the second lesson, a conception of time as a linear quantity (familiar) was compared to a multidimensional, nonlinear conception (unfamiliar). The familiar habits of keeping appointments and planning amount of time spent on activities stem from a conceptualization of time as a line to be measured and segmented. This attention to measurement is not prominent in cultural contexts suffused with an amorphous idea of time. The third presented a comparison of different cognitive classifications for the elements of the natural world. The traditional Native American view of nature as a whole in which all elements are of value (unfamiliar) was compared to a categorization of plants, animals and people into separate mental classes with differential value (familiar). The comparative advance organizer for the fourth lesson presented systems of logic underlying cause-and-effect relationships. While cause-and-effect is considered to be a universal pattern of explanation, there is cultural variation...
among the premises used to inform explanation. Scientific theory based upon verifiable observation is the common source of cause-effect logic in technological societies (familiar). Rationale derived from the realm of the spiritual or supernatural is an alternate foundation (unfamiliar). The mixing of logical premises sometimes occurs in attempts to explain events.

Stories. A story, presenting data consistent with the abstraction, was written to accompany each comparative advance organizer. The stories averaged 450 words. The story for the first lesson is about an immigrant to the United States who fails to inform his employer when he decides to quit his job, because he wishes to avoid any unpleasantness (preserve harmonious communication). Without warning, the immigrant fails to report to the restaurant where he is employed as a waiter. The head waiter is left without enough assistance to cover the dinner shift. Even though the young man is depicted as ambitious and responsible, his behavior is incompatible with expectations in his new home. In the second story, two businessmen travel to a town in a foreign country to keep an appointment with the local mayor. The town is a proposed site for an overseas branch of their corporation. They expect negotiations to be finalized at the meeting. Upon arrival at the mayor's office, they are confused by the mayor's division of attention among many people who have come for different purposes (nonlinear conception of time). The third story describes an agricultural extension agent's attempt to convince a Native American village elder that crop yield could be improved with the use of chemical fertilizer. The elder knows his people will not use fertilizer, because they do not wish to harm the plants. Their refusal reflects a high regard for all living things (one classification for natural objects). The fourth story describes citizens' reaction to a cholera epidemic in a small Chinese town. Scientific medical remedies, as well as rituals in recognition of supernatural forces, were employed to fight the disease. The variety of practices in the face of serious illness demonstrates reliance upon both scientific and spiritual reasoning (alternate cause-effect premises).

Discussion questions. Questions, used to guide discussion of the comparative advance organizers and stories, are the third component of the sets of lesson materials. Pre-reading questions were written to increase students' consciousness of their own cultural beliefs and establish expectation for learning unfamiliar beliefs (Melendez & Pritchard, 1985). Following are examples of pre-reading questions.

What do you think when someone is late for an important business appointment?
If you lived among adults who believed that spirits caused sickness, but learned about viral infections in school, what would you say caused you to become ill?

Some questions were written to assess comprehension of the passages at a literal level. The following are examples.
In your own words, describe how the head waiter felt when Ramon failed to notify him of his decision to quit working at the hotel.

Which character in the story believes that farmers should try to increase crop yield? Why does the character have this belief?

Inference questions, which provide opportunity for students to relate actions of story characters to cultural abstractions, were asked when reading was completed. Discussion of inferences generated data needed to answer the study’s research question.

Tell whether you think each of the following statements is a correct description of Ramon and why or why not.

a. Ramon had no sense of responsibility.

b. Ramon did not wish to be impolite.

c. Ramon was ambitious and inconsiderate.

Which particular actions in the story represent a linear definition of time, and which represent a nonlinear definition?

Lesson Implementation

I wanted to maximize the amount and quality of data. Since the focus was student reasoning during instruction, group size was intentionally limited to provide opportunity for extensive verbal explanation from each student. It was thought that more evidence of individuals’ reasoning would be apparent in a small-group setting than in a large-group class discussion. Each group sat in a circle for 40 minute lessons in a private room. The lessons were audio-recorded.

I purposely elicited participation from every student and encouraged clarification and elaboration of ideas. Each question was discussed thoroughly before moving on to the next question. When a student’s responses suggested confusion or failure to accommodate the new concepts and principles of the lesson, I attempted remediation either through direct explanation or probing questions.

The lessons were structured by the sequence of teaching procedures incorporated in the sets of instructional materials. Pre-reading questions were discussed. Students read the comparative advance organizers silently and responded to an oral assessment of their literal comprehension. Students then read the stories silently and responded to literal comprehension and inference questions. As the last step in each lesson, each student wrote a paragraph in response to an open-ended question requiring interpretation of story events.

Data Analysis

The similarity of the lessons made the transcript data amenable to a typological analysis strategy. Typological analysis requires division of all data collected into categories on the basis of rules which may be derived
from a theoretical base or ordinary perceptions of reality (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

The overall aim of the lessons was to guide students toward cognitive incorporation of unfamiliar cultural abstractions in order to explain unfamiliar cultural behaviors. Data were divided into categories representing steps toward the overall aim. For example, one step was to use pre-reading questions to stimulate students' expectation for unfamiliar cultural beliefs. Meanings corresponding to this intention became the content defining one category. Following were the data analysis procedures: (a) systematic inspection of transcripts to identify teacher-student or student-student interactions which corresponded to the steps implicit in implementation of the lesson design, (b) determination of boundaries between chunks of transcript data as indicated by a change in teacher intention, (c) further comparison and refinement of fit between data chunks and steps represented in the lesson design. The classification, which can be replicated or modified in other studies with the same theoretical base and lesson design, enhances the study's reliability and validity (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

During inspection of data for typological categories, idiosyncratic meanings introduced by the students began to emerge. These data represented personal interpretations and provocative concerns that were especially salient in the students' reaction to the unfamiliar cultural information. Through an inductive analysis process, two categories of meanings initiated by the students emerged (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

Results

Teaching Procedure

The typological analysis of transcript data yielded six categories. All transcript data were subsumed in the categories. Five categories contained data representing efforts to accomplish substantive purposes and one contained teacher directions.

Give directions. Teacher statements delivered for the purpose of moving the lesson forward or focusing students' attention were subsumed in the directions category. Some examples are; references to a page or question number, directives to read silently, and requests for individual oral participation.

Assess literal comprehension. To teach literal comprehension of the comparative advance organizers and stories, I posed questions requiring students to clarify vocabulary, reword sentence meaning, summarize ideas, and supply factual details. The students rephrased the advance organizers and reported story details. There was some misinterpretation of specific words, which I addressed with corrective feedback and direct explanation. Data in this category indicate the participating students were able to derive the literal meaning of the passages used in the study. More instruction
would probably be necessary with a less able group of readers. Following are examples of data included in the category.

**Topic: Social Communication**

T Now let's look at the fourth sentence in the paragraph which starts, "This desire . . . " How would you explain that sentence in your own words?

S1 Uh. Let's see. "To maintain harmony dominates." It means that they don't want to have like any arguments that will like hurt people or anything. They don't want. They just want a pleasant atmosphere around them and all that.

**Topic: Conception of Time**

T Who would like to summarize the first paragraph?

S3 It's just saying that Americans are really like precise, and they do everything at certain times and follow schedules.

**Topic: Classification of Nature**

T What's a subsistence farmer?

S6 It's a . . . a substitute.

T No. It looks like it, doesn't it? It's the opposite of cash farmer.

S6 A nonprofit farmer.

T Good, (S6). That's right. A subsistence farmer is just growing food to eat, not to sell.

Note: Students are designated by the symbols S1 through S8, and the teacher by T. An ellipsis . . . indicates a pause by the speaker.

*Establish familiar beliefs.* This category contains attempts to prompt students to recall and verbalize their own cultural beliefs and values before exposure to unfamiliar beliefs and values. Pre-reading questions were used to bring the familiar to consciousness. The students cited some behavioral examples of familiar cultural abstractions in everyday life. As shown in the following samples, they commented on the common observance of time schedules and reliance upon scientific proof. They were more reluctant to cite examples of directness between people, perhaps because they were sensitive about the subject; it was the first lesson, and they did not yet know their teacher. The separate classification of plants, animals, and people was difficult to clarify. Perhaps cognitive formation of classes is so habitual, its exposure is problematic. Alternatively, the discussion questions may have been vague.

Mixed quality in the responses to pre-reading questions suggests that the intention to bring familiar cultural beliefs to consciousness was realized in part. The uneven quality may be related to lesson content. One familiar
abstraction was explained clearly (time) while another seemed to be obscure (classification).

Topic: Conception of Time

T  Why do we need bells in school?
S7  For our classes.
T  What about our classes?
S7  So we get there on time, and we have enough time before school is out to fit in all of them.
S8  Everything, just about everything in the United States runs on time. Something has to be done by this time. Something else has to be done by this time.
T  Isn’t that right. That’s the way Americans . . .
S8  The way everything works.

Topic: Cause and Effect

T  If you lived among adults who believed that spirits caused sickness, but learned about viral infections in school, what would you say caused you to become ill?
S7  The infection. I guess I believe more in the scientific world than the spirit world, cause it’s . . . you can hold it, and you know it’ll work. And I don’t really believe in the spirit world.
S6  They can prove the scientific, but they can’t . . . there’s like a scientific problem, but they can’t prove that there’s a spiritual problem.
T  Ah, and you like to have the proof?
S6  Yes.

Topic: Social Communication

T  What would be a reason why Americans might be unpleasant to one another?
S3  Like if people aren’t getting along, then maybe they want to tell them . . . like their feelings or whatever. Tell them like what they think . . . they should . . . I’m not explaining it.
T  That’s fine. Are there times when Americans think that it’s necessary to tell the truth to somebody else, even if the truth isn’t pleasant?
S3  Yes.

Topic: Classification of Nature

T  How do you think plants and people are different?
S3  Animals and humans can think and talk and . . .
Topic: Classification of Nature

T  If we tried to get an American Indian farmer to use fertilizer, just like farmers here in the valley use fertilizer on their crops, what do you think he might say or do?

S1 He would probably say he wasn’t sure because he has his own things of how to help the plants grow.

S3 He might just think that maybe he just wants it, like to grow naturally, and not interfere with how it grows.

T  Why would the American Indian think that?

S3 Well, they think that plants are the same as people and animals, so they wouldn’t want to put stuff on it. They would want it to grow naturally.

Elicit explanation of familiar beliefs. Inference questions were asked to establish a link between familiar behaviors and familiar beliefs. The idea is to teach the students to use abstractions to interpret behavior by starting with familiar cultural content. They responded readily when asked to infer the expectations of story characters or cite story details which are manifestations of the values and beliefs of their own culture.

Topic: Social Communication

T  How do you think the head waiter felt when Ramon failed to tell him that he wasn’t going to come back to work?

S4 He felt disappointed and sort of mad, because Ramon was a good worker.

T  What do you think the head waiter expected Ramon to do?

S4 Call in and tell him that he was unable to work there anymore.
Topic: Conception of Time

T What do Americans think when someone is late for an important business appointment?

S1 They think that they're irresponsible people. They think that the person who’s supposed to meet them thinks that it's no big deal if you miss an appointment, or if you're late for it.

S4 The person thinks the person who is late is tardy . . . and what’s the word . . . careless.

Topic: Conception of Time

T What particular actions in the story represent a linear definition of time?

S8 The linear way of time I can think of is when the Americans got off the plane late thinking, “We're going to be late,” and not going to their hotel.

T Why did they do that?

S8 Because they thought they'd disappoint the mayor by being late. Like they were in America.

T That's right. That's what they would think if they were in America. Can you explain why?

S8 It's just the way America runs.

T OK, what word did we learn today for what we call that way of thinking about time?

S8 Linear.

Elicit explanation of unfamiliar beliefs. Data in this category address the second part of the research question: the use of unfamiliar cultural beliefs to explain and interpret unfamiliar events. The teacher’s intention is to encourage students to rely upon abstractions outside their cultural frame of experience. Students are expected to respond to inference questions by explaining unfamiliar behaviors or events in the light of unfamiliar beliefs, just as they previously explained the familiar in the light of familiar beliefs. Data supporting ability to make culturally authentic interpretations indicate realization of the global education goal.

Responses suggest that students did use unfamiliar beliefs to make authentic inferences. They did not resort to the familiar abstractions within their cultural experience. However, the most cogent inferences were not cited consistently by all students. Some responses seemed to be influenced by reasoning which was relevant, but did not contain the most precise information available (e.g., S1, Social Communication). Nevertheless, data in this category lend credibility to the suitability of the advance organizer model for the global education goal.

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Topic: Social Communication

T What actions of Ramon show that he believes in interpersonal harmony?

S1 Like when he went to the hotel and worked, he was always a hard worker. He didn’t talk to any of the other workers. And he built up a reputation as a hard working man. And he just didn’t talk to them, because he knew he had to get the job done, or something, or he'd be violating his job.

T Good. Is there any other reason you can think of why you think he believed in interpersonal harmony?

S3 Well, he didn’t want to tell his manager that he wasn’t coming to work, so that he wouldn’t have an argument with him or be impolite with him or anything.

T Is that why you think he didn’t tell him?

S3 Uh huh.

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Topic: Conception of Time

T Do you think this statement is true or false? “The Mediterranean mayor does not have good business manners.”

S5 In America he would not have good business manners, because he was just talking to everybody, and that wouldn’t be how it would be. I mean everyone has a time. But in that country, that’s how they run things, so it wouldn’t be bad or good or whatever. They just think that’s the normal way. But when the Americans went there, then they thought that he didn’t have good business manners, because he was talking to everybody at once and not paying attention to one set problem. He was trying to deal with all the problems at one time.

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Topic: Classification of Nature

T Let’s read each of the following statements.

a. Subsistence farmers do not need to know about the latest agricultural techniques.

b. Farmers cannot make plants grow faster.

c. Both people and plants should be treated with kindness.

Tell which ones you think the Hopis would believe.

S3 I think that they would believe the second. Both of the last ones.

T Why?

S3 Because they think that . . . farmers can’t make the plants grow faster. They can’t really do anything about how long it takes. So they just let them grow, however long it takes. And the last one, they say that both people and plants should be treated with kindness, because they think that they’re equal.
S5 Letter c. Both people and animals should be treated with kindness is what they believe.
T Do you agree (S6)?
S6 Yeah.
T Does anybody think the second statement is also true of the way Hopis believe?
S8 They have the opportunity to make plants grow faster, they just don’t want to.

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Topic: Cause and Effect

T What did the people in the story do which showed they thought there was a nonscientific cause for the epidemic?
S6 When the parade was going through, nobody came out of their houses. They kept their doors shut, cause they were afraid if they went outside the spirit would get in their house.
T And what did they do which shows a belief in both kinds of causes?
S6 They put the lime stuff around their houses both for scientific and nonscientific reasons.

Assessment of Paragraphs

As the final step in each lesson, each of the students wrote a paragraph explaining their interpretation of story events. The instructions were to explain the following: (a) why Ramon quit his job without telling the head waiter, (b) why the American executives were confused when they left the mayor’s office, (c) why the Hopi farmers did not want to put fertilizer on their crops, (d) why the residents of Shatin used both scientific and nonscientific methods to fight the cholera epidemic.

The following criteria were used to guide analysis of the written paragraphs. Did the student develop an explanation, in response to the question posed, which stated or implied the: (a) existence of differences in cultural beliefs, (b) observation that story characters were influenced by the beliefs of their culture, (c) observation that some beliefs influencing characters were unfamiliar, (d) explanation of the content of the unfamiliar beliefs? Taken together, the criteria were meant to assess whether the students wrote explanations which correctly incorporated the unfamiliar cultural abstractions presented in the comparative advance organizers. Positive findings would suggest that progress had been made toward ability to adopt a new cultural perspective, the underlying aim of the lessons designed for this study.

Table 1 presents the results of the content analysis cross-tabulated by student and by lesson. The letters “a,” “b,” “c,” and “d” represent the four criteria. “None” indicates the paragraph met none of the criteria. “Absent” indicates the paragraph is missing because the student was absent from school. A comparison of total number of criteria met by each student

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shows variation in success. The two most successful students (S3 and S8) met 12 and 10 criteria respectively, while all the others met approximately half as many. Slightly more criteria were met in the paragraphs for Lessons 2 and 3 (Conception of Time, Classification of Nature) than in the paragraphs for Lessons 1 and 4 (Social Communication, Cause and Effect). Overall, explanations that characters were influenced by their beliefs and that some of those beliefs were unfamiliar were included more frequently (criterion b = 21, criterion c = 18) than explicit statement of the existence of different beliefs and explanation of the content of unfamiliar beliefs (criterion a = 7, criterion d = 4).

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<th>Table 1. Content Analysis of Written Paragraphs: Criteria Met</th>
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In the following two paragraphs for Lesson 4, notice the reference to cultural belief throughout the first example and the exceedingly practical interpretation offered in the second example. While both scientific and supernatural practices are cited in the second paragraph, the notion of variation in source of cause-effect premises is not stated or implied. The first student has incorporated the abstraction presented in the lesson’s comparative advance organizer, and the second student has not.

Paragraph 1

The residents of Shatin were brought up to believe that the cause of sickness and/or infections was evil spirits. Since they could not see the infection or sickness taking shape, they had to make up ways that it happened. But, some of the residents went to school; and therefore learned that infections and sicknesses are caused by bacteria and germs. So, those people would probably want to use a medicine to get rid of their sickness. But, if their parents had not been to school, they prob-
ably taught their children an unscientific way of curing disease (rituals, prayers, etc). So the people who had been to school might use both a scientific and unscientific way to fight the cholera epidemic.

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**Paragraph 2**

They used scientific ways because most of the people with the epidemic would do almost anything to get rid of it. For instance, the epidemic people bought everything that was advertised for curing this deathly disease. The people also used non-scientific ways to try and cure the epidemic. Most people in the city took chains, spears, and guns and participated in a parade for Wen God. Who they thought would fight off the evil spirit who was causing the epidemic. Policemen also participated in this parade. And while the parade was going on no one would come out, because they feared the spirit would enter their home.

The variation in paragraph quality, according to the specified criteria, suggests mixed results for the research question. Even though unfamiliar beliefs were described and abstract explanations were used to interpret behavior without apparent major difficulty in the discussions, individual written interpretations do not verify a uniform success rate. A summary of the paragraph content analysis should probably be characterized as a report of differential findings. The notion that unfamiliar actions of story characters should be interpreted in the light of their own culture, appears to have been more thoroughly learned than the propensity to represent the unfamiliar in an abstract manner. The new perspectives, introduced in the comparative advance organizers, tended to be described in the paragraphs as factual information rather than patterns of reasoning.

**Student Meaning Categories**

The inductive procedure, using meanings introduced by the students to guide analysis, yielded two categories. Only data characterized by meanings of apparent saliency to students were selected for the two categories.

*Interest in source of belief.* During Lesson 4, one group initiated and sustained an interchange of several minutes duration. A question about causes of illness stimulated comments about the development of personal belief systems. Two students, in particular, were reluctant to relinquish discussion of the dilemma posed by discrepancies in scientific and nonscientific sources of knowledge.

**Topic: Cause and Effect**

T If you lived among adults who believed that spirits caused sickness, but learned about viral infections in school, what would you say caused you to become ill?

S2 I would say that I would believe more in the viral infections because that would be a more reasonable answer. If you're learning in
school, you can tell that you might breathe in air, and there’s germs in the air, and you get sick. But I don’t think you’re going to breathe in a spirit.

T All right. That’s the cause that you believe.

S3 I think that they might believe their parents, because they’d probably believe their parents... what their parents have said... more than a book.

T Thanks. (S1)?

S1 But wouldn’t you believe the teachers? Because the teachers have learned about that in school. And then those teachers have learned about that in school... and so on. But your parents... it would depend upon if your parents went to school. And they believed by their own religion.

S4 Yeah. If your religion is what your parents believe. Well, I mean, so if your parents believe that, they taught you to also.

S1 You’re forced with a big decision. Whether to believe the people who teach you everyday or the people you live with and who gave birth to you.

T It’s a tough decision, isn’t it?

S3 Well, also, if you’ve heard something all your life... since you were little, then you usually believe that more than... it would take a lot to get you to believe something else.

T What if I said that you could believe both, do you think you could?

S3 That’d be kind of hard.

S1 It would be, because they’re different.

S2 People might... like people in other places might think that bacteria is a spirit because you can’t see it, unless you’re a doctor with a microscope, so they think it’s some kind of spirit inside you.

S1 Yeah, if that part of the country doesn’t have microscopes or anything.

S4 That could be kind of hard, because I mean, spirits are a being, germs are just little inside you and they can fit. Spirits are what live outside.

S1 Say you’re in a place that does not have microscopes, and if their religion is that they don’t believe in viral infection, then they may believe that there’s a spirit.

T Because they haven’t seen any microscopes?

S1 They haven’t seen what bacteria looks like... micro... whatever that word is... microscopic.

S3 Maybe since they don’t have any proof about anything, they just make up something. So, sometimes it might give them like a feeling of... I don’t know how to say this...

S1 Just say what you think.
S3 Superiority or something, if they have something that they teach their children . . . this is a spirit.

S1 Like a wise man . . . like the old wise man . . . like in the story we read last week . . . like he would tell everyone and everyone would believe him . . . yeah, they would believe the elders, because the elders have been around longer in time.

Salience of familiar culture. Casual, inadvertent references in the context of discussion of unfamiliar beliefs and values introduce interesting data pertaining to prominent meanings in the students' reasoning. There were occasional comments indicative of the influence of familiar rationalizations from background knowledge. This finding is consistent with the tendency of readers to distort or elaborate textual information in light of their own knowledge. The saliency of the familiar culture did not prevent students from making culturally unfamiliar inferences. However, data suggesting that the familiar culture exerts a persistent influence are noticeable, even during discussion of the unfamiliar. For example, when asked why the waiter was absent without informing his boss, a student responded as follows.

S8 I think he didn’t want to tell him and disappoint him, but he actually disappointed him more by not telling him, because he didn’t know and there were people to serve and nobody to serve them.

The student has considered the waiter’s obligation to fulfill his duty. Perhaps in the student’s way of thinking, failing to meet an obligation is a greater act of discourtesy than engaging in an inharmonious conversation.

During discussion of the mayor who attended to several business matters at once, a student commented as follows.

S3 It still might be important to get there on time though, because they meet . . . well, you have to talk to all those people and maybe he doesn’t have time after then to do it. Maybe he’ll be gone or something, and he has to speak to all those people at the same time . . . so if they are late, they won’t get to see him at all.

It seems difficult for this student to relinquish a notion of time as a finite, measured commodity. She advised visitors to be on time for appointments, because the mayor may be occupied with other matters at a later time. I question whether an individual who conceived of time as nonlinear would offer such an utilitarian explanation. People, who have no apprehension about getting things done before time is used up, may not think of making a recommendation to be on time in case the mayor is busy later. In fact, use of the word “late” is incongruous with a nonlinear conception of time. This
student's use of the word "proof" in the previously cited discussion about source of belief illustrates another persistent cultural theme.

S3 Maybe since they don't have any proof about anything, they just make up something.

The assumptions implied by this statement in its discussion context seem to be: (a) beliefs must be supported by proof, (b) proof is derived from verifiable phenomena. Supernatural explanations are not verifiable, consequently, not proven in this student's line of reasoning. Thus, in the absence of microscopes, people "make up" explanations for illness. A spiritual cause is not a real cause since scientific proof isn't available. She stated the same position in Paragraph 1. Apparently, she is not ready to accept the notion that beliefs can be viable to anyone without the support which constitutes proof in her frame of reference. Later, she made the following suggestion to describe a cure which people subject to conflicting home and school influences could adopt.

S3 They could tell their parents that they're taking this medicine and it goes inside and kills all the spirits.

This is curious reasoning which attempts to mix cultures. Logic from the realm of scientific rationalization (take medicine) is invoked to address a nonscientific problem (presence of spirits). This statement seems to presume that spirits live inside the body, are destructible, and should be eliminated to attain good health for their victim. Furthermore, medicine embodies the power to produce the desired effect.

**Discussion**

The hypothesized influence of learners' cultural schemata may be the most important implication of this study. In some instances, the reasoning of participating students suggests they interpreted new information in the light of salient knowledge already possessed. Consequently, instructional designs which ignore the influence of background knowledge take a naive approach to the development of a cross-cultural perspective. As a result of exploratory analysis, it can be anticipated that previously learned cultural assumptions will interact with the reception of new assumptions during instruction. This finding raises the question of how students can be taught to recognize instances of use of familiar schemata in their own reasoning.

Perhaps the eagerness to examine the source of personal beliefs, which was demonstrated in one lesson, should not be ignored. The dialogue may reflect a need for extensive value analysis in the intermediate grades. There was some reluctance to accept the notion that an individual could develop disparate belief systems and act accordingly. Inadequate tolerance for ambiguity may be a contributing factor. If so, educational experiences which nurture such tolerance are needed for realization of global education goals.
A third finding presents implications specific to the study's theoretical model. There were mixed results for the expectation that students would be able to explain social phenomena at an abstract level. The variation may imply interaction of cognitive maturity with lesson content. Perhaps we are seeing evidence of incomplete, but developing ability to express reasoning in an hypothetical, deductive mode. Theoretically, the comparative advance organizers used in this study offer potential for assisting cognitive growth, but empirically they did not predict student success in generating abstract explanation.

The implications of this exploratory study are especially valuable for current planning in global education. The model of cognitive psychology used as the theoretical context provides a rationale for analysis and interpretation, and enhances replicability. Modifications and extensions are necessary before definitive conclusions can be offered about development of a global perspective. However, as an attempt to report student reasoning during instruction, the study contributes to a new genre of research in social education.

References


Reviewed by Allan R. Brandhorst, School of Education, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3500.

When confronting a problem, the human mind has a pronounced tendency to accept the first solution that it encounters. Perhaps this tendency is characteristic of humankind because it had a utilitarian value in facilitating survival of early man. Our forebears did not often have the luxury of detached reflection when confronted with problems of survival. As physically the frailest species in the environment, human beings had to have their wits about them at all times. Perhaps the pressures that they faced made them more impulsive in accepting the first solution that presented itself in each crisis.

In a crisis situation, however, the first solution that presents itself is often not the best, but merely the most easily recognized. In many situations delay of an intellectual response will pay off in a far more adequate solution to a problem. Therefore it would seem appropriate to raise the question of whether the impulse to premature closure is a human trait that might be amenable to modification through education or training. Certainly if methods could be developed that would assist individuals to overcome their tendency toward impulsive conclusions, the benefits to society would be considerable.

If social studies teachers can encourage tendencies to look for multiple solutions to problems, and thereby weaken the tendency toward premature closure, the quality of problem solving might be improved. It seems reasonable that the tendency toward premature closure is an awareness problem, in which the satisfaction of finding a solution is a powerful influence toward cutting off further exploration. Practice in finding multiple solutions should develop an awareness on the part of students that the first idea is not always the best.

Richard Neustadt and Ernest May have provided a resource for addressing this goal. In their book, *Thinking in Time*, they report upon a training program for high level public officials which they have been conducting at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government for the past two decades. As the title implies, the authors have focused on the use of history by decision makers in shaping public policy. They take their readers on a behind-the-scenes tour of crucial policy-making meetings in the White House during
the past nine presidential administrations, laying bare the human dynamic behind policy-making.

This aspect of the book is, by itself, of value to history teachers for the light it casts on the formation of historical decisions and the shaping of events by the human players. However, Neustadt and May do not merely report on how policy has been shaped by the use of historic analogies. They also differentiate between effective and ineffective policy, and in the process define seven "mini-methods," the use of which could have helped policy makers to avoid serious mistakes in the policy formation process. It is this set of mini-methods which constitutes the real treasure for social studies educators.

The seven mini-methods share several common features, the most significant of which is the careful use of historical data in decision making. Each mini-method represents a strategy that a decision maker can apply to ferret out inapplicable historical precedents. Each is unique, however, and accordingly warrants a brief description.

**Seven Mini-Methods**

1. **K-U-P/L-D.** This method is concerned with defining an immediate situation in the here and now. The method employs identifying the "Known," the "Unknown," and the "Presumed" for the immediate situation and for any historical analogues. "Then" and "Now" are compared in terms of likenesses and differences.

2. **The Goldberg Rule.** This method involves a change in defining a problem. Simply put, it requires the replacement of the question "what's the problem?" with "what's the story?". As the authors make clear, the distinction is far more important than it seems.

3. **Time Line.** This is the identification and sequencing of events in the "story" of the problem.

4. **Journalists' Questions.** In the pursuit of thinking through the history of an issue or problem it is useful to answer the questions "who," "what," "when," "where," "why," and "how."

5. **Bets and Odds.** This method is used in conjunction with the presumptions in mini-method number one, to determine how solid the presumptions are.

6. **Alexander's Question.** Designed to increase awareness of limits on objectivity, Alexander's Question asks "what fresh facts would cause you to change your presumption?"

7. **Placement.** Designed to examine the personal element in proposed solutions, the focus here is on the perspective problem solvers bring to a problem.

The Neustadt and May volume is a lucid statement of the difference between remembering something and being able to use it. The seven mini-
methods are techniques for transforming remembered information into useful knowledge. As such they are useful for helping adolescents develop their historical understanding. Therefore, they are excellent metacognitive candidates for inclusion in the high school history curriculum.

Neustadt and May bring a wealth of experience to the writing of this book. They have both worked extensively with presidents and governmental agencies in a consulting capacity. They bring an almost conversational tone to the book, as they report on policy meetings at which they participated.

In the spring of 1988 I used this book as a collateral reading in an undergraduate social studies methods course at the University of South Carolina. At the conclusion of the course I asked the students to critique the book. While there was considerable diversity in the critiques, the students uniformly recommended that the book be assigned again as required reading for future social studies teachers. Their most common complaint about the book was that the book presented more detail than was necessary to illustrate the application of the mini-methods in actual policy making situations.

The future security of a democratic state depends upon the ability of its youth to think historically about public issues. Many young people today apparently are not reaching this goal, and in many cases do not even remember the history they have been taught. The Neustadt and May volume provides social studies teachers with a blueprint for the design of a practical history curriculum. While the book is not a substitute for a methods text, it provides germinal ideas which, in the hands of a creative social studies teacher, might breathe new life into the American History course.

Reviewed by Richard K. Jantz, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742

I took a stool at the lunch counter, checked the main menu over the wall to the kitchen, and focused on the daily specials on the little sign by the cash register. Just then an elderly black man came in and sat at the counter one stool away from me. I'd bet that he was born in the late 1800s, but I didn't ask. From the look of his neck, his face and his hands it appeared that he worked outdoors. Was he a farmer? a waterman? both? The man pulled out a handful of change from his pocket—nickels, dimes, pennies, maybe a quarter. He sorted through it again and again. Then he picked up the menu, looked at it and quickly placed it back on the counter. He looked at the wall menu as if searching for something, but was not able to find it. I began to wonder, could he read? I didn't know. I decided to speak up. Addressing my question to the counter clerk, I asked how much was a hot dog and bowl of chili. They weren't on the menu. The clerk replied, $1.75. As soon as mine came, the man said "I think I'll have a hot dog and a bowl of chili," and he slowly counted out $1.75. (Author's ms.)

The above recollections are factual; they're first hand accounts of events that did happen. They hint at history, biography and society and their intersections with social structures. That is what social science in the classical sense is all about. To understand these intersections, particularly the relationships between history and biography within society, requires an imagination that can link observations and thinking. Mills has called this quality the sociological imagination:

What they need, and what they feel they need, is a quality of mind that will help them to use information and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in the world and what may be happening within themselves. It is this quality, I am going to contend, that journalists and scholars, artists and publics, scientists and editors [and we might add educators] are coming to expect of what might be called the sociological imagination (p. 5).

This quality of mind is the linkage between observing and thinking; it requires researchers not only to have the capacity to shift from one perspective to another, but also "that every self-conscious thinker must at all times be aware of—and hence be able to control—the levels of abstraction on which he is working. The capacity to shuttle between levels of abstraction, with ease and with clarity, is a signal mark of the imaginative and systematic thinker" (p. 34).
This quality of mind also has to do with keeping a proper balance between method and theory. What to verify and how to verify it should guide our observations. There is the danger that overemphasis on the theoretical models can cloud our observations and interfere with our work, while too much concern with method can end up with too much manipulation of data and a thinness of results. Mills has indicated:

Useful discussions of method as well as of theory usually arise as marginal notes on work-in-progress or work about to get under way. "Method" has to do, first of all, with how to ask and answer questions with some assurance that the answers are more or less durable. "Theory" has to do above all, with paying close attention to the words one is using, especially their degree of generality and their logical relations. The primary purpose of both is clarity of conception and economy of procedure, and most importantly just now, the release rather than the restriction of the sociological imagination. . . . When we pause in our studies to reflect on theory and method, the greatest yield is a restatement of our problem. Perhaps that is why, in actual practice, every working social scientist must be his own methodologist and his own theorist, which means only that he must be an intellectual craftsman. (pp. 120–121).

The release of the sociological imagination is grounded in the assumption of substantive problems and common sense for "common sense determines what is to be seen and how it is to be explained." The release of the imagination for observing and thinking promotes scholarship and craftsmanship. It enables one to obtain a proper balance between theory and practice in designing studies. The release of the imagination helps place studies in the proper context by avoiding the problem of perceiving the present as an autonomous creation. It gives order to the disassembled pieces of our work. The author states:

The classic craftsman does not usually make up one big design for one big empirical study. His policy is to allow and to invite a continual shuttle between macroscopic conceptions and detailed expositions. He does this by designing his work as a series of smaller-scale empirical studies (which may of course include microscopic and statistical work), each of which seems to be pivotal to some part or another of the solution he is elaborating. That solution is confirmed, modified, or refuted, according to the results of these empirical studies. . . . Verification consists of rationally convincing others, as well as ourselves. But to do that we must follow the accepted rules, above all that work be presented in such a way that it is open at every step to the checking up by others. There is no One Way to do this: but it does always require a developed carefulness and attention to detail, a habit of being clear, a skeptical perusal of alleged facts, and a tireless curiosity about their possible meanings, their bearings
on other facts and notions. It requires orderliness and system. In a word, it requires firm and consistent practice of the ethics of scholarship. If that is not present, no technique, no method, will serve (pp. 126-127).

Mills makes other points about the release of the sociological imagination and the formulations of problems for observation. He talks of values, troubles, issues, and the constant challenge of how inquiry can open up the casual connections between milieux and social structure: "Such work also involves an abstraction from what may be observed in everyday milieux, but the direction of its abstraction is toward social and historical structures" (p. 124).

Mills describes behaviors which can stimulate the sociological imagination:

(1) On the most concrete level, the re-arranging of the file. . . . You simply dump out heretofore disconnected folders, mixing up their contents, and then re-sort them. . . . Of course, you will have in mind the several problems on which you are actively working, but you will try to be passively receptive to unforeseen and unplanned linkages (p. 212).

(2) An attitude of playfulness toward the phrases and words with which various issues are defined often loosens up the imagination. . . . In all work, but especially in examining theoretical statements, you will try to keep close watch on the level of generality of every key term, and you will often find it useful to break down a high-level statement into more concrete meanings (p. 212).

(3) Many of the general notions you come upon, as you think about them, will be cast into types. A new classification is the usual beginning of fruitful developments. . . . Good types requires that the criteria of classification be explicit and systematic. To make them so you must develop the habit of cross-classification. . . . In many ways, cross-classification is the very grammar of the sociological imagination. Like all grammar, it must be controlled and not allowed to run away from its purposes (p. 213).

(4) Often you get the best insights by considering extremes—by thinking of the opposite of that with which you are directly concerned. . . . The hardest thing in the world is to study one object; when you try to contrast objects, you get a better grip on the materials and you can sort out the dimensions in terms of which the comparisons are made. . . . One of the things meant by "being soaked in the literature" is being able to locate the opponents and the friends of every available viewpoint (p. 214).

(5) The release of the imagination can sometimes be achieved by deliberately inverting your sense of proportion. If something seems very minute, imagine it to be simply enormous, and ask yourself: What dif-
ference might that make? . . . I should never think of actually counting or measuring anything before I had played with each of its elements, conditions, and consequences in an imagined world in which I controlled the scale of everything. This is one thing statisticians ought to mean, but never seem to, by that horrible little phrase about "knowing the universe before you sample it" (p. 215).

(6) Whatever the problem with which you are concerned, you will find it helpful to try to get a comparative grip on the materials. . . . One reason for doing so is that often what you are examining is limited in number; to get a comparative grip on it, you have to place it inside an historical frame (p. 215).

(7) There is, finally, a point which has more to do with the craft of putting a book together than with the release of the imagination. . . . It is the distinction between theme and topic. A topic is a subject. . . . A theme is an idea. . . . In working out the construction of a book, when you come to realize the two or three, or, as the case may be, the six or seven themes, then you will know that you are on top of the job. . . . I think most writers—as well as most systematic thinkers—would agree that at some point all the themes ought to appear together, in relation to one another (p. 216).

I first read Mills' book as a graduate student in a sociology course almost twenty years ago. It was pertinent then, and I believe pertinent now. It was one of a few books that had a major impact on me as a graduate student. It provided structure to a discipline and a foundation for thinking. It is one of those books which appears to have merit over time.

Mills talks of ways to stimulate the imagination, about intellectual craftsmanship, and about thinking and writing that provide sound advice to today's graduate students and research practitioners. Most of all Mills talks about a frame of mind and scholarship that can provide guidance in our observations and pursuit of scholarship. The Sociological Imagination is a book to be read, thought about, and discussed with others.
MECC (Minnesota Educational Computing Consortium). World GeoGraph, a microcomputer software program for the Apple IIgs (768K, two disk drives recommended). 3490 Lexington Avenue North, St. Paul, MN (612/481-3500), $139.00.

Reviewed by A. W. Strickland, Education Department, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Baltimore, MD 21228.

All too often the task of teaching geography has been best represented by the model labeled "drill and practice." The typical scenarios are either (1) students are assigned the memorization of countries and capitals of a specific continent and after some interval of time asked to take a quiz; or (2) a specific country is assigned and then a complete report is written. While the latter would be preferred, and the research involved would be considered a valuable excursion, very little analysis or synthesis takes place, since the area studied is isolated from the rest of the world.

Geography instruction which concentrates on the lower end of Gagne's hierarchy of learning has been the method educators have been forced to accept. The employment of microcomputer technology now provides an opportunity for inclusion of the higher levels of Gagne's scale (e.g., principle and rule learning, and problem solving).

The use of large geographic databases can significantly enhance the teaching process and provide an opportunity for analysis and synthesis of information. In the past, the thought of using such databases as exploratory tools in geography was only a dream for most secondary and college instructors due to the cost of hardware and software. Databases were delivered by sophisticated (and expensive) mainframe computer systems, not easily accessible to classrooms.

Recently, Minnesota Educational Computing Consortium (MECC) introduced a microcomputer software program called World GeoGraph. This program is a constantly evolving world atlas—a combination of textual information and a cartographic database with which the user can seek information from a variety of sources. The user interacts with the software in many ways: simply locating countries; comparing data from several nations; creating searches to make inferences about any of the 177 different countries and 55 different categories.

World GeoGraph is aimed at the middle-school-and-above audience; realistically, it would require a great deal of teacher-created introductory activities to be successful at the middle school level. However, for high school or college instruction, the program provides an unique opportunity to investigate the world of geography.

Hardware requirements may initially hamper the acceptance of the program since it requires an Apple IIgs with 768K (one megabyte would be
more realistic), at least one 3.5" disk drive (preferably two), an electronic mouse, and an RGB monitor. The use of an attached printer (ImageWriter or LaserWriter) is strongly suggested.

Once the hardware components are acquired, the software offers great opportunities for emphasizing concepts and relationships rather than confining geography lessons to the recall of factual information. The 55 categories of information include 32 numeric and 23 textual sources. The data may then be displayed in card format (similar to an index card), a table format, or a “living map” format (visual displays in the form of maps or graphs).

A student may select any country, and then any of 32 numeric categories containing information about the target nation and compare that with the other 177 countries of the world database. For example, if the country of Spain were selected by the student as the target nation, and gross national product chosen for comparison purposes, a map would appear showing Spain ranked 121st in the world out of the 177 total countries. The color coding on the map would indicate which countries were higher than, equal to, or lower than the targeted nation. An additional option labeled “world quartiles” could be selected from the Map Menu. (This option is keyed to any of the 32 numeric categories.) The resulting quartile data is then displayed, again with color coding, on a regional map. Choices such as arable land, birth rate, caloric intake, death rate, crop production, and other numeric categories may then be compared using this option.

A feature I found very appealing was the weather and climatic data available for each country. For instance, in searching the database for the largest wheat producers in the world using the “living map” option, it revealed that the countries growing wheat are all located at the same latitude in the northern and southern hemispheres. Countries within this band which did not produce any significant quantity of wheat can be located, and information can be acquired on what crops they do grow. In conducting this type of database search, it was found that wheat is not the most abundant grain. Sorghum-producing countries outnumber wheat-producing countries, though annual production of sorghum rarely exceeds world wheat production.

*World GeoGraph* offers new opportunities to expand geography instruction and to help students discover a myriad of geographic relationships. As with so many software programs, the description MECC provides does not tell it all; a more succinct phrasing might include “load the program, pour in a generous helping of imagination, stir well, and serve abundant helpings to your students.”

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*Curriculum as a Political Problem* by Tomas Englund is not just an esoteric volume on a Scandinavian curriculum problem. Englund draws on the views and works of educational and political thinkers from France, Germany, England and the United States as well as Sweden, as he traces the history of citizenship education in Sweden. American educators can learn about the knowledge and value structure of their own citizenship education from this insightful analysis of curriculum development in Sweden. Only recently have we in the United States come to see the inherent and historical political perspectives that enhance or impede school change. In that sense the Swedes are far ahead of us, and we can learn from them.

Many countries have borrowed from American curriculum models, but have modified them in light of changes in culture and politics. It behooves American educators to examine works such as Englund’s to reconceptualize their synthesis in order to improve the American curriculum.

Englund’s work is remarkable both in its scope and its depth. He has drawn from classic works in educational history as well as the most modern radical views of education and schooling. In his discussions of today’s curriculum, he makes a strong case for the relevance of revised views of history of education such as those of David Tyack, Michael Katz and Larry Cuban.

The notion of citizenship education in Sweden was once synonymous with moral education, but this moral curriculum code was replaced by what Ulf Lundegren called the rational curriculum code. The parallels between American social studies curriculum development and Swedish efforts in this area are remarkably similar. The school reforms of 1918–19 in Sweden can be favorably compared to the 1916 committee on social studies. Both saw the curriculum designed to strengthen young people’s sense of community and sought to instill a sense of community responsibility and civic duty. Both looked to a capitalist economy and a feeling of vocational pride for success.

Englund lays his foundation for this study by examining curriculum theories, particularly the reconceptualist view, which he espouses with limitations. He is skeptical of the American reconceptualists, Apple, Anyon, Giroux and Popkerwitz because “their analysis are often excessively politicized, but they do nevertheless point to the necessity of focusing on the actual value assumptions of curriculum work” (p. 48).

Englund divides Swedish educational history into three periods which he terms patriarchal, scientific-rational and democratic. The former two can
be seen in the American curriculum. The scientific-rational period, which began at the turn of the century, was reflected in Swedish schools from the time of the 1919 school code until the report of the 1946 School Commission was successfully implemented in 1955. The effects of the 1916 Commission on the Social Studies still hover ominously over all work done in this area.

The curriculum battles in Sweden were openly political, and the players included the Church, unions, the Elementary School Teachers Association, the Social Democrats, representatives of commerce and industry. Englund notes, "The struggle between different political ideologies, between more or less coherent systems of assumptions, theories, practical programmes of action, etc. which are manifest and/or latent in character—or more correctly the striving of different ideologies for hegemony—form a basis for the concrete exercise of power by state apparatuses, including schools, and hence, in the long term, for the development of human consciousness" (p. 150).

Englund presents, discusses, and relies for much of his thesis upon Karl Mannheim's work on sociology of knowledge. His presentation of Mannheim is lucid and helpful, but I would have liked to have the thesis applied more. Who were the people who wrote the 1919 school code or that of 1946? Why were they appointed, and what points of view did they bring to these tasks?

Citizenship education, or civics, once was an overarching principle of schooling in Sweden. In that sense it was critical and controversial in approach. By transforming it into an "orientation subject," the 1946 School Commission succeeded in watering down its controversial nature. The opportunity for a more penetrating type of citizenship education, fostering a critical approach, was lost. This might be useful to consider when examining what citizenship education offers to American students and how it is delivered. One of the paradoxes Swedish and American schools face is viewed by Englund thusly,

To the School Commission, citizenship education in schools was closely linked to maintaining and strengthening democracy. The Commission's view of democracy, however, rested on the specific premise that schools must not transmit any kind of ideological doctrine, be it that of democracy itself. The criterion of democratic instruction was, they argued, that it should have an objective, scientific base (p. 204).

If American schools are to truly move toward what Englund calls a democratic educational conception, it would be most appropriate to view Englund's book for cautions and suggestions. He offers some useful models and demonstrates breathtaking facility in his application of a most exhaustive body of research.
Is the U.S. Department of Education's publication, *What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning* (1986/87), a reliable summary of research findings or a political document advancing a particular perspective? It seems to me that it is unquestionably the latter—it is a political document masquerading as a summary of research findings.

The inadequacies of this report are revealed in the introduction to the first edition (Department of Education [DEd], 1986). Assistant Secretary for Research and Improvement, Chester E. Finn, Jr., adroitly resolves a pivotal dilemma—how to translate inconclusive research evidence into curricula—by replacing the complexities of the academic world with the layman's "common sense" reality. He dismisses academics who "seldom know as much as they think they should know before drawing definite conclusions" (p. 1). He questions methodology that hedges its conclusions "by the well-known academic caution: statistical correlation does not reliably indicate causation" (p. 1). He provides an alternative method for deciding what is "true, useful, and important" (p. 1), based on the belief that "to wait for absolute certainty is sometimes to wait too long...." He asserts that "true opinion is as good a guide to correct action as knowledge" and "until they are put to the test... one person's intuition and common sense are as reliable—or unreliable—as another's..." (p. 2).

To better understand how both editions of *What Works* (1986/87) use this "common sense" criteria to select and shape exhaustive, yet inconclusive, evidence into simple findings, consider the maneuvers used to create the research finding on phonics:

Children get a better start in reading if they are taught phonics. Learning phonics helps them to understand the relationship between letters and sounds and to "break the code" that links the words they hear with the words they see in print. (1987, p. 19)

The notion that facility in phonics gives children a better start in reading because it enables them to "break the code" is one that immediately frames the construct of reading as a decoding of sounds, rather than an understanding of meaning, process. This framework sets the stage for particular types of evidence, for research which views reading as the accumulation of
discrete skills, and effectively locks out research-based notions which view reading as a constructive, holistic process.

If reading is synonymous with sounding out words, ipso facto, phonics instruction has to be the most effective instructional method. The way to measure its effectiveness is to taxonomize the reading process, and then quantify various identifiable attributes connected to the attainment of this skill, e.g., speed in reading or age at which certain skills could/should be achieved. Nowhere in this early-attainment-of-skills model is there room for Piaget’s counter-question: “Is it a good thing to do?” Nowhere can the emphasis on speed be met with a “Why?” or “So what?”.

The information presented in the balance of the “phonics finding” and its accompanying comment has one goal—to validate the view of early reading as a decoding process. It does so even though the attempt to summarize current research evidence agrees that existing research on beginning reading “says nothing consistently…” (Chall, 1983, p. 87); that “research provides insufficient justification for strict adherence to either overall philosophy” (that is either a commitment to phonics or meaning) (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985, p. 42); and that “the relationship between skilled reading and beginning reading instruction is not straightforward” (Perfetti & Lesgold, 1979, p. 58).

The balance of the claims in the accompanying comment are equally problematic. Indeed each statement raises not only internal, but external validity issues as well. The first portion reads:

Until the 1930s and 1940s, most American children learned to read by the phonics method, which stresses the relationships between spoken sounds and printed letters. Children learned the letters of the alphabet and the sounds those letters represent.

For several decades thereafter, however, the “look-say” approach to reading was dominant: children were taught to identify whole words in the belief that they would make more rapid progress if they identified whole words at a glance, as adults seem to (1987, p. 19).

These are indeed questionable claims. Of the six references listed in the revised edition (1987), only Smith (1965) documents the rise and fall of approaches to reading. But, though she is cited, the substance of her work is ignored. For example, Smith is careful to point out that, since its introduction in 1807, phonics has always co-existed with other methods. In discussing the 1950s, she states that phonics instruction was an integral part of every reading program and quotes, in support of this claim, from the Pittsburgh Report of the Eleventh Annual Conference on Reading (1955): “Not a reputable system of teaching reading exists today that does not give extensive attention to phonetic training throughout the entire primary and middle
grades . . . The writer who accuses the school of doing nothing about phonetics is simply saying things that are not true" (1965, p. 357).

What then was What Works' historical source? It is Smith who offers a possible answer. "Laymen," she writes, "who see only children's readers and are not acquainted with the phonic instruction provided for in the teachers' guides of basal reader programs, are quick to accept the critics' statements that phonics is no longer taught in the public schools of the United States" (1965, p. 358). The written record simply does not corroborate either the layman's or What Works' view of history.

The current split between whole language and phonics advocates is the latest in a series of artificial dichotomies which have dominated the field of reading. What Works, in contrast to most of its sources who support a combined phonics/whole language approach, reinforces this false either/or dichotomy. Certainly theoretical differences, bolstered by ideological jargon, do exist. However, on the classroom level, the key instructional distinctions boil down to those determined by the beliefs, attitudes, and expectations of the teachers and learners (Rist, 1970).

Let us not forget that teachers rarely adhere to one model in their classroom teaching practices, but "invariably make adjustments in methods to suit their own style of teaching" (Chall, 1983, p. 79). In other words, while theorists may polarize, teachers mix and match to suit their needs!

The notion that phonics instruction gives children "a better start" not only presents an either/or stance, it also assumes a sequential, linear progression in learning to read which begins with phonics. It is amusing to note that when the authors of What Works urge parents to read to their children and talk to them about the text (1987, p. 7), they are advocating whole language (meaning emphasis) experiences in the home both before and during formal phonics instruction in school. Is this an example of a new time/space dichotomy, a presentation issue, or an organization's ability to hold divergent beliefs simultaneously?

Submerged in the historical theme of this portion of the document, lies the notion that children who learned to read using phonics methods were better readers. Is this true? Smith (1965) notes that during both World Wars thousands of soldiers could not read well enough to follow the simple printed instructions used in connection with military life. Anderson et al. write that "studies dating back to the middle of the 19th century usually have shown that succeeding generations of students perform better than earlier generations" (1985, pp. 1-2). Similarly, Chall (1983, pp. 73-74) notes that the majority of proponents of various early reading methods agree that reading standards have not suffered.

Since Smith's (1965) history contradicts that of What Works, why was she even included as a reference? Perhaps the authors, as Glass (1987) contends, were attempting to validate their contentions by referring to sup-
posed historic antecedents. Such a notion fits with Glass’ view that the intellectual conservative perspective is characterized by a reliance on history, but a history that suits the purposes of their social agenda.

Certainly language used by Smith to document the history of reading instruction is very different from language used to discuss reading as a social-cum-cognitive process. Smith’s (1934/65) process of objectifying instruction by reviewing texts—readers, supplementary materials, teacher guides, courses of study, and research titles—ignoring classroom practices, teacher/learner interactions, and intra-approach variations, determined the categories that underlie What Works’ conceptualization of reading.

This example demonstrates how taxonomies which researchers such as Smith (1965) use to organize such complex processes as reading come to determine the way laymen and politicians think about these complicated issues. In other words, shaping the category system is tantamount to exerting political power and influence.

The remaining statements in this finding contain similar unvalidated assumptions, murky use of language, and assertions that do not agree with their sources. To name a few—what is a “secure verbal footing” (1987, p. 19)? What are “good” stories (p. 19)? While it may be common sense to assume that extended phonics instruction “can defeat the spirit and excitement to read” (p. 19), no research supports this contention (Chall, 1983).

Other findings are also rife with examples. In the finding on Homework: Quantity (1987, p. 51), how regular is “regularly” or how conscientious is “conscientiously”? My favorite is the finding on Student Ability and Effort: “Children’s understanding of the relationship between being smart and hard work changes as they grow” (p. 37).

The conclusion is unavoidable. What Works is a political document written by conservative partisans who, armed with a perspective, searched the research literature for evidence to support their world view. Their objectivist stance embodies a fundamental confusion between teaching and learning which results in a misplaced focus on teaching (and instructional practices) rather than on learning. The notion that learning is a process of meaning-making, as learners make sense of their transactions with the world, is neither understood nor addressed.

This mechanistic view requires an enormous technology of control—over students’ in-school and at-home time, over school and classroom organization, and over curriculum. These issues of control permeate both editions. (What form might this document have taken if written by those who view education as a social construction process? Could this type of “quick fix” document even be written by social constructivists?)

Translations from research evidence to prescriptions are hazardous ventures at best (Shaver, 1979). If the summaries of the evidence are themselves questionable, as is true in What Works, the prescriptions become creative nonsense.
Will *What Works* have influence? Certainly the journalistic style and format (over one-half million copies of the first edition have been distributed) increase the possibility. More importantly, as a government document it reveals the kinds of issues that will most likely receive government funds. Indeed, this finding on phonics is currently being presented by the U.S. Department of Education as the standard by which elementary school reading programs are to be judged. It is the "ideal" driving the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement's (OERI) funding of research projects designed to improve reading (1988).

However, these findings are nothing but examples of ritualistic writing from a particular historic period—"The World of Educational Research According to the Department of Education"—circa 1980-88. *What Works* is a biased, unreliable summary of research findings. It must be considered dangerous to both teachers' and children's well-being.

**References**


Information for Authors

Manuscripts

Manuscripts (five copies) should be addressed to Millard Clements, TRSE, New York University, 200 East Building, New York, New York, 10003. In addition, if you use WordPerfect, please send your article on a floppy disk; the disk will be used in the final editing of your manuscript for publication.

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Each manuscript should include on a separate page, an abstract of 50–100 words. Ordinarily manuscripts will not be returned. Authors are not expected to send the original copy.

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Book Reviews (two copies) should be sent to Jane J. White at the address in the front of the journal or to 1820 Tucker Lane, Ashton, MD 20861. The length may vary from 500 to 3500 words. The format for the top of the first page of the review is as follows:

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An Invitation

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

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

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

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

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

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

Millard Clements

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As of June 1989, no program Co-Chair has been selected. The deadline for submitting proposals is the first week in February. Write if you have suggestions or questions about the program. The 1990 Program Theme is "Opening Pathways to Citizenship: The Role of Social Studies in a Changing Nation."

The 70th Annual NCSS meeting is November 15–18, 1990 in Anaheim, California.