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Editorial:

A Few Comments About Tests of Statistical Significance

We continue to receive a number of manuscripts describing quantitative studies in which the authors used a test of statistical significance inappropriately (or even incorrectly). Accordingly, I would like to offer a few comments as to when the use of such tests are appropriate and when they are not.

The three most common ways that authors present the results of a quantitative study are either (a) a difference between the means of two (or more) groups compared on one or more dependent variables; (b) a correlation coefficient to indicate the degree of relationship that exists between two measured variables; or (c) a crossbreak table to display the number of cases in certain categories. The appropriate statistical inference test in each case, depending on the nature of the variables involved, can differ, but often involves one of the following: a t-test for independent means, an F-test (analysis of variance or analysis of covariance), a t-test for the correlation coefficient, or a chi-square test.

Many of the authors who submit manuscripts to TRSE continue to imply that statistically significant results are important in their own right. The authors of one experimental study that we received, for example, found that a one-semester course in “inquiry teaching” had a statistically significant effect \( (p=.05) \) on the conceptual learning of students in 9th grade geography classes. Using analysis of covariance, these authors found that the experimental group (those students taught by the inquiry method) showed greater “understanding” of a number of geographic concepts. The actual mean difference between the experimental and control groups on the posttest, however, was only two points (on a 50-point exam), with both groups showing a standard deviation of seven points.

Caution is in order here. Common sense ought to have warned these researchers to think things through a bit more. The authors’ statistical analysis only tells us that the two-point difference is very hard to explain as occurring by chance. But this fact does not in any way indicate that such a difference is educationally important.

The same logic applies to correlational studies. We continue to receive descriptions of studies in which the authors report trivial (i.e., quite small) correlation coefficients (e.g., lower than .25) as being statistically significant. One author, for example, reported a correlation of .15 between two variables he was studying. A correlation of this magnitude, however, yields a coefficient of determination (i.e., \( r^2 \)) of only .02, indicating that the scores on these two variables have only two
percent of their variance in common. The author called attention to this small correlation because it was statistically significant. It is difficult to see such a small correlation as indicating any sort of educational significance, however. (Sometimes the reverse occurs. Potentially important results are overlooked by researchers because they are not statistically significant!)

Examination of many of the studies submitted to us for consideration suggests that many members of the social studies research community do not understand the assumptions on which statistical inference tests are based. Some of these assumptions (e.g., that the dependent variable is normally distributed within the population) can be foregone if the researcher has a sufficiently large sample. There is one assumption, however, that is crucial: that the sample has been randomly selected. If the sample has not been randomly selected, any test of statistical significance is inappropriate, for valid generalizations cannot be made to the population of interest. The purpose of doing a statistical test in the first place, therefore, is defeated. Unfortunately, many studies conducted by social studies researchers are not done with random samples, because it often is not feasible (or sometimes even possible) to select the sample randomly.

There are some alternatives to statistical significance testing that we would encourage more social studies researchers to consider. Sample characteristics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, etc.) might be described in much more detail than is presently done. Frequency polygons and scatterplots might, whenever possible, be provided so that the distribution of the data involved in a particular study can be seen. (Means and correlation coefficients are accurate descriptions of data only in some instances; they may be misleading in others.)

Authors might also comment on the magnitude of the results they obtain by reporting effect sizes. The magnitude of an obtained effect might be compared with the magnitude of results obtained on the same dependent variable(s) by other groups (especially extreme groups) known to the researcher or reported in the literature. Finally, previous or related studies might be replicated. Since I took over the editorship of TRSE some 14 months ago, only one replication of a previous study has been submitted to us for consideration.

Tests of statistical significance do have a place in social studies research, but it is only in attempting to generalize results to a larger group. All that such tests can do is eliminate chance as a plausible alternative explanation for an obtained result. They cannot tell us whether a result is important.

Jack R. Fraenkel
September, 1992
NEW DIRECTIONS FOR STUDYING HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING

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Abstract

Much of the research on historical understanding has been based on the Piagetian concept of global stage constraints on learning. Such research has led to arguments against teaching history at the elementary level and lent support to the traditional "expanding environments" curriculum. This paper contrasts Piagetian-based research with psychological work in the areas of script knowledge-based and domain-specific knowledge restructuring theories of development. Drawing on ideas from interpretive anthropology and semiotics, the authors then place this primarily psychological work in a cultural framework, and give consideration to the relevance of theories of narrative for studying historical understanding. Using this approach, the authors suggest both new directions for studying the development of historical understanding and implications for history instruction in the elementary years.

Introduction

Many studies of the development of historical understanding have investigated its connection to Piagetian stages of development (Hallam, 1974, 1979; Laville & Rosenzweig, 1982; Peel, 1967). Results of these studies have generally indicated that historical understanding is a formal operation developed in later adolescence (Watts, 1972; Zaccaria, 1978). English researchers, Peel (1967) and
Levstik & Pappas

Hallam (1972, 1974, 1975), used Piaget's theory of development as the criterion by which to measure historical thinking. Initially, Hallam selected three "historical" passages to elicit student response. One hundred students aged eleven to sixteen answered ten questions about each passage: responses that were fragmentary, inconsistent, or indicated that students completely missed the point of the question were categorized as pre-operational; responses that were limited but indicated that the question was understood were coded as concrete operational; and responses that were "correct" and showed a judgment between alternatives were considered to be formal operational. The underlying assumptions of this model include a definition of history congruent with history as it is taught in most schools—as an essentially non-observable content area learned through the abstractions of a particular form of discourse, chronological essays. The model also assumes that historical thinking is characterized by the same stage progression Piaget posited for logico-mathematical constructs and that important concepts related to understanding history, including ideas about chronology, the past, and change over time, come later in cognitive development. Such conclusions have led to arguments against teaching history at the elementary level and support for the traditional "expanding horizons" curriculum. However, recent approaches that characterize cognitive development in terms of the restructuring of prior knowledge or "schemata" in specific domains (Carey, 1985a, 1991; Gelman & Baillargeon, 1983; Keil, 1984, 1991; Mandler, 1983) raise questions about whether a global knowledge restructuring perspective—such as Piaget's—is an appropriate cognitive framework for viewing conceptual change in the domain of history. The purpose of this article is to outline and describe these more recent areas of primarily psychologically-based research, and then to locate them in a cultural framework in order to suggest new directions for studying the development of historical understanding in elementary-age children.

New Theories in Cognition

During the past decade, Piaget's theory has been seriously criticized on both theoretical and empirical grounds (Carey, 1985a; Gelman & Baillargeon, 1983; Mandler, 1983). Many of these criticisms stem from current knowledge-based conceptions that emphasize the role of prior knowledge in learning and thinking. In a Piagetian perspective, prior knowledge is a factor in learning only in a general way—learning occurs either by being incorporated within prior knowledge (assimilation) or by modifying prior knowledge (accommodation). Through these two ill-defined processes, along with the process of equilibration (Karmiloff-Smith, 1991), developmental change is seen
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as global knowledge restructuring or stages (Carey, 1985a; Vosniadou & Brewer, 1987); that is, knowledge restructuring constitutes a change in the structures or set of operations that influences how a child processes and acquires information in all domains. Consequently, in this view children in one of the stages of development (i.e., sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete-operational, or formal-operational) apply the same kind of thinking processes in activities or tasks no matter what the domain or topic is. The procedures or routines that children employ in each stage are independent of the content of the knowledge they operate on because it is assumed that their mental structures vary little across different domains (Keil, 1984). Since the global knowledge restructuring view is a domain-neutral one, the process of learning is affected only slightly, or not at all, by which concepts are contained in a learner's structures in each of the domains. Children's thinking processes, which are different from those of adults (except for those in the formal-operational stage perhaps), are constrained and determined by which stage they are in. Children change procedures and routines only when they enter a new stage, when these general global knowledge structures are modified.

A different view of developmental change has been offered that challenges this global knowledge restructuring one--an approach based on domain-specific knowledge restructuring (Carey, 1985a, Keil, 1984; Mandler, 1983). This kind of knowledge restructuring is seen as the product of the child's knowledge of a particular domain; that is, properties or concepts in particular domains affect the thinking processes, routines, strategies, and procedures that children apply in their experience. Consequently, unlike the global knowledge restructuring view, the topic or conceptual domain that the child is involved with or trying to figure out does matter, and is significant.

In the domain-specific knowledge restructuring view, inferences by a learner at any time are based more on what and how concepts are structured and organized in particular domains--specific content--than they are on the age of the learner. For example, if children have many experiences with clay--perhaps because their parents are potters, or because they live in a place where the ground is clay-like, or because they regularly play with the leftover dough when their parents make pies--then very young preschoolers are likely to understand that a particular ball of clay is the same amount even if it is rolled into a long "snake." In Piagetian terms, these children can conserve mass. They realize that the quantity of the clay is the same despite its transformation in shape. The reason these children have developed these understandings at age three or four (instead of seven or eight, according Piaget's theory), is because they have a schema in the particular domain of clay and its properties and transformations. In this view, children can be "experts" in a particular area in which
adults may function as novices, as five-year-old dinosaur experts, eight-year-old Star-Trek or space whizzes, and teenage computer hackers illustrate.

Cognitive development, then, is dependent on the acquisition of frameworks of specific concepts and integrations between these concepts (Novak, 1977). These frameworks or representations of organized prior knowledge usually have been termed "schemata" (Glaser, 1984; Rumelhart, 1980). As Rumelhart (1980) defines them, "schemata" are embedded knowledge units or structures—they are the building blocks of cognition.

Although domain specificity figures powerfully in most of the recent work in cognition, much debate exists about how more precisely to depict and explain conceptual development within this view. Two different interpretations have been offered to describe domain-specific knowledge acquisition during development (Carey, 1985a, 1991; Vosniadou & Brewer, 1987). The first position is described as a "weak" knowledge restructuring view. This perspective has frequently been used by those who have investigated the novice-expert shift in problem-solving tasks (e.g., Chi, Glaser, & Rees, 1982; Voss, Greene, Post, & Penner, 1983). According to this view, the knowledge of novices and experts is organized differently. Experts' conceptual systems or schemata include more and different relations between concepts than those of novices. The knowledge of novices is organized more literally; that is, around the specific objects in the problem at hand. In contrast, the knowledge of experts is organized in terms of principles or abstractions which subsume these objects (Glaser, 1984). The problem-solving difficulties of novices, in this view, are not the result of their processing capabilities per se but are attributed more to the inadequacies of their knowledge bases. They cannot infer further knowledge from the literal cues in the problem at hand that the experts easily generate because the expert's knowledge involves "tightly connected" schema. Development for novices, then, would involve restructuring their knowledge by "enriching" their present conceptual schemata (Carey, 1991).

The other type of knowledge restructuring, exemplified by the work of diSessa (1982), McCloskey (1983), and Wiser & Carey (1983), is termed "radical" knowledge restructuring (Vosniadou & Brewer, 1987). In this view, novice/expert shifts reflect theory changes similar to those described by historians of science (Kuhn, 1962). Here, knowledge restructuring is considered to be stronger, more fundamental, because the novice or expert has a different theory or paradigm—different in terms of its structure, in terms of the particular domain concerned, and in terms of its individual concepts (Carey, 1985a; Vosniadou & Brewer, 1987); that is, the conceptual change found in radical knowledge restructuring consists of both differentiations and coalescences of certain categories or
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This radical view claims that completely new theories/paradigms emerge from existing structures, not just different relations among the same concepts (Carey, 1985a; 1985b; 1991).

It is important to note that both domain-specific versions are constructivist approaches. Each version frequently includes reference to cyclical phases that can reoccur at different ages, both in different domains (Karmiloff-Smith, 1986; Keil, 1986; Mounoud, 1986) and in fundamental, domain-specific knowledge reorganizations (Carey, 1985a; Brown, 1990). Thus, these two views are not seen as either-or accounts of developmental change; they both may be implicated in the whole developmental picture. In fact, it may even be possible that certain domain-general (or global) mechanisms, though they would be articulated and refigured quite differently from the accounts operating in Piaget's view—may also end up being involved in full developmental descriptions (Karmiloff-Smith, 1991). Despite this present uncertainty, and even though our description of these two positions here has been admittedly sketchy, the domain-specific restructuring view permeates most of the recent developmental literature and therefore has prominent significance for explanations of cognitive change.

The research described above is closely related to the research done by Nelson and her colleagues (1986) on preschool children's acquisition of the schema of knowledge of familiar events, or scripts. The findings of this research also have questioned certain aspects of earlier views of cognitive development. Using the script model proposed by Shank and Abelson (1977), Nelson has investigated the content, structure, and function of event knowledge of young children in order to gain insights into the child's cognitive system and its development. In Nelson's research, a script is conceived of as an event schema that is a type of generalized event representation. Scripts are like the schematic organizations discussed in the previous section. The script, like other schemata, is a general, hierarchically organized body of knowledge where a part implies the whole and the whole is more than the sum of the parts, thereby providing inferential power; however, the script structure is different from other schematic structures in terms of its basic elements—actions. A script is an ordered sequence of actions organized around a goal and appropriate to a particular spatial-temporal context; that is, scripts for everyday experiences (for example, getting-dressed scripts, birthday party scripts, restaurant scripts, and so forth) specify obligatory and optional actors, actions, and props relevant to particular goals and circumstances. Thus, what is "domain-specific" here are the various particular scripts of event knowledge, and a major finding of script research is that preschool children, when talking about familiar experiences, show an understanding of a range of logical relationships—hypothetical and conditional relations, causal relations, temporal
relations, and adversative relations much earlier than previously thought (e.g., Fraisse, 1963; Piaget, 1969). By the time they become five to seven years old, children appear to be able to use their knowledge about events flexibly and explicitly (Fivush & Slackman, 1986).

In sum, in many theories of cognitive development, including most domain-specific knowledge restructuring accounts described in the beginning of this section, knowledge of the physical world and knowledge of the social world are separated. In a script view, however, the child's knowledge representational system integrates social knowledge and physical knowledge. For this reason, it seems to us that the work done from the domain-specific perspective can be incorporated into the script knowledge conceptualization by elaborating on the specific aspects, properties, relations, and so forth, of the persons, objects, and actions that make up scripts. What is appealing about such a script view is how it enables us to consider social action in a broader way—in a cultural framework.

Towards a Cultural Framework for Studying Historical Understanding

We have outlined recent psychological research on cognitive development to show that many Piagetian notions about cognitive change have to be challenged. This means that a new conceptualization for studying historical understanding is required, since much of the work on the topic has relied so heavily on Piagetian tenets. However, what kind of a framework is appropriate for guiding future research on this topic? We believe that a cultural framework that incorporates and is consistent with the script/domain-specific ideas we have summarized here could serve such a purpose.

Of course the distinctiveness of the nature of historical understanding has been alluded to before; e.g., in his attempt to assess the Piaget-Peel-Hallam model of historical cognition, Kennedy (1983) explored the relationships between developmental level, information processing capacity, and historical understanding, and found only very weak relationships among the three kinds of measures. He argued that the construct of information-processing capacity (at least as it was operationalized for the study) defined by Pascual-Leone (1970) did not appear to be a useful notion to tap levels of historical understanding. Moreover, although previous research on historical cognition has been largely based on the significance of a relationship between developmental level and historical understanding (and, as has already discussed, has indicated that such understanding appears late in development), Kennedy suggested that developmental measures and traditional historical understanding measures may have been assessing different constructs; that is, logical structures from one domain such as science or mathematics may not have analogies in history. Jurd (1973)
and Mink (1966) have also argued that the search for evidence to construct laws in science and mathematics is not characteristic of history. None of these claims, however, provided an alternative basis on which to challenge the Piagetian perspective of global stage development, nor were they very specific about the grounds on which the distinctiveness of history could be argued. We think that ideas from interpretive anthropology and semiotics might provide a framework within which disciplinary distinctiveness can be explicated.

To begin with, Geertz's (1983) ideas on disciplines offer a way to integrate "thought in the head" from a psychological point of view with "thought in the world" that is culturally coded and historically constructed. According to Geertz, modern thought consists of various disciplines and quasi-disciplines that should be seen as social activities in a social world. In his words, disciplines "are cultural frames in terms of which attitudes are formed and lives conducted . . . . [F]or their practitioners they support particular modes of engagement with life, and for the rest of us they illustrate them (p. 14).

Given this conceptualization, we want to argue that history, as a discipline/cultural frame, is a specific domain of knowledge. It considers specific scripts or schemata of particular event knowledge. Moreover, the "thought in the head" that represents the modes of engagement Geertz mentions are expressed in relatively stable types of texts in particular genres (Bakhtin, 1986). In other words, in development, we learn how to "mean" in a variety of social contexts, and we learn how to express what we mean through various symbolic forms. What is involved is a semiotic disciplinary matrix where historical ideas are seen as a cultural artifact, where knowledge is characterized through its expressions in ways that sustain the activities pertaining to the domain of history.

History, as a discipline, then, is not just "in the head," but is enacted in a particular discourse community (Bakhtin, 1986; Halliday, 1978; Pappas, forthcoming; Swales, 1990; Todorov, 1990). Within this community, then, learning would involve children's developing an understanding of its particular semiotics. "[T]hinking in this view is a matter of trafficking in the symbolic forms available..." (Geertz, 1983, p. 153). Although a number of different genres are used in the history community, various forms of narrative have played a major role in forming for historians and illustrating for others historical understandings. For this reason, narrative provides an important avenue in considering the development of historical understanding.
The Relevance of Theories of Narrative for Studying Historical Understanding in a Cultural Framework

For the purposes of this discussion, we define "narrative" according to Traugott & Pratt (1980) as a way of linguistically representing past experience, whether real or imagined. Narrative is perceived by the reader as a sequence of non-randomly connected events, and the connectedness is taken to be both motivated and significant. Within narrative, subgenres employ or embody more specific purposes for expressing historical content. It is not our purpose to distinguish all the specific aims and their corresponding linguistic patterns, but because narrative genres are so prominent in the domain of history, our intention is to suggest why narrative is such an important avenue in studying the development of historical understanding, especially at the elementary level. In doing so, we will cover several points, including why narrative might be more accessible to young children than texts used in previous research on historical understanding, the nature of narrative that affords that accessibility, and why narrative is such a salient genre for expressing historical thought.

Historians have long used narrative as a way of structuring historical accounts. Nevertheless, traditional research on historical understanding has generally required students to use and understand non-narrative genres (Wishart & Smith, 1983), or experimentally constructed texts such as those used by Hallam (1975) and more recently by Knight (1989). This presents several problems in interpreting the results of such studies and may account, in part, for why there has not been much evidence for historical understanding prior to adolescence. Since these are not texts from naturally occurring genres, nor are they ones used by historians, there is no reason for children to be familiar with them. As such, they tell us little about the development of children's historical understanding. Children are, however, familiar with a narrative framework that remains powerful well into adolescence, and is both part of many children's cultural milieu and a genre used by historians (Meek, Warlow & Barton, 1978). In her study of the relationship between historical response and narrative in a sixth-grade classroom, Levstik (1986), for instance, found that history embedded in literary narrative (historical fiction, biography, and autobiography) elicited strong interest among students, and could be channeled into study using other genres (informational texts and primary source documents). Blake (1981) also noted student interest in historical literary narratives. Given a historical fiction format, children engaged in interpretation and analysis more readily than previous studies would suggest. Our study (Levstik & Pappas, 1987, 1988) with second, fourth, and sixth-graders indicated that children as
young as seven and eight were able to respond to history in a literary narrative, and had concepts for "history" and "the past" that included distinguishing between history and the past on the basis of significance (i.e., history is that part of the past designated as important).

So, what is the structure of narrative that makes it particularly useful in looking at how children become meaning-makers in the cultural frame labeled "history?" To begin with, narrative involves the depiction of events that may be spatially and temporally remote from both teller and audience (Toolan, 1988). The reader understands these experiences both as events that have already happened, and as events that are logically and chronologically related. The discourse through which these events are related transforms them from chronology--a list of temporally related events, to history--an interpretation of events. In doing so, narrative shapes events, assigns significance to some events over others, and embeds them all in a culture (Toolan, 1988; White 1980). At the same time, the discourse itself is a cultural form, a "social activity in a social world" (Geertz, 1983, p. 14). Narrative is a formalized way to express interpersonal meanings and as White (1980) notes, to transmit "transcultural messages about the nature of shared reality" (p. 6). It is also a forum where it is possible for people who inhabit quite different worlds to come to have some understanding of other times, places, people, and events--concepts inherent to historical understanding (Geertz, 1983).

Bruner (1986) explicates some of the ways in which narrative approximates the structures of history. Narrative, he notes, is a form of interpretation that makes experience comprehensible. It deals with intention and action, with the consequences of both, and as with history, narrative deals with the particular--not any person, but this person at this time and place, and given this set of circumstances. Both narrative and history are more than a recount or collection of "facts," a sequence of events. They involve the description and interpretation--the causes--that account for these "facts." One of the ways these causal relationships are realized is through a narrative convention, the rule of temporal causation (Rabinowitz 1987). Specifically, "it is appropriate to assume that temporally connected events are causally connected unless there is a signal to the contrary..." (p. 108). Inherent in learning to "read" narrative texts, then, is learning to apply this rule with increasing sensitivity. Similarly, causation is inherent in the process of reading and interpreting history as this process includes recognizing and ordering salient historical data. Thus, in the narrative genres in the domain or discipline of history, such as historical fiction, biography, autobiography, and memoir, the task is to use these kinds of narrative conventions to make sense of historical data.

Because the ideas and conventions used in history and narrative are social constructions, history as a discipline and the genres within it
are cultural artifacts. As such, they also represent "truth" in particular ways. While Kermode (1980) terms this an "arbitrary imposition of truth," in a cultural framework, this truth construction cannot be arbitrary. Instead, it is both an intellectual vantage point and a way of being in the world. In other words, the sense that can be made of the narrative is constructed within (or in opposition to) a cultural milieu that provides both the linguistic forms of expression and the social ethic for interpretation of the narrative. It becomes part of our consciousness, shaped as Geertz (1983) argues, "at least as much by how things supposedly look to others, somewhere else in the lifeline of the world as by how they look here, where we are, now to us" (p. 9). In the genre of historical fiction, for instance, readers encounter the human capacity for both good and evil in a framework that generally invites them to sympathize with, or at least understand a particular point of view. In several studies conducted by Levstik (1986; 1989, in press), children seemed to find this a compelling satisfaction of such narratives. One of the most striking features of children's response to the narratives in each of these studies was the frequency with which they explained their interest in historical topics in terms of "needing to know," searching for "the truth," or seeking "what really happened." In effect, narrative holds history up against a social system that is, as White (1980) suggests, "the source of any morality that we can imagine" (p. 18). For all of these reasons, then, the use of narrative may be especially useful in investigations of the historical understanding of elementary age children. Of course, this does not exclude the use of non-narrative genres; instead, in a cultural view, they too are critically important, as we explain in the next section.

New Directions

Much of previous research on historical understanding has relied upon a Piagetian cognitive framework to examine when historical cognition develops. Its findings have indicated that elementary-age children lack such understanding. As a result, it has been argued by some that only at adolescence can we expect students to benefit from instruction in history. This article has reviewed more recent research in script/domain-specific, knowledge-based approaches to cognitive development that challenge major tenets of the Piagetian perspective with respect to how knowledge is acquired. We have placed this primarily psychologically-based research in a cultural framework that incorporates important features of this research that cannot be dismissed. In particular, a cultural framework helps better to explain the domain or discipline of history as a "social" study. In addition, a semiotic interpretation shows how the role of narrative genres is implicated in both the expression of historical thought and in
Studying Historical Understanding

children's developing historical understanding. Within this framework we suggest two broad avenues that might be explored in both research on historical understanding and classroom instruction in history, the texts that are used, and issues in multicultural inquiry.

To begin with, it seems clear that the use of experimentally constructed texts is not going to be very useful in tapping children's developing understandings of history. Because history as a mode of thought is realized by specific genres, using texts that are instances of those genres would be more likely to lead to ecologically valid insights into children's thinking about history. How could children's responses to an "artificial" text that is not like those typically employed by practitioners in the discipline ever reveal children's developing competence in employing the symbolic forms of the domain of history? In contrast, we have argued that narrative genres in particular could and should be employed instead. Narrative discourse may provide a critical window into children's patterns of meaning-making when confronted by historical data. First, it is a naturally occurring expression of the cultural frame called "history." Second, narrative is an accessible literary form for children because of its prominence within the culture at large. Thus, asking children to respond to and create various historical narratives (fiction, biography, autobiography, and so forth), and at an early age during the elementary years, for example, might be one avenue to explore, both in research and instruction. Of course, such inquiry and instruction should not be limited to the use of narrative genres. Since there are other non-narrative historical genres, it would also be important to compare and contrast the ways in which they influence children's developing historical understanding. In doing so, we would want to caution against any ideology that would assume that these non-narrative texts might not be ones that children could use or learn from. As Pappas (1991) notes, young children have both interest and ability in using informational, non-narrative texts. Future research could explore the strategies that children employ in understanding history in non-narrative genres.

Another broad area to investigate regarding children's historical understanding involves multicultural inquiry. Acknowledging that history and the genres for expressing historical thinking exist in cultural frames is more likely to enable us to examine multicultural issues in a more thoughtful way, both in research and in the classroom. "[Flinding out how others across the sea or down the corridor, organize their significant world" (Geertz, 1983, p. 151) is basic to understanding history as it is valued and explicated in various cultures. This process provides an opportunity for children to really scrutinize the puzzles of translation whereby meaning in one culture is expressed in another. Narrative, then, can play a particularly cultural role that is relevant to this inquiry. Most cultures include collective stories dealing with
such questions as "Who are we?" and "Where did we come from?" (Van Dongen, 1987). These stories take on different degrees of significance in different cultures so that in some communities, historical stories are part of daily life, included in rituals and traditions, and form the basis for developing a view of "the good life." In others, stories may be used to transmit values without necessarily being quite so central to community rituals. Other cultures may include historical stories with a cultural purpose, but tend to emphasize their function as entertainment. Thus the silences in one culture may be the exuberances in another, and vice versa (Becker, 1991), and how children make sense of these differences would be a revealing enterprise, both from a researcher's perspective and in classroom practice.

Another dimension of this multicultural inquiry would be exploring cross-cultural concepts of time. Notions of past, present, and future are central to how we think and talk about events and experiences. In a Western model of time, past and future are categories that are ordered in relation to a continually shifting "present" reference (Harner, 1982). Research on the acquisition of young children's event knowledge described above and recent research on language development in general (e.g., Wells, 1981, 1985) indicate that children appear to master these important distinctions during the early childhood years. There is evidence, however, that there are cultural influences on our orientations and interpretations of these conceptions of time, and that some cultures may be more influenced by past events in terms of what they think and talk about (Harner, 1982). Studying how children create explanations of the relations between particular events for particular purposes in particular places in time might shed light on how children fix meaning in the flow of events and as expressed in various cultures.

We have sketched out only two broad areas for studying the development of historical understanding. Certainly other directions are available and necessary to answer theory-based questions regarding the teaching and learning of history. However, we believe that a cultural perspective is a more powerful way to address concerns about history as it is being taught, and how it is and could be investigated. In this perspective, emphasis shifts from a focus on the accumulation of historical information and facts to a focus on what Geertz (1983) calls the central problem of the integration of cultural life. In Geertz's words:

The problem...becomes one of making it possible for people inhabiting different worlds to have a genuine, and reciprocal, impact upon one another....[T]he vitality of that consciousness depends upon creating the conditions under which such interplay will occur. And for that, the first step is surely to accept the depth of
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the differences; the second to understand what these differences are, and the third to construct some sort of vocabulary in which they can be publicly formulated—one in which [various members of particular disciplines] can give a credible account of themselves to one another (p. 161).

On this basis, children can understand and distinguish history as a way of knowing from the other social studies as well as other areas in the curriculum. Making these distinctions is at the root of rich interdisciplinary and integrated teaching and learning. It also underlies a multicultural perspective that recognizes the power and richness of cross-disciplinary inquiry. Such implementation would give children authentic reasons for studying history and researchers new directions for understanding historical thinking.

Endnote

1 This is a fully coauthored article. Authors' names are listed in alphabetical order.

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EXPLORING POLITICAL TOLERANCE WITH ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract
Most research on political socialization has suggested that the traditional formal civics curriculum has limited impact on students' civic attitudes (Ehman, 1980). Political tolerance—the willingness to acknowledge the civil liberties of those with whom one disagrees—is no exception. Although civics courses do emphasize abstract democratic norms, such as freedom of speech, they tend not to link them directly with everyday political situations in which these norms can be applied. We have developed and tested a curriculum that encourages students to explore the linkages among democratic values and legal principles, and their application to unpopular groups in our society. Our data suggest that increases in political tolerance are due to a greater awareness of individual rights; decreases in tolerance may be attributed to heightened concern for public safety.
Do All of the People Have All of the Rights All of the Time?

Clearly the American civil liberties record has deep flaws in it, especially in social and racial justice and toleration of radical political expression, and clearly the record is not as pristine as American ideals are. Yet it must also be remembered that the record would probably not be as good as it is if American ideals were not so high, for they act as a constant standard and constant challenge. Further, the American record, it should be reiterated, compares favorably with the vast majority of countries in the world today (Goldstein, 1987, pp. 451-452).

There is a deep and abiding paradox in the American civil liberties record. On the one hand, we enjoy some of the widest and deepest legal protections for our civil rights and liberties accorded citizens anywhere in the world. On the other hand, we have often indulged in profound abrogations of these rights and liberties for substantial segments of our society, including, among others, the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II and the well-documented abuses of the McCarthy era.

Surveys of the political attitudes and beliefs of American adults provide insight into our record. Americans profess overwhelming support for democratic principles (McClosky & Zaller, 1984; Sullivan, Piereson, & Marcus, 1982). For example, when asked if they believe in free speech for everyone, about 90 percent of Americans will say yes (McClosky & Brill, 1983). Yet, studies show dishearteningly little support for the impartial application of these principles to groups that express unpopular ideas (Gibson, 1988, 1989; McClosky & Brill, 1983; Sullivan, Piereson, & Marcus, 1982). When asked about a more specific situation, such as the Ku Klux Klan appearing on public television or the Communists marching in their neighborhood, less than 30 percent will support the rights of free speech and assembly (McClosky & Brill, 1983).

One possible explanation for the disparity between support for civil liberties in the abstract and their application in concrete situations is that many people simply do not make the connection between the two. When asked whether the American Nazi party should be given access to public television, for example, many people may not even consider the value of free speech; rather, they tend to focus exclusively on their abhorrence of the group's political views. Indeed, many citizens lack an understanding of how the abstract principles of freedom of speech and minority rights are embedded in a system of legal protections and rights (Sullivan, Piereson & Marcus, 1982).
Those interested in political education have suggested that traditional civics curricula perpetuate this disjuncture by failing to analyze rights within specific contexts (Corbett, 1991; Zellman, 1975).

After a brief overview of the research related to political tolerance, we argue that adolescence is an ideal period for the exploration of issues related to individual rights and the public good. We review literature which suggests that traditional civics curricula often fail to meet this challenge. Results are presented from a study designed to explore the potential of a civics curriculum in developing a willingness to acknowledge the civil liberties of disliked or unpopular groups. Finally, we discuss the implications of our findings for civic education and political theory.

Related Research

Political Tolerance

More than 35 years ago, two large national surveys indicated that large majorities of American adults were unwilling to extend procedural rights to nonconformist groups, particularly communists (Stouffer, 1955). For example, almost two-thirds of the respondents said they would deny an admitted American Communist the right to make a speech in their community. At the same time, they professed strong support for freedom of expression in the abstract.

Since Stouffer’s classic study, political scientists and educators have traced the limits of U.S. tolerance, debated its practical and theoretical significance, and argued about the origins of intolerance. Recent research suggests that dogmatism, perceptions of threat, support for abstract democratic values and norms, education, cognitive moral development, and self-esteem are important factors that affect levels of adult political tolerance (McClosky & Brill, 1983; Sullivan, Piereson, & Marcus, 1982; Wagner, 1986).

Perhaps the most important debate revolves around the conceptualization of political tolerance. In the late 1970s, Sullivan, Marcus, Piereson, and Feldman (1978-79) suggested that tolerance involves “a willingness to apply these [democratic] norms without disfavor to those whose ideas or interests one opposes” [emphasis added] (p. 116). Previous studies had conceptualized tolerance as a willingness to extend rights to political or social groups generally considered marginal or extremist within society, regardless of the respondent’s perception of the groups. According to Sullivan et al., tolerance requires dislike or objection; thus the measurement of political tolerance should take into account the individual’s attitude toward specific groups.

Using a national sample of 1,509 adults, Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus (1982) initially identified the dissident or nonconformist group
that individuals found most repugnant. Although respondents were presented with a list of potential "outcasts," they were also encouraged to name a group other than those listed if appropriate. This was an important departure from previous studies, many of which focused on Communists, and to a lesser degree, atheists and socialists. Using the respondents' least-liked group, Sullivan et al. then presented them with concrete situations in which they were asked if they would extend basic civil liberties to the group. For example, if a person's least-liked group was atheists, the person was asked to respond to statements such as, "Atheists should be allowed to hold public rallies in our city." In this manner, the researchers believed they had devised a "content-controlled" measure. Although not all researchers support Sullivan et al.'s methodology (see, for example, Sniderman, Tetlock, Glaser, Green & Hout, 1989), the research has renewed interest and debate about the nature and complexity of political tolerance.

In comparison with the research on adults, studies of political tolerance among children and adolescents are smaller in number and generally less rigorous, both conceptually and methodologically. Still, the research offers some insight into the factors associated with tolerance during this age period. The disparity between support for abstract democratic principles and their application to concrete situations among adolescents parallels that of older generations (Jones, 1980). Similar to adults, the more negatively adolescents perceive a group, the less likely they are to extend rights to the group (Avery, 1988; Owen & Dennis, 1987; Zellman & Sears, 1971). Tolerance seems to be associated with political experiences (Avery, 1988; Jones, 1980), divergent thinking, self-esteem (Zellman & Sears, 1971), and high levels of cognitive moral reasoning (Avery, 1988; Breslin, 1982; Eyler, 1980; Patterson, 1979).

The dearth of research on adolescent political tolerance is somewhat perplexing, particularly given that much of the change that takes place during adolescence has direct and important implications for developing political orientations, attitudes, and behaviors (Adams, 1985; Sigel & Hoskin, 1981; Torney-Purta, 1990). In the next section, we describe research which indicates that this period may be critical to the development of civil liberties attitudes.

A Focus on Adolescence

The emerging capacity for abstract thought during adolescence provides opportunities to explore the complexity of moral, social, and political issues, and to test competing ideological perspectives and beliefs (Adelson, 1971). Gallatin's (1985) interviews with students in grades 6 through 12, for example, suggested an increasing ability among older adolescents to link democratic principles to specific situations, and to appreciate the complex relationship between individual rights
and the public good. Such understandings are fundamental to a sophisticated analysis of issues associated with political tolerance.

Zellman (1975) argued convincingly that adolescent political socialization must play a central role in the development of adult attitudes and behaviors on civil liberties issues. By age 11, if not before, children exhibit attitudes about both the principles of democracy and about the application (or lack thereof) of these principles to unpopular groups. These attitudes appear to be about as consistent as those of many adults in our society (Zellman, 1975; Zellman & Sears, 1971).

Additional evidence for the potential importance of addressing tolerance during adolescence was provided by Dennis, Lindberg, McCrone, and Stiefbold (1968), who studied children from four nations. Their U.S. sample included children in fifth, eighth, and eleventh grades who were asked to agree or disagree with three statements about tolerance of dissenting minorities: (1) When most of the people want to do something, the rest of the people should not criticize; (2) If a person wanted to make a speech in this city against churches and religion, he should not be allowed to speak; (3) We should not allow people to make speeches against our kind of government. In all three cases, the percentage disagreeing (the more tolerant response) increased substantially from fifth to eleventh grade. The increase on the “not criticize” question was from 9 percent disagree to 33 percent disagree; on the “against churches and religion” question, the increase was from 20 percent to 59 percent; and on the “against our kind of government” the increase was from 33 percent to 64 percent. The same age trends in tolerance for dissent were identified by Farnen and German (1972) in their study of five nations, including the United States.

Jones’ (1980) secondary analysis of the 1976 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data also suggests that an appreciation of rights of expression increases during adolescence. On each of five items related to freedom of expression, 17 year olds demonstrated more tolerant views than their 13 year-old counterparts. For example, 40 percent of the younger students surveyed supported citizens’ right to criticize the government; 65 percent of the older adolescents expressed similar support. When asked about specific groups, however, the 17-year-olds were more reluctant to recognize rights of expression. Although 63 percent felt dissidents ought to be allowed to hold public protests, fewer than one-third would allow a member of the Nazi Party to campaign on television (younger students were not asked similar questions).

Research suggests that adolescence is a critical period during which students simultaneously develop support for democratic norms and negative attitudes toward nonconformist groups in society (Jones, 1980; Miller & Sears, 1986; Owen & Dennis, 1987). Thus, although most research on political tolerance and support for the Bill of Rights has
been conducted on adults, the development of civil liberties attitudes during adolescence has convinced us that the focus of efforts to increase recognition of unpopular groups' civil liberties ought to be on this age group.

The Civics Curriculum and Political Tolerance

National and international assessments of civics knowledge and attitudes, as well as professional statements and guidelines from the social studies community, reflect a concern for the development of political tolerance among our youth. Recognition and support of constitutional rights, specifically the right to freedom of expression, have been major objectives assessed in national studies (NAEP, 1978, 1980). The twelfth grade version of the most recent national study of civics achievement included eight items directly related to rights of expression (NAEP, 1990). "Support for the right of citizens to express dissent" and "respect for political opposition" were among the objectives deemed important by educational institutions in all nine nations (including the United States) participating in the 1971 IEA study (Torney, Oppenheim & Farnen, 1975). In addition, the curriculum guidelines adopted by the National Council of the Social Studies (1989) state that free speech, religious freedom and democratic decision making are essential to human dignity. Although professional educators seem to share the view that political tolerance is important to a democracy, research suggests that the traditional civics curriculum does not engender a strong commitment to tolerance, particularly as it applies to unpopular ideas and groups.

In a review of the empirical studies of schooling and political socialization, Ehman (1980) concluded that conventional civics courses have little if any impact on secondary students' political attitudes. He cited a national survey of high school seniors conducted by Langton and Jennings (1968), in which only very weak correlations were found between the number of civics courses taken in grades 10-12 and variables such as political interest, efficacy, and civic tolerance. Scores on a three-item tolerance scale were not affected by the number of civics courses taken by white students (beta=.06), although civics courses had an impact on tolerance scores among African-American students (beta=.22). The authors interpreted these findings in terms of "information redundancy": White students were already exposed to most of the information presented in civics classes, but for African-American students it was new information. It is unclear whether a study of today's students would yield similar results.

When Jennings and Niemi (1981) conducted a follow-up panel study on the same students from the Langton and Jennings (1968) research, they found that educational stratification and achievement
played prominent roles in shaping many political attitudes and behaviors in later life. In spite of the fact that civics education per se did not have a direct impact on students, the educational sorting process, which does have a powerful cumulative impact on citizens, had begun.\textsuperscript{5} Jennings and Niemi (1981) did find evidence that many differences among educational strata were prominent during adolescence, even before the college years began.

Jennings and Niemi's (1981) follow-up study also demonstrated that on all three tolerance issues, the effects of educational stratification increased after high school. In fact, they discovered some of the largest differential rates of change between the more and less educated strata on these issues, suggesting a major role for socialization through post-secondary educational experiences.\textsuperscript{6}

Zellman, noting the lack of connection between support for democratic principles and their application among secondary students, (1975) argued that:

\begin{quote}
Civil liberties attitudes are taught mainly in slogan form, without concrete implications being discussed or deduced...Were the implications of the principles made apparent and the process of deduction presented and practiced, tolerance would likely increase. (p. 49)
\end{quote}

There is little evidence that the content of current secondary civics courses has changed much in recent years. High school government and civics texts, which are generally good indicators of what is actually taught in civics classes (Patrick & Hawke, 1982), continue to emphasize isolated bits of information about governmental institutions and processes. In-depth examinations of key constitutional issues are virtually nonexistent (Carroll et al., 1987; Katz, 1985; Remy, 1981; Patrick, 1991). Patrick and Hoge (1991) suggested that students' tendency to attach greater significance to majority rule than minority rights may be due, in part, to the failure of most textbooks to address the latter issue. In an effort to avoid potential controversy, most textbook publishers give such questions only superficial coverage. It is doubtful, therefore, that current civics curricula can be expected to help young people develop a sophisticated understanding of democratic principles. In a recent summary of the impact of civic education, Corbett (1991) concluded:

\begin{quote}
While democratic political principles are taught, they are taught as slogans rather than as applications... Children are not taught to apply these principles to actual situations.... As a result...the typical American
adult is not very supportive of specific applications of democratic principles. (p. 213)

These remarks are vividly reminiscent of Zellman's observations over 15 years ago.

There is some evidence that innovative curricula can increase support for civil liberties. Goldenson (1978) examined the potential of curriculum materials specifically developed for civil liberties education. He found statistically significant differences in the changes in attitudes and concern for civil liberties among students who studied this curriculum compared to a control group that studied economics. The former were exposed to a three-week unit on civil liberties which was designed to "put more than the usual stress on the implications of abstract constitutional civil libertarian principles in concrete situations" (p. 50).

From a different analytic perspective, which entailed the use of cross-national survey research methods, Sullivan, Shamir, Walsh, and Roberts (1985) discovered that an understanding of the concrete legal basis of democratic principles had a greater impact on political tolerance than did support for the abstract norms themselves. This research reinforces Zellman's suggestion that a curriculum designed to increase support for civil liberties in concrete situations should focus on how the legal and constitutional framework of our society directly embodies the norms of freedom of speech and minority rights, and how these norms and laws can be applied in specific situations that test our society's political tolerance.

In conjunction with a small number of secondary civics teachers, we have developed a curriculum that incorporates all of these suggestions. In the following sections, we describe the curriculum, its impact on students' levels of political tolerance, and other variables which may contribute to adolescent tolerance.

Method

Tolerance for Diversity of Belief: A Curriculum

Tolerance for Diversity of Belief is a four-week curriculum unit designed to engage junior high students in the active exploration of issues associated with freedom of belief and expression. Unlike many instructional materials, the lessons have been shaped by theory and research on political tolerance. Particularly, we have attempted to respond to the weight of research suggesting that when people understand how the abstract principles of freedom of speech and minority rights are embedded in a system of legal protections and
rights, they are more likely to acknowledge the civil liberties of unpopular groups. Throughout the curriculum, students systematically examine the ways in which the legal and constitutional framework of our society directly embodies the norms of freedom of speech and minority rights. Students analyze the legal protections that have been accorded unpopular groups at the national level and the parallel principles that are embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the international level. Case studies, role-playing, simulations, and mock interviews are used throughout the curriculum to examine the historical, psychological, and sociological dimensions of tolerance and intolerance. Specifically, information from psychological studies helps students understand why some individuals are particularly intolerant of beliefs that differ from their own. Descriptions of the Holocaust, the Cultural Revolution, and the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II direct students' attention toward the short and long-term consequences of intolerance for the victim, the perpetrator, and society.

Within the curriculum, students consider both the rights and responsibilities associated with freedom of expression. For example, if one strongly disagrees with the beliefs of the Ku Klux Klan, does one have a both a right and a responsibility to express disagreement? What rights and responsibilities do members of unpopular groups have? A series of vignettes encourages students to decide for themselves what limits, if any, should be placed on freedom of expression in a democratic society. Questions guide students toward differentiating between acknowledging an unpopular group's civil liberties and approving of the group's message, between beliefs that are abhorrent to the majority and behaviors that are violent and harmful. (See the Appendix for a more detailed description of the curriculum.)

The primary goal of the curriculum is to help students understand how the abstract principles of freedom of speech and minority rights are embedded in our legal framework. If Zellman (1975) and Corbett (1991) are correct, the young people who participate in the curriculum will be more likely to acknowledge the civil liberties of unpopular groups. As an educational tool, however, the curriculum is also designed to challenge intolerant and tolerant students' thinking about the role of freedom of expression in a democratic society. Regardless of whether students choose to acknowledge the rights of dissidents or outcasts as a result of the curriculum, it is hoped that they will develop a more complex understanding of civil liberties issues.8

The Students, the Schools, and the Design

In the spring of 1991, we conducted a comprehensive test of the effects of our tolerance curriculum. A description of the students,
Exploring Political Tolerance With Adolescents

teachers, and schools involved in the study is shown in Table 1. We analyzed the effects of the curriculum on ninth grade students, all of whom were assigned to treatment groups based on intact classrooms. The groups were as follows:

- **Curriculum Group.** 274 students completed the pretest, the four-week curriculum, and immediately thereafter the posttest.
- **Delayed Posttest Group.** 70 of these 274 students also completed a delayed posttest one month after they completed the curriculum and the first posttest.
- **No Curriculum Group.** 168 students completed the pretest and, four weeks later, the posttest; they did not study the curriculum--instead they studied their regular civics curriculum.
- **Delayed Curriculum Group.** 59 of these 168 students also served as their own control group: they took the pretest, studied their normal civics curriculum, took the posttest four weeks later, then studied the tolerance curriculum and took a second posttest immediately upon its completion.

This arrangement allowed us to examine the impact of the tolerance curriculum in several different ways. First, we examined differences in levels of tolerance among all groups at the beginning of the study, as well as any changes that occurred over time. Second, we wished to examine changes and differences in the levels of threat, wary that apparent increases in students' levels of tolerance may have been due to declining fear or dislike of their least-liked group. Third, we were able to examine the impact of the curriculum by regressing posttest tolerance scores for the Curriculum Group on curriculum measures, such as a knowledge test, using pretest tolerance scores and other known independent variables as covariates. Finally, responses to two open-ended questions were examined; these items asked students to explain why they had adopted tolerant or intolerant stances. With this multifaceted approach, we hoped to attenuate the problems caused by our lack of control over assignment of students to classrooms.

**Measures**

During the pretest and various posttests, we collected data on a number of concepts. The dependent variable in this analysis is political tolerance; the independent variables include support for democratic norms, perceived threat, authoritarianism, knowledge of the curriculum, attitude toward the curriculum, and three standard demographic variables (race, gender, and grades in school).

**Political Tolerance.** We have adopted Sullivan and his colleagues' (1982) conceptualization of political tolerance, i.e., individuals cannot be "tolerant" of those of whom they approve. If
<table>
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<th>School B</th>
<th>School C</th>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>M 51%</td>
<td>M 51%</td>
<td>M 51%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F 49%</td>
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<td>M 48%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>F 43%</td>
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<td>White male, 15 years experience</td>
<td>White female, 17 years experience, and white male, 4 years experience</td>
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they approve of a group, they may "support" it but not "tolerate" it. If they do not care about a group, they are "indifferent" but not "tolerant." By this definition, political tolerance requires that persons recognize the civil liberties of groups with whom they disagree. Thus, in order to assess tolerance, we asked students to evaluate (like-dislike) a number of potentially unpopular groups from both sides of the political spectrum using a five-point Likert scale. Students performed this evaluation twice, once on the pretest and again on the posttest. The students were then asked to specify which group they liked the least. About 72 percent of students chose the same least-liked group at both points in time.

Once students had specified a group, each student was asked six questions concerning the rights that should be extended to his or her least-liked group. The following questions compose the tolerance scale (we will use the Ku Klux Klan an example):

1. Members of the [Ku Klux Klan] should not be able to run for president or other elected offices.
2. Members of the [Ku Klux Klan] should be allowed to teach in public schools.
3. The [Ku Klux Klan] should be against the law.
4. Members of the [Ku Klux Klan] should be allowed to make a public speech.
5. The government should be able to tap the phones of members of the [Ku Klux Klan].
6. The [Ku Klux Klan] should be able to hold public demonstrations or rallies.

Each tolerance question had five possible responses, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The most tolerant response was assigned a 5 and the least tolerant response a 1. The tolerance scale therefore ranges in value from 6 to 30. Coefficient alpha on the pretest was .74; it was .79 on the posttest.

Support for Democratic Norms. Previous research on democratic norms and values found that United States citizens were overwhelmingly supportive of freedom of speech and minority rights in the abstract, but not when applied to unpopular groups (McClosky, 1964; McClosky & Brill, 1983; Prothro & Grigg, 1960; Sullivan et al., 1982). The usual conclusion has been that although ordinary citizens endorse these norms, they rarely translate them into practice. It is true, however, that there is a relationship between a strong endorsement of democratic values, and political tolerance toward one's least-liked group (Sullivan et al. 1982).
Given these results—as well as the underlying premise of the curriculum we developed—support for abstract democratic norms was measured by responses to six standard items, including "I believe in free speech for everybody, no matter what their views might be," and "Society shouldn’t have to put up with those who have political ideas that are extremely different than the majority." The resulting scale had a reliability of .63.

**Perceived Threat.** Previous studies of political tolerance have suggested that perceived threat of a least-liked group is an important determinant of intolerance among adults (McClosky & Brill, 1983; Stouffer 1955; Sullivan et al., 1982; Sullivan et al., 1985) and young people (Avery, 1988; Patterson, 1979; Zellman & Sears, 1971). We asked students to describe their least-liked group using a series of polar adjectives: safe-dangerous, good-bad, nonthreatening-threatening, can be trusted-cannot be trusted, and nonviolent-violent. The polar terms were presented in a five-point scale with the terms anchoring the ends, giving students the opportunity to provide a self-calibrated response. For each adjective pair, we assigned a score of 5 to the most threatening term and of 1 to the least threatening term, with the scale thus ranging from a low of 5 to a high of 25. Coefficient alpha was .86 on the pretest and .87 on the posttest.

**Authoritarianism.** Past research on adults has suggested that psychological insecurity and authoritarianism have a strong impact on intolerance (McClosky & Brill, 1983; Sniderman, 1975; Sullivan et al., 1982). We developed a scale of authoritarianism that includes measures of submission to existing authority, authoritarian aggression, conventionalism, and dogmatism (Altemeyer, 1988; Rokeach, 1960). The full scale had an overall reliability of .59. Representative items include: "Anyone who is homosexual is sick," and "To keep society orderly we must all obey the police."

**Self-Esteem.** Levels of self-esteem have been significantly related to levels of tolerance in adults (Sniderman, 1975; Sullivan et al., 1982), but the literature linking tolerance and self-esteem in adolescents has produced mixed results (Zellman & Sears, 1971). In this research, we used Rosenberg’s (1965) measure of self-esteem. The measure includes eleven statements such as "I feel that I have a number of good qualities," and "I feel I do not have much to be proud of." Students responded by indicating whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or disagreed strongly with each statement. Coefficient alpha for the scale resulting from this measure was .86.
Knowledge of Curriculum Content. We measured students' knowledge of the curriculum on the posttest by using nine true/false questions representative of the material covered in the curriculum ("The United States is the only country with a Constitution that protects the free expression of ideas." "It is against the law to belong to a racist group like the Ku Klux Klan."). The alpha coefficient for this scale, which ranged from 0 to 9 (0 = all wrong answers and 9 = all correct answers), was .83.

Attitude toward the Curriculum. On the posttests, we used polar terms to have the students indicate their reaction to the curriculum. The terms used were dull-interesting, fun-boring, and like-dislike. The alpha coefficient for this scale was .89.

Demographic Variables. Research in the 1950s suggested that demographic variables were associated with political tolerance, finding that more highly educated people (with higher incomes generally) were more tolerant of outgroups such as communists and atheists and that men were more tolerant than women (Stouffer, 1955). However, after controlling for target group, gender differences virtually disappeared. Sullivan et al. (1982) suggested this occurred because women were more religious than men and were more intolerant of atheists. Education continues to make a slight difference in levels of tolerance even in content-controlled studies (Sullivan et al., 1982), but the differences are reduced.

Among adolescents, studies of the influence of demographic variables such as race and gender on political tolerance have produced mixed results. When statistically significant differences have been noted, they are quite modest (Avery, 1988).

In the present study, information regarding three demographic variables was collected: race, gender, and grades. Students were asked to report the grades they "usually" receive in school: A to A-, B+ to B-, C+ to C-, D or below.

Results

The Curriculum and Increases in Political Tolerance

A primary question of interest to this study is whether students displayed increased levels of political tolerance after participating in the curriculum. Contrary to the general finding that civics curricula do not affect adolescents' levels of tolerance, the curriculum does seem to increase students' levels of tolerance toward disliked political groups.11

Because we were unable to randomly assign students to classrooms,
we conducted the series of analyses mentioned earlier, designed to assess the impact of the tolerance curriculum. First, we conducted one-way analyses of variance to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between the Curriculum Group and the No Curriculum Group on political tolerance and perceived threat scores. The results as shown in Table 2, indicated no significant pretest differences between the groups (for tolerance, p=.877; for threat p=.993), despite our lack of random assignment.12

As a result of this lack of pretest differences, we will use analysis of variance to compare the Curriculum and the No Curriculum Groups. Table 3 shows the results of this analysis for both political tolerance and perceived threat. The most important finding about political tolerance is the significant interaction between condition (curriculum v. no curriculum) and time (pretest v. posttest). Time matters differently for the two groups of students—political tolerance scores increase more among students who studied the curriculum than among those who did not. The effect size for time is .25 and for the interaction between time and curriculum condition it is .15. Both of these effects are modest, but highly statistically significant. The mean for the Curriculum Group increased from 15.35 to 17.55, while the mean for the no Curriculum Group increased from 15.28 to 15.85. This effect is above and beyond the main effects of both condition and time. Although both groups showed some increase in tolerance, this increase was small among the No Curriculum Group, and significantly greater among the Curriculum Group. This suggests that the significantly increased tolerance of the Curriculum Group is a reflection of the curriculum intervention, rather than differences between the groups, or natural changes that may occur among these adolescents over time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Curriculum Group</th>
<th>No Curriculum Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest Political Tolerance</td>
<td>15.35 (5.37)</td>
<td>15.28 (5.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest Political Tolerance</td>
<td>17.55 (5.47)</td>
<td>15.85 (5.69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest Perceived Threat</td>
<td>22.14 (3.46)</td>
<td>22.28 (3.23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest Perceived Threat</td>
<td>22.19 (3.75)</td>
<td>22.27 (3.61)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Standard deviations in parentheses)
Exploring Political Tolerance With Adolescents

The second test of the curriculum involves using the Delayed Curriculum Group as its own control. Recall that these students completed the pretest measures, studied a regular civics unit for four weeks, and then took the posttest. For the next four weeks, they studied the tolerance curriculum and took the posttest afterwards. They were taught throughout the entire eight weeks by the same teacher. Repeated measures analysis of variance for the Delayed Curriculum Group indicates no statistically significant change in tolerance during the control phase ($p = .205$), followed by a significant increase during the curriculum phase ($p < .000$). The mean scores of these students changed from 16.29 to 17.00 to 19.70 across the three testing periods (see Table 4), and the effect size was a very robust .63. The results are strikingly similar to the comparison between the Curriculum and No Curriculum Groups: Both groups demonstrated statistically and substantively significant changes in levels of tolerance when participating in the tolerance curriculum, but not when studying the traditional civics curriculum. Before studying the curriculum, the typical student scored almost two points below the midpoint of the political tolerance scale; after studying the curriculum, such a student scored almost two points above the midpoint. In other words, most students went from mild intolerance to mild tolerance, a substantively important change. This adds credence to the claim that the tolerance curriculum does have an impact on students.

### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Political Tolerance</th>
<th></th>
<th>Perceived Threat</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$p$</td>
<td>Effect Size*</td>
<td>$p$</td>
<td>Effect Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.703</td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>.897</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition x Time</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.150</td>
<td>.871</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Effect size = $\sqrt{(t^2/t^2) + (n-2)}$
Mean political tolerance scores for times 1, 2, and 3 were 16.29, 17.00, and 19.70; mean perceived threat scores were 21.64, 21.42, and 21.65.

Effect size = \( \sqrt{F/(F + df \text{ in error term})} \)

The third test involves examining whether the curriculum has a brief impact due to increasing temporarily the salience of a set of “right answers,” or whether it has a more lasting impact due to learning. Delayed posttest scores for the Delayed Posttest Group were collected and compared to pretest scores to examine any persistent effects of the curriculum. Four weeks following the conclusion of the tolerance unit, the tolerance scores of these 70 students remained significantly higher than their pretest scores (p=.01); the mean scores of these students changed from 16.61 to 19.66 to 18.50. Thus, it seems likely that the change is not entirely ephemeral, but may be due in part to learning that lasts beyond the curriculum experience itself.

All of these findings lend strong support to the conclusion that the curriculum does increase students’ levels of tolerance toward disliked groups.

The Curriculum and Threat Perceptions

In the pretest data, and in many other data sets, threat perceptions are among the strongest factors influencing tolerance. To examine whether the curriculum increased tolerance among students in the Curriculum Group by reducing the extent to which they feel threatened by their least-liked group, we performed a second set of analyses of variance, this time on pretest and posttest levels of perceived threat. Table 3 shows the results for a repeated measures...
analysis of variance for threat scores of the Curriculum Group. None of the differences are statistically significant, indicating that threat scores were stable for both groups, regardless of whether they studied the tolerance curriculum. Table 4 shows the same results for the Delayed Curriculum Group, the group that served as its own control: levels of threat were constant over the two four-week periods for this group.

It is an important finding that while levels of tolerance increased, neither students’ dislike of their least-liked group nor their threat perceptions changed significantly. Levels of dislike were similar before and after studying the curriculum, with only one exception: Students disliked American Nazis more after studying about them. In terms of statistical significance, there were no other groups for which students’ evaluations differed after studying the curriculum.

The findings on levels of threat are important because they suggest that students’ increase in political tolerance is not primarily the result of declining dislike or fear of these groups. Recalling the nature of many disliked political groups in our society--e.g., the Ku Klux Klan, Nazis--we would view such an outcome with dismay. Given our understanding of tolerance, we hoped that the curriculum would instead teach students to be tolerant given that they dislike a particular group. Increased tolerance may be due to other factors such as an increased ability to show forbearance in the face of threat.

A Multivariate Analysis of Political Tolerance

Having demonstrated that students’ levels of tolerance increased is only part of the picture. We explored the effects of the curriculum on different types of individuals, examining the effects of demographic variables (race, gender, and grades in school) on changes in tolerance. We also examined the effects of variables such as knowledge and enjoyment of the curriculum, and level of perceived threat.

Two sets of regression analyses were run, the first to examine the causes of students’ levels of political tolerance prior to curricular instruction, and the second to determine some of the effects of the curriculum (Table 5). Prior to students’ participation in the curriculum, perceived threat was a significant predictor of political tolerance.

Support for democratic norms among these adolescents was a significant predictor of actual levels of political tolerance on the posttest, but falls just below significance on the pretest. As support for democratic norms is measured at the pretest and not at the posttest phase, it is possible that students may have demonstrated an increase in their support for democratic norms which corresponded with their increase in tolerance. This seems likely, given the curriculum’s empha-
sis on the principles as well as the application of civil liberties, and would not contradict the repeated findings that support of democratic principles is seldom translated into their application to disliked groups. A closer examination of the regression findings indicated little change in the regression coefficient or t-values from pretest to posttest.

Levels of perceived threat were strongly and negatively related to political tolerance prior to students' introduction to the curriculum. If groups were perceived by students as very threatening, they tended to
be denied most democratic rights. While the relationship persists in the posttest results, it is much weaker. The curriculum seems to attenuate the link between threat and tolerance; although the perception of threat remains salient to students, there are a range of considerations that intervene between what has been demonstrated to be a striking cause and effect relation between threat and intolerance.

One of the strongest predictors of posttest tolerance levels (other than pretest levels) is students' knowledge of the curriculum material. Simply put, knowledge of lesson content contributed substantially to higher levels of tolerance. Grades and enjoyment of the curriculum, however, have little effect.

Authoritarianism is a strong predictor of posttest tolerance, but not (all else equal) pretest tolerance. This was an intriguing finding, and led us to suspect that certain students may have been reacting against the curriculum. To explore this further, we compared students who exhibited the highest increases in tolerance with those who showed the greatest decrease in political tolerance on many characteristics. We found several significant quantitative differences between them, but most importantly, those who decreased in tolerance scored much higher on our measure of authoritarianism. Interestingly, they were significantly less threatened on the pretest but significantly more threatened on the posttest than students who increased the most in terms of political tolerance. At this point, our conjecture is that some adolescents are highly authoritarian and when they experience a curriculum designed to promote tolerance, they react against it, perhaps becoming more defensive, fearful, and thus less tolerant.

Finally, self-esteem is positively related to levels of posttest tolerance, but not to pretest tolerance. These findings appear to demonstrate support for the suggestion that negative self-attitudes interfere with social learning (McClosky & Brill, 1983; McClosky & Zaller, 1984; Sniderman, 1975). Not surprisingly, self-esteem is positively correlated with students' grades in school ($r = .18$, $p < .01$). And, in correspondence with most research on adolescent self-esteem, girls in our sample have significantly more negative self attitudes than boys ($r = -.27$, $p < .01$). Yet, the regression findings demonstrate the significant effect of self-esteem, even controlling for students' grades and gender. We suggest that the effects of low self-esteem are similar to those of high authoritarianism among adolescents. Negative self-esteem appears to impede upon students' ability, and possibly their motivation, to learn more tolerant behavior through the lessons of the curriculum. Possibly such individuals are more defensive and fearful of information which challenges their ideas about social norms.

That pretest tolerance levels remain the strongest predictor of posttest tolerance is a matter which merits attention. The attitudes students bring to their civics classes (and to the curriculum) are
informed by many broad factors of socialization which we have neither measured nor affected in the course of this project. Many of these factors are related to attitudes that have been fostered in the home, particularly by parents and mass media as transmitters of general cultural views on topics of tolerance and intolerance. We do not expect that our curriculum overcomes all of the entrenched and intolerant ideas that young people learn from adults and society more generally. Although our findings leave much of the origins of tolerant and intolerant attitudes unexplored, the results of our initial study suggest changes important enough to warrant cautious optimism.

Students' Explanations for Tolerant/Intolerant Responses

In an effort to better understand students' responses, we included two open-ended questions on the pretest and posttest. In this section, we report our analysis of a small sample of students' responses to the open-ended items. Forty-four students' pre and posttests were selected for analysis on the basis of pretest political tolerance scores: 22 of the students had the lowest pretest tolerance scores of the sample who studied the curriculum, and 22 had the highest pretest tolerance scores. Responses provide further insight into the nature of tolerance and intolerance; in addition, they lend support to our interpretation of the quantitative analysis.

The open-ended items required students to explain their views on whether their least-liked group should be allowed to hold a public rally, and also to comment on what they thought would happen if the group did hold such a rally. Table 6 provides an explanation of the coding categories.

We examined responses from four groups of students: (1) low pretest and posttest tolerance scores; (2) low pretest and high/moderate posttest tolerance scores; (3) high pretest and posttest tolerance scores; and (4) high pretest and low/moderate posttest tolerance scores. Recall that we originally selected equal numbers of extremely tolerant and intolerant students based on pretest scores (22 students in each group). The posttest scores of these students, however, were not similarly divided. Because most students' tolerance scores increased after the curriculum, there were relatively few students whose tolerance scores declined from high to low.

Figure 1 shows the changes in explanations from pre to posttest. Among the 22 students who had the lowest pretest tolerance scores, levels of tolerance remained low for 11 students and increased to the middle or top third of the possible range of scores for the other 11 students. Among the 11 students whose levels of tolerance remained
### Table 6
Reasons for Allowing/Disallowing Least-liked Group to Rally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| They are wrong - Disliked group has no right, or should not be allowed, to hold rally because their reasoning or views are inappropriate. | • They have no right to put down another race because they think they are better.  
• No group should be able to hold rallies to tell people: "Hate these people because they are not our color!"
 |
| Recruitment - Concern that disliked group will influence people and increase its popular support. | • They'll speak and more people will want to join in.  
• If they convinced people to join them, many more people will be hurt by their actions. |
| Danger - Disliked group would engage in dangerous activities, or violence would erupt between disliked group and protesters. | • It would get out of hand. They would kill people who don't agree with them. It would not be a nice sight.  
• I think it would be a mess. A riot would probably start. |
| Rights - Any mention of a constitutional or a fundamental right or privilege that should be granted to all people. | • They have every right to assembly, just as much as you or me.  
• Everyone holds first amendment rights no matter what they believe. |
| Exchange Views/Protest - Potential for exchange of views or peaceful protest among competing groups or ideas. | • There would be opposition but if it was peaceful it would go alright.  
• If there would be one, there would be some peace rallies too. |
low, the majority of responses on the pre and posttests indicated a high level of concern for the potential danger posed by the disliked group. Nine students on the pretest and eight on the posttest were willing to deny the right to hold a rally because of the fear of violence. In comparison, only three students used the language of rights on either pre or posttest, and only one referred to the possibility of a peaceful exchange of views. Students with low pretest tolerance scores also tended to deny the right to rally on the basis that their disliked group holds wrong or bad ideas. However, the number of these responses declined to zero on the posttest.

---

**Figure 1**

On the other hand, among the eleven whose posttest scores increased significantly, none used the language of rights on the pretest, while eight did so on the posttest. Perceptions of danger remained fairly high for these students from pretest to posttest, despite their increase in tolerance. This reinforces our earlier finding that learning about tolerance tends to decouple the issue of perceived threat from tolerance and makes perceived threat less salient when deciding...
whether to extend certain rights to groups. However, concerns about recruitment declined dramatically for students in this group. Among the students who were initially lowest in tolerance, then, a new focus on “rights” (presumably gained from our curriculum) distinguishes those whose tolerance increases significantly from those whose tolerance remains relatively low.

We also analyzed the responses of the twenty-two students whose pretest tolerance scores were highest. Among the sixteen whose scores remained high, eleven used the language of rights on the pretest while all sixteen did so on the posttest. Also interesting is the number of high tolerance students who referred to the potential for exchange of views among groups. Five students mentioned this on the pretest and six did so on the posttest. The high tolerance students who remained high demonstrated somewhat less concern over the threat of danger and violence in their explanations than did those whose scores declined: only four highly tolerant students mentioned violence on the pretest and five cited violence on the posttest.

Among the six students whose tolerance scores decreased from high to low, there was an increase in references to danger or violence, with one student mentioning violence on the pretest and five students citing violence on the posttest. There was also an increase in the “they are wrong” category, a corresponding decline in the number of students mentioning rights at the pretest stage (four) and at the posttest stage (one), and a decline in the number of students recognizing the possibility of exchanging views at a rally (three to none). This suggests that these students may have reacted against the curriculum. They were not worried about danger or violence, or potential recruitment by the group before studying the curriculum and focused instead—as did the high-high group—on “rights.” Studying the curriculum appears to have activated their fears about the group’s danger and strength, thus diminishing their focus on the group’s right to demonstrate.

Responses to the open-ended items on the surveys therefore give us greater insight into the nature of tolerance and intolerance, and why changes may occur in response to the curriculum. In general, it appears that increases in tolerance levels are due to a greater focus on rights, whereas decreases in tolerance levels may be attributed to heightened concerns for safety.

Discussion and Implications

Research on civics curricula as they are currently constituted suggests that they have little impact on the political attitudes of American youth (Ehman, 1980). However, one ought not conclude from this research that a reconstituted civics curriculum would be ineffective. Our work suggests that such a reconstitution might engender a greater tolerance for diversity of beliefs. A curriculum that helps
students comprehend the consequences of intolerance can increase students’ willingness to extend rights to disliked groups. In short, political tolerance can be taught.

Importantly, our testing of the curriculum seems to indicate that it is effective under vastly different classroom conditions. Students’ levels of tolerance increased at all three schools at about the same rate. It might have been expected, given the findings of Langton and Jennings (1968), that tolerance would increase more at the urban school whose student population includes a larger proportion of students of color. However, the information redundancy Langton and Jennings discovered among whites did not occur in our study. The contents of the curriculum appear to have been sufficiently new to the students to have an effect across student populations, teachers, and school settings.\(^{15}\)

Of course our study has some limitations. We do not know how the teachers involved in the project affected changes in tolerance. Other research has suggested that an open and democratic classroom climate in which students feel free to express their opinions is related to the development of tolerance (Torney, Oppenheim & Farnen, 1975). Students’ perception of the teacher’s credibility has also been noted as an important variable (Goldenson, 1978). Our understanding of how the curriculum was taught is based on the teachers’ descriptions of their experiences, as well as student responses to open-ended questions. A more thorough study would include observations of the classes, with particular attention to the classroom climate.

The teachers in our studies were self-selected; their very willingness to try an experimental curriculum suggests an openness to different teaching materials and strategies. Most of the teachers were also quite experienced—three of the teachers had taught for more than fifteen years, while one had taught for four years. In the hands of more traditional, less experienced teachers, the curriculum might have had different effects on students’ levels of tolerance.

Still, the effectiveness of this curriculum has important implications for educating the citizens of a democratic society. Some empirical democratic theorists have cautioned against trusting ordinary citizens to make fundamental decisions about democratic rights (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954; Schumpeter, 1943). Rather, they argue that political elites, who possess the requisite understanding of how democratic norms and values ought to be applied, should make the difficult choices about democratic rights. Studies of tolerance generally show, as well, that so-called elites do perform with greater consistency when asked about concrete implementations of minority rights (e.g., Barnum & Sullivan, 1989; McClosky, 1964; McClosky & Brill, 1983; Nunn, Crockett, & Williams, 1978; Prothro & Grigg, 1960; Stouffer, 1955).\(^{16}\)
Exploring Political Tolerance With Adolescents

Our study's results provide a glimmer of hope. We believe that if civic education were to include a systematic examination of the role of dissent in a democratic society, young people might develop a commitment to protect civil liberties that would ultimately engender a more fully democratic citizenry. Our study suggests that if tolerance of diverse beliefs is an important democratic ideal, it may be possible to realize this ideal through challenging and creative curricula. We may be able to create the conditions for a democratic culture in which we need not fear the actions of an intolerant citizenry.

Endnotes

1 The authors wish to acknowledge the comments of Marcus Flathman, the cooperation and assistance of several public school teachers, and the financial and other support provided by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), both of the University of Minnesota.

2 We have limited our discussion to the effects of the traditional civics curriculum. It should be noted that some researchers have addressed other important instructional issues. For example, studies have suggested that an open and democratic classroom climate (Torney, Oppenheim & Farnen, 1975), an instructional emphasis on causes and explanations as opposed to rote memorization in civics classes (Nielsen, 1977), and controversial issues discussions (Breslin, 1982; Grossman, 1974) are related to young people's civic tolerance.

3 We are aware of important critiques of the Langton and Jennings (1968) study (see, for example, Hepburn, 1980). However, it remains the only national study which specifically examines the impact of the number of civics courses taken on civic tolerance.

4 The three items were: (1) If a person wanted to make a speech in this community against religion, he should be allowed to speak; (2) If a Communist were really elected to some public office around here, the people should allow him to take office; (3) The American system of government is one that all nations should have.

5 There is evidence that in Britain, civics curricula have an impact on political knowledge, sophistication, cynicism, and efficacy, but not on political tolerance (Denver & Hands, 1990).

6 Despite these findings with respect to students, others have shown that education and tolerance are correlated among adults (e.g., Bobo & Licari, 1989; McClosky & Brill, 1983) and among young adults (Montero, 1975). These findings reinforce the suggestion that much civil liberties socialization occurs after high school, either through curriculum effects in college or, more likely, through a broader social (Endnotes continued next page)
learning process that occurs both in and outside of the college classroom. Altemeyer (1988) provides evidence that college vitiates authoritarianism by providing a diversity of experience and exposure to ideas that does not occur as frequently or profoundly among citizens who do not attend college. He finds little evidence to link authoritarianism among college students directly to the effects of curriculum.

We do not claim that ours is the only curriculum that addresses these issues. Many of the law-related education materials provide in-depth analyses of civil liberties issues. However, we are unaware of any studies that measure the impact of these curriculum materials on political tolerance.

Critics may contend that the curriculum is indoctrination as opposed to education. Indeed, this issue has prompted not a few lively discussions among us. No curriculum is devoid of values, and our curriculum is no exception. We do, in fact, believe that tolerance for diverse beliefs is critical to a democracy, and hence is an important area of inquiry within citizenship education. On this point, we appear to be joined by governmental agencies and professional education organizations (NAEP, 1978, 1980; National Council for the Social Studies, 1989). It is also our belief, and the one tested here, that if students carefully examine the consequences of intolerance for the victim, the perpetrator, and society, they will be more likely to choose more tolerant stances.

Our curriculum, however, does not provide "right" answers; rather, it poses questions that should be challenging to both tolerant and intolerant viewpoints. Lessons do not condone violence, nor do they encourage students to approve of the beliefs of specific political groups (on the contrary, students are reminded of their right to express disagreement with groups whose ideas they find noxious). Further, at no point during the curriculum are students "graded" on their views with regard to civil liberties issues.

For a more thorough discussion of this conceptualization and measurement of political tolerance, see Sullivan et al. (1982).

Seventy-three percent of the students in the control group chose the same least-liked group at both points in time; the fact that similar results were obtained among students in the experimental group indicates that the curriculum does not affect students' attitudes toward their least-liked group.

Among experimental and control groups, on both pretests and posttests, approximately two-thirds of the students chose the Ku Klux Klan as their least-liked political group. American Nazis and Pro-
Choice groups were selected by approximately 15% of the students. Each of the other groups (American Communists, Peace Activists, Pro-Life groups, War Supporters, groups who support women's rights, and groups who want rights for people of color) were chosen by less than 10% of the students.

The curriculum was initially piloted in the spring of 1990 with 271 eighth and ninth-grade students from three public junior high schools in the state of Minnesota (see Avery, Bird, Healy, Sullivan, & Thalhammer 1991). The 1990 study did not include a control group. Results of the 1990 study, however, are quite similar to those found in the 1991 study, thereby increasing our confidence in the results reported here. In 1990, students who participated in the curriculum demonstrated a statistically significant increase in political tolerance (t=-8.81, p<.001). On the pretest regression analysis, political interest, perceived socioeconomic status and perceived threat were significant predictors of political tolerance. On the posttest regression analysis, gender, grades, perceived threat, curriculum knowledge, and pretest tolerance were significant predictors of tolerance. Measures of authoritarianism and support for democratic norms were not included in the earlier study.

Chi square analyses were conducted to detect any differences between groups on independent variables. This analysis revealed that students in the No Curriculum Group were significantly more likely to be younger, to be people of color, to be female, and to report higher grades and self-esteem than were students in the Curriculum Group.

The curriculum has two case studies that involve the Nazis, their rights, and the victims of their intolerance.

For comparison purposes, all scores have been standardized to an n of 16. Actual raw numbers are reported in the text. For example, the actual number of students who had low tolerance scores on the pretest and posttest was eleven. The actual number of students' responses coded in the "They are wrong" category on the pretest was six. For the visual representation shown in Figure 1, the number of students was calculated as follows: actual number of responses x 16/actual number of students in low-low group.

Student responses to an item on the posttest provide support for this conclusion. When asked to describe the curriculum on a five-point scale with 1 as "ideas new to me" and 5 as "same old stuff," only four percent of the students marked the box assigned a score of 5 and 11 percent the box assigned a score of 4.

For some exceptions, see Gibson and Duch (1991), Shamir (1991), and Sniderman, Fletcher, Russell, & Tetlock (1989).
Appendix

The curriculum _Tolerance for Diversity of Beliefs_ consists of seven lessons which extend over a period of three to four weeks. Each lesson includes a set of guiding questions and learner objectives.

Lesson 1: Victims of Intolerance

_What is intolerance? Who are the victims of intolerance?_

Lesson 1 focuses on victims of intolerance. Students define tolerance as a group and then categorize a number of concrete situations in terms of the degree to which they are deserving of tolerance. In their journals, students record how important tolerance is to them on a scale of 1-10 and how important they think tolerance should be for the well-being of humanity. Students then divide into three groups; each group reads one case study—the Japanese-American internment during World War II, the Holocaust, or the Cultural Revolution in China. Groups role play the case studies for the entire class.

Lesson 2: Intolerance—From Whence It Comes

_Why are individuals/groups intolerant?_

Lesson 2 examines the roots of intolerance, helping students to explore conditions that create intolerance in people or groups. Students are asked to write in their journals about behaviors that test their tolerance, people/groups of which they are sometimes intolerant, and a situation in which they behaved in an intolerant manner. Volunteers share these instances with the class to see if any generalizations can be made. Students read a fictional account of a class bully to develop an understanding of the origins of intolerance. The “Bully Bulletin” provides information from psychological and sociological studies of bullies.

Lesson 3: Basic Human Rights

_What are basic human rights? What is the relationship between rights, responsibilities and tolerance?_

Lesson 3 considers the question of basic human rights, focusing on the balance between rights and responsibilities. Students list human rights and try to decide which of these they would term “basic.” Working in groups, the students choose the three rights considered most important; they then compare the rights they selected with the rights protected by the constitutions of several nations. Next, students consider
possible limitations to basic rights and how these rights are tied to responsibilities. Finally, students view a 20-minute video, "I-Team Hate Mail," that focuses on the relationship between beliefs and actions and whether one is entitled to express one's beliefs if that action will hurt others. Elroy Stock, the main character, wrote letters to people in racially or religiously "mixed" marriages telling them they were wrong. In their journals, students react to Stock's actions, and what they might do if confronted with someone with similar views.

Lesson 4: Case Studies

How have issues of intolerance been addressed in the United States courts?

Lesson 4 examines national case studies. The first case involves high school students protesting the Vietnam War by wearing black armbands to school. When the school officials objected, the students sued, taking their case all the way to the Supreme Court. The second case involves the American Nazi Party's attempt to march in Skokie, Illinois, an area heavily populated by Jews who had escaped from Nazi Germany. Students simulate the cases, playing the parts of attorneys for each side and judges or justices.

Lesson 5: International Rights and Responsibilities

What international standards address issues of intolerance?

Lesson 5 extends the concept of tolerance to the international level. Students read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, and compare it to the United States Bill of Rights. Students analyze the disparity between principles and practice in news articles, and suggest reasons for the disjuncture.

Lesson 6: Belief and Believers

Who are the people, past and present, who followed their consciences and acted on their beliefs?

Lesson 6 focuses on advocates for tolerance and victims of intolerance. Students receive: (1) a list of the names of people who have acted on their beliefs, even when it was dangerous for them to do so, and (2) a list that describes each person's relationship to freedom of expression. Students match the names to the descriptions by consulting reference materials in the school library. In addition, two students previously selected by the teacher role-play a mock interview with
Aryeh Neier to explore his beliefs about freedom of expression. Neier, a Jew, defended the Nazis' right to march in Skokie in his position as a leader of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Lesson 7: Taking Action to Increase Understanding of Rights of Expression

What actions can be taken to increase understanding of rights of expression?

The final section, Lesson 7, invites students to consider actions they might take to increase understanding of freedom of expression. First, students explore the rights and responsibilities they believe they should have in the classroom. Then, the students work in small groups to identify intolerance in their school, community, nation or world and offer suggestions as to actions they might take. One possibility introduced to them is that of forming an Amnesty International group at the school. To conclude the unit, students return to the exercise in Lesson 1 in which they were asked to rate the importance of tolerance to themselves and to the well-being of humanity. They complete the ratings again, and discuss any changes in their views.

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AN ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS OF TEACHER ATTITUDES ABOUT TEACHING HIGH SCHOOL ECONOMICS¹

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Abstract
In this article, the authors utilize a general analysis of organizational behavior theory to construct and test a set of hypotheses concerning the determinants of teacher work attitudes. The characteristics that influence worker satisfaction were divided into two sets: individual attributes and job characteristics. Results of a probit analysis raise interesting questions about the impact of experience, autonomy, differences between teacher and student goals, and teaching aids from outside agencies on teacher attitudes about the teaching of high school economics.

Introduction

At a press conference conducted during the 1988 American Economic Association meetings, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Paul Volcker, made the statement that "economic education in the United States is not in the kind of shape we want it to be in." He was commenting on the results of a recent examination of high school students concerning the basics of our economy. On a 46-question test, average scores ranged from 37 percent correct for social studies students to 52 percent correct for students who took basic
There is a continual effort to study the factors which affect pre-college economic literacy. In fact, at that same convention, two papers examined the effects of gender and state-mandated programs on economic education in the high schools (Heath, 1989; Rhine, 1989). Improvement in economic literacy and an informed policy on economic education are the goals of this type of research.

Typical large-sample studies in economic education research, such as Walstad and Soper (1989, 1982) and Watts (1985), analyze teacher quality aspects of the economic education process including the effectiveness of teacher training, teaching methods, educational setting and other teacher variables. The introduction of instruments to measure the impact of economics instruction on students' economic attitudes by Walstad and Soper (1983) and Ingels and O'Brien (1988) has increased interest in attitude assessment. However, few of these studies examine specifically what may be a very significant factor in the process, teacher attitudes toward teaching economics. Schober (1984), includes teacher/student opinions about the subject of economics and finds that teacher workshops have a significant impact on achievement scores of teachers and these in turn affect opinions about the subject. But teacher attitudes about teaching are not specifically examined.

In a large sample study of high school seniors in economics courses, Foeller (1988) included a measure of teacher attitudes about teaching and found that such attitudes were positively and significantly related to student test scores—the way a teacher feels about teaching appears to matter. Unexplored, however, are the factors which influence such attitudes. Does a mandated program in economic education, for example, have a positive or negative impact on teacher attitudes about teaching the subject? Does economic education for teachers enhance teacher satisfaction? What types of teacher aids affect teacher attitudes? Are current programs and materials in economic education effective satisfiers? Do student/teacher interactions seriously affect teacher attitudes about teaching?

The objectives of the authors in this study were to use the general analysis of organizational behavior theory to construct and test a set of hypotheses concerning the determinants of teacher work attitudes and to examine the possible policy implications for economic education in high schools.

Theories of Job Satisfaction

The general hypothesis of this article is that satisfaction in teaching economics is derived from the same foundations as job satisfaction in other occupations and work situations. In early analyses, job satisfaction was found to be dependent on the extent to which needs of an individual can be met through work (Schaffer, 1953). In more
recent analyses, job satisfaction was found to be a function of the feelings associated with a person's work. This occurs in the form of positive or negative emotions associated with one's job (Bullock, 1984).

Theories associated with job satisfaction can be grouped into two categories: Content theories and process theories (Chung, 1977). The content category includes the work of Maslow and Herzberg. The process category includes discrepancy theory and valence theory.

Content Theories

Much early research on job satisfaction was based on the organization behavior theory of Abraham Maslow (1943), who developed a worker needs hierarchy. In his hypothesis, workers' satisfaction is based on a structure of needs which are consecutively satisfied from relatively basic physiological (or physical) needs to safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs. In this hierarchy, a higher, less basic need does not provide motivation unless all lower, more basic needs are largely satisfied.

A more recent, competing theory of worker needs and satisfaction was developed by David McClelland (1961). In this theory, workers are hypothesized to have at least three major positive needs: achievement, power, and affiliation, and one negative need, the need to avoid failure.

Early researchers of job satisfaction utilized the Maslow and McClelland theories to construct hypotheses which suggested that a job was satisfying when there was a correlation between job characteristics and the needs of the individual. Maslow and McClelland have been criticized, however, for not providing proof that the list of needs in their structures are indeed needs (Locke, 1976, p. 1308).

Two-factor theory is based on the work of Herzberg (1968) and Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959). Herzberg constructs and verifies distinct sets of work "satisfiers" and "dissatisfiers." Herzberg et al. categorize those factors which satisfy workers as follows: Achievement, recognition, nature of the work, responsibility and advancement. All of the "satisfiers" seem to describe workers' relationships to what they do. These factors make people happy with their work because they serve a need for psychological growth. "Dissatisfiers" include institutional policy, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions. These seem to describe the worker's environment rather than job content and meet the need to avoid unpleasantness.

Herzberg's analysis seems to be relevant for research on teacher attitudes. Johnson (1967), for example, surveyed high school teachers in Alabama specifically to test the applicability of Herzberg's satisfiers and dissatisfiers. He found the general categories to be relevant, but his
particular characteristics for teachers differ somewhat from the earlier Herzberg list for engineers and accountants (Herzberg et al., 1959).

A study of college faculty by Hill (1987) also demonstrated the relevance of two-factor theory for research on teacher attitudes. Hill found that intrinsic factors leading to higher faculty satisfaction were related to teaching, convenience, and recognition. The extrinsic factors in the analysis of faculty satisfaction were related to economics, administration, and colleagues.

Process Theories

While the two-factor theory appears to provide a theoretical model for the analysis of teacher attitudes, many questions remain about the way workers consider the different factors in determining their level of satisfaction. The process theories help to complete the organizational behavior framework by concentrating on the interaction between the needs and expectations of the employees and their work environment (Hopkins, 1983).

Discrepancy Theory. Discrepancy theory compares what employees receive with what they expect to receive from their jobs. The notion behind this theory is that if an employee receives less than the perceived equitable level, that employee will be dissatisfied. If an employee receives rewards equal to or more than the (perceived) expectation, that employee will be satisfied (Chung, 1977).

This equity-inequity theory is based on the notion that employees will be satisfied if they perceive their input-outcome ratio (how much an individual employee puts into his job versus how much he gets from it) to be equal or comparable to his perception of other employees' input-outcome ratio (Bullock, 1984, p.1). Researchers using this approach apply a social comparison measurement and suggest that employee satisfaction will result if there is equity between an individual's perceived input-outcome ratio balance when compared to another's equivalent ratio.

Valence Theory. Those who favor valence theory define job satisfaction in terms of an individual's anticipation of receiving valued outcomes. The anticipated value of rewards serves as a motivator and increases the level of search behavior (Chung, 1977, p. 116). Proponents of valence theory also point out that a state of dissatisfaction is necessary because it arouses search behavior.

In order to understand job satisfaction, researchers have tended to group it into facets. The most studied facets which researchers believe influence employees' satisfaction include work in current job, attitudes
toward co-workers, compensation, pay and benefits, and attitudes towards supervision, administration/management, work environment, organization, and work in general.

While organizational behavior theories tend to vary in their focus, they combine to provide a coherent structure for an analysis of teacher attitudes. As presented by Miller (1980):

Job satisfaction or dissatisfaction can thus be the product of individual social and psychological attributes as well as objective assessment of job conditions. If the cognitive aspects of judgments about work are emphasized, attention is focused on the objective features of the work environment that explain variation in job satisfaction. If, on the other hand, differences in values are viewed as the critical determinants of job satisfaction, individual characteristics are emphasized.

In the analysis that follows, the relative importance of job conditions and individual attributes on teacher attitudes will be examined to discern implications useful in the construction of economic education paradigms.

**Hypotheses, Variables, and Research Method**

The hypotheses tested in this study were limited by the data available on individual and job characteristics. The development and dissemination of new data from the Joint Council on Economic Education's National Assessment of Economic Education Survey (NAEE) gathered for high school seniors during the 1986-87 school year (Baumol & Highsmith, 1988), provided the opportunity for a large sample analysis of the organizational behavior hypotheses applied to economic teacher attitudes.

The NAEE survey, consisting of four questionnaires, correlates student economic achievement test scores (Test of Economic Literacy [TEL], Form B) with other student, teacher, and school district data. The survey was based on a national sample of high schools such that a representative random sample of twelfth-grade students was included. The total unadjusted sample size for the number of students surveyed was 3,266. At all schools in the sample, survey data were solicited from the district superintendent (district survey), the principal, (school survey), and one or more teachers. The teachers were asked to complete self-administered questionnaires about the teaching of economics and teaching aids and materials that they considered helpful. Additional survey data were solicited from students concerning their attitudes
about the study of economics and their exposure to economic issues. All of the students had taken the Test of Economic Literacy intended to measure economic understanding and reasoning. Each student's test score was then coded so that in each case, student, teacher, school, and district responses to the survey instruments were directly matched across four sets of survey data. Survey questions were carefully screened and pre-tested. All NAEE activity is under the review of an advisory committee of distinguished practitioners and scholars who oversee its activities. Since much of the survey data were student-oriented, we used the student as the unit of observation. Thus, multiple observations (students) may have the same teachers, school or district data. Furthermore, in this analysis, any observation with missing data in any variable was removed from the data subsample. This reduced the subsample for analysis to 1,059 observations. However, an examination of variable means before and after removing missing data did not indicate any significant bias in the subsample.

From the teacher survey of the NAEE data, a dichotomous, 0-1 variable, TATT, was constructed for teacher attitudes about teaching economics. The value of TATT is 1 if the teacher is very enthusiastic about teaching economics (and presumably very satisfied) and 0 if the teacher is less enthusiastic. The survey data consisted of a teacher self-rating that did not provide useful multiple categories of satisfaction to be analyzed and precluded the construction of a more detailed attitude measure. The possibility that teacher views of enthusiasm may differ provided an additional concern in the construction of a more detailed measure. Our analysis, therefore, only concentrated on a comparison of highly satisfied teachers and less satisfied teachers. Thus, TATT is the dependent variable involving a qualitative response of zero or one—in this case, a favorable attitude toward teaching economics versus absence of a favorable attitude. The probit model of analysis which estimates the probability of an event's occurrence or absence of occurrence, given a qualitative dependent variable, uses a maximum likelihood estimate of that probability and is appropriate for this investigation (Spector & Mazzeo, 1980).

The organizational behavior literature provides two major sets of characteristics that influence worker satisfaction. The first set of characteristics are the worker's individual attributes. These characteristics are often said to be intrinsic and related to differences in values. The second category of characteristics are related to job conditions. These characteristics are termed extrinsic and relate to working conditions such as degree of self-direction, job pressures, organizational structure, job uncertainties, and the rewards/protections of the job (Miller, 1980).
An Organizational Behavior Analysis of Teacher Attitudes

Individual Attributes

NHEC—number of hours of formal economic instruction. The social studies or economics teacher who has more hours of economics instruction will better understand the subject and material to be taught. If the hypothesis that there is a strong correlation between performance and job satisfaction is valid (Petty et al., 1984), then the better grasp of the material that comes with additional courses would appear to be a natural satisfier for a teacher. The variable is entered into the analysis as the total undergraduate and graduate credit hours in economic courses completed by the teacher and is hypothesized to be positively related to teacher attitude.

RETYR—the ratio of years teaching economics to the total number of years of teaching experience. Again from the Petty et al. (1984) analysis, to the extent that it increases performance, experience is thought to have a strong positive impact on attitudes. But as Herzberg (1968) noted, the sign could be negative and misleading since job attitude data show that new entrants to a job have very high levels of satisfaction which may mask the experience effect in cross-section studies. The use of the ratio of experience in economics to total experience is designed to examine the differences associated with the portion of teaching experience accumulated in economics. It is expected that teachers who have only taught economics may differ from those with a substantial portion of their teaching experience outside economics. The rigorous retooling that may have been required to move from another discipline into economics leads to a hypothesized positive coefficient sign for this variable.

SEX—the gender of the instructor as a dummy variable, F=1 M=0. As pointed out by Miller (1980), men's and women's orientations to work may be different. The differences in orientation may be related to socialization before entry into the labor force, dissimilar parental and conjugal roles, or reactions to the systematic differences in occupational expectations. This variable is therefore entered to control for gender effects on teacher attitudes.

EXPT—the teacher's expectation of class performance. This variable is considered to be one of the measures of the social and psychological attributes associated with teaching. EXPT is included to test the hypothesis that teachers will be more enthusiastic about teaching a group of students who are perceived to be highly motivated. This variable is constructed as a dummy variable from the survey which includes a categorical variable on perceived ability. High anticipated ability=1, 0 otherwise.
Job Characteristics

Miller's (1980) division of working conditions into five areas was intended for an analysis of a variety of different occupations. The concentration on teachers reduces the applicability of measures of organizational structure and job uncertainties and leaves three subdivisions. Occupational self-direction is defined as the use of initiative, thought, and independent judgment in work (Miller, 1980). The two components of self-direction in this analysis are teacher autonomy (AUTON) and the availability of support material (AID).

AUTON—the instructor's autonomy in the determination of topics and coverage of material. As pointed out by Miller (1980), self-direction is considered to be one of the major focus points of working conditions. The variable is entered as a categorical variable directly from the survey where 1=mandated curriculum and material, 2=mandated curriculum only, 3=mandated materials only and 4= no mandate. While there is certainly the possibility that mandating the use of certain materials could be as restrictive as mandating the entire curriculum, the general progression from mandated curriculum and materials through no mandate seems to represent successive increases in the teacher's autonomy. Instructors are thought to prefer autonomy; however, the guidance provided by the curriculum and policy support could also improve the nature of the work and could lead this variable to have a positive impact on teacher's attitude. The hypothesized sign on this variable is uncertain and left for empirical confirmation.

AID—An additional variable is constructed to determine the significance of curricular and/or teaching and materials aid provided to the teacher of economics. Five specific sources of aid are surveyed in the NAEE data: local Centers for Economic Education, the Joint Council on Economic Education (JCEE), the Foundation for Teaching Economics, Junior Achievement, and state Councils on Economic Education. Additional data were available to identify a school district as a member of the JCEE's Developmental Economic Education Program and to identify teachers who had inservice training in economics. Since there may be much duplication in aid sources, a dummy variable was initially constructed to identify a teacher who receives any type of aid from any of the five sources. When aid is received, the variable is one. Otherwise, the variable is entered as zero.

Job pressures may be intrinsic to the nature of the tasks performed or imposed by worker or management (Miller, 1980). In this study, job pressures are represented by class size (SIZE), student attitudes toward economics (SAT), and differences between the goals of students and the instructor (GDIF).
SIZE—the number of students in the class relative to the average class size in the sample. The process theories suggested that the amount of work a particular worker performs relative to other workers is a potentially sensitive aspect of working conditions. It is expected that teachers with larger than average classes will be less satisfied and the hypothesized coefficient sign is negative.

SAT—the student’s attitude about the subject. Again, the hypothesis is that the teacher is better satisfied with students receptive to the subject. The variable is entered as a categorical variable 1-5, where 5 indicates a strong enjoyment of economics.

GDIF—a proxy index variable constructed to capture differences in goal agreement between student and teacher. Vredeveld and Jeong (1990) analyzed the impact of goal differences on student choice and found that when the teacher's goals for an economics class closely matched those of the student, the student would place a greater value on the course. Charkins, O'Toole and Wetzel (1985) found that when student learning styles and teacher teaching styles differ, economics test scores are negatively affected. In a similar way, if the student's reasons for studying differ from the teacher's goals in teaching, teacher attitudes about teaching economics may likewise be negatively affected as the teacher anticipates adjustments in teaching goals and styles. On the other hand, a variety of goals and efforts by students and teachers may stimulate the teacher's interest in the class. Since the purpose of including this variable is to test the broad hypothesis that goal differences in general affect teacher attitudes as an extension of earlier works, a broad proxy goal difference index is constructed. In the survey, both teacher and students were asked six coincident questions concerning the reasons for studying economics (see Appendix A, Table 2). The index variable is constructed by summing the absolute value of the difference between matched responses for each of the six goal questions. Since the categorical values for each response in the survey range from 1, not significant, to 3, very important, the maximum absolute value of goal differences for any one question is 2, and the maximum summed difference across all six questions is 12. With this formulation, higher scores represent greater divergences in teacher and student goals. While the Vredeveld and Jeong (1990) results might lead one to expect a negative coefficient sign, the possibility that the goal differences may actually stimulate the teacher's interest suggests that the expected sign is not clear and will have to be empirically determined.

The final subset of job characteristics is related to the rewards/protections of the job. These extrinsic rewards of work include varied measures of job income and job protection. In the absence of specific salary and benefit data, worker rewards are provided by relative district expenditures (DXPEN) and school location (RURAL).
DXPEN—the difference between the average district expenditure per student and the individual teacher's district expenditure. As pointed out in the process theories, workers tend to concentrate on comparisons of their conditions relative to those of other workers. This variable is entered as a measure of the ability of the school districts to provide facilities (and perhaps salary level) relative to the average expenditures of the districts. Below average expenditures (represented by a positive difference) are hypothesized to have a negative impact on teacher attitudes.

RURAL—a dummy variable to control for the location of the school in an urban or rural area, R=1, U=0. This variable is entered to test the hypothesis that rural districts are less conducive to a satisfying teaching environment for economics education.

Empirical Results

The following single equation probit model was evaluated on 1,059 matched student/teacher observations of the NAEE data:

\[
TATT = f(NHEC, RETYR, SEX, EXPT, AUTON, AID, SIZE, GDIF, SAT, DXPEN, RURAL)
\]

Table 1 lists the empirical results. The chi-square significance level is respectable and the actual and predicted frequencies are acceptable. Two of the four individual attributes (NHEC, EXPT) exhibited a positive impact on teacher attitudes. In terms of job characteristics, the provision of aid had a positive impact on the attitudes of the teachers, but greater autonomy did not have a positive impact. The job pressure measures suggest that larger than average classes negatively impact teacher attitudes and positive student attitudes contribute to greater teacher enthusiasm. As discussed in greater detail below, goal differences between teachers and students did not decrease teacher enthusiasm. As expected, below-average expenditures and teaching in rural areas had negative impacts on the probability of the teachers being enthusiastic about their work.

Conclusions

The results appear to indicate that an organizational behavior analysis is appropriate for developing hypotheses in research designs involving attitudes of high school economics instructors. Except for the variable, RETYR, the independent variables constructed for this study have the expected signs and show significant effects on the dependent variable, TATT.
In constructing objectives for this study, current research left unanswered such questions as: Does economic education for teachers enhance teacher satisfaction? What types of instructional aids affect teacher attitudes? What work related or individual attributes affect teacher attitudes about teaching economics? Data limitations and the nature of self-assessment surveys limit the generalization of some of the results, but several exploratory and tentative observations can be made.

First, with respect to the effects of economic education on attitudes, the results for the variables describing individual attributes--hours of economics instruction (NHEC), the ratio of years of teaching economics to total years teaching (RETYR), and teacher
expectations of student performance (EXPT) all significantly affect the enthusiasm for teaching in this study. Instruction and higher anticipated student performance enhance teacher enthusiasm. The experience ratio variable, RETYR, however, hypothesized to improve attitudes because of the retooling associated with a change in the subject taught, shows a negative effect on teacher enthusiasm. The negative coefficient on RETYR is a rather interesting result.

The average length of total teaching experience in the survey is 14.78 years and the average ratio of economics to total is .55. One possible interpretation of the negative result is that the transition to a new subject area after years of teaching in a different discipline may contribute to a greater enthusiasm for the subject. While this particular study is much too narrow to allow broad generalizations, further research into the impact on teacher attitudes of a change in subject (or course) taught is needed. It is also conceivable that teachers with a high concentration of experience in economics may not be as enthusiastic or satisfied with their work. The present sample consisted of a large segment of teachers with less than seven years of experience in teaching economics. This suggests that experienced teachers moving into economics are more likely to be enthusiastic than newer teachers with all their experience in economics.

With respect to the question of teaching aids and teacher enthusiasm, the agency aid variable (AID), demonstrating a positive impact in the analysis, was constructed for joint aid across official agencies and registered as 1 when a teacher received aid from any of the agencies, and 0 otherwise. The general observation is that aid enhances teacher enthusiasm for teaching. But the data are too sparse to identify exactly what type of aid has significant effects.

Although a teacher may receive aid from several sources simultaneously which could confound the assumption of independent effects, a further probit analysis was conducted with five agencies entered separately. The results are listed in Table 3 (see Appendix B). Three of the AID coefficients representing assistance from the Joint Council on Economic Education (A2), the Foundation for Teaching Economics (A3), and Junior Achievement (A4) remain positive, although the coefficient on the Junior Achievement variable is not statistically significant. However, the coefficients representing aid from local centers and state councils were negative. This indicates that those agencies provide unsatisfactory services, but that these aids are not increasing enthusiasm in this teacher sample. Caution in interpreting these results is warranted. The data do not indicate the nature of the aid nor the experience of the teachers using this aid. Longitudinal analysis would better illustrate the possible significance of the effects of any aid programs on attitudes.
A further test of types of aid was conducted substituting dummy variables for DEEP districts and inservice training. The DEEP variable = 1 if the district participates in the Joint Council's program of curriculum development and zero otherwise. The IN variable is a dummy with 1 assigned when a teacher has participated in inservice training and zero otherwise. A probit analysis was conducted with these variables substituted for the AID variables. The results are listed in Table 4 (see Appendix C) and confirm the conclusion that aid from the Joint Council on Economic Education in the form of the DEEP program has a positive impact on teacher attitudes, but no conclusions can be drawn concerning the inservice variable. The general conclusion is that aid, whether in the form of materials or other services, appears to have some positive impact on teacher attitudes, but also that further research is needed in this regard.

The results for the variables concerning goal differences and degree of autonomy in teaching should be of some interest to those involved with curriculum development. In reference to differences in the goals between teachers and students, the results deserve some additional discussion. Vredeveld and Jeong (1990) found that divergences between student and teacher goals had a negative impact on students' feelings about the course and their plans to take another course. The positive and statistically significant coefficients on goal differences in all three teacher attitude models suggest that the divergences do not have a similar impact on teacher attitudes. As stated earlier, these differences may actually stimulate the teacher's interest in the class. The differences in the impact of goal differences on teachers and students certainly deserves some additional attention. Future studies need to move beyond the NAEE data in an attempt to provide results of a more general nature. Future analysis of the impact of goal differences may also seek to replicate Vredeveld and Jeong's distinction between teacher overestimation and student overestimation.

Second, in contrast to the organizational behavior literature's emphasis on self-direction, teachers seem to be more satisfied with some form of curriculum structure since the sign on the AUTON variable is negative and statistically significant. The suggestion that mandated curriculum or materials would not decrease enthusiasm for the economics teachers is instructive.

Finally, several policy issues emerge from this analysis. First, in the consideration of individual attributes, factors such as additional hours of economics coursework and expectation of motivated students appear to increase teacher enthusiasm. The two remaining attributes, however, are sources of concern. As stated above, further research is necessary to examine the differences between teachers with a high concentration of experience in economics and those that change subjects.
The SEX variable is also a source of concern. The consistently negative coefficients suggest that being female decreases the probability of being very enthusiastic about teaching economics. While this result supports Miller's (1980) belief that men and women have different orientations toward work, it also suggests that additional research is necessary to learn more about these orientational differences and their influence on teacher attitudes.

The analysis of the job characteristics appears to support the contention of the organizational behavior literature concerning the tendency of employees to compare their position relative to that of their peers. Economics teachers with larger than average classes and those in districts with below average expenditures per student are less likely to be enthusiastic about their work. This result has some interesting implications for economic education funding. Data limitations preclude further analysis of this issue here, but the issue of educational funding and teacher attitude is a rich area for future research.

Furthermore, an examination of the result on the student attitude variable (SAT), indicates that the reduction in job pressure that appears to be associated with positive student attitudes about studying economics, can increase the probability of teacher enthusiasm for teaching economics. If this result is a general condition of student/teacher interaction, programs that condition students for the study of economics would appear to enhance teacher enthusiasm for teaching economics as well. Further analysis of the relationships between student attitudes and teacher attitudes would be beneficial.

Endnotes

1 This research was partially sponsored by the Joint Council on Economic Education through funding provided by the J. Howard Pew Freedom Trust. The authors would like to thank four anonymous reviewers of this article for their helpful comments and suggestions.

2 The set of parameter coefficients reflect the impact of changes in the independent variables on the probability of the teacher being very enthusiastic (TATT=1). See Greene (1990) for more details about the interpretation of a probit analysis.
An Organizational Behavior Analysis of Teacher Attitudes

Appendix A

**Table 2**

Student/Teacher Goals Evaluated

| Make intelligent decisions as workers, consumers, and voters |
| Understand American economy |
| Understand alternative economic systems |
| Learn practical skills (e.g., balance a checkbook) |
| Understand current economic issues |
| Understand basic economic concepts and principles |
**Table 3**  
Maximum Likelihood Estimates Probit Analysis  
Separate Aid Sources*

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<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
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<th>Probability</th>
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Frequencies of actual and predicted outcomes
Predicted outcome has maximum probability.

<table>
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<th>Actual</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>672</td>
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<tr>
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<td>373</td>
<td>286</td>
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*Dependent Variable=TATT; N=059  
Chi-square (15)=675.19  
Significance Level= 32173E-13
## Appendix C

### Table 4
**Maximum Likelihood Estimates Probit Analysis**
**Inservice and DEEP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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Frequencies of actual and predicted outcomes
Predicted outcome has maximum probability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>0</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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*Dependent Variable=TATT; N=1059
Chi-square (12)=750.59
Significance Level=.32173E-13
References


Authors

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FIFTH GRADERS' IDEAS ABOUT HISTORY EXPRESSED BEFORE AND AFTER THEIR INTRODUCTION TO THE SUBJECT

Jere Brophy
Michigan State University

Bruce A. VanSledright
University of Maryland, College Park

Nancy Bredin
Holt, Michigan School District

Abstract
Prior to their first curriculum unit (on history and the work of historians) in a U.S. history course, three classes of fifth graders stated what they knew (or thought was true) about history and what they wanted to learn about it. After the unit, they reported what they had learned. In addition, a stratified sample of ten students was interviewed concerning the details of their thinking about several key subtopics. Following the unit, the students' knowledge and thinking about history had become notably more sophisticated. Even so, certain misconceptions still persisted in some of the students and all of them still had difficulty understanding how they might use historical knowledge in their lives outside of school.

Introduction
Current theory and research on subject-matter teaching emphasize the importance of teaching school subjects for understanding, appreciation, and application, not just knowledge memorization and skills practice. Drawing on neo-Vygotskian theorizing and work on knowledge construction, conceptual change, and situated learning,
educators have been developing methods of teaching school subjects in ways that connect with students' existing knowledge and experience and engage them in actively constructing new knowledge and correcting existing misconceptions. Progress is most evident in mathematics and science, where rich literatures have developed describing what children typically know (or think they know) about the content taught at their respective grade levels. Curriculum developers can then use this information as a basis for developing instruction that both builds on students' existing valid knowledge and confronts and corrects their misconceptions.

The potential for applying similar concepts and methods to curriculum development appears to be at least as great in social studies as in other school subjects, but realization of this potential cannot occur until more is learned about children's knowledge and misconceptions about the social studies content commonly taught at each grade level. The authors have initiated a program of research designed to address this issue by interviewing elementary students before and after each of their social studies units.

**Procedures**

The interviews are constructed in consultation with the students' teachers so that they address not only the major ideas typically emphasized in teaching the topics commonly taught at each grade level but also the key ideas that these particular teachers emphasize in each of their social studies units. The preunit interviews develop information about what students know (or think they know) about a topic via information acquired in earlier grades or through reading or out-of-school experiences. The postunit data show how the students' knowledge and thinking have changed in response to instruction and learning activities.

Fifth graders usually have not been exposed to sustained, chronologically organized instruction in history prior to their fifth-grade U.S. history course. They possess bits and pieces of knowledge about the past (Native Americans, the Pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving, Columbus, presidents and other famous Americans, and smatterings of state history), but they usually have not yet studied systematic, chronological history. Thus, although they are relatively sophisticated learners, fifth graders usually enter their U.S. history course with very little systematic prior knowledge.

Our interviewees were typical in this respect. Their school district's curriculum guidelines and adopted elementary social studies series both followed the expanding communities framework that focuses on the self in kindergarten, the family in first grade, the neighborhood in second grade, the community in third grade, the state
and region in fourth grade, and the United States in fifth grade. The teachers did not always rely heavily on the adopted textbooks and accompanying worksheets and activities suggestions, but they did follow the district guidelines and teach the topics traditionally emphasized within the expanding communities framework.

The interviewees were a stratified sample of fifth graders who attended an elementary school located in a working-class/lower middle-class suburb of Lansing, Michigan. All of the students were white, as were the vast majority of their classmates. The sample included five boys and five girls. Within each gender group there were two high achievers, two average achievers, and one low achiever, based on academic achievement in fourth grade. Because we could interview no more than ten students due to resource limitations, we weighted the sample toward higher achievers in the expectation that this would yield more substantive responses.

Students were interviewed individually for fifteen to thirty minutes in quiet rooms outside of their classrooms. Interview tapes were transcribed for analysis, using pseudonyms to identify the students. The preunit interview was done in the spring of 1990 when the students were still in fourth grade, and the postunit interview was done in the fall, following the first fifth-grade unit on history and the work of historians.

In developing questions for the interviews, we focused on two overlapping sets of ideas: (1) The unit topics and associated key ideas traditionally taught in fifth-grade U.S. history courses, and (2) the major goals and key ideas emphasized by this particular fifth-grade teacher. The teacher's intended goals and content emphases were taken into account in selecting questions to be included in the interview, and her knowledge of what transpired as the unit progressed was included in interpreting the findings.

In this case, the teacher's intended goals and content emphases were well matched to (although they went somewhat beyond) those that typify the fifth-grade textbooks that the leading market-share publishers have offered in recent years. In these texts, the focus is on U.S., rather than global or even more generally North American, history. They offer traditional accounts developed with emphasis on the English colonies, the American Revolution, the establishment and growth of the nation, and the Civil War. It is assumed that this is the students' first systematic history course, so the texts minimize reference to background knowledge and attempt to be coherent in developing initial understandings of this body of information (not always successfully, as Beck & McKeown, 1988, have shown). Many texts begin by introducing students to history as a field of study, seeking to convey basic information about historical inquiry, the process of synthesizing

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accounts from diverse sources, and the interpretive nature of the discipline.

The students' fifth-grade teacher's approach to teaching U.S. history was noteworthy for her use of children's literature and her own storytelling and explanations, rather than a textbook, as the major source of content for students; her emphasis on depth of development of key ideas rather than breadth of coverage in selecting and representing content; her use of several devices designed to help students focus on key ideas and structure their learning around them (e.g., introducing and closing units with KWL exercises; displaying key terms, organized within "people," "places," and "events" categories, on a history bulletin board; and creating, reviewing, and then posting story maps that summarize and connect the key details of important historical episodes); and emphasizing cooperative learning activities and extended writing assignments over worksheets and short-answer tests. Her major social studies content goal for the year was to teach students about the establishment and development of the United States as a nation. In addition to providing information through stories and explanations, this included keeping track of developments by locating them on timelines and maps.

Her first unit was designed to introduce students to history and the work of historians. Key concepts included primary and secondary sources, artifacts (examples from each period), the work of historians, timelines and chronological order, the students' personal histories, and United States history (helping the students to realize that, just as they have histories as individuals, the United States has a history as a country that they would be learning about during the year). Students applied these concepts by developing information about their own personal histories. They interviewed their parents and other relatives, collected artifacts (birth certificates, photos, baby books, newspapers from their birth dates, etc.), and then organized their information by creating a timeline that identified noteworthy events in their lives and illustrated them with documents and artifacts. This direct experience in acting as historians was intended to help students understand the reconstructive and interpretive nature of history as a discipline, the process of tracing developments through time, and the uses of information sources and timelines.

**KWL Findings**

We begin our presentation of findings with the KWL data collected at the beginning and end of the unit. KWL is a technique for helping learners to retrieve relevant background knowledge and learn with metacognitive awareness of purpose and accomplishment (Ogle, 1986). Learners fill out KWL sheets in two steps. As they begin study of
a topic, they write down what they already know (or think they know) about the topic and what they want to learn about it. After completion of the unit, they describe what they learned. For this first unit, the KWL sheet instructed students to tell what they knew about history and what they wanted to learn about it. These KWL data were available for three classes totaling 80 students (all taught U.S. history by the same teacher).

What the Students Knew About History

Table 1 summarizes responses to the first section of the KWL sheet, in which students stated what they knew (or thought they knew) about history. Section A of the table indicates that 75 of the 80 students gave generally acceptable responses defining and/or giving examples of history. Of these 75 students, 20 confined themselves to a general definition, 27 gave both a definition and some examples, and 28 gave only examples. The latter response is less developmentally advanced than responses that include general definitions (Estvan & Estvan, 1959). It was made by 18 boys but only 10 girls. In addition, four boys but only one girl did not know or gave irrelevant or incorrect answers. Thus, most students conveyed a generally accurate sense of what history means, although the girls communicated more accurate knowledge.

The most typical definitions equated history with the past ("History is a part of time--the past, not the present"), sometimes adding examples ("History is like in the past, like Christopher Columbus"). Sometimes this core idea was stated imprecisely ("It is stuff that already has been done"), and sometimes it was elaborated with noteworthy precision ("History means yesterday or back to when dinosaurs lived. History will add on every time a day passes. History means everything that happened in the past").

Section B of Table 1 indicates that only 16 students (20%) confined themselves to unqualified definitions of history as the past or the study of the past. More typically, students qualified their definitions by specifying that history refers to people or events that were particularly important and/or from long ago. Levstik and Pappas (1987) also found that fourth graders tended to distinguish "history" from the past in general by specifying that history refers to important events that happened long ago. These findings indicate that most children enter fifth grade knowing that history is about the past. However, they tend to project a mythic quality to it, viewing it primarily as stories about famous people in the very distant past (Egan, 1989). Most do not yet realize that history also includes the very recent past and the everyday lives of ordinary people.
# Fifth Graders' Ideas About History

## Table 1

What Students Said They Knew About History as They Began Fifth Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. How they defined history</th>
<th>Boys (n=44)</th>
<th>Girls (n=36)</th>
<th>Total (n=80)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gave general definition only</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gave general definition plus examples</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Gave examples only</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Didn't know or gave irrelevant or incorrect answer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| B. Whether they distinguished "history" from the past generally  |             |              |              |
| 1. No qualifications: history as (study of) the past           | 8           | 8            | 16           |
| 2. Time qualification: history as events that happened long ago | 8           | 9            | 17           |
| 3. Importance qualification: history as famous or noteworthy people or events | 11         | 12           | 23           |

| C. The examples they cited                                     |             |              |              |
| 1. Indians/Native Americans                                    | 10          | 8            | 18           |
| 2. George Washington/first president                           | 6           | 9            | 15           |
| 3. Famous people (kings, presidents)                          | 6           | 7            | 13           |
| 4. Wars (unspecified)                                         | 5           | 8            | 13           |
| 5. Pilgrims                                                    | 6           | 4            | 10           |
| 6. Columbus                                                   | 2           | 5            | 7            |
| 7. Particular wars (Civil, WWI, WWII, French and Indian)      | 3           | 3            | 6            |
| 8. Lincoln                                                    | 4           | 1            | 5            |
| 9. How people lived prior to electricity, engine power, etc.   | 1           | 3            | 4            |
Section C of Table 1 lists the more common examples of what history is about. Levstik and Pappas (1987) reported a tendency among fourth graders to cite wars, tragedies, or disasters, but this was less noticeable in our KWL responses. Thirteen students did mention wars (unspecified); six others mentioned particular wars; several mentioned Lincoln's assassination; and individuals mentioned the atomic bomb, Custer, and Hitler. Surprisingly, girls mentioned wars more often than boys did. However, boys were more likely to mention individuals or events associated with wars (Paul Revere, Custer, Hitler, the atomic bomb).

The majority of the responses concerned events in early U.S. history that had been emphasized in social studies units in earlier grades on Native Americans, the first Thanksgiving, pioneer life, or Columbus Day. Also, many of the responses concerned inventions (cars, baseball) or individuals who attained prominence for nonmilitary accomplishments (Betsy Ross, Ben Franklin).

Girls were more likely to mention themes connected with everyday family living or historical people or events of particular relevance to women. Among specific individuals named, Betsy Ross was the only woman--mentioned by three girls but no boys. In addition, three girls but only one boy spoke of history as being about how people lived their everyday lives prior to key inventions; one girl mentioned women getting the right to vote as a key historical event; another girl mentioned the Ingalls family; and another girl mentioned family history as an aspect of history.

Most responses were conventional definitions or lists of examples. The following responses were unusual but worth noting because of what they reveal about the mind sets of fifth graders:

**Boys**

• The Indians didn't have stereos and CD players and stuff like that.

• I know about the name Pontiac, a fort. They were playing a game and they let the Indians in.

• Famous presidents who invented things. (Note conflation of presidents with inventors as categories of famous people.)

**Girls**

• It was a long time ago. The Native Americans had to give up some of their land.
• Long time ago. Cars and trucks and go-carts. People didn't have lots of money.

• History is about America and what happened in the past. It's about George Washington and the way to George Bush.

What the Students Wanted to Learn
Table 2 summarizes students' statements about what they wanted to learn about history. Most students named one or more specific things, although several did not respond and 15 said only that they wanted to learn "everything," "a lot," or "all about" history. Among students who did mention specifics, 21 wanted to know more about wars and 18 more about presidents. Other popular topics were Indians, dates of specified events, how people lived in the past, explorers, and inventors.

Given their limited background knowledge, many students had difficulty answering this question. In addition to the ones who failed to respond or who gave generic "I want to know everything" responses, many students simply mentioned historical topics that they had been exposed to in earlier grades (Indians, Pilgrims, presidents, explorers, inventors), without identifying new topics that they wanted to learn about. Some mentioned only a single, very specific item of information (what year George Washington became president, who sewed the first American flag). The majority of the most interesting and thoughtful ideas are included among the less conventional responses quoted on the next page.

Boys
• How did history start? Why do we have history? Why did they call history history?

• What was the first school ever made and who made it?

• I would like to know more about sunken ships.

• I want to learn more about dinosaurs and Mother Nature.

• History about California. What made the Grand Canyon? When did California become a state?

• When did they put the faces on the mountain and a coin?

• What started the wars? Why did people take prisoners?

• Why did people have war? Why did Hitler have so much power over people?
Girls

- Who was the first man in America? Was there really cave men and dinosaurs? When was history first discovered?

- How people survived when $15.00 was a lot of money. Could they make peace just by talking it out?

- People who lived long ago. Who were the presidents? What kind of things happened? How did they run businesses? How did the people farm?

- I would like to know if you had to do something famous or interesting to be in history or if it is just the way people lived and did things a long time ago. Or both? I'd like to learn about famous people.


- Why there were wars and why people are hostages. Why men had to be in the army. And women can't have jobs.

- Why did they fight at the time? What did the Indians do to the Pilgrims that made them mad? Why they invented the museum.

Most students' interests ran to facts rather than explanations. A few mentioned "why" questions (mostly about war), but none expressed curiosity about how historians gather and interpret information. Most topics were from U.S. history and thus situated within the last four centuries. A few students mentioned prehistorical times or the dawn of history, but none mentioned ancient civilizations, the Greeks or Romans, or any aspect of medieval or religious history.

The findings suggest additional gender differences that complement those already described. The girls tended to mention more generic categories of historical topics and to express more interest in the everyday lives of ordinary people. In contrast, the boys expressed more interest in particular events and in learning about the accomplishments of famous (male) presidents, explorers, and inventors.
What Students Reported Learning

At the completion of the unit, a few students stated that they had learned "all about history" or that history is about topics such as Indians or inventors, but most responded with one or more of the elements summarized in Table 3 (data are given on 76 students, not 80, because four students were absent). Many students responded by looking at the history bulletin board where the key words for the unit had been posted and then copying these words on their KWL sheets, either listing the words alone or adding definitions. This accounts for the high totals in Section A of Table 3. Typical responses resembled the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. General Categories</th>
<th>Boys (n=44)</th>
<th>Girls (n=36)</th>
<th>Total (n=80)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Wars</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Presidents</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Everything/a lot/all about history</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Indians</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dates (of specified events)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How people lived in the past</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Explorers/discoveries</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Inventors/inventions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Pilgrims</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Specific vs. Unspecified Wars and Presidents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Mentions wars in general</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Specifies a particular war</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mentions presidents in general</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Specifies a particular president</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What the Students Reported Learning

At the completion of the unit, a few students stated that they had learned "all about history" or that history is about topics such as Indians or inventors, but most responded with one or more of the elements summarized in Table 3 (data are given on 76 students, not 80, because four students were absent). Many students responded by looking at the history bulletin board where the key words for the unit had been posted and then copying these words on their KWL sheets, either listing the words alone or adding definitions. This accounts for the high totals in Section A of Table 3. Typical responses resembled the following:
Brophy, VanSledright, & Bredin

- I learned about a timeline. I learned what oral history is, interview, history, artifact, archeologist, secondary source, primary source, historian.

- I learned that an artifact is an object from a long time ago. And I learned more about my own history. I also learned that a primary source is a first-hand experience and a secondary source is a second-hand experience to something.

The responses listed in Section B were more spontaneous. Many students mentioned learning about their own personal histories and/or collecting artifacts from their childhoods. Girls were more likely than boys to mention this aspect of the unit, although in general, the boys' and girls' responses to this part of the KWL sheet were much more similar than different. A few responses were noteworthy for their completeness or the quality of their insights:

- I learned that there's a lot more to history than just wars and famous people.

- I learned history is more than what I thought. It can be about you, it can be told in oral form which is out loud or chronological order. It's also about wars, Indians, explorers, presidents. History isn't just famous people because I'm not famous but it can be about famous people.

- I learned many vocabulary words like timeline and artifact. I also know what they mean. I learned about my personal history and dug some neat artifacts. I also got to use a computer which was fun. I also learned about primary and secondary sources. I also learned what a timeline is and how to make one. I had a fun time in social studies this lesson.

- I learned about timelines. I learned that history can bring back memories and things that you did not even know. I learned that history can be fun. I learned more about archeologists. I learned about oral history and primary and secondary sources and I learned about other peoples and artifacts. I also learned that I want to be an archeologist!

- I learned about artifacts, timelines. We learned that artifacts are something that you find from a long time ago like bones, pans, plates, parts of maps, and things like that.
...Fifth Graders' Ideas About History

We made a timeline from the day we were born to 1990. We learned that a primary source is something that you saw and you write about. We learned that a secondary source is when I write about George Washington.

Other responses were less satisfying. Some were humorous, deliberately or otherwise (oral history is "something passed down from the mouth"; oral history is "history told to someone with vocal chords"; "we learned a lot of words that I can't spell;" "I learned that if you don't turn in your work, you will get in trouble"). Several responses indicated confusion in distinguishing the work of historians from the...
work of archeologists or primary from secondary sources ("A primary source is something handed down. A secondary source is something your parents saved for you from when you were a baby"). Finally, a few responses indicated that misconceptions had persisted ("I learned that history is famous people and the way people lived a long time ago").

In summary, most of the students entered fifth grade with vague but generally correct ideas about history and some smatterings of information about Columbus, the first Thanksgiving, various famous Americans, and aspects of Michigan history, but little or no knowledge about history as a discipline and no systematic, chronologically organized knowledge of the details of U.S. history. Because so many students relied so heavily on the posted key words in responding to the "L" part of the KWL exercise, their responses cannot be used with much confidence as measures of how much they learned during this first unit. However, these responses at least suggest that most students had picked up some useful vocabulary, acquired a clearer conception of history as chronologically organized narrative based on a variety of sources and artifacts, and learned that history includes the everyday lives of ordinary people in the recent past.

Interview Findings

We now turn to the findings from the interviewing of the subsample of ten students. Responses will be presented in pairs or groups arranged to contrast the students' entry-level thinking with their thinking after exposure to the unit. Highlights of the findings are shown in Table 4, in which the students are grouped by gender, and within gender by achievement level (see Appendix A).

The high achievers (Jason, Tim, Teri, and Sue) generally spoke succinctly and to the point when they knew or thought they knew an answer but said little or nothing beyond "I don't know" when they did not. In contrast, the average (Mark, Brad, Helen, and Kay) and low achievers (Ned, Rita) tended to be more verbose. Usually, however, their lengthier responses were not qualitatively better than the high achievers' briefer ones. They simply took more words to say essentially the same thing that the high achievers said more economically. These findings may be related to those of Estvan and Estvan (1959), who noted a tendency for children being interviewed about social studies topics to take less time to respond, speak with more facility, and use fewer words, yet produce a greater number of ideas, when talking about familiar rather than unfamiliar topics. A second reason for the lengthier responses of the average and low achievers was that they usually were more willing to speculate if they were not sure of their answers.
Self-Report of What Was Learned

Post-question #1: You recently finished a social studies unit on history. What are the most important things that you learned in that unit?

Even though the interviews were conducted outside of the classroom so that students could not scan the history bulletin board for the posted key words, their answers to this question were very similar to their responses to the "L" section of the KWL sheet; that is, they tended to enumerate things that they had learned, mostly things included in the key word list. The high and average achievers all named several items but the two low achievers only named one item each.

**Brad:** We learned words like historians and artifacts and secondary resources and primary resources and what they mean.

**Sue:** Well, about history and artifacts, things archeologists dug up and inventions and timelines and stuff.

Questions About History and Historians

Pre-question #1: Next year in social studies you will be learning about history. Do you know what history is? (If students do not know or answer incorrectly, prepare them for the next questions by telling them that history is the study of the past--of who were the people who came before us and how they used to live back then.)

Ned made no response and Brad guessed that history dealt with nature or wildlife. The other eight students gave generally correct responses indicating that history concerns people or events in the past.

**Tim:** It's stuff that happened a long time ago that's real good.

**Sue:** It's about what people did for our country a long time ago and the wars and stuff like that.

Of the eight students who responded generally correctly, seven specified that history refers to events that occurred long ago and four specified that history refers to noteworthy people or events.

Post-question #2: How would you define history? What is history? Following the unit, all ten students indicated that history has to do with the past. Also, all ten now included general definitions, not just
examples. Thus, their responses were shorter, yet both more precise and at a higher level of generality (cf. Estvan & Estvan, 1959).

Only three students still said that history refers to events occurring long ago. Furthermore, two others said, in response to probes, that history can refer to any time in the past. No student still specified that history refers to noteworthy people or events. Thus, the students had acquired a more precise notion of history and most had cleared up some prior misconceptions.

Tim: Something that happened in the past (a long time ago?). It could be a second ago.

Sue: Things that happened in the past.

Pre-question #2: What do historians do? (If students do not know or answer incorrectly, prepare them for the next question by telling them that historians study and write about history--that they are the ones who write the history books.)

Six students could not answer this question, one guessed "famous people like George Washington," one said people who teach history, and two said people who study history. Thus, although most of the students were familiar with history, most were not familiar with the term "historian" prior to the unit.

Post-question #4: Who are historians? What do they do?

Seven students gave correct or generally correct answers to this post-question. Of the rest, one knew that historians dealt with the past but confused them with archeologists; one had no response; and one guessed "people that have died in the past." Two of the three students who failed to answer correctly were the two low achievers.

Jason: Historians study history. They study artifacts. (Why? What are they trying to do?) Find out what happened. (Where do they get their information?) From books.

Helen: Historians are the people that study history, not underground. They find the stuff that's left above the ground, like an arrowhead. They look for artifacts and primary sources that they might have left over in the past.

Kay: They read and find out about the past.
Fifth Graders' Ideas About History

*Rita:* They try to put the puzzle back together . . . they take the artifacts and they have more and they try to put them together. One digs and one puts the thing together.

In talking about how historians do their work, four students said that they read and study artifacts; four emphasized physical artifacts and confused historians with archeologists; and the other two didn't know. Two implied misconceptions were that physical artifacts, rather than written or printed materials, are the "stuff" of history and that historians work by reconstructing artifact puzzles rather than by constructing accounts from various (primarily written) sources. The teacher noted that archeology and the concept of artifacts appeal to students because of their concreteness—students can understand digging and looking for things. Also, the artifacts that they bring in for their personal history assignment tend to be physical artifacts such as baby toys and blankets, not books. Even so, she was surprised that the students had not acquired clearer notions of how historians work and how this differs from the work of archeologists. She was confident that these confusions would clear up, however, because more would be said about historians and their work as the school year progressed.

The students' tendencies to confuse historians and archeologists might have been exaggerated by the fact that the following question preceded the question about historians in the postunit interviews.

*Post-question #3: Who are archeologists? What do they do?*

All ten students stated that archeologists dig for things that tell us about the past. Four specified that archeologists look for artifacts from long ago. All five of the boys, but only one of the girls, used technical terms (artifacts, fossils) to describe the material dug up by archeologists.

*Ned:* They're scientists and they study fossils and stuff they dig up from the ground.

*Sue:* People who find things from a long long time ago and they dig them up and look at them and see how long ago they were.

*Pre-question #3: How do you think historians do their work—how do they find out about what happened and decide what to write?*

Nine students (all but Ned) responded to this question. Their answers were generally sensible but frequently confused historians with archeologists. The higher achievers tended to emphasize interviewing
and library research, whereas the lower achievers tended to emphasize physical artifacts and archeological digs.

Jason: Go looking for it where early people were. (Where would they look?) Library. Think about it and write what they think.

Sue: Maybe people back then wrote books about these people that saved their country or something, so they read some of the stuff that the people wrote and then wrote it in a book with a whole bunch of other people.

These answers further indicate that the students did not know much about historians and tended to picture them working by digging up physical artifacts rather than by interviewing witnesses or reading written records. Five students mentioned books as written records, but none mentioned newspapers or diaries. The girls generally had more to say than the boys, typically mentioning at least two information sources (usually living interviewees, books, or physical artifacts).

Post-question #5: How do historians do their work--how do they find out about what happened and decide what to write?

All but Rita responded to this question. The students now showed much less confusion between historians and archeologists. Eight indicated that historians get information from written sources, four mentioned interviewing living witnesses, and only two mentioned archeological evidence. Answers to this question were briefer than in the preunit interviews, and differences by achievement level or gender no longer were evident.

Jason: They could look at the books.

Sue: Maybe things they dug up or things they studied from other people.

Although the students now distinguished more clearly between archeologists and historians, they still tended to picture historians as interviewing people and working from primary sources more than they really do. They were vague about the sources that historians would use to learn about what occurred prior to the 20th century. Although eight students mentioned books and two mentioned newspapers, none mentioned diaries, letters, public records, or other written sources of information. Perhaps they did not yet realize how long written records
have existed or the variety of such records that are available to historians.

Questions About Conflicting Interpretations

On both sets of interviews, the students were asked about how historians might resolve disputes and how they (the students themselves) might decide what to believe when they encountered conflicting historical accounts. Unsurprisingly, given their vagueness about how historians gather information, the students had difficulty with these questions.

Pre-question #4: Sometimes historians disagree about what happened in the past, why it happened, or what it all means. When they disagree, how can they decide what is right?

Jason: People that wrote it, they look at it, they might not have enough equipment so then the person reads it with all the equipment, they might think, "We have more equipment so we can think better."

Kay: They go exploring, both of them, and show each other what their proof is and see which one's right, maybe.

Rita: They'd talk to other scientists and try to see how they think and they'd try to work it out...like they'd take it to a judge or something, a judge that's higher than these scientists but that's a scientist judge. Someone that all of them trust and they'd know that he'd tell the truth...he'd listen to both sides and try to work it out.

Most of the students appeared to believe, at least implicitly, that one could arrive at a "right answer." In part, this was because they were thinking about "existence proofs" (such as proving that King Arthur actually existed) rather than about more subtle matters of interpretation of the causes or meanings of known events. This again indicates some confusion of history with archeology, as well as a lack of knowledge about what historians try to do and how they work.

The students' expectation that a right answer could be reached also implied faith either in an authority figure who knows everything about the subject or in science and scientific methods (Note Jason's faith in better scientific equipment to provide better answers or at least help one to think better). Related beliefs appeared in the students' notions about archeology. For example, they "knew" that scientists can use "machines" to date artifacts, even though they knew nothing about how this process works. The teacher reported that these students are
"steeped in technology"—that they are familiar with and accepting of the notion that "if there's a problem, get better machines to fix it." She added that students are still trusting of adults at this age. Given that they believe that adults control machines, she did not find it surprising that the students would look to a benevolent authority figure or a trustworthy machine for resolution of conflicting historical interpretations.

Rita's response to this question exemplifies the tendency for certain students (especially Helen and Rita) to construct detailed narratives when answering some of our questions. These narratives usually mixed accurate elements with naive misconceptions, confluences (e.g., of history with archeology), or imaginative but fanciful elaborations.2

Post-question #6: Sometimes historians disagree about what happened in the past, why it happened, or what it all means. When they disagree, how can they decide what is right?

This question produced a variety of responses, most of them correct or at least sensible. One student could not respond and one still spoke of taking the matter to an authority figure for resolution. The rest, however, showed more awareness of the need for dialogue, reasoning, and interpretation, as well as more recognition that often there is no definitive right answer to be achieved. Four spoke of getting more or better information, one spoke of using some kind of debate or reasoning process to develop a sensible interpretation, and three mentioned attempts to reach an answer through voting or some form of compromise. These responses were more sophisticated than those that still assumed a definitive right answer but less sophisticated than responses that recognized room for differing interpretations.

Jason: They write down what they think is right.

Kay: They can look it up or just prove it by going where you found it, the information. If you found something in a different state you could maybe take people there and prove it.

Rita: They just put it together and then they...just put it together. Some historians have different ideas.

Pre-question #5: What about you--what if you were reading about something in history that you were interested in and found that different sources disagreed? How could you decide what to believe?
As with Pre-question #4, the students' answers here were sensible but tentative. They included looking it up in a definitive source (implying a right answer), splitting the difference to reach a ballpark estimate, trying to decide for oneself what makes the most sense, looking for agreement among the majority of sources, or asking a parent or teacher.

*Brad:* I could look in other books or I could decide by myself. (How?) I'd see what I think would be most real or believable.

*Sue:* I'd either ask my teacher or ask a person who studies history and stuff and back when it happened.

*Kay:* Well, maybe the thing that made more sense or the book that explained more about it or you could ask somebody who really knew.

Seven students spoke of trying to decide for themselves after gathering additional evidence and five spoke (in addition or instead) of consulting an authority (an encyclopedia or a parent or teacher) to get "the" answer. The boys mentioned books but not people as information resources, but four of the five girls spoke of asking a parent, a teacher, or "somebody who really knew." This may be a manifestation of more general gender differences in cognitive styles and preferences for individual versus social problem-solving contexts. In addition, the teacher interpreted it as part of a general tendency for girls to talk more about school at home than boys do.

*Post-question #7: What about you--what if you were reading about something in history that you were interested in and found that different sources disagreed? How could you decide what to believe?*

Responses to this question were just as varied as they were prior to the unit and not much more confident. However, more students now realized that you cannot necessarily find a definitive source or reach final agreement on everything. Also, none of them now mentioned asking parents or teachers, although several mentioned finding more definitive reference sources or living witnesses.

*Brad:* I'd ask a survey. I'd put it in a newspaper or something and I'd ask a lot more people and I'd see what it comes to and if I got more of one than the other, I'd go with that.
Sue: I’d find a few more and see what they say about it. (Where would you get this information?) You could probably find it in the library or you could ask someone.

Responses to Post-questions #6 and #7 indicated that the students had become more sophisticated about historical sources but remained understandably unsure about what they would personally do to resolve uncertainty when they encountered conflicting accounts. This suggests limits to the feasibility of trying to use original sources with elementary students in ways that attempt to get them to engage in sophisticated historical reasoning. Students would need information about some of the decision rules that historians use in estimating the credibility of conflicting accounts, followed by application activities using documents that had been selected with the students' levels of background knowledge and cognitive development in mind.

Questions About Personal History and the Country's History

Pre-question #6: Do you have your own personal history or life history? When does it begin? (What was the first day of your life history?)

Tim and Rita immediately answered "yes" to this question and stated that their personal history began on the day that they were born. The other eight students initially said "no" or were unsure. However, all but Helen (who continued to be confused by her perception that history is about ancient events) eventually gave at least partly correct responses following probing. Several students seemed thrown by the notion of someone writing a history of them, and Jason initially misunderstood the question to be, "Has your personal life history been written?"

Jason: No. I just have my work that my mom saves. (Stuff from school?) Yeah. (That's your life history?) Yes. (When do you think it first started?) When I was born.

Sue: No. (You don't? Why do you say no?) I don't know. (If somebody wanted to write a history of Sue, could they write one?) I don't know. (Is there anything to write?) I'm a swimmer. (If somebody was going to write your history, when would it begin?) Probably last year. (How come last year?) That's when I started really doing stuff and getting into sports. (If somebody wanted to write your total, complete history, though, even if it wasn't interesting, where would they start?) Probably when I was born.
Helen: What do you mean by that? (I'll put it this way. Do you have a life history?) I'm not really into that much. I like history, but it's not my life. (Let me see if I can rephrase that. You're how old?) Ten. (So from ten years ago until now, there's all of that time. Is that like history, a history of your life?) I wouldn't say so. That's ten years. History's gotta be more than that.

Three of the four students who answered Pre-question #1 by specifying that history referred to noteworthy events in the past had difficulty with Pre-question #6. Kay initially denied that she had a personal history because she didn't think that anything in her life was noteworthy enough to qualify as history, and Helen maintained this perception even after several probes. Sue initially suggested that a history of her life would begin not on her birthday but when she started accumulating sports accomplishments.

Helen's "I like history, but it's not my life" is our favorite quote from these interviews. We are not sure whether this was an ambiguously worded statement of the idea that nothing in her life as yet has been significant enough to qualify as history or, as we prefer to believe, it was a precocious expression of *fin de siecle* ennui!

Post-question #8: Do you have your own personal life history? When did it begin?

Most of the earlier confusion had disappeared by the postunit interviews. Eight students immediately answered "Yes" when asked if they had a personal life history and went on to note that it began on the day they were born. Jason was still confused in the same way that he was in the preunit interview. Teri remained confused both about the notion of herself as a subject of history and about whether such history would begin at birth or would only chronicle noteworthy accomplishments. It is interesting that the only two students still partly confused about this question were high achievers.

Jason: No. (Why don't you have your own personal life history?) I don't really like to write. (You were born ten or eleven years ago and since you were born up until right now, is kind of like your history. So when did it begin for you?) Ten years ago.

Teri: No. (You don't have anything that went on for you in the past?) No. (When did your life history begin?) When I
made the school spelling bee. (How about when you were born?) I guess so.

Sue: Yes, in 1980.

Helen: Yes. (When did it begin?) 1980 when I was born.

Pre-question #7: What about our country--does the United States have a history? When does that history begin? (Did the United States have a birthday--a day that was its first day as a country? When was that?)

In contrast to their answers to Pre-question #6 concerning their personal histories, all of the students knew that the country has a history. Five stated and two others implied what would ordinarily be considered the correct response (at least from the Eurocentric point of view)--that the country's history started when the New World was discovered by Europeans. Two were confused or didn't know, and one said "when the world was born." From another point of view, the latter is also correct.

Tim: Yeah. (OK, when does that history begin?) When it was founded, when people discovered it. (Does the country have a birthday?) Yeah. (Do you know what day it was?) No. (What happened that day that made it a country?) The Constitution...it's not the Constitution. Let me think. I think the British and the English battled over it and the English won...it was the English colonies and then it turned into the United States.

Teri: I don't know...a long time ago...I think it was in the 1700s or something like that. (Does the country have a birthday?) Yeah, but I don't know when it is. (Do you know what happened that made it a country?) I guess it was when there was some people and I can't remember what country it was called but they were trying to find a shorter way to China so they went a different way instead and they found America.

Helen: Yes ((Does it have a birthday?) Yes it does. On Columbus Day. (Tell me a little bit about Columbus and why we say that.) People say that Columbus first landed in America and named it but really what I think is another person, I can't remember his name, he found it first...I think
he was a pirate or something and he sailed to America and named it that. After his name. It had American in it...

Surprisingly, no one mentioned the Fourth of July as the nation's birthday. Elementary students learn about Columbus Day, Thanksgiving, and other holidays, but apparently July 4th is not included among these holiday units because it occurs in the summer. In response to the birthday question, five students did not know, two said when the Constitution was signed, two said when the land was discovered (counting Helen's "Columbus Day" response here), and one said Earth Day. Although the Fourth of July is traditionally called the nation's birthday, the "discovery of the land" and "signing of the Constitution" responses are just as valid, if not more so, from other perspectives.

Several answers displayed bits and pieces of (not always correct) history that the students picked up elsewhere. Mark and Teri knew that the land was discovered by people looking for a shorter way to China, but Mark thought that they were French. Tim knew that there was a war (although he thought that the English defeated the British) and that the English colonies turned into the United States. Helen knew (from watching an episode of the "Chipmunks" cartoon show) that Columbus was not the first to discover America and that America was named after Amerigo, but she thought that Amerigo was "a pirate or something" who got here two years before Columbus. In general, the students knew that the country was part of a new world discovered by Europeans, but not much else.

The students' vagueness and confusion about the establishment of the United States as a nation reflect the trends that McKeown and Beck (1990) found in fifth graders who had studied U.S. history through the colonial unit but had not yet studied the Revolution. These fifth graders were vague about the colonies, their relationship with England, and how they became an independent country. If they mentioned that a war was involved, they were likely to be confused about the combatants and to conflate elements of the Revolutionary War with elements of other wars, especially the French and Indian War. They also did not know much about the Declaration of Independence or the role of the concept of freedom in motivating and explaining the Revolution.

Post-question #9: Did the United States have a birthday--a day that was its first day as a country?
All students immediately answered yes and went on to name July 4th, either immediately or after probing. Thus, whereas no student mentioned July 4th in response to Pre-question #7, all of them supplied the conventional response concerning the country's birthday during the postunit interviews.

Although students now knew the July 4th date, they did not know the year of the Declaration of Independence. Of seven students specifically asked, four did not know and the others guessed 150 years ago, 1792 and 1942.

Post-question #10: Do you know how it got to be a country? (Probe)

The teacher had introduced a U.S. history timeline that stretched across the front of her classroom and made brief mention of the key events involved in establishing the country as an independent nation, but she had not conducted sustained instruction on the American Revolution during her initial unit. Consequently, the students' answers to Post-question #10 were almost as varied as, and only somewhat more informed than, their answers to Pre-question #7.

Jason: That's the day we became free from England. (Why did we become free on that day? What had been going on?) They were bossing us around so we decided to fight them. (Who's we?) The Americans. (What happened?) We won.

Tim: It was when we wrote the Constitution. (What was that all about?) We fought off the English. (Why?) They were like invading. They wanted our country. (Who won?) We won. (Why were the English trying to boss us around?) They wanted to get to China and they found this and tried to take over.

Mark: I don't really know. (What were we before this birthday?) We were a few states and then it kept on growing. (Why do we call it Independence Day?) Because the Declaration of Independence was signed. (From whom?) I'm not sure but it might be the people who signed it.

Brad: There was only a little bit of the United States and most people lived on the east coast. The little bit was the U.S. and another part of it in the center, I forgot what that was called and it was divided by the Mississippi River. I think one of them was called the English Channel. (Why do we have Independence Day?) It's the first day America became America after they won the war to win all the
land. (Who were the wars fought with?) The British. We were kind of being cheated. Once we won it, all of our land, that's how the United States became the United States on the Fourth of July.

**Ned:** I don't know. (How did we get to be this country? What were we before our birthday?) Settlers. (Who was in charge?) Themselves. (What happened on July 4?) They had a War of Independence.

**Sue:** The Europeans were looking for a shorter way to China and they thought they'd just go the other way and find a shorter way. (Did people live here?) Yes. (How did it become the United States?) I don't know. (We call Fourth of July Independence Day. Why?) Everyone celebrates being free. (Free from whom?) Slavery.

**Helen:** (The United States became a country in 1776. What was it before that?) Just an island. Columbus came in 1492. (Actually Columbus came in 1492). I get them mixed up. (What was going on in this country before Independence Day?) A war. World War I. I think it was the British and the French fighting. The English and Americans fought and the Americans won. The colonists lost because they had a lot of people that were slaving but they got more slaves than they had and all of them got together and they beat the colonists.

**Kay:** We had a war I think. It was World War I, I think. (Actually, we called it the Revolutionary War. We call it Independence Day. Independence from what?) I don't know. (What were we before Independence Day?) Just a discovered piece of land. (Who were the Americans fighting?) The French. I'm not sure. (Do you know who was in charge of this country?) The Indians.

**Rita:** (Why did the United States have a birthday?) So it could become a state. (What was it before that?) It was just there. (Who was in charge?) Nobody. They did what they wanted to do. (What happened on the birthday?) It became a state and the government decided laws and stuff.

Only Jason, Mark, and Ned provided responses that were both substantively correct and free of incorrect elements. Brad had the correct general idea but thought that the United States won all of its
land in the original Revolutionary War. He also located the English Channel somewhere in America. Tim thought that the war was between English invaders and Native Americans who were already living on the land when the English discovered it. The girls' responses were vague or confused. Rita recognized the implications of formation of government and laws but confused nation with state and really did not know who was here or what was happening at the time. Sue knew about Europeans discovering America but not much else. Kay knew that independence had been achieved through a war but not who fought it or what was involved. Helen made some correct statements (the United States became a country in 1776, the English and Americans fought and the Americans won) but embedded these in a rambling and mostly incorrect explanation that included refutations of the parts that were correct. Teri could not respond to this question.

One consistent gender difference in children's literary interests is that boys are more interested than girls in stories of conflict and war. Perhaps this is why the boys were better informed than the girls about the Revolutionary War. We are not sure, however, why this difference appeared so clearly in responses to Post-question #10 but not in responses to Pre-question #7. The questions were phrased differently, and perhaps Post-question #10 was phrased in ways that "pulled" more war content than Pre-question #7. Or perhaps the boys simply noted and remembered more of this information from the little bit that the teacher said about it during the first unit.

Most students seemed vague or confused about who the Americans were. Ned knew that they were settlers and Brad and Rita appeared to have generally correct ideas. With the others it is harder to say, except for Kay, who said that they were Indians. Confusion with information picked up in fourth-grade units on Michigan history may explain some of these responses. The influence of residuals from early holiday units and especially from fourth-grade Michigan history units could be seen throughout the interviews.

Questions About Historical Artifacts and Sources

Questions in the preunit and postunit interviews were not parallel in this section because students had not been exposed to the terms "artifacts" or "primary and secondary sources" prior to the unit. We wanted to ask about these concepts, however, because they are important in understanding the work of historians and because the teacher emphasized them. Prior to the unit, the students were shown an artifact (an old candle holder with a carrying handle) and asked what it was and what it might tell us about the people who used it. They also were shown a timeline (marking key events in a person's life and in world affairs between 1950 and 1985) to see if they would understand its
function and be able to read it correctly. Following the unit, they were asked about artifacts and about primary and secondary sources.

Pre-question #8: (Show candle holder). Do you know what this is? (Explain or clarify for student as necessary.) What does this tell us about the people who used it?

All 10 students immediately identified the artifact as a candle holder and then went on (in response to probing) to explain that people needed these to carry candles around with them in the days before electric lighting.

Tim: Candle holder, candle, lantern...they took it with them so they could see where they were going...because if it was dark they couldn't see. They didn't have electricity back then.

Rita: A candle holder...In the olden days, they didn't have electricity. They were smart but they weren't as smart as us because we can learn more things because we have computers and stuff. They didn't have electricity so they had to make something so they could see in the dark so they made this.

Post-question #12: What are artifacts? (Probe for definition or examples)

All 10 students indicated that artifacts are physical objects that can be used to infer conclusions about the people who used them. Besides the items mentioned in the following response excerpts, examples included bones, old books, baby cards, and statues or pieces of buildings from long ago.

Tim: Something that was part of history and dug up. We had to bring artifacts like a blanket when we were little. Stuff like that.

Brad: They are things that were at the scene like an arrowhead that could be something that was at the war. It was at the war and it's an artifact. It's something that was at the place at the time.

Helen: Something you can hold in your hand, something I had from 1980 that I could bring in to show somebody. It
would be like the bracelet that has your name. It's proof that I was born on a certain day.

Only three students specified that artifacts are dug up from under the ground, indicating that most of them now realized that most artifacts never were underground in the first place.

*Post-question #13: What can artifacts tell us about the people who used them?*

Three students could not answer; the other seven said that artifacts can show us that particular people existed and tell us something about how they lived. A few recognized that the meanings or uses of artifacts must be interpreted.

*Jason:* What they used, how they lived.

*Helen:* Depends on what it is. Like an arrowhead. It tells us that they had arrows for weapons and it might even tell you how long ago they were alive.

*Kay:* It tells us what they liked and what they did.

*Post-question #11: Historians talk about primary and secondary sources. Is it better to have information from primary sources or secondary sources? Why?*

Eight students said primary sources; Jason and Ned said secondary. Ned could not respond to follow-up probing, but Jason provided an interesting rationale: Secondary sources are better because the information is written down (presumably he thought that primary sources were all oral). Ironically, Tim gave the opposite rationale for favoring primary sources, observing that "people could just write down anything."

Of the eight students who favored primary sources, only four unambiguously indicated that a first-hand observer is preferable to a second or third-hand source. Helen had this same general idea, but she thought of a primary source as a quote from an observer that is printed in a newspaper and a secondary source as just a rumor.

*Tim:* Primary, because it's like somebody told it to you instead of writing it down. (Why is that better?) People could just write down anything ... I don't know. (Does it have anything to do with whether people were there or not?) Yeah, sometimes people have seen it and there's
proof that they've seen it, like pictures and drawings. (Can you tell me the difference between primary and secondary?) One is written down or drawn and one is like a picture or something that proves that it happened.

Mark: Primary. Primary source comes from someone or something that was there and secondary source might be like a newspaper that just heard about it. They just wrote something about it.

Brad: Primary source...a primary source was at the scene so it would know specifically what happened.

Teri: Primary because secondary might exaggerate and make up things. (What's a primary source?) It's true and whoever was telling it was there.

Sue: Primary. Primary is first-hand account on what happened. Secondary source is like reading it in the newspaper.

Helen: Primary source. I don't know what a secondary source is. (What do you think a primary source is?) Like a newspaper telling about something, the people that were there and they could put it in the newspaper and tell what actually happened. (What is a secondary source?) You heard about it. You weren't there. It's like a rumor. You heard it from somebody else.

Kay: A primary source. A primary source is something that was from the past. You could learn more about that object or thing that's from the past than just reading a book that you don't even know if it's right. (Can you give me an example of a primary source?) Like a journal from a president. (Journals aren't secondary sources, are they?) No. A secondary source is something written right now.

Rita: Primary source...because it's first-hand.

The students had picked up the idea that some sources are more credible than others. However, only four gave precisely correct definitions. Tim, Helen, and Kay gave confused or contradictory responses. Tim initially said that people could write "anything" down, implying that verbal reports are accurate but written reports are not. Later he shifted to the idea that a secondary source is either written or
drawn (but constructed by a person and thus open to bias or distortion), whereas a picture or artifact is objective proof. Helen gave a newspaper report as an example of a primary source and a verbal report (albeit one from a person who was just passing on what he or she had heard rather than seen directly) as an example of a secondary source. Kay defined a primary source as something contemporary from the time involved and a secondary source as something written in the present about the past.

Looking back, the students were clearer about artifacts than about primary versus secondary sources. This was part of the larger pattern of being clearer about the work of archeologists than about the work of historians. Also, the teacher noted that she showed a number of artifacts and had students bring in artifacts for their personal history assignment, whereas she said less in this initial unit about primary and secondary sources. She reported that artifacts are concrete and appeal to the students' sense of wonder, whereas primary and secondary sources are more like abstract definitions that the students have to learn as vocabulary words.

Pre-question #9: (Show timeline illustration)...This is a kind of illustration used in teaching history. Do you know what it is called? (If necessary, give the name timeline. Then ask: What information does a timeline give?)

None of the students had any trouble reading the timeline or understanding its illustrative function, although four called it a timeline, three a scale, one a lifeline, one a history line, and one a graph. All three students who called the timeline a "scale" were girls.

Several students mentioned prior experience with timelines at school, although in reading rather than in social studies. A teacher had introduced timelines as a way to help them keep track of events in reading stories.

Ned: A graph...they keep track of how history goes and stuff. (How can you tell?) Cause it's 1950 to 1985.

Kay: A history line or...I remember this. We did this in reading. (It's called a timeline. It could have been called a history line too. What kind of information does a timeline give you?) It tells you parts of a year or parts of the time until it goes on with your life and tells you what happens in each year, maybe. It tells what happened.

Questions About the Value of Learning History

In both interviews, students were asked why they thought history was taught in schools and how it might help them in life
outside of school. Most of them found it difficult to respond to both questions on both occasions.

Pre-question #10: Why do you think they teach history in school—why do they think you should study the past?

The students didn't know much about history yet and so were grasping at straws here. Eight said that history is taught "so you will know what happened in the past," without saying much if anything about why this might be important to know. One suggested that you might need the information for school, and three that you might need it so you would not be embarrassed if someone asked you for it. Two thought that learning about history might be good preparation for jobs, but when probed about such jobs, could mention only being a history teacher or a historian.

Tim: So you'll know more about yourself.

Brad: So we could learn about what happened...because if you didn't know what happened in history, it'd be the same thing as not knowing what would happen now. You'd have to know what happened in history to know what would happen in the future.

Sue: So you the children can know about the important people back then and what they did for our country and maybe how famous they were because they were a president or something. (Why is it important to know that?) Because if somebody comes up and asks you what's the first president, you want to tell them and you would want to know. (Why would you want to know?) Because I'm sure that those people that were important back then would want people to know now what they did for people.

Kay: So you know how the people in the past, what they did, like they didn't have electricity or heat or anything ... so you might know a little bit more about before you were born or before your parents were born and it tells us about a long time ago that you didn't know about and told what you used.

Four students implied more general reasons for learning history than simply acquiring the specific knowledge taught. Brad suggested that it would help you to understand current events and predict the future, and Tim stated that it would help you to know more about
Brophy, VanSledright, & Bredin

yourself. Helen and Kay implied this same idea in stating that it would be helpful to know about the similarities and differences between your life now and your ancestors' lives in the past. Also, Sue's last idea is interesting and touching: People who did great things in the past would want modern people to remember and honor them for it, and we should.

Post-question #14: Why is history taught in school--why do they think you should study the past?

Even on this Post-question, most students still talked only about learning the specific information without giving good reasons why. Four basically said, "They teach it so you will know it," two spoke of learning it in order to get good grades at school, one to get a job as a historian, and one to avoid embarrassment if people ask you historical questions.

Tim: I don't know.

Brad: If you know more about the past you can probably project something about what's going to happen in the future because way back in 1950 they didn't have a lot of electricity and computers and as they grow they gain more and in the year 2,000 they're going to have a lot more computers and machines that can do more things.

Sue: So if you're digging somewhere and you find something, you might want to know what it is. (Any other reasons?) I don't know.

Kay: So you know more about your past and it tells you about the people who fought wars. Because you know stuff about your life or your timeline. (How does it help you?) It just tells you what your relatives did.

Many of these answers were disappointing regressions from answers to Pre-question #10. Brad still talked about the value of historical knowledge for projecting into the future, and Kay at least hinted about knowing the past as contributing to self-knowledge; however, Tim now said that he didn't know, and Helen spoke only about passing tests in school. The only new idea was Sue's notion that historical knowledge might help you to recognize artifacts that you discovered on your own.

The teacher did not place much emphasis on the value of learning history in her initial unit, so we did not expect responses to Post-
question #14 to be strikingly better than responses to Pre-question #10. Regressions were not expected, however. They are doubly troubling because the teacher is notable for her projection of enthusiasm for history and her attempts to make it interesting for the students. Perhaps there is an inevitable loss of intrinsic interest in an area of knowledge once students begin to study it as a school subject.

Pre-question #11: How might learning about history help you in life outside of school, either now or in the future?

Students were thrown even more by this preunit question than the previous one. Four could not respond even after probing. Three suggested that history knowledge might help you in a job, at school, or when others asked you questions. Just three students identified more specific reasons for studying history. Brad and Tim gave general knowledge/cultural literacy responses, suggesting that knowing about the past might help you to understand or learn better today. Sue suggested that studying the past might help you to recognize weaknesses or injustices that could be corrected by passing new laws.

Tim: If you were reading a book or something and you heard of this one guy, you might know about him.

Brad: I don't know...might help you know how you got here and how everything else got here.

Sue: Cause maybe if someone wanted something back then, maybe you could help them with doing it today. Maybe it was easier...if someone wanted a law in the country and it's still not here now, then maybe someone could carry it on and ask the people to make a law about that...People that were important back then may have done something for our country like slaves, there are not slaves anymore, so somebody might have wanted the people not to be slaves so now there's no slaves.

Taken together, the students' responses to Pre-questions #10 and 11 indicated that most of them found history interesting and were looking forward to learning about it but had not yet come to understand that historical knowledge could give one perspective on personal identity or be useful in living one's everyday life or thinking critically as a citizen. The typical purview was "I don't know why we study it, but it must be important."
Post-question #15: How might learning about history help you in life outside of school, either now or in the future?

Ned, Teri, and Rita could not respond to this postquestion, and the other seven students once again had trouble identifying any uses for history outside of school.

Jason: Your kids. (What do you mean?) If they had a test to study for, you could help them. (What other reasons?) A job ...a teacher.

Mark: Like if you went to some museum and you saw something and you might wonder what it was and if you knew, you'd know and wouldn't have to keep on looking for it. (How else?) Maybe for in high school if you had a test on it.

Brad: If I know about history I can think of things and say, "This was a couple of years after I was born, so it's about eight years old." That part I studied in history and it was here, history can help you know things and if you see things you know what it is.

Sue: Jobs. If you got a job as a historian and you didn't know anything about history, then...if people didn't know what history was, you could tell them what it meant.

Helen: If you had a question or if you found an actual artifact you could know that this arrowhead was from the Native Americans and you know what the Native Americans were. (How would it help you to know all that?) I don't really know.

Kay: I don't know. Some people think it's real interesting to know about their lifetime and they look it up and stuff. Another thing might be making something for somebody and you might want to make a timeline.

Mark, Brad, and Helen gave cultural literacy responses indicating that knowledge learned in school would help you to recognize and understand things encountered elsewhere (although in two cases the examples given were archeological artifacts). Brad and Kay saw at least interest value in knowing about important historical events that were linked to events in their own lifetimes. In a child-like
way, they may have been groping with concepts such as identity or situating oneself in time and place.

Discussion

Data for this study came from students attending a middle-income suburban school in the midwest that serves a predominantly Anglo-American population, and only ten students were interviewed in depth. Therefore, caution should be observed in generalizing the findings. Nevertheless, the community's socioeconomic status indicators and the school's adoption of conventional social studies curriculum guidelines and materials (following the expanding communities model) make these students representative of a great many incoming fifth graders in contemporary American schools.

The students' responses communicated an interest in history and possession of bits and pieces of historical information. They had well-organized and mostly correct ideas about differences in the conditions of everyday life between the "olden days" and the present, although most were vague about the reasons for these differences. Rather than talking about industrialization of the economy and accumulation and diffusion of inventions and cultural knowledge, they spoke of modern people being smarter or richer than their ancestors. Most of them viewed history as a collection of facts that might be interesting to know rather than as a subject for systematic study or personal reflection. Except for the few who had begun to wonder why people go to war or do some of the things that they do during wars, the students had not yet begun to appreciate the potential of history for developing personal wisdom or insight into the human condition.

Most of the students entered fifth grade knowing that history has to do with the past, although many harbored the misconceptions that history is limited to the exploits of famous or important people or to events that occurred long ago. Partly for this reason, some had trouble appreciating the notion that they themselves have personal histories. The students did not know much about how historians work, tending to confuse them with archeologists and to picture them as working with excavated artifacts rather than written documents.

Many of the students thought of history as an exact science that would establish facts unequivocally. They did not appreciate the degree to which history is interpretive, and they had difficulty imagining how either historians or they themselves might attempt to resolve conflicting accounts. They had generally accurate information about life in the "olden days" before electricity and engine power, but only vague notions of the timelines involved. They knew that the country had a history but did not know much about it. Most were at a
loss when asked why they study history or how history might help them in their lives outside of school.

After they experienced the introductory unit on history and the work of historians, their knowledge and thinking about history had become notably more sophisticated. Most now understood that the study of history encompasses everything about the past, including the everyday lives of ordinary people in the recent past. They knew that they themselves had a personal history, having portrayed key events in their lives along a timeline. They were less prone to confuse historians with archeologists, as well as more aware of the range of sources that historians use to develop their interpretations. Whereas none of the students named July 4th as the nation's birthday prior to the unit, all of them did so following the unit (although none of them correctly identified the year in which the Declaration of Independence was signed).

Along with these indications of learning, the data included findings that provide cause for concern. The students failed to generate clear ideas about why they were learning history or how such learning might help them in their lives outside of school, and certain confusions or misconceptions persisted in some students despite the instruction they had received. Some still believed that history refers exclusively to events that occurred long ago, confused archeologists with historians, failed to appreciate that history is interpretive, or could not distinguish primary from secondary sources adequately.

The data suggest the need for teachers to help their students to appreciate the value of history as a subject of study. In particular, we recommend stressing two advantages to historical study that did not even occur to most of these students. First, although it also has a social science dimension, history is one of the humanities and thus is worthy of study as such: It can enhance one's quality of life. Learning about and reflecting on history can enhance one's sense of identity by helping one to "place oneself" within the broad sweep of human experience. Learning in this area can be powerful for individuals of all ages, but especially children who still have a strong potential for experiencing awe and wonder at aspects of the human condition that they become aware of for the first time. They also can learn to appreciate the history that is all around them and to enjoy reading about history and visiting historical sites.

A second major advantage to studying history is its value as civic education. A good working knowledge of history will include a great deal of information about how individuals and nations have handled various decision-making situations that recur periodically because they are part of the human condition. Armed with knowledge about the probable trade-offs involved in various courses of action (based in part on knowledge about the outcomes that these courses of action have led
Fifth Graders' Ideas About History

to in the past), students will be better prepared to make good personal, social, and civic decisions.

If students are to gain the benefits of these two potential advantages of studying history, they will need to learn to appreciate history's interpretive nature. This is a relatively sophisticated concept that the students we interviewed had difficulty understanding. However, we believe that they can learn to understand it, at least at their level of cognitive development. Like all humans, children constantly interpret the events of their lives as they attempt to make sense of them. This includes historical events that they encounter in learning about the past in the classroom. Children might be made more appreciative of the interpretive nature of history through activities that engage them in historical interpretation.

For example, after studying information about history and what historians do, children might be asked to write accounts of the previous day's lesson and then share those accounts publicly. Differences in perspective, emphasis, and even ostensible facts would begin to emerge as various accounts accumulated, providing opportunities to discuss what is involved in interpreting events. Related concepts such as bias, distortion, or primary and secondary sources could be introduced in the process of noting and seeking to resolve discrepancies. The teacher could connect this process with accounts of how historians do their work, the difficulties they encounter with conflicting interpretations, and the decisions they must make in determining what to include in their accounts and how to check their accuracy. Throughout the rest of the year, the notion of interpretation (the students', the teacher's, and the historian's) could be interwoven as a consistent theme of historical study.

In this manner, students would begin to develop critical thinking abilities and a sense of reflection about their own storytelling and that of others. This developing reflective sense would connect with students' developing sense of the processes involved in making decisions about personal and civic policy issues, and these insights could connect with their growing awareness of the judgment responsibilities of citizens in a democracy (Engle & Ochoa, 1988). Development of a disposition to be reflective in studying history would also help students to begin to appreciate and value its interpretive nature (rather than continuing to be frustrated when no clear-cut "right answers" are forthcoming) and to use it as a source for developing their own ideas about the nature of the human condition.

The students that we interviewed remembered facts and stories better than abstract concepts and definitions. Memory support devices such as the posting of key words apparently helped them to remember these words, but not necessarily to grasp their meanings with understanding, appreciate their significance, or use them in relevant
application situations. Additional experience in acting as historians, or at least periodic exposure to conflicting historical accounts followed by critical discussion and decision making, would make these concepts more concrete and applicable for the students.

Fifth graders can begin to understand and appreciate the interpretive nature of history by considering such issues as the disputes over who discovered America or the contrasting views of King George and of the American rebels concerning the events leading up to the Declaration of Independence (see Wineburg & Wilson, 1991, on this point). Still, the students would remain limited in background knowledge and readiness to act as historians in authentic ways when confronted with discrepant accounts. Consequently, activities requiring them to do so may be limited in feasibility and cost effectiveness for fifth graders, compared to activities that focus on developing initial ideas about key historical themes and events. Although it is important to introduce history as a subject of study and to teach it in ways that its disciplinary practitioners would consider valid, with fifth graders it may be best to build basic knowledge and appreciation of history and to concentrate on its civic education aspects rather than on its knowledge generation aspects.

The students tended to conflate information learned in their fourth-grade Michigan history unit with their thinking about the colonization of the New World and the development of the United States as a nation. This raises questions about the wisdom of studying state history in fourth grade prior to studying U.S. history in fifth grade. For a discussion of this issue, see Brophy, VanSledright, and Bredin (1991).

Some interesting achievement level and gender trends appeared in the findings. Higher achieving students generally showed both more entry-level knowledge and more complete learning about the topics addressed in our interviews, although these differences were not as large as they tend to be with subjects that students have been studying for several years. There also were occasional interesting exceptions to the general trend, such as the fact that the two students who remained somewhat "thrown" by the notion that they have their own personal histories, even after instruction on the topic, were two of the four high achievers.

The gender differences were somewhat more extensive and suggestive of instructional implications than were the achievement level differences. In thinking about history, the boys tended to focus on great men and events, whereas the girls tended to focus more on family themes and conditions of everyday living. Students of both genders need to develop better appreciation of the fact that history is not just about famous individuals and events but also about changes in human customs, culture, and conditions of everyday living that have resulted from
discoveries, inventions, and diffusion of knowledge. They also need more exposure to the accomplishments of specific females.

Conclusion

Along with related data reported by Levstik and Pappas (1987) and McKeown and Beck (1990), our findings indicate that entering fifth graders are interested in history and already in possession of some accurate knowledge of the past. However, such children are vague about the interpretive nature of history and about the work of historians, and they need assistance in developing initial ideas about historical topics and in correcting various confusions and misconceptions. We believe that it is possible to address these problems and teach U.S. history to fifth graders in ways that emphasize understanding, appreciation, and application to life outside of school, but that doing so will require helping the students to see the value of history as a humanity and as preparation for citizenship, not just as miscellaneous facts to be memorized in case someone ever asks.

Endnotes

1This work is sponsored in part by the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects, Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University. The Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects is funded primarily by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the position, policy, or endorsement of the Office or Department (Cooperative Agreement No. G0087C0226).

2 For analysis and additional examples of these phenomena, see VanSledright and Brophy (in press).
### Table A

#### Table 4
Summary of Students' Responses to Pre- and Post-Unit Questions About History and the Work of Historians

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<th>Gender</th>
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<th>Tim</th>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Brad</th>
<th>Ned</th>
<th>Teri</th>
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Post 1. What were the most important things you learned?

| Primary and Secondary Sources | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| Time lines/chronological order | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Artifacts | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Oral history/interviews | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Archeologists | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Historians | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Inventions | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
### Table 4 (continued)

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#### Pre 2. What do historians do?

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### Post 3. What do archeologists do?

| Dig for artifacts/things from long ago | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 10 |

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### Table 4 (continued)

#### Pre 4. How do historians settle disputes?

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<th>Pre 5</th>
<th>Post 6</th>
<th>Post 7</th>
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#### Pre 5. How could you decide what to believe?

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<tr>
<td>Immediate yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eventual yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure or no</td>
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### Table 4 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Unsure or no</th>
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<tr>
<td>History began at discovery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country began via war or Constitution</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<th>Post 9. Did the United States have a birthday?</th>
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### Appendix A

**Table 4 (continued)**

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<td>How people lived, what they did or used</td>
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<th>3</th>
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<th>8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary better than secondary</td>
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### Appendix A

#### Table 4 (continued)

**Pre 10. Why study history?**

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**Post 14. Why study history?**

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### Appendix A

#### Table 4 (continued)

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<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Post 15. How could history help you in life? | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
|----------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| For a job                                    | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| So you will know it                          | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Mentions specific life application           | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Pass tests in school                         | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Doesn't know                                 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
Fifth Graders' Ideas About History

References


Authors

JERE BROPHY is University Distinguished Professor of Teacher Education and Co-Director of the Institute for Research on Teaching at Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1034. BRUCE A. VANSLEDRIGHT is Assistant Professor of Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Maryland, College Park, MD. NANCY BREDLIN is a fifth-grade teacher in the Holt School District, Holt, MI.
Book Notes


Review by NANCY FICHTMAN DANA, The Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA.

Historically, educational research has been approached from a positivist paradigm. This paradigm, largely behavioristic and experimental, drove the process-product studies that have dominated educational research in the past (Shulman, 1986). Dismayed by the widening gap between theory and practice, many educational researchers are adopting different, more intimate approaches to educational research by moving “inside classrooms to observe, participate, and discuss such phenomena with those who know it best, the teachers and student” (Cole, 1989). With the emergence of this alternative paradigm, generally referred to as interpretive, the role of the educational researcher is changing, with many educational researchers adopting qualitative methodologies to approach their work.

Qualitative interviewing is often considered a favorite methodological tool of qualitative researchers (Denzin, 1978). Although “the quality of the information obtained during an interview is largely dependent on the interviewer” (Patton, 1990, p. 279), few methodological sources focusing on conducting qualitative interviewing in the field of education are available for novice interviewers seeking to improve their interviewing skills. Seidman's *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences* ingeniously addresses this need by focusing not only on the skill of qualitative interviewing, but the issues inherent in the process of conducting an interview itself.

Seidman accomplishes this goal by speaking directly to those most likely to embark on qualitative interviewing for the first time -- both doctoral candidates and those more experienced researchers who may be new to qualitative interviewing. In so doing, Seidman offers one of the few texts written with teacher educators/researchers in mind. Seidman's work will be of particular value to graduate students and their advisors who together are learning about qualitative research as Seidman cites numerous examples of interviewing from both his own work and those of his graduate students. The reader's understanding of qualitative interviewing is enhanced as Seidman describes his own
approaches to writing qualitative research proposals, gaining access to and selecting participants, affirming informed consent, conducting the actual interview, and gathering and analyzing interviewing data.

Yet, *Interviewing as Qualitative Research* reaches far beyond a “cookbook” or “how to” approach to interviewing. Rather, it helps those new to qualitative inquiry understand the complexity of qualitative research and the interviewing process by placing the technique of interviewing in qualitative research into the larger historical context of educational research. For example, as a preface to discussion on interviewing techniques presented later in the text, Seidman states, “those who advocate qualitative approaches are in danger of becoming as doctrinaire as those who once held the monopoly on educational research and advocated quantitative approaches. What are needed are not formulaic approaches to enhancing either validity or trustworthiness but understanding and respect for the issues that underlie those terms. We must grapple with them, doing our best to increase our ways of knowing and of avoiding ignorance, realizing that our efforts are quite small in the larger scale of things.” Seidman illustrates his continual grappling with the issues of qualitative interviewing by sharing his own narrative reflections on his past research. In addition, he places qualitative interviewing into the social context in which it is always embedded by discussing the social forces of race, class, and gender. A strength of the text is the invitation extended to the reader to continue grappling with the aforementioned issues through the inclusion of direction to other sources that offer differing theorists’ perspectives on the interviewing process.

An additional strength of this book lies in Seidman’s assertion that any student of qualitative inquiry must “understand something about the history of science, the development of positivism, and the critique of positivism as it is applied to the social sciences in general and in the field of education in particular. Without this background, qualitative researchers do not know what they do not know about methodology. Consequently, their rationale for choosing a qualitative over a quantitative approach may not be as well grounded as it could be.” While Seidman’s point is well articulated, he fell short of a clear opportunity to remind doctoral candidates and their professors of the corollary argument—Without knowledge of the history of science, quantitative researches do not know what they do not know about method and consequently, their rationale for choosing quantitative over qualitative approach may not be as well grounded as it could be.

With this argument in mind, I recommend Seidman’s *Interviewing as Qualitative Research* not only for his intended audience of doctoral students and educational researchers engaging in qualitative inquiry, but for doctoral students and their professors who engage in quantitative inquiry as well. Seidman’s work offers a
comprehensive perspective of the nature of qualitative inquiry and the art of interviewing and serves as an excellent point of departure for the discussion of qualitative interviewing in the larger context of the educational research community.

References


REACTION AND RESPONSE

Editor's Note: James Leming's article, "Ideological Perspectives Within the Social Studies Profession: An Empirical Examination of the Two Cultures Thesis," which was published in the Summer 1992 issue of TRSE, was first presented as a paper at the annual meeting in Washington, D.C. in November, 1991. Walter Parker was the reactor to Leming's paper at that time, and we therefore invited him to prepare his oral remarks for publication in print. What follows is his reaction to the Leming article, followed by Leming's response.

BACK TO THE MELTING POT?
A RESPONSE TO LEMING

Walter C. Parker
University of Washington

I.

James S. Leming's paper is a welcome addition to the literature on the old and messy tension between town and gown. It provokes reflection on our work as professors of social studies education, on the place of diversity among us and, more to the point, between us and other groups, namely, school teachers, the general public, and the political elite. These are worthy topics.

Leming has given us two papers, really, one a political tract and the other an opinion poll. The political tract suggests principles and strategies for increased influence by professors of social studies education on the conduct of social studies education in the nation's public schools. On my reading, this is the main paper, the one that signals the author's project. It is the conceptual centerpiece of the larger, combined paper, though it gets less space and then only at the beginning and end. The other paper, longer yet subsumed by the first, is a Gallup-style, forced-choice political opinion poll of 58 percent of the 450 members of the College and University Faculty Assembly (CUFA) of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). The opinions of this group, whom Leming calls the "intellectual leadership" of the social studies field, are compared to those of teachers in general, social studies teachers in particular, and the general public.

Together, Leming's two papers are a period piece. (Of course, it could not be otherwise.) They reveal much of the present professional landscape: Intense popular frustration over social problems that are without solution or apparent strategy; rising expectations that the school system will solve these problems; attacks on teacher educators as a group; competition for school time from other subject areas; a perception among some that the social studies field is in "disarray" (a
Reactor and Response

favored word of critics); and now, the capstone: The history lobby's revival and quick ascension to the White House. Leming writes about these affairs at some points explicitly but at others only indirectly and unavoidably because they so suffuse the moment in which he writes.

Here I will summarize the papers, show how their combination in a single work led wrongly to the identification of liberalism as the cause of social studies' troubles, and suggest that the political solution Leming proposes is neither political nor desirable.

II.

This work is an extension of Professor Leming's Social Education article of a few years ago (1989), the thesis of which was that there are two groups, cultures really, of social studies professionals. They are social studies teachers—doers, and college and university professors—theorists. In the earlier article, the differences between the two cultures were characterized as an ideological gulf drawn along political lines. Teachers are conservatives intent on socialization; social studies professors are liberals or revolutionaries intent on countersocialization. In the present work, Leming acknowledges the lack of evidence on the "nature and extent" of the gulf, and he sets out to gather it. Using a composite questionnaire, he finds that the responding CUFA members are indeed different from teachers. On the whole, they identify more with the Democratic party, consider themselves liberal, have little faith in the economic system or in religion as sources of solutions to social problems, pray less, have liberal positions on policy issues (e.g., death penalty; abortion), and rank citizenship as the most important goal of education.

So what? For Leming's answer, we must move into the other paper, the political tract. Leming believes that social studies education, like education in general, has come under increasing public scrutiny because of the recent "decline in confidence in the product of our educational system." This scrutiny has revealed what Leming believes his data now support: The current social studies leadership is a "collection of extreme liberals out of touch with contemporary society." It has "marginalized" itself, particularly through its socially progressive citizenship-education agenda, effectively removing itself from influence over, even participation in, the making of curriculum policy. Not only the term social studies, but the very idea of social studies has fallen out of favor with the political elite, which now regard social studies as the "great dismal swamp" of the school curriculum.

The remedy? Leming believes that the field's "intellectual leadership" should "redress those factors that have contributed to that state of affairs." Specifically, it should articulate a statement of the goals of the field that will win the support of teachers, the public, and
the political elite. This would rule out social studies' traditional goal of educating for citizenship because, on Leming's analysis, it is perceived by the public as a liberal, even revolutionary, political project. Second, the leadership should come to grips with the fact that education, especially social studies education, is a conserving institution, not a progressive one. Consequently, returning to the first remedy, the goal needs to be articulated in conservative terms, which Leming gives us: "in a word, knowledge...accurate knowledge of American history, traditions and the social world." And what about civic competence? Leming advises that to the extent this goal even is mentioned it, too, must be defined in conservative terms. Again, Leming supplies them: "developing loyalty and commitment to our nation and its core culture and democratic values."

III.

Numerous sparks fly up from these papers, each wanting a response that space here does not allow. Let me just mention two of the work's lesser problems after which I will give greater space to what in my judgment are its more important problems. First, a response surely is needed to the assumption that CUFA members compose the "intellectual leadership" of the social studies field. Let it suffice for the moment just to note that the idea of "intellectual leadership" of a field is hugely problematic. What does the term mean? And what particularly does it mean when the field is not a discipline but a profession? If by intellectual leadership (and this is a big if) Professor Leming means influence over the thinking and doing of others who also are in some way associated with the field, then let us recognize that such might be the case in a center-to-periphery Confucian society, but it is a weak assumption in this society in these times. Indeed, Leming seems to acknowledge the point in his aside about ideological differences between town and gown making for funny cartoons in the "New Yorker, but not much else.

The second concerns the validity of responses. One wonders what sort of reception the social studies "leadership" gave a forced-choice political opinion poll that issued from someone already well known for his "ideological gulf" hypothesis. The effect on responses cannot be known, but by way of analogy readers might imagine the reception artists would give a questionnaire from Senator Jesse Helms concerning their sexual preferences. Furthermore, and regardless of its sponsor, what was the reception given such a question as "Do you ever pray to God?" followed by "Check one"--yes or no. The question and its response options are in comprehensible for members whose metaphysics lie outside monotheism.
Let me turn now to the work's greater difficulties, one concerning causes and the other concerning solutions. The problem Leming identifies and for which he proposes solutions, as we have seen, is the decline of social studies. The field is in "crisis." Social studies has "fallen out of favor" in relation to pure history and geography, he tells us, and the primary cause is CUFA members' liberal political ideology. But, wait. How did we get from problem to cause? Remember that Leming has given us two papers, not one. The combining of the two papers, especially the location of the opinion poll inside the political tract, creates an illusion of relation. The empirical data Leming presents serve to specify his use of the term liberalism and more or less support the ideological gulf hypothesis. But they do no more than this. Only by some leap does the "intellectual leadership's" liberalism become the cause of the social studies' troubles. Neither proof nor convincing argument is offered here for the causal relationship implied. What we learn from these data is that those CUFA members who responded to the survey are more liberal, at least by this measure, than social studies teachers and the general public. These are interesting data, for they tell us something about some of the people (an unrepresentative minority, to be sure) who are educating the nation's social studies teachers. But the question remains, So what?

There are, I think, two more likely causes of social studies' troubles. The first can be found in an argument Leming himself made in his "two cultures" article (1989). The citizenship goal is too vague to do anybody any good, he argued. It has so many meanings that, as another scholar put it, "it may be used to encourage whatever is happening in the curriculum to go on happening" (Longstreet, 1985, p.22). The complaint now, we should recognize, is not about the citizenship goal's alleged liberal social agenda but, on an entirely different front, its nebulous quality—the fact that no consensus has been reached on what sort of agenda it might require. So, which is it? Is the citizenship goal liberal or is it too vague to tell?

The vagueness complaint is a good one. Its essence, as I have argued elsewhere (1990), is that the citizenship goal can mean anything to anybody; consequently, this goal works reasonably well as a rhetorical device in the written curriculum—at the front of curriculum guides especially, but malfunctions in the taught curriculum, where its vague quality allows present practices to become ever more deeply entrenched. This alone could cause the "wretched" situation that Chester Finn abhors (quoted in Leming). But, and here is my point, if the ubiquitous vagueness of its principal goal is indeed contributing to social studies' troubles, the remedy is not to abandon the goal but to clarify and specify it. An invisible target is impossible for an archer to
hit, no matter how good her aim. The remedy surely is not to ban archery or ridicule the archer, but to find the target.

Clarifying and specifying the citizenship goal is a consensual project. The work needed is straightforward enough: A curriculum committee needs to have conversations about the goal, exploring alternative meanings, and working toward representations of the goal that are practical. That is, they should (a) function fairly well as a guide for content selection; (b) specify kinds of learning experiences that should prevail (hence, also the forums, climate, and types of instruction); and (c) make clear for students what it means to achieve the goal. Not that this is easy work. Conversations about issues that matter to people never are. But it is an attractively direct response to the problem.

Leaving the problem of vague targets, let me turn to a second possible cause for social studies’ troubles. Leming tells us that CUFA members have located themselves on the liberal fringe of contemporary educational discourse, speaking a liberal fringe language, rather than at its center, speaking in a conservative mainstream voice. On my reading, the fringe complaint has some validity but only if the adjective liberal is removed. The fringe complaint, which is different from the liberal fringe complaint, can be justified on the grounds that one can observe a flight by the social studies professoriate. It is a flight to the outlands from the central problems and concerns of the field. It is not, to be sure, a mass migration or a total abandonment of the field; nor is it so infrequent or subtle as to escape detection.

Flight is Joseph Schwab’s (1969) term for detachment from the practical affairs of curriculum, that is, its problems, questions, and methods. Flight, I am suggesting, not liberalism is the phenomenon that deserves our attention. I should emphasize, as did Schwab, that flight is a problem to which all fields of inquiry are susceptible and, therefore, not a condition that warrants shame. The members of any field of study bound by canons of inquiry sufficient to make its methods self-consciously reflective and disciplined are certain to run up against situations where they have learned enough to know that the old ways are inadequate. Flight is a sign that a situation of this sort has obtained. Let me suggest four varieties of flight from the social studies field. I use Schwab’s terms, adding my interpretation.

- **Translocation.** This is a flight from the field itself, a shift in the location of its problems and attempts to solve them to other fields, for example, to educational psychology, philosophy, history, the social sciences, global education, law-related education, and gender and ethnic heritage studies.
• **Upward.** This is a flight from talk about the problems of the field to talk about that talk, from use to nonuse of the field's methods and principles, from grounded theory to models, metamodels, and metatheoretical talk about models.

• **Sidelines.** This is a flight from the messy activity of the playing field to the tidy sidelines, to the ivory tower, to the role of bemused and aloof observer of the activity of others.

• **Perseveration.** This is another way to avoid the playing field, now by retreating to the analyses and discourses of a prior day, superimposing them on present problems. While flights upward are not grounded at all, this flight is grounded, not in the present but in old habits.

Space does not permit the illustrations needed to elaborate my view that flights have occurred and are sufficiently numerous as to pose a threat to the vitality of the social studies field. But before leaving the topic let me stress, with Schwab, that flights away from the field are not necessarily equally damaging. Flights upward, for example, are threatening when they venture so far as to lose sight of the field. In such cases, engaged problem finding and problem solving are abandoned for an exosphere so thoroughly removed from the concerns of the field that model building and category spinning become ends in themselves. On the other hand, flights upward can be enormously helpful in breaking perseveration's grip. Judicious flights upward permit us, in Freire's (1985) terms, to be both in the world and sufficiently disentangled from it to be with it--with it in a way that opens the possibility of acting on it, transforming it, seeing through it.

V.

I will end by turning from causes to solutions. Leming believes, recall, that liberalism in the professoriate is the cause of social studies' troubles. The solution he proposes is straightforward: remove the cause. Accordingly, he asks CUFA members to become more mainstream, more conservative, to articulate "a view of the purposes of the field that can marshal the support of teachers, the general public and the political establishment." Giving such political advice, let me be clear, is not a problem. Indeed it is admirable—not so much the content of the advice but his casting social studies' troubles in political terms, and his willingness to offer political advice. (This is, after all, the opposite of fleeing the field.) The problem, instead, is that the political advice he offers, remarkably, eschews politics! He asks social studies professors not to redouble their efforts to influence policy, not to argue more effectively their views and advance more forcefully
their visions, but to change their tune, reverse their values, and withhold their competence—in a phrase, to tow the line and shut up. Why? So that the playing field will be left to a unitary voice—a mainstream voice, a voice that has been trimmed clean of opposition and annoyance. Leming's solution, then, is yet another sort of flight. He asks professors to play politics by fleeing politics. He asks in one breath that CUFA members "reenter the national dialogue about the future of social studies education" but adds in the next that they should leave their voices at the door.

This is an anti-democratic solution. It is founded on a politics and philosophy of homogeneity and thus cannot help but sponsor a one-party system. It is a step backward to "melting pot" ideology (colonialism dressed up for the industrial age) for it shuns the possibility that from pluralism can arise civic intelligence. Limiting the widest possible articulation of ideas and exchange of views, let us be clear, leaves everyone ultimately dumber and not one person smarter: Not one teacher, one professor, one student, or one politician.

But I overstate my point. I mean only to suggest that the proper course of action for the social studies professoriate is not to muzzle itself. To the contrary, it should vigorously engage the field's problems and assert itself (itselfes, really, for there is no need to to pretend we are of one voice). Troubled times tempt populations of all kinds to flee the clatter of democracy for martial law—presenting a common front, rounding up dissidents, and in general, eschewing the free interplay of ideas because some awful threat seems to justify it. Yet it remains that good education is multicultural education, that good science includes criticism as a matter of course, that good politics seeks to comprehend diversity, not stamp it out; that, in short, democracy is daily labor, fully engaged with differences of all sorts, not a relic passed whole from one generation to another. Good curriculum policy is no different.

References
James S. Leming responds:

CORRECT, BUT NOT POLITICALLY CORRECT?
A RESPONSE TO PARKER

Parker's response to my article raises important questions about the quality of the research and the line of argument that follows the presentation of the data. Parker is correct in noting that the article being discussed is really two papers under a single title. The first paper is a survey research study; the second an extension of a line of argument presented in my original "two cultures" article (Leming, 1989). It was this article that served as the basis for the survey research. According to accepted canons of empirical research, one should not stray far from one's data when discussing the results of one's study. Even though I labeled the final section "Commentary," I did consciously violate this canon in my article. My reason for doing so was in anticipation of the very question trenchantly raised by Parker in his reaction: "So What?" Since the origins of this research arose from a political analysis of the problems besetting the social studies profession, and since the data collected partially supported some of my earlier speculations in this regard, it seemed appropriate to return to the earlier analysis and to extend the argument at this point. Since the two papers can stand alone, and since Parker's analysis is organized roughly along the lines of the two parts of my article, I will turn to the questions raised in two sections.

Questions Regarding Research Design

Parker's critique of the research restates limitations discussed in the article. He questions whether the accessible population (members of CUFA) are representative of the target population—a group I have referred to as the intellectual leadership of the social studies profession. He also questions if the term "intellectual leadership" is a meaningful one. Finally, questions are raised regarding the nature of the questionnaire items.

To offer convincing evidence that the membership of CUFA is a representative sample of the intellectual leadership of the profession would require that it be shown that the most influential statements on the nature of the social studies have been authored by CUFA members. I did not have the resources to conduct this inquiry when I wrote the original article, but in preparing this response I did conduct a quick analysis of whether the lead authors of the 53 chapters in the Handbook of Teaching and Learning in Social Studies Education (Shaver, 1991) were currently, or had been recently, CUFA members. I
found that 37 of the lead authors (70%) had held CUFA membership during the past five years. This is not the only possible test of this claim, but based on this evidence it is reasonable to conclude that CUFA members comprise a plurality of the most respected theorists and researchers in the field of social studies education.

One assumption made in this study was that within any professional group there exists a group of individuals who over time set the parameters and agenda for discussion regarding the nature of the profession and the important issues facing that group. I agree with Parker that the precise identification of those who are, and those who are not, members of this group is a difficult task, and I would be hard pressed to come up with a rigorous definition of the group or an exhaustive list of individual members. I assume that my inability to do so, however, does not mean that the group is fictive. In Parker's response, he refers to a group of individuals as the political elite. I would suggest that terms such as "political elite" and "intellectual leadership," although defying precise definition, do communicate a common, albeit general, understanding.

A final question raised by Parker about my research design was related to the reliability of the responses to the questions and of the forced-choice nature of the questionnaire items themselves. Parker suspects that there may have been a tendency for the respondents to answer items dishonestly (or to not respond at all) because the source of the questionnaire was an individual who possessed a relatively well-known and somewhat critical view of the accessible population. I am puzzled as to what the pattern of these suspected unreliable responses might be. Parker is not clear on this matter.

Let us imagine two CUFA members, Mr. X and Ms. Y. Mr. X, a naturally critical and conservative fellow, find himself in fundamental agreement with Leming's "two cultures" thesis. Ms. Y, on the other hand, a staunch believer in the power of social studies education to reshape American society, finds herself in fundamental disagreement. How would they respond?

Mr. X would have no possible motivation to respond dishonestly, for he knows what the results of the research will be. Ms. Y could choose to answer the items honestly, or she could choose to answer the questions in such a way as to attempt to undermine Leming's thesis; that is, fake conservative. It is unlikely that Ms. Y would fake liberal and thereby consciously attempt to support Leming's hypothesis. If the CUFA membership is in aggregate liberal, and liberal respondents faked conservative, then the liberal pattern of the responses reported in the study is low. It is possible that those who disagreed with Leming on the issue were more likely not to respond than those who agree. This also would result in an under-reporting of liberal responses. It would
appear that if there is a response bias it would result in an underreporting of liberal responses.

Parker correctly points out that the forced-choice nature of the questionnaire items restricts the respondents' range of response on some controversial and complex issues. As I mentioned in the original article, this was a necessary limitation of the research design. It was beyond the resources of the researcher to use an open-ended questionnaire format and to constitute new national samples for all of the populations reported. One cannot ask one set of respondents one set of questions and another set of respondents a different set, and still expect to make valid comparisons between groups. Differences in the precise wording of questionnaire items can, especially with regard to controversial and complex questions, produce very different responses from respondents. I assumed that the incidence of individuals who found that the questionnaire items failed to assess adequately their own more complex opinions was distributed equally among the different samples. I see no reason to assume that CUFA members had more complex positions on the issues than did the general public or social studies teachers or that the items somehow biased one groups' responses in a way that it did not for the other samples.

Questions Regarding the Political Analysis of the Social Studies Profession

Parker found the argument presented in the "Commentary" section of the article lacking on two accounts. First, he objected to the identification of liberalism as the source of the problems of the social studies profession. Second, he found my proposed remedy for the situation unsatisfactory and even frightening. He then offered up his own analysis of the primary problem facing the profession—clarity of the conception of citizenship—and proposed his own solution, achieving clarity through committee deliberation.

Parker found a lack of proof and/or convincing evidence with regard to my argument that liberalism is at the heart of the problems facing the profession today. Let me briefly restate that position so that if it is not convincing, at least it is clearer. The argument can be stated in the form of four propositions:

1. Conceptions of citizenship as an educational goal are shaped by the political ideology of the proponent(s) of that view.

2. Those individuals who have been the most active with regard to the articulation of citizenship as the goal for the social studies hold positions that are consistent with
liberal ideological positions--see my discussion of Engle and Ochoa in Leming (1989) as an example of this phenomenon.

3. Practitioners of social studies (i.e., public and private school social studies teachers) do not generally share the socially progressive conception of citizenship and the goals of the social studies as espoused by the intellectual leadership of the profession.

4. In a profession where the publicly presented goals of the field are not consistent with mainstream thought and practice, that profession is divided and thereby weakened. The profession may seem to be at odds with itself or more fundamentally at odds with the political base that, in general, supports the current practice of the profession in the field.

I suspect, however, that the logic underlying my argument was not what exercised Parker so, but rather my failure to present evidence for the alleged link between liberalism and the current state of the profession. In response to this call for evidence, I must fall back, at least in this brief response, on the well-known adage that data is the plural of anecdote. Space prevents an extended presentation at this point, but I will mention two events that recently occurred within the profession that I feel are representative of the link between liberalism and professional weakness. First is the incident, tellingly described by Evans and Nieto (1991), that occurred at the leadership dinner hosted by Procter and Gamble during the 1989 annual meeting of NCSS in St. Louis. It is hard to think of a more compelling example of how kneejerk liberal dogma could be applied in a thoughtless, rude, and politically unastute manner to the detriment of the organization. I will not describe what happened at the dinner again here, but I urge those interested to read the account and ask themselves if the rationalizations offered by Evans and Nieto are any reasonable substitute for courtesy, common sense, or even the crudest level of political astuteness.

A second and related example of the deleterious impact of liberal ideology on the profession can be found in the current paranoia among some members of CUFA over the alleged hegemonic intentions of textbook publishers with regard to NCSS. This concern is symptomatic of an attitude held by some members of NCSS and has resulted in ruthless attacks on any person who, or position that, does not toe the politically correct line. I have witnessed numerous cases where teachers and influential national leaders have left encounters with some members of the social studies intellectual leadership either
bewildered by the use of obtuse jargon, or outraged over savage attacks on the expression of politically "incorrect" positions. These incidents drive a wedge of misunderstanding between the organization and important groups with whom we need to work constructively. It seems for some CUFA members, anyone who is pro big business or who represents middle class values is somehow suspect and has to be brought into the proper political consciousness.

I suggest that these two cases are typical of the effort by selected members of the intellectual leadership to control the organization in a manner consistent with a particular ideological position. By discussing these examples in this response I do not intend to implicate Parker in either of these cases. I raise the question merely to illustrate my claim (which Parker disputes) that the unfettered liberalism of certain selected and highly vocal members of the intellectual leadership, who voice their political views in a dogmatic and politically naive manner, is a significant source of the current malaise in the profession. These incidents are not examples of a healthy debate, but rather, in my judgment, a formula for professional weakness.

I was surprised to find that when I called for the development of a "politically astute rationale for citizenship education" and "the articulation of a view (of citizenship) that can marshall support of teachers, general public, and the political establishment" that I had, according to Parker, suggested that the intellectual leadership "not redouble efforts to influence but to change our tune;" "reverse their values and withhold competence;" "toe the line and shut up;" and, "leave the field to a single voice--trimmed clean of opposition and annoyance." Finally, Parker suggests that I have proposed "...an undemocratic solution."

One of the many valuable things that I have learned over the years from my colleagues in CUFA has been to develop my sensitivity to the political dimensions of curriculum and schooling. I must admit that I have questioned their perspective at times; however, I have gradually come to appreciate the increased richness that this perspective provides in understanding questions of curriculum. I have begun to ask questions such as: Whose interests are served by present arrangements? Who benefits from proposed changes? Who has power over whom? and so forth. I have learned to view matters in a politically sensitive manner. I find now that I have not learned my lesson well--my analysis of the professions' troubles may have been political but, according to Parker, they were not politically correct; that is, I have not concluded that the interests served by present arrangements in the profession are the maintenance of current social and political positions and power, but rather I have concluded that the interests served by the present debate represent the hegenomy that
selected members of the intellectual leadership wish to exercise over the discourse about the profession.

After finding my analysis lacking, Parker offers up his own analysis and proposed solution to the problems of the profession. He finds the major problem to be a lack of clarity regarding the conception of citizenship. The solution he proposes is the negotiation of consensus through committee deliberation. I agree with Parker that the vagueness of the conception of citizenship is an important issue facing the profession, but would argue that clarity would not necessarily be a solution to the problem I have posed unless this more clear conception were in some way a centrist position. A more clear position, but one that is a fringe position, such as that of Engle and Ochoa (1989), is in my judgment no solution to what I interpret as a political problem facing the profession.

Parker's means for solving the problem of clarity lies in the model of the curriculum renewal committee (Parker, 1991). The problem with Parker's proposed solution is that it is a model appropriate for local needs applied to what I think is a much bigger and different problem. From this perspective I would argue that Parker's solution in Schwabian terms represents a flight downward—a return to the subject matter in a state of innocence; a new pristine look at the subject free of inherent and inexorable dilemmas.

I would argue that general agreement regarding the proper goals of social studies education can be found at the building or district level. Debate does not rage on this matter in the field. It is not that teachers, administrators and the public don't ever sit down and think carefully. Thoughtfully developed social studies curricula exist in many schools. These curricula are consistent with local ideology and values. The problem as I see it is that the conception regarding the goals of social studies education held at the local level in this country are not shared by the intellectual leadership of the profession.

The second problem I have with Parker's analysis is that I don't think it will work at the national level. Today there is within NCSS a frantic effort once again to define the social studies. Such efforts have been a recurring aspect of the history of the field. If calm deliberation alone could result in a clear definition of the field, the issue would have been resolved long ago. I am still perplexed regarding the precise sources of the definitional difficulty faced by the field, but the solution, I am convinced, is as much political as it is deliberative.

One evening after rereading Parker's response, I turned on the television set and watched the apparent rebirth of the Democratic party at their national convention. Here was a case where a political party, after decades of ideological excess, decided to seek out a platform and a candidate who could once again speak to the concerns of the middle class. In so doing, the party apparently has abandoned old
fringe positions and policies, taken careful assessment of the political landscape, and positioned itself so that once again it has the potential to exercise increased political power by winning control of the executive branch of our government. One does not have to be of any particular political stripe to recognize, at least judging from recent public opinion polls, that this has been a politically astute move. Although the analogy I am proposing is not an exact one, what I am suggesting is little different: Find the center and begin to position oneself in order to be an effective voice within that venue. If the struggle for the curriculum in America's schools is largely a political enterprise, then does it not make sense to participate in that struggle in a politically astute manner? I would like to be optimistic in this regard, but more likely, judging from Parker's reaction to my suggestion, I think that we will stand on the platform arguing about where we wish to go as the train for a new destination takes off without us.

References
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