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Editorial

A new year and a new issue of TRSE. From the number of manuscripts we currently have on hold awaiting publication, 1995 promises to be an exciting year for social studies education. In future issues this year, we plan to publish several articles dealing with a number of controversial issues facing the profession.

Along this line, we start off with a provocative piece by James Banks of the University of Washington. This article is an expanded version of the invitational address that Dr. Banks gave to the Research in Social Studies Education (RSSE) Special Interest Group (SIG) at the 1994 American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual meeting last April in New Orleans. Banks' article is followed by three responses from Merry Merryfield, Stuart Palonsky, and Geoffrey Milburn, who express contrasting points of view regarding multicultural education. We hope you find this exchange interesting and thought provoking, and we encourage you to send us your comments and reactions.

Also featured in this issue is an article by Stuart A. McAninch of the University of Missouri at Kansas City. McAninch presents a discussion of two paradigms for studying the Cold War in high school history classes, represented by the work of Paul Gagnon and Noam Chomsky. He argues that students need to learn multiple perspectives in order to gain a meaningful understanding of historical events. We also include a reaction by O. L. Davis, Jr. to our recent special issue on the foundations of the social studies, and two book reviews.

Beginning with this issue, we also have a new resource available to our readers. To aid anyone who wishes to locate a particular article or articles on a particular topic, TRSE will be indexed in the Current Contents®/Social & Behavioral Sciences database maintained by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI, 3501 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104). Contact ISI directly for more information.

As always, we hope that you enjoy our current selection of articles, and we welcome any response. We look forward to many healthy debates in the new year.

Jack R. Fraenkel
February, 1995
TRANSFORMATIVE CHALLENGES TO
THE SOCIAL SCIENCE DISCIPLINES:
IMPLIEDIFICATIONS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
TEACHING AND LEARNING

James A. Banks
University of Washington, Seattle

Abstract
The author contends that the social studies projects of the 1960s and 1970s reflected institutionalized mainstream academic knowledge in the social sciences which assumes that knowledge is neutral, objective, and universal. Within the last two decades, transformative knowledge created by scholars of color and feminist scholars has challenged the social science disciplines and some of their major assumptions and tenets. Transformative scholars argue that knowledge is neither universal nor neutral but reflects human interests, the cultures of social scientists, and the power relationships within society. The author recommends that the gap between the transformations occurring within the social science disciplines and the way that the social studies is taught in the school be closed.

The Social Studies Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s

In September, 1959, approximately 35 scientists, scholars, and educators gathered at the Woods Hole conference center in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, to discuss how science education might be improved in the nation's schools. Based upon this 10-day meeting of eminent

1 An earlier version of this article was presented as an invitational address to the Research in Social Studies Education Special Interest Group, American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana, April 4-8, 1994.

2 The author is grateful to Jack R. Fraenkel, Heidi McKenna, and Walter C. Parker for comments on an earlier draft.
American scholars and educators, Jerome Bruner (1960) wrote *The Process of Education*, a book that revolutionized thinking about teaching and learning not only in the sciences but in all subjects, including the social studies. Bruner presented his now famous contention, "Experience over the past decade points to the fact that our schools may be wasting precious years by postponing the teaching of many important subjects on the ground that they are too difficult....The foundations of any subject can be taught to anybody at any age in some form" (p. 12).

Bruner also argued that the fundamentals of every discipline can be reduced to its structure, by which he meant its key concepts, key generalizations and principles, key questions, and unique modes of inquiry or investigation. Bruner stated that the structure of each discipline could be identified, and could be taught to all students in some form regardless of their ages or stages of development.

With this assertion, Bruner seriously challenged the leading ideas of developmental psychologists. He also challenged the social studies curriculum institutionalized in the U.S. and popularized by the writings of Hanna (1963). The expanding communities framework was based upon developmental ideas of the time; for example, children should study the family before they study the larger community.

Based upon this idea of the structures of the disciplines and other key ideas set forth in *The Process of Education*, historians, geographers, sociologists, economists, anthropologists, and political scientists became heavily involved in the development of social studies curriculum projects during the 1960s and 1970s. Like any educational movement that tries to change schools from the outside, the social studies revolution had mixed results.

The new social studies movement created vigorous discussion, debate, and innovation. It had a significant influence on social studies curriculum development at the state and school-district levels and on textbook writing. It also had a major influence on the research, teaching, and writing of social studies literature by scholars and university professors. However, it had little influence on actual classroom practice (Shaver, Davis, & Helburn, 1979).

The Silenced Voices in the Structuralist Revolution

The majority of the social studies projects of the 1960s and 1970s were conceptualized by mainstream male academics and scholars who taught at the nation's leading research universities. Largely absent from the center of the structuralist revolution were the voices of classroom teachers, social studies curriculum specialists, scholars and academics of color, and feminist scholars. Most of the projects were built upon the assumption that knowledge should and could be constructed
without the influence of the researcher’s personal or cultural characteristics. Most project developers assumed that the structures of the disciplines—their concepts, generalizations, and principles—did not reflect the social, economic, cultural, and political contexts in which they were formulated.

In project materials and teaching strategies, students rarely were encouraged to interrogate the assumptions, biases, and interests of the social science disciplines and social scientists. Rarely did the constructors of the programs ask: Whose interests are served by disciplines that are based upon the assumption that the objective elements of knowledge are more significant than the subjective elements? In other words, the project developers did not ask: "Whose subjective interests are served by an ideal of objectivity?" (Code, 1991; Harding, 1991), "Out of whose subjectivity has this ideal [of objectivity] grown? Whose standpoint, whose values does it represent?" (Code, p. 70). Code writes, "The point of the questions is to discover how subjective and objective conditions produce knowledge, values, and epistemology" (p. 70). Feminist scholars and epistemologists are strongly challenging the idea that the subjective and objective elements of knowledge can be dichotomized, and that objective elements are more significant than subjective ones.

With few exceptions, including projects and publications by Metcalf (1971), Oliver and Shaver (1966), and Newmann with Oliver (1970), issues related to cultural and ethnic diversity, gender, praxis, and the transformation of the social order were absent from the social studies projects of that era. The voices of women and people of color were on the margins or invisible in most project materials.

Mainstream Academic Knowledge

Most projects of the 1960s and 1970s, like most social studies content in the nation’s schools today, constitute mainstream academic knowledge (Banks, 1993). Mainstream academic knowledge consists of the concepts, paradigms, theories, and explanations that constitute traditional and established knowledge in the behavioral and social sciences. An important tenet within the mainstream academic paradigm is that there is a set of objective truths that can be discovered and verified through rigorous and objective research procedures that are uninfluenced by human interests, values, and perspectives (Greer, 1969; Kaplan, 1964; Sleeter, 1991). This empirical knowledge, uninfluenced by human values and interests, constitutes a body of objective truths that should make up the core of the school and university curriculum. Much of this objective knowledge originated in the West, but is considered universal in nature and application.
Mainstream academic knowledge is the knowledge that critics of multiculturalism such as Ravitch & Finn (1987), Hirsch (1987), and Bloom (1987) claim is threatened by the addition of content about women and people of color to the school and university curriculum. This knowledge reflects the established Western-oriented canon that has historically dominated university research and teaching in the United States. Mainstream academic knowledge, like other knowledge forms, is not static, but is dynamic, complex, and changing. Challenges to the dominant canons and paradigms within mainstream academic knowledge come from both within and without. These challenges lead to changes, reinterpretations, debates, disagreements, and ultimately to paradigm shifts, new theories, and interpretations.

The Challenges to the Social Science Disciplines

Mainstream academic knowledge constitutes most of the institutionalized learning within the nation’s schools, colleges and universities. However, mainstream paradigms, assumptions, and findings have been challenged by scholars on the margins of society since the social sciences were established in the United States near the turn of the century (Banks, 1992; Franklin, 1989; hooks, 1984; Meier & Rudwick, 1986). These challenges have become more widely publicized, intense, and influential within the last two decades.

It is important to realize that groups on the margins of society have been deconstructing and interrogating the findings, assumptions, interpretations, and uses of mainstream social science since these disciplines were established. These challenges were often only heard within ethnic minority communities because the mainstream scholarly and popular communities rarely listened to the voices of groups on the margin of society (Banks, 1992). Many decades later, however, the concepts, theories, and interpretations developed by scholars in the African American community often have become the accepted interpretations within the mainstream scholarly community. Near the turn of the century when most American scholars were accepting the belief that some races were innately inferior to others, African American scholars such as Kelly Miller (1908), Alain Locke (1992), W. E. B. Dubois (1909-1910), and Carter G. Woodson (1919) were challenging this belief. Today, the ideas about race that African American scholars constructed near the turn of the century are the dominant ones within social science theory and research (Franklin, 1989).

Voices on the margins of a society are often able to provide a perspective that enriches and deepens mainstream intellectual and popular thought and discourse. These perspectives are often the most visionary ones within a society and become legitimized over time, often
by being appropriated by mainstream society. The case of Elvis Presley legitimizing Southern Black music within the American popular culture is one example of this phenomenon. Perspectives and vision on the margins of society often deepen our understanding of reality. Patricia Hill Collins (1990) calls the perspective of African American women that of the “outsider within.” I call this kind of knowledge transformative academic knowledge (Banks, 1993). Brewer (1993) describes how Black feminist scholars have brought new concepts and paradigms into the social science disciplines, such as the “articulation of multiple oppressions,” or the ways in which race, class, and gender interact to oppress Black women (p. 13). She writes, “This polyvocality of multiple social locations is historically missing from analyses of oppression and exploitation in traditional feminism, Black studies and mainstream academic disciplines” (p. 13).

**Transformative Academic Knowledge**

Transformative academic knowledge consists of concepts, paradigms, themes, and explanations that challenge mainstream academic knowledge and expand the historical and literary canon (Banks, 1993). It challenges some of the key assumptions that mainstream scholars make about the nature of knowledge. Transformative knowledge and mainstream academic knowledge are based upon different epistemological assumptions about the nature of knowledge, the influence of human interests and values on knowledge construction, the ways in which social scientists engage in cultural structuring (Morrissey, 1992), and the purposes of knowledge.

An important tenet of mainstream academic knowledge is that it is neutral, objective, and uninfluenced by human interests and values. Transformative academic knowledge reflects postmodern assumptions about the nature and goals of knowledge (Foucault, 1972; Rosenau, 1992; Rorty, 1989). Transformative academic scholars assume that knowledge is not neutral, but is influenced by human interests; that all knowledge reflects the power and social relationships within society, and that an important purpose of knowledge construction is to help people improve society (Code, 1991; Harding, 1991; hooks & West, 1991). A major goal of transformative knowledge is to understand society so that it may be changed and improved (King & Mitchell, 1990).

**African American and Feminist Transformative Knowledge**

There are many challenges to the social science disciplines today. A serious one is the postmodern project (Rosenau, 1992). A diverse group, postmodernists share some basic assumptions about the nature of knowledge. They raise questions about the extent to which language can
be objective, and recognize that meaning is not centered or fixed; it is dispersed throughout the text. Jacques Derrida (1981), who is considered the originator of deconstruction, uses it as a form of poststructural criticism to demonstrate the impossibility of meaning. Writes Rosenau (1992):

The skeptics and affirmatives challenge those versions of modern science that claim objectivity, causality, a materialist reality, and universal rules of inquiry. Their preferred methods include antiobjective, introspective interpretation and deconstruction. Relativism and uncertainty characterize their views (p. 23).

I will not consider the challenges posed by the postmodern and poststructural projects per se, but will focus on two significant transformative challenges to the social science disciplines: (a) those from early African American scholars, (b) and those from modern feminist epistemologists and theorists. I will then discuss the implications of these challenges to the social science disciplines for social studies teaching and learning.

I will first discuss African American transformative scholars. This is only one case study; scholars studying other ethnic groups could also be used as an example of the transformative challenge to the social science disciplines (e.g., Blea, 1988; Martinez, 1977; Yu, in progress). However, African American scholars are an appropriate example because they were historically one of the first groups of scholars to mount challenges to the established social science disciplines. Their work reveals that transformative challenges to the disciplines are not a phenomenon that has emerged since the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s; rather, the ethnic studies movement that emerged during these years drew heavily upon the work of these early scholars (Banks, 1992).

Feminist social scientists are the second group of transformative scholars I will discuss. Feminist scholars such as Patricia Hill Collins (1990), Rose M. Brewer (1993), bell hooks (1984), Lorraine Code (1991), Sandra Harding (1991), Elizabeth K. Minnich (1990), and Paula Giddings (1984) have developed important critiques of mainstream academic knowledge and epistemology. They contend that despite its claims modern science is not value free, but instead contains important human interests and normative assumptions that should be identified, discussed, and examined. They also maintain that mainstream epistemology is hegemonic, patriarchal, heterosexist, and contributes to the reproduction of existing class, gender, and racial relationships within society.
Early African American Transformative Scholars

In the late nineteenth century and during the first decades of the twentieth century, racism was institutionalized within both the academic community and in the wider society in the United States. Most academics during this period legitimized and justified the dominant conceptions about race that were institutionalized in colleges and universities and in the public imagination. Craniometry, which was the measurement of the skull to determine the mental traits and characteristics of racial groups, was used to establish that African Americans had, on the average, smaller brains than Whites, and were consequently intellectually inferior to Whites (Fredrickson, 1971; Gould, 1981).

Although racial groups such as African Americans and Indians were considered to be at the bottom of the racial pecking order, Whites were not considered one racial group. This concept is a rather recent invention. Whites were also arranged hierarchically in a racial pecking order. The books by William Z. Ripley (The Races of Europe, 1899) and Madison Grant (The Passing of the Great Race, 1916) developed classification schemes that described and codified the distinctions among various White racial groups. They also warned against the interracial mixture of inferior and superior White racial groups because interracial mixture would destroy the superior Teutonic, Nordic, or Aryan race. Grant (1916) called the Teutonic race "the white race par excellence" (p. 150).

It was in this climate of institutionalized racism and apartheid that African American social scientists and scholars such as W. E. B. DuBois, Carter G. Woodson, Kelley Miller, Alain Locke, and Charles H. Wesley undertook their work to deconstruct institutionalized conceptions about race and African Americans, and to create representations of their racial group that were oppositional, transformative, and liberating. This was also the period during which the Plessy v. Ferguson Supreme Court decision was handed down, when D. W. Griffith's film Birth of a Nation (released in February 1915) was a huge success (Franklin, 1989) and when the lynching of African Americans grew rapidly. More than 2,500 people were lynched in the United States between 1884 and 1900, most of whom were African Americans (Franklin, 1967).

In this atmosphere of apartheid and lynching, knowledge construction was not without subjectivity, valuation, or human interests; rather, it was about survival and a life with dignity, respect, and possibilities. A major reason for the founding of the American Negro Academy in 1896 was the construction and publication of knowledge that would "aid, by publications, the vindication of the race from vicious assaults, in all lines of learning and truth" (Moss, 1981, p. 24).
will discuss two of the most important African American vindicationists (Drake, 1987): W. E. B. DuBois and Carter G. Woodson.

W. E. B. DuBois Challenges the Established Race Paradigm

In a prodigious scholar-activist career that lasted from the late nineteenth century until the march on Washington in 1963, W. E. B. DuBois authored hundreds of publications that contributed greatly to the creation of oppositional and realistic representations of African Americans. DuBois created works representing several genres, including empirical studies, scholarly articles and books, popular articles and editorials, fiction, and poetry (Lewis, 1993). His empirical studies and other scholarly publications were transformative. They challenged dominant, institutionalized, and hegemonic perspectives and concepts about African Americans, other groups of color, and women.

DuBois (1921/1975) rejected the notion that the Aryan race was superior to others and that there were higher and lower races. He believed that because the darker races of humankind were the majority, the world’s future was tied to their destiny. He wrote, “If the uplift of mankind must be done by men, then the destinies of this world will ultimately rest in the hands of the darker nations” (Dubois, 1921/1975, p. 49).

DuBois seriously challenged the institutionalized conceptions of race that canonized negative characteristics of African Americans by producing seminal empirical studies that provided new evidence, to which he gave novel interpretations. He rejected the widespread beliefs shared by most White historians about the incompetence of Black rule during Reconstruction. In a paper read at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in 1909, DuBois (1909-1910) deconstructed the interpretation that the Black governments during Reconstruction were incompetent and corrupt. He pointed out that they had given the South some of its most enlightened and enduring institutions, including democratic governments that permitted all men to vote (including poor Whites), free public schools, new social legislation, and new state constitutions that had proved enduring. DuBois (1935/1963) further developed these ideas in his book, *Black Reconstruction*, published in 1935.

Carter G. Woodson Challenges Institutionalized Representations of African Americans

Carter G. Woodson was born in 1875 and received his Ph.D. in history from Harvard in 1912. He fervently believed that the construction of objective knowledge about African Americans would help undercut racism and lead to better race relations. Woodson
devoted his career to researching and disseminating historical knowledge about African Americans that he felt was needed by both African Americans and Whites (1919/1991; 1921; 1922). In his view, both groups had been “mis-educated” (Woodson, 1933/1977).

Woodson probably had more influence than any other scholar on the teaching of African American history in the nation’s schools and colleges from the turn of the century until his death in 1950. With others, he established the Association for the Study of Negro (now Afro-American) Life and History (ASNLH) in 1912. He founded the Journal of Negro History in 1916, and served as editor until his death. The journal is one of Woodson’s most important and lasting contributions to the study and teaching of Black studies and to the current multicultural education movement. In 1921, Woodson established Associated Publishers, a division of the ASNLH, to publish African American scholarly books and textbooks. In addition to his major works, Associated Publishers published important books by scholars such as Horace Mann Bond (1939) and Charles Wesley (1935/1969).

Woodson, a former high school teacher, played a major role in popularizing African American history and in promoting its study in the nation’s Black schools, colleges, churches, and fraternities. He initiated Negro History Week in 1926 to highlight the role that African Americans had played in the development of the nation and to commemorate their contributions. In time, and with the vigorous promotional efforts by the ASNLH and its branches throughout the nation, Negro History Week became nationally recognized and celebrated. Woodson never intended for Negro History Week to be the only time of the year in which Negro history was taught. Rather, he viewed it as a time to highlight the ongoing study of Negro history that had taken place throughout the year.

In 1937, Woodson established the Negro History Bulletin to provide information on Negro history for elementary and secondary school teachers. He also wrote textbooks for elementary and secondary schools that were widely used in Black schools, including Negro Makers of History (1928), African Myths (1928), and The Story of the Negro Retold (1935). The 10th edition of his widely used and popular text, The Negro In Our History, first published in 1922, was published in 1962, with Charles H. Wesley as the second author.

A Feminist Challenge to the Objectivity/Subjectivity Dichotomy in Mainstream Epistemology

An important tenet of mainstream Anglo-American epistemology is that the subjective and objective aspects of knowing can be differentiated, and that knowledge produced by the knower is neutral, objective, and generates universal principles (Greer, 1969). Code (1991),
Transformative Challenges to Social Science Disciplines

as well as other feminist scholars, such as Sandra Harding (1991) and Patricia Hill Collins (1990), have seriously challenged this major tenet of mainstream epistemology.

In her significant book, *What Can She Know? Feminist Epistemology and the Construction of Knowledge*, Code raises this question: "Is the sex of the knower epistemologically significant?" She concludes that the sex of the knower is epistemologically significant because knowledge is both subjective and objective. The subjective characteristics of the knower influence the knowledge that he or she produces. Knowledge "is, necessarily and inescapably, the product of an intermingling of subjective and objective elements" (Code, p. 30). Events that occur are subject to multiple interpretations, and can be analyzed from diverse perspectives. Code describes how facts can be interpreted in many different ways:

So there emerges a picture of objective facts, open to multiple interpretations, analyzable from various perspectives. Facts may change and evolve in processes of interpretation and critique; hence reality is indeed open to social structuring. Social practices, attitudes, institutions are far from constant, yet neither are they mere ephemera of a researcher's imagination. They are there, present for analysis. Facts may mean different things to different people, affect some people profoundly and others not at all; hence they are both subjective and objective (pp. 45-46) [emphasis added].

Concepts such as feminist standpoint theory and positionality are used by feminist scholars to describe ways that the social, political, and economic situations in which knowers are embedded influence how and what they know. Like the African American scholars that preceded them, feminist scholars recognize that knowledge often labeled objective, neutral, and universal is hegemonic, and reinforces dominant social, cultural, and economic arrangements within society. Challenges to the social sciences by feminists and scholars of color reveal the ways that avowed objective knowledge contributes to the oppression and voicelessness of marginalized groups. The feminist and ethnic projects describe the politicized nature of knowledge. Harding (1991) states that every account by humans is "fully political" (p. x).

African American Feminist Epistemology: Outsiders Within

In her influential book *Black Feminist Thought*, Patricia Hill Collins (1990) describes the importance of self-definition among marginalized groups, and points out that the silencing of victimized
groups is beneficial to the dominant society because it “can be taken to mean that subordinate groups willingly collaborate in their own victimization” (p. 5). She states that mainstream knowledge inventors construct negative representations of African American women, which contribute to their oppression and victimization. African American feminist scholars must invent oppositional knowledge and representations in order to experience liberation and empowerment. Oppositional knowledge and representations challenge the social science disciplines because many of the stereotypes and misconceptions about Black women that exist within the popular culture are validated and legitimized by these disciplines.

Collins (1990) points out that White feminist theory as well as mainstream male-dominated social science have “suppressed Black women’s ideas....Even today, African American, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian American women criticize the feminist movement and its scholarship for being racist and overly concerned with white, middle-class women’s issues” (p. 7). Collins (1990) has contributed an important concept to feminist discourse: the outsider-within stance. She explains that this stance emerged because many African American women were domestic workers for White families. Observing these families daily, they saw “white power demystified” (p. 11), and realized that they were being exploited and were not integral parts of the families for whom they worked. Consequently, they developed a “curious outsider-within stance, a peculiar marginality that stimulated a special Black women’s perspective” (p. 11). Collins writes:

Taken together, the outsider-within perspective generated by Black women’s location in the labor market and this grounding in traditional African American culture provide the material backdrop for a unique Black women’s standpoint on self and society. As outsiders within, Black women have a distinct view of the contradictions between the dominant groups’ actions and ideologies (p. 11).

Feminist scholars of color such as Collins (1990), bell hooks (1984), Gloria Anzaldua (1990), and Paula Giddings (1984) have described the ways in which researchers who study their own communities balance objectivity and subjectivity. Giddings describes how she strove for this balance in her book, When and Where I Enter:

For a Black women to write about Black women is at once a personal and an objective undertaking. It is personal because the women whose blood runs through my veins breathe amid the statistics. They struggled north during the Great
Transformative Challenges to Social Science Disciplines

Black Migration, endured separations, were domestics and schoolteachers, became pillars of their community, and remained ordinary folks. Writing such a book is also an objective enterprise, because one must put such experiences into historical context, find in them a rational meaning so that the forces that shape our own lives may be understood. When and Were I Enter attempts to strike a balance between the subjective and the objective. Although it is a product of extensive research, it is not without a point of view or a sense of mission. A mission to tell a story largely untold. For despite the range and significance of our history, we have been perceived as token women in Black texts and as token Blacks in feminist ones (p. 5).

The Feminist Challenge to Western History

Research by feminist scholars reveals how the history of the American West has been conceptualized and viewed primarily through men's eyes. A group of feminist historians interested in the West has done important work describing how dominant concepts and paradigms about the West are gendered and patriarchal (Stratton, 1981; Schlissel, 1982; Armitage & Jameson, 1987; Morrissey, 1992). These scholars have also developed concepts and paradigms for reinterpreting the West in ways that make the roles of women and people of color more central and significant. Armitage and Jameson (1987) write:

From Daniel Boone to John Wayne, our national folklore is replete with white male "rugged individuals" finding their selfhood in the freedom of an untamed land. This image, like most other stereotypes, is one-dimensional and historically inaccurate and incomplete. It leaves out most westerners, including the original inhabitants of the land, American Indians and Hispanics; men who came West, not as loners, but with their kin; and women of all ethnic groups and social classes" (p. 3).

Katherine G. Morrissey (1992) also describes the ways in which the institutionalized conceptions of the West are gendered. She calls the West "a powerful ideological place" in which images about "tough men" and "understanding women" have become cultural myths (p. 133). The male-dominated image of the West has become an important part of the American identity. Morrissey states that historians of the West, such as Frederick Jackson Turner, Frederick Merk, and Ray Allen Billington participated in "the ongoing construction of a West that lives in mainstream cultural ideology" (p. 134).
James A. Banks

Morrissey describes three major types of studies that characterize the attempts by feminist historians to transform the dominant conception of the West: (a) studies that attempt to incorporate missing women into the established framework of Western history, e.g., “gentle tamers” of the “old wild west” (pp. 134-135); (b) studies of exceptional women within the traditional framework of Western history, “such as Sacajawea, the missionary Narcissa Whiteman, or Judge Ester Morris” (p. 135); and (c) studies that challenge the existing Western history framework, identify women’s perspectives, and describe the limitations of existing paradigms and frameworks.

Implications for Social Studies Teaching and Learning

Social science knowledge taught in the school, which I call school knowledge (Banks, 1993, 1994), is usually presented to students as a body of facts that are not to be questioned, criticized, or reconstructed. This method of teaching is inconsistent with the way social science knowledge is constructed and reconstructed. It does not reflect the important challenges to the social science disciplines today from scholars of color and feminist scholars. Neither does it reflect the ways that the social science disciplines are being transformed. The wide gap between the transformations taking place within the social science disciplines and the ways that the social studies is taught in the schools needs to be closed.

To achieve this goal, we must help students understand the knowledge construction process and the ways that scholars of color and feminist scholars are challenging the social science disciplines. These challenges, as well as those from the postmodern project, are creating exciting changes within the social science disciplines in which students in the schools should be able to participate. The knowledge construction process should be a key component of the social studies curriculum. This process consists of the methods, activities, and questions teachers use to help students understand, investigate, and determine how implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the way knowledge is constructed. When the knowledge construction process is taught, teachers help students understand how knowledge is created and influenced by the racial, ethnic, and class positions of individuals and groups (Banks, 1994).

Teaching How Knowledge Is Constructed: Rewriting the History of the Montgomery Bus Boycott

I will use a unit on the Montgomery bus boycott that began on December 5, 1955, to illustrate how students can be taught the knowledge construction process and can create their own interpretations.
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of the past and present. A careful study of these events from different perspectives will give students an opportunity to understand how history is written and rewritten, and how historians construct interpretations and determine who is included in written history. Popular views of the Montgomery bus boycott often repeated in textbooks are: (1) the arrest of Mrs. Rosa Parks caused the boycott; and (2) Mrs. Parks refused to give up her seat when asked by the bus driver because she was tired from working hard all day.

Two important autobiographies by women who played key roles in the boycott enable historians to rewrite its history. One is by Jo Ann Gibson Robinson (Garrow, 1987), who was an English professor at Alabama State College and who served as president of the Women's Political Council (WPC). The other is by Rosa Parks (Parks with Haskins, 1992). The WPC was founded in 1946 by professional African American women in Montgomery to provide leadership, support, and improvement in the Black community and to work for voting rights for African Americans. Many of the WPC members were professors at Alabama State College; others were Black public school teachers.

In 1953, African Americans in Montgomery brought more than 30 complaints about abuses they had experienced from bus drivers to the WPC. Robinson and the other WPC members worked with the city leaders to improve the treatment of Black bus riders but to no avail. Approximately 70 percent of the bus riders in Montgomery were African Americans, who continued to experience intimidation and demeaning and hostile encounters with bus drivers, such as being asked to give up their seats to Whites even when seated in the "Negro" section of the bus. They often had to pay their fares in the front of the bus and were forced to exit and reenter through the back door. Sometimes the bus drove off and left them before they could make it to the back entrance. In 1951, an African American man who had been drinking was killed by a police officer after he was involved in an encounter with a bus driver.

As the negative incidents directed against African American bus riders mounted, the WPC concluded that only a boycott against the bus system would end hostile bus incidents toward Blacks and bus segregation. It began to plan for a boycott and to wait for the right incident to use to launch it. On March 2, 1955, Claudette Colvin, a 15-year-old high school student, was arrested when she refused to give up her seat for a White rider. She was seated in the "Negro" section of the bus. Mary Louise Smith, an 18-year-old, was arrested and fined for refusing to give up her seat in October 1955. The WPC, for several reasons, did not believe that either of these cases was appropriate to

3 The lesson on the Montgomery bus boycott in this article is adapted from James A. Banks, "Transforming the Mainstream Curriculum, " Educational Leadership, 51(8), 4-8.
use to initiate the boycott. The Council members believed that the arrested person’s reputation must be beyond reproach.

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat for a White rider. Because of her stellar reputation in the community, the Council members concluded that the “right” person had been arrested and it was time to mobilize the community and initiate the boycott. Parks (with Haskins, 1992) describes why she did not give up her seat:

People always say that I didn’t give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn’t true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me being old then. I was 42. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in (p. 116).

Fed up with mistreatment, intimidation, and the violence they experienced daily from bus drivers, the African American women of Montgomery, led by the WPC, called for a boycott of the city buses that would take place the day after Rosa Parks was arrested Friday, December 2, 1955. The organizers of the boycott expected it to last for one day. They had no idea that the boycott would last for more than one year and that it would become a landmark historical event.

Reinterpreting the Past

When students learn about the construction of knowledge using the Montgomery bus boycott as a case study, they can compare mainstream accounts of the events, such as those in textbooks, with transformative accounts (Banks, 1993) such as those given by Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and Rosa Parks. They can discuss why people who often played significant roles in historical events, such as those played by Robinson and the WPC in the Montgomery bus boycott, often remain invisible in history. The work of men and organizations headed by men such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ralph D. Abernathy are emphasized in most textbook and popular accounts of the Montgomery bus boycott. The work of women like Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and her female colleagues in the WPC remains absent from most textbooks. It is significant that Robinson’s memoir is titled The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It.

A comparison of Rosa Parks’ account of why she did not give up her seat to a White rider with the accounts in textbooks will help students to understand not only how written history can be highly discrepant from actual past events, but also how history is rewritten when people who have been excluded from its production begin to play
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active roles in its construction. Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and Rosa Parks have written accounts of the Montgomery bus boycott that challenge institutionalized accounts in significant ways.

Making the Social Studies Transformative

The voices of people on the margins of society challenge the social science disciplines as well as school knowledge and other institutionalized and hegemonic knowledge forms. The work of nonmainstream scholars constitutes what I call transformative knowledge. The curricula within the nation's schools and colleges primarily reflect mainstream popular and academic knowledge. Most mainstream popular and academic knowledge reinforces the dominant structures, power arrangements, and inequalities in society. Transformative knowledge needs to become an important part of the curriculum in order to help students in social studies classes attain the knowledge, values, and skills necessary to engage in thoughtful and reflective action to make our nation more humane and just.

We need to revise the social studies curricula and social studies teaching so that both will reflect democratic values as well as the challenges and ferment existent in the social science disciplines. Teaching students how knowledge is constructed and reconstructed will help them to attain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to become effective and thoughtful citizens in the next century.

References

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Editor's Note: We invited three social studies educators with diverse points of view to respond to Professor Banks' article. Following are the comments of Merry M. Merryfield of Ohio State University, Stuart B. Palonsky of the University of Missouri, and Geoffrey Milburn of the University of Western Ontario.

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REACTION: Education for Equity and Diversity in an Interconnected World

MERRY M. MERRYFIELD, Associate Professor of Social Studies and Global Education, Ohio State University.

Banks' "Transformative Challenges to the Social Science Disciplines: Implications for Social Studies Teaching and Learning" can serve as a case study for social studies teachers who want to learn how to teach their students to challenge mainstream academic knowledge, examine multiple knowledge bases and epistemologies, and create their own ways of knowing. If we are to teach children to think critically about the world and the information that surrounds them daily, we must teach them about the politics of knowledge creation and help them develop skills in perspectives consciousness and inquiry. Banks' example of reinterpreting the past by studying African American and feminist scholarship on Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott ably illustrates how teachers can make social studies transformative. Students must understand and appreciate both the process of knowledge construction and the knowledge and perspectives of people on the margins if they are to bring about a more just and equitable nation.

I agree with several of Banks' major points: (1) social studies as taught in the nation's schools today is for the most part mainstream academic knowledge, (2) students need to understand that groups on the margin have always deconstructed and interrogated mainstream academic knowledge, (3) voices on the margin need to be a part of social studies, and (4) one goal of transformative knowledge is to change and improve society.

I find it ironic, however, that Banks writes only of American voices as though no others exist. While criticizing Ravich, Finn, Hirsch, and Bloom for their exclusion of the knowledge and perspectives of women and people of color, Banks ignores the vast majority of the world's women and people of color. By focusing solely on Americans, Banks is in effect joining forces with those promoting
mainstream academic knowledge as both he and they exclude voices on the margin from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and other world regions. Ninety-six percent of the world's people live outside the United States. Don't American students have something to learn from these other voices?

Such American-centrism will not prepare our young people for survival, let alone equity and diversity in the interconnected world of the 1990s. If they are to change and improve society in the coming century, students must understand their global connections and appreciate the voices of people on the margin both in their own communities and in other parts of the world. Whether Americans want to recognize it or not, we are part of the dynamic warp and weft of a global mosaic of cultures, transactions, conflict, and change. In 1995 we cannot study American threads separately because they are inextricably woven together with ones from other cultures, the workings of transnational organizations, and global issues and technologies.

In order to teach transformative social studies, our schools need an integration of multicultural and global perspectives. I suggest that Professor Banks consider infusing a global perspective into his article. First, I will present a rationale for such an infusion of global perspectives into the content of transformative social studies. Then I will outline ways in which global perspectives can complement the multicultural perspectives outlined by Banks.

A Rationale for Global Perspectives in Developing Transformative Social Studies

It is not only in the United States that we find a powerful elite shaping mainstream academic knowledge so that it supports their political, economic, and cultural dominance while marginalized peoples work at the edges to counter such knowledge with their own scholarship and knowledge creation. Educational systems reflect the powers that be, and people on the margins of power because of their class, color, ethnicity, gender, religion, political ideology or other characteristics find ways to resist, create, and expand their own knowledge. This margins to the mainstream conflict over knowledge creation, development, and diffusion is constantly evolving. The dynamic nature of today's cultures, global diffusion and mixing of ideas, and the acceleration of knowledge diffusion contribute to local, regional and global debates over what is taught in schools. Today's social studies teachers are on the front lines of the battlefield in the knowledge and culture wars (see also Shor, 1992).

Knowledge of marginalized people in the United States forms only a small part of the knowledge that mainstream academic
knowledge in the U.S. ignores or constrains. Knowledge, perspectives and experiences of peoples in Africa, Asia, and Latin America have a history of being stereotyped, marginalized, or trivialized as exotic in the mainstream academic knowledge of American schools and universities (see also Amin, 1989; Mazrui & Levine, 1986). Discrimination against people of color in the U.S. has long been reflected in the treatment of their root cultures in American education. However, the problem is more complex than an Eurocentric bias in American mainstream academic knowledge. There are complex issues regarding access to the knowledge, perspectives, and experiences of peoples in other parts of the world who are not only marginalized within American mainstream academic knowledge but also within their own countries or cultures. One cultural universal found in most nations today is discrimination against particular groups of people. These people have little if any voice in the history, politics, economics or literature taught in their nation's schools. The global phenomena of discrimination, marginalization, and opposition are incredibly diverse and complex. Discrimination may be as horrific as outright massacres, as flagrant as the open persecution of religious or ethnic minorities, as legal as laws that prevent women from owning property or driving a car, or as subtle as being passed over for a job promotion. It may be based on gender or color as Banks notes, but in many parts of the world it is based on religious affiliation, political ideology, national origin and other characteristics. The global commonality in all cases of ongoing discrimination is the creation and diffusion of oppositional knowledge by those on the margin.

Without knowledge that discrimination, marginalization and opposition are global phenomena, American students will be making decisions based on incomplete knowledge of their world and its connections to their nation and local community.

How Would Global Education Complement the Multicultural Perspectives Outlined by Banks?

Banks believes that teaching about voices and knowledge from the margins of the U.S. will "make our nation more humane and just." I would argue that we need to hear and understand voices of peoples from other parts of the world who are also marginalized by American mainstream academic knowledge. Following are some ways that a global perspective could enrich and strengthen Banks' transformative social studies.

Global education extends the multiple perspectives and perspectives consciousness of multicultural education through a global lens on the human condition. A global perspective places the American experience of mainstream academic knowledge and knowledge
construction of marginalized people within a global context. By learning an interconnected history that links time periods and world areas, students understand the development of present inequities and diversity within their community and in the world. They learn to assess the role of their community and the U.S. within the global system and to examine the power, human rights, civil rights, and quality of life of Americans (from the margins and the mainstream) relative to people in other parts of the world. They also become skilled in viewing historical events and people through the eyes and philosophies of others (see also Bennett, 1994; Johnson, 1993).

Can students really appreciate the unique qualities of U.S. history and cultures without a global perspective? It is by connecting and comparing their own knowledge with other peoples’ histories and others cultures’ voices that American students learn about themselves and their nation. More than any country in the world, the United States has been shaped by the famines, wars, injustices, prejudices, and lack of opportunities in other places. The stories of others are our own.

Global perspectives provide increased understanding of cultural universals and human diversity. Contemporary movements for self-determination, democratization, and the protection of human and civil rights (belonging to women, children, indigenous people, and others) are transnational (Merryfield & Remy, 1995). Martin Luther King, Jr. was influenced by Gandhi, whose ideas were shaped initially by living and working on the margins of South Africa. Such connectedness with other people in other places strengthens student understanding and appreciation of the application and empowerment of knowledge. It helps students recognize their place in the world and their commonalities with other peoples.

Ideas, strategies, and their repercussions cross borders every day through such technological miracles as fax machines, jet travel, short wave radio, video, and satellites. The battle over educational rights to equal access and opportunity, a voice in the curriculum, and fair assessment is global. Many people around the world are voicing the concerns that Banks captures in his article. Multicultural perspectives are not for Americans only.

Global education connects human diversity and equity with global issues that are critical to the survival of life on our planet. There are significant connections between culture and the global issues facing our planet at the end of the twentieth century. Most of today's critical global issues (persistent hunger, sustainable development, environmental abuse, refugees and immigration, the spread of AIDS, political instability) are enmeshed in cultural norms and cannot be solved without the participation of peoples who are marginalized within their countries or within the global arena. The U.S. cannot solve problems related to the environment, hunger, human rights, or fair
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trade without learning to work together with other countries. Our fate is linked to that of others, and our young people need to understand many peoples' perspectives of such connections between culture and sustainable growth if they are to become effective citizens. Isolationism is no strategy for American multiculturalists in a global age. We have much to learn from and to share with others. Along with understanding and appreciating diversity, we need to teach our young people why and how neighborhoods, peoples, and the world community need to learn to work together, collaborate, and cooperate.

Banks' "Transformative Challenges to the Social Science Disciplines: Implications for Social Studies Teaching and Learning" is needed in teacher education and in courses on global education. I will bring this article into my next global education seminar, and we will discuss it along with Friere's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Hanvey's *An Attainable Global Perspective*, Laye's *The Dark Child*, and Said's *Culture and Imperialism* in the context of the perspectives, experiences, and knowledge of my American and international students. Together these authors demonstrate much of the complexity of equity and diversity in an interconnected world. As Said (1993) said so eloquently:

No one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are not more than starting-points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or Black, or Western, or Oriental. Yet just as human beings make their own history, they also make their own cultures and ethnic identities. No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about. Survival in fact is about the connections between things (p. 336) [emphasis added].

References
Merry M. Merryfield


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REACTION: Reconsidering the Social Studies

STUART B. PALONSKY, Professor of Education and Director of The Honors College, University of Missouri.

Professor Banks' attention to social studies content and curriculum is a refreshing departure from the psychologizing of education and the current "methods fetish" (Bartolome, 1994, p. 173), a fascination with apolitical and technical approaches to classroom teaching. Implicitly, Banks defines the social studies as the social sciences applied to public school settings, but he chides his colleagues for ignoring recent scholarship and failing to focus classroom attention on the moral and political dimensions of instruction. The social studies, Banks argues, should move forcefully to incorporate new social science thinking about knowledge and knowledge construction and expand the canon to include voices previously unheard or unheeded in both the social sciences and the social studies.

Professor Banks writes that the social studies reforms of the 1960s and 1970s were dominated by positivist ideology and canonical thinking (even though no one would argue that all canonicals are positivists). Influenced by educational psychologists, wedded to uncritical textbooks, social studies reformers urged classroom teachers to create school knowledge that celebrated the past and justified the present. Classroom knowledge was assumed to be politically neutral, scientifically derived, and therefore moral and fair. Banks reminds us that the impact of the reforms on practice was minimal. The social studies revolution, for reasons not examined here, failed to influence classroom practitioners. Banks notes that scholars on the margins, e.g., feminists and African Americans, first privately and then publicly challenged the so-called objective approach to knowledge championed by the reforms. They argued that mainstream academic knowledge, the traditional content served up in public schools, encouraged the
transmission of a biased and distorted view of the past in the guise of
truth. Belatedly, Banks argues, this critique of mainstream knowledge
was accepted by others in the academy. The public schools, however,
continue to follow the traditional path. Banks encourages the social
studies to adopt a new epistemology and pedagogy. The story of the
past, he maintains, has to be told more fully, and from many more
perspectives to be complete and fair. To catch up with intellectual
developments in the social sciences, the social studies should give
attention to a broader range of perspectives and a socially constructed
view of knowledge. Because facts have both objective and subjective
qualities, social studies classes must treat the transmission of
knowledge more critically.

The paradigm of knowledge as a social construct is not entirely
new. Nietzsche, for one, claimed that there were no facts, only
interpretations. He believed that there was no order or meaning in the
world apart from that ascribed to it by human thought. Although
unacknowledged in Banks' essay, others—from Ortega y Gasset and
Thomas Kuhn to Michael Polanyi—have argued similar metaphysical
positions. Professor Banks is also not alone in calling for a critical
examination of school content. Some educators, like Henry Giroux and
Bill Stanley, have focused attention specifically on the moral and
political nature of the social studies. Banks, I believe, may be the first
to bring the combination of African American scholarship and feminist
scholarship specifically to the reform of the social studies.

Banks' essay is reminiscent of the sociology of knowledge coupled
with nineteenth-century perspectivism and the Social Recon-
structionism of Counts, Rugg, and Brameld. Banks argues that
knowledge is constructed socially and experientially to serve political
ends, and therefore social studies instruction should examine the nature
of knowledge and build specific multiperspective understandings. The
social studies should develop transformative academic knowledge.¹
Banks notes, "Transformative academic scholars assume that
knowledge is not neutral but is influenced by human interests; that all
knowledge reflects the power and social relationships within society,
and that an important purpose of knowledge construction is to help
people improve society."

Banks argues that social science scholarship no longer supports a
view of social reality as fixed or singular. Constructionism, the

¹ Banks does not discuss critical theory here, but the link between his ideas and
those of critical theorists merits examination. For example, Banks' transformative academic
knowledge calls to mind Giroux and McLaren's definition of teachers as transformative
intellectuals. Giroux and McLaren (1986) argued that teachers should "reclaim space in
schools for the exercise of critical citizenship via an ethical and political discourse that
recasts, in emancipatory terms, the relationships between authority and teacher work, and
schooling and the social order" (p. 213).
prevailing knowledge paradigm, assumes that many realities may exist simultaneously, constructed socially from seemingly objective data but interpreted through the lens of race, gender, or class or some combination of all three. (While this may be new to the social studies, it is not new to the philosophy of the social sciences. Since Kant, most metaphysical deliberations have focused not upon the nature of reality but upon human thought about reality.) Banks criticizes the social studies for not keeping up with the newer thinking, choosing instead to pass on mainstream academic knowledge and adhering to an outdated view of a single, objective, confirmable reality.

And what of the canon? Proponents of Great Books courses typically explain their place in the curriculum by paraphrasing Matthew Arnold: Students are asked to sample from the best that is thought and known in the world (Searle, 1990, p. 34). At the University of Missouri, for example, we tell students that for all its flaws, there is a Western intellectual legacy from Socrates to Hannah Arendt in philosophy and from Homer to Toni Morrison in literature, and while it does not constitute a complete education, being well educated requires some exposure to this tradition. Where some find a resounding crescendo of progress and rationality in the Western tradition, others find only monuments to oppression—hierarchical, imperialistic, sexist, and monocultural—and argue that the canon needs to be dismantled.

Professor Banks asks the social studies to stake out a middle ground between the knee-jerk celebrants of the Western tradition and the equally dogmatic anticanonicals. He reminds us that the social studies has specific democratic goals and that in order to achieve the full moral and political implications of democracy, the Western literary and historical canons need to be examined for their political messages and expanded to include African American and feminist perspectives. Professor Banks encourages social studies teachers to compare mainstream accounts of the past with transformative accounts, and to include more voices and competing interpretations in their teaching. To explain how a transformative curriculum would play out in a classroom, Banks provides the example of teaching about Rosa Parks. The case study is very well presented, and it holds the promise of social studies classrooms open to genuine inquiry and new perspectives.

Teaching transformative academic knowledge implies a fresh look at social studies epistemology and a re-examination of the preparation of social studies teachers. It seems to me that learning to teach for social transformation demands a series of welcome changes for university-based teacher education: less emphasis on the psychology of education and greater attention to the sociology of education and issues of social change; less emphasis on the methods of transmitting content and greater emphasis on teaching for the interpretation of social studies content. Transformative academic knowledge also promises a
richer education literature, one that would include the study of DuBois, Woodson, Code, and Collins among others (e.g., Plato, Descartes, Locke, and Dewey) who offer supporting perspectives.

Professor Banks opens the door to an appropriate and timely reconsideration of the social studies. He refreshes an older argument with promising new sources, and his article is thoughtful, persuasive, and gently insistent. It also raises a number of questions:

(1) The constructivist paradigm of knowledge is itself a human construct: a social invention, subjective and fallible. No one knowledge paradigm can be demonstrated to be incontrovertibly right. As Lincoln and Guba argue, "Advocates of any particular construction must rely on persuasiveness and utility rather than on proof in arguing their position" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). Given the past pattern of social studies education, what would convince leaders of state and national social studies reforms to adopt a constructivist paradigm of knowledge and a transformative curriculum?

(2) The anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) states that as humans we are suspended in webs of meaning of our own design (p. 5). The social studies could help students understand the meaning that they have inherited in order to make a better world, a world more in harmony with democratic goals. I think that most social studies educators would agree that the social studies should be taught in ways designed to improve society and to make it more humane, fair, and just. But teaching students that all knowledge is socially constructed has potential drawbacks. What is to prevent students from concluding that society is functioning appropriately and that it is already sufficiently just? What is to keep other students from concluding that society is tilting too much in favor of previously discriminated groups? If social studies teachers were to use a constructivist classroom epistemology, how could they convince students otherwise?

(3) If reality is subjective, socially manufactured, and influenced by one's gender, race, and class, is it possible to ask social studies teachers and students to engage in anything traditionally called the objective and disinterested search for truth?

(4) How should the canon be expanded? What should be omitted and what should be included? Not all canonical authors endorse mainstream academic knowledge. (Missouri's Great Books sequence includes Nietzsche, Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, and Toni Morrison.) On the other hand, it is also self-deceiving to assume that all feminist and African American scholars are socially transformative or that their inclusion in the curriculum would automatically benefit the social studies (for example, socially conservative Camille Paglia and Thomas Sowell would seem unlikely to take us in the progressive directions suggested by Professor Banks).
Stuart B. Palonsky

The social studies reforms outlined by Professor Banks should be attractive to many social studies educators and teachers; however, I cannot help but ask if social studies reform centered upon constructed knowledge and social transformation is likely to have any more success than the reforms that asked students to search for the structure of the disciplines.

References

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REACTION: Transformative Challenges Reassessed

GEOFFREY MILBURN, Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario.

Dr. Banks has written an eloquent and impassioned article that both surveys much of recent social scientific literature, and also examines the application of its ideas to the social studies classroom. Because a great many of the questions he examines are currently under discussion in education at all levels, such a broadly based paper deserves very close study and analysis.

Because I shall be largely critical in my response to many arguments within Banks' article, I want to mention one or two important points upon which we agree. I share Banks' interest in adapting contemporary scholarship to the social studies curriculum (his review of current literature in this article, especially the examples he offers, are very helpful). I share also Banks' commitment to significant educational and social goals that he characterizes at one point as providing for all students an opportunity for "life with dignity, respect, and possibilities." During the last two or three decades, great strides have been made within the educational community towards recognizing major inequities in educational provisions, curricular content, and
classroom pedagogies. A commitment to equity in these matters (although I grant that the term equity is subject to interpretation), I assume, is acknowledged by virtually all educators.

Many of the arguments in Banks' article seem to me to extend much further than that generally held position. Equity in this sense does not appear to be the major goal of his article—directly or indirectly, he seems to find that goal either wanting or insufficient. Some of his additional goals, it seems to me, are much more debatable and if I understand him correctly, may well point social studies education in quite a different direction. (I should add that I was not always certain in reading the article when Banks was offering his own opinion or simply reporting ideas suggested by other scholars.)

Some of the differences between us, I think, have their origin in the sheer breadth of the territory that Banks covers: sociological commentaries on the nature of contemporary society, philosophic arguments on epistemology and the goals of education, theoretical issues concerning gender, culture and race, and historical analyses of curriculum studies in general and social studies in particular. Within that maze of commentaries, Banks finds a set of arguments that he maintains have significant implications for the contemporary curriculum. I do not dispute the fact that his interpretations are held widely—but counterpositions derived from the same set of sources are equally plausible.

Given the same set of commentaries, I offer four principal counterarguments to some of Banks' most important positions:

a) the notion of alternative ways of knowing is much more problematic than Banks suggests;

b) the apparent abandonment of standards of scholarly integrity is harmful;

c) some notions of transformation are counter to education; and

d) introduction of the transformative challenges outlined by Banks are as likely to divide the educational community as to promote a greater understanding of the human condition.

Banks points to the importance of distinguishing various types of knowledge, various epistemologies, or various ways of knowing. The titles he ascribes to them include "mainstream academic knowledge," "transformative academic knowledge," "African American feminist epistemology," and "oppositional knowledge." Far be it from me to dispute the injustice and profound sense of social hurt that lies behind the arguments that produced these labels. Nor do I dispute the fact that the work of historians, economists, and other social scientists has been affected by the culture in which they lived. Nor would I attempt to refute the charge that these scholars have often erred dramatically.
Geoffrey Milburn

But to argue from that point that knowledge itself, and the academic pursuit of that knowledge, is so debased by social pathologies that it must be divided into sets of relativist categories is a much more debatable proposition than Banks has allowed in his article. Yes, people argue that there are various ways of knowing, but others claim that these so-called ways of knowing are ill defined, ideologically driven, and highly problematic. The suggestion, for example, that there is a distinctly female way of knowing science, mathematics, or social studies—which only women can offer, explain, or understand—seems to me to be, at best, a very contentious proposal, and one for which there is little or no evidence.

I am not sure how far Banks is prepared to take his argument that knowledge is dependent upon gender, class, or race, but if indeed the argument is that knowledge exists only in the eye of the beholder or only in the experiences of various groups within society, then it seems to me (and I suspect to many others) that the very notion of knowledge, and the possibility of communicating knowledge from one human being to another, collapses. How can knowledge exist if what we know is derived from and dependent upon our gender, class, or racial group? How can any understandings be established if all understandings are dependent on arbitrary cultural factors? How can there be a curriculum for any subject if the knowledge base of that subject is dependent upon social configurations?

Secondly, Banks reports that criticisms have been made of both traditional scholarly methods of the search for truth and the traditional proof processes in the various disciplines. He points in particular to pathologies within social scientific research, to the suppression of voices from the margin, and to the concept that reality is open to social restructuring. Again, Banks shows cause for his arguments, and presents particular evidence that is impossible to refute. Yes, historians in the past have often ignored important factors in their explanations of past events; they often have been mistaken in their interpretation of social events; and they have also been guilty of racist or sexist assumptions. But to suggest that historians have been in error (or worse) in the past is one claim; to deny the ideals of objectivity, the possibility of rational discourse, and the rational examination of knowledge claims in history is a very different one. While a historian may never attain perfectly these ideals, they remain central to his or her task. In making judgments about the past, the moment that a historian abandons the thorough search for available evidence, the scrupulous testing of that evidence, and the careful weighing of various testimonies within particular historical contexts, then he or she simply becomes a propagandist (or worse).

Third, Banks makes an eloquent plea for what he labels transformation in education in general and in the social studies
curriculum in particular. Transformation is not a new word in the educational lexicon, but it has assumed great popularity of late. Despite that popularity, it is not easily defined, and the definitions offered in the educational literature are vague and imprecise. One reason for this imprecision is that those using the term seem singularly divided about what it means. In that context, the examples of particular transformative experiments in the twentieth century have not been encouraging. Again, there are elements in Banks' arguments with which one cannot but agree (e.g., that the school curriculum should be thoughtful and reflective). But if the transformative curriculum is to reflect relativist positions within alternative ways of knowing and if it is to abandon ideals of scholarly methods and debates, then the debate assumes a very different hue. If to be transformative means to deny these ideals, then a school curriculum which accepts that aim simply cannot be considered educational.

Finally, Banks argues that the transformative curriculum will lead to human betterment and render the nation "more humane and just." I find it difficult to reconcile that general aspiration with his earlier arguments. If the knowledge available to students is divided into various social compartments, each claiming some intellectual privilege, then a counterargument can be made that social divisions within the nation will be strengthened rather than diminished. If there are no standards of investigation and verification of findings, then it is extremely unlikely that schools will be able to encourage disinterested inquiry into social issues. To the extent that our schools are used simply as vehicles for advancing political agendas, then they are likely (as Banks demonstrates) to promote social disruption rather than the thoughtful discussion of important social questions.

Banks' section on actual change in the social studies classroom is heartening. He points to the need to examine how "implicit cultural assumptions, frames of knowledge, perspectives, and biases influence how knowledge is constructed" (notions, incidentally, which comprised a much more prominent part of the so-called social studies reform movement in the 1960s than Banks has allowed). Few would disagree either with this general objective or with Banks' reframing of the social studies curriculum to introduce evidence and data previously ignored or underestimated. Any such redefinition of the curriculum should be set within a framework in which evidence is examined dispassionately, in which the veracity of various claims is tested, in which the search for solutions to problems is open-ended, and in which the ultimate aim, however elusive, is the search for truth.
This article is a discussion of how ideological paradigms shaped during the Cold War might be adapted in high schools to explore critically the roles played by the United States in world affairs during the last half century. The author focuses on two specific paradigms, represented respectively by the work of Paul Gagnon and Noam Chomsky. Whereas Gagnon asserts that examination of flaws in American foreign and military policies must be tempered by recognition of the legitimate national security concerns of policymakers and the difficult dilemmas they face, Chomsky argues that the rela objective of American policies has been geopolitical dominance and that the methods used to realize that objective have been ruthless. The author concludes with the argument that allowing students to stand outside of both paradigms and explore them in light of historical evidence will help them to develop a meaningful perspective on the roles played by the U.S. during the Cold War.

At the end of the last decade, both the Bradley Commission on History in the Schools (Bradley Commission) and the National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools (National Commission) emphasized the need to strengthen high school American history programs. Calling for correlation between the study of American history and the study of European and world history, the reports of both bodies also reflected a growing perception nationally that many economic, social, and environmental issues can be meaningfully understood only within a global context. While the National Commission report advocated "teaching our nation's history as part of the general story of humanity," the Bradley Commission referred to
the history of Western civilization as revealing "our democratic political heritage and its vicissitudes" and described world history as acquainting us "with the nations and people with whom we shall share a common global destiny" (National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools, 1989, p. 14; Bradley Commission on History in the Schools, 1989, p. 24).

No social studies educator who reads and reflects at all upon the United States and the roles it plays in the world is likely to disagree in principle with a call to teach our nation's history as part of the general story of humanity; such a position is not likely to offend any ideological sensibility. Whether such an educator is conservative, liberal, or radical in his or her interpretation of historical and social issues, it should be apparent that helping students make sense of the shifting geo-political balance of power in the wake of the Cold War, a rapidly changing global economy, narcotics trafficking, or the impact of immigration on American society and culture clearly all require such an approach. Yet, when considering how to represent concretely in high school curricula the general story of humanity embodied in the Cold War, informed and thoughtful social studies educators are not likely to reach such consensus.

The termination of the Cold War has not brought an end to vigorous and often acrimonious debate among historians and social scientists who still approach interpretation of the Cold War from vastly different ideological and historiographic frames of reference (Paterson et al., 1990; Hogan, 1992; Gaddis, 1993; Jones & Woods, 1993; Cumings, 1993). Significant differences of opinion continue over such important methodological issues as how to assess and accurately interpret the intentions and ideological perspectives of American policy-makers, how to ascertain the nature of the Soviet threat to American economic interests and national security, how to describe the relationship between the United States and the Third World, how to identify the influence public and private institutions exercise on American foreign and military, and how to apply the tools of social history to study the influence of non-elite groups on those policies. Even more fundamental is the continuing ideological rift separating those historians and social scientists who perceive American foreign and military policies as stemming in most cases from legitimate national security concerns and those scholars who perceive those policies for the most part as a betrayal of democratic values at the heart of American political culture.

Paul Gagnon has developed the most prominent recent paradigm expressly for use in high school history courses offering a systematic explanation of the part played by the United States in the Cold War. Gagnon is a historian very much aligned with those who American policy as at times mistaken, unwise, or tragic, but created and
implemented by mostly well-intentioned national leaders facing to the best of their abilities the real threats to American security in particular and to democracy throughout the world in general.

When evaluating the utility of his paradigm and considering how it might best be applied in high school curricula, however, social studies educators must keep in mind an important competing paradigm, one that rests upon the premise that a systemic contradiction existed between American foreign and military policies during the Cold War on the one hand and the best elements of American political culture on the other. Systematically elaborated in the work of Noam Chomsky over the course of the last 25 years, such a perspective holds that American political and economic leaders have not been either well-intentioned or democratic in international affairs and depicts implementation of American Cold War policy as calculated aggression aimed at consolidating the economic and military hegemony of the United States around the world.

Representing very different sets of ideological premises and readings of history and current politics, these two paradigms illustrate a schism in academic circles over the meaning of the Cold War, divide that social social studies educators need to understand and, if possible, turn to educational advantage in the classroom. Helping students pit such starkly different interpretive models against each other and critically examine both in the light of the historical evidence is in the best tradition of the critical pragmatist approach to the study of social issues as epitomized by the work of such educators as Shirley Engle, Anna Ochoa, Maurice Hunt, Lawrence Metcalf, and Alan Francis Griffin (Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Hunt & Metcalf, 1955; Griffin, 1992). It also hearkens back to an older tradition grounded in the classical liberal thought of the Enlightenment and summarized in Thomas Jefferson's statement that "[r]eason and free inquiry are the only effectual agents against error" (Jefferson, 1961, p. 63). According to this tradition, only by critically examining strong representations of opposing interpretations of an issue can individuals come to a meaningful understanding.

I use the term paradigm intentionally in this article. Paul Gagnon provides an interpretation of American involvement in the Cold War and a structure for discussing that involvement in the classroom, both of which are grounded in broader theoretical understandings of the meaning of world history and the nature of a properly constructed civic education. Likewise, Noam Chomsky's work on the Cold War—which I address as representative of a competing paradigm emerging from New Left critical theory and revisionist scholarship of the 1960s and 1970s—is grounded theoretically in the fundamental distinction between "capitalist democracy" and "meaningful democracy" that he draws in his reading of American history as an evolving struggle
between adherents to these two different visions of democracy, and in his understanding of how public consent is manufactured in cultural institutions like schools in the United States. Both Gagnon and Chomsky provide a systematic theoretical framework for making sense of American involvement in the Cold War and clear guidelines to govern discussion and inquiry about the Cold War.

Ultimately, in the course of exploring these paradigms with students and examining how well they explain American involvement in the Cold War, teachers can also raise questions suggested by the conflicts between the paradigms and aimed at teasing out broader generalizations about the historical development of political culture and institutions in the United States and the ways in which they have shaped American use of power abroad. What is the nature of democracy? To what extent have American political and economic institutions acted in ways that are democratic? Have American military, diplomatic, and economic initiatives abroad historically been for the most part inherently undemocratic quests to impose American hegemony in other parts of the world, or have they been characterized generally by a respect for other peoples' freedom and a genuine desire to export democracy?

The Paradigm of Paul Gagnon: Tolerating Evils in the Pursuit of Good

The work of Paul Gagnon, professor of history at University of Massachusetts, Boston and principal investigator and editor for the Bradley Commission, illustrates the importance of considering carefully the educational utility of Cold War paradigms. Gagnon wrote Democracy's Untold Story: What World History Textbooks Neglect (1987) and Democracy's Half-Told Story: What American History Textbooks Should Add (1989) for the Education for Democracy Project, a joint project of The American Federation of Teachers, The Educational Excellence Network (which also sponsored the Bradley Commission), and Freedom House. Ostensibly written as critiques of commonly used history textbooks, Gagnon's two books also serve as curricular guides. They forward an argument that the struggle to achieve democracy should be the organizing theme for both world and American history courses, suggest topics to be addressed, and discuss how best to balance and cover political, intellectual, social, economic, and military history.

Gagnon's book is very much an ideological artifact of the late Cold War era. This becomes evident if one looks carefully at his diagnosis of the fundamental problems facing American civic education, and examines how he uses that diagnosis to shape the parameters for textbook and classroom discourse on the relationship of the United
States to other nations. Gagnon’s framework for determining what is acceptable and unacceptable for inclusion requires close scrutiny.

A statement of principles included in each book lays out school responsibility in the area of civic education: In order to play their necessary role of safeguarding American democracy, schools must “purposely impart to their students the learning necessary for an informed, reasoned allegiance to the ideals of a free society” (Gagnon, 1987, p. 14). In turn, this entails “our transmitting to each new generation the political vision of liberty and equality that unites us as Americans—and a deep loyalty to the political institutions our founders put together to fulfill that vision” (Gagnon, 1989, p. 161). Unfortunately, realization of this primary civic goal in American schools has been seriously threatened by a “a certain lack of confidence in our own liberal, democratic values” and “an unwillingness to draw normative distinctions between them and the ideas of nondemocratic regimes” among some educators (Gagnon, 1987, p. 15; Gagnon, 1989, pp. 162-63). Aggravating such widespread cultural relativism among educational professionals is the sheer ignorance—due to the decline in history course work in schools—of most students regarding democratic institutions and principles. The problem, however, is not merely curricular in nature; it is also ideological. Growing relativism and declining commitment to democratic principles and institutions can also be directly linked to “an industry of blame” spawned by those who during the crises of the 1960s and early 1970s became “indifferent to, or even alienated from, American democracy, out of disillusion over its failings in practice” (Gagnon, 1987, p. 17; Gagnon, 1989, p. 164):

First, America had its long-overdue reckoning with the historic national shame of racial discrimination. Then the country found itself mired in the Vietnam War, and was further shocked and disheartened by assassinations and the events of Watergate. As we struggled to confront our failings and correct our flaws, legitimate self-criticism turned at times into an industry of blame. The United States and its democratic allies were often presented as though we alone had failed, and as though our faults invalidated the very ideals that taught us how to recognize failure when we met it (Gagnon, 1989, pp. 164-65).

Hence, excessive and unbalanced criticisms of American institutions and ideals—in large part associated with the critiques of American military and foreign policy during the Vietnam era—have contributed greatly to a deep-seated malaise among Americans and a severe challenge for civic educators. Gagnon never explicitly identifies who engages in the industry of blame, except when he makes references
in both books to revisionist historians who place more blame for the origin of Cold War on the United States than on the Soviet Union. Such excessive viewpoints apparently are to be excluded from the classroom: “None [of the world history textbooks which he reviewed] pretends to take up the revisionist debate; each is content to state the obvious” (Gagnon, 1987, p. 132; Gagnon, 1989, p. 133).

In fact, Gagnon himself engages in ‘legitimate self-criticism’ of American foreign and military affairs in Democracy’s Half-Told Story. He recommends “the problem of the ‘imperial presidency’ and secret government” be included as one of six main topics on which to focus study of post-World War II American history (Gagnon, 1989, p. 130). He expresses concerns regarding the distorting impact of the military-industrial complex on the American economy and political system. He criticizes the demagogery of Joseph McCarthy and the immoderate rhetoric of John Foster Dulles. He cites General George C. Marshall’s warning to the nation following the Second World War to not, as was the case in Athens after its victory over Persia, allow hubris to cause it to become overextended in world events. He criticizes the resort by American leaders to apparently easy and cost-effective answers to international conflicts—such as American participation in the coups in Iran and Guatemala during the 1950s—that “were to raise enormous difficulties later on” (Gagnon, 1989, p. 138). He acknowledges as “shameful” CIA-sponsored manuals for use in Central America that “suggest the murder of friends, in order to blacken enemies” (Gagnon, 1989, p. 142).

Yet, Gagnon qualifies such criticisms. Hence, the “tragedy” of Vietnam and “the excesses of secret government” were a result of legitimate good intentions combined with lack of sufficient knowledge and “the overheated polemic of politicians” (Gagnon, 1989, p. 137). Moreover, even such serious excess on the part of the American government must be weighed against what he refers to elsewhere as “the problems all nations face in a dangerous world” and “a democratic nation’s need of security for itself and its interests abroad” (Gagnon, 1989, p. 143).

Gagnon, then, is not advocating a return to the thoroughly uncritical and chauvinistic celebration of America’s role in the world, a perspective that characterizes American history textbooks written during the first two decades of the Cold War. In the words of Frances FitzGerald, these books tended to portray the United States as “a kind of Salvation Army to the rest of the world: throughout history, it had done little but dispense benefits to poor, ignorant, and diseased countries” (FitzGerald, 1980, p. 129). Gagnon instead provides an ideological framework to govern discussion and inquiry, one that allows for critique of American foreign and military policies and actions and also allows for relatively complex judgment on the part of students.
Students after all are to be introduced to “the notion that good and bad, progressive and regressive, very often co-exist, in history, as in their daily lives” (Gagnon, 1989, p. 36).

Gagnon sets limits, however, to critiques that can be raised legitimately. A teacher, student, or textbook author may speak of the American government’s excesses, mistakes in judgment, or occasional failures to implement democratic principles in the conduct of foreign and military policies, but according to Gagnon’s own formula for addressing such flaws, that individual must treat them ultimately, to borrow a phrase from John Lewis Gaddis, as “examples of tolerating evils in the pursuit of good.” Certainly, American foreign and military policies at times were enacted in ways that were harmful to other peoples and deceitful to the American public, but such activity was conducted by leaders who were genuinely trying to confront severe threats to American security, who often lacked adequate information upon which to base decisions, who often had to make decisions based upon partisan political considerations rather than purely objective and disinterested analysis or moral reasoning, and who often faced complex dilemmas for which there were no clear-cut and neat moral solutions. Gaddis states this particular perspective on American Cold War policy, which he shares with Gagnon, rather well:

All of these examples of tolerating evils in the pursuit of good—lack of candor in portraying the threat, the postponement of negotiations, intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, even the decision to build the ultimate weapon in order to avoid psychological insecurities and to have a bargaining chip—were made by men with good intentions in the interests of what they thought to be good causes. Nevertheless, these decisions could not help but raise the question of where such compromises would stop. How much evil did one have to put up with, to return to Niebuhr’s terminology, in order to accomplish good (Gaddis, 1992, p. 53).

In his work, Gagnon portrays himself as the advocate of an ideological center balanced between dogmatic and distorted arguments of the Left and Right. He presents himself as a strong voice for recognizing complexity in history, opposed to ideologues who demand unreflective adherence to whatever simplification of history fits their particular party line. Yet, the complexity that he offers is kept within specific boundaries. We can discuss evils pursued by men with good intentions; we can debate whether certain compromises with principles should have been made, and what factors caused American leaders to believe them necessary at the time. To question, however, whether the
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intentions of American political leaders were in fact good places one in the camp of revisionist historians who can not—or will not—see the obvious. To deny good intentions—as Alan Tonelson, associate editor of Foreign Policy magazine, argues in a 1986 review of Noam Chomsky’s Turning the Tide—“reflects a failure to think of United States national interests in a Hobbesian world in which tragic choices are sometimes unavoidable” (Tonelson, 1986, p. 28).

The Paradigm of Noam Chomsky:
A Consistent Pattern of American Aggression

One way to determine if those perspectives that Gagnon labels the industry of blame ought in fact to be dismissed is to identify the strongest and analyze it. Focusing on those areas of history curricula that explicitly address the roles played by the United States in world affairs during the Cold War era, the analyst would need to find a perspective that places primary blame for the origin of the conflict upon the United States, and that categorically denies that American actions abroad are, despite any excesses, misjudgments, and mistakes, “the extension of democracy’s habits at home” (Gagnon, 1989, p. 102). If even the strongest identifiable representation is irrational or inadmissible because of clear distortion of historical evidence, then it can be safely excluded; however, if it offers a rational interpretation of American actions during the last half century and rests upon a reasonable interpretation of historical evidence, then it can be excluded only at the risk of denying students a credible perspective that may shed vital light on the recent historical development of forces in the world that will immediately and profoundly affect their lives.

Among the most systematically articulated and defended perspectives that fit the above criteria for the industry of blame is the paradigm summarized by Noam Chomsky in On Power and Ideology: The Managua Lectures, published in the same year as Democracy’s Untold Story. Whereas Gagnon depicts the American political system as a functioning democracy despite its faults, Chomsky draws a distinction between “meaningful democracy” and the kind of “capitalist democracy” which, he argues, has come to predominate in the United States.

Capitalist democracy is oligarchical in nature: “a system of governance in which elite elements based in the business community control the state by virtue of their dominance of the private society, while the population observes quietly...a system of elite decision and public ratification” (Chomsky, 1987, p. 6). The system is perpetuated largely through the two-party structure, since both major parties are dominated at their highest levels by elites, and since their programs, to the extent that they diverge, represent competing interests and
viewpoints among elite groups: “There is no political party based on labor and the poor, responsive to some extent to their needs and interests and committed to limited reforms of the capitalist system, such as the socialist, labor, or Communist parties in Europe” (Chomsky, 1987, p. 117). Maintaining such a political system requires the “manufacture of consent” (a term Chomsky borrows from Walter Lippmann) in order to keep people “passive, ignorant and apathetic” and to keep intellectuals from raising divergent questions (Chomsky, 1987, pp. 10, 127). The influence of more libertarian strains of the Enlightenment limits the power of the state to directly coerce citizens and compels elites to resort to ideological manipulation rather than more direct forms of violence as a primary means to suppress challenges to their authority.

At the heart of this hegemonic process is a political theology propagated by mainstream media, scholarship, and government rhetoric—a body of sancrosanct assumptions regarding the inherent virtue of the American government and economic system—which is not questioned by respectable journalists, intellectuals, experts, or leaders (Chomsky, 1987, pp. 10, 129). Such assumptions set the parameters for acceptable dialogue: “Within the ideological system, it is permissible, even meritorious, to record ‘errors’ and ‘failures’ in pursuit of these noble objectives [which are taken for granted], but not to expose their systematic patterns and to trace these ‘blunders’ to the conscious planning that regularly underlies them or to their roots in the pattern of privilege and domination in the domestic society” (Chomsky, 1987, p. 12). To move outside of these parameters and argue that the Vietnam War was the result of calculated American aggression or that the United States government has systematically facilitated exploitation and violence in the Third World is to lose one’s standing as a respectable journalist, intellectual, or political figure, and also to risk the institutional status and sources of employment and the personal advancement associated with such standing. In a society such as ours, Chomsky argues, heretics are not burned at the stake or even in most cases imprisoned; rather, they are excluded from access to the marketplace of ideas shaped by dominant cultural institutions or they are marginalized. Threats regarding loss of status or position are not usually necessary to keep educators, careerists in government and business, or journalists within the doctrinal system, however, most are so socialized through years of schooling and professional life that conforming has become largely second nature.

Despite Chomsky’s bleak portrayal of the political and doctrinal systems in the United States, he also maintains that elite hegemony can be contested, and therein lies the hope for eventual achievement of meaningful democracy. The imposed ideology is “paper thin” and can be challenged through “committed efforts” (Chomsky,
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1987, p. 131). As in the case of the antiwar movement, these committed efforts tend to be made by grassroots protest movements who can rally large numbers of citizens during crisis situations, but who are unable—due to the lack of an established press, party structure, or educational institutions—to fully articulate a systematic critique or program of action or to achieve more than limited successes. Despite their limitations, however, such movements indicate what the structure of a meaningful democracy might be:

Meaningful democracy must be based on an organizational structure that permits isolated individuals to enter the domain of decision making by pooling their limited resources, educating themselves and others, and formulating ideas and programs that they can place on the political agenda and work to realize (Chomsky, 1987, p. 123).

To understand American relations within the world during the Cold War era, then, according to Chomsky one must first understand how those relations have been shaped by policies forged largely outside of public purview by those holding positions of power in a highly circumscribed capitalist democracy. Second, the doctrinal system transmitted through media, education, and political rhetoric distorts and thereby sanitizes American political and economic policies and their impacts on the world. Third, contrary such historical representations, the Cold War was a well-intentioned reaction by the United States to the threat of Soviet expansionism. Although by no means benign, the Soviet Union at the end of the Second World War was little more than a regional military and economic power and was exceedingly careful not to challenge American power outside its own limited sphere of influence.

A close and honest scrutiny of available documentary evidence reveals that the main concern of American foreign policy planners throughout the postwar period to use American power proactively to build a world system subordinate to American national security interests as they defined it (Chomsky, 1987, Lecture 1). In the doctrinal system that was manufactured consciously by the state to justify Cold War policy and for the most part accepted compliantly by media and academia, the term Communist came to be applied to virtually any group that opposed American power (Chomsky, 1987, p. 10). American response to such opposition was characteristically ruthless, either directly through military intervention and terroristic covert operations or indirectly through facilitation of indigenous military dictatorships or death squads. What ultimately evolved during the Cold War, then, was a tacit arrangement between the United States and Soviet Union.
that—despite all the saber rattling and posturing—each govern its own respective sphere of influence without interference from the other. Speaking to Nicaraguans in the audience during a question-and-answer period following one of his 1986 lectures at the Universidad Centroamericano in Managua, Chomsky (1987) argued:

One of the truths about the world is that there are two superpowers, one a huge power which happens to have its boot on your neck, another, a smaller power which happens to have its boot on other people's necks. In fact these two superpowers have a form of tacit cooperation in controlling much of the world (p. 51).

Any theoretical attempt to describe social reality is open to criticism, and Chomsky's is no exception. Almost any careful and critical reader is likely to wonder at times about the context for some of the quotations with which he copiously documents his argument or about the nature of the sources that he cites. Moreover, whereas Paul Gagnon is quick to find extenuating circumstances to soften any criticism of American foreign policy makers, Chomsky is utterly unforgiving: policy makers propagate violence in the world because they are either cynical, self-deceived, indoctrinated into the propaganda system, or a combination thereof. One might well wonder if vital nuances are missing in a critique characterized by such unrelentingly absolute judgments, or whether as Walter LaFeber (1988) asserted in his review of Manufacturing Consent, which Chomsky co-authored with Edward S. Herman, his argument "is sometimes weakened by overstatement" (p. 27). Critics more strident than LaFeber have rejected almost entirely the value of Chomsky's depictions of capitalist democracy, American foreign policy, and hegemony.

Evaluating the Educational Utility of Chomsky's Paradigm: The Case of the Vietnam War

Gagnon argues that revisionist historians and other participants in the industry of blame seriously distort the role of the United States in the Cold War. The implication of his argument is clear: The viewpoints of those engaged in such immoderate criticism can only hinder students' attempts to conduct legitimate self-criticism and to construct realistic and balanced understandings of American foreign and military policies. To carry Gagnon's argument to its logical conclusion, a marketplace of ideas in the classroom is best served by omitting misleading viewpoints or—if it is necessary to acknowledge their existence—by making clear how they distort and mislead. Even if educators grant this logic that maintaining parameters that excluding
the patently implausible or dishonest point of view from serious
attention in the classroom is necessary, the question remains whether
Chomsky's work falls outside those parameters. Despite any flaws,
does Chomsky's theoretical position provide a rational framework
which fits the evidence closely enough to be of educational use in
discussing, for instance, the role played by the United States in the
Vietnam War. Conversely, is it a polemic too distorted by partisan
fervor to cast any meaningful light in history classrooms on the nature
of American involvement in the war?

Not surprisingly, Chomsky asserts that the Vietnam War
followed a consistent pattern of American aggression that began with
support until for the French war to recolonize Indochina, the subsequent
subversion of the Geneva Agreements and imposition of a "terrorist
regime" south of the 17th parallel, and "direct land invasion" in the
mid-1960s after it became apparent that neither the Diem regime nor
its immediate successors could develop political stability in the face of
43-44). In its general outline Chomsky's is a defensible position, one
that is both conceptually clearer and better fitted to the evidence than
the treatment of the war that Gagnon suggests.

After all, the U.S. government provided indispensable financial
and logistical support for the French, and worked to undermine the
Geneva Agreements. Diem launched an anticommunist denunciation
campaign in mid-1955, aimed at destroying both his Communist and
anti-Communist opposition, and his security forces were given
progressively wider discretion in arresting anyone they suspected of
disloyalty. Tens of thousands of political opponents were confined for
"re-education" in concentration camps. Thousands were executed during
the course of the campaign. Torture was common, and as Joseph
Butttinger, an American confidante of Diem early in his regime, later
noted concerning the origin of the political killings and imprisonments:
"All of this happened more than two years before the Communists
began to commit acts of terror against local government officials" (in
Kahin, 1986, pp. 96-97). Given that Diem's regime was dependent for
its survival on American aid and protection and that Diem's
appointment as prime minister was engineered by the United States, it
is certainly not a distortion of the evidence to argue that the United
States imposed a terrorist regime.

Nor is it irrational interpret direct American military
intervention beginning in 1965 as an invasion. Many American officials
at the time were unable to define, at least in private, the government
formed in mid-1965 by Air Marshall Ky and General Thieu as a viable
state. William Bundy, assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern
affairs at the time, later observed that it "seemed to all of us the
bottom of the barrel, absolutely the bottom of the barrel" (in Herring,
A 1967 U.S. intelligence assessment described that government as plagued by an "almost total absence of any organized popular support, or even sympathy" (in Kahin, 1986, p. 421; emphasis in original). Moreover, if one looks at the other side, the war in its earliest stage was carried on by southern Vietminh units often in contradiction to the directives of the Communist Party leadership in Hanoi, which directed its party cadres in the south to avoid military confrontation with the Diem regime. Even though party leadership in the north finally authorized armed struggle and sought to assume control—ultimately sending North Vietnamese troops beginning in 1964—it is entirely reasonable to argue that none of this early activity constituted foreign aggression against the South Vietnamese state, and as such was not a violation of the Geneva Agreements.

Finally, one can argue that the military methods employed by the United States in Vietnam were much more consistent with invasion than with protection from aggression. In the words of one U.S. army officer's history of the war, an emphasis on high body count often encouraged American unit commanders to "bend the ROE [rules of engagement] in favor of killing 'potential' insurgents, although in many instances they might have been innocent civilians" (Krepinevich, 1986, p. 202). Moreover, in free fire zones all Vietnamese—whether civilians or enemy combatants—were regarded as legitimate targets, and use of large quantities of lethal antipersonnel weapons such as napalm and cluster bombs led to heavy civilian casualties. Extensive use of defoliants such as Agent Orange led to high levels of dioxin among the South Vietnamese. Artillery and aerial bombardment—as well as search-and-destroy sweeps by U.S., Korean, and South Vietnamese soldiers—led to massive property destruction.

Approximately 70 percent of the villages in Quang Ngai province alone were destroyed by 1967 according to one reporter who based his estimate on interviews with U.S. military personnel and on flights over the province in U.S. Air Force forward air control planes (Schell, 1988, p. 198). According to historian George McT. Kahin, such destruction was often used consciously to "clear out peasants from territory over which it was too difficult to exercise authority and push them into refugee camps, where they could be more easily controlled" (Kahin, 1986, p. 407). As Jonathan Schell, the reporter who studied the campaign in Quang Ngai province in 1967 put it, "We are destroying, seemingly by inadvertence, the very country we are supposedly protecting" (Schell, 1988, p. 191).

If one looks at the case of the Vietnam War or for that matter nations like Guatemala or Haiti that have been firmly within the American sphere of influence throughout the twentieth century but are among the poorest countries in the world, Chomsky's paradigm presents a defensible explanation for what went wrong. Critics no doubt have
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raised valid concerns regarding his work; nevertheless, a strong argument exists to show that his paradigm has a valid place in the marketplace of ideas in the classroom.

Standing Outside of the Paradigms

What would happen if high school students were exposed to elements of both Gagnon's and Chomsky's paradigms adapted for the secondary school level? The Bradley Commission calls for slowing down coverage periodically in order to explore topics "worth extended treatment" in depth and to discuss "significant, thoughtful questions" (Bradley Commission, 1989, p. 41). With regard to the Vietnam War, for example, learning about the American war effort could be structured around investigation of the conflicting themes of tragic but fundamentally well-intended miscalculation (Gagnon) and calculated aggression (Chomsky).

Such treatment would provide a general framework within which students could analyze and explore the implications of a variety of primary source materials, and might generate significant, thoughtful questions. From the Vietnam War era, students might look at Walter Rostow's (1965) rationale for American counterinsurgency, discussed in his address entitled "Guerrilla Warfare in Underdeveloped Areas", as well as excerpts from Daniel Ellsberg's (1972) essays against American involvement in the war in Vietnam. They could contrast the speeches of Presidents Johnson and Nixon with Dr. Martin Luther King's denunciation of the American war effort in his address at the Riverside Church in New York City on April 4, 1967 (Johnson, 1965; Nixon, 1969; King, 1987). They could look at reactions to the war in the media ranging from the views of I. F. Stone (or Chomsky himself) to those of William F. Buckley (Stone, 1989; Chomsky, 1970, Buckley, 1972). They could examine a range of viewpoints belonging to American participants of the war, as found in sources such as Al Santoli's (1981) Everything We Had and The Winter Soldier Investigation (1972) published by Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

Students might also find it both enlightening and sobering to view American foreign and military policies through the eyes of a Vietnamese writer such as Thich Nhat Hanh, a Buddhist monk prominent in the movement to find an alternative to both the violence of the National Liberation Front and the violence of the United States (Hanh, 1967). Passions have cooled to the point where it should be possible to examine the testimony offered in David Chanoff and Doan Van Toai (1986, Eds.) Portrait of the Enemy or Nguyen Thi Dinh's (1976) account of resistance to the Diem regime in the Mekong Delta, a movement she helped to organize during the early 1960s. In conjunction with such inquiry, students might be encouraged to look also at early
American efforts to define the enemy such as “The Faceless Viet Cong” (1966) by CIA analyst George Carver or Frances FitzGerald’s (1972) Fire in the Lake.

Such treatment might also allow for a useful case study in the exercise of American military power abroad. Students might analyze American bombing strategies and tactics in Southeast Asia, and also the military, geopolitical, social, and ecological consequences of such actions. They might trace the history of a major search-and-destroy operation, or study the linkages between U.S. involvement in Vietnam with U.S. military operations during the same period in Guatemala or the Dominican Republic. Students could do study comparing use of military technology and its consequences in Vietnam and in the Persian Gulf War. They could use the Vietnam War as a case study to examine the vital links between U.S. military actions on the one hand and foreign aid and development activities undertaken by government bodies such as the Agency for International Development on the other.

Evidence and perspectives on the war uncovered in the course of such exercises would give students a knowledge base for making preliminary evaluations regarding the utility of two radically different interpretations of the American war effort in Vietnam. Is that war effort best described as tragic, mistaken, and an understandable response to the real danger posed by Communist aggression to both the Vietnamese and American peoples? Or is it best described as an invasion utterly inconsonant with genuine democratic principles and responsible for inflicting tremendous suffering on the Vietnamese people? It may be that the most reflective students would engage in what Michelle Fine (1991) has termed “contradictory talk”: a rejection of simple right and wrong answers, an acknowledgement of insights afforded by each position, a probing of the weak points in each, and a struggle to articulate a complex alternative interpretation (p. 42).

Such treatment of American involvement in the Vietnam War—or, alternatively, comparable in-depth treatment of American military, diplomatic, and economic involvement in Latin America or in the Middle East during the Cold War—would enable students to explore more general points of contention separating the two paradigms. Such exercises, of course, take time and require access to a range of sources, including a teacher with enough content knowledge and pedagogical skill to be able to guide students effectively. Students must have already acquired basic research and inquiry skills and a basic knowledge base in earlier American diplomatic and military history. In order for such exercises to be possible, the community and school district must be tolerant enough to allow teachers and students to create a genuine marketplace of ideas by exploring controversial arguments and raising potentially uncomfortable questions.

The benefits of such exercises, however, are large. Rather than
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locking students into a hegemonic Cold War paradigm aimed at rehabilitating faith in American foreign policy following the Vietnam War—or for that matter into an uncritical acceptance of a radical critique such as Chomsky's—educators need to devise the means to allow students to examine these important paradigms and to evaluate their usefulness for making sense of history and putting the present into perspective. Only when students have genuine ideological choices and the opportunity to play paradigms off against each other can they think critically about the roles that the United States has played in the world.

In order to understand the formulation of military and foreign policies, and to reflect carefully upon the question of whether they function in ways that can be reconciled with moral principle and a general national interest, students need a complex approach to study of the Cold War era. Students are not going to acquire such sophisticated competencies from reading the cursory, often simplistic, inaccurate, misleading, or incomprehensible narratives in secondary school textbooks, nor will they acquire them in an ideologically restrictive classroom environment. The history classroom is particularly well suited to help students explore critically the habits of thought by which Americans in recent generations have made sense of the world. Such exploration can be used in turn as the basis for discussion of the post-Cold War world.

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REACTION

Editor's Note: The following is a response to the recent special issue of Theory and Research in Social Education on the foundations of the social studies (Volume 22, Number 4, Fall, 1994).

And Miles to Go before We Sleep: Toward a Usable Past of the Social Studies

O. L. DAVIS, JR., Professor of Education, University of Texas at Austin.

Social studies practitioners and researchers alike appear mainly to understand their practice in terms of a current reality only. On those rare occasions when they do think about past practice, practitioners misinterpret their history as an extension of the present. Presentism continues to shackle the social studies field, and this easy snapshot, accurate as it is, depicts only a portion of reality. It portrays the intensity that accompanies everyday concern for substantive and vigorous programs, and it records current attention to the near-term future of the field. Nevertheless, presentism remains a conspicuous and disgraceful flaw.

Its fast bonds appear to be slipping, albeit only slightly. This clearly personal perception of reality is not simply legitimation of hope by assertion. Increasing evidence attests to this sense of change. Particularly important in this regard is the Fall, 1994 issue of Theory and Research in Social Education. Its articles and book review document the progress underway to recover the history of the social studies field.

This change, although impressively tardy, signals a momentous shift in the professionalization of social studies. Fewer than 15 years ago, the history of the social studies was marked mainly by a fragile awareness of need coupled with a cautious optimism (Davis, 1981). Still largely neglected, this history now receives increasing recognition and respect. It also regularly attracts new recruits to serious historical inquiry in the field. Scholarship in the history of social studies in the American school curriculum has increased in quantity and quality. On the other hand, its small corpus suggests but does not constitute a usable past.

Scholarship continues to suffer the ills of a presentist practice and it suffers from inattention, indifference, and casual support by too many senior social studies scholars. Individual works, moreover, are marked by impatient probing and haphazard sifting of evidence, overblown attention to ideologies and advocacies at the expense of more sharply focused cases within specific school contexts, and simplified
interpretations. These serious flaws notwithstanding, the present status of the history of the social studies indicates advancement and vigor largely unknown just two decades ago. In a research arena characterized by increasing and seriously intentioned activity, such flaws can be tolerated even if they are not excused. Subsequent inquiry can be trusted to detect error, modify interpretations, and reform mistaken judgments. Two complementary developments accompany the refreshing interest in this field.

Only a few scholars actively pursue the history of the social studies, although their numbers are increasing. Equally important, some of these individuals focus a considerable portion of their productive scholarship on the history of this curricular field. Several foster additional interest through their teaching and supervision of graduate research. The growing popularity of qualitative research clearly has loosened the grip of the positivist paradigm on graduate thesis and dissertation inquiries and on an increasing number of journals that publish research about the social studies. Acceptance of the appropriateness and legitimacy of historical inquiries in education has been a major unanticipated consequence of this development. Without doubt, each author of an article in the special issue has benefited from this changed intellectual environment. So, too, has the field itself, and it will continue to prosper. Especially important to the nurture of historical scholarship in the social studies has been the very active Foundations of the Social Studies group of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). This small group provides a forum for presentation and discussion of research, along with a modest publication venue. More valuable to its members is the means of personal encouragement and support it provides.

A second development is the slow collection of manuscripts and other archival materials. Two particularly noteworthy efforts merit special mention: the availability of the NCSS Archives at Teachers College, Columbia University, and the activity of the NCSS Archives Committee. The recognized need for additional collections has prompted several individual scholars to launch and/or to expand specialized collections of sources (e.g., oral histories). These significant activities augur well for the increased understanding of the history of the social studies. Their impact on current scholarship is evident in several articles in the special issue on the foundations of the social studies.

The articles in the special TRSE issue reflect two prominent thrusts of recent historical research about social studies education. One illuminates the contributions of individuals, projects, and movements to the progress of the field; the other seeks meaning within specific periods.
Michael Whelan's study (1994) of Albert Bushnell Hart joins a series of important intellectual biographies written about individuals who have contributed significantly to the social studies field. Sometimes called "Old Masters and Founders," these biographies put faces to ideas that too commonly have lost proper attribution. Whelan's article reminds the field of its origins in the academic study of history, and it rescues from present obscurity an individual historian whose late nineteenth and early twentieth century influence on the curriculum persists today.

This account of Hart's work uncovers much about how history became embedded in the "grammar of schooling" (Tyack & Tobin, 1994). The status of history in the American school curriculum was fragmentary and precarious until the advent of the high school; however, within a decade, its place in the curriculum was assured by the 1893 report of the Committee of Ten. Hart exercised certain influence on this report. His recommendations, as Whelan notes, accorded remarkably with those of the 1916 report of the Committee on the Social Studies. Hart's work, therefore, seems less an apology for history in the schools than advocacy for the role of history in an enlarged and invigorated citizenship education curriculum.

Whelan's portrayal of Hart's work adds a fresh historical perspective to the origin of the social studies field. Simply, the intense struggle many scholars depicted among historians and social studies advocates for control of this curricular area (e.g., Lybarger, 1991; Saxe, 1991, 1992) may be more imagined than real. The emergence of the social studies as a curricular component in the first quarter of this century actually may represent an example of changed rhetorical emphasis rather than an actual contest for curricular control. The persistence of a sequenced offering of history courses in the actual curriculum of twentieth century American schools (Shaver, Davis & Helburn, 1979) appears to present solid evidence for such an alternative explanation.

Advocacies for social studies curriculum space, time, and emphasis on the part of many special interests groups, from consumer education to global education, certainly have occurred during this century. Some of these elements still clamor for visibility. Others (e.g., law-related education) have found a place within the regular social studies program but they remain at risk, no matter the rhetoric of

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1 Three sets of biographies of notable social studies educators have been published under the editorship of Atwood (1982) and Barth (1985-86, 1988-89). Most of the original articles were presented at Foundations of the Social Studies SIG sessions at NCSS annual meetings.
legitimation. None has dislodged history from the school curriculum regardless of the claims by various observers (e.g., Bestor, 1953; Ravitch & Finn, 1987). Solid historical investigations of the contested ground underlying the social studies are sorely needed before mindful interpretation may triumph over ideology.

Two matters of persisting concern to the improved teaching of history were highlighted in the work of historian Hart and other authors of methods textbooks (Saxe, 1994). Strong history teaching required teachers to know considerable history. In marked contrast to contemporary rhetoric, however, these historians insisted that teachers understand how history was constructed. Their emphasis on using manuscript sources in school history courses clearly mirrored the new scientific history and its reliance upon archival materials. In their view, history should be as rich and engaging to students as to historians. Moreover, they believed that in learning to use such sources, students would employ the habits of mind understood to underlie democratic discourse and decision making. School history, under these conditions, constituted a central position in education for citizenship.

As Saxe properly observed, the relationship of these methods textbooks to actual history instruction remains problematic. Little solid historical study exists, unfortunately, about the extent to which teacher candidates who used these methods textbooks really employed historical sources in their classroom teaching. Based upon altogether fragmentary evidence, few teachers appeared to do so.

The "good idea" of teaching school history courses using original documents encountered the textbook, a certain reality of the classroom, and lost the contest. Textbooks of the times likely were no less discursive than those of the present day (e.g., Davis et al., 1986), and they did not contain the documents necessary for source teaching. In addition, history teachers probably did not know how to use sources in their instruction. Within this probable context, teachers may have considered the good idea to carry too high a cost, they may well have questioned its validity, and they also may have believed that the proposals were inconsistent with their teaching style. Simply stated, teachers probably considered source teaching to be impractical (Doyle & Ponder, 1977). These conjectures merit the intense light of historical inquiry. The social studies field should not be held hostage either to healthy ignorance or to weak inference.

In fact, the account of the Man: A Course of Study MACOS project and its materials (Dow, 1994; Goetz, 1994) represents the kind of sensitive and authoritative investigations that generally are needed. The demise of MACOS was assured long before the acrimonious public

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2 Cuban (1993) noted a contemporary "good idea," computers in education, that also lost its encounter with the classroom.
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controversies that beseiged it (e.g., Kraus, 1979). MACOS was simply the Edsel of the New Social Studies. Other projects of this vibrant era merit mindful study (e.g., Beyer, 1994; Fraenkel, 1994).

The recent special issue of TRSE emphasizes the importance of individuals and ideas to social studies education. Both merit increased historical inquiry. Professional practice does not just happen; it is accompanied by ideas. Individual teachers, other professionals, and scholars (e.g., historians, social studies theorists) are central figures within specific contexts.

Practice and Rhetoric: A Distinction with a Difference

Rhetoric surely presents some evidence of the condition of the social studies field at a particular time. Writings and speeches about current and desired practice not only shape but preserve a record of contemporary discourse about matters of worth and importance. On the other hand, this rhetoric commonly carries the heavy burden of advocacy.

In all fields throughout the course of American education, no one practice, idea, or set of materials has endured over an extended period of time. Such a persistent commonplace, therefore, invites irregular doses of brutal criticism and fresh elixirs of salvation accompanied by strident justifications. The rhetoric of appeal, critique, failure, and possibility routinely obscures descriptions of ordinary practice.

Actual classroom engagements seldom are reported. They are filled with ubiquitous teacher talk, student responses and questions, and books and other instructional materials. Their common place, even in treating special topics or presenting unusual activities, never seems important enough to report to a wider audience. When engagements are completed, their artifacts (e.g., lesson plans, students reports) are discarded without record, reflecting the empty or shallow memory of teaching practice (Davis, 1992).

Thus, historians of the social studies are confronted by an almost intractable problem. The evidence of actual social studies practice either is unavailable or must be inferred from other, less direct sources. The rhetoric about preferred practice, however, is available in abundance. It fills the field’s journals, reports, and books. Although sometimes difficult to accomplish, separation of the rhetoric of advocacy from the that of practice is essential to providing accurate, rich, authentic portrayals of the field (Davis, 1977, 1991). This serious historiographic problem is well articulated in the articles by Nelson (1994) and Field (1994).

Nelson’s helpful depiction of the field relies exclusively upon his seasoned view of the contemporary published rhetoric of preferred social studies education. The lode of this rhetoric is rich. Nelson’s
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essay, substantial and soundly reasoned, must be understood for what it is and not misunderstood for what it is not. It is a historical essay of prominent ideas within social studies education over the last quarter century, not a portrayal of the social studies practiced during that period.

On the other hand, Field's essay focuses on elementary school social studies practice during the short period of U.S. involvement in World War II. It enriches previous understandings of wartime social studies as experienced by teachers and students in American schools (e.g., Nelson, 1986; Jones, 1990; Davis, 1993). Her study reveals the common difficulty of identification, separation, and relation of the rhetoric of preferred practice from and to reports of actual practice in wartime social studies programs. On occasion, the rhetoric of preferred practice was not only the best but the only evidence available. Her efforts to partition advocacy and practice succeed admirably.

Both these essays illustrate the usefulness of historical inquiry employing strikingly different categories of evidence. Rhetorical claims and descriptions of practice are distinct, and carry different types of meanings; they are not to be confused.

And Miles to Go: Next Steps into the Future

The journey toward recovery of the history of the social studies field clearly is underway, and the recent special issue of TRSE represents the interest and strength of the collective enterprise. This is an important step in the right direction, but much remains to be done. For the social studies, a field in which history always has been prominent, its own history has suffered unjustified neglect for too long. This anomaly surely will be overcome, and it is this prospect that sustains the journey.

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ESSAY REVIEW

The Professors and the Press: The 'Politically Correct' Talk Back


Review by WALTER PARKER, University of Washington.

The Leming/Parker exchange (*TRSE*, 20(4), Fall, 1992) concerned the right relationship between social studies professors, school teachers, and the general public. Professor Leming argued that social studies professors' political views were extremely liberal, risking this group's usefulness to the field. I responded that the politics of schooling should not be avoided, and that if social studies professors needed to do anything differently it was not to muffle their political views but, on quite another tack, to articulate them more clearly, and aim them more carefully at the central problems of the curriculum field.

Along comes a volume that widens the lens on this old debate. Mark Edmundson's collection features new and often brilliant essays by some of America's most distinguished scholars from the arts and sciences responding to the polemical broadside against the academy conducted in magazines (*Newsweek, U.S. News and World Report, The Atlantic, The New Yorker, The New Republic*) and in a curious genre of university-bashing books penned for the general public: D'Souza's *Illiberal Education*, Kimball's *Tenured Radicals*, and Lehman's *Sign of the Times*, to name three. The bashers' targets, often the authors in this volume, generally have continued to write to one another and to their graduate students; that is, they have not talked back.

Back Talk

In what may be the first satisfying collection of back talk, we find essays by philosophers and literary theorists, all of whom are teachers: some feminist, some deconstructionist, some humanist, some pragmatist, some moderate, and some radical. They make a splendidly heterogeneous group and broach no consensus. They wouldn't even if they could. Consider their argument over the scope of politics: Duke University's eminent feminist critic Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick attempts to deconstruct sexual identity—to politicize and thereby "to denaturalize any presumptive understanding of the relation of 'heterosexual' to
‘homosexual’ as modern sexual identities” (p. 250). Milton scholar William Kerrigan protests this and other political forays into the field of scholarship. “Politics that allow no concept of the apolitical are the worst kind,” he writes (p. 164). From a different vantage point, philosopher Richard Rorty agrees. His essay, which gives the book its title, argues against the common insistence on finding one single way of holding everything, from gardening (orchids) to governing (Trotsky). His critics on both the left and the right want to see love, power, and justice as coming together deep down in the nature of things, or in the human soul, or in the structure of language, or somewhere. They want some sort of guarantee that their intellectual acuity or their aesthetic sensitivity, and those special ecstatic moments that such acuity or sensitivity sometimes affords, are of some relevance to their moral convictions. They still think that virtue and knowledge are somehow linked—that being right about philosophical matters is important for right action [emphasis in original] (Rorty, 1993, p. 48).

While a few of the volume’s 13 chapters are not written in the promised accessible genre, none requires exhaustive effort. Taken together, they provide a thoroughly provocative, readable, and often entertaining treatment of canonicity, ‘political correctness’, inclusion, relativism, and more. Along the way, we meet Emerson, William James, Dewey, T. S. Eliot, LeRoi Jones, rappers Public Enemy and Salt-n-Peppa, the Great Books, The Norton Anthology, and social/personal fissures such as the riots in Los Angeles, breast cancer, war in the Middle East, and gay and lesbian adolescent suicides. We thus travel across a wider, more differentiated landscape than normally comes into view, and we are allowed it because these authors travel on theories that encourage breadth, irreducibility, and historicity—in a word, diversity. So, when African Americanist Houston Baker in the essay “Handling Crisis” asks the old question, “Why can’t Johnny read?” he swiftly observes that the question is not asked seriously today. If it were, “then the decidedly economic overdetermination of Johnny’s plight would not be so consistently ignored, erased, or denied” (p. 272).

Yet the essays are not merely back talk. They are not simply responses to the popular writers whom Sedgwick calls the punditeratti. One gets the impression that many of the scholars assembled here have little interest in responding, for that would distract them from their work, in sharp contrast to the pundits for whom this is their work. These essays are better described as compressed accounts of the authors’ particular lines of work comingled with intellectual autobiography. The combination is what makes the volume work so well. The personal
dimension in the essays underscores the differences that exist within the university generally and in this collection especially. It should, in Edmundson's words, "counter attempts by the academy-bashers to render their foes as caricatures, creatures markedly less human than themselves or their readers" (p. 7).

The self-representations are telling, as a few examples should show. Rorty writes of his simultaneous interest at the age of 12 in the Dewey Commission's inquiry into the Moscow trials of Leon Trotsky and his "private, weird, snobbish, incommunicable" interest in "socially useless" things such as orchids (p. 35). Rorty's initial wish for a level of comprehension at which the two would become one sent him on the wild goose chase called philosophy. He admits to being glad for all the years spent at it, however. Without it, he tells us, he might "never have been able to stop looking for what Derrida calls 'a full presence beyond the reach of play,' for a luminous synoptic vision" (p. 50). He might have settled for the vision of Socrates, Plato, Marx, or Kant, for the urge to settle is strong, and the alternative seems terrifying or, at least, socially unworkable. The punditeratti delight in accusing those who do not settle into a fixed position of relativism, the belief that one life way is as good as another. But Rorty is quick to point out that the absence of a unifying vision does not prevent one from making judgments. It does not prevent one from arguing that Nazis are bad and Mother Theresa is good, that a moment of silence should be allowed in schools, that Maya Angelou is a brilliant or mediocre poet, or whatever; only that there is no neutral, common ground to which one can resort to produce or receive such judgments or to arbitrate disagreements. "For Deweyan pragmatists like me," he writes, history and anthropology are enough to show that there is no such place (p. 44).

J. Hillis Miller, the American deconstructionist, writes of the lasting influence of his scientific bent and his Protestant religious training. As a physics major he learned to account for everything, which might as well be deconstruction's motto. Meanwhile, in church, the subtext was deconstruction's rule: Don't trust authorities. Nancy Miller, who helped launch feminist criticism in America, traces her work since 1962 and gives readers a chronologically ordered phenomenological account: (a) before feminism, 1962 to 1968, during which she was harassed by a writing tutor in Paris; (b) during feminism, 1969 to 1977, at Columbia in graduate school, seeing that she had become a structuralist and a feminist all at once; (c) feminist literary criticism, 1978 to 1989, "speaking as a feminist, 'for all women'"; (d) after feminism, 1990 to the present: "[M]ost of all, I miss the passion of community" (p. 94-96).

Finally, Edward Said shows us how Orientalism, his 1978 treatise on the Western way of knowing and dominating Asia, emerged from the confluence of what had been parallel streams in his life: a
critical reading of French theorists Derrida and Foucault, and the 1967 Middle East war. Thereafter he fused his academic work, which until then had been "merely" academic, with his cultural identity as a Jerusalem-born Palestinian. This was a watershed for him, a new beginning. His refusal to hop on the French bandwagon was affirmed, for it left no room for beginnings of any kind. Foucault was aligned with power, after all (Said calls him its scribe), and allowed no possibility of escape.

**Political Correctness**

Political correctness receives more attention from these authors, one way or another, than any other topic. Writing about what she calls "the paradigm shift in the humanities," Amherst English professor Judith Frank takes on columnist George Will (p. 129). Frank tells the story of her encounter with a radiologist who, having learned she was an English professor, administered a running commentary on political correctness along with radiation therapy for the cancer in her breast. "I argued fiercely with him for fifteen minutes or so," she writes, surprised that she let him engage her, especially given the circumstances (p. 127). Afterward, angry that she had argued badly, she resolved to write her essay to "oppose this backlash" (p. 128).

She concerns herself especially with Will's rant on being a victim. In the April 22, 1991, issue of *Newsweek*, he wrote:

> Shakespeare's *Tempest* reflects the imperialist rape of the Third World. Emily Dickinson's poetic references to peas and flower buds are encoded messages of feminist rage, exulting clitoral masturbation to protest the prison of patriarchal sex roles. Jane Austen's supposed serenity masks boiling fury about male domination, expressed in the nastiness of minor characters who are "really" not minor (Will, in Frank, 1993, p. 129).

In Frank's analysis, Will's buffoonery is strategic. He denies that the humanities are a profession, a speech community whose practitioners are trained in its particular language, and insists its new members are crybabies. He tells the reading public that canon-shaking on university campuses amounts to no more than an unkempt "proliferation of groups nursing grievances and demanding entitlements" (in Frank, 1993, p. 131).

The supplanting of esthetic by political responses to literature makes literature primarily interesting as a mere index of who had power and whom the powerful
victimized. Thus does criticism dovetail with the political agenda of victimology (Will, in Frank, 1993, p. 131).

Victimology. Entitlements. Will talks about people of color, about lost voices in African American, Asian American, Native American, and Hispanic literature. He talks not about professors any more, Frank writes, but about “the petty, the insolent, the uppity, women” (p. 131). He displays the anxiety of any ancient regime facing a disastrous domino effect: Canon revision will denaturalize official knowledge; the curriculum will be unmasked, its roots found in social convention rather than in scholarship; decision making will become necessary; barbarians, excluded from the old canon, will have a voice. The con is ending, and the aristocracy is worried.

Sedgwick builds a different response to the politically correct charge, concentrating on the habits of mind that suffuse it. She finds an overarching history of antiintellectualism both on the right and the left without which no twentieth-century political movement could dare play its hand. The right’s recent success in lumping together so many contemporary opposition movements under the rubric of politically correct is, according to Sedgwick, an antiintellectual coup not seen since the artistic and academic purges of Germany and Russia in the 1930s. But why, she asks, the widespread antiintellectualism? Sedgwick traces it to the odd notion that thinking and theorizing are scarce, that they, like gold or rice, must play by the first rule of economics. Furthermore, she connects this impoverished notion of thought to workplace contingencies. Most people’s work lives are sharply constrained. Not only is employment uncertain, but using one’s mind while at work is rare—so rare that workplaces where thinking is fostered still make the evening news, and CEOs are salaried, bonused, and benefited as though they had the only brains in the company. Academic faculty, by contrast, still “can expend some substantial part of our paid labor on projects we ourselves have conceived, relating to questions whose urgency and interest make a claim on our own minds, imaginations, and consciences” (p. 263).

Conclusion

Does the collection succeed? For the most part, it does. We are given an array of distinguished scholars, some of whom are gifted writers. They merge explication with autobiography, giving readers friendly introductions to pragmatism, deconstruction, feminist criticism, gay and lesbian studies, and other currents in the movement that Will, D’Souza, and others have caricatured and, apparently, seek to stop (or simply to make money from, I’m not sure which). Only a few authors respond in kind; that is, with caricatures. Houston Baker conjures up a
scene with "Barbara Streisand in the background crooning 'The Way We Were' as Allan Bloom exhorts a tearful congregation of ex-Cornell professors, and William Bennett passes the collection plate for suggested 'required readings' to reclaim a legacy. Meanwhile, Deacon Hirsch counts entries" (p. 272).

Mostly, however, these writers take the high road, clarifying their work and showing its origin in their lives. Edmundson, a contributing editor at *Harper's*, hopes the volume will open up a line of communication between professors and the public, the press in particular. This is a decent if unrealistic goal, but the essays in this volume do not need it. For the most part, they stand on their own as evidence of liberal education, which is quite enough.

Social studies professors might gain some inspiration here. These colleagues seem not to have considered even for a moment caving into their critics, muzzling themselves, or towing a party line, and all this tenacity at a time when economic instability is providing antidemocratic forces with an audience! Neither are they concerned about agreeing with one another, let alone developing a unified voice or presenting a common front. Whether these stances display prodemocratic courage, disarray, or political stupidity is a question on which reasonable people will disagree, hence the Leming/Parker exchange I spoke of initially. I, for one, believe such efforts are chiefly the first of these combined with a determination actually to use the academic freedom that tenure ostensibly protects.

References


Walter Parker


ESSAY REVIEW

The Struggle for a Regime of Truth within the Social Studies


Review by KEVIN D. VINSON, Department of Education, Loyola College, Baltimore, Maryland.

The philosophy of Michel Foucault has grown increasingly more influential in the study of education since his death in 1984. Such Foucauldian concepts as archaeology, care of the self, discipline, genealogy, human science, power-knowledge, regime of truth, technologies of the self, and will to truth have provided teachers and researchers new tools, methodologies, and frameworks with which to pursue their tasks. So far, those researchers investigating educational politics, economics, philosophy, or theory and those concerned with educational criticism, primarily the so-called critical pedagogues or critical theorists (Adler & Goodman, 1986; Gage, 1989; Giroux, 1988a), have led the way in applying Foucault's thought. Their continuing quest toward a deep, meaningful understanding of the sociocultural, economic, and political contexts within which educational systems operate—with and upon their participants (e.g., Ball, 1990; Giroux, 1988a; Popkewitz, 1987, 1991)—encourages this connection.

In The Struggle for Pedagogies Jennifer M. Gore (1993), a self-described radical teacher educator and senior lecturer at the University of Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia, demonstrates that the ostensibly liberating or emancipatory educational philosophies espoused by critical and feminist theorists risk becoming (and to some degree already have become) as oppressive as the traditional approaches they denounce. By exploring critical and feminist pedagogies as Foucauldian regimes of truth, Gore engages in a process of

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1I wish to thank Dr. Linda Valli, Dr. Steven Selden, and Dr. Joseph Cirrincione for their invaluable support, both in terms of their constructive criticisms of earlier drafts of this article and their guidance and clarification with respect to some of the difficulties inherent in the works of Foucault, Gore, and the radical pedagogues. Thanks also to students in my summer 1994 sections of “Current Research on Teaching and Learning” at Loyola College for their insightful feedback. Last, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to Dr. Perry Marker.

2New is, of course, a relative term. Although Foucault's career spanned decades, his work is new for many educators because it was not applied widely to earlier educational research, and did not form a significant—if any—part of teacher education programs at either the undergraduate or graduate level.
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self-criticism, seeking an understanding of the contradictions apparent in both philosophical schools.

Gore's purpose is to examine radical pedagogy according to Foucault's (e.g., 1980) concept of regime of truth—defined as a circular relationship between power and knowledge in which power cannot exist without the production and control of knowledge (and vice versa). The book is organized into two sections. Gore presents the theoretical and methodological framework for her analysis, then applies it specifically to feminist and critical pedagogies.

The Gore Approach

Gore presents a critique of radical—critical and feminist—pedagogies. She focuses on four major problematic issues as necessary to understanding both in their current dominant constructions: (1) inconsistencies or ambiguities surrounding the meaning of pedagogy; (2) fragmentation within and between radical discourses; (3) the academic institutional locations of these discourses that place them within some particular context of social regulation and some particular 'will to truth'; and (4) the lack of any significant impact of radical pedagogies on mainstream education (p. 2).

According to Gore, there are many ways to define pedagogy, each more or less related to the etymologically correct "science of teaching children" (p. 3). In general usage, of course, pedagogy connotes teaching or instruction. Gore, however, defines pedagogy as a "process of knowledge production" which includes "both instruction and social vision" (pp. 4-5), arguing that from this position radical pedagogies actually encompass two key components: "(1) the pedagogy argued for (the claims made about the process of knowledge production) and (2) the pedagogy of the argument (the process of knowledge production evident in the argument itself)" (p. 5). One of her major themes is that there frequently exist dangerous contradictions between the pedagogy argued for and the pedagogy of the argument.

Further, both categories of radical pedagogy are fragmented; Gore identifies two major strands within each. The strands of feminist pedagogy represent the work of scholars in Women's Studies.

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3 Gore states, "I am using 'discourse' in a poststructuralist sense where the concern is to answer such questions as 'How does discourse function?' 'Where is it to be found?' 'How does it get produced and regulated?' 'What are its social effects?' In short, discourse in this sense is not a question of meaning or of method, but a description of function" (pp. 1-2).

4 Will to truth (and will to power) are concepts introduced by Nietzsche (1967, 1887/1969) and expounded upon by Foucault (1969/1972; 1984a). Gore defines the idea "as the desire to know the difference between truth and falsity in particular disciplines or discourses" (p. 10).
The Struggle for Truth within Social Studies

departments and in colleges, schools, and departments of Education. For Gore, feminist pedagogy as constructed within Women's Studies emphasizes curriculum and instruction proper; that is, how and what to teach, and thus de-emphasizes any specific "feminist social vision" (p. 20). Although a "general feminist vision is assumed" (p. 20), it lies separate from the processes of teaching and learning. The second strand, feminist pedagogy as constructed in colleges, schools, and departments of Education, downplays the instructional element of pedagogy, focusing instead upon the more comprehensive pedagogy of "how gendered knowledge and experience are produced" (p. 26). In other words, the feminist pedagogy of Women's Studies programs focuses on teaching and instruction, while the feminist pedagogy of Education programs focuses on gender and social vision. This discourse is further fragmented by the fact that although both strands share some common themes—women as important contributors to schooling, "women's shared experience of oppression" (p. 31), rejection of the structural patriarchy pervasive in Western culture, and concern with voice and empowerment—there is little direct interaction or contact among them (and even less between them and critical pedagogy, although they too share common ground).

The fragmentation within critical pedagogy is even clearer. Whereas Gore presents feminist pedagogy primarily in terms of institutional location, she distinguishes strands of critical pedagogy according to the work of key theorists. She thus sees one major strand characterized by the writings of Giroux (e.g., 1983, 1988a, 1988b) and McLaren (e.g., 1989), and a second by the writings of Freire (e.g., 1970/1993, 1978) and Shor (e.g., 1980, 1988; Shor & Freire, 1987). Like the feminist pedagogy constructed by scholars in Education, the critical approach of Giroux/McLaren emphasizes social vision over instruction. It offers a specific political discourse based upon neomarxism and Frankfurt School critical theory; thus, "it emphasizes a critique...of social injustices and inequities, particularly those constructed around class differences, but also...gender and racial differences...perpetuated through schooling" (p. 34). It provides "a social vision for teachers' work rather than guidelines for instructional practice" (p. 34). "The emphasis is on the critique of oppressions and the abstract outline of possibilities rather than on the specific actions or strategies of educators or others" (p. 35). Conversely, the Freire/Shor strand "offers

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5Capitalization here follows Gore's usage; for example, "Education" (as opposed to "education") refers to an academic field.

6This fragmentation is central to Gore's understanding of feminist and critical pedagogies as regimes of truth and will be further explained below.

7For a good overview of critical theory and its relationship to Foucault and postmodernism see, for example, Best & Kellner (1991).
concrete suggestions and examples taken from their own pedagogical practice...intended to help other educators” (p. 40). Its focus is instruction “that is pedagogy as classroom practice consistent with liberatory politics” (p. 42). Again Gore notes that these strands engage in little direct interaction with one another or with feminist pedagogy. To the extent that radical pedagogy seeks inclusion—education for everyone—Gore believes that its fragmentation is inevitably “counterproductive” (p. 48).

Gore’s point is not that feminist and critical pedagogies are adversaries instead of allies, but simply that each strand is indifferent toward the others. She suggests that this may best be understood by considering these discourses as regimes of truth. In doing so, she first clarifies the concept in terms of Foucault’s (1984b) theory of power/knowledge/ethics (Foucault, 1984b). Power is that relationship among beings by which one entity is able to limit, to set parameters for, to govern, or to control the behavior of others. It is practiced, not owned; it is a dynamic process—the political aspect of a regime. Knowledge is that system of rules distinguishing true from false by which power is linked to truth. And while power and knowledge are not the same qualities, they are inseparably joined within a relationship of circular interdependence. In modern societies, power is exercised through culturally determined and imposed technologies of the self,8 or moralities of action—the ethical aspect of a regime. Gore summarizes:

I understand regime of truth to convey the connection between power and knowledge which is produced by, and produces, a specific art of government...[in which] such government has increasingly produced self-disciplining or self-styling. It...relies on technologies of the self which are actualized and resisted/get acted out through the body. Power exists only in action and is actualized at the site of the body, in our actions and behaviors [emphasis added] (p. 55).

Gore argues that “everything can be related to regimes of truth” (p. 62). She proposes a methodology following that of Feher (1987) and Foucault (1983a, 1983b) in which regimes of truth are identified and analyzed vis-à-vis their political and ethical components.9 Politically, Gore examines:

8This concept is explored as part of Foucault’s theory of ethics, especially in terms of care for the self. See, for example, Foucault (1983a; 1983b, 1984/1988a, 1988b).

9Gore specifically defines the political aspects of a regime of truth as “the relations of power [and] what goes on between people” and the ethical aspects of a regime of truth as “the relation to one’s self and the way that relationship shifts” (p. 63).
The Struggle for Truth within Social Studies

(1) the system of differentiations that characterizes [the] given regime, permitting one to act upon the actions of another or to exercise power; (2) the functions and objectives pursued by those who act upon the actions of others...the objectives of the relations of power; (3) the specific techniques and practices that actualize the relations of power; (4) the institutions which integrate these practices; [and] (5) the formation of knowledge that describes the reality produced by a given regime of power and that raises problems immanent to that reality (p. 63).

Ethically, she stresses:

(1) aspects of the self considered problematic in [the] regime—the gestures, postures, and attitudes which are in need of disciplining or styling; (2) in the name of what the self is disciplined or styled—[Foucault's] "mode of subjection"; (3) the specific techniques that are developed to achieve a particular self-styling; [and] (4) the assigned goals of these ethical practices of self-styling, the kind of being to which we aspire (p. 63).

Feminist and Critical Pedagogies

In applying her framework to feminist and critical pedagogies, Gore focuses on the concepts of authority and empowerment because of their centrality to both discourses. Following her proposed methodology, she examines the political aspects of feminist pedagogy by analyzing the differentiations distinguishing the regime. She identifies three hierarchical, dichotomous, "totalizing" (p. 74) constructions of authority—"authority versus nurturance, authority as power, authority as authorship" (p. 68)—each implying its own view of empowerment. These differentiations represent, Gore continues, a series of power relations—"teacher and student, women and men, feminist and non-feminist, feminist and patriarch" (p. 74)—from which those who seek to "act upon the actions of others in the name of feminist pedagogy" develop two objectives: "to counter patriarchy...and to transform schools and/or the academy toward feminist politics/practices" (p. 75).

The implementation of these objectives involves both the pedagogy argued for within feminist classrooms and the pedagogy of the argument within feminist literature. Techniques of content and process define the pedagogy argued for. Content approaches include: "(1) presenting 'new' texts, previously marginalized or overlooked within disciplinary knowledge; (2) engaging in 'new readings' of old
texts; [and] (3) drawing on the personal experiences of teacher[s] and students as the basis of knowledge production” (p. 79). Process—classroom practice—emphasizes cooperative (at least noncompetitive) strategies such as “discussion, role play, journal writing and storytelling, and alternative grading and evaluation” (p. 79). With the pedagogy of the argument, however, feminist pedagogy more clearly manifests itself as a regime of truth. The difficulty for Gore is that although nondidactic, cooperative, emancipatory techniques are argued for, they are practiced infrequently. Feminist pedagogy thus becomes a discipline characterized by a stifling, dominant reading of content in which only the feminist perspective is legitimized.

Institutionally, this occurs within the academy and the school. In the academy, the political aspects of the feminist regime demonstrate themselves primarily through Women’s Studies programs. Here the problem is the development of a pedagogical discourse within an environment described by feminists as patriarchal. Feminist scholars want both a forum separate from such institutional patriarchy and the simultaneous acceptance within it. Gore’s criticism is that although feminist pedagogues distance themselves from the patriarchal history of the university, it is the university that enables Women’s Studies programs to succeed. Further, she admonishes feminist theorists for their nearly universal interest in transforming colleges and universities instead of elementary and secondary schools. As Gore notes, this is odd for any pedagogy, feminist or otherwise. She concludes that “[i]n the discourse of feminist pedagogy...some of its central concepts create its major inconsistencies and problems...; [for example] how to reconcile feminism...with the situation of the ‘patriarchal’ institution” (p. 85).

Ethically, Gore examines “what feminist pedagogy says about the relationship one ought to have with oneself” (p. 87). Her finding is that it says very little, ignoring its ethical dimensions (in Foucault’s conceptualization) except for vague, general directives to “reclaim[ ]...authentic voices” (p. 87) and “to be women; to recognize, believe in, and think...as women” (p. 88). The mode of subjection—the disciplinary philosophy—is based on authenticity (real womanhood) and feminist solidarity accomplished through self-validation among students (although Gore correctly criticizes the inattention to specifics). Overall, when feminist pedagogues and their students behave ethically toward one another and themselves, it is for the general purpose of attaining a certain type of being, one based upon emancipation from patriarchy and freedom from various forms of gender oppression.

10 Gore suggests that to blame “The Patriarchy for all that is evil in education” risks becoming “totalizing and polarizing” (p. 83)—another negative potentiality characteristic of regimes of truth.
Within critical pedagogy, politically, Gore identifies a differentiation between "good" and "bad" (p. 94) authority based upon the utility of power. In one, power represents property, and is therefore central to the elite classes' ability to dominate. In the other, power represents the possibility for productive social change. Either way, for Gore, the critical pedagogues' disdain for one's power over another contradicts their assertion that teachers by definition necessarily are authorities who must lead. And while critical pedagogy's objective is ostensibly the emancipation of all oppressed and powerless people—represented in certain power relations, such as oppressor and oppressed, teacher and student, and theorist and practitioner—that means simply freedom from the evils of capitalism (not, for example, ethnic, gender, and/or racial oppression). Gore even argues that critical pedagogy is perhaps not liberating for students at all, but only for teachers (who are encouraged to act freely as authorities) and for theorists (who freely maintain an arrogant distance between their work and real world practice). This ironic recognition of contradictions represents a stinging, sobering criticism of the very critics who work against the contradictions inherent in so-called mainstream educational approaches.

Another contradiction exists between the pedagogy argued for and the pedagogy of the argument. Like feminist pedagogy, critical pedagogy is an advocacy of cooperative, egalitarian instruction. The pedagogy of its arguments, however, implies hierarchy, isolation, and inaccessibility. Its language, for example, frequently confuses many teachers who are neither professional theorists nor philosophers. Specific instructional techniques are rarely offered, so that already overburdened teachers not only must comprehend, subscribe to, and enact a particular social vision, but also must develop the methods by which such a vision can be actualized in their classrooms. As with feminist pedagogy, the primary institutions in which critical pedagogy is integrated are schools and universities. And, as Gore argues, critical pedagogues support several contradictions relative to these environments. Whereas they base their vision on a critique of schools as oppressive and as reproductive of societal injustices and inequalities, they also portray them as potentially democratic and liberating. Further, the primary domain of knowledge production is the academy—again implying a hierarchy (and a dominance) of university and professor over school and teacher. Overall, Gore describes the essence of this discourse as totalization since it insists upon a particular conceptualization of authority, power, and oppression—in part because of its roots in such dominating thought systems as neomarxism and the Frankfurt School. Ethically, self-regulation and social empowerment are crucial. Here discipline is enacted "in the name of rational and moral choice" (p. 116), although specifics of the technologies of self
again are ignored. The being to which critical pedagogues aspire (for themselves and their students) is the "transformative intellectual" and/or the "critical and active citizen" (p. 117). Gore concludes that critical pedagogy is unclear in its conceptions of authority and power, overemphasizes social vision at the expense of instruction, liberates the theorist and not the practitioner or student, and downplays the importance of Foucauldian-type ethics.

**The Question of "So What?"**

In *The Struggle for Pedagogues: Critical and Feminist Discourses as Regimes of Truth*, Gore presents three overall conclusions:

1. critical and feminist pedagogy discourses are grounded in conceptions of "power-as-property," and "power-as-dominance," while also maintaining a notion of "power-as-productive," "power-as-creative energy"; (2) these discourses of radical pedagogy have difficulty escaping or altering regulative aspects of pedagogy; [and] (3) in both critical and feminist pedagogy discourses, there is minimal attention to the ethical, in Foucault's sense of that term (p. 119).

According to Gore, these findings support a perspective possible only vis-à-vis Foucauldian analysis. She further suggests that regime of truth as analysis or methodology provides a framework applicable to any discourse in which an investigator seeks some depth of knowledge. It provides a tool for the examination of power-knowledge and thereby mobilizes us into self-analysis. Gore's work leads her to a re-examination of her own construction of radical pedagogy, providing insight into the techniques (e.g., reflective teaching, action research) that might help her and other radical educators overcome the criticisms she introduces.

**Implications for the Social Studies**

Gore's (and, by extension, Foucault's) work offers social educators a number of challenging and fresh ideas. The very concept of regime of truth itself, with all its innate complexities, suggests implications on at least three significant levels: social education theory and research, social studies teacher education, and elementary and secondary social studies instruction. These areas are interrelated, of course, but for present purposes, I will discuss individually the importance of Gore's findings for each.
Social Studies Theory and Research

For most theorists and researchers, the standard perspective from which to understand the social studies is that of the various traditions (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1977; Barth & Shermis, 1970; Engle, 1977; Martorella, 1991). Here, one's approach to social education stems from beliefs and practices regarding purpose, content, and method. According to this model, social educators can be classified in terms of the similarity of their viewpoints to those representing any one of five categories characteristic (historically and presently) of the social studies: citizenship transmission, social science, reflective inquiry, social criticism, and personal development.

Gore offers two prospective threats to this paradigm. First, she provides and subsequently defines the potential for a sixth tradition, social studies as regime of truth, compatible with the dominant framework in that it can be distinguished based upon its own unique views of purpose, method, and content. As a regime of truth, the purpose of social education might be, for example, the use of power to create the institutional mechanisms by which students learn or are taught to control their own behavior toward effective citizenship as defined by those persons most able to demonstrate their power.11 Content would include that knowledge determined by some bureaucratic hierarchy as useful in meeting particular citizenship objectives. The teaching method or methods actualized in classrooms would be those likely to allow the powerful to continue practicing their power and to ensure that students develop the means by which to discipline their own actions toward the predetermined ideal of good citizenship.

Gore's second challenge clearly represents a more ominous threat to the field in that it takes aim at the very foundations of the traditional perspective. Here, the implications of her work suggest an entirely unconventional approach to the social studies. Based upon the power/knowledge/self theorizing of Foucault, she suggests approaching all fields of study (including, therefore, the social studies) in terms of their political and ethical components. Thus, for example, where the traditional framework identifies the perspective of social studies-as-citizenship transmission based upon purpose, content, and method, the regime of truth model would distinguish it as an approach (or regime) only to the extent that it exhibits political and ethical aspects distinct from other approaches (or regimes). In other words, conceivably, it is possible that all social educators could work toward the same purpose (e.g., to encourage effective citizenship), emphasize the same content (e.g., civics), and utilize the same methods

11 This is obviously only one of many possible examples.
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(e.g., cooperative learning) but still represent distinct regimes because of differences in the political and ethical dimensions of their work.

Teacher Education

Both directly and indirectly, Gore provides several indications of how current teacher education practices might be improved. Explicitly, she propounds training in such well-known strategies as “reflective teaching” (p. 149) and “action research” (p. 152). Implicitly, however, her work suggests even more. Whereas in traditional methods courses teachers are introduced to the usual instructional strategies (e.g., lecture, cooperative learning, mastery teaching), Gore advocates newer, more radical modes of thought and practice. Certainly, it is uncommon to expose teacher education students to the means by which they engage in regimes of power and knowledge. When they are so engaged, it is by way of the standard approaches of theorists such as Dewey and the critical pedagogues. Rarely, if ever, is Foucault introduced. From Gore, one might deduce that teacher educators should include discussions of power and knowledge, and that they should emphasize the ways in which teachers work to determine students’ ways of being; that is, while many programs claim to focus on liberating students’ minds and actions, teacher educators should include in their courses some discussion of how teachers, schools, and school systems work toward disciplining students toward some bounded ideal, one implemented only within some regime of truth.

Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Instruction

Perhaps Gore’s greatest contribution is in the area of elementary and secondary instruction. Her work in this emphasizes the importance of politics and ethics, and seems especially important to the social studies, a field in which both traditionally maintain a key position. Consider that a major component of the social studies is the study of society, including those public issues society deems crucial. The meaning of these public issues rests on the belief that they operate within some field of power/knowledge/ethics; that is, politically they include differentiations that allow some citizens to act upon others vis-à-vis certain techniques, ends, institutions, and contextual constructions of knowledge; and ethically they include problematic aspects of self, a mode of subjection, technologies of the self, and a specified telos. In a course on government or democracy, then, an effective investigation into one issue—abortion, for example—might be conducted in a manner similar to Gore’s work on radical pedagogy. Politically, the differentiations might include prolife/antilife or prochoice/antichoice; the objectives of power might be ending legalized abortion or maintaining it; the specific techniques or practices might involve protests and organized political action (or, as recent events
demonstrate, more extreme means); the relevant institutions might include the media, clinics, churches, schools, and political parties; and the formation of knowledge might be based upon one's interpretation of the Constitution—whether one views abortion in terms primarily of a guaranteed right to privacy or a guaranteed right to life—and/or upon one's religious beliefs. Such an analysis could lead students to a greater and deeper comprehension of the complexities surrounding the issue. It would certainly work with others; for example, smoking, the penal system, and health care.

Conclusions

On a number of levels, Jennifer Gore's book provides important contributions to the field of education. First, it offers those already interested in radical pedagogy new ways of knowing and thinking about key topics, such as authenticity, authority, empowerment, pedagogy, and power. Second, it presents a clear (but specialized) interpretation of Foucault's idea of regime of truth—at best a difficult concept. Third, it provides a new analytical methodology—a framework or research tool—by which any pedagogy, class of pedagogies, and/or discipline (e.g., social studies) might be more deeply understood in light of its approaches to power-knowledge and ethics. Fourth, it serves as a model of how serious, introspective, reflective self-criticism might lead to positive changes in one's pedagogical methods. Gore criticizes both theory and practice in order, hopefully, to lead herself and her colleagues toward an overhaul of their thinking and instruction (e.g., by her reconsideration of methods originally perceived as emancipatory, but which, in reality, were inhibiting for many students).12

The Struggle for Pedagogies works best for specialists, or those with an extensive background in Michel Foucault's philosophy as well as in critical and feminist pedagogies; this is, after all, Gore's intended audience. The book's major weakness, however, is its potential inaccessibility to most teacher educators, teachers, and teacher trainees—those without the specialist's expertise. It is therefore ironic that these educators might benefit most from the efforts of Gore's work. (It is also ironic that one of Gore's criticisms of radical pedagogy is its specialized, abstruse nature.) Still, this is an essential and important book for anyone hoping to understand the current state of the field and for anyone interested in cutting-edge research methodologies. It is without question an admirable achievement.

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12 This very point was made by Foucault in one of the works Gore consults. See Foucault (1984c). Specifically, he states: "I do not think that there is anything that is functionally—by its very nature—absolutely liberating" (p. 245).
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INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Theory and Research in Social Education is designed to stimulate and communicate systematic research and thinking in social education. Its purpose is to foster the creation and exchange of ideas and research findings that will expand knowledge about purposes, conditions, and effects of schooling and education about society and social relations.

Conceptualizations and research from all of the social sciences, philosophy, history, and the arts are needed in clarifying thinking and practice in social education. Manuscripts are welcomed on topics such as those that follow:

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF GRANT COMPETITION

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT
CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

Sponsored by the National Council for the Social Studies
Fund for the Advancement of Social Studies Education (FASSE)

FASSE announces a three-year project to develop and implement a successful model for applying the NCSS social studies standards in the schools. FASSE will award a $20,000 grant.

Applicants should consist of a team made up of social studies research and development specialists associated with a college or university and a school-based leadership team. Implementation of the standards in a K-12 district is preferable. The deadline for applications is April 15, 1995. The grant will be awarded no later than June 1, 1995. The grant will run through the 1997-1998 year.

For further information, please contact:

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FASSE Grant Competition
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