EMERGING TEACHER IDENTITY:
A study in learning to teach through the experiences of a secondary social studies methods course.

by

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study focused specifically on a secondary social studies methods course in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia. The intent was to generate descriptions of the methods course experience, and to explore student teachers conceptualizations as they made sense out of learning to teach social studies.

Eight student teachers in one section of SSED 312: Curriculum and instruction in social studies - Secondary agreed to be a part of this study. These eight were interviewed four times over the duration of the five month study. The first interview, prior to the beginning of the methods course, examined their initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy. The second interview, after a month of the course, and the third, following a two week practicum at the mid-point of the course, investigated their conceptualizing in response to specific experiences of the methods course and the practicum. The fourth interview, upon completion of the course, investigated any change in how the participants conceptualized social studies and the salient influences on that change. Data were also collected through my regular observation in the methods class.

Generally, there was some form of change in the conceptualizations of all eight participants, some to a greater extent than others. These changes included being able to identify self as a social studies teacher; understanding the social studies teacher’s moral responsibility, particularly when dealing with value-laden and controversial issues;
clarifying the nature of social studies; and learning about social studies pedagogy. Central to the change process were both reflection on, and articulation of, their initial conceptualizations, as the participants experienced the course.

The most salient influences on change were both internal and external to the course. Internally, the instructor's provocative teaching style, the nature of the course content, and the emphasis on peer interaction were most influential. Other influences included the short practicum, other course work encountered in the preparatory program, and, being a part of this study.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCING THE STUDY

Background to the Problem

Over the past 12 years, I have worked with student teachers in a variety of capacities from school-based positions of sponsor teacher and practicum advisor, to university-based positions of practicum coordinator and course instructor. I have often witnessed the transformation from student to teacher that occurs. I am intrigued by what part teacher preparation programs play in influencing how student teachers make sense of teaching. In particular, based on nine years of instructing an elementary social studies methods course, I am interested in the role that subject-specific methods courses have in this sense making.

My Personal Beliefs About Learning To Teach

I have formed certain beliefs about learning to teach from my years of experience in teacher education. I recognize that these beliefs act as a personal screen through which I filter all new experiences, including this study. One of these beliefs is that teacher education is a life-long journey of which the formal teacher preparation component required for certification is but one part. Consequently, I believe that individual preparatory courses and the formal education program of which they are part cannot fully prepare teachers for the complexities of the classroom, nor should they strive to.

I also believe that teaching is not just about the acquisition of technical expertise, but is also highly contextual and personal. Accordingly, learning to teach cannot
be reduced to a body of knowledge and skills to be mastered. What can best be done at the preservice level is to assist prospective teachers in recognizing and better understanding the interplay of the technical, contextual and personal elements of their teaching. One of the more salient aspects of the formal preparatory component of teacher education, I believe, is that it allows novices time to begin to clarify how these various elements influence their own sense making about what it means to teach, without having the full responsibilities of teaching.

In the past, I have shaped my teaching of the elementary social studies methods course based on these beliefs. While these may be the guiding principles behind my teaching, I would like to know whether student teachers’ views of teaching are comprised of similar elements. I am also intrigued by what role they see their formal preparation playing in learning to become a teacher. As well, I am interested in how other instructors approach their teaching of methods courses as I am always looking for new ways to inform my own practice. Further, since all of my experience has been working with prospective elementary teachers, I am curious about the similarities and differences in the learning-to-teach process at the secondary level. Knowing more about by own subject area by expanding my understanding to include the secondary level can only be beneficial to my teaching. The latter two broad questions are of particular relevance to this study.

Thus, my background experiences and the questions arising from them have provided the personal impetus for undertaking
this study. As well, I have identified certain gaps in the existing learning-to-teach research that have provided further motivation.

Gaps in the Existing Research

Two issues in the extant literature that were thought to be of particular relevance to this study were the role played by coursework, in particular methods courses, in the preparation of teachers, and the question of whether there is an essential knowledge base for learning to teach.

The role of the methods course

Over a decade ago, Feiman-Nemser (1983) contended that little was known about the role of teacher preparation programs in learning to teach. In a recent review of the learning-to-teach literature, Adler (1993) maintained that the situation has not changed. Consequently, Feiman-Nemser (1990) advocated generating descriptions of the teacher education experience in individual settings in order to explore the effects of a particular program on teachers' ideas and practices. Grossman (1990) suggested that one way of exploring this process was through the "lens of subject matter." One such lens is that of a preparatory social studies methods course.

Most student teachers (elementary and secondary social studies majors) across Canada and the U.S.A. take methods courses in social studies curriculum and instruction as a part of their teacher preparation programs. While these courses have been recognized as providing prospective teachers with ways of thinking about social studies and how to approach the teaching of it, longitudinal studies have discovered that they have
varying effects on the teaching of social studies. Findings range from little far reaching influence because of the more powerful pull of personal beliefs and life experiences (Johnston, 1990) and the lack of congruence between what was taught in the course and actual practice (Palonsky & Jacobson, 1989), to having significant influence on practice (Adler, 1984; Yon & Passe, 1993). For the most part, these long term impact studies on social studies (and other subject area) methods courses have tended to rely on the recall of practising teachers about their preparatory programs. Little is known, however, about what actually occurs in these courses (Carter, 1990).

According to Adler (1984), what research has been done in investigating courses in social studies has tended to focus on what ought to be instead of what is being done in them. As well, the majority of these studies have addressed the preparation of elementary teachers as generalists teaching social studies (Wilson, Konopak & Readence, 1994). Here, in this lack of knowledge about the influences of a social studies methods course on learning to teach secondary social studies is one gap in the existing research literature that this study addresses.

A knowledge base for learning to teach

A second relevant concern in the literature has to do with the knowledge that is essential for learning to teach social studies. A review of that literature identified several gaps and questions arising from extant research on the roles of professional knowledge and personal knowledge in learning to
teach. For example, as an element of professional knowledge, subject-matter knowledge is recognized as integral to teaching, yet little is known about the process of acquiring that knowledge or the role of the methods course in that process (Grossman, 1990). Personal histories, including academic background have been acknowledged as important influences on learning to teach social studies (Adler, 1984; Wilson & Wineburg, 1988). However, we need to know more about those influences, in particular, what role they play in the way prospective teachers conceptualize social studies as they experience a social studies methods course.

I suggest that here, in this lack of research on the interplay between professional and personal knowledge in learning to teach, is a second gap in the existing research literature that may be informed by this study.

The Study

The purpose of the study

This qualitative study focused specifically on one preparatory methods course in secondary social studies in the Faculty of Education at The University of British Columbia. The intent of the study was to explore the ways in which student teachers conceptualized social studies as they experienced a social studies methods course. This entailed first examining the participants' initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy prior to the beginning of the course. Second, the participants' reflections on, and change in their initial conceptualizations, as they experienced the social studies methods course were
investigated. Finally, the salient influences on the participants' change in their conceptualizing were explored, as was the nature of that change process.

The research questions

Three research questions directed this study. These were:

1) How do the participants conceptualize the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy prior to the methods course?

2) How do the participants reflect on and begin to change [if at all] their initial conceptualizations of social studies as they experience the methods course? and,

3) What influences are most salient in causing change in the participants' initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy?

These questions were used to guide the collection and analysis of data over the duration of the study.

The research method

Because of my interest in exploring the sense making of student teachers in a methods course, I have chosen a qualitative, descriptive/interpretive approach to this study. Based on instructor interest and consent, one section of SSED 312: Curriculum and instruction in social studies - Secondary (out of three offered in September of 1994 in the Faculty of Education at U.B.C.) was chosen as the focus. Eight student participants in this one course section were self-selected from a group of 15 who had been contacted by letter and telephone concerning the project prior to the commencement of classes. These eight were followed for the 13 week duration of the SSED
312 course in an attempt to understand what influences the methods course was having on their conceptualizations of social studies.

Several ethnographic tools were used in the collection of data. Four one hour, semi-structured interviews were held with each participant over a five month period. The initial interview in August, prior to the first class, was used to explore the participants' initial conceptualizations of social studies based on their personal knowledge arising from prior life experiences. Three subsequent interviews, one in early October, after one month of classes, the second following the two week practicum at the mid-point of the course, and the final one on completion of the 13 week course in December, examined the participants' reflections on their initial conceptualizations about social studies through the experiences of the methods course. Interview transcriptions and my initial interpretations of them were returned to the participants after each interview for member checking and feedback purposes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The instructor was also interviewed on two occasions, prior to and following completion of the course. The first interview was to examine his plans for teaching the social studies methods course, as well as his ideas about what student teachers need to know in order to teach social studies. The second was to check whether there had been any change made in those plans over the duration of the course.

As well, in order to provide a description of the context of the study, I became a regular observer in the methods
During this time I kept detailed field notes which provided a substantial amount of data on the course proceedings.

Data analysis was on-going and began immediately following the first set of interviews. A coding and categorizing procedure described by Tesch (1990) was used to document emerging patterns and topics for organizing the presentation of the data. Each of the three research questions further guided the analysis and were used to organize the analysis chapters (V, VI and VII). The findings were reported in a narrative style, with frequent transcript excerpts interspersed throughout, to emphasize the study's interpretive and descriptive nature and to make the report as vivid and valid as possible.

Contributions of the Study

There are several contributions to our understanding of learning to teach that arise from the findings of this study. First, the study findings advance the existing knowledge on how teaching, in general, and social studies, in particular, were conceptualized by the study participants as preservice teachers, and how these conceptualizations influenced their thinking about teaching as they experienced a social studies methods course.

Second, the study draws attention to the experiences in a methods course, as a part of the formal preservice preparatory program, that were described by student teachers as being most instrumental in influencing reflection on and, at times, change in their initial conceptualizations of the nature of social
studies and social studies pedagogy.

Third, the study raises some questions about the notion of a professional knowledge base for learning to teach and the role that the prior personal knowledge of the teacher has to play in that knowledge base.

Fourth, the study further enlightens the current understanding of the function of the methods course as an element of a preservice teacher education program in addressing and developing the various domains of teacher knowledge.

Fifth, the study highlights the role of reflection and articulation as central elements in the sense making process of the student teachers as they attempt to clarify what it means to be a teacher of social studies.

Sixth, the study recognizes teacher identity as an important part of the knowledge essential for learning to teach and the important role that confrontation with prior personal knowledge plays in shaping that identity.

Finally, some recommendations are made about the instructing of social studies methods courses. These are not to be taken as generalizable, however, as they are based on the unique setting of this study.

Limitations of the Study

The claims made in this study are based on the close examination of only one element of the professional preparation of teachers - a subject-specific methods course. The focus was narrowed further to the subject area of social studies at the secondary level. These claims are intended, therefore, to contribute to our understanding of student teachers'
conceptualizations about teaching as revealed in the particular context described.

It is understood that social studies methods courses, such as the one highlighted in this study, vary in many ways both within these courses, and externally, as to the teacher preparation program in which they are housed. Consequently, as suggested by Eisner (1991), recommendations made for the structuring and teaching of methods courses are provided for the reader as "tentative guides and ideas to be considered, not as prescriptions to follow" (p. 209).

A second limitation of this study is that its entire focus is on a methods course as one element of a formal preparatory program for social studies teachers. It would be presumptuous to suggest that this one course could have been solely responsible for shaping the participants' entire understandings of social studies. It is acknowledged that the methods course is only one component of what goes into the sense making of a social studies teacher. While other influences within the program have been acknowledged, I do not claim to have provided a completely inclusive examination of the potential influences on learning to teach, especially the tacit ones (Polanyi, 1966). The intent of this study was solely to highlight the methods course as one influence on learning to teach.

Thirdly, this study represented the thinking of only eight people from a class of 39, and a total population of 120 across the three course sections offered. It cannot, therefore, be claimed to be representative of the thinking of all course participants. The study does highlight, however, the uniqueness
and similarities of the eight participants as they conceptualized what was experienced and constructed personal meaning out of those experiences. Also acknowledged was that each individual brought prior knowledge of teaching to their coursework. This proved to be a decisive influence on the learning-to-teach process.

Organization of the Chapters

The review of the literature in Chapter II addresses the issue of attempting to define an essential knowledge base for learning to teach and the role of the methods course in preparing teachers. Chapter III presents a discussion of the study's methodology, including the selection of participants, data collection and analysis, and how the findings are reported. Chapter IV provides background information on the instructor of the methods course including his plans for teaching the course. In Chapter V, summative profiles of each participant's initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy have been compiled based on data collected in response to the first research question. Chapter VI focuses on the ways in which the participants conceptualized social studies as they experienced the methods course.

Chapter VII presents a synthesis of the data collected in the final interview in response to the third research question on the overall influences of the methods course. Generally, the participants noted having their initial conceptualizations about social studies changed in some way by their experiences over the five month study. The change process involved
confronting their prior knowledge and either confirming and clarifying it or reconceptualizing it, and, constructing new knowledge. As they reflected on the experiences of the methods course through this process, the participants found that they could better identify themselves as teachers of social studies. They concurred that the influences on the change in their conceptualizations came from both within the methods course and from elements external to the course. A final influence acknowledged by all participants was the "forced reflection" brought about by being a part of this study.

Chapter VIII examines the four areas of knowledge generated about the teaching of social studies as the participants experienced the methods course. These included: knowledge of self as social studies teacher, knowledge of the moral responsibility of the social studies teacher, knowledge of the nature of social studies, and knowledge of social studies pedagogy. Central to recognizing these elements of learning to teach social studies were reflection on and articulation of personal conceptualizations of social studies as the participants experienced the course. Several recommendations concerning the teaching of social studies methods courses arising from the study findings have been made.
CHAPTER II
REVIEWING THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Despite extensive empirical research on teaching, little is known about the role of teacher education programs in learning to teach (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Zeichner, 1986). Consequently, Sarason, Davidson and Blatt (1986) called for further investigation into what actually occurs in teacher education settings to better understand the influences they can have on learning to teach. Lanier and Little (1986) emphasized that these investigations should include descriptive and analytical inquiry into both the curriculum of teacher education and the thinking and learning of preservice teachers.

One issue of particular relevance to understanding the connection between preservice teachers' thinking and professional preparation programs is the notion of defining an essential knowledge base for teaching. Since this issue is of particular relevance to this study, it has been highlighted in the following review of the literature. Research on the role of preparatory course work, in particular the methods course, in addressing this knowledge base for teaching has also been examined.

Defining a Knowledge Base for Teaching

In defining "knowledge base" in their work, Wilson, Shulman and Richert (1987) claimed that it is "the body of understanding, knowledge, skills and dispositions that a teacher needs to perform effectively in a given teaching situation" (p. 106). Research aimed at defining what
constitutes this knowledge base for teaching has increased in the last decade. The process of acquiring that knowledge base has also begun to emerge as a recurrent theme in the learning-to-teach literature (Richardson, 1990).

Historically, the more prevalent view of learning to teach was a "process-product" conceptualization (Lanier & Little, 1986) in which the important knowledge of teaching was believed to be evident in the behaviour of experienced teachers. In learning to teach, the student teacher was seen as the passive recipient of this "expert" knowledge on how to teach (Carter, 1990). Recently, Palonsky (1993) contended that there has been a re-emergence in the U.S.A. by the Holmes Group (1986), Smith (1983), Shulman (1986, 1987), Reynolds (1989) and Goodlad (1990), among others, toward attempting to define a core of expert teacher knowledge that is based on the specialized knowledge of good classroom practitioners.

However, others like Sockett (1993), rejected the notion of defining such a core knowledge because "teaching is not a mechanical operation" but rather a "moral enterprise" that defies the notion of a "science of teaching" (p. 7). Schon (1983) too refuted a technical rational approach to teaching because it does not account for individual teachers' reflections in and on their actions as salient influences on their teaching and sense making. The views of Sockett (1993) and Schon (1983), among others, are concurrent with what Sparks-Langer and Colton (1991) contended is a shift in thinking about teaching which has begun to emerge in reaction to this "overly technical and simplistic view of teaching" (p.
According to Kagan (1992), this shift has resulted in a move away from replicating teacher actions to emphasizing teacher's thinking and understanding "the cognitions, beliefs, and mental processes that underlie teachers' classroom behaviors" (p. 129). Concurrently, the need to illuminate the role of the teacher's own personal knowledge as influential on learning to teach has begun to surface in the recent teacher education literature.

Thus, contemporary research acknowledges that teachers possess both a body of professional teaching knowledge, and a personal knowledge of teaching that is shaped by and shapes the experiences and beliefs they bring to the profession. It is the preliminary juxtaposition of this professional knowledge and the teacher's personal knowledge at the preservice level and the resultant emerging sense of teaching that is of particular interest to this study. Some of the current research in both of these dimensions of a teacher's knowledge is further examined to ascertain how it informs this study.

The Professional Knowledge of Teaching

Much of the leading research in the area of defining a professional knowledge base for teaching has been conducted by Shulman and his colleagues at Stanford in the United States. Through the "Knowledge Growth in Teaching Project" (1988), they undertook a two-year study investigating the role that subject-specific knowledge played in the planning and instruction of novice secondary school teachers (Grossman, Wilson & Shulman, 1989, p. 26). A model of the professional knowledge required
for teaching arose from this study and has been the basis of much study since then of both novice and expert teachers.

In defining the professional knowledge base for teaching, Shulman (1987) conjectured that teachers draw from seven domains of knowledge for planning and implementing instruction. The domains included knowledge of curriculum, knowledge of learners, knowledge of educational aims, goals and purposes, general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of other content, knowledge of subject matter, and pedagogical content knowledge. Each of these domains have been revisited here to provide a clearer picture of what aspects of a teacher's knowledge Shulman includes under each one and why that domain is perceived to be important in understanding teaching.

1. Knowledge of the curriculum

Under knowledge of the curriculum, Wilson et al. (1987) included "the teacher's understanding of the programs and materials designed for the teaching of particular topics and subjects at a given level" (p.114). These materials and programs comprised what Shulman (1987) referred to as the "tools of the trade" (p. 8). They consisted of the teacher's understanding of the various curricula, the resources such as the recommended textbooks, and the alternative resources available for support such as other texts, computer software, visual materials, and films, as well as tools like laboratory demonstrations and other such "invitations to enquiry" (Shulman, 1986, p.10). Shulman (1986) noted that teachers need to not only have a good grasp of these various tools of the trade, but they also need to understand the curricular
alternatives that are available for teaching and be able to recognize when circumstances warrant the use of these alternate materials. To Shulman (1986), this involved knowing when to "present or exemplify particular content and remediate or evaluate the adequacy of student accomplishments" (p. 10).

Curricular knowledge is, therefore, an important domain of the teacher’s knowledge because it is here that the content to be covered in a particular subject is defined, the sequence for presenting that content is provided, and the teaching materials are explained. Without this knowledge, a teacher would be lacking in understanding of the "what" and "how" of their subject area.

2. Knowledge of learners

According to Wilson et al. (1987), the knowledge of learners domain incorporates "knowledge of student characteristics and cognitions as well as knowledge of motivational and developmental aspects of how students learn" (p. 114). In their research, Wilson et al. (1987) exemplified this domain through a teacher in their study who chose to present a lesson on Shakespeare using the analogy of Captain Kirk as Julius Caesar. In referring to this teacher’s knowledge of learners as demonstrated in his planning, Wilson et al. (1987) noted his awareness of the students’ interest in and prior knowledge of the Star Trek series and the topic of Captain Kirk. The teacher also acknowledged their level of sophistication in that he understood using the actual play of Julius Caesar would have been too difficult for them to grasp. As well, he was aware of and drew upon the concerns of his
students. He noted that these included "loyalty, friendship, bonds, promises, parental authority, and group solidarity" (p. 114). All of these learner characteristics were used to guide the planning of this teacher's lesson in the chosen fashion.

Knowledge of learners is, therefore, an important element of a teacher's knowledge because failing to address student interests, prior knowledge and current developmental levels can seriously affect the success of a lesson.

3. Knowledge of educational aims, goals and purposes

To Wilson et al. (1987), educational aims, goals and purposes were important elements of a teacher's knowledge because they served as guides for planning and teaching. In order to use them as guides, however, the teacher needed to know not only what these were, but also what philosophical and historical grounds they were based upon. Additionally, this domain included understanding the alternative purposes for teaching particular content.

As an example of how this domain of knowledge guides the teacher's planning, the Caesar-as-Captain-Kirk analogy can again be used. The teacher's main purpose for using this analogy was to present the study of Shakespeare in a meaningful way to his students. He talked about considering a number of alternative approaches before deciding on the theme of moral conflict. He chose this theme because he knew his students had little understanding of the nature of moral conflict and he wanted them to be able to experience the emotional and intellectual struggles that were involved in one. Consequently, he felt the Captain Kirk analogy would be a good opportunity
for introducing moral conflict through something his students could understand.

Knowledge of aims and purposes is an essential element of a teacher’s knowledge base because with this knowledge intact, teaching is purposeful; without it, teaching is directionless. Not only do teachers need to be aware of the sometimes varied, aims, goals and purposes, as articulated in teaching materials such as textbooks and curriculum guides, but they also need to recognize that they personally hold certain aims, goals and purposes that are implicitly influential on their own teaching.

4. General pedagogical knowledge

For Wilson et al. (1987), general pedagogical knowledge included "knowledge of pedagogical principles and techniques that is not bound by topic or subject matter" (p. 114). Included under this domain were the teacher’s knowledge of the theories and principles of teaching and learning, and of classroom behaviour and management that are integral to the success of teaching (Wilson et al., 1987).

One example of a general pedagogical principle they offered was the teacher’s understanding that when teaching something new, the unknown should be taught in terms of the known. Other similar principles of teaching include beginning with the simple and moving to the more complex, and recognizing that all learners progress at their own rates and have different preferred ways of learning. Without this general pedagogical knowledge, teaching can be negatively affected in terms of the students’ ability to make sense of what is being taught.
5. Knowledge of other content areas

This domain addressed the teacher's knowledge of the curriculum materials being studied in subjects other than their own (Wilson et al., 1987). "Lateral curriculum knowledge" is important to teaching, according to Shulman (1986) because it "underlies the teacher's ability to relate the content of a given course or lesson to topics or issues being discussed simultaneously in other classes" (p. 10). By stressing these relationships across the disciplines, the teacher with knowledge of other content areas is able to assist students in making linkages between what they are learning. These linkages can help to make learning more holistic and complete, rather than piecemeal.

6. Knowledge of subject matter

The domain of subject-matter knowledge, according to Wilson et al. (1987), included the teacher's understanding of both the substantive and syntactic structures of the discipline being taught. The substantive structures addressed the "ideas, facts, and concepts of the field, as well as the relationships among those ideas, facts and concepts" (Wilson et al, 1987, p. 118). The syntactic structures consisted of the teacher's "knowledge of the ways in which the discipline creates and evaluates new knowledge" (Wilson et al, 1987, p. 118).

Grossman et al. (1989) further divided subject-matter knowledge into four dimensions. These were: a) "substantive knowledge," which they credited Schwab (1978) for defining as "the explanatory frameworks or paradigms that are used both to guide inquiry in the field and to make sense of data;" b)
"syntactic knowledge," or knowledge of how to conduct inquiry in that subject, and "the canons of evidence and proof through which new knowledge is admitted into the field and current knowledge is deemed less warranted;" c) "content knowledge" or the factual information, organizing principles and central concepts of the subject; and, d) the "beliefs about the subject matter" held by the teacher, of what is important to know and how one knows it (Grossman et al., 1989, p. 29). I contend that this is a much broader, and more accurate conception of subject-matter knowledge than Shulman's (1987) original one because it acknowledged the role of the teacher's personal knowledge in thinking about their subject area.

Numerous claims as to the importance of a teacher possessing sound knowledge of subject matter have been made in the research. From her research with novice secondary English teachers, Grossman (1990) concluded that teachers used their subject-matter knowledge to make decisions concerning how and what to teach and how to make use of a text. She also found that a teacher with a broader and deeper understanding of subject matter was more likely to encourage classroom discussion. As well, Wilson and Wineburg (1988), in their investigation of the disciplinary knowledge of four novice secondary social studies teachers, and Lichtenstein, McLaughlin and Knudsen's (1992) investigation of mathematics teaching, found that the teacher's depth of understanding of the subject matter affected how adequately, effectively and creatively that teacher was able to teach.

A strong foundation in subject-matter knowledge has also
been found to be necessary for building greater subject-matter competence including acquiring new knowledge in the field (Buchmann, 1984; Grossman et al., 1989; Wilson and Wineburg, 1988). As well, subject-matter knowledge has been established as an important factor in socializing teachers into a larger community of those who hold similar knowledge, including subject-specific professional organizations (Grossman and Stodolsky, 1994; Lichtenstein et al., 1992).

Thus, subject-matter knowledge, including knowledge of important content, the organizing structures of the subject, and the nature of inquiry in that subject are important not only for effective planning and instruction, but also for sharing ideas through professional organizations and for staying current in a field.

7. Pedagogical content knowledge

One concern raised in the research on subject-matter knowledge is whether understanding subject matter is enough to be able to teach it. Wilson et al. (1987) suggested that teachers must not only have personal understanding of the subject matter but also must possess a "specialized understanding" to "foster the development of subject matter knowledge in the minds of students" (p. 110). This requires understanding what it means to teach a particular topic within a subject area, as well as knowing about relevant teaching techniques and materials. "The Knowledge Utilization in Learning to Teach Study" project at Michigan State, is one study that has a particular interest in better understanding the role of teacher preparation programs in helping student
teachers to make this transition to "pedagogical thinkers" (Ball, 1990; Ball & McDiarmid, 1990; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1989).

The specialized understanding of a subject area falls under the domain referred to by Shulman (1986) as "pedagogical content knowledge." Shulman (1986) defined pedagogical content knowledge as knowledge that "goes beyond" subject matter to understanding ways of representing ideas that make the subject matter more comprehensible to others. These "transformations," as suggested by Shulman (1986), include "powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations" (p. 9). Pedagogical content knowledge also encompasses understanding "what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult" for students and "the conceptions and preconceptions that students of different ages and backgrounds bring with them to the learning" (Shulman, 1986, p. 9).

Wilson and Wineburg's (1988) study of novice secondary social studies teachers, investigated how teachers taught for understanding. The four novice teachers of social studies in their study taught for understanding by modifying the use of instructional materials such as the textbook and employing particular representations for explanation and clarification. For example, one teacher, Jane, in a unit on the Roaring Twenties "breathed life into the facts of history" (Wilson & Wineburg, 1988, p. 534) by showing slides of people during the 1920s, playing jazz pieces from the era, and reading excerpts from The Great Gatsby and The Grapes of Wrath, to help her students learn about the social, cultural, political and
economic issues of the time. Clark and Lampert (1986) maintained that this knowledge of how to represent a subject is contextual, interactive and speculative, and comes about as a result of direct experience with students and the curriculum.

Thus, teachers who have a sense of pedagogical content knowledge know better how to make their subject more easily understandable and interesting for their students.

This review of the literature on defining a professional knowledge base for teaching highlighted Shulman’s (1987) model of seven domains of teacher knowledge that influence planning and instruction. These domains included knowledge of curriculum, learners, educational aims and purposes, other content areas, general pedagogical knowledge, subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge.

McNamara (1991) maintained that clearly defining each of these domains is a difficult task because of the considerable interplay among them. Nevertheless, examining the development of domain-specific knowledge can assist in better understanding the sense making of the teacher when planning and instructing. As well, since these domains of professional knowledge are integral to a practising teacher’s knowledge, it is imperative that their role in learning to teach is better understood.

Preparatory Coursework and Teacher Knowledge

The function of preparatory coursework specifically the methods course, in developing a knowledge base for teaching, such as that defined by Shulman (1987) is of particular interest to this study. While acquiring a knowledge base for teaching is recognized as an essential part of learning to
teach, little is known about how student teachers develop this knowledge through their preservice experiences. As Grossman (1990) contended, "Only recently have researchers begun to study how teachers acquire knowledge of particular subject matter during undergraduate studies and teacher preparation" (p. 7). Grossman and Stodlosky (1994) added further that "relatively little is known about the consequences of [a teacher's] subject-matter preparation" (p. 181).

Some studies have begun to surface related to the role of preparatory coursework in developing certain elements of a knowledge base for teaching. The domains of pedagogical content knowledge or pedagogical reasoning (Cochran, DeRuiter & King, 1993; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985, 1986; Grossman, 1989b; McDiarmid, Ball & Anderson, 1989; Russell, Munby, Spafford & Johnston, 1988), and, subject-matter knowledge (Buchmann, 1982; Elliott, 1988; Leinhardt & Smith, 1985) have received considerable attention. For example, Grossman's (1991/1992) research with teachers of English, and Gudmundsdottir and Shulman's (1987) work with novice and expert social studies teachers explored how the transformation of subject-matter knowledge into pedagogical content knowledge could best be encouraged through teacher preparation programs. Grossman (1990) contended that understanding the influence of subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge on student teachers as they learn to teach is essential. Here is where a link to the experiences of preparatory methods courses has been found (Blakey et al., 1992; Shapiro, 1991).

Exemplary approaches to teaching methods courses have been
studied as examples of how best to assist with this transition from subject-matter knowledge to pedagogical content knowledge (Adler & Goodman, 1986; Grossman, 1989a, 1991, 1992; Metzger, 1985; Schug, 1987). Some recurring themes in these studies have found benefits in instructors emphasizing student teacher reflection on the experiences of the preservice program (Adler, 1991b; Colton & Sparks-Langer, 1993; Cornett, 1990; Greene, 1978; Ross, 1987; Ross & Hannay, 1986; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984; Zeichner & Liston, 1987); using cooperative work groups for completing projects and assignments (Adler, 1991b; Rovengo, 1992; Su, 1992; Yaakobi & Sharan, 1985); and, providing direct contact with classrooms and children as a part of field-based methods courses (Blakey et al., 1992; Cirricione & Farrell, 1985; Combs, 1965; Fullan, Connelly & Watson, 1987; Goodlad, 1993; Leskiw, 1981; Su, 1992). However, further research is needed into how student teachers begin to translate subject-matter knowledge per se into subject matter to be taught to children. Little is known about what role the subject-specific methods courses in teacher education programs play in assisting with this transition.

The question of how much preparation in a particular subject is necessary for teaching has also become a focus of current research. For example, some researchers have found that preparatory coursework provided a significant influence on their classroom practice. Ferguson and Womack (1993), in their quantitative study of the extent to which subject-matter courses predicted the teaching performance of student teachers, found that teacher education coursework did make a difference
on teaching performance. Greene and Campbell (1993) also found a positive link between teacher education coursework in general and a change in the thinking of their 12 participants who were followed through the teacher education program and into the second year of teaching.

In terms of methods courses specifically, Grossman (1989a), in her research with student teachers of English at Stanford, claimed that these courses "can help prospective teachers acquire knowledge about what students are likely to find difficult in a particular subject and a realistic sense of students' interests, abilities, understandings and misconceptions concerning specific topics" (p. 206). As well, based on self reports of preservice teachers, Grossman and Richert (1988) concluded that methods courses impacted strongest on preservice teachers' "conceptions of their subject-matter for teaching" and their ability to understand their subject matter from the perspective of their students (p. 56).

In social studies, Yon and Passe (1993), at the University of North Carolina, conducted a case study with two first-year elementary teachers and found that the social studies methods course was influential on the teachers' beliefs although the constraints of their teaching situations did not allow them to implement their beliefs to the extent espoused in the methods course. Barth and Sommersdorf's (1981) quantitative study at Purdue University on change in 48 preservice social studies teachers also found a positive influence from the social studies methods course. They concluded that the greatest change
was in students' attitudes toward instructional methods which were affected more by their social studies methods course than by student teaching.

Conversely, other studies have found that student teachers claimed to have had no or minimal growth in their knowledge from their preparatory course work, including methods courses. The four novice English and mathematics, elementary and secondary teachers in Feiman-Nemser and Parker's (1990) study at Michigan State, for example, claimed to have been least prepared for teaching in the area of subject-matter knowledge as a result of their teacher education program. In the most recent assessment of social studies in British Columbia, teachers responding to a questionnaire claimed that the academic courses in their background were only "somewhat adequate" in preparing them for teaching secondary social studies in particular. They concurred that there was a need to improve the provision, design and delivery of these courses. The report concluded that both the "extent of academic background and methods preparation is inadequate to the tasks of effective instruction" (Bognar, Cassidy, Lewis, & Manley-Casimir, 1991, p. 95).

Others (Kagan, 1992, McNamara, 1991; Shulman, 1986) concurred that there was a need for more preservice preparation time on acquiring subject specific knowledge because teachers were least prepared in this area. Brophy and Alleman (1993), for example, argued that the insufficient time spent in preparatory social studies courses did not "allow them [student teachers] to develop a coherent view of what social education
is all about, let alone a rich base of social education knowledge and an associated repertoire of pedagogical techniques" (p. 27).

One reason cited for the ineffectiveness of preparatory coursework was a lack of connection between what was espoused in the course and what was experienced in the classroom. Palonsky and Jacobson (1989), for example, interviewed 50 elementary student teachers in two different educational institutions, one large and one small. They found not only was there a lack of congruence between the social studies methods courses taken and the student teaching experience, but also that student teachers did not construct views of social studies during the practicum that were similar to those espoused in their methods course. The respondents also claimed they were not equipped with teaching strategies and approaches to the content that impacted on their teaching over the long term. Palonsky and Jacobson (1989) recommended that one way to better ensure the survival of the "university perspective" would be to engage more actively the faculty in the practicum.

Also, a study by Ross (1987), at State University of New York, examined how 21 student teachers' perspectives on social studies were created throughout an entire teacher preparation program. His respondents generally perceived what they were learning in coursework to be artificial and removed from the reality of the classroom. He concluded that the influence of all aspects of the preparation program, including the practicum, appeared to be marginal and did not produce any deep internal changes in the belief systems of his respondents. Ross
(1987) further noted a concern that the field experience being provided for student teachers may promote a "utilitarian" perspective on teaching, rather than one that is thoughtful and reflective.

Lortie (1975) had contended earlier that what was presented in teacher preparation programs was too theoretical and impractical because the professors, who were remote from the classroom, gave "utopian conceptions" of classroom reality and tended to extol the virtues of their novel approaches while putting down those of the classroom teacher. Brophy, Prawat and McMahon (1991) and Leming (1989) concurred and suggested that a closer collaboration between social studies education professors and classroom teachers would bring about a tighter match between theory and practice.

Most studies of a similar nature concluded that for student teachers, the closest connection between the preparation program and the classroom was that experienced during practica (Su, 1992). Cirrincione and Farrell's (1985) study of experienced social studies teachers' attitudes toward their professional preparation, concluded that secondary teachers in particular tended to view the usefulness of their training in terms of its relevance to the classroom. Kagan (1992) too, in her review of learning-to-teach studies, found a consistent reference to the inadequate amount of "procedural knowledge" being provided to novices in preparatory methods courses. Most of this missing knowledge, as reported by student teachers, was in knowledge of pupils and management routines (Kagan, 1992). Hollingsworth (1989) agreed and suggested that
before the student teacher can concentrate on pedagogy and content knowledge, this procedural knowledge has to be in place. It was contended that more of the focus in preparatory coursework, particularly methods courses, should be on the acquisition of this procedural knowledge.

However, others like Beyer (1989) warned against taking too technical an approach in methods courses because focusing on "tricks of the trade," tended to foster "routine action," curtail growth and development, and not account for "unanticipated classroom events" (p. 38). Bestor (as cited in Lanier & Little, 1986) also objected to "preparation that offered specific practical solutions to specific practical problems instead of the knowledge teachers could use to solve problems on their own" (p. 547). According to Bestor, the former did not "deepen student's understanding of the great areas of human knowledge, nor start him [sic] on a disciplined quest for new solutions to fundamental intellectual problems" (Lanier & Little, 1986, p. 547).

Little is known about the role of preparatory coursework in developing a professional knowledge base for teaching. A critical aspect of better understanding this process, therefore, would be to examine the knowledge bases that are articulated in subject-specific courses, such as those required in science, mathematics, social studies and English methods. One aspect of this undertaking, as suggested by Calderhead (1988) would involve illuminating the underlying assumptions of the course instructors as to what they believe is important for student teachers to know, as well as how they plan for that
knowledge to be acquired and used through the experiences offered in their courses. These beliefs about subject-matter knowledge held by the instructor implicitly and explicitly shape the course work and impact directly on students' learning.

Personal Knowledge of Teaching

Under the rubric of personal knowledge, researchers have included teachers' views on the nature of teaching and of learners (Adler, 1984; Aitken & Mildon, 1991; Elbaz, 1983), on themselves as teachers (Bullough, 1989), on their roles and responsibilities in their pedagogical relationships with children (van Manen, 1990), and how life experiences have shaped those views (Adler, 1991a; Carter, 1990). These personal views of teaching and learning have been established as an informative conceptual tool for understanding how student teachers approach social studies as a school subject. van Manen and Parsons (1985) contended that every action of the teacher "illuminates a particular philosophy or belief system providing information about what values a teacher holds, how a teacher views teaching, and how a teacher views social studies" (p. 9). Because of the impact of these personal views on teaching, van Manen and Parsons (1985) asserted that teachers need to become more aware of them as an influence. Adler (1984) concurred and noted that more attention needs to be paid to teachers' backgrounds and beliefs as they influence teaching in the area of social studies.

Life histories have been established as significant influences on these student teachers' beliefs, as well as their

Adler (1984) and Goodman and Adler (1985) found that personal views of teaching in general, and social studies in particular, are formed early in a career, therefore, a crucial period for examining their development is during teacher preparatory coursework. Studies conducted by Johnston (1990), Nelson and Palonsky (1980), Palonsky and Jacobson (1989), Yarger and Smith (1990) and Yon and Passe (1990/93) supported these findings. Weinstein (1989) and Good (1983) claimed this attention to student teachers' views has been lacking in most teacher preparation programs to date.

Adler (1993) asserted further that the didactic rather than dialogic approach taken to the coursework and the lack of sensitivity on the part of instructors as to how student teachers' understandings were constructed added to the lack of impact of that coursework on future teaching.

Johnston (1990), in her study of two students in a one-year elementary teacher education program at Ohio State, concurred that the social studies methods course and the
program overall had only "partial and differential" influence on the student teachers' beliefs and teaching practice because their background knowledge, beliefs and prior experiences were more powerful. She concluded that teacher educators needed to be more aware of the understandings student teachers bring to their courses, and how they interpret the new ideas presented there.

There has been a consistent call in the recent literature for illuminating these entering views of teaching held by preservice teachers during the teacher preparation experience (Adler, 1984; Blakey et al., 1992; Goodman & Adler, 1985; Johnston, 1990). Wilson et al. (1987) suggested that one way to address personal views in teacher preparation programs is to help students to develop intellectual biographies as a way of understanding the entering knowledge and beliefs they hold about the subject. In this way, student teachers would be recognized as "agents" who actively interpret their world and make meaning of it.

Wilson, Konopak and Readence (1994) concur in their study of practising secondary social studies teachers. They argued that since understanding how teacher's think is necessary to understanding their practice, it is also imperative to understand how their perspectives of social studies evolved through their preparation as teachers. Fenstermacher (cited in Shulman, 1987) too contends that teacher educators "must work with the beliefs that guide teacher actions, and with the principles and evidence that underlie the choices teachers make" (p. 13). Barnes (1989) argued further that in
considering what beginning teachers needed to know, teacher educators tended to ignore what they think they already know. Consequently, Good (1983) suggested that more attention should be given in teacher preparation to how student teachers "conceptualize the role of the teacher" and how they should go about developing "a coherent teaching philosophy before they enter the classroom" (p.31). Without these firmly in place, stated Good (1983), teachers are "unlikely to positively affect student learning and development" (p. 31). Young (1991/92) also recommended that student teachers be assisted in recognizing their personal views on aspects of teaching such as planning, as well as understanding the internal influences which shaped these beliefs.

Other studies have found that student teachers enter their teacher preparation programs with clear images of "good" teaching based on their prior experiences as pupils (Bullough, 1989; Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Florio-Ruane & Lensmire, 1990; Hollingsworth, 1989; Johnston, 1992; Lortie, 1975). These images of "good teaching" have been found to directly influence the novice's image of self as teacher (Johnston, 1992; Weinstein, 1989). Others have found that this image of self as teacher is directly related to the person's image of self as learner (Bullough, Knowles & Crow, 1992; Hollingsworth, 1989; Sarason et al., 1986). These preexisting images of self as teacher have been found to be a strong determinant of the student's success during teacher training (Aitken & Mildon, 1991; Bennett & Spalding, 1992). On the other hand, others have found that these "images" are influenced very little, if at
all, by the various components of teacher education programs (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; McLaughlin, 1991). In Greene and Campbell's study (1993) at the University of Lethbridge, for example, these preconceptions impacted strongly on the participants' initial thinking about teaching, but their influence tended to diminish over the duration of the teacher education program and with more teaching experience in the classroom.

While illuminating the entering conceptions of teaching held by student teachers was recognized as a critical element of teacher preparation in the research, solely bringing student perspectives to a conscious level has been found to be inadequate in promoting understanding of the process of learning to teach. In many cases, these entering perspectives do not adequately reflect the reality of teaching (Clark, 1988; Valli, 1992). Lortie (1975) located the roots of these inadequate ideas about teaching in the "apprenticeship of observation" in which teaching was understood in terms of only the overt actions of the teacher as seen through the pupils' eyes. Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1989) contended further that, left unchallenged, those entering beliefs can lead to "mislearnings or missed opportunities to learn" (p. 375). Consequently, they called for increased attention to such "inadequate" ideas about teaching during teacher preparation.

Summary

This review of the literature on attempting to define a professional and personal knowledge base for teaching is informative for teacher educators. It suggests that both the
personal knowledge of student teachers, including their life histories, images of good teaching and images of self as teacher and learner, and their evolving professional knowledge including knowledge of curriculum, content, educational aims, learners, and pedagogy are important to understanding how they learn to teach. Both forms of teacher knowledge, therefore, have an important role in better understanding the process of learning to teach through formal teacher preparation programs. More needs to be known about these ideas, however.

This review identified several gaps in, and questions arising from, the research on the role of professional knowledge and personal knowledge in learning to teach. Domains of professional knowledge, such as subject-matter and pedagogical content knowledge, have been identified as critical elements in learning to teach, yet little is known about the process of acquiring that knowledge. Personal histories, including academic background have also been acknowledged as important influences. However, more needs to be know about their roles. Further, Calderhead (1988) contended, "the processes by which these knowledge bases inform classroom action is both unarticulated and unexamined" (p. 58). As well, little is known about the role played by the various elements of formal teacher preparation programs, including the methods course, in assisting student teachers in acquiring the knowledge needed to teach.

Carter (1990) contends that we need to learn more about the nature of the learning process in teacher education. This could best be done, she maintained, by including the
descriptive details of the teacher education program involved in learning-to-teach studies. Specifically relating to social studies, Ochoa (1981) contended a decade ago that, "No data exist concerning the nature of social studies methods courses for either elementary or secondary school teachers" (p. 159). Little is still known about what occurs in these courses (Carter, 1990; Feiman-Nemser, 1990).

Zeichner (1983) cautions that it is unwise to make change in teacher education with "so little knowledge of what teacher education courses are currently like" (p. 3). Adler (1991a) concurred and advocated that more needs to be known about "what is being done [in teacher education] and to what effect" (p. 210):

...the contexts of learning to teach social studies play a role in what teachers, both preservice and inservice, learn and do: reinforcing and/or changing preconceived notions of teaching and learning, developing and/or stifling teaching skills, encouraging or discouraging reflection and growth in the teachers of social studies. But we know little about that role and those processes (Adler, 1991a, p. 218).

Feiman-Nemser (1983) agreed, "It is impossible to understand the impact of preservice preparation without knowing more about what it is like" (p. 156). She recommended generating descriptions of the experience of teacher education in individual settings, in order to explore the effects of a particular program and learning opportunities on teachers' ideas and practices (Feiman-Nemser, 1990). The intent of this study, therefore, was to address the gaps in the learning-to-teach literature by providing a detailed description of one such component of a teacher preparation program, a social
studies methods course, as it influenced student teachers' sense making about learning to teach social studies.
CHAPTER III
CONDUCTING THE STUDY

Introduction

This qualitative study necessitated both a descriptive and interpretive orientation as the intent was to probe student teachers' sense making as they experienced a social studies methods course. Eisner and Peshkin (1990) contended, "Qualitative approaches to research "may be better able to make the feel of the place more vivid than a precise measured description of what students say they experience" (p. 12). Further, Burgess (1985b) claimed that qualitative research in educational settings can allow "the researcher to get close to the data and to understand the definitions, concepts, and meanings that participants attribute to social situations" (p. 2).

Interpretivism, as an approach to research, is grounded in the assumption that people are active agents in constructing their own knowledge and making their own meaning (Preissle-Goetz & LeCompte, 1991). Since my interest was in understanding how student teachers come to know teaching through their preparatory course work, meaning making was a integral concern. To Eisner (1991) this is "a matter of being able to handle several ways of seeing as a series of different views rather than reducing all views to a single correct one" (p. 49). Examining the meaning making of the study participants, therefore, entailed hearing their multiple stories. The best way to get at meaning, said Eisner (1991), is "to interpret, to place in context, to explain, to unwrap, [and] to explicate"
Through this study, I sought to better understand what was happening in a given situation (a preparatory methods course) and how what was happening was interpreted by the participants (Cornbleth, 1991). I wanted to encourage the study participants to "unwrap" their thinking as they attempted to make sense of what it means to teach social studies over the duration of the course.

The Research Design

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), the design of qualitative research should be emergent as, "You are not putting together a puzzle whose picture you already know. You are constructing a picture which takes shape as you collect and examine the parts" (p. 29). When designing qualitative research, the intent is not to purposely superimpose a theory or theories upon the data, nor should data be collected to support or to refute hypotheses. Rather these should emerge from the data, as should the categories and guiding concepts for analysis. Consequently, no a priori assumptions were placed on this study other than a desire to examine the role of the methods course in preparing teachers, and the place of student thinking and meaning making in learning to teach. Also of interest was the juxtaposition between what had been proposed in the literature as a professional knowledge base for teaching and the personal knowledge the participants brought to the methods course.

Three broad research questions were used to guide the data collection and analysis in this study. These questions were:
. How do the participants conceptualize the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy prior to the methods course;

. How do the participants reflect on and begin to change [if at all] their initial conceptualizations of social studies as they experience the methods course; and,

. What influences are most salient in causing change in the participants' initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy?

These questions were used to guide the data collection and analysis and the presentation of the findings.

My role as researcher

Qualitative study involves immersion in the field. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), the qualitative researcher should study individuals as unobtrusively as possible in their natural settings to document and attempt to understand the way they "attribute meanings" in social situations. Thus, the natural setting becomes a direct source of data. As the inquirer and the study participants interact, the researcher attempts to assume what Burgess (1985b) referred to as an "emic" or participant perspective. Further, Stake (1994) contended, "Enduring meanings come from encounter and are modified and reinforced by repeated encounter" (p. 240). As a data collection tool, Kirk and Miller (1986) suggested
that observation is particularly useful for gaining entry to the world of participants, as it allows for immersion and sustained interaction in the field.

Consequently, as an observer, I attended all of the scheduled classes of the secondary social studies methods course (SSED 312) in which the study participants were registered. This course met three times weekly for two hours over a 13 week period beginning in September. Being an observer provided data about the participants as they interacted in class. Questions they asked the instructor and each other and answers they gave in response to questions were recorded. To Vansledright and Putnam (1991), these "student teacher discourse patterns and questions [are useful] as a means to understand their sense making experiences" (p. 116).

Being an observer also allowed me to have more frequent contact with the participants so that I could get to know them better. As well, regular class attendance allowed me to live the experiences of the methods course along with the participants, thereby permitting me to ask them more relevant, course-related questions in subsequent interviews, and to be able to identify more easily with their course-related experiences. It also allowed me to address my initial curiosity about how other instructors approach the teaching of methods courses. I made note of things that I thought might be useful to my own practice as a methods course instructor. I did not actively participate in any large or small group discussions during these observations, but rather sat in the back of the classroom, listened and recorded detailed notes of the
proceedings of each class. During small group activities, I tried to sit in with a group containing at least one of my study participants. I varied the group that I sat with each time. Again, I did not take part in any discussions or activities as I did not want to influence by my presence the class proceedings any more than I already was.

Dealing with My Subjectivity

When conducting qualitative inquiry, the integral role of researcher as observer can also be a cause for concern. Subjectivity seems to be at the same time the greatest strength and weakness of qualitative research. On the one hand, the caring and compassion the researcher has for a project can enrich and enlarge what is observed and discovered. According to Preissle-Goetz and LeCompte (1991), the researcher’s reactions, including thoughts, actions, beliefs and utterances, are integral to the qualitative data base as a part of the evidence.

On the other hand, as researcher, I had to be wary of imposing personal judgment on what was seen and heard, although I recognize that it is impossible to completely remove any judgment. It was necessary, therefore, that I was cognizant of my own reactions and views and how they affected what I was seeing and hearing. I found that keeping a daily reflective journal in which I addressed my beliefs, thoughts and reactions proved to be indispensable for reminding myself of my own subjectivity.

Interacting with the Participants

In an effort to gain the co-operation of participants for
this study, there were a number of ethical issues that had to be considered. Burgess (1985a) noted that central to field research is the development of relationships between the researcher and those who are researched as "this interaction will directly influence the course of the research" (p. 31). I recognized that qualitative research is a social process, and that I would have to work at establishing trust and building relationships with the participants from the beginning. In so doing, I acknowledged my obligation to consider and safeguard their interests and concerns, and to endeavour to remain as nonjudgmental as possible in my dealings with them. I endeavoured to be non-threatening in my interactions by trying to put them at ease in the interview situation. I was revealing of my intent for the study in that I asked them to sign a formal written consent (see Appendix A), but made sure that before they signed, they understood the nature of their involvement, the nature of my study, the purpose for conducting the study and my plans for the final report.

I attempted to ensure that the participants were not exposed to risks by protecting their identity from being revealed to the instructor or to other classmates (unless the participants chose to reveal that themselves). To ensure their right to privacy, I also changed their names in this report and on all interview transcripts. I was conscious of not intruding too much on their time or being disruptive of their work in class. I also endeavoured to be accountable and responsible to the participants by communicating clearly and openly, and by giving all transcripts and interpretations to them for checks
after each interview (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This respected the participants’ right to be quoted accurately.

Selecting the Participants

My interest in this study was not in comparing the experiences of student teachers across different sections of the same course, but rather was in exploring the meaning made by student teachers as they encountered the same experiences. Consequently, all of the participants were chosen from one section of the three SSED 312 methods courses offered in the fall of 1994. One instructor was approached concerning the study because of his academic status as a full professor and his years of experience teaching the social studies methods course. At that time, he expressed a willingness to be a part of the study.

Once instructor approval was secured, a tentative class list was obtained from the registrar in late July of 1994. This list contained the names, addresses and phone numbers of the 39 registrants. My initial intention was to purposively choose names from the class list based on gender, age, academic background (as indicated by their previous degree), and ethnicity (as much as this is apparent from a list of names) as these were thought to be important criteria for ensuring a broad sample of participants. Since no information other than name, address and phone number was provided, and only gender was further discernable, 15 names had to be arbitrarily selected, eight being female and seven male to assure gender balance. (The number 15 was chosen because, due to time constraints, it would allow for more expedient access to people
interested in participating). If at least five of those initially contacted had not offered to become participants, a further mailing to the remaining class names would have been necessary.

The 15 students chosen were mailed letters of introduction to the project in late July (see Appendix B). A follow up telephone call was conducted in mid-August, prior to the beginning of classes, in which the project was explained and questions were addressed. At that time, I was not able to reach four of the original 15, three were not interested in the project, and the remaining eight agreed to participate. Due to the enthusiasm of these eight, I accepted them all as participants. A ninth participant was self selected. She approached me with an interest in participating after the first class in which I had been asked to explain the project.

Of the nine participants, five were female and four male. Two of the five females had geography degrees, one had a history degree, the fourth had an English Literature degree and the fifth a Bachelor of Arts in Mandarin Chinese. Of the four male participants, two had degrees in human kinetics, one had a Bachelor of Sciences in biological sciences and the fourth a Bachelor of Arts in history. One of the male participants, the history major, decided to drop out of the study just prior to the second interview due to personal time constraints. This brought the participant total to eight - five females and three males.

Collecting the Data

Several data collection techniques were employed in this
study. These consisted of in-class observation, including taking field notes and collecting course-related artifacts, keeping a reflective journal, a series of semi-structured interviews, and a number of informal telephone conversations. Each is discussed in greater detail below.

1. Field notes

The field notes kept during my in-class observation proved to be a valuable source of information. Following the recommendation of Bogdan and Biklen (1982), these field notes contained both a descriptive and a reflective component. The descriptive component included notes on observations made during classes, such as reconstructions of dialogue amongst and between the participants and the instructor, questions asked and answered both by the instructor and the participants, descriptions of the physical setting, accounts of particular events and activities, notes on my reactions and behaviour as researcher, and comments on the general form and content of the classes. This extensive note-taking generated a considerable amount of data which became an invaluable source of information during data analysis and subsequent interviews. In particular, these field notes proved useful for recalling certain incidents and drawing specific examples in support of the participants' reactions to in-class experiences. Artifacts such as the course outline, readings, assignments and exams were also collected as a part of these field notes.

2. Reflective journal writing

In conducting qualitative research, Eisner (1991) advised that the constructivist view of research, "recognizes that the
resources we [as researchers] use to construe the world not only guide our attention to it, but when used to represent it, both constrain and make possible what we are able to convey" (p. 60). Spindler and Spindler (1987) concurred and cautioned further that the researcher "must constantly be on the alert to avoid prejudgment of the significance and meaning of behaviour" (p. 23).

Consequently, being aware of my constructivist position as researcher necessitated a reflective component in my field notes. Here, I attempted to guard against my biases by recording detailed field notes which included reflections on my own subjectivity. I interjected myself by revealing my feelings and personal reactions to whatever was being described. These reflections spilled over into a personal journal that I kept throughout the study. It contained a more detailed subjective account of the proceedings of the classes and of the relationship building I was experiencing with each of the participants. Here too I thought through an ethical dilemma I faced concerning the problems one of my participants, Margaret, was having with one of her instructors. I also "talked" through some of the ways in which I disagreed at times with the methods course instructor's approach, or queried a comment he had made during a class. Additionally, I pondered questions that I wanted to have clarified in subsequent interviews based on comments made by the participants or the instructor during class. Most often I reflected on the struggles I was having with how to effectively present my findings and my frustrations and successes with the research process.
While this reflective journal proved to be a useful way of acknowledging 'observer effect' by serving as a constant reminder of my own subjectivity, Eisner (1991) cautioned that, "a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing. What we see is frequently influenced by what we know" (p. 67). Despite the precautions taken, biography is always influential so observer bias can only be limited, never eliminated (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). Consequently, what I chose to concentrate on was shaped by my own prior experiences and assumptions (as outlined in Chapter I).

3. **Semi-structured interviews**

Another form of data collection used in this study was the interview. Spradley (1979) suggested that the interview should be like a "friendly conversation" with a purpose. The purpose in my case was to find out what knowledge the participants held about social studies, how that knowledge was organized, and how it changed over the duration of the study. In order to encourage "friendly conversation," I used a semi-structured interview format in which, as interviewer, I offered some lead questions as ice breakers or to raise points of clarification based on prior interviews, but more often encouraged the participants to address concerns and questions they had. Some of the participants were open to taking control of the interview, while others seemed more comfortable having questions directed by me.

Four one-hour interviews with each of the participants were held over the duration of the five month study. One, in late August prior to the beginning of classes, was intended to
determine the participants' initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy before they began the SSED 312 methods course. The second, during the first week of October, investigated the ways in which the participants' initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy were and were not being influenced by their participation in the first month of the methods course. The third, following a two week practicum at the mid-point of the course, examined how the practicum influenced the participants' conceptualizations. The final interview, at the end of the course in December, was intended to determine any change in thinking from the first interview, to describe the nature of the change, and to probe for the influences on that change. (See Appendix C for sample interview questions).

In order to ascertain the instructor's views on the role of the methods course in preparing secondary social studies teachers and his plans for teaching the course, I also interviewed him on two separate occasions. One interview was held just prior to the beginning of classes and the other at the end of the course. This final interview was intended to check whether the instructor had made changes since the first interview in his approach to the course.

All interviews, including those with the instructor, were recorded and the transcripts were mailed out within three weeks of each interview. Accompanying the student participants' transcripts was a letter containing my initial interpretations of what I thought they were saying in the interview. These
participant checks not only assisted in confirming the degree to which they concurred with my interpretations, but also provided them with feedback on their thinking (for further reflection if they so wished), and gave direction for subsequent interviews.

4. Telephone conversations

In addition to the four interviews, each participant was contacted by telephone on at least three occasions over the duration of the study. All participants were contacted in mid-August to solicit interest in the study. A second contact was made during the short practicum to make arrangements for a post-practicum interview. All were contacted on at least one other occasion to set up a third or fourth interview. Short conversations of approximately 10 minutes, regarding the participants' current thinking, ensued during these phone calls. The participants were encouraged to contact me by phone at any time if they wished to clarify a point on their transcripts or discuss something they thought might be relevant to the study. Two participants took advantage of the offer. Another participant sent two e-mail messages. Notes made during each of these conversations were added to the participants' data files.

Analyzing the Data

In qualitative research, data collection and data analysis occur simultaneously and analysis is best done inductively (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). The analysis process for this study was begun immediately following the first set of interviews in August. Tesch (1990) suggested a number of steps in data
analysis that proved to be useful as a guide. The first step involves segmenting the data collected in the first interview into smaller parts containing a singular idea or piece of information relevant to the study. Consequently, each of the eight initial transcripts was read a first time and margin notes were made to highlight the key ideas. These key ideas were recorded on a separate sheet and whenever they appeared in a new transcript, the participant's name was noted beside the particular idea. The transcripts were then reread and colour coded based on the key ideas that emerged consistently across the set. Examples of common ideas were: promoting thinking through social studies, the role of history in social studies, personal experiences with social studies in secondary school, preferred approaches to teaching social studies, and attempts to define social studies.

The next step involved taking these coded segments from each transcript and organizing them into a summary matrix showing all eight participants' responses across the emerging categories. For the first interview, these categories included age, gender, academic background, life experiences, teacher role models, image of self as student, definitions of social studies, purposes for teaching social studies, the important content of social studies, and approaches for teaching social studies.

Tesch (1990) suggested that the final step in analysis should involve assembling everything that belonged to one category together for the purpose of reporting patterns (p. 122). In my case, the categories on the summary matrix based
on the first interview became the organizing topics for the presentation of the findings. Based on my first broad research question and the patterns in the categories on the matrix chart, I decided to organize the data into three sections: a) background information on each participant, b) views on the nature of social studies, and c) views on social studies pedagogy (see Chapter V).

These same steps were followed for each of the three subsequent sets of interviews, resulting in the production of four large matrices, one for each interview. The data on the second and third charts were combined to address the second interview question in Chapter VI. Topics reported on were all categories from the matrices. These included: defining social studies, the role of controversial issues in social studies, critical thinking, values education, the purpose of education, planning and teaching social studies, using instructional resources, and interacting with secondary school students. The categories on the fourth matrix based on the findings from the fourth set of interviews were used to organize the presentation in Chapter VII.

A summation of my initial interpretations of each interview was written in the form of a letter and sent to the participant for feedback. To encourage peer review, several colleagues were also asked to read some of the transcripts and examine my coding and summary matrices and provide feedback.

Reporting the Findings

In qualitative research, according to Tesch (1990), data collected in the form of words should be reported in a
narrative form that is both highly textual and descriptive. As Phillips (1987) noted, this involves giving "an account of how the participants in a situation see it [a particular situation]" (p. 20). Through detailed description, the report of this study's findings was intended to give the reader a feel for the experience of learning to teach social studies through a methods course (as a part of a professional preparation program).

In Chapter V, I have presented individual profiles of each participant, based on the first set of interviews, so that readers have a more detailed picture of the individual's life experience and initial conceptualizations about the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy arising from those experiences.

Rather than continuing to profile individual participants in Chapters VI and VII, the findings from the remaining three interviews have been presented in a cross-case comparison format in which organizing topics are discussed using the interwoven thoughts of all eight participants. This format was chosen as it better illustrated ways in which the participants' thinking about the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy was similar in some ways, but differed in others.

Inclusion of frequent excerpts from participant interviews in these three data analysis chapters allowed for "verisimilitude" or the "ability to reproduce (simulate) and map the real" (Lincoln & Denzin, 1994, p. 579). Where excerpts have been taken from telephone conversations, the quotation is followed by the initials 'PC' and the date of the conversation.
Addressing the Issue of Validity

In reporting my findings, I was cognizant of the issue of validity, which Eisner (1991) described as the "coherence" or "tightness of the argument," including whether the study "rings true, coheres and makes sense" (p. 56). Using questions suggested by Eisner (1991), I was able to address important validity concerns as I conducted the study. These included asking myself whether my findings were making sense, whether my observations were congruent with the rest of the study, how I was using multiple data sources to give credence to my interpretations, whether I was regularly checking my interpretations with the participants, how I had supported my conclusions, and, how well the study related to what was already known.

Other suggestions in the literature for addressing validity were also considered. One of these addressed the issue of the amount of interpretation the researcher should apply to the data. For example, Wolcott (in Eisner & Peshkin, 1990), recommended "analyzing little" as "only the most central issues in one's research warrant thorough probing" (p. 130). More important, it was suggested, was providing a forum for participants to present their own case by providing lengthy

(eg. Aug 10). Lengthy excerpts taken from interview transcriptions are followed by the abbreviation 'Int,' the interview number and the transcript page (eg. Int#3, 8). Examples taken from field notes during participant observation are designated by the initials 'PO', the class number (eg. Cl#13) and the field notes page number (eg. PO Cl#13, 51).
data excerpts and "conversational snippets" that capture their expressive thoughts. Further, Lincoln and Denzin (1994) contended that researchers "must take steps to ensure that the words they put in subjects' mouths were in fact spoken by those subjects" (p. 578). My purpose, therefore, for relying extensively on direct quotes from interviews, field notes and conversations was to assist in providing a "participant forum" and accurate representation of their words.

As well, Spindler and Spindler (1987) claimed that validity is affected because "A lot of ethnographic information is second hand, in the sense that one cannot observe directly what is happening, but people talk about something that happened" (p. 20). They suggested that the researcher could compensate by trying to find a number of people to talk about the phenomenon under study in order that common elements could be ascertained. Having a sample size of eight in this study and drawing all of the participants from the same section of the methods course allowed for identifying some of the elements that were common to the participants' conceptualizations and experiences of social studies.

Addressing the Issue of Generalizability

In this study, I sought to understand how student teachers' initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy were influenced by the experiences provided in a secondary social studies methods course. Consequently, my purpose was situational understanding, not cross-site generalizability (Cornbleth, 1991). Cornbleth (1991) stated, "Interpretive researchers seek to understand the
particular setting being studied and to inform understanding of other, similar settings but not to formulate law like generalizations that might enable prediction and control" (p. 266). This contextualized understanding, Cornbleth (1991) advocated, can provide the reader with understandings they may then apply to other situations. Generalization, therefore, becomes the reader's responsibility. The reader then can bring his or her perspective and preexisting knowledge to the reading. As Stake (1994) noted, the reader "will add and subtract, invent and shape - reconstructing the knowledge in ways that leave it differently connected and more likely to be personally useful" (p. 241). Peshkin (as cited in Eisner, 1991) concurred, "My ideas are candidates for others to entertain, not necessarily as truth, let alone Truth, but as positions about the nature and meaning of a phenomenon that may fit their sensibility and shape their thinking about their inquiries" (p. 48). Eisner (1991) noted further that the important issue in qualitative research is not whether the findings can be generalized to other populations, but rather the "instrumental utility" or usefulness of the reported findings as "tentative guides, as ideas to be considered, not as prescriptions to follow" (p. 209).

Accordingly, I was mindful of the usefulness of my report for my audience throughout the time that it was being written. That audience was assumed to be comprised mostly of teacher educators, however, it was recognized that it could also include practising social studies teachers, sponsor teachers and student teachers, among others. My responsibility as
researcher was to provide as vivid a rendering as possible of the situation so that it would be a comprehensive guide to these diverse readers. According to Eisner (1991), "The good guide deepens and broadens our experience and helps us understand what we are looking at" (p. 59). This account, therefore, attempted to highlight, explain, and provide recommendations for the reader if he or she chooses to make comparisons between or transfer findings to other teacher education programs and methods courses (Firestone, 1993).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated further that it is important to guarantee balance and fairness in the report. They suggested that consistent attention to procedures such as member checking of data with sources for correction, verification and challenge, debriefing by peers, triangulation of data and interpretations, prolonged engagement in the field, and the use of reflexive journals, all add to the quality of the report. Member checking was an integral element of this study, as was cross checking of data by peers. On several occasions, colleagues were asked to read and offer impressions and suggestions for improvement at various stages in the writing process. A reflexive journal was also kept, as noted earlier.

Summary

This qualitative study was both descriptive and interpretive in its design. The intent was to examine the changes [if any] in the participants' conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy as they experienced a social studies methods course.
Eight participants from one section of a methods course were selected based on gender balance and willingness to be a part of the study. Data were collected using in-class observation, field notes, artifacts, researcher reflective journal writing, a series of four semi-structured interviews, and telephone conversations over a five month period.

Findings have been presented in the form of a narrative including both individual participant profiles to introduce each of the student teachers in Chapter V, and comparisons across all eight participants on selected topics related to the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy in Chapters VI and VII. Frequent inclusion of interview and class excerpts have been used throughout the data analysis to make the account as vivid as possible.

The instructor was also interviewed on two separate occasions to determine his thoughts on the role of the methods course in preparing social studies teachers and his plans for the course. These have been highlighted in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER IV
SETTING THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Preservice teachers in the 12 month post-degree program in The University of British Columbia’s Faculty of Education can take one of two routes to prepare themselves as teachers of secondary social studies. They can major in social studies as their only teachable subject, or they can choose to concentrate on two subjects, one being social studies. All those declaring social studies as a teachable subject must have completed at least a four year bachelors degree that meets a number of pre-admission requirements in social studies.

According to the U.B.C. calendar (1994), student teachers choosing to concentrate in social studies must have six credits of introductory survey courses in the areas of geography, history and a social science, as well as a further six credits of junior courses and 18 credits of senior courses in the discipline of emphasis. In the area of geography, student teachers must have both physical and cultural geography with courses in regional and environmental studies. The history component has to include Canadian, European and modern world history. For the social science requirement, student teachers need a grouping of courses within a single acceptable social science discipline such as anthropology, Asian studies, economics, political science, sociology or women’s studies. There is also a six credit requirement of significant Canadian content over the total program. Additionally, a student teacher majoring in social studies must have a further 12 credits of
senior courses in either geography or history (U.B.C. Calendar, 1994, p. 135).

The Social Studies Methods Course

All student teachers at U.B.C. interested in becoming secondary social studies teachers, whether they are majoring or concentrating in social studies, are required to take the SSED 312 methods course in social studies curriculum and instruction in the Faculty of Education. Student teachers majoring in social studies must also simultaneously take a second curriculum course entitled SSED 317: Curriculum topics in social studies - Secondary. Nonmajors and majors have an additional nine credits of curriculum courses to be completed in the final third of their 18 month program. Some or all of these credits, (compulsory if majors), may be taken in social studies.

The required social studies methods course in the Faculty of Education at U.B.C. is entitled SSED 312: Curriculum and instruction in social studies - Secondary. In the university calendar, the course is described as "curriculum organization in social studies and the principles and methods of instruction as applied to teaching social studies" (1994, p. 402). It is a four credit course taught in the fall term for 13 weeks from September to December. Classes are held three times weekly for two hours. A short practicum of two weeks, which is intended to serve as an introduction to the school, the sponsor teacher(s) and the students, falls at the midpoint of the methods course in October. The assigned school is also the location of a 13 week practicum from February to May for all secondary student
teachers.

Three sections of the SSED 312 course were offered in the fall of 1994. There were two instructors for the three sections; one, a graduate student, was responsible for teaching two of them; the other, a full professor, taught one. The latter instructor was selected based on his willingness to be in the study, his academic status and his years of experience teaching the methods course.

The Instructor

Academic and teaching background

At the time of the study, the instructor for the section of SSED 312 from which the participants were drawn, was a full professor in the Department of Curriculum Studies in the Faculty of Education at U.B.C. He had been teaching there for 24 years. He received his B.A. and B.Ed. degrees from the University of Saskatchewan and M.A. and Ph.D. from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Prior to taking the position at U.B.C. in 1971, he had four years of secondary school teaching experience. The instructor’s areas of interest included social studies education and multicultural and anti-racist education. His most current research activities included a study comparing anti-racist and multicultural curricula, and the development of an anti-racist training package for secondary schools.

The SSED 312 methods course was one of the first courses that the instructor began teaching at U.B.C. Since then, he taught the course off and on for 10 years. This year he returned to teaching it the first time in five years. In
addition to this methods course, he has also taught an undergraduate course on controversial issues in teaching social studies in which he has addressed such issues as ageism, sexism, racism and homophobia. This course, SSED 317, was offered simultaneously with SSED 312 in the fall of 1994 and was taken by all students who were majoring in social studies from the three sections of SSED 312. Consequently, the instructor taught some student teachers both courses during the fall semester. (This affected two of the eight study participants).

**Views on the nature of social studies**

In describing his beliefs about the nature of social studies, the instructor noted that social studies should involve not only the study of 'what is,' but also 'what ought to be.' He stated:

Social studies tells the students not only what is out there and we gathered all that information from political scientists, historians, geographers, sociologists, anthropologists. They're going to teach us explanatory concepts...[that] will help to explain their world. So I want the students to know what 'is' out there as much as we can, but even more important, I think the difference between a social scientist and a social studies person is that the students ought to begin to discuss what 'ought to be' out there. How can things be different? (Int#1,6/7).

Through the examination of 'what ought to be,' the instructor saw social studies as having the potential to address important contemporary social issues. However, he confessed to a significant degree of cynicism about the present state of social studies in the province of British Columbia. In reality, he claimed that the social studies being taught in schools was "heavily focused on history, specifically history that recalls
irrelevant events such as the 100 Years War, with a little bit of geography thrown in." He expressed concern that this was the social studies that his student teachers were being exposed to during the practicum. Thus, while he would have liked to have seen social studies student teachers prepared and willing to address contemporary issues in the classroom "in critical ways," he has compromised his stance over the years. Instead, he has taken an approach to teaching the social studies methods course that is more in tune with the "reality" of what his student teachers see in the schools.

As to the subject-matter knowledge preparation of student teachers, the instructor noted that he did not address this through the methods course because he assumed that all of his students had acquired the necessary expertise in their various disciplines through their first degree. He noted, however, that 10 years ago the Faculty of Education used to be more concerned with subject-matter knowledge as courses were offered in content, such as Canadian History, to student teachers who were missing that subject-matter background. These introductory courses have recently been taken over by the respective social science departments.

**Views on preparing social studies teachers**

When talking about how he believed social studies teachers should be prepared to teach social studies, the instructor once again alluded to his cynicism based on his experiences of "going out and watching two years of practicum." He also recalled two experiences he had teaching secondary school classes, one he taught a few years ago as part of one of his
undergraduate courses, and recently a class he taught for a research project he was involved in. Based on these experiences, he claimed that he could return to teaching today and still be "in sync," using lessons that he prepared 20 years ago: "I could go back into any classroom, I think, in the lower mainland right now and start teaching secondary social studies and nobody would know that I hadn't been there since 1968" (Int#1,4).

The kind of social studies he claimed to have witnessed being taught by secondary school teachers was heavily lecture oriented with an overuse of worksheets and a reliance on the textbooks. He contended that not only do the teachers want this heavy reliance on the textbook, but the secondary students want it too. Hence, "the textbook is and will continue to be the god." The instructor acknowledged that this was the way the majority of student teachers had been taught social studies and predicted they would eventually end up teaching how they were taught despite what was done to them during their teacher preparation. Lacey (1977), Lortie (1975) and others would agree with him. Consequently, the instructor was not hopeful that his student teachers would change the approach to social studies teaching with which they were most familiar when they got out in the secondary classroom. They would, instead, be socialized to a standard by the system, a standard which he claimed was consistent across the subject area. Grossman and Stodolsky (1994) in their review of studies of teaching in secondary school settings, concur. As well, the instructor equated this undisputed acceptance of what was out there in the schools as
consistent with a tendency among student teachers toward accepting what they see as 'is,' as what 'ought' to be.

Furthermore, the instructor maintained that student teachers perceived knowledge acquisition as the most important element of their teaching and assessment. Consequently, during his visits to classrooms, he claimed to have seen little attention in the field to "systematic assessment of whether we are causing the [secondary] students to be better thinkers" regardless of the affective objectives that were being advocated in documents, like the Year 2000 (1989), from the B.C. Ministry of Education: "You will never see in a secondary classroom any assessment to see whether the students are better at that kind of activity - analysis, application - from beginning to the end of the program in any kind of way" (Int#1,2). Once again, he attributed much of this problem to the narrow approach to the teaching he claimed was being modelled in the field.

On the whole, the instructor found his experiences in the schools to be "very depressing" because, he claimed, "we are not getting any transfer." He believed that he has little ability to influence the teaching of social studies in the secondary schools. While he views himself as a cynic, he also claimed that education students are cynical too about what they can learn in a Faculty of Education. Hence, he has moved toward making the methods course "less sophisticated." He, therefore, intended to concentrate on addressing the curriculum by examining the program of studies and the prescribed textbooks, and would focus on methods of teaching which he would have his
Plans for the SSED 312 Methods Course

Course goals

In our pre-course interview, the instructor explained his plans and goals for the course. In terms of course goals, the instructor stated that he would want the student teachers in his class to, "know and be able to apply different methods in different situations." To address this goal, he stated, "I teach them a whole series of methods and persuade them to look for ways in which they can apply them" (Int#1,8). While "presenting innovative ways of transmitting information" was one stated goal, a second was to help these student teachers to understand that the "function of schools and of social studies classes is to teach [secondary] students to think and value."

In the course outline presented to the student teachers on the first day of class, the stated course goals were threefold: 1) participants will be able to construct units and lessons following provincial curriculum guides; 2) participants will be able to use a variety of instructional methods and apply them to different situations; and, 3) participants will be able to critically examine the provincial curriculum.

Course content

The instructor planned to divide the content to be covered in his course into three main parts. The first part would deal with defining social studies, discussing the purpose of education, and providing justification for teaching history and...
geography. The second and largest part would be centred around planning and teaching social studies. This included examining the curriculum guides and the textbooks, as well as demonstrating and practising various teaching methods, such as lecturing, supervised study, question and answer discussions, panels, debates, reports, role plays, simulations and study trips. The third part of the course would address teaching concepts, values education, critical thinking, current events, and controversial issues.

On the first day of classes, a tentative course outline was distributed which reflected what the instructor had verbalized in our interview (see appendix D). A revised course outline would be handed out when the student teachers returned from the short practicum. This second part of the course, from October 31 to the beginning of December, would be organized consecutively by the specific topics of critical thinking, geography, values education, assessing knowledge and thinking, assessing affective objectives and social skills, using case studies, and the techniques of simulation and role play.

Classes would run from 1:30 to 3:15 PM on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for 11 weeks from September 7 to November 30 with a two week break from October 17 to October 28 for the first practicum session. Out of the possible total of 26 classes over the 11 week period, two classes were cancelled for the instructor to attend the annual conference of the National Council for the Social Studies in the United States, one was cancelled for Remembrance Day, two classes were taught by a guest speaker from the geography department and another
two by a guest from the Education curriculum library. There was to be no textbook upon which the course was based. Students were to be given a series of handouts in class with a small photocopying fee collected at the end of the course.

Student evaluation

The assessment for this course was based mostly on two exams, a mid-term and a final. The mid-term exam was held in class just prior to the two week practicum and counted for 30% of the total marks, and the final exam held during exam week in mid-December counted for 50%. Both of these exams required the student teachers to prepare several series of lesson plans, based on excerpts from the various secondary school social studies textbooks, to demonstrate their grasp of the teaching techniques presented during class.

The other component of the course assessment for 20% of the total assessment was a series of article critiques from the major social studies journals, including Social Education, Canadian Social Studies and The Journal of Social Studies Research. The instructor's purpose for giving this assignment was that through familiarizing student teachers with these professional journals, "there is a chance that they might be influenced by that literature." The articles were to include one of each of a methodological study, an empirical study, a conceptual and a philosophical study, with the fourth being a choice of either of those three. These article critiques were submitted weekly over the last half of September and the first half of October. Each was worth five marks. After the short practicum, the instructor asked various student teachers to
report to the class on articles read as they related to the topics of critical thinking and values education.

Instructor's Teaching Style

The instructor described himself as aggressive, task oriented and business-like in his teaching manner. He characterized his teaching style as "teacher-directed and dominated." He noted, however, that he liked to take an interactive approach to his classes in which he had the student teachers regularly involved in small groups and peer teaching activities.

Summary

The instructor of the section of SSED 312: Curriculum and instruction in social studies - Secondary from which the study participants were drawn was both a former secondary school teacher and a social studies methods course instructor, and practicum supervisor. His experience has made him cynical about the power he has to change student teachers' thinking about, and teaching of social studies through the methods course. Because of what he saw as a lack of "transfer" between his methods course and the teaching of social studies in the schools, he has chosen to take a more realistic approach to his teaching of the course. Consequently, most of the emphasis during the course would be on presenting a variety of teaching techniques and familiarizing student teachers with the program of studies and the textbooks. Some of the course content, however, particularly in the second half, would address the 'what ought to be' component of social studies that he claimed was important to him, by addressing values education,
controversial issues and critical thinking.
CHAPTER V
INTRODUCING THE PARTICIPANTS

Introduction

Summative profiles of the eight study participants have been compiled in this chapter based on data collected in response to research question #1: How do the participants conceptualize the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy prior to the methods course? These individual profiles acknowledge that the participants had definite ideas about what social studies is and how best to teach it before experiencing the methods course. While these ideas were vague at times, they were nonetheless part of the participants' existing knowledge that had to be taken into account as influential on their sense making about learning to teach social studies.

Life experience has been established as a critical influence on student teachers' thinking about their subjects (Carter, 1990), as well as on how they made sense of their professional preparatory coursework (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1989). Consequently, the first segment of each profile provides background information on the participants' experiences including their social selves, ethnic heritage (where they recognized it as influential on their current thinking), family and home environment (including the influence of family members who are teachers), and employment, travel, and their participation in coaching others. Also noted are the participants' academic accomplishments to date, their reasons for wanting to become teachers, and their chosen teaching
specialization(s).

Additionally, student teachers' conceptualizations of their subject area (Adler, 1984) and what constitutes good teaching of that subject (Weinstein, 1989) have been established as influential on how they understand and teach it. Thus, the remaining two segments of each profile are focused more specifically on the participants' conceptualizations of social studies prior to commencement of the methods course. The first segment addresses the participants' entering views on the nature of social studies, including their thinking about what social studies is, its purpose(s) as a school subject, and their sense of its important content and understandings. The final segment deals with the participants' views on social studies pedagogy. These include descriptions of remembered events and teachers of social studies, as well as the participants' ideas about how best to teach social studies so secondary students understand it.

These initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy also demonstrate ways in which the students' knowledge base for teaching had already begun to develop prior to entering the methods course. Unlike many other Canadian teacher education programs and most American programs, these student teachers entered their preparatory program with a completed degree either with a major or with a minor in a requisite social science. Their entering knowledge of the subject matter reflected this disciplinary background. As well, their knowledge of adolescents as learners arising from their coaching experience gave them some general,
if somewhat vague, ideas about pedagogical principles and practices.

Participant Profiles

Katherine

In the first few minutes of our initial interview, Katherine’s confidence in her ability to discuss her beliefs about teaching and learning was evident. She described herself as "outspoken", "self assured" and "excited" about her future teaching career. Her relaxed demeanour and bubbly enthusiasm permeated our conversation. While she spoke knowledgeably and assuredly about teaching, Katherine confessed that being a teacher was not something that she had always wanted. Initially, after finishing secondary school, she tried journalism, with a geography minor, at the University of Carleton in Ottawa, but after one year in the program decided to leave. She could not accept "their nasty, brutal approach to getting a story." She decided she liked geography better so, being a Vancouverite, she returned home to the geography department of U.B.C.

The main catalyst for selecting geography, with an emphasis on regional studies, was a perpetual curiosity about other places resulting from numerous travel adventures throughout her 24 years. When she was seven, her family spent a year and a half living in Iran. Since then she has visited places like Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Spain and other parts of Europe, Morocco, the east coast of the USA, and all of Canada, except the Territories and Newfoundland. When she travels she likes to "really experience the culture" and is
"big on talking to people."

At some point over the span of her geography degree, Katherine made the decision to become a teacher. She comes from a home where "teacher talk" was always a part of her life because of her father, a secondary school principal.

Katherine: I don't know if you can appreciate this but I have an excellent relationship with my father. I guess he has never said it but he loves that I am going into teaching. And we always talk about it. (Int#1,5)

Because of her frequent discussions with her father and six years of coaching girls' volleyball, Katherine feels comfortable around teachers, schools and adolescents. She has chosen to major in secondary social studies with a concentration in English in the Faculty of Education.

**Katherine's views on the nature of social studies**

As she enters her teacher preparation program, Katherine describes social studies as "a very broad subject area," and she likes that breadth. She sees social studies as drawing heavily from the discipline of geography because of her academic background. For her, understanding geography is very important because it is an integral determining factor in people's lives.

Katherine: I think that it [geography] is basically about how society interacts with the earth because everything that happens to people is determined by the physical lay of the land. A lot of things that happen to the earth affect people and I think it's the interaction between the two, and a lot about what people do with their choices based on where they live. (Int#1,6)

Through social studies, Katherine feels that she can help her students to better understand what is going on in the world.
Studying other countries, in particular the third world, would give them "a more realistic sense" of the people there than what they see on the foster child advertisements on television. Addressing current issues in these countries would further develop this global orientation.

Katherine claims to recall very little of the actual geographic facts that she learned during her undergraduate work. She also has difficulty defining what geography actually is: "Geography has got to be one of the most [pause] diverse words. It covers so much stuff. I think I would be very hard pressed to say what geography is." While geographical concepts are fundamental to her thinking about social studies, Katherine acknowledges that history plays an important part as well because "what happened in the past affects us now." However, she feels the content of history is one of her weaknesses due to the minimal historical focus in her undergraduate coursework.

Katherine’s views on social studies pedagogy

Katherine thinks that social studies "can be a great subject, depending on the teacher." For her, "who you are as a teacher and what you bring to the classroom are critical." Her personal knowledge based on her travels and her home environment have strongly influenced what she believes about good teaching. Further, she recalls one secondary school English teacher, in particular, whose progressive ideas have been a positive role model for her. Overall, her secondary school experiences with social studies, however, were very frustrating. She saw a lot of time wasted through
disorganization and poor planning. Much of her learning was a chore as it was by rote. She claims that a lot of her teachers "just gave facts" to their students and she is determined that she is "not going to teach that way."

For Katherine, the "content is not all that important." She does not want her pupils to memorize and be able to "list off a bunch of stuff," but rather wants them to be able to apply what they are learning.

Katherine: I would rather be able to give a task to students and say, "Okay, if you are a geographer what are you going to do with it." And really see all the different types of things that they think a geographer does (Int#1,3).

Consequently, she sees her approach to teaching as student-centred with learners "actively involved." She does not want to be a lecturer, but rather a "guide" who "keeps students on track and helps them to see that there are always other ways of looking at things." She notes, however, that her students will have to be taught how to take a more active role in their own learning because they are so used to "receiving knowledge." They will have to be taught to inquire critically, to talk about what they are thinking, to apply their opinions, and to "take a chance."

The best way to teach social studies, according to Katherine, would be to use a variety of techniques and present information from a number of different viewpoints. She would make her students aware that her viewpoint is only one way of looking at things and help them to recognize that they "have an opinion that matters" too. She feels this approach to learning would give them a sense of pride and make them want to learn
more. Discussion is very important to this way of learning, especially students talking to each other. She too learns best by "asking a lot of questions to try to better understand." As the teacher, she recognizes that she can never have all of the answers. She claims to be a self-motivated, lifelong learner.

Stephanie

Stephanie's "well honed communication skills from eight years in business" were evident from the outset of this interview. Her self-confidence and what she described as a "dominant personality" immediately put things in her 'court.' She told stories of her successes in "the male-dominated business world" and the enjoyment she felt because of her accomplishments. She spoke of her eventual eagerness to leave sales because, "I needed a connection. I was in business and I hated it. I want to feel that I'm doing something that is worthwhile for people." One of her clients as a salesperson for an environmental magazine was a professor in geography at U.B.C. He inspired her to return to school to pursue a geography degree. She came back to school with the intention of becoming a teacher. She feels that she is coming to teaching with a "different agenda" than most student teachers because of her past experiences and her maturity. At 33, she is the oldest participant in the study. She also feels that she is "less blind" about the real world of teaching because she has many teacher friends she talks with regularly, and because of years of coaching softball and volleyball. She is majoring in social studies in the Faculty of Education.

Stephanie's views on the nature of social studies
For Stephanie, social studies is an important school subject because it gives "the broader picture" and that breadth is important for finding something to interest all of her students.

Stephanie: In high school you cover such a broad amount of area that you should be able to keep them [the students] with you. Even if they're not interested in one area they know something new will be coming up just around the corner. (Int#1,3)

When defining social studies, she contends that "interaction" is a fundamental concept. She says, "I think social studies is looking at the interaction between basically cultures, political groups or economically like the Pacific Rim - the interaction between all the people on the earth." The discipline of geography is central to her thinking about social studies in that "everything is set in space and time."

History, while she sees it as "what's past is past," has a place in social studies too because "it can give the opportunity for students to study an idea without it being right in their own backyard." In particular, she is interested in addressing environmental issues and regional studies so that her students have the opportunity to see that "history is right there [because] it makes it all come alive."

Stephanie feels that critical thinking is an essential skill that students must learn in social studies if they are to become more open-minded, and willing to seek out different views and other alternatives.

Stephanie: That's my main reason for coming into teaching is to allow kids to begin thinking critically ...They have to know that there is no right answer. The way we see it is not necessarily the way that others see it. So it's keeping an open
Helping her students to become better independent thinkers is Stephanie's "mission" as a teacher. If she finds that she is unable to accomplish her mission, for whatever reason, then she says she would not hesitate to "get out" of teaching. She is concerned, however, about getting everything she would like to do into the existing curriculum. She is also curious to examine the curriculum in her social studies methods course to see what content she still needs to know. She acknowledges some concern over her existing content knowledge: "I know things generally [but] I can't sit here and go through verbatim all that I was taught over the years."

Stephanie's views on social studies pedagogy

Central to Stephanie's approach to teaching social studies is her desire to make what she is teaching relevant to the lives of her students. She uses the analogy of sales when talking about teaching.

Stephanie: Teaching is just like selling. I think you need to motivate kids to want to learn...You know you're selling ideas, and whether the kids buy them or not decides whether you will be successful...In sales you get a commission as the reward, but I think in teaching, it's seeing the light go on...(Int#1,2)

Stephanie claims that motivated students result not only from "catch[ing] onto something that interests them," but also from making them "feel like they have some sense of control." She feels that the challenge is in making the learning "useful for everybody."

Stephanie: The information we have in our minds has to be worth something (#1,4)...Once you get familiar with that information and try to use it in your daily
life, you know once somebody tries to repeat it, they own it. And that's the way learning should be.
(Int#1,7)

To connect what students are learning to "reality" in social studies, she would like to set up fund raising projects like some of the environmental ones she has been working with over the past few years. She also plans to try a variety of ways of teaching social studies, such as the use of small groups, debates and student presentations, because, "You have to try something and then you come at it from a different way to try to make it more interesting for everybody." She recalls a social studies teacher in secondary school who made his subject "come alive."

Stephanie: He put it in its simplest form and allowed us to understand it so everyone had a common base - the lowest level of understanding and then people were able to ask and expand from that base. (Int#1,3)

Stephanie recognizes that there are going to be "some kids who prefer not to learn and some kids [who] can't stop." She thinks the key to reaching all students is through building their confidence and giving them some control over their learning.

Stephanie: I would like to help kids feel that they have the potential to do anything. You know I don't want to set a kid up for failure either, but there are so many kids who go to school thinking they have to be a doctor or a lawyer or an engineer. They have to know that it's okay to be a plumber or carpenter too. (Int#1,3)

Thus, for Stephanie, one of the teacher's more important roles is "to encourage kids to take the next step by giv[ing] small goals that are achievable to build students' confidence, to build the desire to learn and to know that it's okay if you
don't have it 100% right." She is concerned, however, with knowing how to encourage students without "crushing them." As well, she worries about the number of bright kids who drop out of school because "they’re not given any reason to stay."

Stephanie: I’d like to open up all the opportunities because a lot of kids don’t get very far. I’d like to encourage those kids to try to at least finish high school. And they have to know that when they hit bad times that somebody is going to care. (Int#1,4)

While being seen as a caring teacher is very important to Stephanie, she also wants to be "tough, honest and respectful" because without those qualities "it doesn’t matter how many good ideas you’ve got, the respect just won’t be there and the kids won’t listen to you." Respect and caring, therefore, are the two most important qualities she wants to strive for in her teaching.

David

David made the interview situation informal and relaxed. His friendly, outgoing personality and the easy manner with which he talked about his experiences and his future plans as a teacher created a calm, conversational atmosphere. He talked about his many years of part-time employment at the Pacific National Exhibition in the summertime and the Pacific Coliseum over the winter. He told me something of his family, his Italian ancestry, and his girlfriend. He talked about his coaching experience with young children’s softball and his volunteer work as a secondary school football trainer. Sports, in some form or another, have always been a part of his life. It was natural, therefore, for him to eventually end up in a human kinetics program at U.B.C. (with a minor in geography
because of an interest in the earth and weather). However, he did not enter this program planning to be a teacher.

Since leaving secondary school, his career path has been uncertain. Prior to entering U.B.C., he spent three years at Langara College training to be a computer technologist. Part of this training involved a summer-long practicum with a computer company that made him realize he did not want "to sit in front of a computer all day." He claims he enjoys "being around people too much" so that sort of job would be too isolated for him.

As a part of his human kinetics degree, David chose the training component of the degree program which required that he develop lesson plans and teach them to his peers. As well, he regularly took part in a physical education class at a local secondary school. He enjoyed these experiences and found that he felt at ease in front of a group teaching. He particularly enjoyed "being with the school kids," especially when the lessons "focused on skill development and not just games." Based on these experiences and his feeling that he "would be good at it," he decided to complete a Bachelor of Education with a major in physical education and a concentration in social studies.

David's views on the nature of social studies

David sees social studies as encompassing a broad mix of mainly history and geography. When he is attempting to define it, the emphasis is on history.

David: Social studies is about the world that we live in, the history of it and how it was created and where it's going and the people on it and the
problems with it and what we can do to change it...It's more the people around us and how our lives are formed by what we've done in the past and what we are doing and stuff like that. (Int#1,4)

Yet, when he talks about the important content of social studies, he emphasizes geographic concepts, particularly those of physical geography.

David: I see myself teaching about countries [and] everything that goes on in them, like the geography and how things are formed, the different rocks, why they're formed, how they've changed to be the form that they are or how animals are extinct because of things that are happening in our world. (Int#1,4)

David sees two central purposes for teaching social studies as a school subject. The first is sociological in its emphasis in that it is "study[ing] of us as social beings" and learning to "get along." The second evolves around the concept of "change" in that social studies examines "how things in the world can go wrong" and "what human beings can do to make change." He gives the example of recycling as one of these things humans can do to make change.

David's views on social studies pedagogy

David recalled his own experiences with social studies in Grade 11 when he thinks about teaching social studies.

David: He [the teacher] had his overheads that he probably made when he first started teaching and he'd just slap the overhead on. Especially near the end of the course he'd have two overheads going and have someone to keep changing them for him and there'd be notes to copy down and that was it. (Int#1,3)

He feels he did not learn from that teacher "other than copying things down and memorizing" and claims that this lack of learning put him at a disadvantage in his university course work. One of the biggest problems with this approach to
teaching, David claims, was that he was not ever "challenged" to look at things from different perspectives. He now feels that this will be an important part of his teaching of social studies because students are too accepting. The teacher should encourage them to challenge what they are being told.

David: Students need to learn how things are from different points of view. There should be a different way of looking at everything...You have to give kids a challenge and say, "Is this the only way we can look at it?" (Int#1,4)

Based on his schooling and coaching, David also feels that teaching has to be "structured," and not "just free time" (which is the way he feels a lot of secondary teachers, particularly in physical education, teach). He is concerned that students are genuinely learning something about "what is going on" so that their learning is purposeful.

David: I hope to be a teacher that will spend time so that when I'm finished the time or the hour, they've learned something and not just found it boring...I want them to come out of it learning something and to have fun. (Int#1,6)

As a university student, David enjoys group work because "it makes a fairly big project kind of small." He sees himself making use of this technique in his teaching, although he recognizes that he would have to "modify it for different intelligence levels and maturity levels." He also enjoys and would like to use discussions in his teaching, but not "where the teacher just stands there and starts talking." He feels that lectures can be productive at times too, but they need to be enhanced by "visual outlines of key points drawn from the text material" - a successful learning strategy he encountered in one of his university courses. As a student, he also has
always had a great deal of difficulty with reading textbooks. He has concerns with relying on textbooks, although he recognizes that the textbook will have to play some role in his teaching of social studies: "In my opinion a book should be complementary to the course. It shouldn't be the course and the book. But there's nothing wrong with a textbook."

David notes, as well, that the curriculum guide will be a very important document for him, especially since he feels unsure of what he will be teaching in social studies. He recognizes that as a teacher he "can't know everything," so while this curriculum is not the "absolute," it will provide him with a "guideline" to help decide on the content to be covered.

As he enters the Faculty, David is feeling confident about himself as a physical education teacher, but is having some trouble visualizing himself teaching social studies. He hopes the methods course will clarify for him "just what social studies is and how you go about [teaching] it."

Irene

Several times during our first interview, Irene referred to her "passion for history" and her "love of the stories of history." Despite her initial shyness and soft spoken manner, this passion was evident in her excited tone, gestures and facial expressions. Irene claimed to have always had this love of history. After secondary school in what she described as "middle class, red-necked" city in British Columbia, she decided to pursue a B.A in history, despite the warnings of her parents that there would be little she could do with such a
degree: "I knew that somewhere down the line I'd have a B.A. and I wouldn't be able to do anything with it but I did it anyway and I'm glad I did." When she had completed her B.A., she still was not considering teaching as a career, in fact, she "swore to God" that was something she would never do because of what she saw as a lack of interest and effort in school on the part of her secondary school classmates. Instead, she completed a year of a market management program. While she disliked the "backstabbing" and the "intense, competitive world of the marketing business", she feels that she learned valuable organizational and presentation skills such as "how to condense blocks of information and be able to deliver them to other people and sell your ideas." It was during this experience that she began to take the idea of teaching seriously. She recalled getting "a lot of nice positive feedback from the instructors who said, "You should be a teacher. You're in the wrong field." After a "long process of thinking about it," she applied to the Faculty of Education as a secondary social studies major. She expresses great excitement about her choice: "I can't remember feeling so excited about something in the past. It just feels so good. I tried a lot of different things and I finally feel like I'm on track."

Irene's views on the nature of social studies

Irene claims to be "unclear" about what social studies is at this stage, despite the fact that it was always her favourite subject in school. She offered the following thoughts about its nature.

Irene: Social studies...it's the study of people,
past events, and cultures...It involves geography with maps and basic skills. I think social studies is basic skills too...not just learning how to draw a bar graph, but it's the basic skills used to understand history. It's a compilation of stuff. Social studies is history, and geography and sociology. (Int#1,6)

She claimed to have difficulty separating social studies from her academic major in history. For her, history is about making "connections" over time: "It's the past connected to the present and the future. It's a way of learning how the things that have gone on already are still happening." These connections are manifested in her love of storytelling.

Irene: History is a story. One big story. One big bedtime story. It's fascinating. It's a story about why people do things...I enjoy story telling and being able to give that away and I think I can do that because I have enthusiasm and I love my subject - love it. (Int#1,3)

Stories are what make history interesting, exciting and memorable for Irene, and she believes they will do the same for her future students because they are more meaningful than endless facts. She attributes her love of storytelling partially to a background in amateur acting and seeing herself as a performer. Her Irish heritage, as well, has given her many stories she would like to share with her students.

The purpose for teaching social studies, according to Irene, is twofold. One is to assist students in understanding the cyclical nature of history. She wants her students to learn that "what happened in the past is still happening now."

Irene: I think it's absolutely vital to get[ting] through life, to understand the world we live in. Otherwise I think you can become a victim of everything that is happening to you and not understand about why it's happening to you. (Int#1,7)
Her second purpose is to ensure students' learning is relevant to their lives.

Irene: The purpose is just to teach you about your world and what is going on so that when you read the newspaper hopefully something will click and you will say, "Oh yeah I learned that in social studies class." And that's what it's for - to make you aware of how you fit in the world, how your family fits into the world. It's not just the bigger picture of the world, but it's you on the individual level too. So it gets grounded in understanding who you are.

(Int#1,7)

These purposes, she claims, will be important guides to her teaching of social studies.

Irene's views on social studies pedagogy

Irene describes herself as a "good" student who has always been successful in school. She recalls being equally successful with traditional and non-traditional teachers, but notes that the crucial distinction in what makes a good teacher for her is "passion" as opposed to "apathy." As role models, she describes two secondary social studies teachers, one "formal" and one "more relaxed," who influenced her ideas about teaching social studies. These teachers took time to address her many questions, were helpful, and encouraged her to go beyond what she was learning in class.

As a teacher, Irene too feels that she should be able to answer students' questions, but also that she should "fess up" when she does not have the answer. She wants to challenge her students to think for themselves about what they are learning. As well, she wants to directly involve her students by "doing things" and "talking." She wants to be a teacher who "makes it fun" by being a "story teller." She acknowledges that she has
an idealistic vision of what teaching will be like that "is more like sitting around a campfire and talking about things." She is worried that she is "hopeless" and is "never going to make it" because of this "ideal" image. She hopes to assuage some of her fears by talking to teachers about it during the practicum.

As she enters her methods class, she understands there is a curriculum that is a plan to follow in her teaching and that it suggests texts, books and films available for use in her teaching. She has not seen a curriculum guide, nor is she sure of how much "room you have to manoeuvre" within the confines of the curriculum however. She expects to use a textbook in her teaching mainly because that was the way she was taught.

Kim

Kim’s first interview with me was filled with stories about her extensive travels in South East Asia which she feels have been highly beneficial for her as a future teacher. Not only has she "experienced racism" as a Caucasian living in China for a year, but she also believes that she can better "understand some of the cultural aspects of life" in Taiwan and Hong Kong because of her sojourns in southeast Asia. She feels that she would be better able to understand the "adjustment" that many Taiwanese and Hong Kong children undergo when they immigrate to Canada. These experiences have benefited her teaching and understanding of E.S.L. (English as a second language) children, as well as giving her a great deal of self-confidence, ease in social situations, and maturity. These were evidenced during our interview.
At 15, Kim had her first adventure overseas when her parents took sabbaticals to live in Beijing, China for a year. She talks about how hard it was socially being a student in the school system there because she didn't speak the language. Once she did learn Chinese she found it interesting that everyone in the school, no matter what their nationality, communicated in Chinese.

Kim: So we were going to school with Italian kids and Portuguese kids and North Korean kids. We weren't the only Caucasian faces by any means. Chinese was the language talked by everyone which was interesting. I would be talking to an Italian classmate in Chinese, once I could speak it and the same with the Spanish speaking and Korean speaking. (Int#1,3)

Interestingly, once she developed fluency, she recognized the political nature of the curriculum.

Kim: A lot of the subject matter, when my brother and I could finally speak Chinese we realized was about Chairman Mao's communes and pigs on the commune and how many sheep on the commune - all of the math problems were political, full of propaganda. (Int#1,3)

At age 17, her second experience in Asia was as a Rotary exchange student in Bombay, India where she lived with three different families and experienced an education system that "was entirely rote memorization" with classes of 300 people in grade 11. She describes the more effective part of her education there being the "experiential" part as she travelled in the country.

Her third Asian stint came after she completed a Bachelor of Arts in Mandarin Chinese with a minor in Asian history at U.B.C. After completing a business program in the Asian Pacific Management Co-op at Capilano College in North Vancouver,
British Columbia, she worked in advertising in Taiwan for two years. At that time, she also taught English to adults in the evenings and tutored a Taiwanese secondary school student.

Kim has a number of reasons for wanting to be a teacher. She has "always been around teachers" as both of her parents, her sister and her husband are all educators. She feels too that she would "be good at teaching" because she "really enjoys children." She has coached soccer with nine and 10 year olds for three years and has visited numerous classrooms in Vancouver to show slides of her travels in South East Asia. She likes the idea that teaching will allow her to travel as she would like to return to South East Asia to teach in the future. Lastly, she credits her positive experiences with schooling as an incentive for entering teaching: "I think that if you have a positive experience you can probably relay that to kids later on."

Kim is entering the Faculty of Education with concentrations in two areas – Mandarin Chinese and social studies. While her primary interest is in teaching Chinese, it is not recognized as a 'major' subject in British Columbia, therefore she has declared social studies her second concentration. Her interest in social studies, she says, comes from her travel and study of other countries.

Kim's views on the nature of social studies

When asked to define what she believes social studies is, Kim responds in terms of sociology, political science, geography and history: "I would say it is the study of people and places over time...Perhaps it is also the study of
political systems." While she acknowledges history as an important part of social studies, she is concerned about the relevance of the history that is currently being studied at the secondary level.

Kim: I found when I first started taking history courses I didn't care what happened in 1462. I don't know if that was when Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue. I didn't care too much. It didn't seem to relate well with me. It was just too long ago. (Int#1,6)

Although it is important to include history in order to address questions like "why things are the way they are," Kim feels that history that is "too long ago" does not relate to students. It needs to have meaning in order to be interesting for students.

Kim: And I think that kids in high school feel the same way, it was just too long ago. They want to be able to say, "My grandfather was in that war." They want to be able to relate to it in some way, I think, to make it interesting and for it to have some meaning for them. (Int#1,7)

Consequently, she feels that one of the important purposes of teaching social studies is to examine "why countries are the way they are now." Central to this notion is the need to address contemporary issues. Kim would like to see Pacific Rim studies and local studies, like the urban study of Vancouver, comprising more of the content of the social studies curriculum.

For Kim, a second purpose for teaching social studies, would be to try and resolve some of the racial tension that she feels abounds in schools today.

Kim: There's so much negative feelings towards a lot of the kids in the schools. I think a lot of Asian kids in particular tend to stick together rather than
trying to branch out and try to befriend Canadian kids because that's their culture and also it's easier, more familiar to them. A lot of Canadian kids, I think, dislike that. A lot of Canadian people generally, in British Columbia, I don't know about the rest of Canada, feel threatened about the fact that a lot of Asian immigrants have money whereas before they lived in Chinatown and worked in small grocery stores and didn't drive Mercedes Benzs and now all of a sudden these kids are competing for the same jobs. There's a lot of racial tension...I think it's getting out of hand in a lot of ways. I think we need to educate these kids through some sort of cross cultural communication program. (Int#1,4)

Consequently, addressing these racist attitudes overtly will be an important part of her teaching of social studies, she claims.

Kim expresses some concern about a lack of content knowledge for teaching the broader picture of social studies because of her Asian focus in her undergraduate degree, but she recognizes that she cannot know everything and is prepared to continue to learn on her own throughout her career.

Kim's views on social studies pedagogy

Kim talks about her good teachers who made her want to learn because they were positive and enthusiastic for their subject and used innovative approaches to their teaching. She recalls one French teacher who used cooking classes to make learning more interesting so that, "it wasn't ever boring." She disliked teachers who stressed reading and rote memorization. She also did not enjoy courses that were too broad and too focused on learning mere information, particularly the dates of historical events. This is what she recalls about her social studies and history courses. She is hoping to get some "ways of presenting the material in a creative manner" from the social
studies methods course.

Kim would like to be more "impactful" on her students in some way. She feels one way to accomplish this is through relating the content learned to the students' lives: "I want kids to look forward to coming to class. I want it to be interesting for them and for it to have meaning for them." One way to increase the relevance of the learning, she suggests, would be to capitalize on the cultural mosaic in the classroom.

Kim: I want to be the type of teacher who wants to learn from the kids as well, again because of this mosaic of different nationalities in the classroom. Kids from other countries can really bring a lot to the classroom as well I think. They have so much they can share. (Int#1,7)

Also, to be a good teacher, she will "ask students their opinions and really listen" because she does not want students to be afraid to ask questions and participate in class.

Margaret

In our first interview, Margaret spoke assertively, passionately, openly and "from the heart" about the experiences that have brought her to a career in teaching. She was born into a culture in Hong Kong where "silence is valued" and "being silent is the best way to survive." She gave the example of her father who got only a Grade 2 education because "his teacher was dragged away by the communists when they were persecuting intellectuals." She knows that she is considered to be too outspoken by her Chinese relatives, especially considering that she is a female, but she maintains that "you have to stand up for what you believe in." She attributes much of her present belief to the coursework she has been doing in
women's studies at U.B.C. and expresses an interest in completing a masters in that area some day. She also talked about an interest in studying law.

Secondary school for Margaret was what she described as a "hypocritical" experience. She attended school in Vancouver and "hated" it. She almost dropped out at 16, even though she "knew how to play the game and always got straight A's." She was befriended by the school nurse who counselled her into completing her secondary schooling. Her problems were not racially related as she claims that she did not experience racism until she got to university. She suggests that this was because she went to a secondary school with a large proportion of Jewish students. The main reason for her dislike of school was that her superior intelligence was never tapped. In fact, she recalls experiences of feeling "used" by her teachers as "cheap labour" to help other students who were having problems. She describes herself as being "mechanical" throughout her schooling, going through the paces without question, until she began to rebel in secondary school.

A critical change in her life was becoming a volleyball coach in Grade 10 (which she continued for the next seven years). This was a responsibility she took very seriously. She says, as a coach, she had "14 girls to love" and had to help them deal with problems like poor self-esteem, teenage pregnancy and attempted suicide. From her coaching experience, Margaret developed a great deal of perceptiveness about adolescents. She learned that "as a teacher you shouldn't take things that teenagers say personally because they go through
incredible mood swings that can be set off by little things."
She has learned also that you should not "trivialize what
teenagers say because they are capable of more feeling than
adults." "As long as you love them they are willing to forgive
you just about everything." As a coach, she tries to "creat[e]
a community of women to support each other" on her team. Her
role is as one "who listens without judgment but if asked tells
the truth, is there no matter what, and helps them [the team
members] to get a sense of themselves." She wishes she had had
more of that same sort of guidance, in addition to the school
nurse, when she needed it.

Margaret completed a Bachelor of Arts in English
Literature with a minor in History from U.B.C. She is majoring
in English and concentrating in social studies in the Faculty
of Education. As she begins her teacher training, she expresses
concern about her young age of 23 and lack of life experience.
She questions some of the admission policies of the Faculty
because she is not sure that she should have been accepted into
education without so much as an interview. As well, she is
concerned by those of her peers who choose to sit back and
coast through their course work and apparently are allowed to
do so by the instructors. She does not understand how those who
are going to be teachers can choose to not express their
beliefs. She maintains that "you have to stand up for what you
believe in because personal courage, personal responsibility
and loyalty are critical to learning, which empowers the self."

Margaret’s views on the nature of social studies

Margaret takes a sociological and political science
emphasis when she describes social studies. For her, social studies is about helping students to understand their world and their responsibilities in it.

Margaret: Social studies helps students to recognize their place in the world and that everyone has a contribution to make. No one is disposable. Sometimes I get the impression that if we lost all of Kenya, it would be okay. I don’t want kids walking out of my class thinking that. I want them to walk out feeling that they can accomplish great things. We don’t know what great things we can do unless we try. Anybody can make a difference, it’s all in the attitude. We are not nobodies. (Int#1,3)

She contends that social studies consists of geography because "it matters where you live", history because "it explains how we got here," economics because "it’s looking at supply and demand," and political science and women’s studies and sociology and psychology and...Everything connects."

Margaret has some reservations, however, about the kind of history that she sees being taught in social studies:

Margaret: It is history that studies individual people and events because we either want to emulate or avoid them. There is too much emphasis on turning people into saints and villains. There isn’t enough analysis of the constructs we accept and live under, for example, capitalism and democracy. (Int#1,3)

The important purposes for studying social studies, according to Margaret, are first that students get "a sense of history" and of their "place in the continuum." And second, that they come to the realisation that "everything in the world has a ripple effect, everything effects everything else." For Margaret, this entails, "understanding the balance between the individual and society...It’s how we live and why and what are the consequences of the decisions you make. It’s what it means to be human."
Margaret believes that social studies should not be "the study of the subject in isolation," but rather that "integration is critical" because "kids need a sense of how things relate which is really missing these days." In her first year of university she took a "powerful" course entitled ARTS 1 that sparked her interest in the humanities and the notion of individuals in relation to society and cultures in context.

Margaret's view on social studies pedagogy

One of Margaret's best teachers in secondary school was in mathematics. He used to tell "stories" that sometimes related to mathematics, but were more often more important to her because she saw the "human being behind the calculator. He had thoughts." This is the kind of teacher that she would like to be, one who shares her humanity with her students.

Through her teaching, Margaret hopes to "empower" students.

Margaret: My students should be willing to stick out their neck. I will teach about the Nielsen Ratings and the power of the individual voice. One person can make the decision whether we will watch Full House on TV this season. I will encourage my students to write letters, to express themselves, to tell what they believe and to read the newspaper. (Int#1,3)

Central to her teaching strategies will be discussions. She is not interested in telling students "what to think but rather how." She wants them to be "rational and compassionate" and recognize that "there are always consequences to decisions" because "nothing happens in isolation."

Margaret: I would tell students, "Believe what you believe and be sure you believe it because it is so easy to be swayed if you don't." People don't know what they believe and they are becoming more distrustful of believing in anything. (Int#1,3)
For Margaret, the content "doesn't matter as much as students becoming individual thinkers and seekers of truth, whatever that may be for them." As well, she feels that students need to learn to "test their own truths" and be challenged to "think about their ideas."

Margaret: Teenagers have zillions of ideas about the way the world should be. They haven't been indoctrinated as of yet so they have lots of radical ideas that need to be challenged. But their ideas also have to be nurtured and the teacher has to show that she values what they think. (Int#1,3)

Not only does Margaret want her students to be "thinking persons," but also persons with "moral constructs." She feels that it is her responsibility as a teacher to be open and honest about issues of morality.

Margaret: Morality is constantly around us. The minute you walk into the classroom you are a moral example whether you want to be or not. It's part of being a teacher to challenge moral issues. Dialogue is important... If I am asked about my opinion on moral issues, I will answer honestly, but I want students to know this is what I think only and that there are other ways of looking at the issue too. (Int#1,3)

She will encourage her students to use the library and newspapers, to evaluate information and synthesize their knowledge, and to clarify and express themselves. In order to teach these skills, she sees herself bringing in controversial pieces of literature for her students to "look for holes in the argument." In the social studies methods course, Margaret is hoping to have the opportunity to further clarify her personal philosophy of teaching so that she can "get some sense of where I stand in terms of what kind of teacher I want to be." She also hopes to get some more techniques for teaching social
With Daniel, the interview situation tended to be a slower, more deliberative process because, as he noted several times, he "needs time to think about things for a while" before he says them. He claims that he spends a lot of time on his own quietly contemplating things in his head. He expressed concern at various points throughout the interview that his thoughts seemed to lack clarity and that he was not making sense. I wasn’t able to pick out these places of uncertainty other than on a few occasions where he appeared to lose his train of thought. For the most part, I found his responses to be thoughtful and articulate.

We began the interview with Daniel talking about his nine years of coaching youth soccer and his two month experience as a volunteer at a local secondary school. The previous spring, a teacher parent of one of his soccer players had invited him to her school to observe and help out wherever he wanted. Over that time, he experienced a wide range of classrooms and subject areas. He talked about a particularly powerful experience in which he got to work one-on-one with a Grade 8 boy who had been a cocaine baby.

Daniel: I was his science partner for two months. So we sat at the same sink and did the projects together. I didn’t tell him everything but I just helped him. Sometimes all it took was just reading out to him a question or a part of the reading assignment and it would help him to understand it because he couldn’t sit there long enough without getting distracted by another student or something. And he ended up passing science which they didn’t really think would happen because there was only one teacher and what was she going to do, and then there
was this boy. So she had her work cut out for her. It was a good experience. (Int#1,7)

He also did some marking, supervising and helping individually and in small groups in other classes. This classroom experience and his coaching have given him an "advantage in teaching," he feels, because he has "learned how to communicate with adolescents," and can "understand how they think and how they respond to instruction, direction and discipline."

When Daniel left secondary school, he was interested in politics so he started working on a degree in political science. He knew that eventually he wanted to teach so he switched to a subject area that was taught in British Columbia schools. Because of the prominent place of athletics in his background, his choice for a major was human kinetics, with a geography minor. He is entering the Faculty of Education majoring in physical education, with a concentration in social studies, which he feels can be "a good combination" for a teacher.

Daniel’s views on the nature of social studies

Daniel talks about social studies as "a tough one to describe" because "it is so broad" and "encompasses a lot of things." He is concerned about this breadth because he feels it results in social studies not being respected as an important school subject by teachers, students and the educational system as a whole. He thinks that social studies would be better treated if it was separated into specific disciplines: "Maybe they’re [the students] not getting a full understanding of any of it because they’re only getting bits and pieces of any one
of the different aspects of the social sciences."

According to Daniel, social studies is based on the social sciences with history and geography being the two central disciplines from which it draws. The "environment," "social units" and "time" are important concepts to his ideas about social studies.

Daniel: I think it deals with our physical environment around us, and the social environment. It deals with our country, it deals with our province, but it also deals with the rest of the world...uh...Boy, it's so broad...It's our past, our future, our present and again physically, socially and culturally. I guess it's the study of humans, past, present and future all over the world, regionally, nationally and internationally. (Int#1,5)

He thinks that the central purpose for having social studies as a school subject is for students to "learn about themselves and other people."

Daniel: I think that they [students] should know the history of their country and they should understand how things work in their country, but at the same time they should be familiar with how things operate in other parts of the world. They should be aware of current issues. (Int#1,6)

He feels this is an important purpose because the "world is getting smaller...and kids growing up today are going to interact with people from everywhere, so the better they understand others, the better off they'll be." He also suggests that this better understanding might "help with social tensions." Promoting a global orientation is integral, therefore, to his view of social studies as a school subject.

Daniel's views on social studies pedagogy

From his learning experiences in secondary school and university, Daniel recalls being more motivated by active
involvement. He recalls enjoying a mock parliament in Grade 9 social studies, in particular, and peer teaching in his university physical education classes, as compared to passive listening approaches like lectures and discussions "where the teacher does most of the talking." He would like to incorporate this active learning approach in his teaching of social studies.

Daniel: I think that what I remember of the social studies curriculum, there were parts of it where more student interaction and involvement in the classes would have benefitted the students. I remember doing a little bit of it myself, but I think there are aspects of it which could involve more student participation and that way perhaps they would learn more. Rather than just sitting there listening to the teacher, they could become more involved. Dealing with students this age in the high school setting...from my experience, their attention spans are not super long so you have to make it interesting for them and if they’re interested they’re more apt to enjoy it and learn (Int#1,3).

A second important element of his teaching style, he claims, will be making sure that his students are able to understand what he is teaching, at their level: "You have to get the information across to them in such a way that they can understand it first of all." As a secondary school student, he recalls being frustrated by the textbook because the vocabulary was too difficult so "things just weren’t fully understood." He found films and group activities to be effective in helping him learn, but expressed concern that a lot of students did not take them seriously and "napped" instead.

Other elements that he feels will be important for the success of his future teaching are being prepared and organized, managing time effectively, and maintaining a
professional appearance. All of these have been influenced by his experiences with social studies and physical education in secondary school.

Daniel: Social studies back then was a bit of a joke. The social studies department at my school I don't think was the best around. I think that they lacked sort of a professional appearance. They seemed just a little bit too lax and too laid back and I don't think they took the social studies courses as seriously as they should have...I think that students that age are pretty sharp. You know they don't miss much. They know what's going on. You know this guy [the physical education teacher] runs in [to double as the social studies teacher] and he's not prepared. And I don't think that teacher can command the respect that he should or she should from the students...I remember it being too laid back and not organized enough. Not serious enough I think for proper learning to occur (Int#1,3).

When asked if he was concerned about choosing the same teaching combination, he said that he feels he understands the problem and can deal with it through efficient planning. As he begins the social studies methods course, he is wondering how strictly he has to "stick to" the curriculum in his teaching.

Allan

Allan is a confident, outgoing person who is going into teaching partially because he feels he is a good communicator. However, he expressed concern several times about whether he was making sense in what he was saying. He described his thoughts as "confused and garbled." Part of this could be due, he suggested, to the fact that, "I haven't thought much about this [being in the Faculty of Education] before." He hopes "being in this project will help me to think about what my goals are for this program and what I need to focus on." He is genuinely excited about becoming a teacher and speaks
enthusiastically about the preparation program.

Allan revealed very little about himself and his experiences as a student in secondary school in this interview. Instead, he talked a great deal about his knowledge of the subject matter of biology arising from his undergraduate degree, as well as his interest in social studies because of a minor in sociology. He feels he has "a fuller education" because of this sociology minor. He suggests that, "More science students should actually take more of the humanity subjects to get a better understanding of how the society works and what makes it tick." One of the most important concepts to him from his sociological studies is that of inequality of opportunity. He attributes much of this inequality to cultural differences, although he makes no reference to his own Chinese heritage as a catalyst for his thinking. He made the decision to enter teaching while completing his undergraduate degree, after considering other career paths such as research and business.

Allan has worked as a health care worker in a mental hospital, as a volunteer teacher's aid, and as an English as a Second Language instructor with a community mental health care team. He feels that these experiences directed him toward teaching because he "found that it is a great feeling when you get to participate in forming people's ideas and their knowledge. It goes beyond the subject matter; it goes toward their attitude to life in general." Because of these experiences, he feels he better understands the stigma that is attached to mental illness and will "be able to interact with
them [stigmatized kids] by being able to understand where they are coming from and what type of difficulties they have in the community." He expressed an interest in perhaps working with the mentally challenged again.

Allan's views on the nature of social studies

For Allan, social studies is an "amalgamation of different social science disciplines" particularly history, geography, sociology and political science.

Allan: When you mix those [history, geography, sociology and political science] together you create a better knowledge and understanding of the world in the physical aspects, the cultural aspects, and the political nature of the world - globally. (Int#1,5)

Geography is a critical part of social studies, he suggests, because it gives "a better knowledge of how man interacts with the natural world, our water resources and the environment." This knowledge is "important background to our resource management."

One purpose for having social studies as a school subject, he feels, is to address and strengthen Canadian identity, especially considering the threat of Americanization: "I think that it is important to us that I tell adolescents that Canada is unique and that we had a unique history and that we had our struggles too." As well, Allan feels strongly that acquiring a more global view and the understanding that there are many different ways of looking at things are two other necessary purposes of social studies. He states, "There is a world out there and everywhere has a different agenda; everywhere has a different ideology and culture." A third important function of social studies for Allan, and one he

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feels was missing in his secondary school education and still is, is dealing with issues such as inequality of opportunity, gender equity, and multiculturalism. In this respect, he suggests the curriculum, "needs to be revamped." Addressing these issues will be important to his teaching of social studies, he claims.

**Allan's views on social studies pedagogy**

Allan makes very little reference to either the content or the teaching style of his teachers in secondary school. The greatest influence on his thinking about teaching and learning appears to be the knowledge of the disciplines that he has acquired as a result of his academic preparation at university. He believes that helping students to understand what the subject is and why it is important to know are the necessary responsibilities of a teacher: "There is a logical backbone to what you’re learning and there’s a reason why you’re learning it." He is the only participant who expresses this understanding of the subject-matter as being important to his teaching of social studies.

Not only does Allan believe that his responsibility as a teacher is to assist his students "in acquiring and understanding the subject matter as he has come to know it," he also believes teaching is about helping to form their positive attitudes toward life beyond school. He wants his students to be able to "excel" or "at least have proper knowledge that will let them be well prepared" for life. His students need to be "challenged" to think for themselves as "high school poses a barrier to the realism of what is expected at an individual
level, beyond school."

Allan feels that he must try to make teaching interesting for his students through alternative approaches and differing viewpoints. Giving students a panoramic view of what is out there through approaches such as current events is one way to do this. He wants his students to be open minded in "understand[ing] where other individuals are coming from," as well as being able to form their own ideas, and to recognize that facts are not static.

Allan: Underlying my teaching I'd always emphasize the fact that you always have to face the challenge that things are not what they seem to be. It's always openended. You can never prove it, but you can always disprove it. When you go beyond high school, you always question ideas through testing and through testing you learn more and you can create even an extension of a theory, or even a whole new type of theory, or a school of thought — a different attitude towards a subject matter, and I would like to convey that attitude that you always can't sort of just sit there and think that nothing is going to change. Always question. What is known today may not be the case tomorrow. I can see that in the social sciences it supports that idea. It is sort of scripted into historical writings that it's not actually that one way, it's not geocentric, it's heliocentric. It didn't necessarily happen that way. There are other views and neither view might be wrong. You know you have to question what once was a view and you might question other views about what specifically happened. For example, the idea of what Louis Riel was to the natives and what they were to him. You have to test your theories scientifically; and historically, there is a method of historical analysis. (Int#1,8)

Allan recognizes that facts and theories are not static, but rather open to investigation. He feels that learning the ways to test facts and theories through inquiry will be an important part of understanding the subject for his students.

To be successful as a teacher, Allan feels it is important
to be structured and organized in planning. He approached his experience as an English language tutor by "winging it" and was unhappy with the results. He knows that there is a curriculum that states the specific information that students need to know in all subject areas. He also recognizes that he will need to learn and refresh much of the content of social studies he will be required to teach, on his own, because of what he is lacking in his academic background. His main concern is with "acquiring ways of teaching social studies that are beneficial to the students." He wants to learn how to teach in a more "productive," "structured" manner so that he is "better prepared to interact with students in a social studies setting."

Discussion

The questions asked in the initial interview addressed the first research question: How do the participants conceptualize the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy prior to the methods course? These initial conceptualizations of social studies have been highlighted through the profiles of each of the eight participants presented here. Included as well are descriptions of their life experiences (work, coaching, travel, family interactions) and personal characteristics (age, gender, ethnic heritage, personalities) which, they claimed, helped to shape their conceptualizations.

While each individual differed in many ways, both in life experience and initial conceptualizations of social studies, there were also ways in which they were similar. These differences and similarities have been summarized here.
Individual Characteristics and Life Experiences

Five of the participants were female, and three were male. The median age of the participants was 25, with a 10 year range from 23 to 33. Personalities varied from outspoken to introspective. Three were already very confident in their ability to teach prior to entering the course. They attributed some of this confidence to having been around teachers, as friends in Stephanie’s case, and family members in Katherine’s and Kim’s cases. The rest were less sure of their ability to teach.

Travel experience was also recognized as an influential factor on thinking about teaching and social studies. Because of her love of travel, Katherine, for example, talked about wanting to continue to study other countries through her teaching. Kim, on the other hand, was motivated to address the prevalent racist attitudes she had become more aware of through her travels. Margaret too saw racism as an important issue in teaching because of the racism she has experienced due to her Chinese heritage.

Stephanie, the oldest, was the only one who had extensive work experience and was making a career change to teaching. For the rest, teaching would be their first career.

All but Allan and Irene had some coaching experience which they felt gave them an advantage. In particular, Daniel noted that he felt he "knew kids better" because of it. The majority viewed themselves as good students and looked back on secondary school as a positive learning experience. Margaret, on the other hand, continued to carry her resentment from her negative
secondary school experience with her. Most had a particular teacher who was held up as a role model for their own teaching. Some of these were negative role models however. Only one, Daniel, mentioned having teaching as a long term career aspiration. The rest, excluding Stephanie, came to the idea of teaching at some time over their undergraduate study. They brought varied academic backgrounds, including two geography degrees, one in history, two in human kinetics, and one in each of biological sciences, English Literature, and Mandarin Chinese.

Initial Views of the Nature of Social Studies

a) Defining social studies

In comparing the participants' definitions of social studies, it appears that social studies suffers from somewhat of an identity crisis. This is in keeping with the literature on the nature of social studies (Thornton, 1994). All of the participants noted that it was a "tough subject" to describe because of its breadth. All but two saw this as a positive aspect of social studies, however. Stephanie, for example, liked this breadth because it allowed for finding something that would interest all learners. Katherine too liked the "possibilities for what to study" that it opened up. For Kim, on the other hand, it caused confusion over just what social studies content had to be taught. Daniel too expressed concern that this breadth caused a lack of respect for the subject because too much was being attempted with little success in the curriculum.

When the participants did offer a definition, much like
the novice teachers in Adler's (1984) study, they tended to give a vague, general one. I attempted to match their definitions to some of the commonly accepted ways of defining social studies presented in the literature (see Barr, Barth & Shermis, 1977, 1978; Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Osborne, 1988, 1991; Shaver, 1977; Stanley & Nelson, 1986; van Manen & Parsons, 1985), but found that none of these categories appeared to accurately fit their initial descriptions of social studies.

b) The nature and role of the disciplines

While all eight understood that the content of social studies is drawn from the disciplines of the social sciences, they generally emphasized geography, both physical and cultural, as the most important structural elements because it would help students to better understand "the world and their place in it." All, including history and geography majors, acknowledged some concern over the adequacy of their content knowledge for teaching social studies. In particular, concerns about their knowledge of the factual content of history were readily voiced. Only three, Irene, the history major, Kim and David, made specific reference to history in their original definitions. Generally, they viewed history as being about studying the past for what it can teach about the present. Pedagogically, Irene, saw this as best accomplished through story telling that "infused meaning." For others, history was just "boring, factual information" like they had experienced in school. They stated that they were going to have to "try different approaches" so that it was more "relevant" to their students.
There were also differing views on the nature of the disciplines that make up social studies. Allan, for example, displayed some well-grounded ideas about what Shulman (1987) and Schwab (1978) referred to as the syntactical and substantive structures of the disciplines, based on his understanding of the process of scientific inquiry from his biology degree. For him, the disciplines are to be treated as being open-ended in that "facts and theories change." He stressed that this understanding would be an important one to get across to his students. The majority, however, tended to see the disciplines as bodies of information that are not to be challenged.

c) Purposes of social studies

Generally, the participants had already thought about some of the educational purposes for including social studies as a school subject. One of the most commonly expressed ones was to help students to see themselves in relation to their world. There was much discussion about the importance of having a "global view" in today's world. A second common purpose was to develop "independent" and "critical thinking" so that students would be more appreciative of other points of view, as well as being able to articulate their own viewpoints and opinions. This coincided with promoting a global orientation. Thirdly, five of the participants talked about wanting to empower their students to be willing to take action to bring about change, both globally and locally. Margaret was the only one who made reference to promoting good citizenship as a purpose for teaching social studies.
Initial Views on Social Studies Pedagogy

At this point all participants tended to speak in general terms about how they would want to approach the teaching of social studies. As in Lortie's (1975) study, there was a general notion amongst the participants that they knew how to teach based on their own schooling experiences. Their own preferred way of learning was most influential in their thinking. Coaching and teacher friends and family members had also helped to shape their thinking. From these experiences, the participants have formed some common pedagogical principles about what makes an effective teacher and what constitutes ineffective teaching. The ineffective elements included a lack of organization, inefficient use of time and an emphasis on rote learning. All but Allan talked in terms of not wanting to teach in these ways as they were unproductive for them. The effective elements were a caring attitude, a variety in approaches including more active student involvement, and an attempt to make the learning interesting and challenging. All planned to emphasize "student involvement" by "getting kids to talk," "discussing" and "encouraging questions." They concurred that these techniques would assist the students in learning to express their own opinions in order to become independent thinkers.

Their ideas about how to translate these principles into practise were somewhat vague at this point however. For example, they talked about having discussions, encouraging questions, and using a variety of approaches in their teaching. Only Irene had a clearer sense of how to transform the subject
into something that her students could understand. She talked about wanting to approach the study of history through story telling as it would "make the learning more meaningful" for her students.

Expectations of the Social Studies Methods Course

As a whole the participants had few articulated expectations of the methods course prior to the first class. Those who did express expectations tended to have prescriptive questions about how to relate to secondary school students and about teaching techniques that could be used in the classroom. Knowledge of the curriculum appeared to be minimal at this point. They had questions to do with its organization and flexibility, and the content of what is to be taught for each grade. There tended to be a consensus that the curriculum would be an important and influential aspect of their teaching. They viewed it as rigid and "to be followed closely," rather than as something that can be adapted for use by the individual teacher. The textbook as a curricular tool was acknowledged by some of the participants as being important to their teaching of social studies. Irene, in particular, noted that she was taught social studies through a heavy reliance on the text, therefore, that was the only way she knew of approaching it.

Summary

As is evident from this discussion, all of the participants had already thought about themselves as teachers and learners of social studies before entering the social studies methods course. Their prior knowledge arising from life experiences and personal characteristics had helped them to
form initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy. According to Hollingsworth (1989) and Feiman-Nemser (1990), student teacher conceptualizations are important to our understanding of the learning-to-teach process because they act as "filters" for the experiences of the preparation program. Consequently, understanding how the participants' initial conceptualizations about social studies influenced their thinking as they experienced the social studies methods course, and the ways in which they were influenced by the experiences of that course are critical to better understanding how they made sense of learning to teach social studies. These questions are of particular interest in subsequent chapters.
CHAPTER VI
EXPERIENCING THE SOCIAL STUDIES METHODS COURSE

Introduction

The focus for this chapter is the second research question: How do the participants reflect on and change [if at all] their initial conceptualizations of social studies as they experience the methods course? The data analysis has again been divided into two parts. The first part, the participants' reflections on the nature of social studies, examines conceptual concerns raised in class by the methods course instructor and addressed by the participants during subsequent interviews. These included: defining social studies, the purpose of education, social studies as dealing with controversial issues, critical thinking, and the role of values education in social studies.

The second part, the participants' reflections on social studies pedagogy, has been organized using the course topics of planning for teaching social studies, techniques for teaching social studies, the use of the textbook as a teaching tool, and the secondary school student as learner. All of the topics in parts I and II were emergent themes in the data collected during the second and third interviews. Excerpts from presentations, lectures, and activities engaged in over the duration of the course have been highlighted throughout the discussion.

Comparisons across all eight participants were used to present the data for each of the chapter topics, rather than continuing to profile each individual separately. This analysis
approach was thought to be useful for illustrating the similarities and differences in the participants' thinking as they endeavoured to make sense out of learning to teach social studies.

Generally, through the experiences of the methods course such as those highlighted in this chapter, the participants began to reflect on the fit between their initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy (as examined Chapter V) and what they were having revealed to them about social studies through the course. They tended to either confirm and clarify their initial conceptualizations or to rethink them to include the new ideas being presented in the course.

This sense-making process involved first interpreting what they thought the instructor was trying to say or demonstrate through his teaching, then reflecting on what the particular experience meant to them, and finally thinking about the experience in terms of their initial ideas. All claimed that heightened awareness about the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy resulted from this reflective process. However, the degree of that awareness varied for each individual depending on their level of perplexity about the topic being reflected upon.

Part I: Participant Reflections on the Nature of Social Studies

When speaking about the methods course instructor in the second interview, all eight participants referred to the provocativeness of his teaching style. In referring to this
style, they used descriptors such as "challenging," "deliberately controversial," "confusing," "ambiguous," "provocative," "forces thinking," "keeps you on the hot seat," and "stirs things up." His provocativeness appeared to be a strong catalyst for influencing the participants to reflect on their initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies. In our interviews, they frequently recalled experiences from the methods classes in which they found the instructor being particularly provocative. Five such 'provocative' experiences have been highlighted in this section of the chapter. While this was by no means all of the provocations noted over the duration of the course, these five were chosen as they were often referred to by the participants during interviews and were thought to be best representative of examples of how the participants were reflecting on, and, at times, making changes in their initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies.

Each course experience has first been described by drawing excerpts from field notes to explain how it unfolded in the methods class. Next, under participant reflections, quotations from interview transcripts have been used to illuminate the participants' thinking about the experience in relation to their initial conceptualizations about the nature of social studies.

Provocative Experiences

1. Defining social studies

In the SSED 312 course outline, the focus of the first week of classes was "Social Studies: Justification" (see
Appendix D: Course Outline). This involved examining both the purposes of education and the role of social studies in addressing those purposes, as viewed by the instructor. In the first class, the instructor made the statement, "The social science disciplines provide us with the concepts that help us to explain the world - the what is" (POCl#1,3). He then elicited examples of central concepts from each of the social science disciplines from the class. The instructor then explained the difference between the social sciences and social studies. He stated:

The social sciences tell us what is and why; social studies looks at what is as well as looking at and discussing what ought to be. Social studies then is about teaching the concepts of the social sciences and history, but also the what ought to be. (POCl#1,4)

There was a split among the participants in the follow-up interview as to how this definition fit with their initial ones. After reflecting upon their personal definitions in the light of the instructor’s way of defining social studies, several noted that they would now add parts of his definition to theirs. David, Stephanie and Irene particularly liked the ‘what ought to be’ element. For David, it supported his original idea of addressing the "what can we do to change things." Stephanie too liked it because it would provide her the opportunity to address current issues, values and critical thinking in her teaching of social studies. While all of these elements were important to her prior thinking about the nature of social studies, by adding this to her original definition, she felt it became "less flat and more three dimensional."
Irene was surprised by the 'what ought to be' as a component of social studies because it was something that she "didn't see before." She embraced it though because she felt that her initial definition of social studies had been too factual. She stated, "I'm beginning to see now that you have to incorporate a sense of 'well should it be like this' [because] it's not just good enough to give kids facts and figures and rote memorisation." While Allan expressed some confusion over the instructor's definition, upon reflection, he decided that the 'what ought to be' would be a good way of addressing values which were important in his initial thinking about social studies. He was concerned, however, about whether addressing 'what ought to be' would be seen as "molding the students' values" too much.

Others chose not to adopt or adapt the instructor's definition because of its vagueness, choosing instead to "stick with" their original definitions. Katherine, for example, felt that her original definition was a better one because "there's just so much more to it [social studies]." Kim concurred that the instructor's definition as too "cut and dried." Daniel noted that he was confused by the instructor's definition, while Melody dismissed it because it was "too idealistic" in that it did not match what was happening in the schools. She noted, "I don't believe that social studies at any time soon will be a place to decide what things should be like because what they [the schools] want is to produce good, quiet, meek, obedient citizens."

This is an example of one course experience that
influenced the participants to reflect on their initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies. Some chose to rethink and change their initial ideas about how to define social studies particularly in terms of addressing 'what ought to be.' Others rethought their definitions in the light of what the instructor said, but decided to dismiss his way of defining social studies because it was too vague and idealistic.

Including this as an element of the methods course was an important experience for the participants because, as van Manen & Parsons (1985) maintained, being clear on the definition that they as teachers hold about their subject is central to understanding how they will then teach it. Consequently, struggling with definitional issues in this way, as a part of the methods course experience, helped the participants to further clarify their own sense of the subject matter of social studies.

2. The purpose of education

In the second class, as a part of a lesson on the purposes of social studies as a school subject, the instructor made the statement, "The main purpose of education is to change people." A discussion about the role of the social studies teacher in bringing about this change ensued over the next two classes. Initially, the class was asked to pair up and answer the question, "How would you want your students to change as a result of your teaching?" The instructor recorded responses from the dyads on the board under the self-selected headings of 'Knowledge,' 'Skill' and 'Attitudes.' When he had solicited the class responses, he acknowledged that they already had "a
pretty good notion of the objectives set out in the B.C. course of study."

While all of the study participants agreed with the notion of education being about change, there were some concerns about how change was to be defined and enacted. Katherine, Kim and David, for example, expressed some concern about what they saw as change being "forced" on the students rather than "enlightening them and providing them with tools to change."

For Daniel, the idea of changing students was a new one that had not occurred to him before. This was valuable new knowledge that he saw himself using to break away from the more traditional approaches to teaching that he was so adverse to in his initial conceptualization of social studies. The best way to change students, he contended, would be to assist them in becoming better thinkers, which he had talked about being important as a purpose of social studies in his first interview.

Allan, Irene, Stephanie and Margaret, on the other hand, were not surprised by the notion of change as they had already talked about it as an important purpose of social studies in their initial interviews. Allan noted, however, that upon reflection on the instructor's ideas about change, he was now clearer about the kind of change he would want to bring about than he was in his initial interview. Not only would he want to change things like "their knowledge of history and their critical thinking skills," but he also talked about changing attitudes. For example, he stated, "We want them [our students] to have attitudes that are tolerant or facilitative in a
Canadian sense of being together." He also noted that the terms "knowledge, skills and attitudes" were ones that he had not thought to use to organize his thinking about social studies before.

Irene talked about having a better understanding of changing students as an important purpose for teaching social studies as a result of this experience. The "important change" she now contended would be to "make people socially responsible citizens." She had not addressed citizenship as a purpose of social studies in her initial conceptualization. Stephanie and Margaret, on the other hand, had expressed a desire to "empower" their students to make change and be "willing to take social action" through a better understanding of global awareness, interconnectedness and equality. Thus, this discussion of change as a purpose for teaching social studies was a confirmation of what they had talked about in their initial interviews.

For most of the participants, changing students as a purpose of social studies was not a new idea as it had already been a part of their initial conceptualizations. Through reflection on this course experience, some had their prior ideas about the purposes for teaching social studies confirmed and solidified. Reflecting on change as a purpose because of the instructor's provocation, helped others to rethink their original ideas and clarify what changing students meant to them and why it was an important goal for their teaching. Knowledge of aims and purposes is an essential element of a teacher's knowledge base for teaching because with it, teaching is
purposeful; without it, teaching is directionless (Shulman, 1987). Consequently providing opportunity for student teachers to reflect on these purposes through a methods course is critical for them in clarifying and solidifying their thinking about their role in teaching.

3. **Social studies as dealing with controversial issues**

The third provocative experience addressed the role of the social studies teacher in addressing controversial issues. Discussion of this issue arose from an anecdote told by the instructor based on his own secondary school teaching experience. His class had been studying the historical significance of the Protestant Reformation and the new religions that emerged as a result of it. The students were brainstorming a list when one put up her hand and said that she had diamonds in her teeth. The instructor asked the methods class what they would have done in a situation like that. An in-class discussion ensued, excerpts from which have been included in the appendices (see Appendix E). The discussion moved from dealing with the issue of religious beliefs to Holocaust deniers in the classroom.

Discussion of the role of controversial issues in social studies was foremost in the minds of the participants during the second interview. Many of them recalled this experience and reacted to it at the outset of the interview. For the most part, the struggle with controversial issues was steeped in the participants' sense of their moral responsibility as teachers. Irene, for example, claimed that dealing with controversial issues was a whole new area of thought for her. She was
surprised by how much she kept thinking about it after this incident and talked about having many sleepless nights trying to sort out her feelings. Her greatest concerns were deciding on the extent of her responsibility as a teacher and how she would handle issues such as these in her classroom. A detailed excerpt from her second interview has been included in the appendices (see Appendix F) to show the extent of her perplexity.

One of the most common themes in the participants' initial conceptualizations of social studies had been a desire to help their students think for themselves. Initially, in the second interview, the study participants took this one step further and acknowledged that they would want to allow their students the right to express their own opinions when addressing controversial issues in their classrooms. Daniel, for example, based on his initial desire to promote independent thinking, stated that it was not "the teacher's position at all to pass judgment on someone's religion, even if it's something that the teacher feels is not something he or she believes in." Yet when he was further provoked to reflect on how he would deal with a case such as a Holocaust denier in his classroom, he maintained that keeping classroom control and "not disrupting the class" would be the ultimate deciding factor in how far discussion would be allowed to go. Stephanie, Kim, David and Allan too stressed that, when dealing with issues such as this, it was the teacher's responsibility to "draw the line."

Allan: If that person has anti-Semitic attitudes and they say them within the class then it's our position to stop that racist...the classroom and the school is
a public place and in a public place everyone has human rights and religious rights. You would have to give a number of views that have reasonable backgrounds and thoughts. But with things that are racist, you can't bring it into the classroom because it has no reasonable base. It's just a source of ignorance. You would have to make students aware of discriminatory attitudes. (Int#2,3)

This was a difficult conclusion for the participants to come to, however, because they felt they were contradicting what they had originally stated about promoting equality and tolerance for other viewpoints. Encouraging discussion had been another common theme in their initial conceptualizations but in the light of this provocative experience, they worried about encouraging open discussion on some of these issues because things could potentially "get out of hand."

Others, like Margaret, were more concerned about the role their own personal viewpoint on these issues should play in the discussion. Margaret maintained that as a teacher she should be willing to take a stand, but only after the students had a chance to debate the issue. This would be central to the moral responsibility she had as a teacher that she alluded to in her initial conceptualization.

Through the discussion of the role of controversial issues in social studies, the participants continued to reflect on their views about educational purposes as they related to the subject area of social studies. They were also being encouraged to reflect on their role as teachers of social studies through this methods course experience. Only Margaret and Katherine had talked about the role of controversial issues in teaching in the previous interview. All the rest struggled with trying to
fit the study of controversial issues into their initial conceptualizations of their role as social studies teachers. For the most part, they had expressed a desire in the first interview to encourage their students to be open to and accepting of other points of view, but they now found themselves having to rethink that approach. They worried about how far this acceptance of other views should and could be encouraged to go. They were beginning to see that as a teacher they had a moral responsibility to "draw the line" on certain issues. Consequently, providing experiences like this one in the course helped these student teachers to rethink and further clarify their role as social studies teachers when dealing with controversial issues, especially considering their overriding desire to be teachers who promote open discussion, tolerance of others' views, and expression of individual viewpoints.

4. Critical thinking as an element of social studies

Critical thinking was not overtly addressed by the methods instructor until the second half of the course. However, several participants felt that it was implicitly a major part of what they were learning about from the start of the course. Irene, for example, felt that the instructor was purposefully stressing critical thinking through his modelling.

Irene: I feel that's a big part of why [the instructor] is being so deliberately controversial in class is that he wants to stir up a furore and get us thinking and not accept what the professor, God, says is true and he wants to make sure that we get that and that we carry that into our classrooms. (Int#2,6)

The course assignment to critique various types of social studies journal articles was another way in which she saw
critical thinking being stressed.

Irene: He [the instructor] wants us to be exposed to different opinions and to think critically about them. It's very easy to just take an article home and think 'that was nice,' but to actually get to the point where I'm confident enough to say, "No, I don't agree with that," or "I have questions about that." That's a major skill that you have to have, just to be a critical person and it takes time and it has to be a part of history instruction. (Int#2,7)

This emphasis on critical thinking, Irene contended, was particularly beneficial to her own personal development as a critical thinker, as well as making her rethink her initial ideas about its importance to teaching and learning.

After the short practicum, the instructor allocated three classes to address critical thinking. He began by having the class responded to the question, "When someone is a capable critical thinker, what are they like?" Responses included, knows the difference between fact and opinion, can identify bias, can come to a decision through reasoned judgment backed up by supporting facts, can identify different points of view, can weigh evidence, and can recognize flaws in decisions. As a teacher-directed exercise, the instructor took the class through a handout on recognizing fact/opinion, promoting open mindedness, making inferences, recognizing emotional bias and difficulty of proof, and evaluating sources of information. He concluded the class by stating, "Most of the time we stop at the "know," but I think we have to go beyond to the "do." We talk about critical thinking, but little is done with it [in the schools]" (POCl#16,75).

In the follow-up interview, the participants discussed their views on the role of critical thinking in social studies.
All concurred that it was a very important element of social studies. It had been a common theme for most in their initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies. For the most part, they clarified their definitions of what critical thinking meant to them through the course experiences. Daniel, for example, now tied the notion of critical thinking to citizenship goals, which was a new connection for him. He noted that, "students have to be able to think about issues critically and analyze them for themselves to become better citizens." Stephanie, Irene and Margaret took this notion one step further to wanting to empower their students through critical thinking activities, to "take action" and "stand up for what they believe in" as "productive," "proactive" citizens.

After the class time spent on critical thinking, the participants also generally noted that they had become more familiar with the specific skills needed to promote better critical thinking. As Stephanie stated, "before it [critical thinking] was just a title. Now I have 8 to 10 skills to teach so students can critically think better."

Through the course experiences with critical thinking, the participants further reflected on and clarified their initial ideas about the important reasons for addressing critical thinking in social studies. The notion of critical thinking as an element of social studies did not appear to be a new one to any of the participants. While all claimed to have recognized it as an important purpose for teaching social studies prior to the course, they noted being more aware of how to approach
critical thinking in their teaching. They began to familiarize themselves with the specific skills that students needed to be taught in order to promote critical thinking. Through the various textbook exercise, they were provided with the opportunity to think about how the texts could be used to promote critical thinking, as well as where their deficiencies were in addressing this aspect of social studies.

5. **Values education and social studies**

   Midway through Class #18 (November 4), the instructor made the statement, "Remember the definition of social studies - what is and what ought to be? Up to right now we’ve spent time on the what is/what was component of social studies. Now we are going to examine the component of what ought to be" (POCl#18,85). He then conducted an activity in which groups were assigned one historical event, including the FLQ crisis, the Winnipeg General strike, the Falkland War, the internment of the Japanese in Canada during World War II, the storming of the Bastille, and the murder of Archduke Ferdinand. The groups were given some time to recall their knowledge of the assigned event. They were then asked to take the role of various persons involved in their historical event in response to the question, "Should it have been that way?"

   Following this opener activity, the class was shown how to conduct a 'principle testing discussion' as a way of "teach[ing] students in high school how to decide what ought to be done, and how to make rational value judgments" (POCl#18,88). The instructor introduced three stages of principle testing. The first, role exchange, required the
students to take on the roles of the various parties involved in an incident and rethink the situation from those different perspectives. The second, new cases, involved adding new and different alternatives to the original scenario and rethinking the various positions. For the third, the universal consequence test of principle, students had to think about whether one particular position should be held in all cases. The instructor walked the class through each principle test using a variety of examples.

In the following class, the student teachers peer taught lessons in small groups using the various principle tests. The instructor concluded by stating that "Doing something in school to cause change in open mindedness, respect for law, belief in equality in a positive direction would be, in my view, better than teaching the 100 Years War" (POCl#25,173). He encouraged the class to "do more work in the affective because not enough is being done in [that] domain." The class was challenged further to not just teach these principles, but to be able to assess them. The instructor stated, "I would encourage you to do more than evaluate content." He showed examples of questionnaires and attitude scales that he had been using in his research to assess secondary students' attitudes. He asserted, "I think they (secondary school students) should receive punishment in the form of a lower mark on a test if they don’t change in the affective domain or if they don’t want to change because when we work in the affective domain, we are attempting to change their values" (POCl#24,169). He also stressed that, "Values education is implicit. Almost all we do
is value-laden. Make these values clear to your students."

In their initial conceptualizations of social studies, none of the participants had overtly talked about values education as a part of social studies. Some, however, did make reference to values-oriented concepts, such as inequality, global interconnectedness and racism, as being important to their teaching of social studies.

After the experiences with values education in the methods course, all of the participants acknowledged that values would play a central role in their teaching of social studies. Kim, for one, stated that "values are very important over all other subject matter because they [values] would allow the teacher to deal with issues that really matter." For example, "racism is an inherent value" that she feels she has a responsibility not to "shy away from." This had been important to her in her initial interview as well because of the racism she saw while living in Southeast Asia. From the course experiences with values education, she learned about one approach that could be taken to addressing values in her teaching - principle tests. While she said she liked and would like to try the principle tests in her teaching, she was concerned once again about how "tricky" some of these issues could be. She was also once again perplexed about her responsibility as a teacher. For example, she wondered "how to stay impartial" because she would want her students "to develop their own values," rather than accepting ones imposed by her.

David also now acknowledged that values would play a central role in his teaching of social studies, but he too felt
uneasy about the idea of using principle testing discussions because "things could get carried away." He claimed that he had a responsibility as a teacher to make sure that did not happen. He thought instead that he could best address values through his own personal example. Daniel too acknowledged that he would not try to use principle tests at first, although he said he might "give them a try" later in his teaching. He also would rather address values education through his own modelling and by "draw[ing] from the cultural mosaic of the classroom to educate because other students are a wealth of knowledge." He admitted, however, that he was still rather unclear on how to approach values education in his teaching.

Initially, Allan had expressed a desire to help his social studies students understand about inequality, a concept that was central to the study of sociology in his undergraduate degree. Upon reflection on the course experiences, he now understood that overtly addressing values education would play an important part in that it would help his students become "conscious, responsible members of society who are aware of racial, class and gender inequalities." He liked the instructor's focus on teaching students the skills to make their "own right decisions" rather than on "instilling good or bad values." It confirmed what he had expressed in his initial interview. He felt, however, that the principle testing discussion presented in class went "beyond the curriculum" and was very "non-traditional and radical." While he claimed to want to try such a discussion, he noted that it would have to wait until after he had some teaching experience. He did not
feel he had enough skill at it to be able to "handle" a principle test discussion yet. He also felt uncomfortable with the assessment ideas given in class because he felt they would be too offensive to certain people. He was especially concerned about offending someone during the practicum.

While Katherine acknowledged that "values are an intricate part of social studies," upon reflection, she contended that she would not address them "overtly" in her teaching through things like principle testing. She felt that the instructor was being too "idealistic" in his notion of evaluating attitude change as well. She would not use assessment tools like the questionnaires he showed in class because she thought they were inappropriate for use with secondary school students. Rather, she would assess attitude change through observation of students, and through their writing and presentations. Values, she maintained, would be implicit in every thing she did as a social studies teacher.

Through this course experience with values education, the participants further reflected on the purposes for teaching social studies as a school subject. They continued to have their initial conceptualizations of these purposes clarified and challenged. The greatest challenge was in thinking about what role values would play in their teaching, as for the most part, this was not something they had thought about before. After the classes on values education, all concurred that values would be important to their teaching. Once again the issue of their moral responsibility as teacher was central. There was a unanimous sense that this responsibility including
addressing issues relating to values, particularly those dealing with racism and gender inequality. However, while values education was adopted as part of their emerging sense of social studies, the participants generally remained unclear about how to address it through their teaching. There was a concern for the most part about using a principle testing discussion, as advocated by the instructor, because of a lack of skill in using it and the fear that "things could get out of hand." While the participants talked about the importance of values education in their teaching, they had no other clear ideas about how to apply it. There was also the recognition of potential problems with the school and the community in attempting to assess values in the "ideal" way suggested by the instructor. The struggle for many of the participants was with their desire to acknowledge the students' right to hold certain values and their moral responsibility as teachers to discourage inappropriate views.

Part II: Participant Reflections on Social Studies Pedagogy

In addition to the course experiences dealing with the nature of social studies, the instructor presented a number of approaches to teaching social studies that he modelled for the class and/or had them try throughout the course. Suggestions for planning and implementing these techniques were given as each was discussed. Of interest in the second interview was the students' reflections on these techniques in the light of their initial conceptualizations of teaching and learning social studies. In the third interview (based on the short practicum) of interest also was how these initial thoughts on pedagogy and
the pedagogical techniques and principles demonstrated in the methods course fit with what the participants experienced during the two week practicum.

In addition to techniques for teaching social studies, the instructor addressed other pedagogical concerns including planning for teaching, the use of instructional resources, and secondary students as learners. Accordingly, this analysis has been divided into the following four parts: 1) planning for teaching social studies; 2) techniques for teaching social studies, including the use of oral review, the worksheet, group work, and the lecture; 3) the social studies textbook and other teaching resources; and 4) the secondary social studies student.

1. Planning for teaching social studies

Little direct instruction was given on planning for teaching in the methods course, although the class spent a significant amount of class time preparing lesson plans. The instructor did, however, address yearly planning by using a sample semestered timetable and the table of contents of a social studies textbook to demonstrate the amount of class time available for each section of one secondary school social studies course. He also assigned several group lesson-planning exercises. In one instance, the student teachers were given an excerpt on Napoleon from a textbook and asked to plan a series of three lessons to cover the content provided. The instructor recommended having "at least two, preferably three activities [as] it helps the hour go by." These were handed in for feedback and several were discussed in class to further clarify
the planning process. Preparing a series of lesson plans based on a text excerpt was also the format of both the mid-term and final exams.

Both David and Daniel felt that they already had a good understanding of lesson planning prior to the methods course as they had been required to do them in some of their course work for their human kinetics degree. Their prior knowledge of planning was further confirmed for them, however, through the planning experiences in the course.

For Kate and Allan, on the other hand, the idea of lesson planning was "completely new." The planning practice time provided in the methods class helped them to better organize their vague ideas of how to teach social studies. Allan, in particular, had noted a need for this knowledge in his first interview because in his prior experience as an E.S.L. instructor he had had to "fly by the seat of his pants" and it had not worked very well.

A message that came across loud and clear, according to the participants, as a result of the sessions on planning was the importance of using a variety of approaches in each lesson. Irene noted that the instructor "didn’t want us filling our time with lectures." Allan concurred that he was learning "not to be a know-it-all teacher" that only lectures. Most had already noted the importance of this varied approach to teaching as a part of their initial thinking about social studies pedagogy.

2. Techniques for teaching social studies

Four of the many teaching techniques highlighted during
the methods course have been chosen for closer examination, as they were most often referred to by the participants in interviews. These four included the use of oral review, the worksheet, the lecture and group work. (For an overview of other teaching techniques addressed in the course see the course outline, Appendix D). Each of these four techniques has been examined as to what was taught about it in the course, whether the technique matched the students' initial conceptualizations of effective social studies pedagogy, and whether they tried it and/or had it demonstrated by their sponsor teachers during the short practicum.

Technique #1 - Oral review

At the beginning of the sixth class, the instructor stated, "You should build into your lessons a review," and then had the class practice reviewing their learning about social studies to demonstrate one way of approaching it. Reactions to this technique were varied. Daniel, for one, noted being in agreement with the instructor on the need for and effectiveness of review based on his prior experience with schooling. He stated, "Too often teachers cover the material in one day and they leave it until the exams and the students tend to forget that type of material so easily." While he had not thought of the importance of review before, he acknowledged that now he could see it a "very important" to his teaching of social studies.

Katherine, on the other hand, felt that this technique could too easily become "rote recall" which was contrary to what she had initially described in her views on effective
teaching. Open discussion would be much more effective, she advocated.

During the short practicum, only David talked about seeing his sponsor teacher conduct a review. All of the participants, but Margaret and Katherine, tried using the review technique in their teaching however. They all employed a teacher-directed, question-and-answer approach. Some used it as an opener and others as a closure to their lessons. All six felt that this technique, with modifications, had merit and would be one they would like to now add to their repertoire of pedagogical techniques.

Technique #2 - The worksheet

To demonstrate the technique of using a worksheet, the class was given a reading on Louis Riel from the Grade 11 textbook and asked to prepare 10 to 12 questions based on the text excerpt. In designing these questions, the instructor stated, "You have to push them [secondary school students] to remember. You had to demand more than recall" (P0C1#5,25). The class then read out their worksheet questions in groups and were told to tick off any questions that demanded more than the recall of specific facts. The instructor concluded by advising that this technique could be a useful one during practicum.

Instructor: I recommend that for your first time in front of the class you seatwork them. Have your 20 questions, tell them to do the questions and guess what - they do it, and you can walk around and feel like a teacher. (P0C1#4,20)

All of the participants spoke about using worksheets in the practicum in at least one of their lessons. Two, David and Kim observed their sponsor teachers using a worksheet. David
was surprised that the worksheet was as successful a control technique as the methods course instructor said it would be. He noted, "I gave them a worksheet and all of a sudden the heads go down and they're working. It's great." He claimed that he would now definitely add the use of worksheets to his initial ideas about social studies pedagogy. Katherine too discovered that worksheets kept the class "paying attention." She also liked having one handy in case she ran short of material in her lesson. She claimed that they would now be a big part of her approach to teaching social studies.

Margaret, on the other hand, thought that worksheets were "stupid." She felt obliged to use one in her practicum because her sponsor teacher told her to. From their behaviour, Margaret got the impression that the students in her secondary classes did not like doing worksheets either. Having the opportunity to try one out confirmed her initial thinking about effective pedagogy. She reasserted that she would rather encourage discussion with her students instead of discouraging it by using this technique.

Technique #3 - Group work

While the use of group work was not formally taught as a technique, it was implicitly modelled for the class in that the majority of the in-class work was in groups. Reaction to the emphasis on group work was mixed. David, Kim and Irene spoke about the benefits of group work in terms of what working in groups did for them as learners. For all three, group work helped to clarify their thinking. As David stated, "I don't always think on the right track or I might have just a partial
understanding, but when you get heads together things develop more" (Int#2,9). Irene claimed that group work "forced" her to express her opinions; something she had not had to do much before.

Irene: Groups are really useful because I can see what they've done for me...The more cooperative learning experience they [her students] get, I think the better. It becomes very obvious that that's important, to give everybody responsibility - responsibility for your thoughts, for your actions and that's essential. I think now in becoming a healthy, productive person who's confident enough to say what they feel and what they think. It's becoming very obvious that that's a good way to learn. (Int#2,11)

Because of their successes with groups, these three claimed that they would now add this technique to their initial ideas of how to teach social studies. They had not mentioned using groups in their original conceptualizations of social studies pedagogy.

While Katherine also had not noted group work in her ideas about effective pedagogy initially, after these experiences in class, she now talked about "co-operative interactive learning" as being important to "promoting citizenship education" in her classroom. Daniel too could see the benefits of using group work, but he was concerned that he had not learned much about how to go about implementing group work in the secondary classroom.

During practicum, most of the participants attempted to use group work in their teaching. Both Irene and Daniel had success with group activities in which the students discussed primary documents. (The methods course instructor had also demonstrated the use of primary documents as a teaching
technique on several occasions prior to the practicum). Even though Daniel's sponsor teacher did not use group work, Daniel wanted to "try something different" with the students to "make it more interesting." Using a variety of approaches had been central to his prior thinking about effective pedagogy. He was surprised by the success that he met with and the co-operativeness of the students. Kim and Stephanie were equally pleased with their group work efforts. For all of them, this success with practising this technique encouraged them to add the use of group work to their initial list of pedagogical techniques.

While Allan did not try a group activity, he watched his sponsor teacher model one and expressed some concerns with the way some students were being "left out" while others were allowed to "clique up." It bothered him that a few English as a second language students were left to work on their own. He left the practicum still wondering how to effectively implement group work. After observing his sponsor teacher using group work activities, David also expressed similar concerns. He learned that group work was difficult for students if they did not "learn the skills first." Teaching these specific skills would be his first priority, he felt, before organizing group work in his own teaching.

Irene was told by her sponsor teacher that he did not do group work because "it doesn't work. They [the students] simply pass on their own ignorance." Even though her sponsor teacher did not see the benefit in using groups, he did not discourage Irene from trying them. She did, and while she was pleased with
the overall results, she discovered, like Allan and David, that some students found it difficult to work together co-operatively because they were treated as "outcasts" by their peers. She was not sure how to deal with this concern when using group work in her teaching and would have liked some suggestions from her preparatory course work.

Technique #4 - The lecture

When using the lecture as a teaching technique, the instructor suggested having an outline for the class to follow and using anecdotes to "add colour" (POC1#6). He demonstrated the use of a poster as a "hook" to begin a lecture, and slides to embellish the lecture. The class then worked through planning a lecture as a part of a Napoleon lesson-planning exercise. The instructor concluded by saying that he believed many of the class members would begin their teaching with good intentions of bringing in other strategies, but would probably end up teaching mainly by lecture.

For Irene, this last statement was yet another example of how the instructor was provoking them to think about their teaching.

Irene: I think one way he motivates us to be more creative is that he keeps saying, "I know when you leave here you’re all going to go back to the lecture." And it pisses a lot of people off because they go, "No. I’m not going to do that. I’m going to be the one that makes the difference." And I think just by getting people angry. It’s sort of, not a put down, but I think what he’s trying to do is needle us enough to get us saying, "No. I’m not going to be like that." (Int#2,11)

While Irene liked the "tips" on how to enhance lectures, she expressed concern about the effectiveness of the lecture as a
teaching technique. However, she was also worried about covering the content using other strategies. She drew on her personal knowledge from her own schooling to support this concern.

Irene: I guess for me right now my biggest problem is how much content am I supposed to teach? In my high school experience, my profs would lecture for an hour ninety percent of the time and that was a lot of content. Now if we’re trying to incorporate the content into a lecture that’s maybe only 20 minutes of the class or half an hour – how do I do that? How do I give them enough background information so that they can pass the exams, think critically and get to the next grade with a basic knowledge of the previous year? That’s a little vague in my head still. (Int#2,14)

Stephanie too was concerned with the lecture as a teaching technique because "if you just give them facts and figures and lectures it’s too boring." For Stephanie, this technique was contradictory to the approach to teaching that she had talked about wanting to take in her initial interview. She was concerned further that teachers who lecture "forget to assess exactly where the kids are and what their knowledge already is."

Six of the participants had the lecture demonstrated by their sponsor teachers during the short practicum. Irene’s sponsor teacher was highly theatrical in his lecture and used facial expression and tone of voice effectively. Stephanie’s sponsor teacher lectured through stories and jokes. David and Daniel both had sponsor teachers who "rambled on" about factual information with little student interaction. The result, they felt, bored students. By watching this approach, Daniel was motivated further to want to "try something different" as he
had claimed in his initial interview.

Of the five who tried out the lecture technique during practicum, four included visuals such as overheads with outlines, key words and pictures, and filmstrips to enhance their lectures. David found that using pictures in this fashion not only helped him to better understand the content, but also made it clearer for his students. Here, David's sense of self as a learner, influenced both his planning and his teaching. Allan used a filmstrip with his lecture because it was a technique modelled by his sponsor teacher. He also interspersed his lecture with questions to involve the students. He found that one of his classes was more attentive, in answering the questions and thinking for themselves, than the other, which he attributed to management problems. He claimed that this was one area in which his preparation to teach had not been adequate so far as he had very little knowledge of classroom management strategies. Stephanie also conducted her lecture as a question-and-answer session using the overhead projector and was surprised by the difference in the class responses. Her class of mostly grade eight boys "went farther in their learning" she felt than the class with more girls: "The boys asked better questions" and "worked on their critical thinking a lot." She discovered that using discussions embedded in her lectures was an effective way of focusing in on the different developmental levels of her students.

Irene's lecturing style involved telling stories and anecdotes about her topic, a technique that she had talked about wanting to try in her initial interview. Through this
approach, she hoped to motivate her students to "not worry about the facts and free up their minds" so they could enjoy the story. She noted that she got a lot of positive feedback from them about her story telling. Consequently, through this practical experience, the story was confirmed for Irene as an important transformative tool for getting the content across to the students.

As a result of the course experiences, including the short practicum, the participants demonstrated knowledge growth and/or heightened awareness in their thinking about and practice of these four techniques for teaching social studies. While the participants appeared to have entered the practicum with some ideas about how particular social studies topics could be approached, on the whole, their pedagogical knowledge was vague. They were unsure how to actually plan and teach lessons using these ideas. By having to plan lessons that included a variety of pedagogical approaches, and getting the opportunity to "try them out" both in class and during the practicum, their prior knowledge of social studies pedagogy was expanded.

3. The use of the textbook as a teaching tool

On a number of occasions during the methods course, the instructor had the class examine the provincially recommended textbooks for teaching social studies. He involved them in several planning activities using excerpts from various texts. He made frequent reference to places where the texts were lacking and offered suggestions for supplementing with other resources such as artifacts, original documents, pictures and
audio visuals. He concluded by claiming that, "B.C. social studies teachers are invariably tied to a textbook" (POCI#23,143).

While only three of the participants had referred to the role of textbooks in their initial interview, after the course experiences with texts, they all acknowledged that textbooks would have some role to play in their teaching.

Allan: I think his [instructor's] primary objective right now is to show us all the resources that we can use - the text books and everything. First of all we have to use the textbooks so he wants to show us how to use those. Probably we're going to have to rely on those quite a bit as student teachers and maybe even when we're rookies in our first and second year. (Int#2,7)

They also unanimously noted that a clear message was being received from the instructor that the texts would have to be supplemented with other resources.

Katherine: I think the textbook has a place and I think it can be the place where the student starts, but I don't think it should be the only way that students learn. I don't know, maybe you can bring in some audiovisual or you could make them go through pictures or even skits. You can start with the textbook and you can have discussions. (Int#2,11)

After examining the texts, Kim and Daniel noted that they would want to supplement them because of incomplete content coverage. For example, Kim pointed out that one particular textbook she looked at in class "covered the Renaissance in a page." Allan, Margaret, Stephanie, and Irene were concerned with the one-sided view that text content offered.

Allan: Some textbooks give one perspective. The information is just out of date. Some of it looks archaic in terms of the English, in terms of the ethnocentricity of it. Some of that information has changed. It's wrong. Like gender issues and class issues too. What point of view are they going to use
with say the lifestyles? Are they giving an account of wealthy or the middle class or maybe the working class? And gender perspectives too. I think you would have to look hard to find material that has some gender issues in it or gender neutrality or equality. (Int#2,7)

Stephanie was not surprised by the deficiencies she saw in the social studies textbooks. Her concern was with how she was going to make use of these texts she found to be lacking.

Stephanie: I’ve spent the last two years blowing up a lot of the history because of the discourse used. It tended to be almost in the postmodern style. The last two years of my BA were spent exploring Foucault and all this sort of thing so it’s very easy for me to sit and blow it up. What’s hard is trying to figure out how I’m going to use it in conjunction with what I want to do. (Int#2,8)

She gave the example of the lack of content on the treatment of Native history in one text.

Stephanie: "It was a vast land with nobody on it." I really feel strongly that that is a very ethnocentric portrayal of history. It has principles of 'othering' and it just sort of makes native people not exist. That’s very convenient especially today with the land claims. If we can make a case that in history they’re nonexistent then it makes their land claims very weak. (Int#2,8)

Because of the ethnocentricity of the texts she felt that it confirmed her initial views on the importance of teaching the skills of critical thinking. By thinking critically, she felt her students could learn to see the textbook as presenting "just one view."

While Irene concurred with these concerns about the textbooks, she admitted that not relying on textbooks would be very difficult for her.

Irene: That’s difficult, to actually risk saying your sources are not the only ones...At the beginning it didn’t sit well with me. Even though I know that intellectually in my head that of course the textbook
doesn't have everything on this topic, or I've read millions of different interpretations of this particular thing, I guess it was something that I wouldn't have wanted the students to know right then. I thought maybe they couldn't handle it or maybe it's too confusing. I don't think I thought that it would be a good idea to be going around telling your students, "Don't always listen to the textbook." (Int#2,7)

The problem for Irene was embedded in her prior experience as a student, with textbooks. She had been lead to believe that the texts held authority and veracity and, therefore, were to be accepted as fact.

Irene: Learning, lessons were pretty formal and you just did what you did - you did the chapter, you did the worksheet and you just accepted that that was the way it was supposed to be, and it's not that way any more. (Int#2,7)

Daniel and Kim observed a heavy reliance on the textbook in the classrooms in which they student taught. Daniel's sponsor teacher, for example, structured his entire course according to the organization of topics in the text. Daniel too tried using the text as a structure for his lesson planning and found that it was "accurate and detailed enough." However, he did not use it as a teaching tool with the class as much as his sponsor teacher did. Instead, he went to other supplementary resources, such as newspaper articles from microfiche, to try to give his students a sense of the "changing social environment in Canada during WWII."

During student teaching, Katherine, Irene, David and Allan had their concerns with the textbooks confirmed. On the whole, they found the textbooks to be "weak," "surface" in their treatment of content, "dry," and "boring." They supplemented the textbooks with primary documents, videos, filmstrips and
newspaper articles. David admitted a heavy reliance on the textbook in his teaching during practicum because of his "lack of content knowledge." However, he found the text so weak that he had to consult other grade appropriate texts suggested by his sponsor teacher. He claimed that these sources gave him a "sense of the history" that he could then use in his lecture.

While the participants as a whole claimed to have known about concerns with the textbooks, it was not something that the majority had thought much about. Their awareness of the issues surrounding texts was, therefore, increased through the course. None of the participants felt that they could rely totally on the grade-specific recommended social studies texts, not only because of "datedness," but because of missing information and the one-sided view of history they portrayed.

In the excerpts and discussion provided above are examples of ways in which the participants were reflecting on the textbook as a pedagogical tool. Of particular focus were the recognition of textbook deficiencies, as well as ideas for supplementing texts with content from other teaching materials. Noted also, however, was the need felt by some of the participants to rely on the textbook as a crutch. This was because of a perceived deficiency in their background content knowledge, particularly in history.

4. Understanding the secondary school student

Throughout the methods course, the instructor made comments about what could be expected of secondary school students based on his own teaching experience, his research in classrooms and his practicum supervision. Comments ranged from
their tendency to not complete homework, to the level of individual involvement on student research projects to be expected.

In the second interview, the participants talked about what they thought of the way secondary school students were being described to them by the instructor. Both Irene and Allan came into the methods course with little prior experience with adolescents, however, both felt that they were being given a realistic impression of students by the instructor.

Irene: I think from him [the instructor], he wants us to know that they’re [secondary students] tough, they’re jaded, but that they are and they can be open. They want to learn, even if we think they don’t. They want to be entertained. (Int#2,13)

In confirming his impressions, Allan drew on his prior experiences as a secondary school student.

Allan: It’s not unrealistic to think that these adolescents aren’t going to have their minds on what you’re going to be teaching them. Like the homework thing we discussed in class the other day - can we expect them to do their homework? No you can’t. I remember in high school I never did my homework. I didn’t care if I took the class not having the homework done and having him pick on me. It was embarrassing at the time, but afterwards I forgot about it and I wouldn’t do the homework anyways. (Int#2,8)

Daniel and Kim, on the other hand, did not feel that the instructor’s description of secondary school students was accurate. Daniel felt that the instructor was being too sceptical about what secondary school students were really like and tended to "underestimate them." He recalled his personal experience as a classroom volunteer to support his view. Kim too felt she was being given a "minimalist" view of what to expect from the students.
From the two week practicum, the participants concurred that they learned the most about this aspect of social studies pedagogy. While they had entered the methods course with the idea that their students would have individual differences, they were not aware of the wide variety of learners and learning problems in the secondary classroom. For David and Stephanie, the most important new knowledge gained through the practicum was that the students are at "all different stages of development." "Getting to see their work and what they are capable of" demonstrated to Stephanie how important it was to "adapt and modify to the speed of the class."

Katherine was surprised by how "down to earth" her students were and not the "snotty little brats" that she expected to find. She described them as "wonderful gems of possibility." While she had talked about making learning relevant to her students in our initial interview, she claimed that the most important learning based on her practicum, was that "how they [the students] view things is very important [because] if they don't perceive what they are learning as impacting their lives, then they won't be with you." Irene was surprised by her students enthusiasm for learning. They went beyond her expectations in many cases in terms of the answers they gave during discussions. She was concerned, however, for what she referred to as "the hard cases." These were the ones with social and emotional problems who tended to "do nothing" in the classroom. She made a point of reaching out to two particular girls who were struggling and felt that she learned a lot from these encounters. The practicum was beneficial as it
helped her to directly experience "what’s hard for kids," and to "learn to value their thinking."

Allan was concerned by the attitude of his sponsor teacher towards the E.S.L. (English as a second language) students. His sponsor teacher claimed that these children are not interested in learning because of the neighbourhoods in which they live. Allan’s concern rose out of his own personal experience because he felt that he had been a victim of the same attitude when he went to secondary school.

Daniel had his prior beliefs about secondary school students as learners confirmed through the short practicum. He learned that students are underestimated in their ability and that they want to be involved in their learning. Unfortunately his sponsor teacher did not allow student involvement, preferring instead to conduct "one-sided lectures." Daniel found that the students were on the whole very respectful of their teachers and fairly serious about their education.

Prior to the short practicum, the participants were admittedly lacking in knowledge of learners. Actually having to practice the teaching techniques with secondary students in a classroom setting, helped them to confirm and clarify some of their prior ideas about pedagogy, as well as challenging some previously held ideas about what would work best in the classroom. Being in the classroom context was integral to further clarifying their knowledge of learners through repeated interaction with, and observation of, their struggles to learn. Not only did they learn about the characteristics, cognitions and developmental levels of learners through their actual
"practice teaching," but also through their other interactions with the secondary students both in and out of class. By the end of the two weeks, however, they were only just beginning to get a sense of what was difficult for students to learn in social studies. Some of the participants had their prior personal knowledge about students confirmed, while others were surprised by what they saw and had to rethink their earlier ideas about learners.

In summary, this second half of the chapter examined how the participants began in some cases to rethink their earlier conceptualizations of social studies pedagogy in terms of planning for teaching social studies, techniques for teaching social studies, the use of textbooks and other instructional resources, and expectations of the secondary school student, as they experienced the methods course. Growth and change in prior thinking about social studies pedagogy, in particular how to teach social studies and how secondary students learn it, were evident through the discussion presented here. Integral to the change process was the actual classroom experience of working with secondary students as they "struggled to learn" social studies. Through this practice experience, the participants were able to reflect on the fit between their initial conceptualizations of pedagogy, the ideas that were being presented through the methods course experience, and their actual classroom practice.

Discussion

This chapter addressed the second research question: How do the participants reflect upon and begin to change [if at
all] their initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy as they experience the methods course? To illuminate the participants' reflections on this course, highlights were drawn from in-class discussions and activities, and subsequent participant reactions to these experiences as stated in the second and third interviews. The highlighted course experiences were divided into two parts, those addressing the nature of social studies, and those on social studies pedagogy.

Regarding the nature of social studies, the participants' reflections were examined in response to five provocative topics that were addressed in the contents of the methods course. These included defining social studies, the educational purposes of social studies, and the role of controversial issues, values education, and critical thinking in social studies. The second part of the chapter investigated the participants' reflections on the experiences of the course dealing with social studies pedagogy. These included the topics of planning for teaching social studies, techniques for teaching social studies, the use of textbooks and other instructional resources, and understanding the secondary school student, all of which were addressed in the methods course.

The discussion in this chapter emphasized the reflective process that the participants engaged in as they thought about their initial conceptualizations of social studies in relation to what was being presented in the course. Reactions were mixed. For the most part, Katherine and Margaret claimed to have learned little by way of new knowledge about the latter,
as much of what they were being presented in terms of planning and teaching social studies, they had already thought about. For others, the ideas for planning and the varied approaches to teaching were new. Through these ideas, they claimed to be learning about how to incorporate elements of their preferred teaching styles, including actively involving students, as mentioned in their initial conceptualizations of pedagogy. The course experiences also heightened their awareness of pedagogical issues, such as deficiencies in textbooks; the use of teaching techniques, such as the worksheet; and, the use of various approaches to maintain classroom control.

While the participants' knowledge of learners was also expanded, albeit minimally, through the methods course experiences, their most profound learning in this domain came through the short practicum. They concurred that figuring out how best to get the content across to secondary students was dependent on being able to watch them "struggle" with it.

In some cases, the participants also noted that they had their prior knowledge of social studies clarified, particularly as it related to critical thinking. For Katherine and Margaret, however, there was a tendency to further entrench their prior personal knowledge. At times, they felt that what they had been experiencing in the course only confirmed what they already believed about the nature of social studies and their responsibilities as teachers of social studies. At other times, they openly disagreed with what the instructor advocated in the course because it ran counter to their prior knowledge.

Where the most profound learning occurred in the course
for the majority was in terms of understanding the roles and responsibilities of a teacher of social studies. As a result of the course experiences, Irene, Stephanie, David, Allan and Daniel continually found themselves reflecting on and rethinking what they stated originally in their initial conceptualizations as it related to their emerging sense of the moral responsibility of teachers. This included their personal responsibility when addressing aspects of social studies such as values education and controversial issues, as well as being able to see themselves as agents of change. Much of this was new knowledge to them as it was something they had not thought about before.

While Melody, Kim and Katherine claimed to have had their initial ideas about their moral responsibility as teachers confirmed in these areas, they also felt that their awareness of these responsibilities had been heightened through the reflective process.
CHAPTER VII
DESCRIBING THE CHANGE PROCESS

Introduction

In the final interview, data were collected in response to the third research question: What influences are most salient in causing change in the participants' initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy? The analysis of these data has been divided into two parts. The first addresses how the participants described the change process they went through as they experienced the social studies methods course. For most, there were four dimensions to this reflective change process. These included confronting their prior knowledge of social studies; confirming and clarifying that prior knowledge, or reconceptualizing it; constructing new knowledge; and finally, being able to identify themselves as social studies teachers.

The second part of the chapter addresses the factors that were most salient in bringing about change. Noted as being most influential were both the methods course and factors external to the course. Within the methods course, the provocativeness of the instructor, the course content, and peer interaction were most frequently referred to as being significant. A second strong influence unanimously recognized was the short practicum. External to the course, the education program as a whole (including other courses and common strands such as critical thinking), and peer interactions were reported as most influential. Another significant influence noted by all participants was being a part of this study. While these are
not meant to be exhaustive lists of all possible influences on the participants' sense making about social studies, they are representative of what the participants claimed were notable influences over the five month study.

Part I: The Nature of the Change Process

All eight participants concurred that they had changed in some way over the duration of the study. While Katherine and Margaret in particular, felt that that change was minimal, the others described it as being more profound. They described the change process as both "exciting" and "illuminating" at times, and at other times, "frustrating."

Central to the change process were both reflection and articulation. In terms of reflection, all acknowledged that change resulted by thinking about what was being experienced in the methods course and recalling their own personal experiences and initial conceptualizations of social studies in relation to that experience. Articulation involved having to talk about those reflections with an interested party, both during peer interaction and as a part of this study.

The change process, as described by the participants, was comprised of four dimensions.

1. **Confronting and confirming prior knowledge**

   The first dimension noted by all of the participants involved confronting their prior knowledge about the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy as they experienced the methods course. Daniel, for example, described this confrontation as "putting these [prior] ideas on the table" in order to reflect on them in terms of what was being learned.
All of the participants found, at times, that what they had said in the initial interview was being confirmed for them through the methods course experiences. Margaret, for example, found that the emphasis on values education "jibed" with what she had already said about teaching. Katherine too claimed that much of what she was experiencing, she had "already thought about" prior to the methods course. Both claimed, however, that they had become more "aware" of certain aspects of social studies teaching as a result of the course. Katherine, for example, talked about being "more aware of how little I know" in terms of the history to be taught. She attributed this to the geography emphasis in her undergraduate work.

The other participants found that their earlier conceptualizations were not only confirmed at times, but also clarified, through the experiences of the course. Daniel, for example, noted, "I always had that in the back of my head, but not in the forefront." He recognized that he had not been "clear on the purpose of teaching certain aspects of social studies." For him, "this was one of the fundamental things" to learn. For others, it involved clarifying the definition of social studies so that it "makes more sense."

The content of social studies was also clarified significantly. Daniel and Irene, for example, felt "clearer" by the end of the course about the role of teaching concepts, rather than the rote memorization of facts. David and Kim too talked about no longer being concerned about the content that they would be teaching.

For Allan, this clarification also involved being able to
"express my ideas about social studies more clearly." He claimed to have been "convoluted in my thinking throughout the program," but found by the end of the methods course that he had "become more articulate." Picking up the "jargon" was an important part of his sense making about social studies.

Allan: I think a lot of students teachers, before they came in, had these ideas and knew these ideas but now we're in the course we can put them into concepts we can put them in a jargon even...We are able to get those abstract ideas and put them into more concrete terms. (Int#4,6)

Allan also talked about being clearer about the role of knowledge, skills and attitudes in social studies. While he felt that he already "had it there" in terms of addressing these in his teaching, he was not "able to articulate it."

Daniel too felt that because of his experiences in the course and the study, he could now "say what was in his head."

2. Reconceptualizing prior knowledge

Another element of the change process that some of the participants claimed to have undergone was having to rethink their initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy. In Irene's case, for example, having to confront and then reconceptualize what she had "inside" was a decisive element of the learning-to-teach process: "I used to go home at night really disturbed [but] it's been freeing for me after that initial period of struggle, it's been really freeing for me." She talked about a "switch" in her thinking, for example, about the subject-matter of social studies. Before the course, she had thought of it as being more "content oriented." After the course she wanted to
move away from the facts to helping her students "get a feel for the climate of the time because if you feel it you’ll remember it." She also changed her original definition of social studies because it "doesn’t feel right any more. It sounds too factual." By the end of the course, she had incorporated notions of active citizenship into her definition: "Social studies is about making them [the secondary students] productive citizens of society and giving them the tools they need to get on in this world and do something with themselves."

As well, she talked about having "doors opened" concerning the purpose for teaching social studies, "he’s [the instructor] really helped me to think [about what] is important for kids because all of a sudden it’s become important to me."

Others, Stephanie, David and Allan in particular, acknowledged that they too had rethought and changed their original definitions of social studies because they were too "flat" and "one-dimensional" when held up against the instructor’s definition. In particular, they noted wanting to incorporate the element of ‘what ought to be’ in some way into their personal definitions.

Another area in which the participants reconceptualized their prior thinking was in terms of the role of controversial issues in social studies. As a part of their initial conceptualizations, many had noted believing that one of the purposes of social studies was to help students learn that there are multiple ways of looking at things and to be open to all other viewpoints. However, when confronted with the teaching of controversial issues such as the Holocaust, the
participants acknowledged having to rethink those ideas because of the moral responsibility of the teacher to "draw the line" on what views are deemed acceptable in the classroom. Having to think about where they stood on issues such as the Holocaust was particularly perplexing for some of them. This was not something that was taken lightly. Irene, in particular, talked extensively about her struggles with this issue. Stephanie struggled too. She claimed that she had always known there was a "line" that had to be "drawn." She just was not sure how far she would be allowed to push it.

3. Constructing new knowledge

All but Katherine and Margaret referred to the opportunity to construct "new knowledge" about social studies that the methods course experiences afforded. For Daniel, this "new knowledge" resulted in a "better understanding" of the purpose for teaching social studies as a school subject and a discovery that it is "much deeper" than history and geography as he originally thought. As well, Allan acknowledged having learned that, "It's [social studies is] not just knowledge. It's skills and attitudes because knowledge is just a small part of learning."

Another aspect of social studies that was "new" for many of the participants was the role of values education. While some like Allan and Daniel were optimistic about including values education in social studies, they were cautious about attempting to use some of the things such as the principle testing discussion and values assessment techniques learned about in the methods class because, "I don't know if I'd have
the skills - the classroom management skills to pull it off."

On the other hand, Allan did note that he had acquired some of the "necessary skills" for helping his students to address their values, "to get to reasoned judgment" and to become more critical thinkers.

Stephanie too felt that she had acquired new knowledge about the specific skills of critical thinking that have to be taught to students. Prior to the course, she had been adamant that critical thinking would be a cornerstone of her teaching. However, upon reflection, she noted that "before it [critical thinking] was just a title." After the class experiences with critical thinking, she saw critical thinking as being about much more.

Stephanie: There's a lot to critical thinking. I think I used to just think it was bias and things like that, but there's more to it. There's 8 or 10 skills that you could use or teach the kids so that they'd be able to critically think much better.

(Int#4,4)

Other new knowledge for teaching most frequently referred to by the participants was "new methods of instruction." The majority felt that they were getting novel ideas for teaching social studies that they had "never thought of before." The examples most often referred to were the principle testing discussion, critical thinking exercises, and how to use primary documents and visual aides. However, there was concern expressed, at times, about what was perceived to be the "ideal" nature of some of the approaches being learned. David, Allan and Daniel, for example, noted that they might not be able to implement these "ideals" until after a "few years of
experience."

Daniel: I have to know that all these innovative methods that we’re taught are not going to just roll out like [the instructor] might do it in our class. I think as in any job when you begin you’re not going to be as good as when you’re a few years into it so I’m not going to purposely not use certain methods just because I don’t feel they could work. You have to begin sort of experimenting to what works, what doesn’t and kind of build on it like that. (Int#4,12)

Stephanie, on the other hand, recognized that "not everything I’m going to do is going to work, but I’ve got a starting point so that I can go out and try it through trial and error." This "starting point" was comprised of the "new methods" she was learning for teaching social studies.

Conversely, Katherine was frustrated with the methods taught, as they were "just the basic stuff, not "anything new." One area she did acquire some new knowledge in was "dealing with kids." Allan and Stephanie also noted gaining knowledge about "varied" learners and teaching in different ways to address that variety.

4. Identifying self as a social studies teacher

For the majority of the participants gaining "self confidence" as a teacher, learning to "see themselves as social studies teachers" and feeling more "comfortable" teaching social studies were critical ways in which they claimed to have begun to change their thinking over the five month duration of the study. Stephanie described this "discovery of this sense of self" as a "change in person." It was a "shocking revelation" for her because it was the "first time the feeling that I am a teacher emerged." She claimed to be "100% passionate now" and feeling "like I can do it." David too claimed that he had
"changed" in this way because "I can see myself as a teacher" and "I feel a lot more comfortable now about teaching social studies than I did at the beginning." Although he had initially felt fairly confident with the idea of teaching because of his "teaching" experiences during his human kinetics program, upon reflection on the past five months, he realized, that he did not really know as much about teaching initially as he thought he did.

While Kim felt she had maintained her "fairly sound philosophy of teaching based on her background experience," she had a lot of questions about teaching social studies answered through the experiences of the methods course. Consequently, she felt she had grown in her "comfort" with the idea of teaching social studies. She, noted, however that she still had a number of questions that only teaching experience would answer.

Irene had expressed many insecurities in our initial interview about what she had to offer to the role of teacher. However, as a result of her experiences in the social studies methods course and this study, she felt that many of these insecurities had been overcome. She finished the course "feeling like this is where I belong. This is what I want to do. This is what I need to be doing. I can make a difference." "A big revelation" for Irene, resulting from the social studies course, had been learning to appreciate her own values.

Daniel too was unsure about his ability to teach in the first interview, but by the end of the methods course, he acknowledged "feel[ing] more comfortable with the thought of
taking over a class for three months than I did before." He contended, however, that much of what he had been taught was "to be the ideal teacher," so he did not expect to go into the upcoming practicum knowing everything about teaching.

For Allan, even though the semester was much like a "roller coaster" ride with numerous "ups and downs" in his confidence level, he claimed also that he left the social studies methods course feeling more confident about his ability to teach it.

Allan: In my first interview I was all excited about getting into the program and in the second interview I thought the program was being really productive. In my third interview I was sort of disillusioned because of the practicum. I was sort of hard on myself because I felt that I wasn't doing well enough during my practicum. It was like a roller coaster. Now my self concept and my beliefs have become more optimistic again...I think that was important in our interviews that you can see that you can pick yourself up when you're down. Once I got back to school after the practicum and reflected upon my performance and on my disillusionment I was able to pick myself back up. And I'm feeling more confident in myself again now. (Int#4,11/12)

Katherine, on the other hand, did not feel that she gained a better sense of herself as a teacher from this course because she had entered her program already feeling confident based on personal knowledge formed as a result of her life experiences. She noted already believing in a lot of what was being espoused in her course work, so for the most part, there was a congruence between what she was being taught and what she already knew. She also felt that who she was as a person was the most critical influence on her teaching. For her, being in the teacher education program was her "due," her "reward" for all of her years of coaching, as well as an opportunity to
"finally" see the "link" between her coaching experience and her teacher "training."

Margaret had a very troubled time over the five months of the study. At one point in October, prior to the practicum, she talked about perhaps having to drop out of the study because she was not sure if she was going to be able to continue with the program. Rather than having her confidence as a teacher boosted, she left the social studies methods course feeling somewhat unsure about whether teaching was for her. More influential to how she was feeling about herself as a potential teacher was, like Katherine, her personal knowledge based on her positive experiences coaching volleyball, and her need to right the wrongs that she had experienced in the school system.

Part II: Salient Influences on Change

Factors Within the Methods Course

1. The instructor

The instructor was acknowledged as a strong influence on the participants' change in thinking about social studies because of his provocative personality and teaching style, and his experience as a classroom teacher.

a) The instructor's provocativeness. As noted in the introduction to Chapter VI, the provocativeness of the instructor prompted the participants to think a great deal about their initial conceptualizations of social studies, particularly in terms of its definition and purposes. For the majority, Irene, Stephanie, Kim, Allan, Daniel and David, this provocative approach caused a substantial amount of change in their thinking about social studies to occur over the duration
of the course. On the other hand, while Margaret liked the instructor’s provocativeness, she claimed to have not been particularly challenged by his approach to teaching the course. Katherine also was not influenced to change by his provocativeness or the approach taken to teaching the course, but rather tended to defend her preconceptions when provoked by him.

b) Teaching style. A second characteristic of the instructor that was influential on the participants’ thinking was his teaching style. His approach to the teaching of this course was interpreted in different ways however. Allan, David and Daniel, for example, noted a very student-centred approach that involved "very little lecturing." Instead they felt that there was an emphasis on discussion and group work, and modelling of various methods of teaching. Daniel noted that "he’s [the instructor] using us as if we were high school students and he was the teacher, which is very effective."

Conversely, Katherine felt that the instructor’s teaching style was teacher-centred. She noted that he "talks a lot" and "does all the teaching himself." Margaret and Kim concurred, as did the instructor in our initial interview. All three were concerned that there was no attempt to acknowledge their entering ideas and "little room" for expressing and thinking about their personal beliefs during the course.

Kim: Of all the courses that I’ve taken this is probably the least touchy-feely so you don’t really talk about the sort of things you have to offer so much. I mean, ‘What does it mean to you?’ ‘What do you think about that?’ We haven’t really done a lot of that. He’s [the instructor] told us what he thinks and we’ve sort of employed some of his methods and so
For these three, their initial conceptualizations based on their life experiences remained fairly solid throughout the duration of the course. Some of this was due to a personality conflict with the instructor, but, more importantly, their entering ideas about the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy were quite perceptive already. In Kim and Katherine's cases, they claimed that this perceptiveness came from a lifetime of experience with teachers as family members and a feeling of familiarity with schools and teaching.

c) Experience as a teacher. A third instructor characteristic noted by the participants as influencing their thinking about social studies was his secondary school teaching experience. The fact that he had brought teaching experience to the course [even if it was 20 years ago] was noted as a strong point of the course. The instructor tended to tell anecdotes and stories from his own teaching experience or experiences observing in the schools. The word "realistic" appeared repeatedly in conversations about what was being learned because of this. Stephanie was particularly adamant about the importance of having "experienced" instructors.

Stephanie: I think the fact that he [the instructor] was a teacher is wonderful. He modeled a lot of stuff. For some of the courses, they don't have teachers, they have psychology majors or something. And I think they should go through POT [the Principles of Teaching course] and a couple of the methods courses before they're ever allowed up in front of classes...I think that's one of the big things in this program. I think they forget that the people they bring in to be our lab instructors and our profs, they have to have been good teachers. For one thing you've got a lot of students coming in here that have preconceived ideas. They've gone to school
for so long so they think they know what a good teacher is, first of all. And if that teacher doesn't gain their respect, the same as if when I go out and don’t gain the respect of the class and show that I’m organized and I know something about this and it’s worth us working together for them to learn, they’re not going to learn. They’re going to shut down. And I think that happened in some of our classes and it actually taught me a lot as well. (Int#4,12)

David and Daniel noted that the instructor’s expertise resulting from his years of teaching experience was important to gaining the respect that Stephanie talked about. As Daniel claimed in his first interview, both this subject-matter expertise and the accompanying respect were lacking in the social studies he experienced in secondary school.

2. The course content

The content of the course was acknowledged by the majority of the participants as having been influential on their change in thinking about social studies.

a) The nature of social studies. Several noted having a clearer understanding of the nature of social studies because of the content that was addressed. Daniel claimed to better understand "what social studies is, its important concepts and why we’re teaching it." He also felt clearer about "what a social studies teacher is responsible for." Irene claimed she better understood that social studies was not meant to be "content oriented" and "factual" as she initially believed. She learned that she could incorporate literature, for example, to give her students a "feel for the times" they were studying rather than having them just memorize names and dates. This coincided with her initial conceptualization of incorporating stories in her teaching.
b) Values education. A particularly strong influence on the participants' thinking about the nature of social studies was the course emphasis on values education. For Allan, teaching the skills of valuing was "a missing piece" in his prior knowledge about social studies.

Allan: I think that was one thing that I was missing in my thinking before because I thought that we would have to instill some of our beliefs in the students. I guess intrinsically we do or unconsciously, but he [the instructor] has sort of taught me that we have to teach them the skills to get to the reasoned judgment and then hopefully from there, they will be able to make the quote unquote "right decision."
(Int#4,4)

Margaret too identified positively with the emphasis on values education. She was "glad to see someone else believed in it." She claimed that "it convinced me even more that it was the way to go." She did not have much confidence, however, in the instructor's ability to convert her peers to this way of thinking if they had not already believed in it. Katherine was the only participant who claimed to have disliked the focus on values education in the course because of what she saw as its impracticality. The principle tests were not useful for her as a teaching strategy as she felt "uncomfortable" about using them in the classroom. Instead, she noted "it would be natural for me to make them [the students] try and consider the other point of view. I don't think I would have to consider it as a lesson, or outline it the way he [the instructor] has." She claimed this "natural" tendency was due to the progressive views of teaching she had developed prior to entering the program.

c) Teaching methods. A third influential course component
for the majority was the stress on methods for teaching social
studies. Allan, David, Daniel, Irene and Kim felt that they
were getting a "meat and potatoes", "practical strategies"
approach, as well as "a lot of ways to teach for different
learners." Stephanie too liked the "methods." She had
expected a heavy focus on planning for teaching and was
pleasantly surprised that was not the case.

Stephanie: I guess I thought 312 was going to give me
lesson plan after lesson plan after lesson plan. It
wasn't that way. It was here's a concept, how would
you teach it. Here are 10 different ways. And the
reason you want to do it, 'Why do you want to teach
it?,' which is far better because if we just went in
and learned how to plan a lesson for each of the
lessons we have to plan, and we get out there and
they change the curriculum, we wouldn't be creative
enough. We wouldn't know how to really do. You'd know
how to do basic form lessons, but not be able to look
at other things going on in the world and think, "Gee
that could be used." (Int#4,11)

Katherine too was particularly pleased with the
"applicable teaching ideas" that she got in the first half of
the course.

Katherine: I guess I'm amazed that it is so focused
on teaching social studies and actually being able to
teach the material and planning out our timetable and
our worksheets. I'm amazed that it is so 'on the
nose' about teaching social studies. I sort of
thought it would be sort of wishy washy. I guess I'm
so used to having to struggle in classes to get
myself to my target end where I want to be at the end
of the class and this really seems like it is getting
me there. (Int#2,6)

Conversely, Katherine objected to the lack of emphasis on
planning in the course. She wanted to have the instructor ask
her questions about her planning like 'Why am I attacking it
this way?' and 'What are the students going to get out of it?'
She also felt that the ideas for teaching social studies that
they were being giving were not "innovative" as she "already knew about them." They were repetitious as well, she noted, of what she was being taught in her Principles of Teaching course. Margaret too claimed to have "learned nothing new about curriculum and instruction." She also found the teaching approaches to be "slow and not challenging" as she had "already thought about a lot of this stuff." She objected that the course was "taught as if we hadn’t any ideas already of what it [teaching] was about." Here, both Katherine’s and Margaret’s views support the findings of other researchers (Adler, 1984; Adler & Goodman, 1985) that existing knowledge of student teachers is a necessary part of the learning-to-teach process and should be acknowledged within a methods course. Their concerns also deal with a need for more collaborative, team approaches in planning teacher preparation courses so that replication can be kept to a minimum.

3. Peer interaction within the course

Another influential factor in the course was the emphasis on peer interaction and group work. Margaret and Stephanie, for example, particularly liked the sharing of articles in class. Katherine and David, however, did not. Stephanie and David noted benefitting from being a "mini-teacher" through the group peer teaching exercises. As well, Stephanie learned from listening to the "many other smart and interesting people in the class." Irene, Daniel and Allan felt that interacting with peers in class was a good way to "clarify" their own thinking. Irene, for example, was surprised to discover, through discussions with classmates, that she had strong opinions and
ideas that she never realised she had. For Daniel, too, the peer interaction was an "accommodation process" that helped him to "develop new ideas and methods," but also "reinforced" his understanding of what was to be taught and how to teach it. Allan claimed that peer interaction helped to "reconstruct" his prior knowledge.

Allan: I think that a lot of my beliefs and attitudes and knowledge tends to be convoluted some times and I think talking to my peers, I'm able to focus my knowledge in speaking to them and trying to convey my knowledge. That sort of reconstructs my knowledge through my peers speaking to me about their beliefs. So it's that construction and reconstruction I guess. Construction of my own knowledge into a more focused knowledge and attitudes through my conveying to my peers and a reconstruction of my knowledge and my attitudes through my peers interacting with me. (Int#4,7)

Allan would have liked to have had even more emphasis on "bouncing ideas off of each other" in class, but less on having to produce group lesson plans. While David also acknowledged being able to learn more "along with his peers," he was surprised by and concerned about the narrow minded, "overly academic" and unrealistic views of his classmates. Kim too had problems with how "opinionated," and "not open to other points of views" her peers were at times. Both she and Stephanie suggested that one way to weed out some of these people they "wouldn't want teaching kids," would be for the Faculty to interview candidates before accepting them. Margaret too expressed concern with her peers' views, but it was to do with their attitude toward her.

Margaret: I think that there are a couple of students in that class that I actively dislike now...I just disliked the way they treated me because for all the emphasis on tolerance, respect, open-mindedness, I
found that I would get the most subtle racist sort of messages. Stuff that you can't even say really was rotten, but that if you thought twice about it and looked at the context where it was mentioned yeah, it is. It's racist. Or at the very least it was designed to undermine me. (Int#4,1)

She recognized that her aggressive personality resulted in her challenging her peers and the instructor at times. Even though this was the case, she felt that she was "right" in her concerns based on her prior experiences with racism, and, therefore, had to speak up.

The stress on group work in the course was seen as a bonus at times and at other times, a burden. While group work helped to "clarify thinking," there were some concerns with the group work emphasis. Stephanie's frustration was caused by her peers' lack of experience working in groups.

Stephanie: The group is not working for me. We've got a lot of people who are used to working on their own and competing rather than working together. So I have to make sure that I don't spoon feed them. (Int#2,4)

Daniel too had a concern with the size of the groups used. For most of the lesson-planning sessions, the methods class was working in groups of 10.

Daniel: ...in the larger groups I think it's not effective because everyone's talking and you can't quite hear somebody or they're down at the other end of the table. It just doesn't work. But when we have broken down into the smaller groups, I have been able to draw a lot of extra information from the students and we've had more meaningful discussions and people get a chance to put their input in. (Int#2,6)

At times though, they found having to plan in groups a strain. Kate felt that this was an unrealistic way to plan because teachers in schools did not plan in groups. Allan was in a group with Stephanie and they both noted that their group was
not very productive. In particular, Stephanie felt that her peers were being too conservative.

Stephanie: The people in this class are relying on the traditional approaches because it’s safe. We are just developing the concept that we can go a lot further and we can do a lot different and we don’t know yet what will work and what won’t. (Int#2,7)

The short practicum

While the short, two week practicum was not officially a part of the methods course, having it at the mid-point of the course was integral to the reflective process and to the participants’ sense making about social studies. They unanimously recognized the influence of the short practicum on their thinking about social studies, even though it was not an entirely positive experience for several of them. Not only was the practicum a place to "get to know kids better," it was also a time to "try out," in a more "realistic" situation, what the participants described as the "ideals" they had been learning about in the methods course. During practicum, they all noted having the opportunity to develop their own planning style, which was a combination of what they learned in this methods course and their Principles of Teaching (POT) course. In particular, they discovered what seemed to work best for making sense out of the topic of the lesson.

Allan: Just the experience is the thing, because what we’ve learned in the courses in our program are ideals and I think that when we get into the classroom we get to implement them and we get to practice and we get to have a realistic experience and interaction with the classroom...During our practicum we get to learn the dynamics of the classroom. We’re able to learn our teaching style and our teaching style sort of reflects what we’ve learned during our program. (Int#4,10)
For Kim, Irene and Stephanie, the practicum was a time of confidence building about their ability to teach social studies. This increased confidence came about "just from the doing and being in front of the class." For Daniel and Katherine, their chosen teaching style, in particular their previously articulated desire "not to be a rote teacher," was "confirmed" during the practicum, both through "practice" teaching and observation of their sponsor teachers. They were both surprised that despite their extensive coaching experience, they were not as prepared for the classroom by their coaching as they thought they would be. The difference, they concurred, was that in coaching "the kids really want to be there," whereas in the classroom, attendance is mandatory. Because Katherine felt that she had benefitted so much from the short practicum, she recommended strongly that the practicum should be given more emphasis in the preparation program. Others, however, felt that it was beneficial to have exposure to secondary school classes, but then returning to the university gave them time to think about what they had experienced and what was being learned in their courses. Daniel, for example, noted that they could then "apply" their coursework to that experience and "kind of figure it out for ourselves." This desire to have preparatory course work coinciding with practicum experience refutes the claims of others (Lortie, 1975; Ross, 1987) that course work bears no connection to actual practice. The two week practicum was a critical element in the participants' sense making regarding what they were having revealed about social studies in the
methods course. The strategic location of that practicum experience at the mid-point of the course was noted as being particularly beneficial for them. Formal learning about students as learners was recognized as a necessary part of the participants' knowledge base. However, all were adamant that having actual classroom practice during which they could put this learning into context, was needed in order to clarify their knowledge of learners.

In summary, the participants' change in thinking about the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy was influenced by several factors within the methods course. The instructor's provocative personality and teaching style, his secondary teaching experience, his modelling of teaching techniques and his knowledge of his subject area were most consistently noted. As well, the emphasis in the course content on understanding the nature of social studies, in particular the role played by values education and controversial issues, and the emphasis on the "practical," were acknowledged, as was the peer interaction. Reflecting on all of these experiences helped to heighten the participants awareness of their roles and responsibilities as social studies teachers.

Having a short practicum at the mid-point of the course further assisted the participants in gaining confidence in themselves as teachers. It also helped them to expand their knowledge about learners, including how to address individual needs by varying their teaching approaches, and how to get the content across to their students.
Factors External to the Methods Course

The overall preparation program and some of the courses within it were also acknowledged as influential on the participants' sense making about learning to teach social studies. Several participants noted seeing "common threads" across the teacher education program or between courses that helped them to "blend the borders" and make "connections" across what they were learning. One of these common threads was critical thinking. Katherine, David and Stephanie, in particular, noted this common theme. For example, Stephanie recalled having the same article on critical thinking addressed in both Educational Studies and the SSED 312 Social Studies Methods course. What she liked was that both instructors "came at it in different ways and filled in different grey areas."

Allan noted that another common strand in the program was understanding the varying characteristics and needs of learners. For example, he claimed to have acquired a great deal of new knowledge about learners in his Educational Psychology [EPSE] course, which he was then able to connect to what he was learning in his methods courses and the Principles of Teaching course.

Allan: I still think the Ed. Psych. course has been one of my most beneficial courses because you get a sense of what type of students are out there. And this course makes you aware of that and by making you aware of it you can use the methods that I've learned like say in our Socials course and POT and my other methods course. You can use all those varied techniques and different strategies that we've learned to address the problems that I've learned about in EPSE. (Int#4,3)

Specific courses were also highlighted by the participants
as being particularly influential on their thinking, although there was little agreement on which ones helped the most in preparing them as social studies teachers. For the most part, the courses that provided "hands on lesson planning," videotaping of peer teaching, and group work where peers could "share creative ideas," were most influential on their learning about teaching. In one case, Irene noted that her initial conceptualization about how to best approach the teaching of social studies was further shaped by the emphasis in one of her other courses on the different approaches to content, such as poetry reading and story telling. Through these approaches, she had her prior knowledge about the power of stories confirmed.

As well, Irene and Stephanie (the only two social studies majors) were required to take both SSED 312 and SSED 317, the issues in social studies course. Both were influenced considerably by the further emphasis in SSED 317 on values education. They felt that their ability to teach social studies through a values education approach was strengthened because of it. Stephanie noted several times in our interviews that she felt her peers who did not get to take both social studies courses were at a disadvantage when it came to understanding what they were being taught in SSED 312 because "the 312 is methods and 317 is the philosophy behind, the theoretical. It's only when you have them both can you be effective." Margaret was the only participant not in the SSED 317 course who expressed concern about what she was missing.

Margaret: That's one of my personal worries just for me as a teacher because if I were in one subject area I would be doing two courses in that subject. I'd be
doing the values education and the [methods] class right now which is curriculum, but I'm not because I have two subject areas. It's incredibly difficult to get into the Education Faculty unless you have more than one subject area. But if you have more than one subject area that means that you sacrifice that in depth sort of principles-of-teaching training that you would get...I think I'm missing that reflective sort of stuff we should be doing. (Int#2,5)

Being a Part of This Study

One final factor acknowledged as being influential on the participants' reflections on and change in their initial conceptualizations about social studies was being a part of this study. For Allan, being in the study helped him to gain more confidence in himself as a teacher and to see his personal "change" over the five month period. Irene felt affirmed by being a part of the study because "you wanted my opinions, as twisted or rattling as they may be, and that matters to me. That makes me feel good." Katherine felt being in the study helped her to "clarify [her] vague thinking" and to concentrate on how she was feeling about the things she was experiencing.

David, Kim, Daniel and Stephanie concurred that the greatest benefit was having to talk about social studies because it "forced them to think" and to go back over what they had been learning. For Daniel, reflecting helped him to "reinforce" his understanding of issues and to "think back to something [he] didn't understand in the first place." The reflection process "forced" Stephanie to "stop and think about this section of the [program] and how it fits into everything." She talked particularly about the benefits of having the interview transcripts as a record to refer to "down the road" to keep track of whether she is actually doing the things she
talked about wanting to do in her teaching. Both Allan and Margaret also made reference to the usefulness of the transcripts. They included them as a part of a portfolio assignment for the Principles of Teaching course in which they were to keep a record of their thinking over the duration of that course.

Reflection has elsewhere been identified as a critical element of learning-to-teach (Mackinnon & Erickson, 1992; McLaughlin, 1991; Ross & Hannay, 1986; Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991; Zeichner & Liston, 1987) and to future teaching (Schon, 1987, 1988). Not only was reflective thinking an important part of the clarification process for the participants in the study, but also was having to articulate that thinking for someone else. The participants unanimously felt that having to sit down and talk one-on-one with an interested party was imperative to clarifying their thinking. For some like Allan, Daniel and Irene, this reflection was a natural part of the learning process. For others, like Kim and David, this reflection was something that they saw as having to be "forced" on them (through the study) or they "probably would not have" engaged in it. The majority suggested that the idea of one-on-one discussion should be a part of the regular teacher preparation program because it had been so powerful for them.

Discussion

All of the participants in this study claimed to have undergone some change in their thinking about social studies as a result of the methods course experience and being a part of this study. For some that change was profound; for others, it
was limited.

The change process identified had four dimensions. First, the participants confronted their initial conceptualizations about social studies as they related to the experiences of the methods course. They either had these conceptualizations confirmed and sometimes further clarified, or they reconceptualized them. At times, the change process also involved constructing new knowledge. Finally, the participants noted a change in their ability to identify themselves as social studies teachers. This last dimension appeared to be the most critical aspect of the change process for the majority of the participants. Irene, Allan and Stephanie, for example, claimed that it was a "change in self," evident mainly in their "increased confidence" in their ability to teach social studies. This unfolding sense of self as teacher was validated by reflecting on what they were discovering about social studies through the methods course experiences and what they had stated in their initial conceptualizations. For the most part, they found much of what they were experiencing coincided with their prior conceptualizations. However, before the social studies course they had not been "clear" about their ideas and were unable to accurately "express" them. At other times, the participants had to confront the missing pieces in their prior conceptualizations, and rethink their ideas, particularly about the role of values education and controversial issues in their teaching of social studies, and their moral responsibility as teachers. The new knowledge constructed related mostly to methods for instruction and planning, including ways to get the
content across to students.

Several of the participants experienced change in all four of these dimensions, while others felt that they had changed in only one or two of them. In all cases, the participants' initial conceptualizations were used as a lens through which the experiences of the methods course were examined. Reflecting on these conceptualizations and having to articulate their thinking about them for an interested party were central to the change process.

Fullan (1982) claimed that for change to be effective, it needs to begin with the individual and must be meaningful for him or her. This researcher concurs based on the findings of this study. The participants who underwent the most significant change in this study found themselves often probing their relatively unexamined ideas about teaching social studies. For Stephanie, Daniel, Allan and Irene, this contemplation was pervasive.

Irene, in particular, was the one participant who appeared to experience the most substantial amount of change in her thinking as she struggled to blend the professional knowledge being presented in the methods course with her prior personal knowledge. She had had very little by way of experience with adolescents prior to entering the Faculty of Education and had only recently begun to think of the possibility of teaching. She did not "see" herself as having much to contribute to the profession. In terms of the nature of social studies, she had entered the methods course thinking that the primary focus of her teaching of social studies would be history - "the study of
people and past events." By the end of the course, while still acknowledging history as an important part of social studies, she claimed that she had gained a more "three-dimensional" view of what social studies was all about. She now recognized that a more central purpose of social studies would be to "change" her students so that they "become proactive, productive citizens."

Critical thinking as a means to empower her students and to "get at their values" replaced her original notion of wanting to "challenge students to think." Her initial ideas about social studies pedagogy also became clearer and more "fleshed out" by the end of the course. She had entered the course with a "passion" for story telling and left feeling more confident in her ideas about using story telling. She discovered that students liked this approach because it helped them to better understand what they were learning. She also found out that she was good at telling stories and could use them to break away from the traditional lecture approach in her teaching. Irene had also entered the methods course wanting to promote discussion in her classes, but discovered through the course experiences that she had to be clear on where she stood when dealing with discussions, particularly of controversial issues, because of her moral responsibility as teacher. Initially, she had also expected to be highly dependent on the textbook in her teaching of social studies, but, through the course experiences, gained confidence in her ability to locate and use other instructional resources.

Other participants did not experience as substantial a change in their thinking, as exemplified by Irene. They claimed
to have already spent considerable time probing their thinking about the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy prior to entering the teacher preparation program. Katherine and Kim, for example, talked often with teacher family members about their ideas. Katherine appeared to have been the least influenced by the experiences of the methods course. She experienced little change in her thinking over the duration of the course because of the sound personal knowledge base about teaching that she entered the course with. Her confidence and maturity were evident in her surety that she could and would be a teacher from the outset. Her years of coaching secondary school students gave her a firm understanding of what adolescents are like and how to work with them. Her numerous travel experiences developed a natural curiosity and love of learning in her that helped her to plan creative and motivating lessons for her practicum and class assignments. Her academic background in geography provided her with a sound subject matter base. Where she felt less confident in her content knowledge in the area of history, she had already begun to fill in gaps through her own reading. Hence, much of the professional knowledge presented in the methods course was not new to her. She claimed to have already thought a great deal about the role of critical thinking, values education and controversial issues in her teaching of social studies. She had also encountered many of the approaches to instruction presented during the course and had already decided, based on her prior experience, which ones would be most effective for her teaching. The short practicum confirmed her initial ideas,
as did most of the methods course experience.

Fullan (1982) also argued that there generally has to be some form of external catalyst to initiate the personal change process. The participants in this study found such a catalyst in the provocative nature of the methods course instructor who "forced" them to think about what they were learning. Other influences on change in the participants' thinking about social studies, came from both within and outside of the methods course. Within the course, the instructor's teaching style and his classroom teaching experience, his knowledge of the subject area and modelling of teaching methods, were influential. The provocative course content, in particular, the strategies for teaching and the emphasis on values education, controversial issues and the moral responsibility of the teachers also significantly influenced their thinking. As well, the stress on peer interaction was an influential factor. Too, the short practicum at the mid-point of the methods course was generally acknowledged as being significantly influential, particularly on the participants' thinking about social studies pedagogy.

External to the course, noted influences were the common strands across the program and the other coursework taken simultaneously. A final critical influence acknowledged by all participants was being a part of this study. The "forced" reflection during interviews helped the participants to "clarify" their thinking and express themselves more articulately.

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CHAPTER VIII

MAKING SENSE OF THE METHODS COURSE EXPERIENCE

Reviewing the Research Stance

Social studies methods courses, such as the one highlighted in this study, vary in many ways. There are differences within these courses themselves in terms of their time frame, the aspects of curriculum and instruction addressed, and the philosophy, personality and teaching style of the individual instructors. Further they differ externally, in respect to the programs of which they are a part, other courses concurrently taught, the common strands encouraged across programs, and the placement of a practicum.

Despite these differences, conclusions arising from this study, focused on one such secondary social studies methods course, might be of use to the reader. These conclusions are based on my understanding of the various elements that appeared to be central to the participants' sense making as they learned to teach social studies. As Donmoyer (1990) suggests, these "might be used to expand and enrich the repertoire of social constructions available to practitioners and others" (p. 182). In this particular case, the conclusions and recommendations might be useful to other social studies methods course instructors, including those at the elementary level, and perhaps to those teaching other subject-area methods courses.

To assist in situations where the reader chooses to make comparisons, and in keeping with Feiman-Nemser's (1983, 1990) recommendations, a detailed description of the experiences of a secondary social studies methods course has been generated. It
is hoped that this description provides sufficient detail to allow significant insight into the study context that readers might make case-to-case comparisons (Firestone, 1993) with their own contexts, if they so choose.

Three research questions provided the focus for this exploration: 1) How do the participants conceptualize the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy prior to the methods course?, 2) How do the participants reflect on and begin to change [if at all] these initial conceptualizations of social studies as they experience the methods course? and, 3) What influences are most salient in causing any change in these initial conceptualizations of the participants?

Describing the Sense Making Process

The participants' conceptualizations of social studies, as they experienced the methods course, indicated knowledge generation about the teaching of social studies in four areas. These included: knowledge of themselves as social studies teachers, knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the social studies teacher, knowledge of the nature of social studies as a school subject, and knowledge of social studies pedagogy. Central to the participants' sense making in terms of each of these four areas was reflective thinking and being able to articulate that thinking.

Reflection and Articulation

According to the participants, reflective thinking was encouraged through both the course and being a part of this study. This reflective thinking involved interpreting what they thought the instructor was saying about the teaching of social
studies, thinking about it in terms of their own initial conceptualizations, and confronting, confirming and clarifying, or reconceptualizing their initial ideas in the light of what was presented in the course.

The instructor's provocativeness and the controversial nature of the course content, as well as the frequent peer interaction and discussion during class, also were acknowledged by the participants as "forcing" them to think. As well, being a part of this study further provoked reflective thinking. All of the participants appreciated the opportunity to be interviewed by an interested party who could help to "draw out" their thoughts. They agreed that it was not enough to "just think" about what was being experienced; it was also very "powerful" to have to "talk about it." Having to articulate thoughts for someone else helped them to "clarify" their thoughts further about social studies.

1. Teacher identity

For most of the eight participants, one of the more central elements in their sense making about learning to teach social studies was constructing an identity of themselves as teachers of social studies. Part of this identification process involved clarifying their "fuzzy thinking" by becoming more aware of their initial conceptualizations of social studies as important influences on their current thinking and future teaching. At times, it also involved confronting and rethinking these initial conceptualizations, particularly in terms of the moral responsibility of social studies teachers when addressing value-laden and controversial issues. As well, it involved
acquiring new knowledge about social studies through the experiences of the methods course, particularly in the area of approaches to teaching social studies. Overall, this learning about self as teacher resulted in a greater "confidence" in and feeling of "comfort" about teaching social studies.

One aspect of the methods course, and other course work, that the participants claimed was particularly powerful for increasing this confidence in teaching social studies was peer "mini-teaching." However, the most powerful influence on this confidence building was the short practicum where the participants got to "practice" being the teacher with adolescents, rather than with peers. Stephanie claimed this was akin to "learning to swim in a pool before swimming in the ocean."

2. The moral responsibility of teaching

A second aspect of the participants’ sense making about social studies involved their becoming more aware of their roles and responsibilities as a social studies teacher. A large part of what was confirmed and clarified for them through this methods course centred around their moral responsibility as teachers. Elsewhere, Goodlad, Soder and Sirotnik (1990a), Sarason et al. (1986) and Sackett (1993) concur that understanding the "moral dimension" is critical to teaching.

The emphasis in the methods course on the educational purposes for teaching social studies was particularly useful for heightening the participants’ understanding of this aspect of teaching. Beginning with the first class, they talked about being challenged by the instructor to think about those
purposes, particularly the notion of "changing" students through their teaching of social studies. Most had indirectly alluded to wanting to bring about student change, such as helping them become "independent critical thinkers" and "active members of society," in their initial conceptualizations. However, they struggled with what was presented in the methods course because they had not necessarily reflected on their role as "agents" of change or the 'what ought to be' as a component of social studies. As well, having to rethink their responsibilities as social studies teachers in addressing values, critical thinking and controversial issues was equally as powerful.

For the most part, the idea of incorporating values education into the teaching of social studies as a way of helping secondary students to clarify and test their own value principles, was a relatively new addition to the prior knowledge of the participants. Many also noted having to "struggle" to clarify their own values and to think about how they would address those values, and the values expressed by their students during teaching. Initially, the participants had talked about wanting to allow all opinions to be expressed and respected in their classrooms. However, they left the course feeling that it would be their responsibility as teachers to "draw the line" on what views they would deem as acceptable for the classroom, particularly in terms of dealing with controversial issues such as the Holocaust. In this instance, the participants' emerging sense of their moral responsibility as teachers, they claimed, "changed" their initial
conceptualizations of teaching social studies.

3. The nature of social studies as a subject area

A third element of the participants' sense making about learning to teach social studies involved reflecting on some of the issues related to social studies as a subject area. This included thinking about some of the different ways that social studies could be defined, including their own, their peers', the instructor's and what was stated in the provincial curriculum guide. As well, the purposes inherent in each of those definitions were also reflected upon. Some of the participants were able to articulate a personal definition of social studies by the end of the course that was consistent with their evolving conceptualization of social studies. Others continued to struggle with this issue and even by the end of the course were unable to articulate a definition that they found satisfactory.

Important too was gaining awareness about what the important content and concepts to be addressed at each grade level were and being able to connect those to the various social sciences disciplines studied in their undergraduate course work. Through this awareness, all began to recognize gaps in their content knowledge from their academic backgrounds. These gaps are not surprising considering the diversity of their backgrounds. While lesson planning exercises conducted in class specifically helped to increase their awareness of the important content of social studies, it did not help, they claimed, to fill in any of the gaps in their existing content knowledge. For example, Allan, in particular,
noted that there were just a lot of "disjointed pieces" that "didn’t seem to fit into a bigger picture." These gaps, the participants felt, could only really be addressed as they worked with the content in practice.

Another important appreciation about subject-matter arising from the course experiences was understanding the role of controversial issues, critical thinking and values education in the teaching of social studies. Generally, in their initial conceptualizations, the participants had talked about wanting to include critical thinking in their teaching of social studies. Some, like Margaret had also talked about addressing controversial issues. For the most part, however, thinking about values education was new. Having this aspect of social studies addressed in class was a powerful catalyst for change in most of the participants' conceptualizations of social studies. Margaret, on the other hand, had her initial conceptualizations confirmed through this experience.

4. Social studies pedagogy

One final aspect of the participants' sense making about social studies, and the area they acknowledged that they "learned the most about" through the experiences of the methods course, was pedagogy. For the most part, the emphasis was on learning about different approaches to teaching social studies and the importance of varying these approaches to "keep things moving."

In the first half of the course, prior to the two week practicum, the emphasis on practising these varied approaches to teaching social studies was particularly appreciated.
Approaches, among others addressed, included the use of worksheets, group work, guided reading, review, lecturing, and using primary documents and visual aids. For the majority of the participants, many of these approaches were new, while others, like Margaret and Katherine, claimed to have already thought a lot about most of them. All, in their initial conceptualizations of social studies pedagogy, had noted wanting to "actively involve" their students in the learning process as much as possible, but were unclear on specifically how to do that. For the most part, they found that the approaches presented in class helped them to "clarify" their thinking about how they could encourage that active student involvement.

Generally, the approaches presented and practised in the second half of the course, in particular, principle testing and assessing for change in the students' values using questionnaires, were thought to be more "ideal" in nature that those in the first part, because they were not as "practical." Allan, Daniel, David and Stephanie liked these "ideals" because they gave them important goals to continue to work toward and to challenge themselves in their future teaching. These were not necessarily seen as better ways to teach as compared to what they saw in practice during the practicum. Rather they were seen as different approaches to try for keeping their teaching interesting and challenging, both for themselves and their students. They noted wanting to be sure to use some of the "new ideas," like principle testing, even if it was "a few years" into their teaching experience. Katherine, on the other
hand, noted that she would rather address values "in everything" she does as a teacher, rather than approaching them through a single "planned lesson using principle testing."

A second aspect of pedagogy that the participants noted learning about was the use of the recommended social studies textbooks. There was a substantial course focus on these texts, with a particular emphasis on their deficiencies. Rather than relying solely on texts, the participants recognized that they were being encouraged to make use of other teaching tools such as primary documents, picture cards, slides, and computer programs for teaching social studies. While Stephanie, for one, came into the course recognizing these deficiencies, she felt that through the course she learned how to make appropriate use of the existing textbooks, as well as how to supplement them.

Thirdly, the participants became more aware of issues related to secondary students as learners. While some of this came partially through the social studies methods course (and other courses), the most significant influence was the short practicum. There was agreement, however, that the methods course instructor gave useful information about secondary students in terms of what could be expected of them. As well, through the experiences of the methods course, the participants also began to get some sense of what was difficult for secondary school students to learn in social studies. For example, from the instructor, Kim, Daniel, David, Allan and Stephanie claimed to better understand that "dry, boring, factual, irrelevant history" was hard for secondary school students to grasp. To overcome this problem with the teaching
of history, the instructor presented different ways of making learning more relevant for secondary students. These included incorporating values education strategies like "role exchanges" using historical events and figures, using stories and anecdotes, providing visual aids and artifacts, examining original documents, and using case studies to "involve" students with the history being studied.

Using the interesting stories of history to motivate students was an approach to teaching social studies that had been strongly advocated by Irene in her initial conceptualization of social studies pedagogy. Others, like Allan and David, struggled with this approach, however, because they were not that familiar with these historical stories and anecdotes due to what they recognized as gaps in their subject-matter knowledge. They acknowledged the importance of having this knowledge though, and felt that they would eventually learn it through their own reading of textbooks and further teaching experience.

One way, the participants claimed, in which the methods course instructor helped to heighten their awareness of pedagogy, was by telling his own stories and anecdotes based on his secondary school teaching experience. Because of this teaching experience, he was perceived to be "closer to reality" than some of the other instructors the participants had encountered in their other course work. The datedness of that experience appeared to be of no significance to the participants. He would describe an incident from his teaching and then challenge the student teachers to think about how they
would have reacted as the teacher in similar situations. Daniel and Allan, in particular, noted that this was very useful for them because it increased their awareness of what to expect in the classroom. This helped them to better "anticipate" the practicum. While the knowledge of the classroom context given did not always match what several participants found during the short practicum, especially Kim and Daniel, it did at least give them some sense of a necessary "starting point."

In summary, the knowledge of social studies that emerged from this methods course experience and being a part of this study was fourfold. Students acquired knowledge about themselves as teachers of social studies; about the moral responsibility of teaching, particularly when dealing with values and controversial issues; about the nature of social studies as a school subject; and about social studies pedagogy. Central to this sense making were both reflective thinking and the articulating of that thinking for others, including peers and myself as researcher.

Rethinking Shulman's Model of Teacher Professional Knowledge

As reviewed in detail in Chapter II, Shulman (1987) claimed that teachers draw on seven domains of knowledge in their planning and instruction. These included: knowledge of curriculum, learners, subject matter, educational aims and purposes, other content, pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge. It was further claimed that each of these domains is contained in the novice's knowledge of teaching, albeit to a lesser degree than the expert teachers (Wilson & Wineburg, 1988; Wineburg & Wilson, 1991). Of interest
to this study was whether knowledge in these domains was also a part of the sense making of the student teachers in this study as they learned to teach social studies.

Through this study of how student teachers conceptualized the teaching of social studies as they experienced a social studies methods course, it was determined that the participants' emerging knowledge of social studies did match Shulman's domains in distinct ways. For example, the participants talked about gaining knowledge of the important purposes for teaching social studies, as well as the content and concepts from the various social science disciplines to be addressed. Most central to their understanding of the subject matter for teaching social studies, however, was thinking about the various ways that social studies can be defined and the assumptions and purposes that underlie those definitions. Additionally, in terms of pedagogy, the participants claimed to have gained some knowledge about secondary students, but mostly knowledge of ways to use instructional tools including the textbooks, knowledge of how to plan for teaching social studies, and knowledge about how to make social studies more accessible and interesting for their students through varied teaching approaches.

However, while acknowledging that all of the elements of Shulman's knowledge base for teaching are important in learning to teach, it is also imperative that teaching is recognized as an activity that is highly individual and personal. It is, therefore, difficult to have a rational, prescriptive view of what it means to be a teacher (Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991).
The more significant issue for the majority of the participants in this study was having the opportunity to begin to construct identities of themselves as teachers of social studies and the responsibilities that identity entailed. Central to that sense making was confronting and clarifying the role of their own prior personal knowledge, in particular their conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy, in relation to the professional knowledge being presented in the methods course. It was the juxtaposition of that personal and professional knowledge that assisted them in beginning to pull their thoughts about social studies together to form a "clearer picture" of how they might go about teaching it.

Recommendations for Social Studies Methods Courses

Based on the claims made about the sense making experiences of the participants in this secondary social studies methods course, a number of recommendations follow for teaching such courses in a way that might facilitate student teachers' sense making about learning to teach social studies.

In Chapter 1, I identified myself as an instructor of elementary social studies methods and confessed to a curiosity about how other instructors approach their teaching of social studies methods courses. I was hoping to inform my own practice through this study. The recommendations made here, therefore, are ones that I have come to see as being particularly important and relevant to my practice. They may also be of interest to other instructors.
Recommendation #1

Considering the central importance of reflective thinking in the participants' sense making, it is recommended that frequent opportunities for reflection be incorporated into the teaching of social studies methods courses. Central to this reflective process, however, is having something "meaningful" to reflect on. An example of a "meaningful" reflective experience suggested by the participants would entail having what they already knew about social studies acknowledged at the start of the course. This might include encouraging student teachers initially to think about their conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy, as well as their reasons for holding those views. These could then be noted in some form, either in writing or by representing them visually through aids like concept maps or pictograms. These representations could then be kept for future reference at various points to be reflected upon in relation to the students' changing conceptualizations through the course. Exercises such as these could also be used to help students identify gaps in their knowledge at the beginning of the course. The instructor could likewise be alerted to these gaps and could then provide opportunities to address them through the experiences of the course.

Recommendation #2

Because of the power of articulation for clarifying thinking, as claimed by the participants, it is further recommended that frequent opportunities be provided for student teachers to share their ideas with others, for example through
collaborative, peer interaction in the course. As well, having the opportunity for "one-on-one conversation" between student and instructor is recommended to draw out and help student teachers further clarify their thinking about what they are experiencing within the course.

Recommendation #3

Considering the central role in this study of being able to identify oneself as a teacher of social studies, it is recommended not only that the student teachers clarify their own conceptualizations of what kind of teacher they want to be and why, but that they be provided with opportunities to help them gain confidence in their ability to teach. Some of the participants found that exercises such as peer teaching and being videotaped were helpful for building confidence. These could be built into social studies methods courses whenever possible. However, the participants also acknowledged that interacting with adolescents in the secondary classroom was the most significant influence on building their confidence. I recommend, therefore, incorporating either a practicum, or some form of collaborative experience with a school, into the methods course to allow student teachers to practice their teaching skills and work closer with adolescents as they learn about social studies teaching in the classroom.

Recommendation #4

Also significant to the participants self-identification as teachers of social studies was reflecting on how social studies is defined and the purposes for teaching social studies inherent in those definitions. As well, reflecting on the roles
and responsibilities of social studies teachers, particularly the moral responsibility when addressing controversial issues and values, was important. It is recommended, therefore, that social studies methods course instructors spend some course time helping student teachers to confront and clarify these definitions, purposes and responsibilities. Not only could this entail examining the definition, goals and purposes articulated in the social studies curriculum guide, but also those of the instructor and experts in the field, as well as their own and those of other student teachers. By challenging student teachers to reflect on the various ways of defining social studies, on why the teaching of social studies is important, and on what they hope to accomplish through their teaching of social studies, their awareness can be heightened of how these views are influencing their thinking about teaching.

Recommendation #5

Gaining confidence in their ability to teach social studies also required becoming more aware of the important content and concepts to be addressed within the subject. The participants noted particular concerns about the gaps in their content knowledge, both at the outset of the course and at its conclusion. To address gaps in content knowledge, it is recommended that methods course instructors offer some ideas for student teachers to address these gaps. Student teachers could be encouraged, for example, to go beyond reading the recommended secondary textbooks, to reading works that deal in depth with particular topics. Some form of needs assessment could be done at the beginning of the methods course in order
to help both the instructor and student teachers define these gaps in content knowledge. As well, a greater focus on addressing the necessary social studies content knowledge for teaching could be included in the course, particularly through the assigned activities.

Recommendation #6

One of the most difficult aspects of learning to teach social studies for the participants was seeing where secondary students "fit into the equation." Clarifying how to make social studies into something that would be "interesting" and "relevant" to adolescent learners was particularly important to them. It is recommended, therefore, that wherever possible student teachers in methods courses be "buddied up" with secondary students so that they can begin to acquire a clearer sense of the motivations, interests and needs of adolescents in the classroom. This connection can be done vicariously through case studies of classrooms, but live experiences, such as collaborative projects in the schools in which student teachers are encouraged to interact with secondary students, have been found to be more beneficial (Blakey et al., 1992; Fullan et al., 1987). Another option is to design course assignments that require working directly with a single or a group of adolescents. This might entail interviewing a secondary student about certain aspects of learning social studies or communicating regularly through a computer network.

Recommendation #7

Also important to the participants' sense making about learning to teach social studies was learning about a wide
variety of approaches to the teaching of social studies. It is recommended, therefore, that varied teaching approaches be modelled and practised during the methods course. The practice of these approaches, such as through peer teaching, was found to be particularly beneficial for the participants, especially in building their confidence as teachers. Whenever possible, this should also be encouraged. Important too is not just learning the "how" of a particular technique, but also the "why." Continuous collaboration among the various course instructors is also encouraged to ensure that specific approaches are not being over-used across courses.

Recommendation #8

The instructor as a teaching model was acknowledged as an important influence on the participants' thinking about pedagogy. They tended to exhibit the practice they saw being modelled for them in their own thinking, teaching and planning. In Lortie's (1975) study, the "apprenticeship of observation" was a powerful influence on students in secondary classrooms. It was equally as powerful for the post secondary student teachers in this study.

It was recommended by several of the participants that all the instructors in a teacher preparation program should have classroom teaching experience, similar to the methods course instructor in this study. At the least, it was suggested, they should have a course in pedagogy before being allowed to instruct. I concur with this recommendation. Not only is the modelling of good pedagogy critical, but also being able to relate stories of practice based on one's own experience can
help to heighten the sense making of student teachers, especially if they are encouraged to "put themselves in the shoes of" the instructor in a particular scenario. It is further recommended that instructors be encouraged to keep in touch with the classroom through experiences such as the supervision of student teachers during the practicum.

Questions for Further Research

Several questions needing further investigation have arisen from the findings of this study. Of particular interest to this researcher is what effect learning about social studies through the experiences of this methods course will have on the participants' actual classroom practice. How prepared to teach social studies do the participants feel when they begin their first teaching job? What stands out in their memories about the methods course experience after they have been teaching for one year, and after a few years? Do the participants try to emulate some of the "ideals" noted in the methods course, such as the use of principle testing activities, in their future teaching? Is there a grace period in beginning teaching before "ideal" approaches such as this are attempted?

Also of interest to this researcher are concerns about subject-matter content knowledge. How do practising social studies teachers go about addressing the gaps in their content knowledge that remain after their professional preparation? How can these gaps better be addressed during teacher preparation? What are other teacher preparation programs doing to try to address content gaps? Should other university faculties be encouraged to narrow these gaps during
undergraduate studies?

A number of other questions remain concerning the sense making experiences described by the student teachers in this study as they learned to teach social studies. Do preservice teachers in secondary social studies methods courses at other educational institutions experience a sense making process similar to the students in this study? How do the sense making experiences of secondary social studies student teachers in a four year Bachelor of Education program compare to those in this one year B.Ed after program? Do preservice teachers experience similar sense making in professional programs that follow an apprenticeship model which immerses them in schools? Does this sense making process apply to learning about other subject areas through subject-specific methods course?

A final area for further research relating to the findings of this study is whether elementary preservice teachers go through a similar sense making process in learning to teach social studies as generalists.

All of the above are aspects of the learning to teach process requiring further study.

Conclusion

In Chapter II, there was disagreement in the research on the influence of social studies methods course on learning to teach. Some studies claimed that these courses had little influence on student teacher thinking or practice (Johnston, 1990; Palonsky & Jacobson, 1989). Others claimed that they had significant influence (Adler, 1984, 1991, 1993; Goodman & Adler, 1985; Yon & Passe, 1993). Based on the findings of this
study, this researcher concurs with the latter, although the significance of that influence varied.

This study explored how student teachers conceptualized social studies as they experienced a secondary social studies methods course. There were eight student participants. All claimed to have been influenced in some way as a result of this course. The significance of that influence was much more profound for some, than for others. The majority of the participants experienced perplexity at times because of the provocativeness of the instructor and the content of the course, particularly the focus on values education and the moral responsibility in teaching when dealing with controversial issues. This perplexity resulted, for some, in "growth," "development," and "change."

Conversely, others, most often Margaret and Katherine, felt less influenced in their thinking largely because of a congruence between what they were being taught and what they had already experienced prior to entering the Faculty. For them, the course served mostly to heighten their "awareness" about some aspects of their initial conceptualizations. Thus, what was perplexing for some, was confirming for others.

All the participants may have been given the same experiences during this social studies methods course, but they each filtered those experiences through their own initial conceptualizations of the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy based on their prior personal knowledge. Some struggled as they attempted to juxtapose their personal knowledge with the professional knowledge being presented in
the methods course. For the majority, having to talk about what they were learning, both about the nature of social studies and social studies pedagogy, as it related to their prior conceptualizations, helped them to confront, confirm and further clarify, and in some cases reconceptualize the meaning they had constructed. Reflection such as this also helped to increase their confidence in themselves as teachers of social studies. The result was an emerging identity of self as social studies teacher and the responsibilities entailed. However, there were still "missing pieces" that they claimed only experience in the classroom would "fill in."

While knowledge about social studies was acquired in many of the domains of professional knowledge as articulated by Shulman (1987), self knowledge, in terms of being able to identify themselves as social studies teachers and understand their moral responsibility, was the most significant learning resulting from the course experiences and the short practicum. It is imperative, therefore, that teacher educators recognize the central role of student teachers' cognitions, beliefs and experiences (Kagan, 1992) in learning to teach, rather than attempting to standardize a body of knowledge for teacher preparation that replicates expert teacher behaviour (Carter, 1990). The personal knowledge of the preservice teacher, along with the recognition that adults are active constructors of their own meaning (Carter, 1991) were central elements of the learning-to-teach process experienced by the student teachers in this study that defy standardization. They deserve to be acknowledged none the less for their influence on student
teachers' sense making about teaching.

The methods course has an important and necessary role to play in helping student teachers articulate and clarify this personal knowledge. It is imperative, therefore, that instructors acknowledge and act upon it. Also, as an important element of the preparation of teachers, the subject-specific methods course has a critical role in helping student teachers begin to identify themselves as teachers of that subject, if they have not already done so. Part of this identification comes through better understanding the nature of the subject area, including how it is defined, its purposes, and the important content and understandings, as well as issues related to the subject-specific pedagogy, including planning, teaching techniques, instructional materials, and how to address the difficulties learners experience with the subject. All of these aspects of learning to teach a specific subject can and should be addressed through methods courses.
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Appendix A

CONSENT FORM

The Subject-matter Knowledge of Pre-service Social Studies Teachers

Subject-matter knowledge is an important element of a teacher's professional knowledge. Many of the decisions that you will make as a teacher of social studies will depend on how you understand subject matter. As a research study for my doctoral dissertation, I am interested in finding out about the subject-matter knowledge of preservice social studies teachers. In particular, I would like to explore how that knowledge is influenced through participation in the required methods course SSED 312 - Curriculum and Instruction in Social Studies: Secondary. Since you have indicated an interest in being a participant in this study, you are asked to sign this consent form.

As a participant, you will be required to attend four one hour (approximately) interviews over a thirteen week period from September to December, 1994. The interviews will be conducted by myself in my office and will be tape recorded. Times will be arranged at your convenience. Your name will not be revealed at any time nor will it appear on any transcripts of the interview data. Only I will have access to that data.

A second component of the study involves my regular participation in your social studies methods class as an observer. In this capacity, I may sit in on small group discussions with you, but at no time will your involvement in this study be revealed. I may also ask you to share with me some of your written work completed for this course, if you are willing.

If you do not wish to give your consent now that you have read this form, it will have absolutely no effect on your standing in this course or in your program as a whole. Further, if you give your initial consent, you may withdraw without any penalties at any time during the research project.

If you have any questions, you can reach me, Susan Gibson, at 822-5246.

I hereby consent to participate in the "Subject-matter Knowledge of Pre-service Social Studies Teachers" research project. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time without penalty.

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Name (Please print)  Signature

I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of this consent form.
Appendix B

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear SSED 312 Student:

My name is Susan Gibson and I am a doctoral student in the Faculty of Education at U.B.C. I am conducting a research project for my dissertation involving your SSED 312 Curriculum and Instruction in Social Studies class with Dr. ___ this September. Dr. ___ has given me permission to contact members of this class and your name has been randomly selected from the class list.

My research project is focused on the subject-matter knowledge of student teachers in the area of social studies. I am interested in exploring this subject-matter knowledge because research has shown that many of the decisions that a teacher makes in the classroom are based on that teacher’s understanding of the subject matter that is to be taught.

What I am interested in finding out is what role preservice education coursework plays in the student teacher’s understanding of subject matter. Particularly, I am interested in exploring what role the experiences of the SSED 312 methods course play in shaping that understanding of the subject-matter of social studies.

My plan is to work with students from your class in order to investigate that role. If you are willing to be involved, it would require your commitment to four out-of-class interviews of approximately one hour in length over the duration of the course. I will also regularly attend the classes as an observer, but this would not interfere in any way with your in-class work. The most I might actually be involved is as an observer in a few of your small-group discussions.

Your identity would be kept anonymous throughout the project and in the final report, so being involved will have no influence on your standing in this course as the instructor will not be aware of your participation. One benefit for you from participation, however, would be the opportunity to begin to talk about and clarify your understanding of social studies as it will directly influence your future teaching.

If this sounds like something that you might be interested in being a part of, I will follow up this letter with a phone call during the week of August 15-19 to give you more details or answer any questions before you make a final decision. If you would like to verify the authenticity of this project, I urge you to contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Ian Wright at 822-5266.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.
Appendix C

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following are sample questions from each of the four interviews which will be asked of interviewees.

Interview #1:
1. What is your undergraduate degree in? What influence do you think your academic background might have on your thinking in this course?
2. Why do you want to be a social studies teacher? Do you have any friends/family members who are social studies teachers?
3. When you think about social studies, what comes to mind?
4. If you were asked to tell a class of Grade Nine students what social studies is in your own words, what would you say?
5. What experiences have you had with social studies in the past that might have influenced you thoughts about social studies?

Interview #2:
1. What have you been learning about in social studies?
2. What do you feel that you know now about Social studies that you did not know a month ago?
3. Have you changed any of your ideas about social studies since our first interview?
4. Tell me about something that you discussed in class that was particularly interesting to you.
5. How does the instructor define social studies? Have you changed what you originally believed social studies was because of his approach to social studies?

Interview #3
1. Tell me about the social studies that you saw being taught in the school during practicum.
2. What did you get to teach?
3. Tell me about one particular lesson that you taught. Why did you choose to teach your lesson that way?
4. Do you see any connection between the way you taught and your beliefs about social studies that we have been talking about over the last few months?
5. Has this short practicum affected your thinking about social studies?

Interview #4
1. When you think about social studies, what comes to mind now?
2. If you were asked to tell a class of Grade Nine students what social studies is now in your own words, what would you say?
3. What experiences have you had with social studies over the past three months that have influenced you thoughts about social studies?
4. What have you learned about social studies?
5. What do you think would be the most important things for your future students to learn in social studies? Why?
Appendix D

Initial Tentative Course Outline for SSED 312

The weekly sequence of the course as laid out in the course outline was:
Week #1 - The Social Studies: Justification
Week #2 - The Curriculum Guides and the Textbooks
Week #3 - Planning the Year and Planning a Unit
Week #4 - The Education Library
Week #5 - Classroom Strategies
& #6
  a) Lecture
  b) Supervised Study
  c) Question and Answer - oral and worksheets
  d) Discussions - student directed, teacher directed
  e) Panels, Debates, Reports
  f) Role plays and Simulations
  g) Study trips
  h) Video tapes and Photographs
Week #7 - Teaching Concepts
Week #8 - Teaching Critical Thinking
Week #9 - Values Education
Week #10 - Teaching for Acceptance of Diversity
Week #11 - Testing and Evaluation
Week #12 - Current Events and Controversial Issues
Appendix E

Excerpts from in-class discussion on controversial issues.

Instructor: My job is to change the student. Does she have the right to believe something that is not true? Is she entitled to continue to have this mystical belief? Is this our job as social studies teachers?

Stephanie: As teachers do we have the right to have a confrontation with this student? Who are we to challenge their religion?

Allan: I remember an incident like this in my high school class with a girl who was a fundamentalist Christian in a session on evolution. I think it is up to us to give a diversity of alternative ideas. We have to teach them a tolerance of multiculturalism. We have to get our students to reexamine their lives and open their eyes to be more tolerant.

Instructor: So we should change their attitudes and values? What if you have a classroom of racists? Is it your responsibility to make them less so? Do they have the right to believe the holocaust was a hoax?

Stephanie: I think you have a responsibility to show them other attitudes.

Katherine: I think you should give them the opportunity to change by providing other positions, but you can't force them to change.

Instructor: Should we allow someone from the outside to present their view in our classroom? Should we have a Keegstra come into the classroom and talk about the lack of a holocaust say as an opportunity to test our students' critical thinking skills?

Margaret: You can't impose your morals on other people? I personally have a problem telling people where they can take a stand. I believe the teacher should express their personal view in class as a moral example.

Instructor: Then should we fail kids if they demonstrate an inability to apply principles of fairness, as we would with knowledge and skills?

(POCl#1, 4-6)
Excerpt from Interview #2 with Irene

Irene: It’s a course that has so far sent me home at night thinking about my own values and how I would or would not approach things in classes. It’s got me thinking about my own feelings on certain issues, just opening up a whole kettle of worms on values and ethics and what it means to be a teacher and what your responsibilities are and what your duties are. That’s what I feel I’m learning - to question a lot of the values and I have. I’ve been doing a lot of thinking about that over the last couple of weeks. It’s been a kind of stressful time, maybe it’s supposed to be that way. That question about the ‘diamonds in the teeth’ - that’s kept me up for nights thinking about how you handle something like that - how I would handle something like that - what it means to be a teacher. I never really expected to have to deal with stuff like that or if I did, I’d overrode it or I danced around it. I’ve started to realise that we have a much bigger responsibility than to let that sort of thing go. I’ve gone home a lot at night and wondered about just myself and a lot of the ways I thought I would teach before. So it’s been kind of...How can I explain it? It’s been three weeks of a lot of questions and feeling very overwhelmed. Yeah, it’s this value thing - wondering where I stand on certain issues, how I would handle stuff, what it’s my job to do in the classroom.

Sue: What stand did you take on the ‘diamonds in the teeth’ issue?

Irene: Initially my reaction was to let it go, gloss over it, not laugh it off, that’s not right, but something along the line of ‘well that’s nice, thank you for sharing that with us, move right along’. That was my initial reaction and once we started talking about it in the class I started to realise that maybe that was really irresponsible, maybe that was not the right thing to do, or not a very effective thing, especially if I believe and I’m starting to believe that it is a teacher’s job to change people and make them responsible citizens. I’m starting to think that you can’t just allow people to go through life with ideas that - not are wrong - but that don’t add up, that aren’t really right. It’s not good enough to say that you can think that sometimes.

Sue: So you think at times there are ‘right’ answers?

Irene: Sometimes. Yes I do.

Sue: Like, for example, the holocaust issue. How would you address that in your class?

Irene: If something like that came up now?

Sue: If you had a student that didn’t believe in the
holocaust?

Irene: This is a hard one for me. I would listen first of all to what they had to say. I would want to know where they are coming from. I would want to know what kind of information they were using to form their opinion. And then I think I would make a real effort to show them the other information. You know, here are the universally accepted facts - this happened and this happened and this happened and here are the pictures, and here are the journals. I would show them that. I don't know if that would be enough. Maybe try to get some kind of a class discussion going. That's a very hard question for me to answer very hard and it scares me - the thought that that might happen. And I'm still a little unclear as to how I would handle it.

Sue: You've said that you've changed your ideas about teaching now. What ideas have changed?

Irene: I'm not sure if I've totally changed everything but they are changing. I use the Wawota example as an example in that when I first thought about the question, my first impulse was to just walk away from it, pretend it never happened and now I'm starting to think that it's not responsible as a teacher to let that kind of thought go on. It's just not. It's not a good thing to have somebody out there believing things that are blatantly wrong. So I guess I'm starting to think that I have a much bigger responsibility than I initially thought I had.

Sue: What role can you see controversial issues like that playing in your teaching of social studies?

Irene: Well they're a great opportunity, first of all, to learn other points of view. They are a good opportunity for students to get clear, to begin to get clear, on where they stand on issues and why. Maybe they can learn that it's not just their parent's beliefs that they are parroting but maybe their own. They play a big role in helping the teacher to understand other points of view. Because I think even though we know there are other points of view out there I don't always want to hear them sometimes. It's not something I like hearing about myself. They're a good opportunity for discussion and they help us to learn from each other.

Sue: Can you see them being a part of your teaching of social studies?

Irene: I'm beginning to see it as a much bigger part, yeah. A lot of the assignments that we've been doing - the articles for 312 that we're supposed to be analyzing - reading a lot about cooperative learning, kids helping each other come to grips with issues, expressing their theories and their feelings on things. They have to have a very big role I think now in social studies teaching. I'm still not sure how to do that all
the time...He’s [the instructor] shown me that I have been pretty hard line, that I’ve tended to see things in black and white, that it’s part of my personality. And he’s shown me that that’s not the best way to think about things and that in other things it is a good way. I mean, his ethical universalism is a black and white sort of issue in some ways. This is wrong, don’t let it happen in the class. So I find myself coming around to different ways of thinking. It’s hard to let go of something you believe because it keeps you safe, it keeps you secure in your own beliefs. It doesn’t make you feel overwhelmed. It’s a good thing that I’m open minded enough to listen to other beliefs and to think that they may be right. It’s good. It’s just annoying sometimes. (Int#2,3)
The story means more to me than when I first talked to you a month ago. To me the story, up until now, was just the people and the pictures and the events but it wasn’t the whole, it wasn’t the coming together of all kinds of elements and it certainly wasn’t looking at how the story could have been different - that never came into my definition before - what you could have done to make things different. (Int#2,4/5).