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ABSTRACT

This study examined elementary teacher candidates' understanding of how history is "made" by historians and how texts are analyzed in the process of historical inquiry. Interviews with three elementary student teachers enrolled at a large southwestern state university indicated that they all had a markedly limited background in academic history. None recalled being actively engaged in the derivation and construction of meaning and significance in history, and none recalled that their teachers explicitly explained issues and components of historical thinking. They were noncommittal about the usefulness of their social studies methods course with regards to teaching history. They were not required to teach social studies lessons during their student teaching semester. When the student teachers were asked to analyze historical documents and express their historical thinking, each student teacher manifested quite different historical understandings, with the three views of social studies being labelled as "the great connection," as a "nonsubject," and as "creative expression." Implications for elementary teacher education programs are offered, focusing on the importance of such issues as historical time, layers and textures of meaning and context, the range and robustness of historical narrative, and rhetorical and persuasive devices. (Contains 22 references.) (JDD)

Understanding the "Knowing How" of History: Elementary Student Teachers' Thinking About Historical Texts

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Research on the teaching and learning of history has suggested the likelihood of a strong relationship between teachers' ability to think historically and the development of their pupils' historical understanding. However, inquiry into the nature of teachers' historical thinking, especially in the context of their preservice education, remains a relatively unexplored territory. Elementary history instruction, especially, invites closer scrutiny. First, inquiry into the historical thinking of experienced and preservice teachers is significant in light of the unclear status of history in the elementary social studies curriculum. Second, recent reconceptualizations of children's capabilities in history necessitate a more robust understanding of teachers' epistemologies of the subject and their translation into effective pedagogical practices.

The historical thinking and understanding of elementary school pupils has indeed received much-needed attention in a growing body of educational research, most of which has centered on the interests and capabilities of pupils at various developmental levels. Downey and Levstik's (1991) comprehensive review (e.g., Friedman, 1978; Thornton and Vukelich, 1988; Hallam, 1966, 1967, 1972; Levstik and Pappas, 1987; Booth, 1980) concluded that no research supports the delay of instruction in history; "young children can and do understand historical time in a variety of ways (and) can see patterns and sequences in real events" (p. 401). They also noted that a superficial "cultural literacy" approach to historical "facts" is not supported by the extant research; instead, "studies link cognition to context, and to a (rich) framework of experiences...Sustained study of significant material appears more likely to develop the habits of mind

relevant to the domain of history" (p. 401). Downey and Levstik emphasized that the study of history can be a legitimate undertaking for children because of these unique "habits of mind." Furthermore, they call attention to the role of narrative in developing children's historical thinking: "Narrative provides a scaffolding for historical understanding that is accessible even to young children" (p. 401).

Subsequently, Levstik and Pappas' (1987) concluded that children as young as seven could respond to history as a literary narrative. Other studies have illuminated that children reason with historical evidence from a variety of sources. For example, Booth (1980), Blake (1981), and Drake (1986) concluded that the use of primary sources enabled pupils of various ages to become more aware of historical problems and better able to grasp the interpretive nature of history.

The crucial significance of instruction in the development of children's historical understanding has been explored in a number of studies (e.g., Downey and Levstik, 1991; Thornton and Vukelich, 1988). Recent research especially emphasizes the importance of teachers' historical "habits of mind" and ability to translate these pedagogical ideas into effective teaching practice (Shulman, 1986). Unfortunately, a paucity of research specifically describes what elementary teachers and teacher candidates do (or do not do) in their instruction of history. Most studies of history teaching have been conducted in high schools. For example, Goodlad (1984) reported a persistent pattern in pupils' activities during history lessons: a preponderance of listening to lectures, reading textbooks, doing worksheets, and taking quizzes. Also, McNeil's (1986) ethnographic study in Midwestern high schools reported wide variations of practice and quality of history

instruction from teacher to teacher and explained instructional dynamics that influenced pupils' negative perceptions of history.

Clearly, history teachers' knowledge of their subject is a major factor in the way history is taught (e.g., Downey and Levstik, 1991; Gudmundsdottir, Carey, and Wilson, 1985; Shulman, 1986; Wilson, Shulman, and Rickert, 1987; and Wineburg and Wilson, 1989). Nonetheless, these recent findings neither support nor imply that teachers' simple accumulation of more historical facts better prepares them to teach. Rather, teachers' deep and personal understanding of the discipline of history and of historical thinking enables them to be "more sensitive to the role of interpretation, to multiple causation, and to the importance of seeing events in a broad context" (Downey and Levstik, p. 405).

Scant research attention has been directed to teachers' and teacher candidates' disciplined perspectives and understandings of history and other social sciences. A notable exception is Goodman and Adler's (1985) study of the perspectives of preservice elementary teachers towards social studies education. Assuming that preservice education was a "crucial period for examining the development of teachers' perspectives" (p. 2), Goodman and Adler concluded that "official conceptions of social studies have little to do with student teachers' beliefs and actions in the classroom, and that methods courses should address this discrepancy" (p. 1). They lamented, moreover, that little research evidence informs "how students incorporate, or fail to incorporate, their thinking about social studies in actual practice" (p. 3), an observation subsequently confirmed by Evans (1988). Evans concluded that teacher conceptions

of history "are directly related to instructional issues and may shape student learning" and beliefs (p. 206). Student teachers, he argued, should "devote more explicit attention to the lessons of history, and more research is needed to clarify conceptions of the meaning of history and their impact on the educative process" (p. 203).

An obvious shortcoming of the current state of research on elementary school teaching practice is the absence of information about elementary teacher candidates' historical thinking, and only recently has research focused on the reading and analysis of historical texts, a critical dimension of history's "knowing how" (Ryle, 1949). Because historians routinely deal with the analysis of evidence in texts to construct reasonable portrayals, accounts, and explanations of past events, history teachers in schools should understand and even be able to apply fundamental aspects of historical thinking to a variety of historical texts and evidence. These aspects include considerations of perspective, context, authorship, and bias; the ability to sift through and sort facts into different explanations and tentative conclusions; and a "healthy skepticism" that permeates the historical thinking process and demands new information before committing to particular ideas or explanations. As teachers incorporate these aspects into their instruction, their pupils can then adopt these "habits of mind" into their own inquiry of how history is made, both by the individuals who actually were involved in an event, for example, and by historians who have studied the event long afterwards.

A research focus on the analysis of historical texts was initiated by Wineburg (1991a, 1991b). Wineburg's research

participants, academic historians and high school students, "thought aloud" while reading eight documents about the American Revolution and attempted to construct meaning and to assign credibility to particular sources for portraying the "truth" of history. In his interpretation of the findings, Wineburg argued that each group brought to the texts a unique epistemological stance, one that shaped and guided the meanings that they derived from the texts. He further suggested implications for the role of history in the school curriculum and for the substantive improvement of teaching school history.

STUDY PARTICIPANTS AND METHODOLOGY

The present study continued this line of research by examining how elementary teacher candidates thought historically in order to analyze historical texts. Specifically, it inquired how elementary teacher candidates understood how history is "made" by historians and how texts are analyzed in the process of historical inquiry. Three elementary student teachers provided data for this exploratory study. Each was enrolled in the teacher certification program at a large southwestern state university, each had completed the required social studies education ("methods") course, and each was beginning her student teaching in the local public school system. In this report, the teacher candidates are identified as Jodi, Allison, and Lisa.

During individual interview sessions, the participants answered a few introductory questions about their familiarity with the discipline of history. These questions provided evidence regarding: a) the nature of their preparation to teach history, b) their expectations for teaching the subject matter of history during their student

teaching semester, and c) their perspective toward history as a school subject or curricular emphasis. Next, each student teacher read and thought aloud about the same documents used by Wineburg (1991a) (see Appendix). Findings about these elementary student teachers' general background and familiarity with history are discussed first; then, their individual reactions to the historical texts are presented.

FINDINGS

Teacher Candidates' Background and Preparation for Teaching History

The common thread in these three student teachers' academic experience was a markedly limited background in academic history. Jodi and Lisa took only standard high school survey courses in world and American history and the minimum number of history courses (two lower division surveys) required by their university degree and teacher certification program. All of Jodi's coursework was completed at the university in which she is now enrolled as a teacher candidate. Lisa transferred her two history courses from a community college into her university degree program.

Jodi described her high school and college history classes as "frequently interesting." She recalled a high school American history teacher who used dramatic roleplaying and storytelling "to illustrate things more vividly"; she also took an "excellent" college course on the Civil War in which the class reenacted battles, read from "a variety of sources," and listened to accounts of "real people and their experiences in wartime." Lisa characterized her high school and college history experiences in almost stereotypical ways: an "old

professor who kept trailing off in his lectures"; "a coach who just made us outline chapters in the textbook"; and the usual assortment of lectures, textbook-generated worksheets, and tests stressing the memorization of historical "facts." Importantly, Lisa made no distinction among social studies disciplines. When she was asked specifically about her history courses, she repeatedly responded with observations about government and geography classes she had taken. To her, history was an undifferentiated element of a confused and ambiguously named set of courses.

On the other hand, Allison's background was strikingly nontraditional. First, she took no conventional survey history courses in high school; secondary school history for her was "more of an elective." She recalled one Russian history class in which her teacher "spent a lot of time telling colorful anecdotes about Catherine the Great" and other major personalities. For her certification program, she was permitted to substitute for the standard lower-division American or world history requirements a year-long survey course in art history she had taken several years earlier. She described the art history survey as "lecture and discussion oriented, with different books, articles, and art slides to analyze."

All three women recalled that their teachers and professors sometimes relied on a narrative framework for history. Jodi and Allison remembered occasionally reading different accounts of events in the books their teachers selected; however, stories about imperial Russia or accounts of the American Civil War commonly were told to them. They did not remember being actively engaged in the derivation and construction of meaning and significance. None recalled that

their teachers explicitly explained issues and components of historical thinking. Lisa recalled no significant experiences that clearly required her active participation in historical thinking, particularly in the reading, analysis, and interpretation of different historical texts.

Questions about these student teachers' preparation for history teaching in their social studies education ("methods") course and in previous internships with classroom teachers elicited few positive responses. They were noncommittal about the usefulness of the methods course with regard to teaching history. None could refer to specific examples of history-related discussion and activities in that course. In addition, all three remembered that, in their junior-year internships, their cooperating teachers rarely, if ever, taught social studies units or lessons. "I saw teachers doing lots of language arts, math, science if there was time" (Lisa); "If there is history, it's kind of blended in with language arts and science...it's not treated as a subject in and of itself" (Allison); "She (the teacher) never did social studies...Teachers can avoid it for the most part if they want to; social studies is just not done on the elementary level from what I've seen, because a lot of people don't think it's important or that it relates to anything" (Jodi); "For my teacher, social studies was just not a high priority...elementary teachers in general don't care about it, not that they can't do it, but they just don't have time" (Lisa); "They would rather do science or math to get kids to think critically, and I don't think they see social studies, and definitely not history, as useful for that kind of thinking... History just hasn't found its place on the elementary level" (Jodi).

Finally, all three respondents indicated that they were not required to teach social studies lessons during their student teaching semester. Jodi and Allison, assigned to fourth grade classrooms, explained that, beyond their required language arts and math instruction, they had a choice between an optional science or social studies unit; neither was expected to teach social studies at all. Jodi noted that she wanted to teach some social studies lessons, but she had not yet chosen a unit topic. Allison had decided to teach a social studies unit that also involved art and literature. Lisa, assigned to a third grade class, appeared especially unsure of what was expected of her. On the other hand, she knew that she was not required to teach social studies and, likely, would not. She remained uncertain of what else she might teach and said that "it depends on what my teacher wants - probably reading, mostly."

Teacher Candidates' Historical Thinking and Analyses of Historical Texts

Each student teacher manifested quite different historical understandings and varying degrees of willingness and/or ability to engage in independent, thoughtful analysis of the documents. Furthermore, two of the student teachers' perspectives toward history impressively corresponded to two of Goodman and Adler's tentative categories: social studies as "the great connection," and social studies as a "nonsubject." The third student teacher's remarks seemed to constitute an additional category, labelled here as "social studies as creative expression." Each of these perspectives, in fact, appeared to represent an important determinant of these student teachers' expressions of historical thinking. Moreover, these

perspectives derived from their backgrounds in history courses and the nature of their opportunities to develop historical "habits of mind."

Jodi

Like a few of the student teachers in Goodman and Adler's study, Jodi characterized history as the "great connection." Based on her positive recollections of her own courses in history, she recognized the subject as an important field of knowledge. Still, she perceived it as one that could be integrated with other knowledge stemming from a variety of sources, both inside and outside the school and without confinement to textbooks. She asserted the importance of teachers' development of their own history curricula on the basis of their knowledge and their pupils' interests. Like Goodman and Adler's respondents in this category, she believed that she could encourage historical inquiry and reflection by her pupils if she had more control over the curriculum. As Jodi explained:

> A lot of people don't think history is important and that it doesn't relate to anything, but I think it's very important, because when you're teaching history you're teaching about where we all came from and how things relate to each other. History is important enough for teachers and kids to look at it separately for what knowledge it has to offer, but at the same time it doesn't always have to be a separate chunk of time. It can be intertwined throughout everything to show kids how to put themselves in the place of someone from the past and be able to see both sides of an event.

As for her own historical thinking, Jodi approached the task of analyzing the documents in much the same way as the academic historians in Wineburg's study. When she began to read the documents, she appeared to know exactly for what she was looking: the author's assumptions, the audience for which the document was written, the

circumstances and context in which the document appeared and from which it arose, and the purpcse of the written text. Without prompts from the interviewer, she explicitly referred to these matters throughout the interview and later enumerated them as important criteria that pupils must adopt in order to construct historical knowledge and meaning from historical sources. Like the historians, Jodi constructed subtexts of "latent meaning" of the documents she read (Wineburg, 1991b, p. 501). Samples of her remarks include:

> (About the colonists' letter to Franklin): This is obviously from the American side of things, but they're trying to be diplomatic because it's a letter going to London to be read over there. They're angry, but they deliberately don't use loaded language. They want sympathy, they don't want to rile anyone up across the ocean, and they certainly don't say what the good citizens of Lexington might have done to provoke things.
>
> (About the novel excerpt): This is definitely a different type of account because it's in modern prose and easier to read. Since it's a novel, and someone else's fictional interpretation of what happened while being far removed from the scene, I don't think it has historical credibility. It does give a very vivid, emotional picture of what happened... But look at the difference in what this novelist says (Major) Pitcairn said, and what (Ezra) Stiles said he said. Stiles was obviously much closer to the event, and this one is exaggerated to make a good story.
>
> (About the Barker diary entry): This is from a British perspective, and it has a few details that the other ones so far don't have...It's biased in that he's British, of course, but not in the sense that he's trying to paint anything more than what he actually saw and felt. He does admit that his men had problems and some confusion.
>
> (About the newspaper article): This is dramatized to excite the London people. It presents details that are really exaggerated and that none of the other sources corroborate about what happened at Lexington. I think it's just trying to get the British to put down those unruly colonists...and there were some pretty loaded ideas, like when they say, "the detachment marched on to Concord with nothing further happening." Well, in the journal entry (of Barker) I just read, the guy said we had a hard time forming them up again because everyone was berserk. That's glossing over a lot of things.

(About the Stiles diary entry): It's kind of a thirdhand account, so I don't know about the quality of the retelling, but he tries to be fair to Pitcairn even though he disagrees with his "bad cause." At least he sounds objective and looks at the issue from both sides. He's probably from the same social class as Pitcairn, but they don't seem to share the same views about this independence issue.

(About the textbook entry): This is so typical of a lot of textbooks, especially the ones from the '60's, which is that they're very pro-American and anti-everybody else. Like the colonists are called "patriots" and they use the word "atrocity." Give me a break. It's so obvious that there is an author with a completely biased viewpoint, but it's presented as being so impersonal and objective.

In her reading, Jodi attended to matters of perspective, context, authorship, bias, and analysis of facts. Her "healthy skepticism" and her understanding of the tentativeness of historical conclusions led her to the following conclusions:

It's interesting that the least credible accounts are the ones from the textbook and the newspaper, because those are two sources that a lot of people really rely on to tell them the truth, and they both seem so objective. That's why you have to check them both carefully for that sort of thing (bias). Textbooks, for example - they've always left out the viewpoints of a lot of groups. But we don't have to throw them out; we can actually use them to teach kids to look for bias.

I could not really pick one of these sources as the most credible. It's easier to pick the poor sources than the good ones, but I would still use the poor ones in class, to say, like, "This is how the London people understood the event," and to show how information changes as it spreads. That has a lot of applications in the classroom in different areas of knowledge...In anything like a war, but I guess for history in general, it's too complex for one statement or source to tell everything that happened, because no one knows everything. Like that ensign (Lister) was the only one who noticed where Pitcairn's horse was shot. Nobody else probably noticed. It's important to have a variety of sources because only one may not tell the whole story. I don't know if there's ever a point where there's one conclusion in history... it's a continuous process of looking at sources and perspectives, and I would use primary sources to try to make that point with the kids.

Given the opportunity to think through historical evidence for herself, Jodi appeared to be a skilled reader and eager student of history because of her "active participation in the fabrication of meaning...pretending to deliberate with others by talking to (herself)" (Wineburg, 1991b, p. 503). In her engagement with the texts, she compared accounts, acknowledged contradictions and subjectivity, recognized that stories may have gotten mistranslated in their retelling, and pointed out nuances of tone and choice of vocabulary. Perhaps most importantly, she often speculated about the documents' authors, the source of the text, and their biases and frames of mind, acknowledging that "details are tied to witnesses" (Wineburg, 1991b, p. 511).

Lisa

Lisa's remarks revealed that she had no particular interest in history and, in fact, that she viewed history as a "nonsubject." She explained that she had not given much thought to teaching social studies at all, that she did not encounter the subject as a junior-level intern teacher, and that, in the third grade in her school, social studies is not even regularly scheduled in the curriculum timetable. As with many of Goodman and Adler's respondents, she seemed to accept the dominance of language arts over the entire elementary curriculum. Underscoring these remarks, of course, were her memories of unremarkable experiences with history courses in high school and college.

Lisa's reading of the documents in several ways approximated that of the high school pupils in Wineburg's study. For these pupils,

reading was a process of "gathering information, with texts serving as bearers of information...They processed texts but failed to engage with them" (Wineburg, 1991b, p. 510). Lisa, however, had considerable difficulty at times even gathering and processing information. Moreover, like the high school pupils, she "rarely saw subtext in what (she) read; (her) understanding of point of view was limited to which 'side' a document was on; (she) rarely compared one account to another, searching instead for the right answer" (Wineburg, 1991b, p. 510). Lisa's interview was very brief because she simply skimmed each document and attempted to summarize the main idea after very little analytic commentary or dialogue with herself. Often silent and unsure of what to say about the documents, she frequently required prompts from the interviewer ("What are you thinking about...") in order for her to continue her commentary. However, even probes and followup questions seemed not to stimulate her analysis. She periodically stated that she was not "sure what she was supposed to be doing" with the documents. Some of her remarks include:

> (On the letter to Franklin): It sounds like something terrible has happened and he's (Warren) trying to give an account of it...It's kind of confusing, though.
>
> (On the Barker diary): Is this from the other side? He's not clear on what happened, except it seems like there wasn't that much harm done to them, that their whole army wasn't wiped out or anything.

At many points in the interview, Lisa completely ignored the identifying information at the end of each document, failing to take note of authorship (referring to each source of information as "he"), dates, type of source, and the location or context in which the accounts were written. For example:

> (On the minutemen's statement): Is it like a speech? This one is a lot easier to understand, it's not as formal. It sounds like he was a victim and didn't get a chance to do anything. Is that right?

In her analyses, she exhibited problems in interpreting both factual and contextual information. She talked about the historical fiction account in this way:

> This sounds like a diary or journal entry. He obviously has very unpleasant memories of what happened, something he remembered throughout his life about his father being shot.

The newspaper article provided a number of descriptive details to support a particular point of view about the British coming upon "a body of the country people under arms," but Lisa understood it in this way:

> It sounds like they came upon Lexington and found a body, and that started all the firing. The account is real vague, there wasn't much detail, and then at the end it says "without anything further happening," so it's like a couple of shots were fired and they went on their way and that was the end of it.

The lack of credibility that she assigned to Stiles' account highlighted another way in which she overlooked the nature and context of particular documents. By failing to note that Stiles' account was taken from his personal diary, she implied that she made no distinctions among the recountings of events in various sources. For Lisa, both the textbook account and the Stiles diary were of exactly the same secondhand nature. She discounted them both by saying,

> I think it's more credible when it's someone's personal experience, like a journal or a diary entry saying, "This is what I heard, this is what I remember."

On the credibility of other sources, she commented:

> I'd rate the second one (the minutemen's statement) as one of the most credible because he was actually there. I also think the third one (the historical fiction) is reliable because this person really made it come to

life and really remembered exactly what was said because he was a witness.

Some of Lisa's remarks indicated that she appreciated the narrative aspects of history and the appeal of a story framework to children. She acknowledged the value of different sources, including primary accounts, for a more robust understanding of historical events and perspectives, and she asserted that "a lot of times we just don't teach children that, yes, there are several sides to an event or story." Like Jodi, she was left with a "blurry" impression of what happened at Lexington as a result of the conflicting accounts. However, Lisa and Jodi clearly arrived at this conclusion in different ways. Lisa's impressions resulted from her difficulty in sorting through layers and textures of meaning in her analysis. Most importantly, her search for a "right answer" led to her confusion over the "blurriness" of the accounts; Jodi, on the other hand, took multiple interpretations of the texts as a given and appeared untroubled by their ambiguity.

Allison

Allison's background, interests, and perspective suggest the possibility of another category to add to those offered by Goodman and Adler's typology: social studies as creative expression. Although Allison had taken few "traditional" history courses, she seemed enthusiastic about history as a field of study. She explained that her artistic background (which also included studies of music, dance, and creative writing) led her to choose elementary teaching as a career and that she saw social studies as rife with opportunities for

children's creative development. Her analysis was characterized by both historical and creative perspectives on the documents.

With regard to Allison's expressions of historical thinking, her reading of the documents initially was unsure and hesitant, but she was deliberate and increasingly contemplative. At times she required prompts from the interviewer to elicit her responses, and, for the first few documents, she merely summarized texts as if telling the story in her own words. For the remainder of the interview, however, she compared documents and speculated about their authors. With continued encouragement from the interviewer, she eventually offered many of the same observations and conclusions at which Jodi arrived independently. However, she was also inclined toward flights of imagination in her engagement with the documents to which the other student teachers were not. Allison seemed to exemplify what can happen when a pupil of history, who may also be a teacher, begins to see how history is pieced together and to develop an "epistemology of historical text" (Wineburg, 1991b, p. 509). Eventually, she commented expansively on several of the documents:

> (On the minutemen's statement): It sounds like they all got together and agreed that this is what happened, and they wanted to make it official that they did not fire first. They want the world to know that the British were at fault, and they have been treated very unfairly. It's a good example for kids of a persuasive statement because it's simple to understand and kind of a powerful message. Also, they use a real effective device: saying that the British shot them when their backs were turned. I think that was considered a real dirty trick back then. I don't know if that really happened, but I'm sure if I were a colonist reading this, I'd be angry and scared.
>
> (On the historical novel): This seems almost too melodramatic, almost like it glorified the event. It's very descriptive and could really captivate the reader, but it's almost too flowery - the "bayonets glittering

in the sun" and so forth. The part about the soldier having a father in the same army is very heartwrenching, like it could be from a TV miniseries. If you were going to present this to kids, you'd need to explain to them about literary devices that writers use just for the sake of entertainment.

(On the Barker diary): This is interesting because it contradicts previous information from the "other side." Some things just don't jibe with the colonists' account. It would be interesting to get kids to act out the two versions as a way of comparing what each side claimed.

(On the newspaper account): This one is so wild. It claims that the colonists were almost waging a kind of guerrilla warfare...Newspapers sound factual, but there's often a lot of propaganda going on to manipulate people's thinking. This doesn't go with Barker's story at all. Maybe a lapse of a couple of months before they published this gave the paper time to distort the facts.

(On the Stiles diary): I don't know if he has a real stake in the matter, but I might be more willing to believe something written by an individual who was sort of there but wasn't directly involved...He might have been a bit more insulated from some of the heated passions of the time if he was president of a real conservative college... What does "seized with flour" mean? And who is this Mr. Brown?...Sounds like Ezra and Pitcairn were on pretty friendly terms, so I don't know what to think about how objective Ezra could be, but he does seem pretty unemotional about the whole thing.

(On the textbook account): One thing that's obviously different here is the mention of Paul Revere. If he's as integral a figure as this account claims, why isn't he mentioned in any of the other sources? It's possible that his role in the whole thing has been exaggerated. It's weird that they use the word "atrocity," which you would associate with propaganda. In a straight text, they should have said, "What colonists thought was an atrocity...". Yes, this is simple and straightforward and easy to read, but it's almost too simplistic. You know there was controversy. There was confusion.

Allison concluded that she was "skeptical" about all the documents. She doubted some of them because they claimed objectivity that she found dubious and others because, given her American upbringing, she doubted her own capacity for objectivity. Indeed, she was the only respondent to mention her own bias as a factor in

historical interpretation. Like Jodi and Lisa, she asserted that "it's hard to say whether any one source is the most credible," and she expressed frustration that the sources did not mesh: "Someone's not telling the truth, and probably both sides are off a bit." She went on:

> There must be some middle ground, some story that isn't in any of these accounts that takes a little bit of truth from each side. I wish some neutral party had been up in a tree somewhere writing down what happened, if there are any neutral parties in a conflict like this. Like in Bosnia or the Gulf War, no one could agree on anything, and worse, the presentation of the events is so slanted, even when there's a camera there. The same goes for these documents - there's always personal bias in describing what happened. I guess the thing to bring out with kids is that there's always two versions of a story, depending on whose boots you're in.

Also, Allison's analysis of the historical documents apparently underscored her beliefs about creative expression. Immediately after her reading of the documents, she remarked that she would emphasize with her pupils the themes of storytelling, uses of language, role playing, and problem solving:

> Kids like the insider's view of things, and being shaken up a bit. They enjoy mysteries and games, like they're detectives, and they like history as a story so they can "see" what happened or identify with characters. They love to perform, to write stories, to act as reporters.

Finally, she observed that a possible advantage to using a variety of sources and perspectives in history is that "it takes kids a step further so that they can put together the stories themselves instead of just having history told to them."

DISCUSSION

Inquiry into the historical thinking of elementary student teachers is especially important in light of the distinctive and ambiguous status of history in the elementary social studies curriculum. Consideration of the implications of this study raises the possibility of improved history teaching in elementary schools, especially through the preservice education of elementary teacher candidates.

An obvious and crucial question is whether or not elementary school teachers are cognizant of the "knowing how" of history. If teachers take up the "doing" of history, they may facilitate their pupils' reconceptualization of historical knowledge to include the "knowing how." This exploratory study built on Goodman and Adler's (1985) assertion that student teachers' experiences with history - from high school and undergraduate history courses to social studies education ("methods") courses to classroom internships - determine the perspectives they have toward the subject. The viewpoints they bring to the classroom are indeed elements of the picture of their historical understanding, and, as Evans (1988) has suggested, likely contribute to their pupils' beliefs and conceptions as well.

This study additionally ties perspective to historical thinking. These three student teachers' experiences clearly had a significant impact on their own manifestations of historical understanding, as evidenced by their analysis of a variety of texts. Although all three student teachers had taken only very few history courses, the quality and nature of their experiences were diverse and illuminating. The emergence of three distinct profiles in this study provides a possible

framework for sorting through the experiences of student teachers in order to form a basis for understanding their capacities to think historically.

Jodi's limited background in history was relatively conventional in terms of the subject matter. Still, her courses at least offered her an exposure to the historical thinking of her teachers and professors. They told stories from different perspectives, analyzed texts for their pupils, and staged historical reenactments, even if they did not explicitly engage pupils in their own analysis of historical sources. From her role as observer, Jodi apparently came to know what to look for when she began to read an historical text. She had little difficulty poring over the documents and took for granted that no "right answer" or simple conclusion was warranted. More importantly, Jodi's underlying academic talent likely enabled her, when called upon, to abstract and to apply aspects of historical thinking to the reading of texts. Her "dialogue" with herself as she went through each document constitutes an instructive case study of historical habits of mind.

Lisa, on the other hand, experienced traditional history in its more prosaic manifestations with teachers who simply recited "facts" and took their pupils through rote instructional exercises. When afforded the occasion to analyze historical evidence for herself, she clearly was unsure of what to do with the documents that she encountered and worried that she was missing the "right answer." Despite the fact that most of her courses were in American history, she seemed relatively unfamiliar with the events of Lexington in the story of the American Revolution. Although she eventually concluded

that children should be taught differing perspectives on historical events, she evidenced little to suggest that she was either capable of or was preparing to do so.

Allison represented a less traditional background; she chose to take relatively unconventional history courses (art, Russia) simply because they appealed to her. Along the way, she developed a favorable disposition toward history, an appreciation for narrative and for diverse perspectives, and, in her exposure to aesthetic criteria from an historical viewpoint, the foundations of analytic thought and imagination. In particular, the imaginative aspects of her approach to history were readily apparent and provide another useful model of a student teacher's historical thinking.

Thus, this research offers evidence from which implications for elementary teacher education programs may be advanced. First, the student teachers in this study likely would benefit to some degree from an increased number of history courses required for the university degree and teacher certification, and from richer courses, especially ones that feature explicit attention to historical thinking, offered by history departments. However, more and better history courses may not be the most significant determinant of student teachers' capacities to think historically. As noted before, research studies have downplayed the simple accumulation of historical knowledge as a major factor in effective teaching. In an earlier study (Yeager and Davis, 1993) in this research program, three secondary social studies teacher candidates displayed thinking patterns that were strikingly similar to their elementary colleagues in this study; those secondary teacher candidates were not more

attentive to aspects of historical thinking simply because they had taken a much greater number of undergraduate history courses.

Possibly more relevant than an accumulation of history courses are issues and topics embedded in the pedagogy of history - for example, historical time, layers and textures of meaning and context, the range and robustness of historical narrative, rhetorical and persuasive devices - that are clearly within the purview of the social studies education ("methods") course in teacher education programs. That course and supervised field experiences, including student teaching, must attend to the active development of teacher candidates' epistemologies of the subjects, including history, that they are preparing to teach. In addition, elementary student teachers who go into the classroom with increasingly clearer conceptions of history likely will avoid the problem Evans (1988) described, in which "muddled" and "unclear" thinking of teachers plays a role in "poorly formed student conceptions...probably due to the lack of explicit attention to meaning" (p. 223). Given the somewhat confused status of history in elementary schools, children seem especially vulnerable to teachers' superficially developed ideas about the meaning of history.

Indeed, teachers' historical thinking advances their instruction beyond an inventory of facts (knowing **that**) to historical analysis (knowing **how**). This advance constitutes a necessary precondition to their teaching of historical thinking to pupils and a likely determinant of their pupils' development of robust understandings of history. Simply, children are not likely to think historically unless their teachers do so. Levstik and Pappas (1987) concluded that "the context in which history is presented, examined, and discussed may be

the crucial factor that will decide whether elementary children come to understand and engage in history...The present elementary history curriculum is too narrow...and appears to underestimate children's ability to deal with historical content" (p. 14). This study expands the discussion of how student teachers think historically and how they deal with historical content as they take their places in elementary classrooms.

Research involving more elementary student teachers in a variety of settings is needed in order to confirm and generalize the findings of this exploratory inquiry. Moreover, additional study of the dimensions of historical thinking in both experienced elementary teachers and teacher candidates is called for. Finally, these teachers' actual classroom use of historical texts and different genres of historical literature - including biography, fiction, letters, diaries, and secondary texts - constitutes a rich area for further exploration.

Clearly, the teaching of historical thinking is a viable, largely unexplored context for children's learning. In order fully to comprehend the impact of different historical sources upon children's historical thinking, knowledge is needed about how teachers themselves perceive and interpret these sources. Research along these lines is essential to the exploration of both teachers' and children's understanding of history and the relationship between the two. Illuminating that relationship should lead to enhanced history teaching practices and a more powerful curriculum for children.

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APPENDIX

Document 1

In 1775, Benjamin Franklin was the colonial representative in London. After the events in Lexington and Concord, the Massachusetts Provincial Congress put together 21 sworn depositions about the events and sent them to Franklin with the following cover letter:

To the inhabitants of Great Britain: In Provincial Congress, Watertown, April 26, 1775. Friends and fellow subjects:

Hostilities are at length commenced in the Colony by the troops under command of General Gage, and it being of the greatest importance that an early, true, and authentic account of this inhuman proceeding should be known to you, the Congress of this Colony have transmitted the same, and from want of a session of the honorable Continental Congress, think it proper to address you on the alarming occasion.

By the clearest depositions relative to this transaction, it will appear that on the night preceding the nineteenth of April instant...the Town of Lexington...was alarmed, and a company of the inhabitants mustered on the occasion; that the Regular troops, on their way to Concord, marched into the said town of Lexington, and the said company, on their approach, began to disperse; that notwithstanding this, the regulars rushed on with great violence, and first began hostilities by firing on said Lexington Company, whereby they killed eight and wounded several others; that the Regulars continued their fire until those of said company, who were neither killed nor wounded, had made their escape.

These, brethren, are marks of ministerial vengeance against this colony, for refusing with her sister colonies, a submission to slavery. But they have not yet detached us from our Royal Sovereign. We profess to be his loyal and dutiful subjects, and so hardly dealt with as we ha e been, are still ready, with our lives and fortunes, to defend his person, family, crown, and dignity. Nevertheless, to the persecution and tyranny of his cruel ministry we will not tamely submit; appealing to Heaven for the justice of our cause, we determine to die or be free.

Joseph Warren (President pro tem)

Document 2

We Nathaniel Mulliken, Philip Russell, (followed by the names of 32 other men present on Lexington Green on April 19, 1775)...all of lawful age, and inhabitants of Lexington, in the County of Middlesex...do testify and declare, that on the nineteenth of April instant, about one or two o'clock in the morning, being informed that...a body of regulars were marching from Boston towards Concord...we were alarmed and having met at the place of our company's parade (Lexington Green), were dismissed by our Captain, John Parker, for the present, with orders to be ready to attend at the beat of the drum, we further testify and declare, that about five o'clock in the morning, hearing our drum beat, we proceeded towards the parade, and

soon found that a large body of troops were marching towards us, some of our company were coming up to the parade, and others had reached it, at which time the company began to disperse, whilst our backs were turned on the troops, we were fired on by them, and a number of our men were instantly killed and wounded, not a gun was fired by any person in our company on the regulars to our knowledge before they fired on us, and they continued firing until we had all made our escape.

Lexington, April 25, 1775. Nathaniel Mulliken, Philip Russell, (andthe other 32 men). Duly sworn to by 34 minutemen on April 25 before three justices of the peace.

Document 3

Major Pitcairn screamed at us: "Lay down your arms, you lousy bastards! Disperse, you lousy peasant scum!"...At least, those were the words that I seem to remember. Others remembered differently; but the way he screamed, in his strange London accent, with the motion and excitement, with his horse rearing and kicking...with the drums beating again and the fixed bayonets glittering in the sunshine, it's a wonder that any of his words remain with us...We still stood in our two lines, our guns butt end on the ground or held loosely in our hands. Major Pitcairn spurred his horse and raced between the lines. Somewhere, away from us, a shot sounded. A redcoat soldier raised his musket, leveled it at Father, and fired. My father clutched at his breast, then crumpled to the ground like an empty sack...Then the whole British front burst into a roar of sound and flame and smoke.

Excerpt from the novel **April Morning**, by Howard Fast, published 1961.

Document 4

19th. At 2 o'clock we began our march by wading through a very long ford up to our middles; after going a few miles we took three or four people who were going off to give intelligence; about five miles on this side of a town called Lexington, which lay in our road, we heard there were some hundreds of people collected together intending to oppose us and stop our going on; at 5 o'clock we arrived there, and saw a number of people, I believe between 200 and 300, formed in a common in the middle of the town; we still continued advancing, keeping prepared against an attack though without intending to attack them; but on our coming near them they fired one or two shots, upon which our men without any orders, rushed in upon them, fired and put them to flight; several of them were killed, we could not tell how many, because they were got behind walls and into the woods. We had a man of the 10th light Infantry wounded, nobody else hurt. We then formed on the Common, but with some difficulty, the men were so wild they could hear no order; we waited a considerable time there, and at length proceeded on our way to Concord.

Entry for April 19th, 1775, from diary of Lt. John Barker, an officer in the British army.

Document 5

Lieutenant Nunn, of the Navy arrived this morning at Lord Dartmouth's and brought letters from General Gage, Lord Percy, and Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, containing the following particulars of what passed on the nineteenth of April last between a detachment of the King's Troops in the Province of Massachusetts-Bay and several parties of rebel provincials...Lieutenant-Colonel Smith finding, after he had advanced some miles on his march, that the country had been alarmed by the firing of guns and ringing of bells, dispatched six companies of light-infantry, in order to secure two bridges on different roads beyond Concord, who, upon their arrival at Lexington, found a body of the country people under arms, on a green close to the road; and upon the King's Troops marching up to them, in order to inquire the reason of their being so assembled, they went off in great confusion, and several guns were fired upon the King's troops from behind a stone wall, and also from the meeting-house and other houses, by which one man was wounded, and Major Pitcairn's horse shot in two places. In consequence of this attack by the rebels, the troops returned the fire and killed several of them. After which the detachment marched on to Concord without anything further happening.

Newspaper account from The London Gazette, June 10, 1775.

Document 6

There is a certain sliding over and indeterminateness in describing the beginning of the firing. Major Pitcairn who was a good man in a bad cause, insisted upon it to the day of his death, that the colonists fired first...He does not say that he saw the colonists fire first. Had he said it, I would have believed him being a man of integrity and honor. He expressly says he did not see who fired first; and yet believed the peasants began. His account is this--that riding up to them he ordered them to disperse; which they not doing instantly, he turned about to order his troops so to draw out as to surround and disarm them. As he turned he saw a gun in a peasant's hand from behind a wall, flash in the pan without going off, and instantly or very soon two or three guns went off by which he found his horse wounded and also a man near him wounded. These guns he did not see, but believing they could not come from his own people, doubted not and so asserted that they came from our people; and that thus they began the attack. The impetuosity of the King's Troops were such that a promiscuous, uncommanded but general fire took place, which Pitcairn could not prevent; though he stuck his staff of sword downwards with all earnestness as a signal to forbear or cease firing. This account Major Pitcairn himself gave Mr. Brown of Providence who was seized with flour and carried to Boston a few days after the battle; and Gov. Sessions told it to me.

From diary of Ezra Stiles, president of Yale College, Aug. 21, 1775.

Document 7

In April 1775, General Gage, the military governor of Massachusetts, sent out a body of troops to take possession of military stores at Concord, a short distance from Boston. At Lexington, a handful of "embattled farmers," who had been tipped off by Paul Revere, barred the way. The "rebels" were ordered to disperse. They stood their ground. The English fired a volley of shots that killed eight patriots. It was not long before the swift-riding Paul Revere spread the news of this new atrocity to the neighboring colonies. The patriots of all of New England, although still a handful, were now ready to fight the English.

From **The United States: Story of a Free People**, a high school textbook by Samuel Steinberg. Allyn and Bacon, publishers, 1963.

Document 8

To the best of my recollection about 4 o'clock in the morning being the 19th of April the 5 front companies was ordered to load which we did...It was at Lexington when we saw one of their companies drawn up in regular order. Major Pitcairn of the Marines second in command called to them to disperse, but their not seeming willing he desired us to mind our space which we did when they gave us a fire then run off to get behind a wall. We had one man wounded of our Company in the leg; his name was Johnson, also Major Pitcairn's horse was shot in the flank; we returned their salute, and before we proceeded on our march from Lexington I believe we killed and wounded either 7 or 8 men.

Ensign Jeremy Lister, youngest of the British officers at Lexington, in a personal narrative written in 1982.