

Where Do We Go from Here? Making Sense of Prospective Social Studies Teachers' Memories, Conceptions, and Visions of Social Studies Teaching and Learning

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Like most teacher educators, we are aware that prospective teachers enter programs with many experiences in schools, and social studies classrooms in particular, that influence their beliefs about schooling, what it means to teach, their subject, and students (Britzman, 2003; Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996). These experiences and beliefs inform how they then experience our program and, possibly, how they

will teach. We in social studies have documented very little about exactly where our students are in their thinking when they begin their social studies education methods courses. However, more research on the inner workings of social studies teacher education is needed (Adler, 1991, 2008; Armento, 1996).

In the past, many have seen the apprenticeship of observation as a barrier to transformation in teacher education (e.g., Labaree, 2000). Rather than viewing our prospective teachers' experiences as barriers, or as deficits to be overcome, we choose to embrace Segall's (2002) understanding that "it is not *whether* or not teacher education changes prospective views

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about teaching and learning, but rather, how and in what ways it does so” (p. 168). The larger study from which this piece arose was designed to look at these subtle changes teachers make in our program. In this article we report on our examination of their memories and visions of social studies education as a way to see what they bring from their apprenticeships of observations.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretically our study is situated in two related discourses: social studies teacher education and learning to teach as an apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 2002). In the most recent handbook of research in social studies education, Adler (2008) looked across the three previous reviews of research (Adler, 1991, Armento, 1996; Banks & Parker, 1990), and highlighted how “research has appeared to do little to inform teacher education practices or provide an understanding of just what happens in teacher education” (p. 330). After reviewing research conducted between 1994 and 2005, Adler (2008) concluded that despite an increased focus on teachers’ beliefs, there remain few conclusions for teacher educators to draw on when attempting to reframe the structure and coursework of their teacher education programs. If we fail to find out where prospective teachers begin and what they think about social studies teaching (good or bad), then we can do little more than create a “best guess” or “one-size-fits-all” approach to teacher education. We miss the opportunity to examine the multiple apprenticeships that prospective teachers experience and bring with them when they enter our programs. As a field we bemoan the fact that prospective teachers do not change or that their teaching practice does not reflect what we taught. We have laid the blame on others (cooperating teachers, cultures of schools, the content area professors). We wonder, if we as a field do not understand where our prospective teachers begin, how can we expect to have the changes that we want?

Research into learning to teach around specific disciplines or topics in social studies exists that helps teacher educators begin to understand the process of learning to teach social studies. For example, we are beginning to understand more about the nature of some aspects of how prospective teachers think about historical thinking (e.g., Yeager, 1997), technology (e.g., Keiper, Harwood & Larson, 2000; Molebash, 2002), and the middle school learner (e.g., Conklin, 2008). While this work has been helpful, a more direct focus on the apprenticeship of observation in social studies teacher education is needed.

Slekar (1998) brought these two worlds together for elementary social studies teacher education. He worked with two prospective elementary social studies teachers to gain an understanding of their apprenticeship of observation and what they would do as a teacher. We continue this conversation by bringing these two worlds together for prospective teachers of middle and secondary school social studies. Our work is designed to spark a conversation around how prospective social

studies teachers begin their social studies education work to inform the design of engaging, powerful social studies courses and programs.

Much of the current understanding of prospective teachers' experiences before teacher education builds upon Lortie's (2002) articulation of the "apprenticeship of observation." Lortie described how prospective teachers hold limited views of teacher roles because they have been denied an open examination of the full process of their teacher's decision-making. Lortie (2002) explained how they are "not likely to make useful linkages between teaching objectives and teacher actions; they will not perceive the teacher as someone making choices among teaching strategies" (p. 63). From their apprenticeships, prospective teachers learn to imitate their former teachers instead of learning how to analyze the decisions their teachers make concerning content and pedagogy.

As Feiman-Nemser (2001) highlighted, previously held beliefs "mislead prospective teachers into thinking that they know more about teaching than they actually do and make it harder for them to form new ideas and new habits of thought and action" (p. 1016). As a result, previously held beliefs are often seen as barriers to the progressive pedagogies of teacher education (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Kagan, 1992; Labaree, 2000; Richardson, 1996). Additionally, teacher education programs are perceived to have a limited influence on prospective teachers' beliefs about and approaches to teaching (Clift & Brady, 2005; Korthagen, Kessels, Koster, Lagerwerf, & Wubbels, 2001; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). We tend to disagree with the emphasis on beliefs as barriers to be overcome by the work of teacher educators. Rather, we see these incoming beliefs and experiences as a necessary starting point from which we can better teach future teachers.

Writing about the potential for methods courses to address the apprenticeship of observation, Grossman (1991) argued that teacher educators must consider the influence of the varying experiences prospective teachers bring into their teacher education programs. She recognized that variation in apprenticeships meant that, "no students share the same set of experiences; in essence, all have watched a different show" (p. 349). Grossman argued that, "memories of the same general activity, may yield distinctly different understandings of what the activity involves" (p. 349). An understanding of this variation in experiences is therefore important for understanding how to address and build on the beliefs of prospective teachers in teacher education programs.

Research Design

Context

We teach at a large, mid-western university. Our program is designed to prepare teachers for a license to teach any form of social studies in grades 7 through 12. Prospective teachers take two state-required prerequisite courses and must be accepted into advanced study before taking a course called *Principles of Teaching*.

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Typically, they take this course in the fall of the next-to-the-last year of their program, the semester before their first social studies education teaching and learning course. If they complete their program with their cohort group, they take the first social studies-specific course in the spring after *Principles of Teaching*, then take the second social studies-specific course in the fall of their final year. While taking this second social studies-specific education course, they are in the field in the same place they student teach in the spring semester before graduation.

Typically 30-35 prospective social studies teachers in this program begin the final four-semester sequence each year. The majority of prospective teachers in this program identify as European-American, over half of each group is male, most grew up in Ohio, and most went to rural or suburban schools. Within the 66 hours of social studies content all prospective social studies teachers take, each can choose an emphasis (Economics, Geography, History, Political Science, or Sociology). Most choose the History emphasis.

Participant Selection

We were interested in understanding our prospective social studies teachers as they come to us in their first social studies education course. So, the sample selection criteria for our study were as follows: (1) an undergraduate or post-undergraduate Integrated Social Studies (INSS) major, and (2) who had completed the first advanced course within the program, a course entitled *Principles of Teaching*. We accepted all volunteers who met these two criteria. The process of selecting participants did not focus on race, ethnicity, gender, social class, or sexual identity because at that point we were focused on the group as a whole.

Following the decision of who should participate, we solicited participation during the final weeks of the fall semester 2008 in four sections of the prerequisite course, *Principles of Teaching*. In-person presentations were made by at least one of the researchers to each section of this course concerning the purpose of the research study (i.e., to understand more about beginning social studies teachers, for us to learn more so we could make changes to improve the program, to understand how prospective social studies teachers experience the program), the anticipated expectations of participants related to the number of interviews and observations, and potential risks and benefits. Prospective social studies teachers interested in participating were asked to sign-up following the presentations or to respond via email to learn more. After the initial presentations, 21 of 38 prospective social studies teachers volunteered to participate. Of the 21, one planned to wait a year before entering the first social studies methods course and one had taken the initial social studies methods course but had wanted to participate in the overall study anyway. The interviews of these two participants were not analyzed for the purpose of this study.

Participants

The demographic characteristics of the 19 participants whose interviews

were included reflect the typical student population for this social studies teacher education program—mostly White males, mostly originally from Ohio, and mostly focused on History. Of the 19 participants, six were female (Anne,¹ Donna, Jessica, Lauren, Stella, and Susan) and 13 were male (Alex, Charles, Dan, Daniel, Dave, Jason, Jeremy, John, Latimer, Michael, Sebastian, Tim, and Xavier). The majority of participants (12) described growing up in either rural or suburban communities in Ohio. It was clear that 16 of the 19 went to high school in Ohio. One of the participants lived in several parts of the United States and around the world before living in Ohio. Two of the participants emigrated from another country outside of North America to the United States before they were adults. One of these students spent all of his high school years in Ohio and one spent one year of high school as a foreign exchange student from another county in an Ohio school. The majority of the participants, 15 of 19, had a History emphasis within their major (three females, 12 males). Two of the participants had a Political Science emphasis (one female and one male), one an Economics emphasis (a female), and one a Sociology emphasis (a female).

Research Approach

The epistemological stance of social constructionism (Burr, 2003) guided our approach to designing this research study. Social constructionism holds that all knowledge and reality is constructed through the interaction of humans and their world in a social context (Crotty, 2003). The social component of social constructionism points to a world of historically and culturally created symbols whose constructed meanings shape the way we see, or do not see, meaning as we interact with the world. According to Burr (2003), the following four broad tenets guide social constructionism: (a) we should be suspicious of taken-for-granted knowledge and the way the world appears to be; (b) the categories and concepts we use are historically and culturally specified; (c) our knowledge of the world is sustained by social processes and interactions; and (d) there are numerous possible social constructions of the world. These tenets helped guide the process of data collection, data analysis, and the writing of this manuscript.

Our entire inquiry can be best described as interpretative practitioner research. As Borko, Whitcomb, and Byrnes explain, “Interpretive research seeks to perceive, describe, analyze, and interpret features of a specific situation or context, preserving its complexity and communicating the perspectives of the actual participants” (p. 1025). This approach fits well with our conception of teacher education as a complex endeavor with multiple factors influencing the teaching and learning within and after the program and our hope to use our research to both add to a larger understanding of teacher education and inform our practice. Interpretive practitioner research allows us a unique view of the context since we know the context intimately. This fits with the notion of social constructionism in the sense that what we know is time and space dependent. This approach to seeing a study also fits because systematic

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study of data collected allows us to look for and examine our own taken-for-granted assumptions in action. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) describe this situation in practitioner research among knowledge, knowing, and the knowers and posit that, although findings are not directly generalizable, “local knowledge can also often act as public knowledge by informing practice and policy beyond the immediate context” (p. 42).

Since we lived the dual lives of both researchers and teacher educators in this program we quickly developed close working relationships with all teacher candidates in the program, though only about half were in the study. Despite the fact that the participants had pseudonyms the potential always exists for a researcher who knows the participants in contexts besides the interview to use those experiences as part of the lens for interpreting the data. Being attentive to this and wanting at this time to look across participants instead of looking for growth over time in a single person, we focused in our analysis more on what the responses said to us rather than who said what. This means that our findings represent what we interpreted across the group rather than what a particular individual was thinking at a particular time. Though we are interested in these nuances and the subtleties of individual change over time, this was not the focus for this study.

Understanding that social studies education has grappled with the teaching of prospective social studies teachers, that we are beginning to understand some aspects of the learning process, and our perception that prospective teachers’ experiences are important starting points, we hoped to begin to understand what they remembered about their experiences and how they envisioned themselves in more nuanced ways. We focused on what prospective social studies teachers remembered of their social studies experiences, their initial conceptions of powerful social studies teaching and learning, and how they envisioned their ideal classroom because their articulations of these items tells a deeper story about what they believe and understand about teaching. They may have had a variety of other experiences that are not captured in their comments, but what they choose to share provides a good representation of what they are drawing on when they think of teaching. These are the experiences that more immediately influence prospective teachers’ thinking about teaching. Our hope was to better understand what they came with as part of improving our work as social studies teacher educators.

Data Collection

To collect data to develop more complex understandings of what prospective social studies teachers enter our program remembering and thinking about social studies teaching and learning, we chose standardized open-ended interviews (Patton, 2002) with each participant before they entered their first social studies methods course (see the Appendix for the interview protocol). Interviewing allows researchers to gain rich details and begin to capture some of the complexity of participants’ thoughts while retaining their ways of expressing their ideas. Standardized open-

ended interviews were used because we wanted to explore their responses to a common set of questions. These standardized open-ended interviews lasted 30 to 60 minutes, occurred five to six weeks before they began their first social studies methods course, and were audio taped and then transcribed.

Interviews were completed by two of the faculty in the program. Students chose with whom they wanted to interview so that no students had to participate in an interview with the faculty member who would be teaching them in the next semester. We provided numerous day and time options for participants to choose from and told them that we would work around their schedules if these options would not work. Some participants appeared to choose one of us because we had a previously established advising relationship while others chose based on their schedules. Students were told as we entered the interviews that we would be audio-recording the conversation and asked if that was “ok.” They were told that at any point they could turn off the recorder, not answer a question, or stop the interview completely. They all were told that they could withdraw at any time without penalty or not agree to one or more parts of the study as a whole. In the larger study, where most of these options occurred, some turned the recorder off and spoke to us “off the record,” some chose not to answer a question, and some chose to not participate in certain aspect of the study. We restated our purposes for the study and thanked them for participating. We asked participants to choose a pseudonym and explained how their anonymity would be protected (i.e., only their pseudonym would be used in the interviews, on their files, and in published work). After the interviews were transcribed, participants received the transcripts and were asked if there was anything that they were uncomfortable with, wanted to change, or add. They also all received a copy of the original draft of this article before it was submitted and were asked to provide feedback or tell us if they wanted anything removed.

Data Analysis

To explore what the prospective social studies teachers shared, each researcher read each transcript holistically and marked and coded comments. We discussed our codes and this initial analysis to begin to come to a shared sense of what we saw across the participants’ comments. We looked for similarities and difference across all participants. We then re-examined the transcripts with the lens of the four initial codes relating to the participants’ social studies experiences that emerged across the responses. Upon further examination of the excerpts and the four codes we came to five final codes that described the memories of their social studies experiences. Trends within the ways the participants spoke of their experiences led to re-examination of these codes and the transcripts leading to further analysis by two of the researchers.

Two researchers focused on analyzing participants’ responses to two specific questions within the interview: “When you hear ‘Powerful Social Studies Teaching and Learning’ what do you think about?” and “Please describe for me what your idea

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social studies classroom would look like” (see the Appendix for the entire interview protocol). Participants’ responses to these questions were examined multiple times. First we looked across each of the responses with no specific focus, making note of significant ideas. From this round we noticed that the participants spoke about powerful social studies teaching and learning in various ways which led us examine the focus of their comments (on students or on the teacher). This layer of analysis led us to notice that some participants focused more on social studies than others, so this added another layer to our analysis of these responses. Their responses about their ideal social studies classroom were analyzed in a similar fashion. The first layer to emerge was the focus of the description and the second layer was the reasoning for their choices. The two major focus areas, social studies content and complexity in their thinking about teaching, were then used to refocus analysis of participants’ descriptions of their experiences.

Findings

Analysis of the interviews began to show us a picture of what the participants’ apprenticeships of observation taught them. Insight into their apprenticeships appeared in various ways. We found two key areas that best illustrate the diversity across their apprenticeships. Together, the two areas provide lenses through which a teacher educator could begin to contemplate how to best teach the students.

First, as a group, participants entered their social studies methods courses with rather generic, non-social studies-specific memories of their social studies teachers, initial conceptions of powerful social studies teaching and learning, and visions of their ideal social studies classrooms. In general, their descriptions of their memories, initial conceptions of powerful social studies, and visions of their future classrooms could just as easily have been descriptions of mathematics or science teachers or teaching. The subject of social studies was not essential to what they described. However, this general lack of social studies emphasis found in their descriptions masks what individual differences existed within the group, important differences to understand for teaching them. The participants’ focus on the general instead of focusing on the social studies aspects of what it means to teach may result from the three general education courses taken before their social studies education courses. This situation is likely similar for many in teacher education since this set up (general courses and content first, then subject specific “methods” near the end) is common in many programs. We see all their schooling including the courses they take at the university prior to social studies methods classes to be part of the apprenticeship that we need to understand to best teach them.

Second, the interviews revealed that despite the lack of social studies-specific focus there was more complexity in the participants’ memories of their social studies teachers and in their visions of powerful social studies than for which beginning prospective teachers are often given credit. Most of the participants saw teaching

through their perspective as a student (e.g., not as much talk of purpose/reasoning, connections between content and pedagogy) but many of them came to us already seeing more aspects to a classroom than just one. Though most had not begun to see a classroom as a teacher might, they were beginning to see a classroom as a complex place. This is an important step on the path to understanding this complexity.

Where's the Social Studies?

Most participants' descriptions of their memories of their social studies classes, initial conceptions of powerful social studies teaching and learning, and visions of their ideal social studies classrooms showed minimal connection to the subject they were going to teach—social studies. Some responses could have been for any subject area. Some responses showed initial understandings of the connections between social studies and teaching and few showed more in-depth connections.

Participants' memories of their social studies experiences provides a first example of both the lack of social studies focus for many and the range of focus across the group. For some, their memories focused on the actions of the teacher but little about content. As Jason began to share about his social studies experience, he focused on remembering the actions of teachers:

A lot of them were very dry I guess. They were just, overhead, here's the notes, write them down, there'll be a multiple-choice test, that sort of thing. There wasn't a whole lot of I guess multimedia or just different sort of technologies going on in the classroom. (Jason)

While describing his A.P. European History teacher, Alex said, "he was really good [because] he knew his content." He added later,

. . . you knew you could go to them with problems related to academics and the school life that sort of thing. You knew that they knew what they were talking about. You knew that they know their content well so that was nice. (Alex)

Many remembered a teacher who cared about the students, the students' learning, and the subject, and being committed to both teaching and the students. Thirteen participants spoke about their teachers in this way. Anne remembered her "freshman year social studies teacher [who] was like everybody's grandpa but he cared about his students and could connect with you." Sebastian recalled a teacher who liked history and the students (caring about both the subject and the students).

My history teacher was kind of boring but not like dull. Like we would just go in and do notes everyday all day and that was it. But he really did like history and he liked us as students, and that was kind of helpful. And he always knew that I kind of wanted to be a social studies teacher. . . . He kind of had a good relationship with us, too. . . . He was kind of inspirational just because he did kind of have a good repertoire with us and like we got along with him and he did like it. (Sebastian)

Again, the connection between social studies and teaching is not concrete. Yet,

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in some of their memories, there is an initial sense of connection between social studies and teaching.

As Latimer discussed how one teacher he recalled could:

Take everything he talked about and he would kind of tie it back into how it would affect us in some way ... he'd just relate stuff back like that in a way that you actually started to care ... He did activities outside of just lecture notes ... we would have to write about different topics that were happening in the world ... My 8th grade civics teacher did stuff that was kind of outside the box ... a constitutional convention ... stock market game.... I would say that every student that went through my district learned more about social studies in that class than in anything else. (Latimer)

This variation in social studies focus also appeared in other places. Seven of the 18 participants² who responded to the question about what they associate with the phrase “powerful social studies teaching and learning” provided answers with no concrete connection to social studies, besides restating the phrase from the question. Their answers could have easily been provided for any classroom. For example, Donna responded:

I think a lot of it has to do with the kind of teacher that teaches powerful social studies. I think if you don't have a good teacher out there making students want to learn then you can't really have powerful learning and I just think, I think when I hear that it comes to mind, students like wanting and eager to learn about social studies. (Donna)

The remaining descriptions, 11 of 18, could best be described as being minimally tied to social studies. Dave's response shows more ties to social studies:

Well powerful is establishing a connection. I would say if you're going to do notes and memorize the terms just for the sake of memorizing, that's not powerful. Powerful is challenging student thinking. Whether it was preconceived notion about a concept or a group of people that they had before but now change that or learn something more. That's powerful. You're making a connection, you're challenging their thoughts and you're making a connection with the material to real life. I would say that's powerful. (Dave)

Like their memories and their initial conceptions of powerful social studies teaching and learning, participants' responses about their ideal social studies classroom also show a range of connections to social studies. Four of the 19 described a classroom that could have been for any content area. The descriptions of these ideal classrooms included no reference to social studies. For example, Susan said,

I hope I can make a place that is safe so that everyone feels comfortable enough to talk and participate. But hopefully something that is exciting because I think a lot of classes can kind of be, ho hum. (Susan)

Dan also focused on a classroom that could be for any subject:

Try to get in the position of respectful control, where you could build mutual respect. Because I need to get, I believe I need to get the respect of the students and need to be in control, but you can't be overbearing, which I think might be kind a hard balance to get at first before, until I get more used to it. (Dan)

The majority of participants (15 of 19) included some reference to social studies. Fourteen made initial connections between social studies and their future teaching. Most of their responses did not include any discussion about how they would make use of the particular aspects included in their classroom visions as part of teaching social studies. Table 1 provides examples of the types of these beginning connections. Within these beginning connections there is a broad range of what participants were thinking.

One participant, Jeremy, gave a more sophisticated, robust response about his future social studies demonstrating an even more complex social studies focus including the possibility of using his classroom to promote active citizenship - a very specific social studies connection.

Table 1
Beginning Connections

<i>Social Studies Connections</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Sample Response</i>
Having Historical Books and Primary Sources in their Classroom	Alex, Anne, & Donna	"A bookshelf on the back wall would be filled with great works of historians and also primary sources." (Alex)
Having Maps on the Walls or on the Smart Board	Anne, Dave, & Sebastian	"Lots of maps and globes I guess it is a social studies room." (Sebastian)
Having Social Studies Related Posters on the Walls	Charles, John, & Lauren	"I don't know probably get some cool dictator posters" (Charles)
Only Brief References to Social Studies Content	Jessica, John, Latimer, & Xavier	"I love studying the 60s and the Cuban Missile Crisis." (John)
Curriculum Connections: Exploring Multiple Perspectives	Anne	"So we could study American history from different perspectives really and its meaningful in different perspectives." (Anne)
Curriculum Connections: Using Current Events	Stella	"I would really really like if there was a senior history class in high school here that would focus on either current events or more current world history" (Stella)
Having Artifacts in the Classroom	Michael & Tim	"What I would like to do is have a lot of relics from that time period. A lot of like propaganda if it's around the time of World War II." (Tim)

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In social studies that is great, it is a great way of learning, um, of running class elections, setting up the entire class structure as the different areas or different styles of government that you are learning. You know, maybe run just have like a mock little um, you, know autocracy or have a mock democracy. Run a class as a senate, there is just so many ways that you can learn these subjects or you could these ideas by participating, you know just by being in there. You know, simulation allows for better understanding of the concept. And of course there is the fact that when you run your classroom in that form, it allows greater amount of students to participate at the level that their comfortable in participating. (Jeremy)

Beginning to See Complexity in What Goes into Teaching

A second way to see the diversity in where participants began emerged around the complexity of their thinking about teaching. Overall, participants remained situated from a students' vantage point of teaching rather than a teachers though some were beginning to see the complexity of aspects that would be considered in a classroom.

Variation in the level of complexity shows in their memories of their social studies experiences. A few participants shared fairly factual, matter-of-fact recollections with only initial interpretations of their experience. As Jessica began to recall:

I distinctly remember in seventh [and] eighth grade. Because I had the same teacher for both grades ... I had a teacher named Mr. Shipley at Midwest for world history and I think it was the first world history class I ever took. And to me I loved it so much more than American history. I still love world history because I feel like we learn so much American history which obviously you know you have to teach kids when their younger, that when I finally got a broad view, it was just so much more interesting to me. It was stuff that I never heard before and its so interesting to see the culture of other people completely different from ours. (Jessica)

Some of the participants showed some initial ability to critique. Daniel shared,

I took this class and the teacher was real passionate about what he was teaching and knew what he was talking about. He wasn't a really good teacher but he knew the material and he incorporated it into a way that was easy to understand. (Daniel)

Daniel demonstrated an awareness that teaching requires more than a strong knowledge of the subject being taught showing he was ready to contemplate the complexities of teaching.

Several prospective social studies teachers remembered at least one experience where a teacher taught with a variety of teaching styles, connected content to the students' lives, promoted active student engagement, and helped students use information not just remember it for tests. It was when they recounted this type of teacher that the prospective teachers were most likely to show evidence of beginning to see connections between content and pedagogy.

Anne's memory reveals a teacher who made explicit attempts to make the content relevant and real in terms of how the content could be understood to influence the student's lives. Anne's teacher:

Made economics real. It wasn't conceptual. We looked at the paper, we looked at the Dow Jones and at the NASDAQ indexes and we got to choose, we worked in groups and we chose those stocks that we were going to follow. He made it very, very practical which was great because economics tends to be something that if someone says, 'hey I don't understand,' it's because it was never made real to them. And he, he did, he worked to make that real. (Anne)

In this example, Anne is connecting student learning to the teachers' pedagogical choices, showing more awareness of complexities of a teacher's thinking.

Participants' initial conceptions of powerful social studies teaching and learning also reveal these prospective teachers coming with a variety of ways of thinking. Some equated powerful social studies teaching and learning to effective teaching as Donna did:

Powerful social studies teaching and learning. I guess an effective teacher, someone who really grasps the subject and can present it in a way that at least most of the students are interested more than not, I guess. Powerful social studies teaching and learning, hmm I am not exactly sure. (Donna)

Some were beginning to be more explicit about how a teacher might make a class powerful. As Daniel explained:

I think of teachers getting students actively talking and discussing about their own opinions on historical matters and bringing their ideas and opinions into the mold to that they build upon their own ideas of what was going on. (Daniel)

A few were beginning to talk about connections among the teacher, students and content. They spoke in ways that seemed to describe all as active members and included initial reasons for why you might want students to learn in this way or learn this content. As Alex shared:

I think that kind of deals with how students come away with a deeper message from social studies. They see the impact of learning history, how it affects their lives, that sort of thing. To me, that's just kind of interesting because, I just want my students to come away with you know, 'wow,' you know, 'that's unique', 'that was, you know, something I never thought about before.' I'm really hoping too, especially with like kind of more inquiry based stuff ... You know I want them to kind of be thinking about, 'how did I factor into this whole thing.' (Alex)

How participants spoke of their ideal social studies classroom provides another way to see variation in their complexity of thinking about teaching. Many focused on classrooms as physical spaces (e.g., "there would be a SmartBoard," "there would be books") rather than how to use the classroom as a curricular or pedagogical space. Although physical aspects are heavily represented in their responses, there is some evidence that they are beginning to move from their seat as a student looking at the surface of teaching to their role as a teacher and seeing the multiple choices a teacher may make. Analysis of the participants' talk about their

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future social studies teacher classroom showed that they spoke in various ways of four aspects of this ideal classroom: physical space (13 of 19), curriculum (7 of 19), pedagogy (6 of 19), and climate (6 of 19). Interestingly, 11 of the 19 students (like before with their remembering of their past teachers) began their social studies education coursework seeing classrooms in more than one way. Specifically, eight had responses focused on only one of the elements, while ten spoke of two aspects in their responses and one spoke of three aspects in their responses.

In addition to the variety of aspects they described, there was also variety in the reasons for those choices. Nine of the participants did not provide any reasoning for their decisions while ten provided initial reasoning. Table 2 provides examples of participants' comments that reflect each of the aspects (i.e., physical, curriculum), an example of a response with one aspect mentioned, two aspects and three, and examples that show no reasoning and initial reasoning. The table below is used to illustrate the variety lessons the apprenticeship has taught them.

Table 2
Seeing Their Ideal Social Studies Classroom

<i>Participant Responses</i>	<i>Aspect Codes</i>	<i>Reasoning Codes</i>
Books, books everywhere, just not even like hardcore history books like things that might interest kind you know have them pick up a book. Comfortable areas to study or like discuss like discussion areas and group project working kind of places. That's pretty much the big priorities that I would like in my classroom. (Donna)	Physical	No clear reasoning for choices
A lot of posters and pictures of different historical events, like big events that happened whether it be like bombing at peril harbor, nine eleven, just things that have happened in the past. And I definitely, I have always hated like desks in rows, I don't think that's like a really good way and I think the best kind of learning happens when students can see each other, especially in social studies we carry a lot discussions so not really necessarily in like a circle like desk, but may kind of like against the wall in like rows so everyone is facing the middle so they can kind of see the whole class. I think people are a lot more comfortable like that to. I don't know, just something not in rows something different cause I think that makes it really formal and I don't want like a formal classroom I want it to be an open space for everyone. (Lauren)	Physical & Pedagogy	Some initial reasoning (student learning, student comfort)
It will be a place where students can come in, know that they are in a safe environment to really think. And know that I want them to think of these ideas outside of the box. Not just what I want them to think what they want to think	Curriculum & Climate	No clear reasoning for choices

Table 2 (continued)

Participant Responses	Aspect Codes	Reasoning Code
<p>about it. You know like, whether it's psychology or history like all those patterns that follow each other like politics and government. Or like, why did our founding fathers say this? Like why? Like look at the things behind it. ... Like how they talked about why we have an electoral college. And it's like, notice like these...I want them to realize, these people are people. ... They had ulterior motives too. And it's not like they're all negative or anything. But it's like, you have to understand, like what is he getting out of this? What is she getting out of this? And why did they do it that way? And I hope that they can learn to think all most in that manner. Learn how to think in cause and effects and learn how to connect ideas. (Jessica)</p>		
<p>Well, it would have posters on the walls and of different historical events. ...I'm big into talking about leaders and former presidents. So I'm a big fan of like Kennedy and Lincoln. I think these guys were real powerful leaders in American history. And I think that having our kids see these figures can inspire them to do good as well, because they... to tell you the truth those two leaders did nothing but good. ... And as far a physical classroom goes I'm going to set up a U-shape of the desks, because I believe desks that are in the typical one desk after another, I don't think that that aids discussion. I think that a U or a big circle of desks is gonna lead discussion better, because not one person is in front of the classroom or there's nobody in the back of the classroom. Everybody's on the outside and it seems that everybody's looking at each other and they all have their own opinions and they all could voice them easier than staring at a teacher up at the front and somebody's head right in front you. So I think that a circle or a U makes for better discussion. ... I'm not a big test guy. I was never... I've never really been a good test taker. I've always been pretty average. I never really liked tests. I like to teach the kids and have them recite what they know back to me in a discussion format. When I do have tests, they will be most likely be essays, because I think the kids can communicate better in an essay than they can in a multiple choice question where there's only four, there's four possible answer, only one's correct. Because I think that especially in social studies, there's more then one correct answer. And with multiple-choice tests it's hard for kids to voice their opinions and voice their ideas, because there is only one right answer for a question. (John)</p>	<p>Curriculum, Physical, Pedagogical</p>	<p>Some initial reasoning (focused on what he likes/liked as a student)</p>

Discussion

This study was designed to explore our prospective social studies teachers' apprenticeships of observation. Findings indicate that these prospective social studies teachers had varied experiences and the sense they made of those experiences differed. As a group, participants' memories, conceptions, and images were rather general, lacking a strong social studies connection. Although the candidates might appear to some to be quite similar on the surface, mostly male, almost all from Ohio, almost all from rural or suburban areas, and despite the persistence of a lack of focus on social studies, there were some differences where individuals were clearly beginning to see teaching social studies rather than just seeing teaching. Also, across the participants, evidence existed of some initial complexity of thinking about teaching. Though some saw teaching in quite simple ways others were beginning to see teaching in more complex ways. This variation is important for teacher educators to understand because it influences the ways these teacher candidates experience our program and learn to teach. Though social studies teacher education programs might have many students who may seem very similar, it is important to begin to see the diversity within their experiences and consider that as their teachers.

It is important to understand as teacher educators that many prospective teachers may come with non-subject-specific conceptions of teaching. As a field, we may often think that because of the "apprenticeship of observation" our prospective teachers come with more understandings about social studies teaching than they actually do. Our findings indicate, that the apprenticeship of observation has taught them about teaching in general but it did not help them think deeply about social studies teaching. This suggests that as social studies teacher educators we should engage teacher candidates in thinking about both historical purposes for teaching social studies as well as their own purposes and rationales for teaching social studies. We can not merely have a methods class that is about methods only. This is unfair to our students (the prospective teachers) and their K-12 students. Providing methods to teach without these conversations about purpose may never help prospective social studies teacher move past thinking about teaching as general endeavor and move into thinking about teaching for democratic purposes.

Our findings reinforce our recognition of the importance of designing the structure, content, and process of our program in such a way that prospective teachers can consider their past experiences and reflect on what their memories mean for their work future social studies educators. Our findings support Britzman's (2003) assertion that, "teacher education must be conceived as more than a technocratic problem of training. Indeed, the problem is with this reduction" (p. 219). The process of teacher education is hard but important work and the methods course is a fundamental place to do more than provide only "methods."

Our findings also provide concrete examples of the diverse apprenticeships that Grossman (1991) recognized. These concrete examples illustrate a clear need for programs to plan for the aspects of the teaching of social studies that do not come

from an apprenticeship of observation. These include exploring the purposes for teaching social studies, meanings of citizenship, and how curricular and pedagogical choices relate to both the purpose and definitions of citizenship.

Teacher educators should begin to rethink and reconceptualize their programs to both build on and build from where their students begin. We suggest that self-study of teacher education practices is a powerful way for some to begin to explore who they are as social studies faculty, who their students are, what the program is doing, and how all this works together (Crowe, 2010). Though this part of the overall study is not a self-study, self-study was a key part of the larger study and the lessons learned about how the participants remembered their social studies experiences, what they saw as powerful social studies teaching and learning as they entered their first social studies teaching course, and how they envisioned their future classrooms provided us as the teacher educators with valuable understandings to continue to teach this group and future groups. Researching your own practice can be an important aspect of creating better programs.

Our findings address Adler's (2008) concerns that within studies of social studies teacher education we have done little more than recognize the power of beliefs on influencing prospective teachers' experiences in a program. The findings from this study begin to illustrate the variety with which prospective teachers begin social studies methods courses. The memories, conceptions, and visions of the participants from this study represent concrete examples of this variety for teacher educators to begin to consider as they plan coursework and programs.

Seeing that prospective teachers begin methods courses with some sense of the complex nature of what they might consider tells us that from their first few years at the university they are starting to understand the importance of the student in teaching and that multiple factors go into what it means to teach. Some are beginning to connect initial reasons to their decisions but, for most, they are not yet able to articulate complex reasons for their choices and, like their recollections of teachers and social studies experiences, their reasons are not connected to a broader purpose for teaching social studies or broadly citizenship education.

Together these varied aspects of where these prospective social studies teacher presents rich opportunities for programs to position prospective teachers to develop connections between memories of former social studies teachers, their visions for powerful social studies teaching and learning, and purposes for teaching social studies. So, where do we go from here?

One approach would be to develop structured assignments, readings, discussions in class and online, and field experiences. Together these structured assignments can be used to enable prospective social studies teachers to move from drawing on their memories of what they remember and liked about learning social studies as students to enacting their own pedagogy of powerful social studies teaching and learning. Teacher educators can enact a pedagogy designed to help prospective teachers draw on their develop understanding of how students learn social studies,

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how their purposes guide what and how they teach, and how their teaching can influence the development of democratic citizens.

As one example, methods courses could begin with activities that engage the prospective teachers' memories and visions to help them make visible their apprenticeship and begin to interrogate these for themselves. These activities could focus on helping the prospective teachers consider their experiences and how these experiences have shaped how they think about social studies teaching at this point. Important to this would be the connection to social studies teaching. These activities and conversations should also help these prospective teachers begin to grapple with notions of purposes for teaching social studies. So, in their exploration of their experiences, they could be presented with opportunities to explore their experiences while connecting those to purposes classic to the field of social studies education (i.e., Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1978), explore multiple purposes and articulate what these might mean for them in practice. Then prospective teachers can begin to engage in discussions of any particular method, strategies, theory or idea being studied, discussion for example, by focusing on what that practice could look like in their future teaching, why they would use it, and how it fits into their ultimate democratic goals.

Adler (2008) stated that there is a lack of consensus in the field as to what social studies is. This is true. However, a clearly articulated focus on social studies within a program in some way is needed since prospective social studies teachers do not come to us with a clearly articulated focus on social studies. Teacher educators can do this by attending explicitly and directly to the subject area specifics of teaching in larger ways as well as class activities. This could take the form of designing a vision for a program guided by the faculty members' understanding of the purpose of social studies, ongoing consideration of what that vision means in practice, and an examination of how the members of the program enact the vision.

Conclusion

To conclude, we realized the need for more work on the apprenticeship of observation of prospective social studies teachers to better teach these future teachers. Findings indicate variation in the apprenticeships of observation that prospective teachers arrive in social studies methods courses with. In the same group, some prospective teachers may be able to articulate little to no connection to social studies while some of their peers may be beginning to connect the teaching of social studies to broader purposes. At the same time, some of these prospective teachers may see little beyond the surface actions of what a teacher does while others are beginning to make connections among teacher actions and decisions, student learning, and the subject area. Teacher educators can take these findings as an example of the diverse influence of the apprenticeship of observation has on our prospective teachers as they enter our programs. We should take this as an opportunity to design and structure coursework and programs to make the most of this diversity.

Notes

¹ All names are pseudonyms to protect the participants' identities. Participants chose their own names for this study.

² During analysis we found that the "powerful" question was not asked in one of the interviews making the total number 18 instead of 19.

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Appendix

Initial Interview Questions

Before beginning the interview please read the following statement: "Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Please know that you have the right to not answer any questions that make you uncomfortable or that you simply do not wish to answer. Please let me know if you would like to skip to the next question at any time during this interview."

1. I would like to start by having you say some things about your own background. Could you talk about your family and how you were raised?
2. Tell me about your experience as a high school student.
3. What do you remember about your social studies classes? What do you remember about your social studies teachers? What do you remember about the content of your social studies classes? What do you remember about how you were taught the content of your social studies classes? What social studies courses did you take in middle school/high school/college?

4. Can you remember when you decided to go into teaching? Did you consider other options? What, in other words, is the history of your choice of teaching?
5. What was your family's role in your decision to become a teacher? Did they encourage you or discourage you in any way? Were there teachers in your family or in your circle of family friends? What was your family's attitude toward or beliefs about teachers and teaching?
6. Can you describe one or more teachers who influenced you to become a teacher? What was he or she like? What did he or she do to influence you? Can you give me an example of...?
7. Why did you decide to study at Kent State?
8. Please tell me about what you consider to be your purpose for teaching social studies?
9. When you hear "Powerful Social Studies Teaching and Learning" what do you think about?
10. Please describe for me what your idea social studies classroom would look like.
11. Please tell me what is one thing you would hope students would learn as a result of taking your social studies class.
12. Please tell me why you believe middle and high schools include social studies in the curriculum.