RMLE Online
Research in Middle Level Education

Karen Weller Swanson, Ed.D., Editor
Mercer University
Atlanta, Georgia

2012 • Volume 35 • Number 7 ISSN 1940-4476

Using Simulations to Teach Middle Grades U.S. History in an Age of Accountability

Lorrei DiCamillo
Canisius College
Buffalo, New York

Jill M. Gradwell
Buffalo State College
Buffalo, New York

Abstract

In this year-long qualitative study we explore the case of two eighth grade U.S. History teachers who use simulations on a regular basis to teach heterogeneously-grouped students in a high-stakes testing environment. We describe the purposes the teachers espoused for implementing simulations and provide detailed portraits of three types of simulations used: role-play, game, and trial. We argue that because the ambitious teachers know their discipline well, see the potential of all their students, and feel that learning rather than testing should drive instructional decision-making, they are able to engage and challenge their students with historical simulations. This study adds to the sparse field of simulation research and to the emerging literature on ambitious history teaching. It also shows educators what is pedagogically possible in teaching history.

Introduction

Education reformers consistently argue the need to increase students' knowledge of history and to raise academic standards (National Center for History in Schools, 1996; National Council for the Social Studies, 2010). Much of the recent focus has emphasized developing students' historical thinking skills (Barton, 2008; Seixas, 2000; VanSledright, 2004; Wineburg, 2001). Some have suggested teachers should use more authentic forms of instruction to raise the level of academic rigor in schools (Newmann, King, & Carmichael, 2007; Scheurman & Newmann, 1998; Wiggins, 1993). And, the most recent U.S. History National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) data (2007) suggest that when teachers use a variety of teaching approaches, students outperform their peers in traditional classrooms.

Although there has been much advocacy for history education reform, Levstik (2008) indicated little has changed, as textbooks continue to be the primary curricular resource. In recent years, some researchers (Gerwin & Visone, 2006; Segall, 2003; van Hover, 2006; Vogler, 2006) have suggested history teachers' decision-making and practices are influenced by state standards, curriculum, and tests in negative ways. Gerwin and Visone (2006) found two New York State history teachers emphasized rote memorization and test preparation in their NYS Social Studies Regents Exam courses but used more engaging approaches in their elective courses. Likewise, Vogler (2006) found teachers who spent a greater percentage of class time preparing students for a high-stakes test used a greater percentage of teacher-centered learning approaches.

Alternatively, Grant and Salinas (2008) reported that teachers' responses to state tests vary considerably. They asserted, "Teachers do make changes in response to new tests, but those changes typically are neither predictable nor deep" (p. 224). Despite real and perceived obstacles attached to a high-accountability system, there is emerging evidence that some teachers are attempting to teach in wise or ambitious ways (Grant, 2003; Grant & Gradwell, 2009; Grant & Gradwell, 2010; Yeager & Davis, 2005). Grant (2005) developed the construct of "ambitious" teaching through a case study of a New York State high school teacher who was preparing her students for the recently adopted state-mandated, high-stakes Regents Exam in Global History and Geography. In this work, he clearly defined ambitious teaching:

> Ambitious teaching develops when teachers know their subject matter well and see within it the potential to enrich their students' lives; when teachers know their students well, which includes understanding the kinds of lives their students lead, how these youngsters think about and perceive the world, and that they are far more capable than they and most others believe them to be; and when teachers know how to create the necessary space for themselves and their students in environments in which others (e.g., administrators, other teachers) may not appreciate either of their efforts. (Grant, 2005, pp. 117–118)

In summary, Grant argued ambitious teachers are those who deeply understand their subject matter and their students and work hard to teach in powerful ways, despite contextual factors such as state tests and unsupportive administrators.

Recent research on ambitious teachers is growing and suggests ambitious teachers use a variety of methods to engage their students with the past (Grant & Gradwell, 2010). They assist students in interpreting historical evidence (Grant & Gradwell, 2005), investigating the lives of everyday people (Gradwell, 2006), writing as historians and discussing important historical questions (Gerwin & Visone, 2006), or engaging in rich historical content (Yeager & Pinder, 2006). Yet, more descriptive research about ambitious teachers' curriculum and pedagogy is needed (Grant, 2005).

Advocates believe that simulations promote active learning in the classroom (Alvarez, 2008; Moorhouse, 2008). Clegg (1991) defined a classroom simulation as a "limited model of some real phenomenon, usually a decision-making or conflict resolution situation, and designed to teach the operation and interaction of principles that operate in the situation" (p. 523). Researchers have asserted that simulations assist students in learning historical concepts and make history and social studies engaging and relevant (Boocock & Schild, 1968; DeLeon, 2008; Gehlbach et al., 2008). For example, in a study of 305 middle grades students, Gehlback and associates (2008) found increases in student motivation after they experienced a web-based *GlobalEd* simulation. Most of the literature related to middle grades and secondary history teachers using simulations is dated (DeLeon, 2008) and appears in practitioner journals drawing heavily from teacher self-reports (see Alvarez, 2008; Miksch & Ghere, 2004; Moorhouse, 2008; Pace, Bishel, Beck, Holquist, & Makowski, 1990; Sanchez, 2006; Schur, 2007). Recent research related to historical simulations is limited; one study analyzed teacher candidates' perceptions toward digital simulation games in the area of social studies (Devlin-Scherer & Sardone, 2010), a second study was a content-analysis of two published social studies-based simulations (DeLeon, 2008), another study evaluated students' motivation using a web-based, role-playing simulation (Gehlbach, et al., 2008), and a fourth study investigated a semester-long simulation of the Holocaust in an upper-level history elective (Schweber, 2003).

Schweber's (2003) study of a high school U.S. History teacher who taught the Holocaust through a simulation is one of few recent efforts to provide a detailed description of a secondary social studies teacher's practice teaching history through a simulation. Schweber found the teacher discussed significant moral questions with her students, and students became "emotionally engaged" in their

study of the Holocaust (p. 176). Although interviews with students revealed they did not learn important contextual history about anti-Semitism or Jews who resisted Nazi perpetrators, Schweber suggested simulations are a possible method for allowing students "emotional and intellectual access to past events" (p. 185). The study illustrated how a classroom simulation can encourage student learning despite challenges.

Over the last 20 years, little research has investigated why and how simulations are enacted in history classrooms. A possible reason for this is, as critics have suggested, that simulations trivialize the past, resulting in students gaining shallow understanding of peoples' feelings (Schweber, 2004; Totten, 2000). However, Barton and Levstik (2004) suggested simulations may be a defensible teaching activity if they are used not as an end but as a tool to encourage student learning about historical figures' feelings.

No recent research efforts have focused on providing descriptive examples of ambitious teachers using different types of simulations in middle grades courses with state-mandated curricula to engage students and encourage their critical thinking about history. Thus, this study of two middle grades teachers who use simulations on a regular basis to teach history to heterogeneously-grouped students in a high-stakes testing environment fills this void in the literature. In this article, we craft portraits of three different historical simulations to build a theoretical typology. Next, we analyze the teachers' ambitious dispositions, which allow them to implement simulations with their students. We argue that the teachers' use of simulations to teach history is a powerful example of ambitious teaching that illustrates what is possible (Shulman, 1987) for preservice and practicing teachers.

Method

As part of the Social Studies Inquiry Research Collaborative (SSIRC) study, we began researching in the two teachers' classrooms, investigating ways in which they used inquiry to teach social studies. Because we found the two teachers were engaging students in a unique, simulations-based curriculum, we expanded our research to continue studying their practice. Information about the larger study can be found at www.auburn.edu/academic/societies/ssirc/. The following research questions guided our additional year-long qualitative study (Fall 2008–Spring 2009) exploring two eighth grade U.S. History teachers' use of simulations in their classes:
(a) What are middle grades teachers' purposes for using simulations in their U.S. History class?,
(b) How do middle grades teachers implement simulations in their U.S. History class?, and
(c) What supports and obstacles do middle grades teachers encounter when they implement simulations in their U.S. History class? An instrumental case study methodology (Stake, 1995) was employed to investigate our research questions because we wanted to find out how and why the two teachers were using historical simulations throughout their curriculum. We chose to study the two teachers as one case instead of using a comparative case study method because the teachers developed and used the same curriculum and combined their students for many of the simulations.

We used Ghere's (2009) typology, which is based on his use of simulations with college students, to categorize the simulations we observed. Ghere divided classroom simulations into four types: role-play, game, trial, and map. Role-play simulations are those in which students take on individual roles to learn about historical concepts and events. They may represent a specific historic individual, group, country, or philosophy. Game simulations usually involve competition between students but should encourage cooperation if students are grouped together. Many game simulations involve a reward system. Trial simulations require students to enact a legal trial or controversial issue to enhance their critical thinking skills. Finally, map simulations provide students with the opportunity to make decisions about territorial options and to visually present those decisions. Often, map simulations in history classes focus on topics such as diplomatic conventions, explorations, and colonization. No map simulations were observed in this study.

Participants

The selection of the participants was purposeful (Merriam, 1998). Andy Bender and Jim Kramer (all names are pseudonyms) are eighth grade U.S. History teachers at Springfield Middle School (SMS), a rural public school in New York. The two teachers were selected because they were identified by local teacher educators and district administrators as effective or "wise" teachers (Yeager & Davis, 2005), an area of research we have been focusing on in recent years. Bender and Kramer are experienced middle grades teachers; Bender has been teaching for 14 years, while Kramer has been teaching for 10 years. Bender has an undergraduate degree in political philosophy and a master's degree in adolescent education.

Kramer studied social studies education both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The teachers have presented workshops at state and national conferences and have received numerous teaching awards for their active teaching approaches.

Site

Springfield Middle School is located in a small rural town in western New York. Based on the most recent New York State School Report Card (2008–2009), the middle school has approximately 475 students in Grades 6–8, with an average class size of 19 students. The school district population includes 97% white, 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1% black or African American, less than 1% Hispanic or Latino, and 1% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, with 27% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. The teachers in this study teach five sections of heterogeneously-grouped eighth grade U.S. History classes. Of the observed sections, students in both teachers' classes were white. Three students in Bender's class and four students in Kramer's class were identified for Special Education services. For the academic years 2001 to 2010, students at Springfield Middle School took the New York State Intermediate U.S. History Exam, a three-part test containing 45 multiple-choice questions, three to four constructed response items, and a document-based question containing content from the Grades 7–8 Social Studies: United States and New York State History section of the *Social Studies Resource Guide* (see New York State Education Department, 1999). Although the exam results did not impede students' ability to graduate, teachers and schools were held accountable for their students' pass rates, as test scores were made public and reported in the New York State School Report Card.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collected from the two teachers included a biographical questionnaire, three in-depth, semi-structured interviews, one think-aloud interview, 10 simulation observations, and classroom artifacts (e.g., handouts, notes, assessment tasks). In the questionnaire, we asked the teachers about their post-secondary education, years teaching, types of courses they taught, and awards or recognition they received. In the interviews, we asked the teachers about their views of teaching and learning history, purposes for teaching history, beliefs about simulations, sense-making of the state standards, and assessment. We took field notes of all observations and collected all materials that were disseminated to students. All but two simulations were observed jointly.

Data analysis began almost immediately and continued throughout the research process. Individually, we typed field notes for each observation. Interviews with the two teachers were audiotaped and transcribed. We coded our field notes and interview transcripts individually, based on initial themes and patterns. For example, some of the themes that developed from our interviews about teachers' purposes were that teachers wanted to engage students, develop their historical empathy, and assist students in connecting history to current events. We came together to determine final themes and patterns that emerged, triangulating them across data sources and probing for confirming and disconfirming evidence (Bogdan & Biklin, 1982).

In analyzing our field notes and interview data, we found the teachers developed specific methods of preparing, implementing, debriefing, and assessing each of their simulations. We also discovered that the teachers reported different purposes for using each type of simulation. We attempted to provide a rich description of this data to assist readers in determining the credibility of our findings (Stake, 1995), which are detailed in the following section. Our second layer of analysis revealed the teachers possessed ambitious dispositions: they knew their U.S. History content; were cognizant of their students' abilities; and worked hard to engage and challenge their students, despite teaching in a high-stakes environment. We also found several supports and obstacles that played a role in the teachers' abilities to implement so many simulations throughout their curriculum. The "Ambitious Teaching" section describes the teachers' dispositions and supports and obstacles.

Portraits of the Simulations

Portrait of a Trial Simulation— Supreme Court Case Simulation

Teachers' purposes for the trial simulation. In an interview, Kramer explained that the Supreme Court Case Simulation, which was the first major simulation of the school year, was aimed at helping students think critically about Constitutional Amendments:

> The Supreme Court [Simulation] is used at the end of the unit, almost like a culminating experience for the unit, in which students have to actually take the Constitution and make arguments about the 14th Amendment … try to articulate arguments using real Supreme Court cases.

Bender added that he hoped the simulation would make the Constitution and Supreme Court interesting and relevant for students. He said, "I think everyone wants to know why this (the Constitution) is important" and that by taking on the roles of attorneys and justices, students would gain stronger understandings of the important role the Constitution plays in their lives.

Preparing for the trial simulation. Two class periods before the four-day trial simulation began, Bender and Kramer divided students into groups by Supreme Court case and went over the simulation with a packet of information. The four Supreme Court cases were: Tinker v. Des Moines School District, Gideon v. Wainwright, Miranda v. Arizona, and Vernonia v. Acton. Students learned the Court would be announced by the Marshal, the Chief Justice would ask the Marshal to read the case, lawyers for the petitioner would present their case for five minutes, lawyers for the respondent would present their case for five minutes, and then two-minute rebuttals would follow. They were also told they would receive "spirit points" for dressing like attorneys. The Justices would be provided with robes (old eighth grade graduation robes) the day of the simulation. The teachers also led students through two worksheets, which explained how they should prepare their case. For example, one worksheet described, in detail, how to construct an opening statement and main arguments. The packet also explained how attorneys should structure their written briefs for the Justices to read.

The day before the simulation started, students broke into their assigned groups, read the facts of their case, answered questions about their case, and worked on their briefs. The teachers walked around their respective classrooms, helping students grasp the main arguments for each side and work on their presentations.

The Supreme Court Case Simulation. The actual trial simulation took four class periods—one period to present and discuss each of the four Supreme Court cases. We observed the first day of the Tinker v. Des Moines trial simulation in Kramer's class. Kramer related that he took a more active role in this simulation because the Constitutional issues were difficult for many students to comprehend, and the simulation was the first one of the semester.

The classroom was rearranged to look like a courtroom. Nine desks for the nine Supreme Court Justices lined the front of the room. Two sets of two desks for the opposing attorneys faced each other on opposite ends of the classroom, and Kramer and the rest of the students sat in the rear of the classroom. Before the trial began, Kramer went over the procedures and then told the attorneys representing the Tinkers to go next door to Bender's classroom to try their case. Two minutes later, two attorneys from Bender's room appeared to represent the Tinkers. Kramer welcomed the two female students, who were dressed in suits and wore black armbands. Then he told the Justices to go into the hallway.

After a few minutes, Kramer raised his voice and said, "All rise," and the nine Justices, now donning purple graduation robes, filed back into the classroom and took their seats at the front of the classroom. Kramer gave a brief overview of the Tinker v. Des Moines case and asked the two attorneys representing the Tinkers to present their arguments. The two attorneys began by stating "May it please the Court" and then explained their arguments in their own words. It seemed that their primary arguments were that "it is not disrespectful to wear armbands in school" and that "it is the student's right to freedom of speech under the First Amendment of the Constitution to wear the armbands to protest the Vietnam War." The Chief Justice asked them two questions, and then they sat down. Kramer asked if there were any other questions from the Justices and seemed a little disappointed when no Justices volunteered to ask questions.

Next, two male attorneys representing the Des Moines School District presented their arguments. They did not appear to be as knowledgeable about the Constitutional issues as the Tinker attorneys. One attorney repeated, "People can't just come to your house and search your house without your permission," which prompted the Chief Justice to ask, "What do searches and seizures have to do with this case?" One of the attorneys replied, "Schools are for safety." The Chief Justice did not seem satisfied with their answer, but he dropped the issue. After the attorneys for the school district finished their five minutes, the rebuttal period ensued. Kramer assisted students in staying focused on the First Amendment rights in question rather than debating whether it was right to protest the Vietnam War, as some students seemed to want to do. The attorneys on both sides appeared passionate about the case and seemed to embrace the challenge of discussing First Amendment issues in their own words.

Finally, after about 15 minutes of rebuttals, Kramer asked the Justices if they had any more questions, and when they did not, he told them to "leave the room to caucus in the hallway and then come back in and say your position and reasoning." Five minutes later, the Justices returned from the hallway as the bell ending the class period rang. The Chief Justice reported that six of the nine Justices ruled in favor of the Des Moines School District. The attorneys from the Tinker side looked disappointed. Kramer congratulated students on a good trial and said they would continue to discuss the case the following class period.

Assessment of the trial simulation. Students were assessed on their performance during the simulation. The teachers created a rubric that outlined what an A, B, and C grade entailed. For example, to receive an A, students had to show a command of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, be professional, well prepared, and exhibit excellent behavior, and take command of the trial. Students also turned in their briefs and opinions for credit.

When asked how they thought the Supreme Court Trial Simulation went, both Kramer and Bender said that, for a first simulation effort, the students had risen to their expectations and engaged in learning about the challenging cases. Additionally, Bender explained that eight months after the simulation, the teacher' discovered it helped students remember the information from the cases.

> The benefits for long-term memory are huge. Last week we were in Washington, D.C., with the eighth graders, and we actually went into the Supreme Court, which was great. We saw Stephen Breyer walk down the street, … and I asked the kids,'"What do you remember about our four Supreme Court cases?" ... "What was the Tinker case about?" ... Right away, even the lower level kids were like, "Free speech in schools." "What about Miranda?" "Rights upon arrest." Because they impersonated the lawyers in those trials and went head to head with Kramer's kids, they understood.

The teachers felt they had achieved their goals of helping students think critically about the Constitution and Supreme Court cases and making the cases interesting and relevant for students.

Portrait of a Role-Play Simulation—Ellis Island

Teachers' purposes for the role-play simulation. Both Bender and Kramer explained the purpose of the Ellis Island Role-Play Simulation was to "hook" students and get them "involved" and "interested" in the topic of immigration in turn of the century America. Kramer remarked, "After they [students] go through that experience of Ellis Island, they want to learn more about it." Their comments reflected their constructivist view that students learn best by doing. As Bender stated, "if you are not involving your learner[s], they aren't going to learn."

Bender said that the Ellis Island Role-Play Simulation was also an attempt to assist students in thinking about the challenges immigrants faced at the turn of the century and today:

> The goal of the Ellis Island Simulation was to allow them [students] to understand what actually happened at Ellis Island, the larger issue there is to show the problems immigrants faced. The secondary larger issue is to show that we are still an immigrant nation and immigrants still face those problems.

Because the purpose of the simulation was primarily to encourage students' interest in immigration and to deepen their thinking about the immigrant experience at Ellis Island, it lasted only one class period. However, Bender and Kramer prepared students for the simulation beforehand.

Preparing for the role-play simulation. Two class periods before the enactment of Ellis Island, the teachers went over background information with students to provide them with the factual knowledge they would need to participate in the simulation. Using a guided note sheet on immigration, Bender and Kramer assisted students in writing answers to several questions, including: "What is an immigrant?" "Who are the immigrants we are studying in 1890–1924?" "What made people leave their homes?" and "What attracted people to the U.S.?" They explained what Ellis Island was and showed them a PowerPoint that included historic images of the immigrant experience at Ellis Island.

The day before the simulation, the teachers asked each student to create their role for the simulation. They handed students a list of questions, including: "What country will you come from?" "What will be your immigrant name?" "What will be your marital status?" "What will be your education level?" "What will be your career?" "Do you have a job in America?" "What is your current wealth?" and "Why are you coming to America?" The handout also asked students to describe their health, political views, and

English speaking skills. For homework, students wrote responses to the questions. Additionally, the teachers showed students a three-minute video clip of the Ellis Island Role-Play Simulation from the previous year to demonstrate how students could dress for the simulation. Students were told they would receive "spirit points" toward their eighth grade trip to Washington, D.C., later that year for coming to class dressed as their characters.

The Ellis Island Role-Play Simulation. The day of the simulation students seemed excited as they came into the classroom. All but one student in Kramer's class came dressed as an immigrant. Most of the female students wore long skirts, shawls, and tied their hair into a bun at the top of their head. Three students carried dolls to show they were mothers with young children. Many of the male students donned feather hats. Three students posed as frail, elderly immigrants, wearing gray wigs and walking with canes and limps. For the first five minutes of class, as the teachers were taking attendance and getting organized, students were asked to introduce themselves to each other in their native languages. Half-sheets of paper with basic expressions, greetings, and questions in various languages were provided. Students seemed to enjoy the activity. We overheard one male student relate to another male student that he was Hungarian and his grandfather had taught him to speak a Hungarian dialect, which he eloquently demonstrated. Many students conversed with each other in English with Italian- or Polish-sounding accents.

Next, Kramer and Bender's second period classes combined for the simulation and lined up in the hallway outside the school library, which would become Ellis Island. Kramer and Bender, who did not always participate in the simulations, took an active role in this one. In a loud voice so that all 45 students could hear, Kramer said, "I am not Mr. Kramer and Mr. Bender is not Mr. Bender. We are inspectors at Ellis Island. You are an immigrant, and you don't speak English." Bender then introduced the school's technology coordinator, Mr. Hughes, who was dressed in a blue inspector uniform. He said Mr. Hughes would be the lead inspector. As students proceeded into "Ellis Island," Bender and Kramer said things to them such as "I am not sure if you look healthy enough to get in" and "Do you have a limp?"

Before school on the day of the simulation, Bender and Kramer transformed the library into "Ellis Island." Projected on the back wall of the library was a historic image of the waiting area at Ellis Island. The middle section of the room had been cleared for seven inspection stations, which consisted of a folding table and two chairs. The stations were where the immigrants went for balance, memory, intelligence, literacy, vision, health, and legality tests. The stations were staffed by inspectors: Kramer, Bender, the school librarian, and four eighth grade students from other class periods, all supervised by Mr. Hughes. Upon entering Ellis Island, the immigrants received a blue slip of paper that said, "Ellis Island Checklist: You must go through all these stations." They were required to have their checklist initialized and stamped by an inspector at each station.

Students rushed to get in line at all the stations. Mr. Hughes, the lead inspector, walked around the room telling students where the lines were shorter. Although there was some laughing and joking among students while they were in line for the tests, all 45 students participated in the tests and seemed to take the simulation seriously. For example, at the literacy test station, we noted a female student read a passage from a history textbook in broken English, prompting the female student inspector to say, "You stupido! Can't you read faster?"

Kramer and Bender occasionally circulated around the room to keep students on-task. They also created some excitement. For example, 20 minutes into the simulation, Kramer grabbed a doll from one of the female students and said, "Oh no, I'm not sure if this baby is going to make it. I don't think she is breathing." Then he laid the doll on the ground and pretended to give her CPR. The student played along and said, "My baby … please save her!" Toward the end of the period, Bender began blowing a whistle and said that he would now take "the anarchists" (students who had received a yellow dot at one of the stations) to a detention center. Three males and one female followed him to a side area of the library.

With five minutes left in the class period and most immigrants having completed their tests, Bender, Kramer, and Hughes asked the immigrants to sit in chairs lined up in the front of the library so that they could begin debriefing the simulation. Mr. Hughes asked students if they knew how many immigrants were allowed into Ellis Island in one day. After several incorrect guesses by students, he related that the number was "approximately 11,000." Bender asked students who were in the detention center to explain how they felt when they were pulled out of the simulation. One male student said "surprised," while another said "angry." Next, Bender began

asking students about the tests they took and whether they would be difficult for immigrants with limited English proficiency. He said he bought three of the tests at the Ellis Island gift shop when he visited. Unfortunately, the teachers' oral debriefing was shortened by the end of the class period, but students had an assignment to further their thinking about what they experienced at Ellis Island.

Debriefing and assessment of the role-play simulation. For homework the evening of the simulation, Bender and Kramer asked students to write responses to several questions: "Which test was the hardest for you today?" "If you were a real immigrant, what test would have made you the most nervous?" "Ellis Island has been described by immigrants as being both 'heaven and hell wrapped together.' After experiencing it for yourself, explain why that statement is true or false." and "In one word, describe an immigrant's experience through Ellis Island." The next day, they went over students' responses to the questions and discussed the simulation. Additionally, they showed students a PBS video about immigration at the turn of the century.

To further assess students' learning from the role-play simulation, Bender and Kramer asked students to write a letter home to a relative living in an Eastern European country in 1911, based on their experiences in the simulation as well as their class notes. The assignment required students to describe push and pull factors, the boat ride to America, how they felt when they saw the Statue of Liberty, their experience at Ellis Island, their experiences after they left Ellis Island, and their hopes and dreams for the New World.

When asked how the simulation went, both Bender and Kramer said they thought it went well and that they had achieved their desired learning goals. Kramer explained:

> I think they [students] were able to internalize the experience of an immigrant, and, even today, they remember their immigrant names and the stories they created, so that has become part of their deeper memory here. After we did that simulation, there was definitely a higher interest, and they wanted to learn more about immigration; they wanted to learn more about their own family histories, so I think it made it real.

The teachers' comments suggested the role-play simulation did, indeed, make the topic of turn-of-the-century immigration interesting, engaging, and relevant.

Portrait of a Game Simulation—Stock Market

Teachers' purposes for the game simulation. Bender and Kramer said they hoped to encourage student engagement and knowledge about how the stock market worked during the 1920s through the Stock Market Game Simulation. Kramer explained, "My view is that you really need to get students engaged mentally and physically in the lesson, get them thinking, get them involved." The teachers also related that they hoped students would empathize with people who had lost their savings by investing in risky stocks during the 1920s and today. The game simulation was enacted in February 2009, when the current U.S. stock market was particularly volatile, so Bender and Kramer compared the crash and depression that followed to the current financial crisis.

Preparing for the game simulation. Before the four-day simulation, students studied the "Roaring 20s." In class, they discussed and took notes on WWI, Women's Suffrage, the prohibition of alcohol, and the rise of the stock market. They also examined documents from the time period, such as a U.S. government propaganda poster from 1918, sections of the 19th Amendment, and political cartoons about the Women's Suffrage Movement. Additionally, they completed a free write entry assignment on the factors that made the 1920s roar.

The Stock Market Game. Although both Bender and Kramer's classes participated in the Stock Market Game at the same time, they did so separately for this simulation. Students did not dress up, although the bankers and stockbrokers wore visors to illustrate their role. We observed two days (day three and the Crash) of the simulation in Bender's classroom.

On the first day of the simulation, the teachers went over a sample investor's portfolio. Students were given their own portfolio and $3,500 in play money to invest in the bank and market. The investment portfolio worksheet contained the names of 15 companies, including "Candy Unlimited," "Diamond Tea Company," and "Tanco Steel." Students were asked to record the number of shares they bought in each company and the closing price per share each day. They were also required to calculate the total value of shares for the day, the total value of their stocks, the money they had saved in the bank, the total cash they had on hand, and the grand total of their investment portfolio. Kramer and Bender went over definitions of vocabulary students would encounter during the simulation, such as stock,

capital, investor, shareholder, dividend, capital gain, initial public offering, stockbroker, commission, bear/bull market, and buying on margin. Throughout the simulation, they made sure students understood economic questions that came up, such as: "Why do companies sell stock?" "What does a broker do?" "Why would somebody want to buy stock?" and "Who decides the price of a stock?"

Bender related that the first three days of the simulation were similar to what we observed the third day. The classroom furniture was rearranged; a long table with two chairs at the side of the room became the bank, while two long tables with four chairs lined the back of the room for the stockbrokers to conduct transactions. Bender began class by going over the "Business News of the Day." On the document camera at the front of the room he projected headlines from the 1920s that read: "People were sickened by Two Flavor Cola" and "New Movie by Far East Films Tanks." He asked students to raise their hands if they owned stock in either Two Flavor Cola or Far East Films, and several students raised their hands. Then Bender asked if the headlines would make students' stocks go up or down, and a male student answered that the stocks would go down. Bender placed a sheet of paper on the document camera that reported how much each of the 15 stocks was worth that day. For the next 10 minutes, as 1920s music played in the background, students copied the current prices of the various stocks and worked on updating their portfolios. Several students used calculators to assist them in computing their totals.

Next, Bender announced, "The market is now open," and students lined up at the bank table or brokers table to deposit money and buy and sell stocks. Bender circulated around the room, assisting students with their portfolios and asking them why they were making specific financial decisions. He seemed to be encouraging most students to invest their money in stocks (to set them up for the crash the following day) instead of depositing money in the bank. Bender also joked with several students, asking one female student if she had just returned from voting and another if she had heard about Lucky Lindy. Students seemed to enjoy the relaxed simulation climate the teacher created.

After about 20 minutes of depositing, buying, and selling, Bender asked students to return to their seats to discuss the day. After asking several students about their portfolios, he went over the meaning of a dividend check, using examples from the simulation. Bender asked, "Who owns stock in Trademark?" and a female student responded positively. Then he asked her how many shares she owned and calculated her dividend on the board to model for students how they should calculate their dividends.

Bender opened the fourth and final day of the simulation by saying, "We're going to close things out today. … What happens when a bunch of people sell stock all at once?" A student replied, "The price goes down." Bender affirmed his response and asked students to take out their investment portfolios. He posted the day's stock prices on the document camera and began to go over them: "Electron Recording loses everything in a bank failure. … Who owns stock in Electron Recording?" Several students raised their hands. Bender continued unveiling the low stocks and reiterated phrases like "Oh, this looks bad." Some students looked worried as they copied the numbers into their portfolios. One student seated near us smirked and said, "I sold everything yesterday, so I'm not worried. … I knew this would happen."

Bender asked the banker, Tommy, to read the names of students who owed loans to the bank. Tommy called out several students' names. Bender told them, "If you can't pay it back, we might have to take your house." Some students looked concerned, while others made comments such as, "Oh, I don't own a home." Bender asked students to calculate how much they lost and how much they had left in the bank. As students worked on their portfolios, Tommy suddenly ran out of the room. Bender exclaimed, "Look, Tommy left a note!" He placed the handwritten note, which said "Bank Closed Due To Crash," on the document camera. This prompted a female student to ask why Tommy ran out of the room. Bender answered, "Just in case someone threatens to take his life."

As students finished their calculations, some acted upset about what they lost. One female student asked, "So, if we have money in the bank, we don't get it back?" Bender walked around the room commenting, "I didn't know this was going to happen … this is shocking. … How are you doing?" One male student who seemed particularly angry stated, "I had $3,000.00, and now I have lost it all." After about five more minutes, students seemed to have finished calculating their losses, so Bender began to debrief the stock market crash.

Debriefing and assessment of The Stock Market Game. First, Bender discussed Black Friday and referred to the simulation to help students relate to

the event. He went around the room and asked each student to state how much money he or she ended up with. One disappointed student said that, at one point in the game, he had $13,000.00 in the bank but now had only $60.00. Another student reported a similar fate. Only two students in the room were left with a substantial amount of money.

Next, Bender showed a Peter Jennings video clip from an ABC/History Channel video, *The Century: America's Time*, with footage from Black Tuesday. He said, "See, this is like what happened to you … people were pulling their money out of banks." Students appeared engrossed in the video. After a few minutes of watching the video, Bender asked students to fill in a note sheet about The Stock Market Crash. He went over several points about why the stock market crashed, for example, "When prices went down, brokers wanted their margin loans repaid, which forced more people to sell their stock to repay their loans." With only a few minutes left in the class period, Bender placed a copy of a current newspaper article from the previous day on the document camera, which discussed the dismal state of the current United States economy. He asked students if they had been following Congress's current stimulus efforts and related that it was similar to and different from what happened in the 1930s.

A Case of Ambitious Teaching with Simulations

Ambitious teachers know their content, understand their learners, and are fully aware of the possibilities as well as the constraints of the teaching environments they work in. We argue that Bender and Kramer are ambitious teachers because they work in a high-stakes teaching environment in which accountability for students' performance on state exams is public knowledge, yet they choose to create engaging simulations for their students to encourage them to think critically about historical events. They do so because they know their discipline well, see the potential of all their students, and feel that learning rather than test scores should drive instructional decision making.

Knowledge of Content

Both Bender and Kramer possessed a strong command of their discipline. They understood the interpretive nature of history and were aware of the curriculum and learning standards set out for them in the state guides. Instead of letting the state documents constrain their classroom content choices, they used them as a guide. Take, for example, their Supreme Court Trial Simulation. In the New York State Core Curriculum Guide, eight Supreme Court cases are listed in the content section. Of the eight listed, Bender and Kramer selected two (Miranda v. Arizona and Tinker v. Des Moines School District) from the core curriculum to be included in the simulation and two others (Gideon v. Wainwright and Vernonia v. Acton) not mentioned in the state guide. Why not choose only cases from the state guide, which are fair game for inclusion on the state exam? Bender explained that having his students engage in these court cases was a way

> to get them to realize what the court does, know the basics, because the court is these invisible nine people, so we wanted to make that come alive … and make that visible. The secondary thing is for them to see why the court is important, how the decisions affect their lives.

Kramer, like Bender, believed that teaching history was more than content coverage—it was about helping students develop critical thinking skills. Kramer asserted that when students learn about and argue Supreme Court cases, they "really see what it is all about, to argue and to be able to think, and to be able to articulate their thoughts." Bender and Kramer believed the purpose for teaching history was not to simply cover history but to assist students in thinking critically.

Additionally, Bender and Kramer carefully selected topics for their simulations. In contrast to the teacher Schweber (2003) studied, they said that some topics, such as the Holocaust, were off limits. As Bender pointed out: "We aren't going to put a kid in a situation of being a Nazi or a Jew. … There are certain things that, just for propriety's sake, we don't want to go near." Bender said that some events were too tragic to be simulated by students. By knowing their discipline and the ramifications of their actions, the two teachers made thoughtful decisions about the teaching strategies they implemented.

Bender and Kramer are examples of ambitious teachers because they know their state core curriculum and assessments but do not let them become the sole driving force behind the selection of topics and activities they choose to present in the classroom. Kramer summed up the two teachers' views: "I put kids first, not the test first. I think that we owe it to them to concentrate on what we believe is important, not necessarily ramming facts down their throats."

Knowledge of Learners

Another ambitious teaching quality Bender and Kramer possessed was deep understanding of their students. Bender and Kramer were dedicated to trying to connect to their eighth graders on various levels. Kramer sensed that many of his students did not possess the same passion he had for history and that they needed additional supports to engage with the past.

> Well, I think that it is easy for social studies teachers to forget that not everyone shares their interest in history. People that go into the profession all have almost an intrinsic passion and interest in history, and very often there is an expectation that everybody has that, and that's not really the case. My view is that you really need to get students engaged mentally and physically in the lesson, get them thinking, get them involved.

Bender also believed involvement is important for students of history.

> At any level, if it is kindergarten or up to college level, [teaching history] has to be done in the most interactive way you can, and, obviously, it has to be age appropriate. … Whenever we can, the students, whether they are six or 76, have to be hooked within 30 seconds and involved within five to ten minutes.

Bender, like Kramer, felt that learning would not take place unless teachers connected with students on an emotional level. As Bender put it, "…when [students] are involved on an emotional level, that is when real learning happens and, I dare say, human growth." For Bender and Kramer, simulations were the impetus to ignite students' passion for the past—a goal they worked toward in their classrooms.

Bender and Kramer also tried to connect to their students by showing them how history related to their lives. Bender suggested that "to make it interesting [to students] is to make it relevant, because I think everyone wants to know why this is important." Bender and Kramer used both the preparation and debriefing time bookending each of their simulations to make real-world connections for kids. For example, in the Stock Market Crash Game Simulation, each teacher took class time to discuss the current U.S. recession and how it compared to the Crash of 1929.

Additionally, Bender and Kramer considered their students' interests in selecting Supreme Court cases for their simulation. The topics under investigation focused on issues that related to student and individual rights. One of the Supreme Court cases argued by the students was Vernonia v. Acton—a case centered on student athletes' rights and drug testing, and one not listed in the core curriculum. Springfield was a small rural school where school sports were a focus in the community. Bender and Kramer knew that many of their students played school sports and sensed that their students would be interested in a case about student athletes' rights.

Instead of emphasizing content coverage and test preparation, Bender and Kramer thought of their students' learning needs. As Bender explained:

> There's a level of interest that [the students] want to know more, and I'd like to think it is because we met them at their level as learner[s] and they understand that finally someone understands how they learn. I say that humbly; we like to think that is what is happening.

Because Bender and Kramer made explicit attempts to meet their students on their level, they felt their students were appreciative of their efforts, resulting in an elevated level of learning in the classroom.

Knowledge of Context: Teachers' Views of the Challenges and Supports

Bender and Kramer faced several perceived and real contextual obstacles; they were required to cover state curriculum, successfully prepare their students to pass the state exam, and teach a diverse group of middle grades students. Despite these various constraints, Bender and Kramer chose to teach ambitiously by enacting simulations throughout their year-long courses.

Both taught diverse and challenging learners and knew what could be accomplished with a group of eighth graders. In discussing the Supreme Court Trial simulation, Bender pointed out some of the limitations to teaching with simulations:

> A big point that turns teachers off from simulations is that you are dealing with 13-year-olds. … They all take it seriously, but … some kids will have a 90-second Supreme Court case, and other kids will have a 10-minute one. Some kids will get carried away a little bit about something that is irrelevant; but they are in eighth grade, you know you just have to roll with it, have patience and redirect them. Some teachers see that and say they [the students] can't handle

> it, they aren't on task, or they are too immature. Well, that happens, and that is part of it, and we have learned that that is the price you pay when you teach eighth grade and teach it actively.

Regardless of some of the challenges associated with implementing simulations with young adolescents, Bender and Kramer found the benefits outweighed any drawbacks, especially among students who had different learning abilities. Kramer thought his special education students benefitted from the simulations.

> Many of them are not great when it comes to pen-and-paper work, but they are quite verbal, and very often it is the special education students that really excel at the simulations; it gives them a certain level of confidence when they can argue a Supreme Court case or make arguments.

Bender saw benefits for both his higher- and lower-level learners and discussed the advantages for the higher-level learners:

> For the upper-level kid who wants to talk at a higher level and who wants something more creative, the simulations offer that option for them to be interested and do the things they want to do that a textbook doesn't allow.

Kramer and Bender viewed simulations as a way of meeting the needs of all their heterogeneous students. They found that simulations allowed students to be resourceful, creative, interested, and confident in their abilities. Unlike some of their peers who designed their entire courses with test preparation in mind and "instill[ed] a fear about the state test throughout the year," as Kramer put it, they relied on active learning exercises like simulations to drive their course constructions. Kramer summed up their views:

> Simulations are like the engine of the course. The textbook isn't in the center of the course, the simulations are. We absolutely still do lecture, have PowerPoint presentations, have students watch videos and write DBQs, and do all the traditional things, but the course, in many ways, is centered around active learning as opposed to being centered around state assessment or textbooks or something else.

Rather than allowing the diverse challenges of teaching a heterogeneous group of students in a high-stakes testing environment impede them, Bender and Kramer found supports within their school and community that made it possible to implement high-level simulations. As the only eighth grade history teachers at Springfield Middle School, they looked to each other as a springboard for their respective ideas. Using their assigned common planning period, they met regularly to discuss new ideas, fine tune existing lessons, and enact simulations with their classes.

In addition to looking to each other for help with daily planning, they created a faculty and community network of dedicated supporters for their simulation endeavors. In doing so, they enlisted the help of their principal, who, just by coincidence, was an avid Civil War re-enactor. They also relied on their school technology coordinator, who came into classes to assist students and the two teachers with creating multimedia presentations, such as videos, PowerPoint slide shows, and music. The technology coordinator also participated in some of the simulations. For example, he served as Lead Inspector in the Ellis Island Role-Play Simulation. Community members, many of whom were parents of former students in the teachers' classes, also took part in some of the simulations.

Bender and Kramer argued that their students provided the most support for their methods. Both teachers reported that former students often came back to visit, even as seniors in high school. Kramer relayed:

> I have high school seniors come back all the time and tell me, 'I remember when we did this, and I was that [role].' They don't remember the day I lectured, but they remember the information, the key ideas and the big ideas of [the simulations]. … I have high school students come back all the time talking about some of the —they don't talk about what we didn't do—they talk about what we did.

Bender echoed Kramer's musings:

> We'll get juniors and seniors who come back here, let's say once a year and pop their head in and say, "Oh the Cold War, did you do the Cuban Missile thing yet? Oh, I remember it." And then they will talk amongst themselves, and it's cool—"Ah, I was Kruschev." "Oh yeah, I was this." So we know that—and that's with kids all over the academic spectrum—and they all react the same.

Kramer and Bender implemented simulations because of the overwhelming positive feedback they received from their current and previous students, from both their displays of enthusiasm and their state test scores. As Bender pointed out:

> The academic benefits are there. … Most of the time on the state tests, the kids are writing. We don't have any kids that throw down the test in half an hour. They are all writing until the end because they have lots to share and they are eager, … We find that, while our colleagues are complaining that "Oh, our kids didn't give a crap about the test," we find that our kids do.

Although this study did not attempt to correlate the teachers' use of simulations and student historical understanding, we found that over the course of the academic year, Kramer and Bender enacted a curriculum of regular simulations without adversely influencing their students' performance on standardized exams. In fact, in an analysis of the state testing data for the last four years (New York State District Report Cards, 2006–2009), Kramer's and Bender's students scored in the same range as their peers in two other rural schools in the county that New York State Education Department (NYSED) identified in the same school category. See Table 1 for a comparison of Springfield, two similar schools, and New York State demographics for the 2008–2009 school year.

Their students also outperformed their peers across the state but not necessarily those at the two similar schools, as depicted in Table 2.

This finding parallels those of the U.S. History NAEP (2007) data and suggests that when teachers use more ambitious teaching approaches, like simulations, their students perform as well if not stronger than

Table 1
2008–2009 Demographics for Springfield, Two Similar Schools, and New York State

Demographics	Springfield	Similar School A	Similar School B	New York state
Total enrollment	2,106	1,588	1,838	2,691,267
Grade 8 enrollment	154	154	128	202,078
Grade 8 average social studies class size	15	26	18	23
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunches	27	26	21	47
Percentage of American Indian/Alaska Native students	1	10	0	Less than 1
Percentage of African American students	1	1	1	19
Percentage of Asian or Native Hawaiian/ other Pacific Islander students	1	0	1	8
Percentage of Hispanic or Latino students	0	1	0	21
Percentage of white students	97	88	97	51

Table 2
Grade 8 NYS Social Studies Exam Percentage of Students Meeting or Meeting with Distinction State Learning Standards

Year	Springfield student percentage	Similar School A student percentage	` Similar School B student percentage	New York State student percentage
2005–2006	83	82	80	54
2006–2007	78	75	85	57
2007–2008	84	87	79	63
2008–2009	87	80	87	63

their peers in traditional classrooms. While we do not suggest correlation or causation from our data, this finding illustrates the teachers' use of simulations did not impede their students' success on the eighth grade state test.

Throughout the year, Bender and Kramer implemented 10 simulations with their students. Despite teaching in a climate of high-stakes testing accountability, the two teachers were able to engage their students in meaningful learning simulations because they were ambitious teachers with clear purposes, and they were supported by administrators, colleagues, community members, and students.

Implications and Conclusion

Andy Bender and Jim Kramer are a case of two ambitious middle grades teachers using simulations to teach U.S. History. They have strong disciplinary knowledge; deep understanding of their students; and a willingness to try active, engaging teaching methods despite working in a high-stakes testing environment. Much can be gleaned from this study for researchers, middle grades professionals, teacher educators, preservice teachers, and practicing teachers.

First, this study adds to the limited research about teachers who implement simulations in history classrooms. Over the last 20 years, little research has investigated why and how history simulations are enacted in classrooms. The detailed portraits of Bender and Kramer's trial, role-play, and game simulations provide a theoretical typology for the sparse case literature on simulations and a research-based framework for other simulation-related studies. This study also adds to the emerging literature on ambitious history teaching (Gerwin & Visone, 2006; Grant & Gradwell, 2005, 2009, 2010; Yeager & Pinder, 2006) by providing a rich description of ambitious teaching in middle grades history classes.

The case of Bender and Kramer is instructive for preservice teachers and practicing teachers. To develop and teach with simulations, Bender and Kramer possessed clear and well-defined purposes for doing so. For example, the Ellis Island Simulation, which only lasted one class period, was used as a hook to introduce students to the unit of study. Alternatively, the week-long Supreme Court Case Simulation was used to encourage students' critical thinking. Bender and Kramer's case suggests that teachers should consider their purposes for using simulations to properly create, prepare, and execute them.

This research also illustrates successful simulations require teachers to carefully prepare, facilitate, and debrief them. Students should be provided with the background information necessary to fully participate. This may come in the form of class notes, resource packets, or class discussions. Teachers must prepare the simulation setting; they may need to rearrange their classrooms, use other spaces in the school (e.g., the library), and bring in costumes and props to enhance the simulation. In enacting simulations, teachers can involve themselves as active participants or as facilitators. Additionally, teachers should debrief each simulation through a classroom discussion or writing assignment to ensure students met their learning expectations.

This study also sheds light on potential supports and obstacles teachers may encounter when implementing classroom simulations. Supportive administrators are extremely important. They can provide common planning periods, similar teaching schedules, and an extra hand when called upon. Student support is also integral. In Bender and Kramer's class, students found the simulations exciting and engaging, which assisted them in learning U.S. History.

Anecdotally, as teacher educators we have found many preservice and practicing teachers relate that they cannot enact activities like simulations because of the ever-looming state test. This case study shows that simulations are a possible instructional method for teaching history in an age of accountability. Although this study did not correlate simulation-based instruction with student learning, the New York State Exam results for Bender and Kramer's students indicated the simulations did not adversely influence students' performance on the exam. Their case should encourage teachers who work in high-stakes testing environments to experiment with simulation-based activities.

Finally, this study adds to the ongoing conversation about middle grades teaching and learning. To assist middle grades schools in creating effective schools, the National Middle School Association (now Association of Middle Level Education, AMLE) developed a research-based position paper entitled *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (2010), outlining the essential characteristics of successful middle grades schools. In the area of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, the five characteristics are that

1. Educators value young adolescents and are prepared to teach them.

2. Students and teachers are engaged in active, purposeful learning.
3. Curriculum is challenging, exploratory, integrative, and relevant.
4. Educators use multiple learning and teaching approaches.
5. Varied and ongoing assessments advance learning as well as measure it.

Bender and Kramer's curriculum and instruction bring these characteristics to life. The descriptive portraits of their purposes for using simulations and their active, simulation-based curriculum illustrate that the *This We Believe* characteristics are possible (Shulman, 1987) for middle grades teachers.

Yet, more research on historical classroom simulations is needed. Questions for future research include: (a) What influence do simulations have on middle grades students' historical thinking? (b) What historical knowledge do middle grades teachers who use simulations possess? and (c) What does teaching with simulations in other grade levels look like? Because few studies investigate teachers' rationale for, implementation of, and supports and obstacles related to simulations, this study provides a glimpse into the realm of possibilities. These findings suggest that simulations offer teachers another method of engaging students and assisting them in understanding history in a high-stakes climate.

References

Alvarez, P. (2008). Students play the notables: Testing a simulation exercise. *History Teacher, 41*(2), 179–197.

Barton, K. C. (2008). Research on students' ideas about history. In L. S. Levstik & C. A. Tyson (Eds.), *Handbook of research in social studies education* (pp. 239–258). New York, NY: Routledge.

Barton, K. C., & Levstik, L. S. (2004). *Teaching history for the common good.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1982). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods.* Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Boocock, S., & Schild, E. (Eds.). (1968). *Simulation games in learning.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Clegg, A. (1991). Games and simulations in social studies education. In J. P. Shaver (Ed.), *Handbook of research on social studies teaching and learning* (pp. 523–529). New York, NY: Macmillan.

Devlin-Scherer, R., & Sardone, N. B. (2010). Digital simulation games for social studies classrooms. *Clearing House, 83*(4), 138–144.

DeLeon, A. P. (2008). Are we simulating the status quo? Ideology and social studies simulations. *Theory and Research in Social Education, 36*(3), 256–277.

Gehlbach, H., Brown, S. W., Ioannou, A., Boyer, M. A., Hudson, N., Niv-Solomon, A., Maneggia, D., & Janik, L. (2008). Increasing interest in social studies: Social perspective taking and self-efficacy in stimulating simulations. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 33*(4), 894–914.

Gerwin, D., & Visone, F. (2006). The freedom to teach: Contrasting history teaching in elective and state-tested courses. *Theory and Research in Social Education, 34*(2), 259–282.

Ghere, D. (2009). *Types of classroom simulations.* Retrieved from http://www.historicalsimulations.com/types.php

Gradwell, J. M. (2006). Teaching in spite of, rather than because of, the test: A case of ambitious history teaching in New York state. In S. G. Grant (Ed.), *Measuring history: Cases of state-level testing across the U.S.* (pp. 157–176). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

Grant, S. G. (2003). *History lessons: Teaching, learning, and testing in U.S. high school classrooms.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Grant, S. G. (2005). More journey than end: A case study of ambitious teaching. In E. Yeager & O. L. Davis (Eds.), *Wise practice in teaching social studies in the age of high stakes testing* (pp. 117–130). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

Grant, S. G., & Gradwell, J. M. (2005). The sources are many: Exploring history teachers' selection of classroom texts. *Theory and Research in Social Education, 33*(2), 244–265.

Grant, S. G., & Gradwell, J. M. (2009). The road to ambitious teaching: Creating big idea units in history classes. *Journal of Inquiry and Action in Education, 2*(1), 1–26.

Grant, S. G., & Gradwell, J. M. (Eds.). (2010). *Teaching history with big ideas: Cases of ambitious teachers.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Grant, S. G., & Salinas, C. (2008). Assessment and accountability in the social studies. In L. S. Levstik & C. A. Tyson (Eds.), *Handbook of research in social studies education* (pp. 219–236). New York, NY: Routledge.

Levstik, L. S. (2008). What happens in social studies classrooms? In L. S. Levstik & C. A. Tyson (Eds.), *Handbook of research in social studies education* (pp. 50–62). New York, NY: Routledge.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research in case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Miksch, K. L., & Ghere, D. (2004). Teaching Japanese-American incarceration. *History Teacher, 37*(2), 211–227.

Moorhouse, D. (2008). How to make historical simulations adaptable, engaging, and manageable. *Teaching History, 133*, 10–16.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2007). *2006 U.S. History.* Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/ushistory/

National Center for History in the Schools. (1996). *National standards for history.* Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles.

National Council for the Social Studies. (2010). *National curriculum standards for the social studies: A framework for teaching, learning, and assessment*. Washington, DC: Author.

National Middle School Association. (2010). *This we believe: Keys to educating young adolescents.* Retrieved from http://www.nmsa.org/AboutNMSA/ThisWeBelieve/tabid/1273/Default.aspx

Newmann, F., King, B., & Carmichael, D. (2007). *Authentic assessment and instruction: Common standards for rigor and relevance in teaching academic subjects.* Des Moines, IA: Iowa Department of Education.

New York State Education Department. (1999). *Resource guide with core curriculum*. Retrieved from http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/socst/ssrg.html

New York State School Report Card (2008–2009). Retrieved from https://www.nystart.gov

Pace, D., Bishel, B., Beck, R., Holquist, P., & Makowski, G. (1990). Structure and spontaneity: Pedagogical tensions in the construction of a simulation of the Cuban Missile Crisis. *The History Teacher, 24*(1), 53–65.

Sanchez, T. R. (2006). The Triangle Fire: A simulation-based lesson. *Social Studies, 97*(2), 62–68.

Scheurman, G., & Newmann, F. (1998). Authentic intellectual work in social studies: Putting performance before pedagogy. *Social Education, 62*(1), 23–25.

Schur, J. B. (2007). Puritan Day: A social science simulation. *Social Education, 71*(7), 348–353.

Schweber, S. A. (2004). *Making sense of the Holocaust: Lessons from classroom practice.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Schweber, S. A. (2003). Simulating survival. *Curriculum Inquiry, 33*(2), 139–188.

Segall, A. (2003). Teachers' perceptions of the impact of state-mandated standardized testing: The Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) as a case study of consequences. *Theory and Research in Social Education, 31*(3), 287–325.

Seixas, P. (2000). Schweigen! Die Kinder! or, does postmodern history have a place in the schools? In P. Stearns, P. Seixas, & S. Wineburg (Eds.), *Knowing, teaching, learning history: National and international perspectives* (pp. 19–37). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Shulman, L. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review, 57*(1), 1–21.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Totten, S. (2000). Diminishing the complexity and horror of the Holocaust: Using simulations in an attempt to convey historical experiences. *Social Education, 64*(3), 170.

van Hover, S. (2006). Teaching history in the Old Dominion: The impact of Virginia's accountability reform on seven secondary beginning history teachers. In S. G. Grant (Ed.), *Measuring history: Cases of high-stakes testing across the U.S.* (pp. 195–220). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

VanSledright, B. S. (2004). What does it mean to think historically … and how do you teach it? *Social Education, 68*(1), 230–233.

Vogler, K. (2006). The impact of high school graduation examination on Mississippi social studies teachers' instructional practices. In S. G. Grant (Ed.), *Measuring history: Cases of high-stakes testing across the U.S.* (pp. 273–302). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

Wiggins, G. (1993). Assessment: Authenticity, context, and validity. *Phi Delta Kappan, 75*(3), 200–214.

Wineburg, S. S. (2001). *Historical thinking and other unnatural acts.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Yeager, E., & Davis, O. L., Jr. (Eds.). (2005). *Wise practice in teaching social studies in the age of high stakes testing.* Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

Yeager, E. A., & Pinder, M. (2006). "Does anyone really understand this test?" Florida high school social studies teachers' efforts to make sense of the FCAT. In S. G. Grant (Ed.), *Measuring history: Cases of high-stakes testing across the U.S.* (pp. 249–272). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

