

**INQUIRY INTO TEACHER LEARNING: SECONDARY TEACHERS' HISTORICAL
INQUIRY PRACTICES FOLLOWING A SUSTAINED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING
EXPERIENCE**

By

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Curriculum, Instruction and Teacher Education—Doctor of Philosophy

2018

ABSTRACT

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER LEARNING: SECONDARY TEACHERS' HISTORICAL INQUIRY PRACTICES FOLLOWING A SUSTAINED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE

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This dissertation is a qualitative case study focused on how the learning done in one context—that of a sustained professional learning experience (PLE)—was taken up in another context—teachers' own classrooms. In this study I addressed two questions: 1) How did secondary history teachers take up the work of historical inquiry after the support from a sustained PLE was gone? 2) What key influences supported or complicated teachers' ability to enact historical inquiry as an instructional approach in their classrooms once the PLE was over?

The three teachers involved in this study, Stacey, Mariah, and Ryan, were voluntary participants in a university-led, 103-hour PLE. The PLE included supports for learning how to teach through historical inquiry—a rich, disciplinary approach that fosters students' critical thinking and communication skills (Levstik & Barton, 2014; Wineburg, 2001). The teachers participated in summer institutes, one-day workshops and were also members of professional learning communities. They engaged in numerous hands-on activities that brought teaching and learning together by focusing on historical inquiry using the *C3 Framework*. The purpose of this study was to investigate what happened in practice once the PLE was over and the embedded supports were gone.

The findings—descriptions and analysis of each teacher's individual representations of practices as well as an analysis of commonalities and differences across the experiences—provided evidence of just how differently each teacher took up the work of the PLE. In addition,

the findings highlighted key influences that supported or complicated each particular teacher within a particular context, and with a particular understanding of historical inquiry to enact historical inquiry as presented in the PLE.

Overall, Stacey took up the vision of the PLE and attested to having her “best year ever.” Mariah, for several reasons, showed hesitation in taking up the work, and after completing a four-day inquiry project stated, “whew, got one done for the year.” Ryan, comfortable with his existing practice claimed, “historical inquiry? Love it and do it every day,” and did not take up the work of historical inquiry as envisioned by the PLE.

Practical implications are given regarding teacher motivations for attending the PLE, teachers’ comfort in questioning and critiquing their practice, and suggestions for working towards sustainable and transformational growth-in-practice. This study adds to a growing body of research on understanding why some teachers are better able to apply the principles and practices of PLE in their instructions than others—and on working towards a clearer and more empowering vision of professional learning. It asks how we can guide and empower all teachers, who in turn must guide and support all learners.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I can only begin to capture in words the way I have grown as a teacher educator, researcher, and scholar in the last five years as a doctoral student at Michigan State University. I would like to thank the people who made this dissertation—a visual representation of my growth—a reality.

First, I would like to thank the members of my committee. Dr. Margaret Crocco's, strength of spirit and commitment to excellency, and Dr. Amelia Gotwals', grace and kindness helped me navigate and thrive in the world of academia. Dr. Anne-Lise Halvorsen's positive leadership and strong commitment to social justice education provided a strong model to emanate. Our work together on the Northern Michigan Historical Inquiry Project (NMHIP) led to so many great opportunities, including this dissertation. But above all, it has led to a marvelous friendship that will continue to grow, strengthen and bring new opportunities. My amazing advisor, Dr. Kyle Greenwalt's, calm spirit and desire to get at the heart and soul of experiences, spoke wisdom, insight, and inspiration to my heart and soul these past 5 years. His ability to ask deep and important questions was vital to my growth as a teacher educator and researcher.

Additionally, I thank Stacey, Mariah, and Ryan, participants of the NMHIP, who so willingly not only welcomed me into their classrooms, but so willingly displayed their love for history, for their students, and for the desire to grow and learn as teachers.

Finally, I am grateful for such a loving family. My husband, my most avid supporter, was a constant encourager. My daughter taught me to think deeply about the world, and was my faithful writing mentor. Chris, my special needs son, reminded me in the midst of the craziness of life to find joy and pleasure in the simple things.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Teachers, in the moral sense of the term, are people who seek to support student growth and transformation. While prior waves of reform attempted to focus on such things as social factors and school curricula, it is now agreed that these, alone, are not enough. Teachers must also be part of the any meaningful process of reform to bring about change in schools.

As a result, new strategies for supporting teaching and learning are being implemented at the same time as new conceptions of professional development and professional learning are evolving (Hargreaves, 2014). Teachers are impacted by this process of change: in some cases, as objects of policy initiatives that focus on teacher quality and accountability, and in other cases, as respected members of learning communities who are being invited to look at curricular and instructional issues differently (Lieberman, 1990). This study situates itself within the language and practice of mutual support, mutual respect, and professional invitation. It does so in the belief that teacher learning and student learning are intimately connected.

Core features of the best of these new programs approach teacher learning from the same angle as student learning—as an active and a complex process. The focus is on goal setting, reflection of practice, self-efficacy, and collaboration with others in professional settings that are sustained over time (Borko, 2004 Desimone, 2009). Teachers are encouraged to try new strategies, receive feedback and follow-up support, and spend time working with peers in analyzing student work. Emerging research indicates that if schools implement these core features successfully, they can support changes in instruction that result in increased student growth (Borko, 2004; Desimone & Stuckey, 2014).

Nonetheless, we still have much to learn regarding teachers' professional learning. Among the most pressing of these problems is whether the tradition of professional development

is one worth preserving and improving upon. Teachers have been and continue to be exposed to professional development that follows a training model (Little, 1993). Within a training model teachers attend workshops where experts present a theory, demonstrate a particular strategy or skill, provide teachers opportunities to practice what has been presented, and deliver feedback on how well teachers are performing the new strategy or skill. Teachers are then expected to go into their classrooms and implement the prescribed knowledge or skill—regardless of context, content, or changes they would need to make (Lieberman & Miller, 2014).

However, several researchers have found that the training model—with its prescribed practices that are detached from classroom practice—ignored what we know about adult learning (Lambert, 1989; Lieberman, 1995; Little, 1993). They concluded that the training model is not a good fit for bringing about the necessary changes called for in ambitious reforms of the whole-school change movement. These researchers advocated for a paradigm shift in professional development—that which is grounded in a learner-centered view of teaching.

Shulman's (1986) notion of "pedagogical content knowledge" presented a rich, deep complexity to teaching and provided a strong rationale for those advocating this paradigm shift from professional development to professional learning. Content and pedagogy, according to Shulman (1986) cannot be seen as independent of each other, and the mastery of content was attached to and dependent on the way it was taught. Thus, improvement in teaching would have to consider not only how to improve teacher content knowledge, but also how to connect content to teaching and teaching to learning.

Thus, the new paradigm is a shift from the training model of professional development towards a growth-in-practice model of professional learning (Lieberman & Miller, 2000; 2007; Little, 2006, McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Talbert, 2010). Teachers get better at their craft by

engaging in day-to-day work that is inclusive, broad based, and grounded in the realities of school life (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988). The characteristics of this professional learning are distinguishable from the training model in many ways. First, as opposed to the technical model where prescribed skills are presented in fragmented pieces, professional learning is steady and involves engaging in ideas—with others—over time. Second, rather than knowledge being transferred to teachers by others through training, the professional learning model involves teachers creating knowledge through collaborative inquiry into practice and knowledge created by outside experts.

Additionally, whereas the training model assumes a one-size-fits-all approach, the professional learning model focuses teachers' attention on specific problems of practice. The amount of experience, the knowledge of teachers, and their particular contexts all are taken into account within the learning process. Finally, too often the training model assumes passive compliance by teachers of the prescribed knowledge or skills, whereas professional learning assumes teachers will actively engage in analyzing, critiquing, and reflecting as part of growing in their practice.

As a teacher educator and researcher, I have a vested interest in this new paradigm of sustained professional learning that supports teacher learning to improve practice and improve schooling—that is, professional learning where teacher learning is collaborative in nature, is rooted in problems of practice, and is committed to creating learning environments where pedagogy supports opportunities for all students to learn. I believe teacher educators and researchers can play an integral role in implementing and researching professional learning that is done—not on teachers—but with teachers.

This study stemmed from one such learning opportunity I participated in that falls within this new paradigm—a professional learning experience (PLE) funded by a federal *Improving Teacher Quality* (ITQ) grant administered through the Michigan Department of Education. The program goal was to develop teachers’ historical knowledge and skills by using inquiry-focused pedagogy to enhance instruction that connected learning to students’ lives outside the classroom. The program design included supports for the 23 (grades 1-12) voluntary participants in learning how to teach through historical inquiry—a rich, disciplinary approach that fosters students’ critical thinking and communication skills (Levstik & Barton, 2014; Wineburg, 2001).

The embedded supports were intentionally aligned with current constructs of teachers’ professional learning. The learning opportunities were situated in authentic problems of practice, done in community and sustained over a period of time. Over a period of 15 months (from June, 2015 to August, 2016) and led by historians and teacher educators—myself included—teachers participated in summer institutes, one-day workshops and professional learning communities. Teachers were active, not passive learners. They engaged in numerous hands-on activities that brought teaching and learning together by focusing on historical inquiry.

Our research conducted during the time of the PLE demonstrated that it was possible to increase teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge, and their capacity for historical inquiry-based instruction through a sustained, intensive PLE. However, we acknowledged that our findings represented only a starting point. More research was needed to understand why some teachers were better able to apply the principles and practices of the PLE in their instructions than others—and whether the benefits we found are sustained over time.

Therefore, in this qualitative case study I researched how the learning done in one context—the ITQ History grant funded PLE—was taken up in another context—teachers’

classrooms. In this, I did not suppose that a straightforward model of “implementation with fidelity” was either possible or desirable. Instead, I saw teachers as active agents, who would creatively adapt their learning into their individual classroom contexts. Therefore, in line with the presuppositions of teacher learning upon which the project was designed and implemented, I explored how teachers were translating what happened in the workshop space into their classroom spaces (Raphael, Vasquez, Fortune, Gavelek, & Au, 2014). In other words, I investigated how teachers took up the pedagogical practice of historical inquiry—modeled and experienced through a sustained PLE—after the support of the project was gone.

More specifically, this study addressed the distinct lack of thorough investigations conducted in the subject area of history as it relates to teacher learning across the career span. Most of the existing studies reporting on teacher professional learning across the career span are in the areas of mathematics or science, leaving a distinct void in other subject area areas such as social studies and history (Guskey, 2003; van Hover, 2008).

Thus, I investigated how three secondary history teachers incorporated the pedagogical approach of historical inquiry into ongoing systems of practice, and if they were able to sustain the practice once the support from the PLE was removed. In particular, I gathered evidence to answer the following research questions:

1. How did secondary teachers take up the work of historical inquiry after the support from an intensive, sustained PLE was gone?
2. What key influences supported or complicated teachers’ ability to enact historical inquiry as an instructional approach in their classrooms once the PLE was over?

In this study, I provide answers to these research questions through a qualitative case study of three teachers—Stacey, Mariah, and Ryan—each representing a different school and district within the state of Michigan.

Chapter 1 provides the background and context of my study. In Chapter 2, I review the literature informing this study: professional development, historical inquiry, and teacher learning through professional learning opportunities in history education. In Chapter 3, I describe the methods used in this qualitative case study, including how my data were collected and analyzed.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 provide detailed descriptions and analysis of how each particular teacher took up the work in their particular context and their particular understanding of historical inquiry. In Part I of these chapters I describe and analyze an exemplar lesson as well as a lesson representative of the “typical,” normal rhythm of the classroom to provide insight into how each teacher used historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach after participating in the PLE.

In Part II of Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I describe the teacher—his or her particular individual traits, career goals, and motivation for attending the PLE. Then, I shift to illustrate the particular school to draw on local knowledge and routines. Lastly, I relate information regarding each teacher’s participation during the duration of the PLE.

Chapter 7 provides a detailed analysis of commonalities across the teachers’ experiences. First, I present an analysis of the commonalities and differences related to the teachers’ willingness to accept the *C3 Framework* as a way to structure inquiry practices. Then, I shift to an analysis of commonalties and differences regarding instructional shifts in practice made to engage students in historical inquiry that was rigorous and public.

Chapter 8 presents the implications of my study through a letter of practice. In this letter I write a letter to a prospective colleague to share my insights—lessons learned—from my

practical and scholarly participation in this sustained professional learning project, and offer suggestions for how to move forward in planning and implementing a PLE.

CHAPTER 2: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This section begins with a brief description of what we have learned over the last few decades regarding conceptions of teachers' learning as it relates to the tradition of professional development. Next, I address the current issues within the field, and I conclude with demonstrating how my study addressed the issues through research that fosters improvement in teacher learning through the new paradigm of professional learning.

Professional Development

Current Research: What have We Learned?

Professional development, whether required or voluntary, is a part of every teacher's life in the United States. It is widely accepted as a way to promote teacher learning. Various foundation, federal, state, and district money is spent each year to design and implement professional development programs. At the core of these programs is the understanding that professional development is about teacher learning. However, the programs themselves vary greatly in design based on different theories of how students learn and different theories of how teachers learn (Kennedy, 2016). Hence, even with the unified goal of professional development being learning, the process of professional development is ever evolving.

Traditionally, opportunities for teachers to improve instruction involved something done on them, not with them. As technicians—not professionals—teachers acquired the tools for the trade by attending training planned for them rather than with them (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). This conception narrowed teacher learning to a set of prescribed methods delivered through one-day in-service workshops (Lieberman & Miller, 2014). Later, as new theories of student learning evolved so did new models of professional development. Teachers were given more opportunities to reflect on, talk about, and change instruction to increase student learning

through staff development. However, even though some new dimensions of teacher learning were put into place, such as coaching and teacher reflection, models of staff development delivered top-down and in isolation—similar to the in-service training—were based on a deficit model of teacher learning, where one-size-fits-all. Teachers, as passive recipients, had little involvement in their own learning.

Consequently, research into the inadequacies within the in-service and staff development models broadened the conceptualization of teacher learning and provided a wider school vision. Through communal work students, teachers, and administrators are all provided with learning support (Guskey, 2009; Kragler, Martin, Sylvester, 2014; Lieberman, 2014). Also within this broader vision, the learning necessary for instructional change is understood as a process that is often difficult and happens over time. Teachers—positioned as professionals—actively engage with school leaders to create plans and create professional learning programs. These programs are designed to consider problems situated in practice and where teachers—supported by their peers—are given more responsibility to engage deeply in their own learning.

In short, there a new vision is emerging that understands teacher learning as professional learning. Within this social constructivist view of learning, we understand that, “Learning is not a thing. Learning is a process that occurs in interpersonal and group context, and it is always composed of an interaction of factors” (Kragler et al., 2014, p. 495). Professional learning involves creating programs where teachers—through communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991)—participate in systematic inquiry about their own schools and classroom work (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2008). Consequently, this systematic inquiry—as an ongoing process—can result in the transformation of teachers’ practices and in the school culture. Teachers, at all stages of development, are held responsible to their calling, and the professional learning programs focus

on expectation of continuous learning and participation across the life span of the teachers' careers.

Current Issues: Competing Models and Contradictory Criteria

As the above section reveals, professional development is framed and implemented based on different presuppositions of teacher learning. In this section, I briefly describe the competing models of professional development that stem from the differing presuppositions, and the complexity involved in determining what makes professional learning effective.

Competing models. On the one hand, there are models of professional development that drive teachers—as opposed to being teacher-driven. Many of these are federal, state, or district reform initiatives that align with institutional theory and sense-making (Hargreaves, 2104). Grounded in institutional theory, information in these models flows from the top, down. Research data is used to find patterns and norms, as well as define educational policies. Teachers are mandated through technical instruction strategies to improve student achievement on high-stakes standardized tests. Teachers are expected to understand that which is coming from outside their school—reforms and mandated policies—and implement, with fidelity, processes that will improve students learning (Coburn, 2001, 2006). Improvement in teaching is measured through compliance to imposed prescribed methods and content, all connected with accountability measures based largely on punitive consequences.

On the other hand, we find models of professional learning that are teacher-driven. These usually emanate from the school level and are school-based. Grounded in adult learning theory, professional growth is seen as a complex affair that requires incorporating the norms, behavior and values of a school (Knowles, 1970). Therefore, the social, cultural and organizational arrangement of schools and communities is also considered. Teachers are supported in learning

from each other, reflecting on and examining instructional practices, and setting goals for their own and their students' learning (Merriam, 2014).

Contradictory criteria for effectiveness. Determining and defining effectiveness of any kind of professional development or professional learning is complex and messy (Kennedy, 2016). On the one hand, top-down professional development—designed to implement mandated policies—often defines teacher effectiveness through student results on high-stake test. However, policy analyst have found that policy pressures may affect change on any given day—by a specific teacher who is teaching a particular subject—but they have found little evidence that such policies have the intended impact on teachers' classrooms over time (Cohen & Barnes, 1993b; O'Day, 2002). Teaching is too complex and involves too many nuanced decisions and judgments to define effectiveness in such a fine grain manner (Cohen & Barnes, 1993b, Darling-Hammond, 2009).

On the other hand, when learning is for teachers and driven by teachers, effectiveness is defined in different terms. Effectiveness is defined by supporting the development of teachers' pedagogical skill, content and pedagogical content knowledge, and moral dispositions, as well as their ability to engage in reflective decision-making (Callahan, Saye, & Brush, 2016). However, trying to define and measure how these supporting elements work toward effective teacher learning is also complex and messy. Guskey, (2003) in seeking to define effectiveness in professional learning, found most of the research evidence to be inconsistent, and sometimes, contradictory. He concluded the characteristics that influence the effectiveness of professional learning are “multiple and highly complex” (Guskey, 2003, p. 750).

In sum, future research is needed to help us better understand how to help teachers negotiate the tensions of competing models of professional learning, and to work towards a

clearer and more empowering vision of professional learning—development committed to guiding and supporting all teachers, who in turn guide and support all learners.

Because I am deeply committed to helping teachers grow in their practice, learning from teachers, and being involved in the change, I now turn to describe how this study addressed the current issues as it invested in research that studied the relationship of professional learning, teacher learning and student learning.

Speaking into the Debate: My Study

Despite the widespread agreement about its importance, there is little consensus about how what happens in professional learning that leads to teacher learning or alters teaching practice (Webster-Wright, 2009). Therefore, Webster-Wright (2009) argued for further research to better understand the relationship between teacher learning in PLE and how teachers incorporate new ideas into their ongoing systems of practice. Given the slow and incremental ways in which teachers incorporate new practices into ongoing practices, merely studying results within the time period of professional learning programs is not sufficient. As I have stated above, work needs to be done to follow up on professional learning opportunities, so that we can better define how learning in one context translates into another (Guskey, 2009; Kennedy, 2016, Webster-Wright, 2009).

Therefore, my study focused on what happened in the classroom following a university-led, voluntary professional learning program, and how it impacted teacher learning (and ultimately, student learning) over time (van hover, 2008). It provides insight into how the learning done in one context—that of a sustained professional learning program—was taken up in another context—teacher’s own classrooms. In doing so, it addressed the current lack of research into the long-term impact of professional learning (Callahan, Saye & Brush, 2016).

More specifically, this study followed how three secondary history teachers took up their work after completing an intensive, sustained, voluntary university-led PLE. Most of the existing studies are in the areas of mathematics or science, leaving a distinct void in other subject area areas, such as history (Guskey, 2003, van Hover, 2008). This qualitative case study speaks into this void, as I highlighted how three secondary history teachers incorporated the pedagogical approach of historical inquiry into ongoing systems of practice, and if they were able to improve practice once the support from PLE was removed.

Historical Inquiry

Since school learning has its origins and goals in disciplinary frameworks for knowing, my study focused on historical inquiry as an instructional approach in the secondary history classroom. Thus, this section details my stance on historical inquiry, the theory behind historical inquiry, and research that explores the absence of historical inquiry within many secondary history classrooms.

Understanding Historical Inquiry

Because inquiry has been defined, interpreted, and implemented in the classrooms in many different ways it is necessary to clearly define my presupposition regarding historical inquiry. Historical inquiry is defined here as a research-based instructional approach to the teaching of history that fosters students' critical thinking skills as they engage in asking questions, gather and evaluate relevant evidence, and reach conclusions based on the evidence (Levstik & Barton, 2015, Wineburg, 2001). Within this definition, inquiry is not seen as merely an innovative instructional method and history is not studied as an isolated academic discipline.

This approach to inquiry is steeped in Dewey's (1910) idea of reflective thought, "Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of

the grounds that support it, and further conclusions to which it tends” (p. 5-6). In short, I see inquiry very much along the lines as proposed by Dewey and other pragmatists. Inquiry should be understood within the context of individuals and groups seeking to restore balance and harmony to problematic personal and social situations. First, there is a 'felt difficulty.' Then, attempts to define that problem are made. This leads into close observation of existing conditions, collection of relevant information, and possible courses of action. Then, as courses of action are put into place, further reflection on and assessments of consequences, both intended and unintended, are made. In all of this, inquiry is understood as *a phase of intelligent action* through the integration of the problematic emotional, moral, and intellectual aspects of a situation (Dewey, 1938).

When applied to history, this perplexity about the past, rather than a prescriptive version of inquiry to study how historians go about their investigations, involves doing history (Levstik & Barton, 2015). Students actively involve in ‘intelligent action’ by asking questions about a ‘felt difficulty,’ gather and analyze relevant evidence, consider and reflect on a variety of alternatives, and consider possible courses of action based on the evidence.

Indeed, as Levstik and Barton (2105) have argued, historical inquiry of this nature is essential to acting within a pluralistic democracy. It allows students to explore the human experience, encounter competing perspectives, and construct arguments based on evidence, and in doing so develop the ability to be informed and active decision makers. Historical inquiry engages students in historical content that focuses on people, is complex and controversial, and is as much about the present as it is the past.

Pedagogically, historical inquiry creates opportunities for students to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to actively participate in the world. Using frameworks such as the

recently released *College, Career, and Civic Life Framework for Social Studies State Standards* (hereafter *C3 Framework*) students learn to ask compelling questions, collaboratively encounter and analyze various primary and secondary sources, discuss and argue multiple perspectives and interpretations, and reach judgments that are supported by evidence (National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 2013). As active participants, investigators and problem solvers, students become involved in knowing history that goes beyond the classroom. Students see themselves in the story, learn tolerance for diverse perspectives, and develop as active participants seeking the common good within a pluralistic democracy (Gerwin & Zevin, 2011).

Theory Behind Historical Inquiry

This understanding of engaging students in historical inquiry to become informed and active decision makers is rooted in my understanding of sociocultural perspectives on teaching and learning and the contemporary cognitive psychology on which it is based.

First, within this perspective, learning is complex and interactive (Vygotsky, 1978). Knowledge is constructed, not delivered, and students are producers of knowledge, not consumers of information (Foster & Padgett, 1999). Students learn to ask questions and to investigate multiple texts including written text, art, music and poetry. Teachers actively engage students in examining the complexity of human interaction in the world, not just passively relay factual information to cover content. Practices, integrated with talking, thinking, believing, knowing, acting, and interacting, and are linked to complexity of human interaction (Gee, 2013).

Second, within contemporary cognitive psychology, learning is purposeful (Gardner & Dyson, 1994). “Clear purposes direct content selection, encourage a sense of agency among students, and create an environment that supports continued intellectual growth” (Levstik & Barton, 2015, p. 13). Historical inquiry provides the opportunities for students to engage in doing

history, not just knowing about history. Through inquiry students develop new knowledge, not memorize knowledge constructed by others. Teachers scaffold and use age appropriate activities so that students are able to confront issues of diversity and equity, develop a sense of civic identity and participation, and address moral and ethical dilemmas in the context of democratic values (Barton, 2010).

Lastly, in addition to being complex, interactive and purposeful, learning means in-depth understandings. Cognitive psychologists explain that the difference between an expert and a novice learner can be explained in how learners organize and make sense of information, not in terms of who knows more about a given topic (Chi, Feltovich, & Glaser, 1981). Expert learners organize information into mental representations—schemas. In doing so, they reach a depth of understanding of concepts and perspectives that go well beyond simply memorizing and retaining facts (Levstik & Barton, 2015). Historical inquiry, as it requires students' sustained attention on a given topic, opens up the possibility to reach this in-depth understanding. Teachers tap into students' natural curiosities and provide both the opportunities for disciplined inquiry and the necessary scaffolding for students to explore important and meaningful situations that are similar to what people face in life outside of the classroom (Wiggins, 1993).

Absence of Historical Inquiry in Secondary History Classrooms

Larry Cuban (1993), in his extensive study of pedagogy in all subject areas between 1880 and 1990, revealed that the teacher-centered traditional model of teaching dominated the classroom during this time. Even though recent attention has been given to reforms in the teaching of history, numerous smaller studies substantiate that Cuban's claim still holds true for many secondary history classrooms today (Barton & Levstik, 2003; Foster & Padgett, 1999). History instruction in schools in the U.S. is dominated by the traditional approach where teachers

primarily use the textbook to transmit information through the initiate-respond-evaluate (IRE) model (Saye, Kohmeier, Brush, Mitchell, and Farmer, 2009).

Often, within this teacher-centered instruction, students—as passive recipients—receive a “fixed” interpretation about the past. History is something they know and that “knowing” is assessed in bits and pieces at the end of a unit test (Levstik & Barton, 2015). Particularly disconcerting is that students taught this way are apt to leave school with misconceived notions of history and their role as citizens in a pluralistic society. They consider history as a singular story, rather than as a “furious debate informed by evidence and reason” (Loewen, 1995, p. 5).

Several factors contribute to the neglect of historical inquiry in secondary history classrooms. First, some history teachers may not see the teaching of history as unique (Gerwin & Zevin, 2011). The result is history will be taught— just like many other subjects students take— through reading assigned texts, memorizing facts, and taking tests. Additionally, teachers within a high-stakes accountability environment, have the constant pressure to cover the textbook and the prescribed curriculum. Historical inquiry—taking the time to construct historical accounts by digging through primary sources, entertaining multiple perspectives, and discussing possible conclusions—may be educational, but it is time consuming, and often takes the back seat to teacher-centered textbook instruction (Barton & Levstik, 2003).

Another contributing factor to the neglect of using historical inquiry is fear (Barton & Levstik, 2003). Teachers may fear having to deal with issues of conflict and power that may be exposed through inquiry, especially those such as race, gender, and politics that question the dominant narrative. Since 80% of the teaching force still remains white, middle class, and female, their educational training may never have exposed them to questioning the “truth” of the dominant culture’s interpretation of history (Schniedewind & Davidson, 2014).

Lastly, teachers avoid historical inquiry due to lack of control that might ensue if students are allowed to investigate open-ended, controversial issues and express their own opinions. (Barton & Levstik, 2003). Rather than step into the uncertainty with students, teachers seek to create classroom environments that are orderly, predictable, and quiet (Levstik & Barton, 2015).

In sum, this study stemmed from the belief that as teachers developed a better understanding of historical inquiry they would engage students in doing history and not just learning about history. The sustained PLE these three teachers participated in focused on spurring historical inquiry as an instructional method, and this study took a closer look at how these teachers took up the work of historical inquiry after the support from the PLE was gone, and in doing so considered factors that supported or complicated the ability to do so.

Teacher Learning Through Professional Development in History Education

Research shows that most social studies professional learning opportunities focus on particular content areas or topics, such as history, civics, global education, multicultural education, and social justice (Adler, 2010). While some variations exist, most of these opportunities for history exist in the form of workshops and summer institutes (Borko, 2004; Wilson & Berne, 1999). A plethora of workshops are offered through various organizations such as the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, The Smithsonian Institute, The National Council for Social Studies, and The Gilder Lehmann Institute of American History.

Many of these opportunities are funded through grants at the federal, state, and local levels. For example, the Teaching American History grant program (TAH) funded by the Department of Education (DOE) from 2001-2011, led to numerous opportunities for history teachers (Humphrey, Chang-Ross, Donnelly, Hersh, & Skolnik, 2005). These grants helped fund

many colleges, museum, and university history departments in efforts to provide professional learning to improve teachers' knowledge and teaching of American history.

The TAH grants were responding to studies that discovered the large gap in students' knowledge of United States history as well as in teachers' knowledge in history (NAEP, 1994, 2001). "While history had been on the stage over several decades because of the disputes over the content of the curriculum, these grants also centered attention on the method of instruction as a factor in student learning" (Kortecamp & Steeves, 2006). Thus, with a TAH grant schools formed partnerships with area organizations that extended over a three-year period to enhance the link between teacher knowledge and student learning.

Many of these partnerships were built on Shulman's (1987) approach to linking content to instruction through pedagogical content knowledge, in which he argued for a "blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction" (p.8). However, to date, the DOE's federal funding of grants had only been provided by the TAH, which ended in 2011. And, although grants at the federal, state, and local levels do provide funding for history teachers, these grants are limited and remain highly competitive.

Recently, the field of social studies began its "national rebound in 2013 with the introduction of the *C3 Framework*" (Grant, Swan & Lee, 2017, p. 3). The framework was developed outside of the typical standards building process, with the intent of highlighting the range of content and skills needed in order to engage students in understanding and interacting with the world around them through inquiry. However, the framework is still in its infancy and in

order to move forward will need funding for professional learning and additional stakeholders to provide “further insight into cross-subject matter connections” (Swan & Griffin, 2013).

The *C3 Framework* conceptually shapes pedagogy through inquiry-based teaching and learning, and in doing so seeks to renew the focus on contents and skill students need to interact with the social world around them. Noteworthy, is the prominent historical role of inquiry emphasized already in the 1916 National Education Association (NEA) Social Studies Committee report—a report that many attribute to the birth of social studies as a field. This report put the spotlight on the preparing democratic citizens as the primary purpose of social studies. Pedagogically, inquiry was promoted during this Progressive Era as a way for teachers to lead students through inquiry—gathering, testing, evaluating, and forming conclusions through relevant social problems.

Needless to say, the 1916 report was controversial and some historians expressed disapproval of the diminished focus on traditional history, the integrative nature of inquiry, and to citizenship education as the primary purpose of social studies education. Although the Social Studies Report did little to effect classroom practice, it did result in innovative materials such as the Rugg curriculum that organized inquiry around contemporary social problems (Saxe, 1991; Thornton, 1991).

During the 1960’s many social scientists and historians feared that inquiry for civic decision-making promoted by the progressives lacked the necessary rigor needed to keep our nation at an advantage during the Cold War Era. Consequently, they promoted curriculum projects based on the conception of inquiry to promote the discovery of key concepts and practices of the disciplines. In fact, by 1967, the New Social Studies Movement (NSS) developed over 50 disciplined-based inquiry projects. The Harvard Project is one of theses projects

developed to assist teachers in integrating disciplinary knowledge and ethical reasoning to analyze social issues (Evans, 2011).

Reforms and ensuing curriculum projects of these two eras highlighted the competing conceptions of inquiry and its purposes in social studies that have raged since its conception and still exist today. Thornton (1994) noted, “ever since [the 1916 NEA report] there have been disputes about what should be taught under the rubric of social studies and how it should be taught” (p. 233). The controversy remains whether rigorous, and interdisciplinary inquiry for civic decision-making as *social education*, or academic disciplinary-based inquiry with a valued end in itself for developing informed citizens as *social science*, should take a primary role in organizing the curriculum (Saxe, 1991; Thornton, 2005).

Today an overlap exists between the two competing conceptions, and it is widely recognized that at the secondary level the disciplinary-specific social science approach prevails, and in the elementary the integrated social education approach prevails (Parker, 2010). While there will always be differing perspectives based on differing conceptions of inquiry, what remains universal is that the goal is to develop knowledgeable, thinking and active citizens.

Therefore, the *C3 Framework* seeks to mark a significant shift to develop strong social studies programs. Past attempts have not resulted in improved learning as evident by the flat scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Students are spending too much time being talked when teachers are driven by content coverage demands and growing accountability. They have become consumers of others knowledge, rather than builders of their own understandings. Therefore, the *C3 Framework* is built on research on how students learn, and seeks to shift the direction or practice to engage students to learn and be involved in their world through disciplined inquiry that is systematic, robust and public.

The introduction of the *C3 Framework* coincided with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) reform movement sweeping across the nation. Because the CCSS includes a set of standards for literacy in history/social studies, some school districts are implementing professional learning opportunities to assist teachers in developing literacy strategies in the content areas.

Additionally, while inquiry is regularly recommend as a preferred pedagogy, research has shown that social studies teachers rarely engage students in inquiry (Thacker, Lee, & Friedman, 2016). Therefore, the NCSS has been developing a number of powerful tools to guide school-level instruction of social studies using the CCSS. These tools are particularly targeted at instructional shifts that need to occur to include inquiry as the center of rigorous social studies disciplines, critical thinking, problem solving and participatory skills for students to become engaged citizens.

Furthermore, authors of the *C3 Framework* have developed a national web-presence to create and house resources that support powerful inquiry-based teaching and learning. Two books—and a third being planned—recently published by the authors of the *C3 Framework*, Swan, Lee, and Grant: *Inquiry-Based Practice in Social Studies Education: Understanding the Inquiry Design Model* (2017); and *Inquiry Design Model: Building Inquiries in Social Studies* (2018) provide exemplars and act as a user’s guide to walk alongside teachers in implementing historical inquiry-based instruction in their classrooms.

Unfortunately, even though the number of opportunities for professional learning has increased our knowledge of the professional learning of history teachers, understanding and wise practice remains limited. Outside of a small number of grants, very few research studies exist that examine the impact of history professional learning. van Hover (2008) stated:

Despite the plethora of opportunities for history teachers' professional development, very few systematic studies investigate the impact of these workshops, institutes, and curricular training on teachers' classroom instruction or student achievement. The few studies that do exist tend to focus on content mastery and teacher self-report data rather than classroom observation or data on student achievement. (p. 359)

Therefore, this case study did not focus on content mastery or on teacher's self-reported data. Rather, it brought me directly into classrooms to collect data and communicate findings as a window into teacher learning and implementation of an instructional strategy following a sustained PLE.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The study design was a qualitative case study that analyzed using an interpretivist approach (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). Case study, as in-depth research, allowed me to better understand and describe the phenomenon—teachers’ instruction of historical inquiry practice—in the context important to the case—their classrooms (Yin, 2014).

Study Design

Using the method of case study allowed me to connect the teaching of historical inquiry to the context. I was able to go into the teachers’ classrooms to focus on their everyday practice within their individual school contexts. The features of this case study acknowledged the complexity of multiple variables within a context and the need for multiple sources of evidence to make sense of how the teachers were taking the work of one context—the PLE into another—their individual classrooms (Yin, 2014).

Methodologically, an interpretivist approach allowed me to look into the phenomenon (historical inquiry) within the specific condition (the classroom). The “looking” is the talking, reading, and doing of history—all in order to make sense of and clarify how distinct participants within distinct contexts took up the work of historical inquiry after the PLE (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012 p. 31). I chose to talk, observe, and read with three participants, believing that the evidence collected, and the unique stories told within each classroom, make my case study more compelling and robust (Yin, 2014). The interpretivist nature of this study was built on the presupposition that learning is situated in context, with situated knowers, and therefore not predictable.

Overall, the purpose of this investigation was to better understand how the learning done in one context—that of a sustained professional learning program—was taken up in another

context—the teacher’s own classroom. More specifically, I collected data to answer the following questions:

1. How did three secondary teachers take up the work of historical inquiry after the support from an intensive, sustained professional learning experience was gone?
2. What factors supported or complicated teachers’ ability to enact historical inquiry as an instructional approach once the support of sustained professional learning experience was gone?

In sum, this qualitative-interpretive research was grounded in the natural setting of the classroom, and the lived experiences of the teachers (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). I understood the particular phenomenon (historical inquiry) as it was being implemented into existing practices, as well as the mediating factors (the variables) that supported or complicated the teachers’ ability to do so (Yin, 2014).

Context: The Nature of the Professional Development

This study allowed me to follow three teachers who participated in a 103-hour PLE offered over a 15-month period. In contrast to many professional development opportunities that tend to be one-stop shopping models (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009), this program was intentionally designed as a sustained model in an attempt to yield more benefits to teachers’ practice (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). The PLE, supported by a state-level Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) grant, engaged 23 teachers, grades 1-12, from 21 small, rural town districts, in developing their skills in the historical inquiry process. This, so they could in turn better engage students in the process.

Layered into the process of historical inquiry, per stipulations of the grant, was the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework. The participants were taught to align their

historical inquiry lessons with the three core principles of the UDL framework. These three principles provide multiple means of engagement (roughly the why, of learning), multiple means of representation (roughly, the what of learning), and multiple means of action and expression (roughly, the how of learning).

The PLE sessions consisted of four summer institutes, three one-day workshops and four two-hour professional learning community (PLC) meetings. The site for the first three summer institutes—the first and second were three days long, while the third was two days long—was intentionally chosen not only because it was in the partnering district for the project’s grant, but because of the opportunities it provided for our participants to explore the rich history of the surrounding rural community while engaging in their own historical inquiry projects. The team leaders modeled historical inquiry using the *C3 Framework*, while also being attentive to the inclusion of grant-required elements.

Teachers, in small groups, participated in historical inquiry projects in the local community. Each group wrote a compelling question (NCSS, 2013), gathered evidence through artifacts and personal interviews, supported their claim with evidence and presented their findings to the whole group. The final summer institute, held in a different county that also offered rich cultural history and resources, provided opportunities for teachers to investigate different historical sites as they incorporated culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012) into their historical inquiry projects.

During the three, one-day workshops that occurred throughout the school year, participants engaged in activities to: (1) strengthen their ability to connect local, state, and world history; (2) develop authentic and meaningful assessments; and (3) support each other to strengthen instructional practices in the teaching of historical inquiry. Professional learning

communities (PLC), made up of participants with similar teaching assignments and facilitated by project team leaders, met four times throughout the school year. Specifically, the PLCs devoted their time to a lesson study, enabling participants to design, teach, and reflect on a lesson with rich historical inquiry.

Participants

The three participants of this study, Stacey, Mariah, and Ryan (pseudonyms) are experienced high school history teachers. They each represented a different small, rural town school districts within the same state, all located within a 150-mile radius of each other. Stacey and Mariah taught in public high schools and Ryan was at a fine-arts private boarding high school offering grades 9-12. Investigating how these three particular teachers understood and implemented historical inquiry within their particular contexts provided in-depth information pertaining to my research questions. In this section, I briefly introduce each participant, and subsequent Chapters 4, 5, and 6 provide detailed descriptions of each particular teacher's individual traits, career goals and school context.

Stacey. Stacey was a vivacious teacher who set the bar high for herself and her students. Her love for learning was apparent by her actions and her words. She was spirited, sure of herself, and quick to speak her mind—sometimes quite sarcastically—which once the students got used to, recognized as her way of deeply caring for them. Stacey, at mid-career, had fifteen years of experience at the same school. This public high school was located in a rural, unincorporated community in Western Michigan. The student population was approximately 1400, predominately White, and middle-class. My lesson observations took place in Stacey's second hour World History class of nineteen sophomores.

Mariah. Mariah, an empathetic teacher with a big heart loved building relationships with her students. She was enthusiastic about history and wanted her students to do well. At mid-career, Mariah communicated the tension of trying to balance being a good mom and a good teacher. Her public high school was located in a small, rural town in Western Michigan. The student population was approximately 3500 predominately White, with over 32% on the free/reduced lunch program. My lesson observations took place in Mariah's fourth hour United States History class of twenty-six sophomores and junior.

Ryan. Ryan was a history enthusiast, constantly on a quest for new insights and understandings. He was an avid reader of American history and spent summers traveling and learning about historic sites in the United States. Ryan exemplified the importance of building relationships with students both within the classroom and outside it through extra-curricular activities. Ryan was in his twenty-fifth year of teaching, twenty-one of which have been at this particular non-profit, fine arts private boarding school. The school served 500 students, grades 9-12. One hundred fifty of the 500 were international students, and 70 were non-boarding students living in the area. The lessons described are from my observations in Ryan's fifth hour American History class of twelve juniors and seniors.

Role of Researcher

Because of the interpretive nature of this qualitative case study it is important for me to be transparent about my position and role as the researcher. First, it is significant to note that as a member of the project team, I played an integral role in planning, implementing, and researching the initial PLE. This long-term involvement provided me with rich interaction with the participants, their contexts as well as their perceptions regarding the phenomena of historical inquiry. However, because of my vested involvement in the project, I was particularly aware of

being sensitive to only wanting to see evidence of its success, thereby avoiding contrary evidence. To avoid this pitfall, I constantly reflected on and interrogated my findings, so that I stayed true to participants' context and intentional about examining my own preconceived notions (Glesne, 2011, Yin, 2014).

Second, I am open and honest about my friendship with Stacey and Mariah. Both were members of the PLC I facilitated during the PLE, were participants in a previous research project, and have generously allowed into their classrooms on several occasions—outside of this study—to observe and interact. While I agree this relationship provided me a “route to understanding, it also carried with it responsibilities and considerations. Here too, I intentionally reflected on and interrogated my findings to make sure I was not letting the close friendship keep me from being able to see clearly (Glesne, 2011, p.171).

Lastly, I recognized and embraced the paradox of my identity as a teacher and educational researcher. My vast array of experiences during my 28 years of teaching granted me insider knowledge of the joy, the struggles, and the demands of classroom life whereas, the last five years of graduate school have allowed me to stand on the shoulders of giants—those who have conducted studies, developed theories, and formulated extensive resources to mold and shape my research identity.

Therefore, on the one hand, as a teacher, being in a classroom awakened my desire to be an integral and key player—plan, interact, problem solve—in other words, do the work of a teacher. On the other hand, my role as a researcher required activity of a different sort. As a researcher, I needed to listen, observe, contemplate and interact with the data. I choose to embrace the tension of this paradox. Though at times it seemed these roles were contradictory, it was not an either-or choice (Palmer, 1980). Instead I drew from my wisdom “as a teacher”

within my role “as a researcher” to delve fully into the complexity of teaching and learning to capture the nuances that context brings to historical inquiry instruction.

Data Sources

My five data sources were: (1) data previously collected from the PLE—pre- and post grant surveys, pre- and post grant lesson plans, observations of instruction, and teacher reflections; (2) individual and group interviews; (3) observations of instruction; (4) field notes; and (5) artifacts. Data from the grant were collected between June 2015 and August 2016. During this study data were collected from spring, 2017 through fall, 2017.

Data from ITQ grant. Data collected during the ITQ grant were part of the evidence used to answer my research questions: pre-post surveys, pre-post lesson plans, observations of instruction, and teacher reflections. Important to note is that while these sources provided rich data regarding many areas supported by the professional development project, for this study, I honed in on the specific data regarding historical inquiry and the supports of the PLE put in place to support teachers’ instructional practice.

First, pre- and post-grant surveys asked teachers about their efficacy in teaching history, particularly using an inquiry approach. Second, prior to the first summer institute (in June, 2015), and again prior to the third summer institute (in June, 2016)—a timeframe spanning a year—each participant submitted a “typical” history lesson plan which indicated the level of historical inquiry intentionally planned in particular lessons. Additionally, project team members collected formal lesson observations during a scheduled 45-minute teaching block. I observed Stacey and Mariah, and another member of the project team observed Ryan. Part of the lesson observation form involved collecting data on the elements of historical inquiry implemented within the delivered lessons (see Appendix A for the Observation Protocol)

Lastly, throughout the summer institutes, the school year one-day workshops, and the PLC meetings devoted to lesson study, teachers responded in written formats to questions regarding their learning, how their teaching had changed (if at all), and how they saw evidence of change in their students' learning. Again, the questions specific to historical inquiry were used as evidence in this case study.

Individual interviews. The first post-grant face-to face, semi-structured interview was audiotaped and conducted prior to classroom observations. The initial interview specifically focused on gathering data to better understand each teacher's context, the experience of the professional development, and participant's implementation of historical inquiry as an instructional strategy. I only conducted one formal interview, but more often than not, I was able to debrief with the teachers after my observations—specifically asking questions about chosen resources, and intentional choices, and work relating to the PLE. The formal interviews were transcribed for analysis. The protocol for the teacher interview is presented in Appendix B.

Group interview. I conducted one audiotaped, internet-based group interview. The group interview allowed the participants to collectively reflect on and discuss the PLE. The open-ended structure of the group interview opened up space for participants to articulate how, and if, they were integrating historical inquiry into their existing practice (if at all), sharing of personal stories, and analyzing perceived affordances and constraints within their particular context. The group interview was transcribed for analysis. The protocol for the group interview is presented in Appendix C.

Observations of instructions. Because this case study sought to describe impacts of a professional development, it was essential to make observations as lessons were taught in the classroom (Yin, 2014). Therefore, as a non-participant observer, during one complete unit of

study for each participant, I took running notes of each individual lesson. These running notes provided a window into how elements of historical inquiry were being integrated (or not) into existing practices. After the completion of each lesson, I summarized the lesson's use of historical inquiry—based on a list of qualities emphasized in the professional learning sessions. However, important to note is that in Mariah's room, I temporarily stepped out of the non-participant researcher role to become an active participant in co-planning a historical inquiry project with Mariah. The process of how and why this occurred will be described in full in Chapter 5.

Field notes. Immediately after each observation, debrief of a lesson, or an interview, I jotted down informal notes. These notes were personal reflections on what I was seeing or not seeing, and quite often contained a list of questions I wanted to pursue with the participants. These informal notes were then converted into more formal notes (Yin, 2014). These field notes served two purposes. First, they helped me in sense-making of historical inquiry practices in every day practice. Second, these organized notes, combined with the collected data from the PLE, the interviews, and the observations of instruction provided a broader and deeper view into each teacher's practice in context (Yin, 2014).

Artifacts. I collected documents such as the course syllabi, textbooks, the state history curriculum guidelines, and classroom artifacts such as lesson handouts, worksheets, quizzes, and tests. The purpose of these artifacts was to better understand how teachers were taking up the historical inquiry process and implementing it into instruction. Additionally, the documents and artifacts allowed me to develop a broader perspective—a bigger picture—regarding the use of historical inquiry over the length of the unit, beyond the limited time of a daily observation (Yin, 2014).

Data Analysis

Existing analyzed data. The project team analyzed the data collected during the PLE. Descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically paired-sample t-tests, were used to quantitatively analyze the pre-post surveys and pre-post lesson plans. This data was used to understand participants' growth within the program, along with what happened after the program was over. Additionally, teachers' reflections and lesson observations were qualitatively analyzed using an interpretivist approach (Miles, Huberman, & Shaldāna, 2014). The patterns of participants' responses and lessons elements aligned to the categories of historical inquiry that emerged were useful as I linked the story of the PLE with the new stories that emerged from this study.

Early stages of analysis. The early stages of my data analysis occurred simultaneously with data collection as I captured analytic thoughts as they occurred. The field notes were invaluable and allowed me to constantly reflect on my work, interrogate my assumptions, and generate new questions (Glesne, 2011). After each observation I took time to read through my notes at least two times and jot down thoughts. However, I resisted the desire to jump too quickly to make judgments or search for patterns or themes. This quote from Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2012) was written on a 3 x 5 card and was placed on desk as a reminder:

Because interpretive researchers do not seek to mirror the world, their primary concern in checking their own meaning-making is not focused on "getting the facts right," as if there were only one version of that social reality. Rather, they are looking to articulate various experiences on viewpoints on the topic under investigation, in order to be able to understand its nuances more fully (p. 10).

Later data analysis. Once the data had been collected, I continued to use the inductive method of looking, talking, observing and reading the data to analyze, not merely describe. I spent hours pouring over the data, one participant at a time. I read the transcriptions from the interviews and made transcriptions of what I had identified as “key” lessons. I scrutinized artifacts, and reviewed the data analyzed during the project.

Throughout the process I not only read line-by line, but also read between the lines. I read, reread, and came back again to read. I specifically noted: What surprised me? What stood out as different? What are the underlying tensions? What do I see? What do I hear? What did I not I hear? What was or was not discussed? What is missing? Through this process I began to make connections and see relationships among the different data sources that brought meaning to the study. I also had several conversations with Dr. Anne-Lise Halvorsen, a member of the PLE team, and with Dr. Kyle Greenwalt, my Ph.D. advisor, to seek their collective wisdom as I made sense of what I was seeing. Organizing, classifying and grappling with the data eventually lead to creating a framework to answer my research questions using strong and plausible data (Glesne, 2011).

After I analyzed the data of each participant separately, I then sought to make sense of the experiences across the cases. I explored commonalities and differences across the individual teacher’s experiences (Glesne, 2011). Looking across the experiences helped me see the experiences through a different, broader lens, and helped me make sense of the how teachers, who participated in the same PLE and received similar supports, pedagogically took up historical inquiry in such different ways.

In sum, through the analysis process of this study, I fully realized that I was not seeking to find “the singular truth” or indicate that my interpretation had the ability to be generalizable

beyond the settings studied (Glesne, 2011; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012). Instead, through describing the process, analyzing the data, and interpreting the findings, I joined with others on work being done to follow up on PLE, so that we can better define how learning in one context translates into another (Guskey, 2009; Kennedy, 2016).

Conclusion

Learning is a process, not a product. This inquiry into teachers' lives in the classroom offered a mere glimpse into the process. Particularly, I chronicled the growth and change of how each participant had, or had not incorporated the process of historical inquiry into their existing practices once the supports from the sustained PLE were gone. In doing so, this study addressed the current lack of research into examining teachers' classroom practices and decision making after participating in a PLE. Although this study was of small scale, and not meant to be generalizable, it holds potential for being significant in furthering the discussion of the relationship between professional learning and teacher change. In doing this study I joined in the collective effort to gather the information necessary to guide professional learning policy and practice that promotes authentic teacher professional learning.

CHAPTER 4: STACEY: BEST YEAR EVER!

Summary Overview of Chapters 4, 5 and 6

Each of the following three chapters, one for each of my participants, is written to honor and acknowledge the dedication they each have to their own learning and teaching of history. They graciously invited me into their classrooms and were always eager to talk about their work. To capture the representations of practice in each of the classrooms each chapter consists of two parts. Together, these two parts provide a window into learning how the work done during the professional learning experience (PLE) was taken up by each particular teacher within a particular context and through a particular understanding of historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach.

Part I of Chapters 4, 5, and 6 will address the first research question: *How is each secondary history teacher taking up the work of historical inquiry after the support of the intensive, sustained PLE is gone?* My findings from observations done in the classrooms and through formal and informal conversations with the teachers are communicated in two ways. First, I present an exemplar that depicts how each teacher used historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach to enact a lesson or project after participating in the PLE. Second, I describe a lesson/routine that is representative of the “typical,” normal rhythm of the classroom. The exemplar is described first to highlight a significant pedagogical change within two of the three teachers’ practice of historical inquiry influenced by the PLE. Following the exemplar I describe a typical lesson/routine to demonstrate how each teacher was incorporating historical inquiry into existing daily practices.

After each—the exemplar and the typical lesson/routine—I present an overview of: (1) evidence of historical inquiry present in the lesson(s); (2) student engagement—as interpreted by

the teacher me and observed by me; and (3) the enacted pedagogy that may or may not have influenced by the PLE—as reported by the teacher and observed by me.

The reader is reminded that through the work of the PLE teachers were encouraged to move students beyond knowing history to doing history using inquiry that is systematic, rigorous, and public (Levstik & Barton, 2015; Saye, 2017) Historical inquiry, as inquiry, creates opportunities for students to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to actively participate in the world. During the PLE, teachers engaged in using the *C3 Framework* as a way to become familiar with and gain proficiency in historical inquiry. Therefore, evidence of historical inquiry was analyzed using the four dimensions of the Inquiry Arc as articulated in the *C3 Framework*.

These four interlocking and mutually reinforcing dimensions of the Inquiry Arc are described as: learning to construct compelling and supporting questions (Dimension 1); applying disciplinary tools and concepts when analyzing primary and secondary sources (Dimension 2); developing evidence-based claims (Dimension 3); and (4) communicating results and taking informed action [NCSS], 2013). As active participants, investigators and problem solvers, students are engaged in knowing history that allows them to see themselves in the story, learn tolerance for diverse perspectives, and develop as active participants.

Part II of Chapters 4, 5, and 6 will address the second research question: *What key influences supported or complicated the teacher's ability to enact historical inquiry in the classroom once support of PLE is gone?* In singling out specific elements to discuss, I am not seeking to negate the complexity of a holistic approach to conceptualizing professional learning, teaching and learning, and teacher change (Opfer & Peddler, 2011). In parsing out key influences (Day, 1999), I do not intend to negate the complexity, but rather highlight how particular influences provided me with insights into the diverse ways teachers took up the work of the PLE.

That being so, in this section of each chapter, I first focus in on the teacher—their particular individual traits, career goals, and motivation for attending the PLE. Then, I shift the focus to the particular school to draw on local knowledge and routines. Lastly, I concentrate on the PLE by describing each participant's: (1) perception of doing historical inquiry within a collaborative community; (2) shifts in understanding (beliefs and thinking about) history and historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach during the PLE; and (3) instructional shifts that occurred in situated practice during the time period of the PLE.

In this chapter I describe an exemplar historical inquiry project and a lesson that represents the normal routine and rhythm of Stacey's classroom. Following each description of the lesson, I provide an analysis of evidence of historical inquiry, student engagement, and any intentional pedagogical shifts—reported by Stacey as being influenced by the PLE—in designing and enacting the lessons. My observations took place several months after the PLE in Stacey's second hour World History class of nineteen sophomores. This particular public high school is located in a rural, unincorporated community in Western Michigan. The student population is approximately 1400, predominately White, middle-class students.

Part I: Exemplar Historical Inquiry Project: The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict

No groans, no protest, no excuses that it's Monday—instead I witnessed what seems to be the norm—that when Stacey gets up from behind her desk (having taken attendance) and stands in the front of the room—class begins and will continue right up until the ending bell. Through their body language and attentiveness most students appear ready to tackle whatever might come their way. However, as they were soon to find out, the inquiry project ahead, *Inquiry into the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict*, was going to stretch their minds, their patience, and at times their faith in humanity.

The Context of the Inquiry

The Israeli/Palestinian inquiry project was nestled within a larger unit on imperialism in the Middle East. Stacey began each unit with a compelling question prominently displayed on the board. Supporting questions and important words and phrases were added as the unit progressed. Stacey made many intentional instructional moves—physically, moving to and pointing to the board, and cognitively, by connecting the day’s activities, discussions, and/or class readings to the compelling question or supporting questions.

The compelling question over the last four weeks had been, *Did imperialism have a positive or negative impact on Iran?* Some of the supporting questions added during the unit were: Were imperial policies the biggest impact on Iran? How can we better understand the Iranian revolution through the eyes of a teenager that lived through it? What role does religion play as this story unfolds? How is imperialism in Iran similar/different to what we saw in our units on China, Africa, India? Additionally, added words were: economics, westernization, abuse of native people, women’s issues, dictators, culture, and history.

Inviting Students into the Inquiry

I felt a sense of urgency and intensity as Stacey addressed the students:

Okay, everyone, settle down! We have quite a task ahead of this week, so it’s super important that we don’t waste any time! Last night as I was rereading the sequel to *Persopolis*—which by the way, I highly recommend, although, be warned, the story is quite intense, definitely not your light adolescent literature—I was thinking once again about much we have learned in the last four weeks about the complicated history of the Middle East, and how we are coming to an understanding that we may never fully understand all of the complexity. Now, as we move on now to investigate

the Israeli and Palestinian conflict, we are going to be involved in an inquiry project. We are diving head first into even more complexity. At times you may feel you need to come up for air to keep from drowning, and that's okay and is to be expected! Let's bring our attention to the shift we've made in our overall compelling question. You'll notice I've left up on the board all our questions and notes from the last four weeks, so that as we move on we will continue to parse out root issues in the Middle East. And, in particular, this week and some of next, we will investigate the compelling question, *What might be the best solution to the Israel/Palestinian conflict?*

Over the next two days I watched and listened as this inquiry projected unfolded. The front end of the project was what Stacey described to them as the "heavy content." In the previous unit the students had grappled with the complexity of the history of the Middle East. Now, Stacey showed the video, *The Road to 9/11*, to provide information regarding the problematic relationship between the United States and the Middle East. Stacey not only provided them with a viewing guide, but she also stopped periodically to help students verbally sort through the heavy content. After the documentary she posted her personal notes of the documentary in Google classroom. She told me:

I often post my notes so that students have access to them. I watch the movie four times in one day, so I get so much more from it—so much content comes at them so quickly and I want them to watch—not be so worried about what to write down and what not to write down. Plus, I want to model good note taking. One of my goals for next year is to do a better job of teaching study skills, such

as note taking. I find that students are not getting enough instruction in that area, and we just expect them to know how.

In addition to this documentary, the class spent time with other short video clips, mini-lectures, and discussions around topics such as the wars of 1948, the 6-Day War, and the 1977 Peace Process. Stacey reiterated several times to the students the importance of making sense of the history, so that they were better able to understand why the “Jews were in such a precarious position, and why they would strike so quickly and so deadly due to the pressure from the rest of the Middle East that is united against them. Remember children,” she said in her own unique, sarcastic yet endearing way, “always be thinking within the history of imperialism and western influences.”

The Inquiry Project

What might be the best solution to the Israel/Palestinian conflict? Students dove into this compelling question using hard copies of resources that Stacey had found online. Students worked individually or with a chosen partner to read, analyze, and evaluate maps and articles. These resources were written from differing viewpoints in order to make claims regarding the compelling question. A teacher-created handout guided their inquiry through the four specified issues: political boundaries, Jerusalem, Jewish settlements, and the Israeli security wall.

Students were instructed to write a well-developed paragraph for each topic stating a claim regarding how they would handle each of the four specified issues. Each claim had to be backed by evidence from the resources (for the boundary issue they were instructed to create a map). Additionally, each paragraph had to address the potential opposition to their claim—again, using evidence from the resources to explain the opposition.

As Stacey had predicted, this task was difficult and grueling for the students. She moved about the room assisting as needed. At times this meant helping them locate places in the resources to reread, other times she asked questions to redirect or deepen their thinking. Often, she simply defused growing frustrations. For example:

Student 1: AHHHH, Ms. Ross, this is IMPOSSIBLE. There is no solution!!!!

Stacey: Remember our motto for this project. I've said this several times and will continue to say it. You are trying to come up with a possible solution to an impossible situation. I know it's tough, but do the best you can. State a claim. Back it up. Who would agree with your claim? Who would oppose it? Why? Remember, there is no perfect solution, but I want you to think deeply about the multiple aspects of this conflict. I want you to be able to view it from many different perspectives and filter your way through all the complexity. Remember, stick to the four assigned topics and solutions. Focusing on those four specific issues should help guide your thinking and writing.

The next day as everyone was diligently working, one student suddenly lifted both hands up and hit them down on the table startling the entire class. In a voice close to tears he stated, "This is too hard and I quit—this is impossible—you can't make us do this." Stacey defused the outburst by once again reminding the students of the conclusion they had come to earlier in the unit:

Remember, we have come to an understanding that we will never truly understand. I know I am asking you to come up with a solution to an impossible situation, but use your prior knowledge and the resources I've given to you to give it your best shot. Tomorrow we'll start the presentations, and you'll be able to share your claims and how you

reached those particular claims with the rest of the class. I'm hoping that in our subsequent discussions we will walk away knowing how daunting this task is, yet how necessary it is. We have to try to try to understand it and wrap our heads around it. People! This is the world we live in and interact with everyday—it's messy and miserable—get used to it.

Student Presentations

Stacey set up clear expectations for the presentations:

Keep in mind, as each group presents, I want this to be a discussion. As you present, your classmates should feel free to ask you to verify or validate why you are saying what you are saying, and ask you to point to the evidence that led to your conclusions. Also—a disclaimer—that I must say because of what happened in the previous class. Just because I ask you really hard questions or push back on what you are saying does not mean I think your conclusions are terrible. No, I am not being the wicked witch of the west—this look is not me being mean and mad! Come on, people, by this time in second semester you should know me well enough to know that not only am I super curious, but I'm also very particular about you being able to inform us about how you reached the conclusions you did and are backing your claims with researched based evidence. I know how difficult this was to do and frustrating.

Student 1: Yea, downright stressful.

Student 2: Uh-huh, but remember we are the future leaders, so we do need to deal with this and know about it.

Stacey: Yes, so let's get started so we can get to as many of these as possible today. Anyone volunteer to go first?

Over the next two days I witnessed nine student presentations. Each group used the document camera to display their map. For the most part, each clearly stated their claims about land allocation, what to do with Jerusalem, how to handle existing settlements, and what was to be done about the security wall.

As promised, Stacey did ask a plethora of probing questions, not only to the presenters, but also to the entire class. These questions required students to recall earlier units, previously watched documentaries, past class discussions, or book/articles read since the beginning of the school year. She also pushed their thinking about their proposed claims. For example at one point she asked, "Does leaving a wall up as a memorial divide people or unite them? At another point she asked, "Is there such a thing as an un-biased mediator?"

Students also asked questions to those presenting. Examples of their questions were; (1) How do you think the Palestinians would like not having access to the Mediterranean? (2) How do you think getting shoved off your land will go over—let's not forget what happened to the Native Americans in the United States? (3) Can you really expect people to be in jail and build a new house at the same time?

By the second day of presentations Stacey started drawing the students attention to emerging themes. One such theme pointed out the western worldview being used to create borders:

In our western minds we always see these nice straight lines that create political boundaries. But what if a country is not divided up so neatly? By putting a line down the middle of your maps, do you realize that one group is being totally cut

off from the Mediterranean? Remember, access to the Dead Sea is not going to help!

Additionally, she pointed out that many of the solutions did not include the reaction of the Arab world or foreign countries such as the United States. Finally, she sarcastically reminded them (and used an example of an altercation that had occurred earlier in the hallway) that simply telling everyone to just get along really is not living in the reality of the complexity of humanity, or thinking big enough about how the world works.

Overall, each of the nine groups did present. Each group: clearly divided up ahead of time who would do which part of the presentation; used the document camera to display the necessary documents; covered the assigned four issues; and most of their claims showed depth of understanding and thoughtful reflecting.

Conclusion

This project concluded a six-week unit on imperialism in the Middle East. As the student work packets were collected, Stacey reminded the students that the final assessment would require them individually to write a short essay to articulate a possible solution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict using evidence from the resources to back up the proposed solution. She assured them they could use the packets while writing the essay.

Stacey thanked the students for their hard work on a tough project and laughingly reminded them they all had survived the storm. One last time she brought their attention to the compelling question on the board, and reiterated that they had only touched the surface of the long-term impacts of imperialism:

Remember, in the Middle East there are multiple countries with multiple internal and external issues with each other and with the western world. Is that why this

solution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict may seem so impossible? Maybe. I don't have an answer. I don't even know what to tell you...there is so much! This is a puzzle that we are all a part of, we can't ignore these issues and turning a blind eye is not going to help. Moving forward, in our next unit we will examine how many of the instances of genocide can be seen in some ways as a culmination of imperial power or influence and what it can lead to.

Analysis of Part I: Exemplar: The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict

I turn now to present an analysis of the exemplar—the inquiry project—as described above. The analysis consists of describing: (1) evidence of historical inquiry present in the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict project (2) student engagement—as interpreted by the teacher and observed by me; and (3) the pedagogical shifts made Stacey reported making as influenced by her participating in the PLE.

Evidence of Historical Inquiry

All four dimensions of the *C3 Framework* were embedded in this project. First, the compelling question and supporting questions driving the project were written on the board and as headings within the resource packet (Dimension 1). Second, students were required to investigate political, economic, geographical, and historical issues (Dimension 2) in order to make judgments and claims as how to solve a real-world problem (Dimension 3)—the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. During three class periods they poured over the teacher-created packet, to, analyze, evaluate, and, at times, agonize over the sources that depicted differing viewpoints. Lastly, students' findings were publically communicated through class presentations (Dimension 4).

Additionally, the necessary scaffolding was used to guide the students through the inquiry. A graphic organizer provided guidance on how to navigate through the information and to analyze in order to state evidenced-base claims. The required piece of having to consider who would oppose their claims brought depth and complexity to this project. It required the students to draw on prior knowledge of the larger context of imperialism in the Middle East (and other countries they had studied—Africa, China and India) in order to grapple with the “best solution to an impossible situation.” As students publically presented to their classmates, the questions—Stacey and the students’—tested their convictions and called attention to any claims not substantiated by evidence.

However, it is noteworthy, to point out that the compelling questions, the research resources, and the resource packet were all generated by the teacher and given to the students. In fact, students were discouraged from spending time looking for their own sources. In this regards, the students did not play a role in setting up the boundaries of the project.

Student Engagement

From observations I made during the project, students appeared to take the task seriously and, few, if any, wasted class time. When I asked Stacey about this, she said:

Well, you do realize, first of all, that you are observing my smallest class that seems to have all history geeks (I could use a few more geeks in my other sections). Secondly, I think the pressure of having to present in front of their peers is a good motivator. They know, from past experience that other students are going to ask questions and they don’t want to look like fools up there.

Additionally, not only as evidenced through the above narrative, but also during Stacey’s informal conversation with the students after the inquiry project, indicated that

some of the students understood the complexity and importance of the issues presented in the project. One student said, “Well, Ms. Moss—you did it again. You made us work hard, beat our brains up, and made work on a hard, messed up situation.” Yet another said, “I know we do a lot of complaining, but this was probably the hardest project we've done yet this year. Doesn't every body bitch a bit when something is hard?”

The debriefing of the inquiry project also revealed how two of the students saw themselves in the story. “Hey, we—the U.S. of A. are deep into this conflict and a huge part of it, so yea, it's important to study and dig into the complexity. The other said, “Yea, this is the world we live in, and we are soon to be voting member! We need to pay attention—be involved—and know the issues from all perspectives. Yea, it's important. People's lives are at stake!”

Overall, only one student spoke up to express his dislike of the project. “Personally, I prefer reading, answering questions, and taking the dumb ol' multiple choice tests. Yup, quick, easy, and a whole lot less work.

Pedagogical Changes Because of the PLE

During a follow-up interview, Stacey explained to me the intentional changes made to this inquiry project because of her participation in the PLE. Although the conversation was wide-ranging, three main areas of change surfaced: (1) the importance of the compelling question; (2) the necessity to bring in complexity and messiness; and (3) the significance of evidence needed when making judgment statements and claims.

Driving this project with a compelling question was an intentional change. Previous to the PLE, Stacey wrote a learning target on the board each day, but indicated that the target quickly faded into “obscurity.” In contrast, she reported that the compelling question became the center

of attention and something continually referred to. She believed the compelling question—along with the supporting questions, added words and phrases—helped students make the connections and make better sense of the content. “By continually drawing attention to the driving questions, students know why we are doing what we are doing, and instead of just hearing a bunch of facts they connect the information to the larger picture.”

Another change made because of the PLE was how Stacey engaged the students in the complexity and messiness of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. She told me that last year, students, with some guidance from her, searched for resources on their own. However, in her words:

This year was quite different. I spent several hours this past summer finding readable resources from multiple viewpoints. The students did struggle at times because it was messy and understanding the conflict is complex. However, I also changed what they needed to do with the information and I think that helped. Narrowing it down to the four categories—political boundaries, what to do with Jerusalem, Jerusalem settlements, and with the security wall helped them sort through the information and make sense of it. The entire packet of resources and the graphic organizer were completely different from last year, and I am super excited about the way it worked this year.

Stacey expressed how this year more than ever she has stressed the importance of backing up claims with evidence. She admitted this was very difficult for students, and was definitely something that they needed to continually be reminded to do.

Even when I make it so clear—well, what I think couldn’t be more clear—on the graphic organizer, I am amazed at how students struggle with this. I feel like a broken record reminding them that what we’re working towards

possible solutions and being able to express how and why we came to those particular claims. I also stressed that equally important was thinking about who would oppose their solutions and why.

Overall, Stacey reported that, over the summer and subsequent to the PLE, she had revamped much of the entire unit on the Middle East, and had made significant changes to the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict inquiry project. She indicated that because the unit was more focused and connected the students were then better equipped to step into the conflict and struggle with the “best solution to an impossible situation.”

Historical Inquiry in the Daily Rhythm/Routine

After a about a month of observing Stacey’s second hour World History class, I got a sense of her daily routines and how lessons typically unfolded. Observing second hour worked best in my schedule, and Stacey was thrilled to have me be a part of this class of nineteen, rather than her afternoon class of thirty. She admitted:

It’s a whole different ball game when you almost double the size and when it’s almost the end of the day—you are lucky to be with a group of history geeks who pay attention and who like to engage in conversations.

I chose to describe this particular day because it nicely represented how a typical day would unfold in Stacey’s room. It contained Stacey’s familiar bantering and interacting with students while taking attendance; taking the time to recap work from the previous day(s); conducting an interactive lecture; and then pointing the students ahead to what’s coming, and, at times assigning homework to complete.

Getting Started

Nineteen sophomores sauntered into second hour world history class and made their way to their assigned seats. I heard the usual bantering as Stacey recorded attendance.

Student 1: Hey, Ms. Ross, you should have been at our baseball game

Saturday. It was a wash...I can't believe how we cleaned up!

Stacey: What? You mean we won?

Student 2: Yeah, they were pathetic....couldn't field or catch a ball to save their lives.

Stacey: Those kinds of games are the worst. The game was against East High, wasn't it? Don't they have about a gazillion more students than we do? One would think that with that many students they'd have plenty to choose from to form a great team.

Student 1: I guess they are super track heavy, so weak in baseball.

Student 3: (Pointing to the mess of yard signs, cash boxes, and carnival game supplies scattered throughout the room) Hey, how did the Student Council Carnival go Saturday?

Stacey: It was sooooo awesome. We had so many people there that the food trucks ran out of food before the day was half over. Especially since this was the first time we've tried anything like this, I can't believe how well attended it was. However, fair warning—being in charge is no picnic! I am so tired today—two naps yesterday and early to bed last night, and I am still dragging. Anyway, that's beside the point—we have a lot to do today, so let's get started! Hopefully, you were all super nice to your mother's yesterday on Mother's

Day, and are now rested up and ready to take on the world's problems. We have such important and difficult work ahead of us today. Let's get to work!

Recap

Stacey had the students take out the documents from the previous day's class. She began a seven-minute recap by pointing to the compelling question on the board and reminding the students that they were investigating the root causes of issues in the Middle East. The compelling question was, *How was Iran impacted by oil, imperialism, decolonization and the Cold War?* Then, using the document camera, she quickly reviewed the topics discussed yesterday: differences between British and Iranians views of the oil in Iran; Iran nationalizing its oil; and understanding the United States reaction—drawing attention to era of the Cold War. Interspersed throughout the review were quick factual questions that required quick student responses such as: Looking back at this article, what are the issues being described? What empires were being split up? What was the purpose of the Treaty of Versailles? What Western powers get control here? What do they want?

Interactive Lecture

Over the next thirty minutes, Stacey used several different modes to involve the students in new content. First, she talked to the students about the importance of being able to understand the relationship between the United States and Iran:

You have to know this. I am giving you some perspective on what happened and the United States involvement on the 1953 overthrow of democratically elected Prime Minister, Mohammad Mosaddegh. This is an incredibly pivotal moment in U.S./ Iranian relations. You have to know this! Listen carefully to what is being

said in the next two short video clips I am going to show you. So very important because it helps you connect what happened in the past to the current situation.

She then showed two short video clips. The first one depicted the events of the overthrow of the Prime Minister in 1953, and the second video provided evidence that surfaced—twenty-five later of the CIA’s involvement in the overthrow. After each video, she spent a couple of minutes asking questions to make sure the students were understanding how the Prime Minister was removed and replaced by the Shah—a puppet for the U.S. government. “Remember, decisions made during this time period of the Cold War—politically and economically driven—have had long term consequences that affect us today and this is now our world. You need to understand that.”

Following the video, Stacey led the students through what she called, “learning through pictures.” Students received a packet containing thirteen black-and-white photographs, each with captions of one to three sentences. Then, using the document camera, she used the pictures and captions to tell the story and to help students grasp the complexity of what lead up to the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

Pointing to What’s Next

Stacey concluded by acknowledging the information overload, but promised them it would become clearer with what was coming next:

Hopefully, this all will all become much more clear over the next few days as you get into your book club groups to read the graphic novel, *Persepolis*, by Marjane Satrapi. This memoir tells the story of the revolution through the eyes of a child, Marjane, and will give us great insight into our next driving question, How do you think the Iranian Revolution will change the life of the Iranian

people? And yes, you can learn a lot from a graphic novel. We will talk much more about this tomorrow—I can’t wait—so don’t miss it.

Analysis of the Daily Routine

I turn now to present an analysis of the described lesson. This lesson was chosen not only because it represents what I observed as the “normal” routine in Stacey’s classroom, but also because it represents intentional shifts Stacey reported making because of what she had encountered and learned during the PLE. The analysis consists of describing: (1) evidence of historical inquiry (2) student engagement—as interpreted by the teacher me and observed by me; and (3) the pedagogical changes made that were influenced by the PLE—as reported by Stacey and observed by me.

Evidence of Historical Inquiry

The first two dimensions of the *C3 Framework* are embedded in this lesson. First, the compelling question and supporting questions driving the lesson were written on the board, referenced to many times by Stacey, and appeared as headings of the picture packet (Dimension 1). Second, students, through the interactive lecture and “learning through picture packet,” investigated political, economic, geographical, and historical issues in order to make sense of the complicated issue of imperialism in Iran (Dimension 2).

However, the third and fourth dimensions were not represented. Since Stacey delivered most of the information, students, at this point were not involved in analyzing, evaluating, or using evidence to make claims or communicate any conclusions. However, it is important to note that the dimensions of the Inquiry Arc are intended to be interlocking and mutually reinforcing overtime, so one would not expect to see all four dimensions evident on a daily basis. What

Stacey did in this lesson could be seen as laying the necessary groundwork needed to engage in these activities later in the unit.

Student Engagement

My analysis of student engagement in an interactive lecture is difficult. I realize that just because a student is quiet and non-interactive with Stacey, it does not mean they are not engaged and interacting with the material. So, I can only describe here what I saw and heard. Stacey asked over forty questions in forty minutes. Roughly one-third of those forty were at the knowledge level of Bloom's taxonomy and the other two-thirds required higher order skills of evaluating and synthesizing that knowledge.

However, interesting to note is that verbally, five students—three females and two males—answered all of the questions. Additionally, the interactions were teacher to student and students did not talk to each other. Throughout the class period, one student in particular, appeared to be withdrawn. The majority of the time she did not look at Stacey and on six occasions I saw her texting on her phone. Otherwise, the other eighteen were looking at her during the discussions, were watching the videos, and appeared to be following along during the “learning with pictures.”

Pedagogical Changes Because of the PLE

During our debriefing of this lesson, Stacey alluded to three intentional changes made to this lesson due to her participation in the PLE. First, she changed how students interacted with information. “Because the information coming at them is so complicated, I purposely broke it up into more accessible chunks.” Besides chunking the information, Stacey intentionally used different modes—the two short videos, the mini-lectures, and the picture packet. Previously, one short video was followed by a long interactive lecture. Lastly, she stated that through the

compelling questions, supporting questions, and questions throughout the lesson, she was consciously trying to make history less about getting facts and more about understanding the bigger picture. “It’s messy, it’s complicated, and in this lesson and throughout the entire unit, it’s so critical that they understand the United States’ role (and continual role) in the mess of the Middle East.”

In sum, this lesson portrays a typical day in Stacey’s World History class. Class time was used efficiently, was driven by compelling and supporting questions, and students engaged in chunked information through different modes. Stacey talked and students answered her questions. However, students did not interact with each other nor did they locate their own resources, resulting in historical inquiry that was more teacher-initiated and supported than student-initiated and supported. Additionally, although at times attempts are made to involve all students, five students do the majority of the talking. This made it difficult to discern how the other students might be making sense of all the information coming their way.

Part II: Key Influences Within Stacey’s Journey

Part II of this chapter addresses the second research question: *What key influences supported or complicated the teacher’s ability to enact historical inquiry in the classroom once support of PLE was gone?* Who Stacey was as an individual, her school context, and her particular experiences within the PLE—all collectively highlight the way in which key influences interacted. They provide insight into how she took up the work of PLE once the supports were gone.

First, I focus on Stacey—her particular individual traits, career goals, and motivation for attending the PLE. Then, I shift the focus to her particular school to briefly draw on local knowledge, problems, and routines. Lastly, I concentrate on the PLE by describing Stacey’s: (1)

perception of doing historical inquiry within a collaborative community; (2) shifts in understanding (beliefs and thinking about) history and historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach; and (3) instructional shifts that occurred in situated practice during the time period of PLE.

The Particular Teacher

Stacey's individual traits. Stacey was a vivacious teacher who set the bar high for herself and her students. As an avid reader, she constantly encouraged her students to be readers too. I heard her say more than once, "Seriously, children, you are killing me. Get your head out of your devices and into books. Read, people, read." She often shared not only what book she was currently reading, but how that book was causing her to think differently. To encourage reading, Stacey willingly lent her books out to students using her own library check out system.

Stacey was spirited, sure of herself, and quick to speak her mind—sometimes quite sarcastically. She told me during one interview, "Yeah, you probably have already written down that I'm bold and I'm blunt—yup, that's me." In fact, she indicated that many students at the start of the year are somewhat intimidated by her matter-of-fact, tell-it like-it-is demeanor. However, overtime they realized her quick wit and sarcastic tone were not a mean streak, but instead her way of deeply caring for them and for what she called "the messed up" world.

Additionally, Stacey's love for learning was apparent. She openly talked with her students about her work in the PLE and told them that learning is for life. Almost every time I observed her, somewhere in the time period of the class she would say, "As I was thinking about this last night," or, "over the weekend, I wrestled with this issue," which was followed by a new connection she had made, or new information she had discovered.

Stacey's career goals. Stacey, at mid-career, was committed to being a quality teacher. Her fifteen years of experience at the same school seemed to have given her a strong sense of identity and depth in professional character. This strength became apparent through her commitment to the lives of students and to the community. Her interactions with students before class starts, in the hallway, and after school indicated to me that she was invested in students' academic and personal lives. For example, I witnessed her talking to a student about a chronically ill sibling, encouraging another student who was in the school play for the first time, and talking quietly to a student after class about why their homework was not being turned in on time.

Additionally, she has been the faculty advisor for Student Council for many years. Her face lit up when she talked about some of the events she was able to coordinate—events that involved students giving back to the community. For example, one fall season she worked with the students to create Make-A-Wish Homecoming. They partnered with Make-A-Wish to connect with four local families whose kids had gotten wished granted. The place where their wish took place became the float themes for the class and the families participated in making them. They used homecoming as a way to raise money for Make-A-Wish and were able to make a \$15,000 donation when it was all said and done. More recently, the student council hosted a Wildcat Carnival that featured games and food booths for families of the community to enjoy. This, too, was a fundraiser and the money was given to a local organization.

Although Stacey did moan about the low pay, and the lack of glory in being the head of student council, she commented that it was about the students—getting them to be leaders in their school and in their community. “That’s what keeps me doing what sane in the midst of some of the insanity.”

Motivation for attending the PLE. Stacey's motivation for attending the PLE was reflective of her commitment to learning. During one of our interviews she said:

I read the description [of the PLE] online and thought, "oh, this is kinda cool!" I feel so strongly when you are a teacher you have to do things, like you get stagnant and start hating your job. I don't want to hate my job. I love my job, but I also need to keep growing as an educator and a professional. I don't want to do the same thing year after year. I don't want to be that teacher that opens a binder for here's day one, here's day two. I refuse to be that person.

In addition, she taught a Michigan history elective course and wanted to glean from the PLE's emphasis on how to do historical inquiry that is connected to the local community.

The Particular Context

School climate. Stacey appreciated the amount of freedom she experienced within her school setting and history department. There are three other World History teachers in the department, and they each act individually to explore their passions. Stacey indicated that at monthly department meetings they set common end goals and themes for each semester, but each teacher was given the agency to "do their own thing" to reach the goals.

However, she expressed some frustrations with the current system of teacher evaluation. "I work my butt of day in and day out, and feel I do some pretty dang creative stuff. Yet, in my last two evaluations, I got ranked only as average—or what they call "effective." She pointed out what an inaccurate picture an evaluator gets when they come in for one class period because they come into the room with no context of what was happening, why it was happening, or what was yet to come:

How doing that [evaluation] twice a year provides an accurate picture of who I am and what I can do is beyond me. I've told my administrator on several occasions that these evaluations are a load of crap. I do know his hands are tied because this comes down from above, but still...this is ridiculous. I told him things like this make me want to go work at Cosco—less stress, no extra work, and probably more money.

Other than the evaluation issue, Stacey expressed admiration for her school. "We have high expectations, our students do well on standardized tests, and I have the freedom to pursue my own passions."

Professional development requirements. Stacey indicated two ways her school supported teachers growing as professionals. First, was an in-house optional Learning Lab. Periodically, teachers from different grade levels (K-12) volunteered to teach a lesson, and other teachers signed up to observe. The lesson was followed by a short debriefing session. Stacey participated once and referred to it as a waste of time. "The teacher was not teaching the grade level I teach at, nor the subjects I teach, so I found it very unhelpful."

The second professional growth opportunity was a required six hours of summer work done with teachers at the same grade (elementary) or subject area (middle and high school). How the six hours was spent required approval by the administration and varied depending on the group. However, rather than this being a source of motivation for Stacey, she found these six hours to be frustrating. In fact, she came across quite harshly regarding her colleagues when she said, "I have my work to do and I want to get it done. What I don't like is having to talk in circles or spend all my time helping out someone else when the time could be better spent on my own work." In fact, for the past two summers she received permission to work on her own, and

she reported to me that her next project was going to be working on a proposal for teaching a new elective course the following spring.

Whole staff meetings and department meetings department were held once a month to cover general issues and the nuts and bolts of the day-to-day, but as Stacey reported, “never to talk about how to teach.” Stacey indicated that teachers did not co-plan or integrate subject areas. And, in fact, she preferred it that way.

Stacey’s Particular Professional Learning Experience

Historical inquiry within a collaborative community. In contrast to not enjoying in-school collaboration, Stacey’s written reflections and comments collected during the PLE communicated her positive experience with collaboration during the PLE. She expressed high admiration for all of the PLE supports—the summer institutes, daily workshops, the cross grade projects, lesson study, and the work she was able to do with the project team. She did willingly admit, however, that she almost walked out the first day. Overtime she was glad she did not:

When I walked into the room and discovered that the group was made up of first through twelfth grade teachers, I almost turned around and drove the three hours back home. I was thinking in my head, “there is no way this is going to work.”

However, over time I was proven wrong. Perhaps it was because we all wanted to be there, or that we were a bunch of history nerds; but no matter, hearing different perspectives and doing the inquiry projects with others provided me with a deep and lasting learning experience.

Stacey also had a change in heart when having to participate in lesson study within her professional learning community (PLC). She admitted that working with others was not her thing, and noted that having to process with others slowed her down. Despite that attitude, lesson

study—that by its very nature demands collaboration—proved to be of some value and something she mentioned she hoped to do again.

She referenced three reasons as to why she thought lesson study was valuable. First, it was a freeing opportunity. “The four of us got to pick the topic, and were given time to work together. We weren’t just told about lesson study—we actually did it—from start to finish.” Second, Stacey expressed enthusiasm for how each part of the lesson study cycle provided valuable opportunities for feedback from peers, “Lesson study—the conversation it created—helped us all evaluate how we structured our time, gave us new insights into how to do historical inquiry with our students, and provided productive feedback as we reflected on the enacted lesson.” Lastly, Stacey indicated that observing peers teach was something she had never done before, and found it beneficial to see an historical inquiry lesson being taught in a different high school classroom.

Besides her positive comments about collaborating with peers, Stacey also said the PLE was unique in how it allowed her to work with the project team:

I’ve never been a part of such a long term PLE, and have never been so impressed with the team that organized this and worked with us every step of the way. You went out into the community to do the projects with us, you helped us find appropriate resources, you stepped in during those moments of frustration and helped us to help ourselves.

Even after the PLE was over Stacey remained in contact with members of the team and in the spring of 2017 presented on historical inquiry at a state social studies conference with two of the project team members.

Nevertheless, Stacey did not pursue any form of collaboration at her school once the support of the PLE was over. She did mention that she shared lesson study with the professional development director in her district, but only in terms of how she thought new teachers would gain value from watching more experienced teachers plan, execute, and reflect on a lesson. Even though she highly praised the value of working with others during the PLE, she preferred working on her own within her own context. Even though within her context some opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues were put into place, she seemed to thrive on being able to control the development and delivery of content to her “children” (as she often addressed them).

Beliefs about history and historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach. In an exit slip during the second summer institute Stacey conveyed how the PLE had influenced her thinking about history:

I’ve been teaching World History for fourteen years, so I know a lot of content.

This [PLE] has been an incredibly influential time for me because it has made me realize that I need to bring in more resistance, success, achievements, and oppression of various groups of people. We (meaning my class) need to recognize this idea of dominant culture success and learn to accept, realize, and understand what that means and move away from that mold.

Later, in an interview, she told me she has never been one to use the textbook because it bores the students and it does not tell the whole story. She indicated her intent to spend much more time looking for resources to give students a bigger, more complicated picture of history, and in doing so make the content more relevant to their lives:

I have to do a better job of getting them involved in doing history that shows them it’s not about facts and memorizing. We were reminded several times during the

workshops that it's more about questions than answers, and about learning to live in a complex and messy world. I want my students to walk away with more questions than answers.

Not only did the PLE push her to think more deeply about history, but also, Stacey shared, in writing and in an interview, how being involved in this project had taught her so much about historical inquiry. She expressed the most powerful element for her was that she not only heard about historical inquiry, but she actually did historical inquiry. She walked away from the PLE committed to doing the same with her students.

Instructional shifts during the PLE. As discussed earlier, the PLE was situated within practice so that teachers could grow in their practice and bring problems of practice to the PLE. Stacey, eager to learn and willing to take risks, seized the opportunity to try new things in her classroom. In her words, "I have spent a ton of time freshening up lessons, recreating projects, and implementing tons of new things in my classroom." For instance, she indicated getting rid of writing the daily learning target on the board. In its place she put the compelling question for the unit and added supporting questions as the unit progressed. Additionally, the compelling question was written on every student handout, and she reported intentionally helping students make connections and draw conclusions based on the driving question(s).

Stacey also shared that, because of the PLE, she intentionally starts the school year differently. She developed an opening activity for the purpose of leading students into a discussion about historical inquiry. First, the students watched an episode of the television show, *Crime Scene Investigation (CSI)*. However, she purposefully stopped the episode before the perpetrator of the crime was revealed. Students were required to use evidence from the show to make a claim as to who was guilty. Stacey reported that the ensuing discussion was heated, as

many of the students disagreed as to who had committed the crime. Students were only allowed to participate if they could back up their arguments with evidence. After finishing the episode to discover the real criminal, Stacey reported introducing them to the dimensions of the Inquiry Arc of the *C3 Framework*.

Later in the fall, I observed Stacey teaching a lesson that had been intentionally redesigned due to the work being done in the PLE. Compelled by the inquiry question, *Did imperialism have a positive or negative impact on India?* and after a lecture providing geographical, historical, and political information on India, the students were given the opportunity to take on the role of a reporter traveling around India. They “talked” to several different people from different walks of life to hear stories of how imperialism was impacting their lives. The “talking” was the reading of several short primary and secondary sources taken from several different sources. Their interviews were “recorded” on a graphic organizer and the end product was a written editorial where each student used evidence from the “interview” to indicate whether imperialism was having a positive or negative impact in India. Although, still teacher—and, not student—driven, this lesson did provide evidence that Stacey was incorporating historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach. To some degree, Stacey had incorporated all four dimensions of the *C3 Framework*.

Additional evidence of her work on historical inquiry during the PLE was provided by her PLE pre and post-lesson plans. Her submitted pre-lesson was a pre-fabricated lesson taken directly from *Reading Like a Historian* (sheg.stanford.edu/). Students were required to answer questions as they read through four documents regarding the India Partition Plan. Then using evidence from the four documents they made claims as to whether the plan was a good decision given what people knew at the time. While the lesson did include students reading, analyzing and using primary documents to support claims, it did not include a compelling question to drive the

lesson, nor were connections made to the students' lives. Additionally, students worked independently through teacher made handouts.

In contrast, Stacey's post-lesson—actually a post-unit—revealed her eagerness, ambition, and commitment to historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach. Stacey had totally overhauled an entire unit within her Michigan History elective. Divided into small groups, the students in her Michigan History class participated in historical inquiry by creating traveling trunks. These trunks were developed through the collaborative work of Stacey, her students, and participating fourth grade teachers who would be receiving the completed trunks. Stacey's students studied fourth-grade Michigan standards, interviewed the teachers to determine the necessary topics, and visited fourth-grade classrooms to observe Michigan history lessons. Each trunk contained a historical inquiry project for a fourth grade classroom. Each trunk included: a detailed lesson plan; instructional goals and strategies; student activities; assessments; and all necessary materials to complete the inquiry (i.e. artifacts, primary and secondary sources, graphic organizers).

The change from the pre-lesson to the post-lesson visibly demonstrated Stacey's commitment to designing and implementing disciplined historical inquiry. Through the traveling trunk project, the student-driven historical inquiry led to hands-on and minds-on materials made, in turn, to engage fourth graders in historical inquiry. Through these creative pedagogical practices Stacey enhanced her Michigan History unit to be inquiry-driven, meaningfully integrated, and challenging as it connected her students to the community and to their lives beyond the classroom.

During the PLE Stacey also set future goals for herself. First, she told me that she had been reflecting on the importance of setting up an inquiry learning community. She has

experienced that this first semester required going against the norms students are used to. They want to read, listen, answer questions, and take a test.

It takes some pulling teeth, but by second semester they are so much better at analyzing, evaluating, and making claims. They finally catch on that I'm not going to give them information to memorize and that just like life is messy and complicated—so is doing world history.

Second, she indicated the desire to revamp her assessments. She relayed that her current testing relied almost completely on memorization and she wanted to work on aligning her assessments with the fourth dimension of the *C3 Framework*. She spoke of creating opportunities for students to be involved in community projects and of seeking other ways for students to sharing information beyond the classroom.

Additionally, she was looking forward to more instructional changes. She planned on incorporating more graphic novels and other sources for students to interact with content. She believed that reading *Persepolis*—because it was about real people— was one of the best resources she has ever brought into her World History, and was so pleased with how it made the content so real. She was currently reading many books and seeking out funding to buy class sets.

Furthermore, Stacey mentioned that almost daily she was learning how to better scaffold learning so that it became more natural for students to back up claims with evidence. “This is an uphill battle I am going to fight and win,” she claimed during an interview. Being informed and being able to state why you believe what you do, is crucial to being involved in the real world. I want my students to leave here doing that.” Finally, she spoke of dreams for building new electives courses in the history department where over the four years of high school, students could be involved in historical inquiry projects to dig deeper into one area of study.

Conclusion

In sum, the above account provided a window into how Stacey—a particular teacher within a particular context, and with a particular understanding of historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach—took up the work of the PLE. Stacey, an avid learner and risk taker, was able to pursue her developing passion for historical inquiry in a somewhat supportive school context. Through her exemplar, a typical lesson and her work during the PLE, she expressed and provided evidence of her enthusiasm for and commitment to bringing historical inquiry into her classroom. During our last interview she indicated with enthusiasm to me that her fifteenth year of teaching was her, “best year ever!” She attributed this to the PLE.

I feel very confident in what I’m doing. Using historical inquiry as an approach is good for kids and good for education. I am little by little making changes to everything that I do and am loving it. I feel more bold in how I ask questions and in teaching them that these questions often have no right or wrong answers. The compelling questions help us focus and keep our information organized. Also, by always coming back to it, the students are able to connect the dots and the unit comes together for so much more of a purpose.

Overall, Stacey implemented many changes during the PLE, and once the supports were gone she continued to show evidence of using the *C3 Framework* to create more inquiry-driven instruction. However, her instruction still remained quite teacher-driven. Also noteworthy, was Stacey’s commitment to collaborating with others outside of her colleagues in the history department, such as during lesson study and the traveling trunk Michigan History inquiry project. However, at this point in time, she did not embrace collaborating with her colleagues as a way to enhance historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach.

CHAPTER 5: MARIAH: WHEW, GOT ONE DONE FOR THE YEAR

In this chapter I first describe an exemplar historical inquiry project and a lesson that represents the normal routine and rhythm of Mariah's classroom. Following each description, I provide an analysis of evidence of historical inquiry, student engagement, and any intentional pedagogical shifts—reported by Mariah as being influenced by the PLE—in designing and enacting the lessons. My observations took place several months after the PLE in Mariah's fourth hour United States History class with twenty-six sophomores and junior. This particular public high school is located in a small, rural town in Western Michigan. The student population is approximately 3500 predominately White students with over 32% on the free/reduced lunch program.

Part I: Exemplar Historical Inquiry Project: The Vietnam War

The Vietnam War inquiry project occurred as a culminating activity before the unit test on the Cold War Part II. Mariah's students set aside their usual routine for four days to engage in a special project that involved: researching primary and secondary sources; interviewing two local Vietnam War veterans; and presenting findings on an assigned topic.

The Context of the Inquiry

Students in Mariah's United States history class were making their way through the Prentice Hall United States History textbook. Mariah handed back the unit test on the Cold War I, instructed the students to store it in their binders for the final exam, and then introduced the next two chapters of the textbook covering the Cold War II. Mariah repeatedly reminded the students of the necessity of getting through the textbook chapters quickly so that they would have time to squeeze in a special project before taking the unit test. Over the next ten days that is

exactly what happened. The students worked through—at what Mariah reported as a faster than normal pace—the next two textbook chapters.

Students began their textbook work by listing and writing out the definitions to key terms highlighted in Chapter 15 of the textbook such as the New Frontier, the Great Society, and the Alliance for Progress. Then, over the next few days the students read through the textbook and wrote out answers to section questions. Following the completion of each section, Mariah recorded their work, and then they went over the answers as a whole group. Students checked their own answers with the ones Mariah projected. As she went over the answers, she gave mini-lectures on the given topic(s). On some days the textbook work was supplemented with short video clips on events such as the first televised presidential debate between President Nixon and John F. Kennedy (JFK) and the assassination of JFK.

After finishing Chapter 15 on Nixon and Kennedy, students took a short quiz, and then proceeded in a similar routine to complete Chapter 16 covering the Vietnam War. Finally after finishing the chapters and handing out the test study guide, Mariah was ready to introduce the students to the special Vietnam War inquiry project.

Inviting Students into the Inquiry

The Vietnam War inquiry project was presented to students as something “extra and special” that would require what Mariah called a “juggling act.” During the textbook work, Mariah built up excitement by hinting at the project. However, each time she referred to it, she also alerted students to the balancing act that would be required. She told them that they would need to balance between getting ready for the unit test and participating in a special inquiry project. For example, this message was expressed prior to the beginning of the inquiry project:

In two days I will be giving you more specifics on how this project will proceed. I'm both excited and nervous—excited because we'll be tapping into that which we normally don't tap into, and nervous because it involves putting a project in between the content of the textbook and your test. So, it's so important for you to turn your work in on time so that I can get it into the computer, hand it back to you, and for you to keep it in your binder for the upcoming test and the end-of-the-year exam. Ladies and gentlemen, we need to get done with the Q and A's for Chapter 16 and you will not have class time to fill in the study guide. We are going to be balancing the studying for the test and this special project. It's going to be a juggling act to get this all done. Once you get done with the content work and we get caught up in this project you might forget what is going to be on the text. So, please stay on top of doing this study guide on your own time.

The next day, Mariah had to rush at the end of class to finally introduce the project. "You are going to get a rare chance to be a historian," she expressed. After this statement she spent a few minutes explaining what she called the "hidden curriculum" of high schools:

We, by we, I mean teachers, tend to just yadda, yadda, yadda—here's the facts and we go an inch deep. What gets left out in this version of school—hidden from you—is being able to be a person in a particular field—whether that be in art, science, math, English or history. Therefore, the intention of this project is for you to pretend you are junior historians. This project will take you through three phases of what historians do. They come up with compelling questions—a question that is researchable. They listen and they tell. You will first listen to national, state, and local stories of the Vietnam War and then you will tell others about what you have discovered.

The invitation to be junior historians was followed with some of the logistics of the project. First, Mariah pulled name cards to separate the students into groups of three to four. Then, rushing—because the class period was almost over—she handed out the packets. The packet included all the necessary information and was tailored to each specific group’s topic.

The students were told that the first day would involve doing research in the computer lab. On the second day, back in the classroom, each group would then dig into primary and secondary documents to further investigate and prepare questions on their assigned topic. On the third day of the project two local Vietnam veterans were coming to class to share their stories. The students would use the questions generated the previous day during the veterans’ visit. The last day of the project would then be spent putting together a brief presentation to share with the rest of the class. This presentation would give the students not only a chance to share what they had discovered, but also a chance to express—given more time and resources—what further questions they would investigate regarding their topic. The bell rang, class was over, and as student hustled out the door they were reminded to meet the next day in the computer lab.

The Inquiry Project

Over the next four days the students made their way through the inquiry project, using the provided packet to record all of their information. What follows is a brief description of each day.

Day one. Students spent the first day in the computer lab individually gathering information about Vietnam War Veterans at the national, state, and local level. They also briefly researched their assigned topic. After a difficult start of getting computers up and running, securing ear-buds for everyone, and clarifying directions in the packet, students completed the individual research portion of the project.

First, each student located the provided website and listened to segments of an oral history interview of a United States veteran. Their notes were recorded on a graphic organizer. The particular veteran assigned to each group was specifically chosen because one of the segments corresponded with their assigned topic. Then, using a virtual wall of the Vietnam War Memorial, students jotted down information found on three to five fallen veterans from Michigan—including two local veterans. In the final activity, students used the provided websites to further research their assigned topic.

Day two. The following day was spent completing group tasks. Mariah settled the class immediately by clearly stating the goals and purpose of the day. Given that it was an early release day, students worked quickly in the shortened class period to accomplish the tasks. First, each group member shared information gleaned from the previous day's lab work, and filled in any gaps in their graphic organizers.

Second, each group examined primary documents and photos pertaining to their assigned topic. The documents were obtained from the help of a local historian at a nearby public library and questions in their packets guided their analysis and interpretations. Third, using the knowledge gained from interviews, websites and written primary documents, the groups completed two more tasks. To complete the first task they wrote three inferences about how the veteran they researched experienced the war—with particular attention to the assigned topic—and began crafting a compelling question regarding their topic.

To complete the second task each group prepared for the interview of the two local Vietnam veterans. They not only wrote three questions connected to their assigned topic, but also prepared for the interviews by reading the interview guidelines handout located in their packets.

Day three. Two local Vietnam veterans spent the class period sharing their stories and answering the students' questions. Present in the room besides the students were Mariah, me, and other invited guests; the high school principal; the district superintendent; and a journalist and his photographer from the district's news network.

David's (pseudonym) story was up close and personal as he candidly shared his experiences in Vietnam and how being in the war changed him. He enlisted in the Marines in 1968, shortly after graduating from this very high school. Being in the Marines, he explained, was his form of protest against communism and his contribution to the efforts to keep war off American soil. He recounted how the war affected him:

I was so close to your age, and the war had such a somber beginning for me.

Imagine graduating from high school and a few months later being in a jungle hunting and killing people. My time in combat and in Vietnam changed me forever—as it does for anyone who has served in a war. In fact, it has been almost fifty years, and I can tell you that not a day goes by in my life without thinking about what happened in Vietnam.

The scrapbook he had brought embodied his experiences, both in the war and after his return. With trembling in his voice, he told the students that the items in the scrapbook book had remained hidden in a box in the corner of his closet for twelve years—twelve years where he did not share or talk about his experiences with anyone.

He said the “dam finally broke” when he got a call from a fellow Marine that he had not seen for twelve years. They spent hours together laughing, crying and sharing about their time together in Vietnam. This event proved to be pivotal for David. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) had severely affected his friend's quality of life. David saw the deep grief of his friend,

shared in his grief, and was moved deeply by it. He said it was “like a light switch had finally been turned on.” He realized he could no longer keep his memories in a box in the closet, and that he needed to start sharing his story with others.

In contrast, to David’s up close and personal experiences in Vietnam, William’s (pseudonym) story was historical and informational. He, too, had graduated from this high school and in 1967 joined the Army. After boot camp in Virginia, he was stationed in Germany, where he worked on maintaining tanks. Although William went off on many tangents, at the heart of his message was giving some context as to why the United States was involved in Vietnam. He provided contextual information on France, Laos, Cambodia, the Six Day War in Israel, and on the Russians trying to invade Prague. He was quite clear on why he was sharing this information with the students:

Now, why on earth was I in Germany if we were fighting the Vietcong in Vietnam? Well, as I have been mentioning, just because we were at war in Vietnam doesn’t mean we didn’t need to be in other places. We were in Europe to contain communism. True, I did not see combat, or live in the rough conditions you just heard about from David. But, our job was important too. We helped in the security of our nation, and in working with our allies to stop the spread of communism.

Following the brief descriptions of their experiences, David and William opened up the floor for questions.

The students asked their prepared questions, and the men sought to answer as many as possible. Through these questions the students tapped into the veteran’s knowledge regarding the topic they had researched during the previous two days. For example, they asked about: how

prepared the American soldiers were for guerilla warfare; what daily life was like in Vietnam and Germany; how each perceived the treatment of African American soldiers; what role aircraft carriers played in the war; and about their thoughts on the anti-war protests going on back in the United States. The two men willingly and respectfully answered the students' questions and in answering were able to share more of their unique experiences.

The bell rang to signal the end of class. Some students left, but others stayed behind to either thank the men personally or to ask more questions. The superintendent and principal thanked the men, thanked Mariah, and went on their way. The journalists and photographer had taken a few pictures and Mariah had lined up ahead of time for four students to be interviewed. However, Mariah quickly had to change gears to start her next class—World History with freshman. As the journalist left he reminded her that he would email her for follow up questions on the inquiry project.

Day four. This day took an unexpected turn. Mariah had originally planned on giving time for the groups to prepare for their three-minute class presentations. However, the students clearly wanted to talk about the veterans' visit, so Mariah tapped into their enthusiasm. Several minutes were spent debriefing before preparing for and giving—three of the seven—presentations.

Several students shared how the interview had challenged them to think differently. For example, one student shared that what we often glorify in war seemed so ordinary for David. He was referring to when David talked about pulling a dead pilot from a plane and within a few minutes life was eating lunch and laughing with his friends. Another student described the significance of David boxing up his experiences and emotions and keeping them hidden for twelve year, and how he was not able to share with the class how the war changes people. “Yea,”

responded a student, “did you hear him say, ‘When you take someone’s life you leave part of your soul?’ That gives me the chills.”

Yet, another student was particularly struck by Tom’s story, “Besides the war in Vietnam, I didn’t even think about what was going on in the rest of the world. Tom opened my eyes to the importance of having a presence in Europe and in stopping communism on that front too.” The last comment before moving on brought many head nods from the rest of the students, “hearing David and Tom’s stories made this all seem so much more real.”

Student Presentations

Mariah used this last comment to segue into group work time. Each group had three minutes to present: 1) the compelling question they had developed for their topic; 2) evidence from their research to back how at this point in their research they would answer the compelling questions; and 3) what they would do to dig deeper into the question. However, before groups began working on the preparation Mariah reminded them of the purpose of the inquiry project:

To me, this is you just getting our big toe wet—that is all this experience is intended to do. And if you feel like at the end you just got to feel that amount—then mission accomplished. You got to be a junior historian, researching with primary and secondary sources, and experience firsthand the importance of oral stories. As historians you are not a walking textbook, but rather you got to narrow your focus and become somewhat of an expert on one topic. That’s what historians do. However, I know some of you are freaking out and hyperventilating right now about presenting in front of you classmates, but remember questions from the crowd can be part of your three minutes, and

remember this will just be a pass/fail. The packet—the packet will be your individual grade—some of you should be more worried about that.

During the last fourteen minutes of class three groups presented on the topics of Agent Orange, guerilla warfare, and the Tet Offensive. Each group presented its: compelling question: information on the topic drawn from the provided resources and suggestions for further work on the topic. They also answered questions raised by their peers.

The bell signaled the end of class rang and students packed up to leave. Mariah reminded them of the “juggling act” they were performing. She assured them the rest of the groups would present the next day, but then their “undivided attention” would go to the study guide. “We have a test coming up and you need to be ready.”

Analysis of Part I: Exemplar: The Vietnam War

I turn now to present an analysis of the exemplar—the Vietnam War Inquiry Project (VNWIP) described above. The VNWIP was something Mariah told me she had never done before and the inspiration for pursuing it was because of what she had encountered and learned during the PLE. My analysis consists of describing: 1) evidence of historical inquiry present in the VNWIP; 2) student engagement—as interpreted by Mariah and observed by me; and 3) Mariah’s description of how the project was pedagogically planned because of the influences of the PLE.

Evidence of Historical Inquiry

All four dimensions of the *C3 Framework* were present in this project, although some more prominent than others. First, the inquiry project itself was not driven by a compelling question (Dimension 1), but instead was driven by fact gathering on assigned topics. In fact, it

was not until the end of the project—during the preparation for the final presentation—where the students wrote compelling questions for the purpose of future research.

Dimension 2 of the *C3 Framework*—that of individually and collaboratively applying disciplinary tools and concepts when analyzing primary and secondary sources—I would argue, was the most prominent. Students used graphic organizers to record information from multiple sources that allowed them to see the Vietnam War through the disciplinary lenses of economics, geography, civics and history. Individually in the lab, and collaboratively in the classroom, students listened to oral history interviews, researched using provided websites, read newspaper articles, viewed photographs, and conducted their own class interview. Graphic organizers, question prompts, and examples in the packets provided the necessary scaffolding to analyze and evaluate sources, so that the groups were able to write inferences and craft compelling and supporting questions.

Dimension 3 of the *C3 Framework* requires making evidence based claims after discussing and arguing multiple perspectives and interpretations. Although the students did not necessarily argue different interpretations, some of them did articulate claims as to how the veteran interviews helped them see the Vietnam War from a different perspective. For example one student said:

It's interesting how, as we read the textbook, we focused a lot on the anti-war protest, hating the government for getting us involved, and on things like Kent State. Yet both David and William gave strong opinions on how going to war was a form of protest. Their form of protest was in helping our government rid the world of communism and saving us from fighting a war on our own soil.

Another student also expressed a change in perspective:

We tend to focus on the horrors of war and want to be wowed by the blood and gore. Hearing these stories made me think about it a bit different. Like David telling us about everyday life, or how the Vietnamese used the opportunity for economic advantage. These were things I did not think about as I read the textbook.

Representing Dimension 4 of the *C3 Framework*, students publically communicated the compelling question they had generated after researching the assigned topic. They also supported—how at this point—they would answer the question with collected evidence. Through their class presentations, students were given the opportunity to publically communicate results. However, because the project was squeezed into four days—including a day for early release, and one day for conducting the veteran interviews—the groups had very little time to work through their findings, develop compelling questions, and plan for the presentations.

Nevertheless, given the small amount of time to prepare, each group drafted a compelling question related to their topic. Some of the questions were more compelling than others. For example, Agent Orange group’s question was, “How significant are the effects of chemical warfare today?” This question connects the past to the present and compels further research, more so than the Tet Offensive group, which asked, “How did the brutality of the Tet Offensive affect the civilians in Vietnam?” Additionally, each of the seven groups ended their presentations by describing the steps necessary for further research.

Overall, the VNWIP allowed the students to attempt something special and, as Mariah noted, they “got their toes wet as junior historians by using a focused lens to concentrate on one specific topic.” However, my observations lead me to conclude that this approach and the brevity of the project hindered a more robust inquiry. The project, squeezed between textbook work and

the unit test, left little time for critical historical thinking—for making connections between information on their assigned topics to larger events and/or enduring consequences. Additionally, at least three times—when introducing, as they were working on it, and the day of presentations—the students were reminded that this was an extra project. That is, it was a project to be individually graded, but the content covered would not be tested. Furthermore, because the packet and procedure were teacher-generated, the students did not play a role in choosing groups, topics of study, or in locating any of their own resources.

Student Engagement

Mariah's informal survey of the students indicated a favorable response to the project. Ninety percent of the students said they appreciated being able to do something other than the textbook. Many said they appreciated going to the computer lab and found the interactive Vietnam War Memorial interesting. One student responded, "Could we please do something like this every week?" All of the students responded with positive comments about the local veterans coming to share their stories. Comments such as these revealed their enthusiasm: "The textbooks gave us an overview, but David and William described what conditions and moments were like," and, "In the textbook we read about what things that happened, but it seemed much more real when I heard someone who was there actually talk about it."

Students however, indicated that they did not always understand the directions, and often felt rushed. This comment summed up those findings: "In the end it turned out okay, but we sure could have used more time in our groups to put together the compelling question and the presentation.

Pedagogical Changes Because of the PLE

Upon the completion of this project, Mariah expressed a sense of accomplishment. In a follow-up interview she indicated to me that this project would have never happened if she had not attended the PLE. She left the PLE committed to connecting to local history in every unit:

Well, that sure hasn't happened, but with your [Linda's] help I was able to at least do it for the unit on Vietnam. I have never done anything like this before, and I can't tell you how much I learned from doing this with you. Now I know that it is possible and manageable.

A month later she also shared enthusiastically with her peers from the PLE during the group interview:

I have never, ever, in my fourteen years of experience teaching had so much student participation. I would dare say I had 100% percent participation—yes, 100%--unprecedented and so encouraging! And, if Linda hadn't helped me, I would have never been able to pull this the inquiry project off. I was so happy to have connected to the local community and to bring in the personal aspects of history. So, yah, whew! I got one done for the year.

Indeed, I attest to the fact that this project would not have occurred if I had not been involved. Before I even started observing in her classroom, Mariah indicated to me her desire to do a project, but also expressed anxiety and insecurity about having the “time and know-how to pull it off.” On four different occasions she asked if I would co-plan a project with her, so I made the decision to shift from participant observer to co-planner for this project.

It was clear from the start that the project was an “extra” to enhance already covered content, rather than historical inquiry to make evidence-based claims. As we began the planning

process, I suggested using a backwards design model. I told Mariah we could take the unit test—the desired results of the unit—and plan an inquiry project to replace the usual textbook coverage. However, she reacted strongly against this approach—fearing that too much content would be left out, and students would not be ready for the test. She indicated that she preferred the project be a short, additional activity to supplement, not replace the textbook. So, it was decided that the test date would be postponed by a few days in order to “fit in” the inquiry project.

We then proceeded to plan the VNWIP together. Given Mariah’s insecurities surrounding technology, I especially helped out in this area. I showed her how to locate primary sources using educational websites, such as the oral history sites and the Library of Congress. I also taught alongside her in the computer lab, working with students and sorting out any procedural confusion. Besides helping out with the technology aspects, I also assisted in creating the packet by: helping craft the graphic organizers; listing the step-by-step procedures; assisting in writing the questions to guide students’ research; and in creating expectations for the class presentations. Mariah connected with the local history society to contact and organize the veteran interviews. After the last presentation she thanked me and said this to the students:

Today was a really cool day. I have wanted to do something like this for a really long time. And quite honestly—I would not have been able to pull it all together—putting stuff together—without Mrs. Doornbos’ help behind the scenes. It takes a team effort.

In sum, The VNWIP was a four-day mini-project conducted at the end of the Cold War Unit II. Both before and after the project the students were reminded that information on the assigned topics would not be covered on the test, and that in order to squeeze the project in, they

would need to juggle participation in the project and filling out the study guide outside of class time. The *C3 Framework* was present, with some dimensions more prominent than others. Overall, the students responded positively to the project and Mariah, inspired by the PLE, was thrilled to have connected them to local veterans. In her words, “as junior historians they were able to focus in on a topic, listen to the data and tell others about their findings.”

Historical Inquiry in the Daily Rhythm/Routine

Several classroom observations gave me a sense of the daily routines and how lessons unfolded. What follows is a description of a typical day if you would walk into Mariah’s fourth hour United States history class of twenty-six students.

Getting Started

The first twenty minutes of the sixty-minute period took many twists and turns before the group focused and settled into the day’s planned activities. After a few minutes of frustration, Mariah got the projector to work, so that she could project the day’s reflection (based on the previous class), the bell ringer (based on the day’s learning goals), and the success indicator (a district mandated lesson objective—“I can” statement).

- Reflection: What previous knowledge do you have of President Kennedy and his administration?
- Bell Ringer: In his inaugural address, President Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” What did he mean by this? Does this still ring true today?
- Success indicator: I can explain at least 3 ways the Kennedy Administration had to deal with the Cold War crisis.

As the lesson continued:

Mariah: Would someone mind opening up the windows. I swear its either a freezer in here or an oven. I guess today we get oven. And the blinds—the ones that are all broken and tearing off the windows—yea, those have to be pulled up first.

Student: Ms. Ahmed, I need to ask you a question. Do you consider NASCAR a sport?

Mariah: What? [Mariah is drowned out for about 30 seconds with students shouting out various opinions] Shhh, okay ladies and gentlemen! The crazy projector is working, may I direct your attention to the reflection, bell-ringer and I-can statement. Get out your learning log, think-pair-share, and spend a few minutes on this activity. As you do the bell ringer...

At this point the student, who asked the NASCAR question, interrupted Mariah, ran to the front and addressed the whole class. He proceeded to give two different arguments for what is and what is not a sport—eliciting strong reactions from some of the other students.

After about two minutes, Mariah cuts him off and while ushering him to his seat neatly summarized what he said:

Okay, so there are two schools of thought on what is and what is not a sport.

Thank you for sharing, but I don't think we need to get into WWII over it. Ladies and gentlemen—happy Friday—hope your three-day week has gone well. I don't know why a three day week seems even longer than a five-day school week and I wonder what the psychology behind that is, but...

Once again a student interrupted. This time the interruption corresponded to the reflection and bell ringer, as a student began speculating about who did or did not assassinate John F. Kennedy. This particular student was convinced it was an inside job. Another student wondered why so many classes—English Literature, World History, and now this class spent so much time talking

about Kennedy. Someone else began talking about the Mandela Effect—explaining to everyone about parallel universes and the results of misremembering historical events.

After about eight minutes of conspiracy theories being bounced about between three vocal students, and eleven shushes, Mariah reminded the students that technically they should be completing their learning logs. Yet, while she had their attention, she interjected the plan for the day:

It's Friday and I have no energy, but clearly some of you do. Remember, if you are going to spout off conspiracy theories you have to have evidence to back up your claims. Now, today we will be tying up some loose ends from our previous chapters, and start on the next chapter/unit in the textbook to gain some background knowledge. You have ten seconds to wrap up this particular conversation. Not that I'm not intrigued by it, but we do have a test to get ready for so I need you to stop and focus on me. 10, 9, 8... I know you are all intrigued by the conspiracy theories, but do remember that historians find evidence to back up claims. Yes, there are still people working on finding out the details of the assassination, but we at this point are going with the textbook evidence. Not that this text isn't biased—all you books have biases, and yes, I want you to be inquisitive and some of these things you are saying may have some truth to them. However, until the facts are uncovered and brought to light, let's stick to the facts, as we know them.

Recap

The next twenty-five minutes were spent wrapping up topics encountered in the primary source packet that had been handed out two days prior. This packet—prefaced as being

something “extra” that would be graded but not tested on—had been handed to students individually as something to work on after finishing the unit test on the Cold War I. The first part of the packet required students to read three primary documents and to answer four questions. The documents portrayed different perspectives on women’s experiences during the 1950’s and 1960’s and was from the Stanford History Education Group: Reading Like a Historian website. The second half of the packet required students to jot down three things they noticed after close readings of seven Cold War political cartoons.

To wrap up of the packet, Mariah opened up an opportunity for students to share any lingering thoughts regarding the previous day’s discussion on gender roles. However, after the invitation for students to contribute, Mariah proceeded with four personal stories depicting the racism, biases, and unintentional assumptions people have made about her as a Muslim, Hispanic women. Using these stories she emphasized the necessity of being aware and of keeping biases in check:

Too often, people get nostalgic about the 1950’s. It’s often portrayed by the media etc. as a healthy, wonderful time. But remember, a lot of people were suffering—especially the minorities. People are under-exposed and under-educated about these things. So, it’s your responsibility to see how embedded the “white” American story is, and to constantly be asking how you might be perpetuating it—without perhaps even realizing it.

The following five minutes were spent on the political cartoons in the packet. Mariah asked a few questions, corrected a couple of misinterpretations, and expressed that the political cartoons were propaganda—used by both the Americans and Soviets to present strong messages and ideas

to intended audiences. Then, because “time was getting away from us,” Mariah directed the students’ attention to the next unit—The Cold War II.

Textbook Work

To start off the new unit, students were given a worksheet covering section headings and correlating questions for Chapters 15 and 16 in the textbook. As Mariah passed out the worksheet, she gave the following directions:

This unit is short, so all of the section questions for Chapter 15 and 16 are on one page. However, it is not necessary, and in fact, I advise against it, to work ahead. You have to start with the vocabulary. List and define. I know that’s the sucky part, but you have to know these people, these terms, and their significance for any of the rest of it to make sense. Once you are done with the vocabulary, the questions, as usual, follow right along with the section headings. The goal is to do Section 1 today. This should not be a problem if you get working immediately. I will be behind my desk if you need me. When you are done, bring it up here for me to check off that you have it completed. We will go over the answers in class tomorrow. If it’s not done today, it is homework. Yes, you may work with someone else and if working alone you may listen to music if you have headsets. So, let’s get to it.

The last fifteen minutes of class were spent on individual work with various levels of students on task. Mariah sat behind her desk working on her computer.

Analysis of Historical Inquiry in the Daily Routine

I turn now to analyze the above lesson. The lesson was chosen because it depicted the “normal” routine in Mariah’s classroom, but also because it gave representation to changes

Mariah reported making because of what she encountered and learned during the PLE. The analysis consists of describing: (1) evidence of historical inquiry; (2) student engagement—as interpreted by Mariah and observed by me; and (3) intentional pedagogical changes that Mariah indicated she made because of what she experienced during the PLE.

Evidence of Historical Inquiry

Dimensions of the *C3 Framework* were sporadic and can be parsed out of the above lesson; however, the framework was not used to connect students to content through historical inquiry. Additionally, historical inquiry (as presented in the primary source packet) was treated as an “extra” to either tack on at the beginning of the lesson, or as an extra, used only when and if time allowed. The reflection and the bell ringer—as compelling questions—(Dimension 1) had the potential to invite students into using knowledge gained from the previous unit to move forward into investigating Kennedy, his presidency, and the continuation of the Cold War. However, Mariah did not directly address the questions, nor were they the driving force of the lesson.

In fact, the questions in this lesson, as the students focused on Kennedy, did more to dismantle and distract the class—the conspiracy theory digression—than bring continuity. Mariah did, however, impressively connect the digression to the historical inquiry process. She assured the students that it was good to be inquisitive, but then told them to channel that desire to do what historians do—search for facts to back up claims. However, this was her telling the students about the process—not actually getting them involved in doing it.

The second, third, and fourth dimensions of the *C3 Framework* were also absent in any coherent or cohesive form. The recap of the primary source packet—on gender roles—had the potential to invite students into doing history. Mariah told four powerful personal stories of

gender biases. However, she, through telling—not the students, by doing—made the connections of the past to the present and disrupted the white American story. The same was true for the recap of the political cartoons in the primary source packet. Mariah quickly pointed out certain symbols that Americans and Soviet Union used as propaganda tools, and highlighted the necessity of analyzing every portion of a cartoon. However, once again it was more teacher-telling than students-doing—leaving little room for students to state claims using evidence from the cartoons.

Lastly, the Inquiry Arc was not present as the students started the next unit. The reflection, bell ringer, and the primary source packet—particularly the political cartoons—had the potential to infuse historical inquiry into the next unit on the Cold War II. However, the questions were not drawn in, the packet was collected, and the students were reminded that time was of the essence to get the textbook work done. The introduction into the next unit, rather than an invitation into student-driven inquiry, was a teacher-generated textbook worksheet, in which the first task was listing and defining twelve vocabulary words.

Student Engagement

The instruction during the three main sections of this lesson—getting started, recap of the primary source packet, and the textbook work—did not move students towards authentic engagement in historical inquiry. For example, the potential for substantive conversation—think-pair-share—during the getting-started activities of reflecting and the bell ringer was railroaded by the interruptions of three vocal students on the topics of NASCAR, conspiracy theories, and the Mandela effect. Likewise, although the social support to get all students involved was present through the think-pair-share activity, I observed very few students having substantive conversations with their elbow partners regarding the reflection and bell ringers.

Additionally, instruction surrounding the primary source packet did not allow students to make connections outside the classroom. Students were recipients of Mariah's personal stories, but were not given the opportunity to tell their own, or relate it to any current issues of gender. Therefore, it was difficult to determine whether students were intellectually challenged, or whether they were making connections of the past to present.

In contrast, Mariah did elicit student responses to the political cartoons by seeking to get at the depth of knowledge political cartoons have to offer. However, most students had turned in the packets the day before so they had to use memory to respond. Mariah used the image of the bear and the eagle as examples of the power of propaganda. Unfortunately, the focus on the cartoons and their messages was not sustained for more than a few minutes with only a three students responding to Mariah's questions.

Lastly, the textbook work did not appear to be authentically engaging most students in any higher order thinking. First, I observed that five of the students did not have a textbook. Second, one student was using the glossary to list and define the terms, rather than using the chapters to see the words used in context. One student was sleeping, one began working on a math worksheet, and one student was simply copying the work of his elbow partner. There were, however, several students on task using the textbook chapters to list and define the vocabulary words.

Pedagogical Changes Because of the PLE

During our debriefing session, Mariah mentioned two intentional changes made to this lesson due to her participation in the PLE. First, she changed how she started the class period. She reported that last year she began each class with having students write down the "I can" statement and ended with students writing an exit ticket to indicate "success" of the "I can"

statement. However, due to what she reported as the “lack of success” of this activity, she knew this year she wanted to do something different.

Therefore, one of the purchases Mariah made with the money allotted during the PLE was, *Take Five Minutes: American History Openers: Reflective and Critical Thinking Activities, Grades 5-8* (Cantu, 2002). Inspired by the examples in this book, she created her own reflections and bell ringers to start each class period. “Since our time in the PLE I am making a concerted effort to asking more critical questions—the reflection question I write each day taps into prior knowledge and the bell ringer pushes us into the day’s content.” She reported that at the end of each unit she collects and grade the students’ learning logs—their daily record of answers.

Besides the reflection and bell ringer, Mariah indicated that the primary source packet was also an intentional change inspired by her experience in the PLE:

The PLE reminded me once again of the importance of using primary documents in the classroom. The Stanford History: Reading Like a Historian website is my go-to. I found the documents on the gender issues on their website. The political cartoons are directly from the PLE—remember our professional learning committee (PLC) wrote a lesson study and I taught using these cartoon. I know back then I did a whole lesson on them, but time just ran away from me this year. So, I at least gave the students a glimpse before moving on. It’s not like I didn’t know of the importance of using primary source documents, but the PLE made me take it off the shelf and dust it off.

In sum, this lesson portrayed a typical day in Mariah’s United States History class. The first third of the class is settling and students are given time to complete the reflection, bell ringer, and “I can” statements on their learning logs. During this time there were also many

random conversations between the students usually instigated by three vocal students. The second third of the class was either a recap of the previous day's material, going over textbook sections, or short lectures. The last third of the class the students worked on sections of the textbook. Historical inquiry was interspersed at times, quite often as an add-on. Much of the instruction I observed did not appear to lead to higher order thinking or lead students into thick knowledge of key issues or topics. Additionally, three to five students did most of the talking, and rarely did I observe instructional attempts to involve all students in the learning process.

Part II: Key Influences within Mariah's Journey

Part II of this chapter addresses the second research question: *What key influences supported or complicated the teacher's ability to enact historical inquiry in the classroom once support of PLE is gone?* Who Mariah is as an individual, her school context, and her particular PLE—all collectively highlight the way in which key influences interacted. They provide insight into how she took up the work of the PLE once the supports were gone.

First, I focus on Mariah—her particular individual traits, career goals, and motivation for attending the PLE. Then, I shift the focus to her particular school to briefly draw on local knowledge, problems, and routines. Lastly, I concentrate on the PLE by describing Mariah's: (1) perception of doing historical inquiry within a collaborative community; (2) shifts in understanding history and historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach; and (3) instructional shifts that occurred in situated practice during the time period of PLE.

The Particular Teacher

Mariah's individual traits. Mariah was an empathetic teacher with a big heart, who loved building relationships with students. Several times I witnessed students coming to her

before or after class, or during lunch for heart-to-heart talks. Her calm demeanor and level-headed wisdom seemed to attract students to seek her out.

However, this caring, empathetic demeanor also meant Mariah was easily distracted from the planned activities of the day. For example, during one particular observation, a student told a detailed story about his weekend to the class. Mariah asked this student several follow up questions and then proceeded to elicit other “great or touching” stories of the weekend. Another time, two students came to class quite upset. They had been kicked out of a classroom during lunch break while working on the yearbook because no adult was present in the room with them. Mariah got them to talk about it, see the issues from different perspectives, and wisely diffused their anger. However, in each of these instances it was thirty minutes before the class was directed to the opening activities—the reflection, bell ringer and “I can” statements.

Besides being an empathetic person, Mariah was also enthusiastic about history and about wanting her students to do well. There were a few occasions where Mariah expressed enthusiasm for history, for what historians do, and why it was important to know history. For example:

You are almost adults, you need to know who we are as a nation, who you are as an individual in that nation, and who or what is influencing you as you make decisions. I am so happy to be with you—here at this moment—so we can walk through United States history together.

Although enthusiastic about the subject matter, Mariah expressed her inability to focus in this particular class, which was held right after lunch. Almost daily, she mentioned to the students this was her worst time of day. She made comments such as, “Come on ladies and gentlemen, I know it’s difficult to come back to it after lunch—I feel the same way—but I guess we better try to get over it and do what we’re suppose to do.” On other occasions, Mariah blamed

her weariness on the classroom conditions. The falling-apart shades, the broken pencil sharpener, the unreliable projector, the inadequate heating system, and the clock set on the wrong time were mentioned at one time or another as contributing to inability to focus.

Mariah's career goals. Mariah, at mid-career, communicated the craziness of trying to balance being a good mom and a good teacher. At the time of our work together, she had two children under the age of six and was pregnant for her third. During our first interview, she told me of her plans to return to the classroom following her maternity leave. Her return was conveyed in economic terms—with no mention at this time of any ambitions for what she was aspiring to within the teaching profession.

She also mentioned that as a busy mom, she often felt the demands of teaching unrealistic. These words express her sentiments:

I want to be able to walk out of this building—go home and enjoy my babies. I don't have time to bring tons of work home with me. I don't have time to look for extra resources or plan cool projects, ya know. Heck, I don't even get a good night sleep anymore. So right now—I hate to say it, but I am in survival mode—not planning my next professional moves.

In addition, Mariah informed me that in her fourteen years of experience—all at this same school—she has not served on any extra committees or been involved in extra-curricular clubs or activities:

It's all I can do to get my work done for teaching and I want to use my precious time for that—not for doing the extras duties that would give me even less time at home. I have managed to squeeze in grad school classes to get my master's and

the occasional professional development, but other than that, not much time for extras.

Motivation for attending the PLE. Mariah’s motivation for attending the PLE also reflected this tension of being a good mom and a good teacher. In fact, she was at first hesitant to answer why she signed up for the PLE, but then opened up—to what I sensed—was a gut-wrenching, honest answer. She said the drive to attend was more out of a sense of failure than anything else. She went on to describe how she sometimes felt she just got lost in the woodwork of the building—some of which was her own doing. “Yah, know—when you’re a female, and a Muslim, Hispanic and Democrat—within a white, male, mostly Republican staff—you learn to lay low and not upset the apple cart too much.”

Therefore, she reported her motivation for attending the PLE, was to show the administration that she, like the superstar, male teacher across the hall, could brag about something she had done professionally. She then went on to describe this young male superstar—doing his own research, publishing articles, and managing a teacher blog. In her words:

I know I will never have the know-how or the ambition to do all that he is doing. But let’s remember, that he has a stay-at-home wife who frees up the time for him to do all this wonderful stuff. I compare myself to him and I feel like a failure as a mom and as a teacher. I just can’t keep up or contribute to my profession in the way he does. So, when I saw the description of this PLE, I was pumped. It was in the summer and I’d get to hang out with other people who love history and learn about inquiry—win-win. Ha, I did freak out at the first institute—I failed to read it closely and had no idea I had signed for a year

commitment that was more than just summer time. But, the director of the project made it a win-win for me. She told me that I was free to bring my family to the summer institutes—let them stay in the hotel with me and go have fun while I worked. This worked out great, and we got several mini-vacations out of the deal.

The Particular Context

School climate. During a group interview Mariah described what she called her school’s “guaranteed viable curriculum.” The board adopted the “viable curriculum” with the intention that all students, within each subject matter, should be getting the same content at the same time, regardless of the particular teacher. “This means that as a department we have a common curriculum, common timeline, and common tests.”

Additionally, she reported that the latest decisions coming from top district levels down to subject area departments dealt predominately with data. Mariah described the collection of data as being used for many things, but she specifically highlighted that:

We spend hours individually entering data about every thing—homework, quizzes, and tests. This data is used then for comparison—not only, of course between schools in the area, but, unfortunately between teachers. They [administration] line up the names of the students alongside the names of teachers they’ve had and see just who is up to—or not up—to snuff. This includes the SAT itemized scores. If a student got a question wrong they look at whom the student had as a teacher. But then, of course, they assure us that it’s not going to be used in our teacher evaluations...Yah, right! As a result, we now spend hours individually tracking our common assessment test scores. I have to note the

percentage of students who score 78% or above on tests, and we go over these at department meetings. We then set goals for the next common assessment—goals for increasing the percentage of those who do score 78% or above.

Mariah expressed her frustration stemming from this viable curriculum philosophy. She felt that while the intent made some sense, the dire consequences were not worth it:

They are trapping us into a cookie-cutter mentality. We all have to stay on the same timeline and give the test on the same day. This kills creativity and leaves no room for inquiry projects. We are forced to teach to the test and endure the daunting stress of being compared to our peers.

Professional development requirements. Mariah indicated the professional development requirements occurred in-house. Once a month the students were released early and the professional learning communities (PLC)—subject area departments—met for two hours. The department chairs created the agendas, and often the middle school and high school history departments met together. They usually spent about an hour together, and then were released to work individually in their classrooms—usually to enter data. Mariah indicated that these meeting were mostly about writing common tests, how to collect data, and how to improve scores “to look better than the next guy.”

Mariah also reported that the PLC time did not push her pedagogically. She said that precious little time was spent on strategies of instruction, problem-solving on difficult issues, or on teachers sharing ideas with each other. Instead, the majority of the time was spent on data and tests scores. Therefore, Mariah said, going to the PLE was something the department would be pleased with, but it was not part of any requirement.

Mariah's Particular Professional Learning Experience

Historical inquiry within a collaborative community. Mariah's perception of doing historical inquiry within a collaborative community appeared to be twofold. First, on several occasions she commented on the benefits of being with other historians during the PLE. She said that this was her first experience in a PLE—in her fourteen years of teaching—where she felt everyone in the room had a vested interest in the teaching of history. She went on to explain that this kind of camaraderie does not exist at her school.

Similarly, on one of the exit tickets during the first summer institute, she highlighted how much she appreciated hearing from “experts” on the project team. For example, she stated this about the presentations by the history professor from MSU:

I so much appreciated his presentations today. The artifact activity was so enlightening and reminded me again about how everyone and everything has a story. I also loved the mini-lecture on the difference between heritage and history—learning to decipher between evidence and emotion and what constitutes work we do for others versus work we do for ourselves.

Additionally, she appreciated the project's local historian who presented on how to conduct oral interviews. “It reminded me how important the local community is and how important it is to connect students to local history.”

Mariah's second perception of doing historical inquiry within a collaborative community shifted to the issue of time. Several of her written reflections during the PLE indicated the issue of time as a constraint to collaboration. For example, during one of the second summer institutes she wrote this on an exit ticket:

I love working with all of these people to do historical inquiry, and long to do this with my students. But in reality—who has this kind of time, or has these kinds of history lovin’ people—to pull something like this off?

Another reflection stated:

Collaboration is a great way to grow and learn. Can I please have the project team come with me into my classroom, so that they could show me how—in the midst a textbook driven curriculum, a set schedule for common assessment—to even begin to fit this into how we “do school?”

After the lesson study experience within the PLE, Mariah also referred to time being a constraint to collaboration and second summer institutes:

As much as I loved doing a lesson study with three other history teachers from three different schools, I don’t see how this could work at my school. It’s just too time consuming. This amount of time spent on one lesson? No way—I don’t see this working at my school.

Nevertheless, even though Mariah expressed advantages to collaborating, other than with her building principal, she had not shared her PLE with any of her colleagues. According to Mariah, as a department, they shared a similar timeline and gave common tests, but they did not plan together, share resources, or talk much about instructional strategies.

Beliefs about history and historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach. The following statement conveyed how Mariah perceived how the PLE influenced her thinking on history inquiry as a pedagogical approach:

The project hasn’t so much changed the way I think about what historical inquiry is, but it definitely highlighted the importance of bringing it more into my

classroom. I think for me historical inquiry has been buried and this experience got me to pull it off the shelf, and dust it off.

After this statement she went on to describe how historical inquiry needs to be more in the forefront of her thinking. She told me that she has always tried to ask students a lot of questions, but using the *C3 Framework* to plan an inquiry was something she had never done.

Besides “dusting it off the shelf” Mariah indicated that her involvement in the PLE stirred a desire to implement more historical inquiry in her classroom:

Historical inquiry is so cool and so messy. Too often I teach the cut-and-dried, dead-and-gone history presented by the textbook. I talk, students listen. I need to teach my students to be historians—to ask questions, to probe for answers, and to share their findings with each other.

However, her enthusiasm was hampered, once again, by her concern with time.

Yet, she did reflect on, and spoke into the constraint. In the final written reflection of the project, Mariah suggested specific ways she wanted to implement historical inquiry within her particular situation:

I am leaving here with so many ideas on how to do historical inquiry. I will need to go home and review my notes. I need to start implementing these ideas and activities from day one. I plan to start first by modeling and introducing inquiry. I will give the students a handout of the poster created by this team to put in the front of their binders. Then, I think I can do a lot in a little time if I provide good anchor questions. And, I will take the time to look for ways to infuse reading and perspectives other than the ones provided in the textbook on the topics we are studying.

Within this reflection she also expressed the desire to have help in finding inquiry materials to use with her students, and help figuring out how inquiry driven teaching was even possible given her tether to the textbook.

Instructional shifts during the PLE. As discussed earlier, the PLE was situated within practice so that teachers could grow in their practice while experiencing the supports from the PLE. Mariah recalled two specific changes she made because of the work she did during the PLE. One of these changes occurred during a class period for students to act as historians, so that they could be exposed to “more inquiry-based open-ended techniques.” She wanted the students to see that “history and inquiry go hand in hand,” and felt that her course, as a fast and furious United States survey course, did not provide enough inquiry-driven instruction.

Although I did not witness this class period during the time of the PLE, Mariah described the activity to me. She explained that this particular activity took place at the beginning of the school year, when “she was still super charged from the PLE’s first round of summer institutes.” She set aside part of a class period for the students to “act as historians.” They each had to pick a topic of interest from the United States history. Then, after a short discussion of what a compelling question is, the students experimented with writing a compelling question on their chosen topics. After writing the question, Mariah communicated how each student had to write a brief description of the process they would go through to conduct research. She told me they struggled with writing compelling questions. However, she was able to seize this teachable moment to discuss how history is not cut-and-dried, and that her goal for the year was to ask tougher questions—many of which may not have easy answers, or answers at all.

The second change Mariah indicated making during the PLE was writing and enacting the lesson she wrote, and later turned in, for the post-lesson requirement of the PLE. This lesson

took place in the spring during Mariah's unit on the Modern Era. The lesson was developed using the *C3 Framework*. It included a compelling question, multiple primary and secondary sources for students to gather and analyze evidence, and required students to back up a claim publically using the evidence they had collected. The lesson plan, as written, did not provide any evidence—within the second dimension of the *C3 Framework*—of how the students were to use disciplinary tools and concepts to analyze and evaluate the sources.

The compelling question was, *Which president (Nixon-Obama) do you believe had the most positive impact and why?* The sources provided to answer the question were the textbook, YouTube mini-biography videos of the presidents, and brief interviews of select school staff members. The culminating activity was a debate. Students were required to state their claim and use evidence from their sources to defend their choice. Additionally, they were required to rebuttal at least two other students' choices. Mariah reported that the students “were quite invested in this project and the debate—held over two days—[as it] gave them a good chance to share with each other not only which president they had chosen, but also why—using evidence—they chose that particular president.”

Although I did not observe this lesson, as written, this post-lesson demonstrated evidence of incorporating the dimensions of the *C3 Framework* more so than Mariah's submitted pre-PLE lesson. Her pre-lesson consisted of an article for students to read and react to individually. The written instructions told students to close-read the article detailing on the consequences of North Korea's rocket launch. After reading the article, students were instructed to write a 250-word reflection responding to the author's three main points of how the United States should respond to the rocket launch. This pre-lesson was not driven by a compelling question, and did not: (Dimension 1) require gathering evidence from different sources before responding to the author;

(Dimension 2) indicate to students how to apply disciplinary tools or concepts to analyze the author's argument (Dimension 3) provide additional resources to bring in other opinions; or (Dimension 4) require students to share their work publically. However, it is important to take in consideration that I came to this conclusion without knowing the context of when or how this lesson was enacted.

Conclusion

In sum, the above account provided a window into how Mariah—a particular teacher within a particular context, and with a particular understanding of historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach—took up the work of the PLE. Mariah, an empathetic, mild-mannered, and wise person-lover, cared deeply about being a good mom and a good history teacher. Her struggle to take historical inquiry off the shelf and “dust it off” was evident through her exemplar and her typical daily lesson, and her work during the PLE.

Examining these struggles provided insight into how Mariah viewed historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach, and how she was taking up the work after the support of the PLE was done. Feeling tethered to the textbook she presented historical inquiry as an “extra” that allowed students to “be historians” for a brief amount of time. Both the Vietnam War Inquiry Project and her typical lesson showed inquiry used after the content of a unit was covered in the textbook. Her statement of, “Whew, got one done for the year,” further suggested her commitment to historical inquiry as important, but not yet as something she integrated into her daily work.

Additionally, Mariah indicated that engaging students in historical inquiry required a lot of work and the help of others to “pull off.” She willingly admitted requiring outside help to write and enact the Vietnam War Inquiry Project. She reported appreciating the collaboration

within the PLE, but insinuated that this type of collaboration did not exist at her school, and in fact hinted that the heavy burden of a data-driven agenda hindered such collaboration.

However, Mariah was individually making what she called “small changes” to incorporate more inquiry in her classroom. The reflection and the bell ringer are evidence of these changes, as well as her comments that she was inspired by the Vietnam War Project. This project provided hope that she could pull off more of these projects in the future.

CHAPTER 6: RYAN: HISTORICAL INQUIRY? LOVE IT! USE IT EVERY DAY!

In this chapter I first describe an exemplar historical inquiry lesson and another lesson that represents the normal routine and rhythm of Ryan’s classroom. Following each description, I provide an analysis of evidence of historical inquiry, student engagement, and any intentional pedagogical shifts—reported by Brain as being influenced by the PLE—in designing and enacting the lessons. My observations took place several months after the PLE in Ryan’s 5th hour, American History (Constitution to the Civil War) class made up of twelve juniors and seniors. Names included are pseudonyms.

This particular school is a non-profit, fine arts private boarding school, located in a small, rural town in Northern Michigan. The student population was approximately 500, and of those 500, 150 were international students, and 70 were local, non-boarding students. Students were accepted through an audition process in their particular area: music, theater, comparative arts, creative writing, motion picture arts, dance, and visual arts.

Part I: Exemplar History Lesson: Transcendentalism and Its Imprint on American Literature

Music was playing as Ryan greeted the ten juniors and seniors coming into his classroom. Ryan “put the kettle” on and asked how many would be joining him for a cup of tea. As the students responded, they chatted with Ryan about upcoming college visits to Harvard University and Columbia University. They acknowledged that two of the students were missing, one for a college visit and the other on the backpacking trip with the Math Department. The music was turned off, a few students poured tea, and class officially began.

The Context of the Inquiry

The inquiry lesson observed, “Transcendentalism and its Imprint on American Literature,” was one of many couched in the overarching theme of this course on the history of the Constitution up to the Civil War that Ryan entitled, “The Republic on Trial.” Throughout this semester-long course, Ryan pulled out themes to discuss from the required text, *America: A Narrative History*. Students did not bring the book to class, but were expected to read—on their own time—the corresponding chapters for this lesson covering: Chapter 13, *An American Renaissance: Religion, Romanticism and Reform* and Chapter 14, *Manifest Destiny*.

In the week prior to the following described inquiry lesson, the students were involved in what Ryan called, “the complex nature of Andrew Jackson.” Through questions, stories, and interactive discussions, the group analyzed Jackson’s involvement in the Supreme Court, the Trail of Tears, and in increasing the power of the executive branch. They also assessed his views on racism and the banks.

Following the two days on Jackson, Santiago, an international student from Mexico, spent two days teaching his peers about the Mexican-American War from the Mexican perspective. Additionally, students watched the first fifteen minutes of a documentary on the war. In the class period previous to the inquiry lesson to be described, the class examined religion in America during the first half of the nineteenth century—Deism, Universalism, and the Second Great Awakening—including the frontier revivals of Protestants and the Mormons. Additionally, they watched twelve more minutes of the Mexican-American War documentary.

Inviting Students into the Inquiry

Ryan wasted no time as he poured his tea and started class. He began with some logistical reminders regarding upcoming events. First, he gave the final details for those joining him that

evening in attending a lecture by a local Muslim leader— held fifteen miles away in a near-by town. Second, Ryan provided details about the optional upcoming trip to the Holocaust Museum in Detroit. He announced the money he collected from their parents was used to purchase 165 cases of water. “As I told you earlier, we will be stopping by a local church in Flint, Michigan—my home town—on our way home. We have been assured by the people accepting this donation of water that they will distribute it to those who need it most.”

To prepare for the Holocaust Museum trip, Ryan highly suggested that all students should view the movie, *Schindler’s List*. To do so, they could borrow the school library copy and view it on their own time, or come to his room for a public viewing:

For those of you who would prefer, I am having my usual movie night in this room next Monday night, and I will be showing *Schindler’s List*. It’ll start at 6:15 and I know many of you have rehearsals until 6:00 p.m., so I will be providing some supper. You can eat while you watch.

Ryan then reminded the students that class the next day was in the library, where they would be given time to work on their research papers. Lastly, he mentioned if students wanted one-on-one help with their papers, he still had empty slots between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday—the usual academic mentoring time.

Then, while pointing to the portrait of a man on the PowerPoint slide he laughed and said, “Alright, all of you, who is this jack-ass?” With that question Ryan invited them into an inquiry-based, interactive discussion on Transcendentalism and the flowering of American Literature.

The Inquiry

The following excerpts provide a window into what occurred over the next thirty minutes. Students conversed freely with Ryan and with each other, first around the issues of Transcendentalism and then regarding the rise of American Literature.

The dialogue on Transcendentalism began when one student identified the “jack-ass” on the slide as Ralph Waldo Emerson. Without prompting from Ryan, students expressed what they knew about Emerson. Ryan used the students’ comments to springboard the discussion specifically to the fundamental beliefs of Transcendentalists. He read the definition of Transcendentalism, and followed up with a compelling question.

Ryan: Transcendentalism is the belief that things that cannot be proven by science are justified by faith, and that all hold within them a spark of divinity. Ah, good ol’

Transcendentalism, America’s gift to the philosophical world—remember the rest of the world has classical Greek, Confucius, Buddhism, Daoism, and every other ism. But, I have to ask. Do you like this definition? In particular, I want to hear what you think about this phrase—all hold within them a spark of divinity? Is it true? Does every human being hold within them the spark of divinity?

Santiago: No.

Alex: I don’t know.

Ryan: Thank you both for your honesty.

Ryan: I am totally fascinated by this subject. Can’t you just feel your hand quiver over the page— if after this phrase I made you write—even Donald Trump. We could then continue to make a list of all the people from left to right, young and old, male and female-- of all the incredibly stupid people—past and present. So, tell me what you are

thinking? Do all human beings have the spark of divinity in them? I would argue that many people seem to prove by their outward appearances, actions and behaviors that this is a bunch of trash.

Adrian: Well, I think we need to first talk about the word spark? What does that mean?

Amy: and divinity...what does that mean?

Gwen: I think it means that everyone, in one, way or another, has a piece of God in them.

Ryan: a piece of God in them, ah, pray, do tell....a piece of God in them. Let's dwell on that for a few minutes.

At this point Ryan interjected two stories. First, he referred to the horrors students would encounter while viewing the exhibits at the Holocaust Museum. Then he mentioned a video, viewed recently by his *Conflict in Culture* class. This video conveyed numbing statistics of the Russian experience during World War II.

He continued:

Ryan: So, if we really believed that everyone has a piece of God in them, would humans treat each other this way? Really? Doesn't the way that humans display what they are capable of knock the living hell out of this statement...a piece of God? If this were true, wouldn't we care about people and act accordingly?

Santiago: Yeah, and what about Lenin, Stalin and the Bolsheviks?

Max: Wait, wait, isn't it possible that everyone could have a spark of divinity in them and still have suffering? Suffering doesn't negate the possibility of God or the possibility of a divine spark.

Ryan: Yep, think about what Buddha says, what's life—it's suffering.

Adrian: Divinity, what do we mean? Are we talking about it in the sense of standard religion or divinity in the sense of the Alan Watts where he says that “I am the only way I experience the universe, therefore I am god.”

Ryan: Wow, interesting distinction and point! How many of you have heard that before?

Now, back to this picture of Emerson—this white, middle-class, American, white man.

Ryan explained the accusations many people made against the Transcendentalists. He told the students that many believe this to be a white, middle class concept—for men first, and only made possible by the fact that women did all of the work. He reiterated that the way we treat each other, and the lack of humanity, humility, and empathy for others—in practice every day—undercuts the philosophical belief of the divine in everyone.

The discussion continued:

Max: Why? I still believe that human suffering doesn't' negate the idea of the divine in every individual.

Ryan: But if we truly believed that a piece of God was in everyone, wouldn't we treat them as if that were true?

Branden: No, not necessarily...evil exists too.

Gwen: I believe that we should be treating everyone as if they do have the divine. This is Jesus' second commandment, love your neighbor as yourself. We have the gift of the Holy Ghost to be able to do this.

Ryan: And remember yesterday what we said about the Universalists? What you just said, Gwen, this concept you just brought up—about loving your neighbor—shows up in all kinds of variations around the world—Buddhism, Confucius—you name it—even in the remote places of the earth, some form of this exists.

Ryan then took this opportunity to take their thoughts on Transcendentalism and connect them back to the previous class discussion on how religion in American had been diluted by wealth and longer life expectancy. He asked, “Do you think Emerson experienced pain and suffering? Yes, I think he did, but the wealthier Americans got and the longer they began to live the more they didn’t need God”.

Then, leaving this discussion hanging, he switched to the next PowerPoint slide to direct the students’ attention to the rise of American Literature.

Ryan: Who is this—Emerson’s counterpart?

Amy: Oh, oh, I know—that’s Emily Dickinson.

Ryan: She seems to be the staple in every high school American Literature class. But, what do you know about her, and why is her story important? How many of you have read her stuff?

Through the contributions of at least six different students, including the student with a severe stuttering problem, the class told what they knew about the story of Emily Dickinson. They commented that she: lived as a recluse in the attic of her parent’s house; only wore white clothing; was quite eccentric; was an outstanding cook; and that she had suffered severe loss in her life. One student also mentioned that most of her work was not published until well after her death.

Ryan then put up a list of several other American writers known from this period in American history: Edgar Allen Poe, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Walt Whitman. Students bantered back and forth discussing who had read what from this list of authors. Together they decided Poe was the darkest, Melville the most active, Dickenson the most secluded, and Walt Whitman the most definitely-not-for everyone.

Throughout the conversation, Ryan told personal stories and gave recommendations of books to read by these particular authors. For example, he shared an urban legend surrounding Poe's death. He also told them that *Moby Dick* was okay, but *Billy Budd* was better. In fact, he said, "this story has profound significance for me and for why I became a teacher." His high school teacher had presented it to his class, "like a man possessed—brilliantly done in such a way that he made me want to be teacher."

The students continued to talk back and forth about books by these authors until Ryan interrupted:

Ryan: This is so important. This is a brilliant time in American literature. Remember, pre-1830s, no one was reading American authors. But by the mid-1940s people were—even in the UK. Imagine that—books going in the opposite direction. Santiago, you recently shared with us about the Mexican-American War. Wouldn't you agree that it's so important that we have the Mexican intellectual establishment being honest about what had happened? This is so important. Authors give us written portraits of ourselves—for better or for worse. Literature tells us who we are. Just think of why the Nazi's burnt all of those books. It's because those books were reflections of themselves.

Amy: Yeah, but I don't like reading these authors. They may be good stories, but they are so racist and sexist. Like *Billy Budd*, Oh my God, it's so eye opening. Whitman, he's crazy! He's so racist.

Ryan: Yeah, but remember, they are reflections of their times. They were sexist and racist.

Santiago: This is not much different from the art and music world. This reminds me of the music by Beethoven.

Max: And Wagner.

Ryan: Yes, these two—they were both huge racists.

Alex: But we have to remember, in music it seems like you have the separation of the music from the composer, whereas, in writing, I feel like their writing is directly showing us who they were.

Ryan: True. Remember, these writers are dealing with the transformation—the renaissance of their society—and they are giving us insights and reflections into the lives of Americans living at the time.

At this point Ryan wrapped up the discussion.

He transitioned to finishing the last twelve minutes of the documentary on the Mexican American War. He reminded them briefly of what Santiago had presented about the war and connected it to what they would see on the video. He told them to specifically look for the contemporary paintings of the time, and to notice how the art depicted life during this time period. “Also, remember, that the religious community—the Transcendentalist of the time—were great opponents of the Mexican War.”

Several times while the video played, Ryan called attention to specifics, or hinted about what was coming next and worth paying attention to. As the video came to a close and the Mexican leaders—when realizing they were losing—abandoned their own people, Ryan said quite sarcastically, “Well, what do you think, the spark of the divine?” He continued, “And with that, I’ll see you tomorrow. Hey, don’t forget, Thursday we meet in the library so you can continue your work on your final papers.”

Analysis of Part I: Exemplar: Transcendentalism and Its Imprint on American Literature

I turn now to provide an analysis of Ryan’s exemplar lesson on “Transcendentalism and the Rise of American Literature.” The analysis consists of describing: (1) evidence of historical inquiry in the lesson through the lens of the *C3 Framework*; (2) student engagement—as interpreted by Ryan and observed by me; and (3) any pedagogical moves that may have been influenced by his experience in the PLE.

Evidence of Historical Inquiry

The exemplar lesson provided evidence of the first dimension of the *C3 Framework*. Ryan used the first dimension—that of asking compelling and supporting questions—not only to invite the students into the inquiry, but also to spur students on to asking their own questions. Ryan’s initial invitation came through the following questions. “What do you think of this definition of Transcendentalism? Is it true—do you believe that all humans hold within them a spark of divinity? If we truly believe that the divine spark is in everyone, wouldn’t we treat each other accordingly?”

Then, several times within the lesson, as students responded to him and to each other, they did so by asking their own questions. Questions such as, “but, wait. Just because we treat each other this way doesn’t negate the notion of the divine spark, does it?” Or later in the lesson this question, “Mr. McCall, can we go back to the discussion on Dickinson, I am curious about why she became so secluded. What happened that made her so paranoid to be with people?”

Ryan’s rapid-fire style questions and related stories successfully evoked student responses. Throughout the discussion on Transcendentalism, Ryan used examples from history, such as the Holocaust, President Trump’s actions, and the Flint water crisis to scaffold the

dialogue and to ask questions to help elicit student responses. Additionally, during the discussion about authors, Ryan used questions to elicit various student responses. Questions, such as—What can we learn about racism, about the treatment of women, and about people’s positions in society from these authors? and, Why are we so fascinated with the darkness of Poe?—were used to discuss the culture, the economy, the religion, and the philosophy of this particular time period.

The third dimension of the *C3 Framework*—discussing and arguing multiple perspective and interpretations—was also present in this lesson. Informal dialogue was used to allow students to demonstrate their emerging understandings of the divine spark, and Ryan allowed student comments to direct the discussion. At times, he expressed his opinion, such as—Emerson being a “jack-ass,” and Trump being on his “list of stupid people.” However, these comments, rather than shutting the students down, or insinuating the students should agree with him, pushed the students to ask questions of their own. Together, they interrogated the idea of the divine spark, and to its presence in human beings. It appeared that Ryan did not expect anyone to take his word as the definitive truth, or that he expected the class to come to any sort of consensus. In fact, with the question of the divine spark still hanging in the air, Ryan skillfully shifted the conversation to American literature by drawing them in with questions about Emerson’s counterpart—Emily Dickinson.

However, missing from this lesson was evidence of dimensions two and four of the *C3 Framework*. Dimension two requires students to apply disciplinary tools and concepts in order to reach judgments supported by evidence. Ryan assumed students had read the corresponding chapters in the textbook prior to class. Additionally, he assumed and relied heavily on the prior knowledge of his students. Prior to, and during class, the students did not receive additional

written sources to build on their content knowledge, nor did Ryan give any explicit instruction on how to analyze and evaluate evidence. Ryan allowed students to freely express their beliefs and opinions, but missing from the lesson was any mention of the necessity of backing up claims with evidence—a crucial aspect of the historical inquiry process.

Finally, dimension four—collaboratively communicating the results of the inquiry—was not explicit in this lesson. Ryan made clear literature is important to explore because of what it reveals about a time period. Collaboratively, students did engage in conversation and were given agency to express their beliefs and opinions. Throughout the discussion, according to my observations, seven of the ten students actively participated. While the other three visually appeared to be actively listening, they did not orally participate. However, the students were not explicitly given a performance task. Nor did the lesson include a way to assess how all students were interacting with the content and issues being discussed.

Student Engagement

Logistically, I was unable to examine the exact thinking of each individual student during the exemplar lesson. Therefore, I analyzed student engagement through observable qualities of Ryan’s instruction and student responses to it. The following observations provided evidence of authentic engagement as evident from, during, and after the lesson.

First, I observed genuine enthusiasm for the broad subject matter of history as students entered. As students entered the classroom and greeted Ryan, many spoke with him about recent activities. For example, as one international student entered the room, he said, “Mr. McCall, I am having such a good time writing my final paper on how Lincoln’s story has changed over time. You Americans are intriguing.” Shortly following that comment, another student walked in and announced to Ryan that she had just called her representative in Texas and urged him to vote to

uphold the Affordable Care Act. While Ryan was getting “the kettle on,” one of the students asked him when the history quiz bowl party was going to be scheduled and how the new members were going to be announced. I inferred, from these types of interactions and the subsequent lesson observations, that students were seeing history not as something to know, but as something to be involved in doing.

Additionally, in this exemplar lesson, Ryan engaged the students through open-ended conversation. Rather than treating the students as empty vessels needing to be filled up, Ryan opened up space for students to interact with him and with each other. Ryan probed the students’ understanding of the “divine spark,” and their familiarity with nineteenth century American writers. As evident in the above description of the lesson, many students participated—even the young man with an obvious stutter. I recorded seven of the ten students participating at least once, and several of them talking on numerous occasions. The students appeared comfortable and used to Ryan’s open-ended questions.

Students remained engaged in this lesson even as class ended. When the bell rang, one student literally let out a groan and said, “no, not already.” Another student mentioned that President Trump’s recent comments about Andrew Jackson definitely qualified him for Ryan’s “list of stupid people” (that Ryan had referred to during the earlier discussion). Additionally, while slowly packing up, three students chatted with Ryan about books they had recently read as well as their final paper.

Pedagogical Changes Because of the PLE

During our debriefing session, Ryan reported that he had not consciously made any changes in planning, or in how he enacted this lesson due to his experience in the PLE. “If anything,” Ryan commented, “the PLE has reaffirmed my belief in the power of compelling

questions. I have worked for years perfecting my ability to lead students in productive conversations by weaving in questions, stories, and content knowledge.” When I asked him about bringing in primary and secondary sources for students to read, analyze, and evaluate he replied:

I have these students for such a short amount of time that I don’t want to waste valuable class time for that. I expect them to read on their own, and as you noticed, I constantly tell them what I am reading, freely loan out my books, and give out countless suggestions for what they should be reading.

Historical Inquiry in the Daily/Rhythm Routine

The following lesson portrays the daily rhythm of lessons in Ryan’s history class. Although he rarely referred to the textbook in class, the topics in “The Republic on Trial” course followed the topics in Chapters 7-17 in the book, *America: A Narrative History*. In the following lesson, the students began an investigation into the presidency of Andrew Jackson. This particular lesson illustrated Ryan’s pattern of using questions, stories, maps, and a short video to elicit prior knowledge and introduce new content and concepts.

Getting Started

As usual, Ryan “put the kettle,” took attendance, and wasted no time in getting started. He set the conversation in motion with questions on Andrew Jackson. The next forty-five minutes flowed uninterrupted as Ryan steered the discussion through three main issues surrounding Jackson’s presidency: (1) the Trial of Tears; (2) banks; and (3) the expansion of democracy.

The Inquiry

Trail of Tears. Ryan used the events that comprise the Trail of Tears to get students to think more critically about Andrew Jackson. Ryan began with asking lower level questions to elicit prior knowledge, “what do you know about Jackson?” Initially, three different students answered. One student knew of Jackson’s defeat of the British in the Battle of New Orleans. This prompted another student to talk about how much Jackson hated the British. Next, a student recalled how Jackson won the popular vote in 1824, but lost the election. Ryan followed each response by either asking a related question, telling a story, or connecting what was said to a current life example.

For example, he talked about how much Jackson hated the British, but recalled other historical events which now connect the United States to a close and “special relationship” with Britain. He also connected the controversy of the 1824 election to the most recent election in 2016:

This election in 1824 was controversial. What do you think? Was it stolen from Jackson or taken? There’s a difference you know—think of taxes, stolen from us or taken? Jackson’s election is interesting to think about in terms of what recently happened in the 2016 election. Here, too, we have a candidate who won the popular vote, but didn’t become president. However, it was much less controversial. Yeah, the only real controversy of this past election was in the candidates themselves, not in the election process. Okay, moving on, so what else do you know about Jackson?

A fourth student then said, “Jackson orchestrated the Trail of Tears.”

Ryan responded:

Ah, yes—the Trail of Tears. Let's spend the next few minutes digging a bit deeper into this event. Tell me, what was Jackson's involvement with the Supreme Court in relationship to the Trail of Tears?

Santiago: "Screw you."

Ryan: In a way, yes. Remember, even though the Supreme Court had ruled against him, they did not have the power that the executive branch did. Anyone want to defend the Trail of Tears?

Adrian: It paved the way for westward expansion.

Ryan: That's a result. How about defending?

Santiago: They needed the land.

Ryan: Who needed the land?

Santiago: White men.

Ryan: Do any of you know about the Indian Pakistan Partition?

A few students told bits and pieces they knew about this event. Ryan took these comments and proceeded to fill in the gaps to give a bigger picture. He used the wall maps not only to describe this event, but also to describe other events in world history that involved the removal of, or forced migration of peoples.

He continued:

Ryan: Now, back to the Trail of Tears. What do these all these examples have in common?

Gwen: forced migration of people.

Ryan: Yes, do you know that today 65 million people around the world are dislocated—not living where they are suppose to? So, back to the Trail of Tears. Can we make the

case that Jackson caved into events or did he orchestrate it? I can tell from the silence this question has you thinking. Good. Now, I am not trying to defend Jackson, but I am trying to get you to think deeply about this period of history. Here's my point. History is complicated and Jackson is a complicated person. When you walk out of this classroom I want you to think about this very complicated problem—don't get me wrong—it doesn't take away from the moral aspect of it. True, Jackson never liked the Native Americans. He was a racist and believed in the superiority of White people, but he, at times, considered himself the father figure to what he called his "red children." He knew what White men were capable of and that they would be relentless to eradicate the Native Americans. So, could it be argued that in using the military, Jackson was providing a buffer between the people who lived here—pointing again to a map—and the people who wanted to live there. Yes, I know many of you agree his face needs to be taken off the twenty-dollar bill, but the fact remains, he is a very important figure in our early national history—but you need to see the complexity.

Banks. Ryan then used this comment to segue to a short discussion of the banks—as further evidence of the complex nature of Jackson. "How about the banks, tell me what you know about Jackson and the banks?" "He hated them," one student replied. "See," replied Ryan, "a racist, a slave owner, involved in the Trail of Tears—yet he hated the banks, hmm, complicated man."

He then related the topic of banks and money to many of the students sitting in the classroom. He reminded them that many of their parents could afford to send them to this private school by the virtue of being related to people in the banking business. Then, jokingly, he said,

“like lawyers—any of you here from a lawyer family? There’s the problem right? Everyone hates lawyers and bankers until—when? Until you need one.”

With that comment hanging in the air, he moved on to show a video— John Greene’s “Crash Course” on Andrew Jackson.

Expansion of democracy. Ryan used the video to bring in content and concepts about democracy. He set the purpose for the watching the video by reminding the students that “Crash Course” videos give a lot of information at a very fast rate. “But, what I want you to really listen for is what Greene says about the expansion of democracy. Try to catch the irony of what happens as democracy expands.”

After watching the video, the class debriefed. First, Ryan answered students’ questions about the banks, about the Supreme Court, and Chief Justice Marshall. Then, Ryan asked, “so, what did you hear about the irony of the expansion of democracy?” Gwen summed it up when she answered, “Greene said the irony is that with the expansion of democracy came more executive power—especially in one person, aka Jackson.”

Then, in response to the paradox Gwen just verbalized, Ryan told the class about the autobiography he was reading on Mark Twain. “From trains, to telegraphs to the telephone—Twain’s theory,” he told them, “was that the more connected we became nationally, the less power we had individually.” He also referred to an article he was currently reading on nationalism that made a similar argument:

This article claims that nationalism results in more concentrated power at the top.

America is on a relentless march to a monarch. Eventually, the American president will be a king—in perhaps everything but that title—because that is what we want. As we become more American we are less democratic with a small

d. This is an interesting concept. Do you think it's true? Are some of you here—at this private school—because your parents may believe public schools are more leveling and give people less power to make their own choices and decisions? Spend some time thinking about this...

During the last few minutes of class, Ryan shifted the conversation to the economic growth during Jackson's presidency. He pointed out that after the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, America experienced "an intense period of growth often fueled by greed." Using a United States map he pointed out specific locations to converse about government policies, such as Eminent Domain and Right of Way, that made life miserable for those who wanted to live as simple, subsistence farmers.

"As our country shifted towards a market-based model, poorer people ended up on land no one wanted. No wonder some people favored Jackson—he despised the unbridled money and power of the Whigs. Like I said, complicated man, complicated history." And on that note, the bell rang and class ended.

Analysis of the Daily Routine

I turn now to present an analysis of the described lesson. This lesson was chosen because it represents the normal routine in Ryan's classroom. In fact, after this particular lesson I asked Ryan if this was a typical lesson for him. He replied, "Yes, this is it—what happens pretty much every day in my class—an interactive lecture and about 10-15 minutes of some documentary or movie. We discuss, argue, and generally just have a great time dissecting American history together."

My analysis consists of: (1) evidence of historical inquiry; (2) student engagement—as interpreted by Ryan and observed by me; and (3) the pedagogical changes that may or may not have been influenced by the PLE—as reported by the Ryan and observed by me.

Evidence of Historical Inquiry

Similar to the exemplar lessons, the first and third dimensions of the *C3 Framework* were more evident in this lesson than the second and the fourth. Questions—compelling and supporting—drive the entire lesson (Dimension 1). These questions, as reported by Ryan, are not all planned out ahead of time, but are driven by students’ reactions and interactions. Ryan reported:

I know ahead of time what main points I am going to make, but as you have witnessed—there is not set plan about what has to happen when. I listen, I respond, I ask questions and try to create a “family sitting around the dining room table” conversation. For example, today I needed to get across the complexity of Jackson and to history overall. I also want them to see how what happens to democracy with the rise of nationalism. As to how we go about it totally depends on where they take us in the conversation.

The third dimension of the *C3 Framework*—discussing and arguing multiple perspective and interpretations—was also evident in this lesson. Ryan consciously was pushing the students to see different perspectives. For instance, he made the claim that history and historical figures, such as Andrew Jackson, are complicated. He used several sources to back up his claim: other historical events; the book he was reading on Mark Twain; the article he referred to regarding nationalism; and John Greene’s “Crash Course” video. Noteworthy, was that Ryan was backing up his particular claims with evidence, but he was not encouraging the students to do so.

However, this lesson did not provide evidence of the second dimension of the *C3 Framework*—using disciplinary tools and concepts to gather data to answer the questions. Aside from the video, students were not given any sources to read or analyze in this lesson nor taught the skill of how to evaluate sources. Rather Ryan sprinkled the historical knowledge and ideas throughout the lesson: civics, in the emergence of democracy; economics, in the discussion of the banks, the greed of the Whigs, and the removal of Native Americans from their land; and geography and history were embedded throughout the lesson as maps were used to recall past and present realities.

The fourth dimension—communicating results and taking action—were also absent in this lesson. Arguably, Ryan and the students communicated with each other throughout the discussion and students were challenged to think more deeply about Jackson and about history. Opportunities were given to freely express their thinking with each other. Nevertheless, the lesson did not include a performance task of any kind that would require them to act on, or express their thinking with those beyond the classroom.

Student Engagement

Once again, because this lesson was driven by dialogue and students were not asked to produce any physical evidence, I analyzed student engagement through the visible qualities of student behavior, my observations of Ryan’s instruction, and his comments about his teaching.

In my observations, it appears that students come in eager and ready to learn. They exchange friendly greetings with each other and Ryan. Some take the offered tea, and as Ryan started with the first question, the flow of dialogue starts and continues smoothly throughout the class period. There are no cell phones visible, no late students, and student respond to his

questions without prompting. It also seems apparent to me that Ryan knows his students well, and is able to use examples from their lives to engage them in the conversation.

For example, when discussing the idea of a nationalist identity becoming more prominent than state identity, he specifically used examples of students from Ohio, Texas, and Michigan. Following these examples, Ryan asked two other international students, one from China and the other from South Korea, to speak about what national identity meant in their respective countries.

Ryan's instruction method also appears to keep the students engaged. Sitting with them "as if at the dinner table" in close proximity kept the instruction personal and interactive. He clearly knows a lot about the subject, but does not display the attitude of I know—therefore, let me now tell you what I know. Rather, through his interactive style of teaching, he showed respect for the students as learners. Using a conversational style, Ryan challenged them to explore and interrogate their own beliefs about history. Additionally, the constant use of questions appeared to keep students alert and active. Although, I recorded only four of the ten students present responding to Ryan's questions, it appeared to me by their eye contact and their body language they were actively listening, even if not outwardly responding.

Finally, after this lesson I asked Ryan specifically about his thoughts on student engagement:

Remember, it cost \$60,000 a year to attend this school. True, we attract students mostly because of their desire for excellent instruction in the fine arts, but usually we get the cream of the crop academically too. These students come in with good work ethics and with a good attitude. Plus, the commitment to small class size

means I build important relationships with each and everyone one of them—that matters, and is a crucial factor for being able to engage students in the classroom.

Pedagogical Changes Because of the PLE

Ryan indicated to me that he did not make any intentional changes to this lesson because of the work in the PLE. He reiterated that complicating the understanding of Andrew Jackson is something he always done:

I intentionally want them to see Jackson as an original American—warts and all.

Most of them know about the Trail of Tears, and I don't dispute its horrors or injustice. But, I also want them to see how such a policy could come from such a man who, at other times, saw himself as a father figure to Native Americans—and protector from even more bloody-minded white Americans. But as for changing how I do this because of the PLE—nope, not much. If anything, I left the PLE dedicated to asking tougher questions and I'd like to think I've accomplished that.

Part II: Key Influences within Ryan's Journey

Part II of this chapter addresses my second research question: *What key influences support or complicated the teacher's ability to enact historical inquiry in the classroom once support of PLE is gone?* Who Ryan is as an individual, his school context, and his PLE—all of these collectively highlight the way in which key influences interacted. They provide insight into how he took up the work of the PLE once the supports were gone.

First, I focus on Ryan—his particular individual traits, career goals, and motivation for attending the PLE. Then, I shift the focus to his particular school to briefly draw on local knowledge, problems, and routines. Lastly, I concentrate on the PLE by describing Ryan's: (1) perception of doing historical inquiry within a collaborative community; (2) understanding of

history and historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach; and (3) instructional shifts that occurred in situated practice during the time period of PLE.

The Particular Teacher

Ryan's individual traits. Ryan, a history enthusiast, displayed his constant quest for new insights and understandings in many ways. For instance, his desire to learn more about history was recognized in the way he spent the grant money allocated to each teacher during the PLE. He purchased several books to read, such as: *Jefferson vs. Hamilton: Confrontations that Shaped a Nation*, by Noble E. Cunningham Jr.; *Defending Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Old South: A Brief History with Documents*, by Paul Finkelman; and *The Fight Against Slavery: Selections from The Liberator*, by William Lloyd Garrison. Additionally, at the time of my observations, he was awarded his fourth grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Through this grant he was anticipating traveling to Rochester, New York, to explore various landmarks of American History.

Besides his love for history, Ryan also demonstrated his belief that the learning of history extended well beyond the textbook and the classroom. For instance, I observed this belief in his lessons. Almost daily—either to add to the conversation or to initiate a new question—he read a quote from a recently read book, talked about a section from an article, or referred to something he saw on a documentary. He brought his own books to class to loan out to students, and provided students with links to the documentaries and articles referred to in class.

Additionally, he reported to me that throughout the year he took students on many outings—outside of school hours. The lecture in the local city by Muslim leader, and the trip to the Holocaust Museum were examples of such outings. Lastly, he demonstrated that knowing history went beyond his teaching and beyond the required textbook by allowing international

students to teach their peers. Most recently, Santiago had taught about the Mexican-American War, and whenever possible, Ryan reported, students from China and from South Korea also shared their perspectives on issues in class.

Finally, Ryan exemplified the importance of building relationships with students. Serving tea each day and setting up his room to enhance dinner-table-like conversations demonstrated his desire to interact with his students on a personal level. That the student with the extreme stutter was willing to talk in class, I believe, bears witness to the relationship Ryan intentionally built with his students. One day as I walked through the hallways with him, I noticed he greeted each passing student by name, and often stopped to talk. I also witnessed two students inviting Ryan and his family to their upcoming senior recitals. Additionally, one day after class, two of his students from five years prior stopped by to say hello. He immediately welcomed them by name and proceeded to chat with them for the next hour.

Ryan's career goals. Ryan, now in his twenty-first year of teaching at this school, reported to me that he was enjoying being one of the “senior staff.” As the senior member of the history department, he was able to make more decisions about semester schedules and courses offered each year. Admittedly, he also told me that since he had “been there and done that,” he no longer willingly volunteered to sponsor events such as morp (the school’s version of prom), or be on additional committees. He commented, “Yeah, I haven't been on a crazy committee now for probably ten years—don't miss it at all.” However, he did mention that he sponsored the History Quiz Bowl group—“but that doesn’t feel like an extra to me, and we don’t meet that often.”

Besides the freedom he felt as a senior member of staff, Ryan also expressed the freedom he experienced by being at a private school. He said:

I know and understand the privilege I have here at this school. Staff members are given a tremendous amount of academic freedom to plan classes and to do their own thing. We aren't tied to any state tests or standards, and yes, we often get the best of the best students. Don't get me wrong, we face our own set of challenges as a boarding school, but the students are great—they come in wanting to learn and wanting to work. Can't beat it and don't see myself going anywhere else.

Motivation for attending the PLE. Ryan revealed two reasons for attending the PLE. First, he lived in the area where the PLE was to be held, so he was drawn by the project's focus on the local history. He indicated that a colleague handed him the PLE promotion brochure and said, "Look into this. It's right up your alley." As soon as Ryan read that the project would get him out in the community doing historical inquiry projects, he knew he wanted in. "What better way to spend time than with other history mates doing history?"

Ryan's second motivation for attending the PLE was to learn more about instructional strategies. When talking to me about this particular reason, Ryan admitted that he felt his secondary teacher education training significantly failed to equip him with instructional strategies. He said his teacher training was almost purely lecture style, and to this day, lecture is his main teaching method. "Therefore, when I saw that the information on the brochure about Universal Design for Learning (UDL) combined with historical inquiry, I knew that this project was for me."

UDL was a component of the project required by the MTE grant. UDL is a framework for intentionally designing lessons that consider the needs and diversity of all learners. The three main principles of finding multiple ways to engage students, multiple ways to represent content,

and multiple ways to allow students to show what they know and understand, were what attracted Ryan to this workshop. He commented:

My school emphasizes the fine arts, and our students come here with multiple talents. I was drawn to the PLE because of my desire to step out of my comfort and explore possible ways, other than lecture, to engage my students—ways to incorporate their fine art talents in showing me what they know.

The Particular Context

School climate. This particular private fine arts boarding school—according to its website, and to Ryan—held students to a high standard of excellence. Students attended academic classes for four hours in the morning, and attended four or more hours of practice in the arts in the afternoon. The school offered instruction in areas such as creative writing, visual arts, theater, dance, and vocal or instrumental music. Students were drawn to this school because of its renowned fine arts instructors. Ryan mentioned that this school is not for the “faint in heart.” He elaborated:

The academic standards are high and a certain grade level must be maintained, but the students are drawn here because of our renowned fine arts instructors.

Students come here with high expectations and expect to pursue a career in the their particular talent. Most of them have attended private schools throughout their school careers. They have been groomed to have little time for a social life, and most come in with a strong work ethic.

The school also has unique ways to stay connected to students’ need. As often done in college, about mid-fall, the school hosted a parents’ weekend. Ryan indicated that only about

200 of the 500 parents were able to attend. During this time, the parents shadowed their students for a day, and attended parent-teacher conferences held in the one of the performance halls.

Besides parent weekend, several other weekly supports are provided for students. Monday and Tuesday nights are reserved for academic support. Academic teachers are required to set aside slots for individual mentoring between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Ryan reported that students come to him during these slots “mostly for help in how to write the mid-term or final paper, and occasionally, if they need help studying for a test.” He also reported using Monday nights to host history movie night, or to take students to off-campus activities. Another school support was the required attendance to “Student Life” assemblies held every Wednesday night from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. During these assemblies, guest speakers or the dorm parents provided activities centered on age-appropriate topics.

However, even with the privileges and support that come from being a private school, Ryan expressed mixed feelings about the administration. On the one hand, he appreciated their strong dedication to the arts. He declared, “we bring in talented students and groom them into fine artists.” In addition, because of the emphasis on the arts, Ryan spoke of the freedom this gave to the academic teachers, “It’s pretty much a hands-off approach, giving us complete reign over what we do and when. We decide—not top down from administration or dictated by state standards or tests.”

On the other hand, he expressed resentment. He explained that in order to draw in top-quality instructors, the fine arts teachers were not required to have teaching degrees. “The problem,” he said, “is that those of us totally dedicated to the academics often feel slighted.” He went on and explained how he felt decisions were based on revenue for the arts with little attention given to the academics:

In fact, a few years ago, the administration also decided to remove the requirement of a teaching certificate for academic teachers. They figured that since the arts' staff isn't required [to have a certificate], then it is not fair to require academic teachers to have one either. That decision, as you can imagine, did nothing to boost our trust in them.

Professional development requirements. Ryan indicated that the school did not have strict guidelines or requirements for professional development. He mentioned that periodically the administration sponsored random, in-house workshops, that according to Ryan, “weren’t planned [out of] a vision for real growth overtime in teaching practices.” In his recollection these workshops were about themes or issues to discuss, not about how to teach or plan a lesson using a specific strategy.

Ryan also reported on staff and department meetings. He indicated that staff meetings—held once a month after school—centered on the logistical, “the nuts and bolts of doing school.” Additionally, he said the history department—of which he was the chair—met at the beginning of the year and at the end. At the beginning of the year, they spent time coordinating areas of interest and avoiding overlapping. At the end of the year, they met to decide which student would receive the yearly history award.

Ryan’s Particular Professional Learning Experience

Historical inquiry within a collaborative community. Ryan’s written reflections during the PLE and interview comments indicated an emphasis on camaraderie and the good times offered by the PLE. For instance, during the group interview, he spoke about the lesson study experience, “it was great fun—always a joy to be other history teachers.” Similarly, on another exit slip he indicated, “I loved being around other teachers as excited about history as I am.”

Additionally, he expressed his appreciation for the “expertise and interaction he enjoyed with the project team.” He liked the unique talent that each member brought to the project, which, according to him, resulted in an enjoyable PLE. He said:

You all [the project team] showed such interest, and worked so hard to provide fantastic opportunities. The 103 hours went by [snapped fingers] like that! Being with you and the other teachers—who also clearly wanted to be there—was pure joy.

Interestingly, comments on collaborating to write lesson plans or working through problems of practice with others were absent in Ryan’s comments and reflections. In fact, his exit ticket reflections during the PLE contained very little writing. Furthermore, on two occasions he did not turn in written reflections, and the back page of one reflection was left undone. Unfortunately, this particular back page had two or three questions regarding the experience of collaborating with a lesson study group.

Lastly, Ryan did not express the need or desire to collaborate with others at his school. “We each have our specialties and are good at what we do. We don’t feel any great need to plan together, and rarely do we share what we are doing. I think we are all fine with that.”

Beliefs about history and historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach. History is alive. History is so much more than a bunch of facts. It’s alive—not dead. It matters. Each, and every day, people make political, cultural, economic, and social decisions based on the past. History, then, is about people and their stories, and is as much about the present as it is about the past. This is the history that I want my students to engage in and be excited about.

Intertwined with this belief about history, was Ryan’s conviction that history teachers need to be constantly learning. “History teachers,” he stated, “need to read, to think, and to

know way beyond the content of any textbook.” Ryan was convinced that, “any history teacher who does not constantly question their own knowledge, and who doesn’t take time to figure out what they don’t know, is doing a disservice to themselves and to their students.” He then went on to say, “know that history is alive, know and be committed to your content, and the rest of it—the pedagogy will follow.”

After that particular statement we had the following short discussion regarding historical inquiry as a pedagogical approach.

Linda: What do you think of historical inquiry and how would you define it?

Ryan: Love it and I use it every day—both formally and informally. My lessons are driven by questions, and my students constantly see how I question everything I read and see.

Linda: During the PLE we emphasized the *C3 Framework*. What are your thoughts on the framework as a way to engage students in historical inquiry?

Ryan: The what? Do you mean the *Common Core*?

Linda: No, I’m referring to the 4 dimensions of using compelling questions, disciplinary tools and concepts used to analyze primary and secondary documents, making evidence based claims and students taking action and communicating the results—which we used in our work in the PLE.

Ryan: Oh, yeah, well, no, I’m not that sold out to that framework, but believe driving lessons with questions and getting students to ask their own compelling questions keeps history alive and keeps students engaged. Like I just said, love historical inquiry, and use it every day. There’s more than one way to skin a cat.

Instructional shifts during the PLE. As discussed earlier, the PLE was situated within practice so that teachers could grow in their practice while experiencing the supports from the PLE. Ryan recalled that the PLE helped form his thinking and learning. He described how the PLE local history project made him think more about the importance of place, and inspired him to apply for another NEH grant. Also, he commented on how the PLE renewed his commitment to the importance of using compelling and supporting questions. However, he admitted that he did not intentionally make any instructional shifts during the PLE.

The pre-lesson and post-lesson collected during the PLE provided evidence that Ryan did not make intentional instructional shifts during the PLE. The pre-lesson Ryan turned in was not really a lesson, but instead contained the written requirements for the students' final ten-page research paper. As the PLE unfolded, and Ryan expressed his desire to use UDL to implement new pedagogy, this choice for a pre-lesson became more understandable. He expressed the desire to alter the requirements, so that students would have choices—other than writing—to represent their findings about chosen topics. However, he also reported this did not occur, and he did not give any explanation as to why.

Interestingly, I did witness Ryan's attempt to implement UDL in the final paper requirements during one of my observations to his classroom during this follow-up study. Ryan was going over the requirements of the final paper with his students. In class, students each shared the topic and the question being researched. Then Ryan allowed time to collaboratively brainstorm ways the students could include other approaches—besides, or along with, writing, to present their work. Examples were given such as: story boards, poems, interpretive dance, and composing musical pieces. Later in the semester, when he checked in on the students' progress

on the papers, Ryan reported they were all doing the traditional written paper. “Maybe next time,” was his comment later to me.

Additionally, the post-lesson Ryan turned in during the PLE was the lesson study lesson written by his PLC. He helped write it, but had not taught it, nor had any intention of teaching it. Each member of the PLE had been asked to turn in a personal, post-lesson plan. Ryan never completed this task. When asked to do so, he replied honestly that, “he really didn’t write lesson plans—they were in his head.”

Conclusion

In sum, the above account provided a window into how Ryan, a particular teacher, within a particular context, and with a particular understanding of historical inquiry took up the work of the PLE. Ryan, a history enthusiast, passionate for his subject area and for building relationships with his students, uniquely engaged students in history through interactive, conversational methods. He reported loving historical inquiry and participating in it daily with this students—through asking his own questions to students, and by allowing students to question each other. Through the constant use of questions, stories, books, articles and the use of wall maps and videos, Ryan was able to start from what students knew and in his own unique way, challenge them with their beliefs about the past and the present. The PLE reaffirmed his commitment to what he was already doing. Consequently, he did not take up the work as presented during the PLE.

CHAPTER 7: COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES ACROSS EXPERIENCES

Looking Across Experiences

In Part I of Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I captured representations of practice from everyday life in Stacey, Mariah, and Ryan’s classrooms to provide insight into my first research question: *At the level of practice, how was each teacher using historical inquiry as pedagogical approach after participating in a long-term professional learning experience?* In Part II of Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I contextualized each classroom practice by highlighting the particular teacher, within a particular context, and having a particular understanding of historical inquiry to bring insight to my second research question: *What key influences supported or complicated the teacher’s ability to enact historical inquiry in the classroom after the professional learning experience?*

Throughout the PLE, teachers were encouraged to use the *C3 Framework* to actively involve students in historical inquiry that was systematic, rigorous, and public. Because “existing research suggest that social studies teachers rarely engage students in authentic inquiry, the *C3 Framework* presents an opportunity for educators to increase the rigor and relevance of student learning” (Thacker, Lee, & Freidman, 2017, p. 91). Systematically, the *C3 Framework* provides common language and structure through the Inquiry Arc. Through this structure—four interlocking pieces and mutually reinforcing dimensions—teachers were encouraged to align instruction to include rigorous questions, tasks, and sources that enabled students to publically communicate conclusions and take informed action (Grant et al. 2017).

Therefore, in spanning across the lived experiences of the three teachers, I describe the commonalties and difference with specific attention to how, and if, they were involved in developing historical inquiry that was systematic, rigorous, and public. The purpose of drawing out commonalities and differences across the teachers was to: bring more clarity as to how the

teachers were applying the principles and practice of the PLE; why some were able to do this better than others; and what key influences supported or complicated their ability or desire to do so.

Importantly, looking across the practices was not to determine straightforward models of implementation with fidelity. Instead, the purpose was to recognize the complexity of behaviors arising from agents interacting locally according to their own principles, beliefs, and interests (Opfer & Peddler, 2011, p. 396).

First, I provide a brief reminder for the reader of each teacher's exemplar and typical lesson. Then, I present an analysis of the commonalities and differences related to the teachers' willingness to accept the *C3 Framework* as a way to structure inquiry practices. Next, I shift to an analysis of commonalities and differences regarding instructional shifts in practice made to engage students in historical inquiry that was rigorous and public.

Brief Summaries of Representations of Practice

Stacey. Stacey's exemplar was an Israeli/Palestinian inquiry project that culminated a six-week unit on imperialism in the Middle East. Students worked individually or with a partner to investigate possible solutions to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. After reading, analyzing, and evaluating several resources, students presented their evidence-based claims on possible solutions to deal with political boundaries, Jerusalem, the Jewish settlements, and the Israeli security wall. The observed lesson portraying Stacey's normal daily routine was an inquiry into the history of the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Through a recap of previous days' work, an interactive lecture, and the introduction to a graphic novel, Stacey led her students in inquiry into the historical background of the revolution.

Mariah. Mariah's exemplar was The Vietnam War inquiry project that culminated her Cold War Part II unit. Students worked in small groups of three to four students to gather local, state, and national information about the Vietnam War using various given resources. Following the examination of the sources students interviewed two local Vietnam veterans. Then through class presentations, each group shared information on their assigned topic. The observed lesson portraying Mariah's "normal" daily routine was reviewing previous work regarding women's experiences during the 1950's and 1960's and an analysis of Cold War political cartoons. Following the review was individual or partner work time—reading and answering questions on the two assigned textbook chapters.

Ryan. Ryan's exemplar was a lesson on Transcendentalism following several previous lessons on Andrew Jackson. Students interacted with Ryan regarding Transcendentalism and the rise American Literature through open dialogue and anecdotal stories. The lesson ended with the students watching a segment of a documentary on the Mexican American War. The observed lesson portraying Ryan's "normal" daily routine was part of an investigation into the presidency of Andrew Jackson. Ryan used questions, stories, maps, and a short video as he interacted with the students on topics and issues regarding Jackson.

Commonalities in the *C3 Framework* as a Structure for Inquiry

On the one hand, there were noticeable similarities across the three teachers' experiences regarding how receptive they were to systematically adhering to the *C3 Framework* to inform practice. First, it is important to recognize that all three teachers indicated they were not familiar with, nor had they used the *C3 Framework* prior to the PLE. Mariah said, "I knew of historical inquiry but had no clue about the *C3 Framework*—what it is or how it informs inquiry practice." Stacey mentioned knowing about the framework before the PLE, but indicated she had not

interacted with it to plan instruction. Ryan was not forthright about his knowledge of it before the PLE. Interestingly, during one of our debriefing sessions after the PLE I asked him to talk to me about the *C3 Framework*, and he replied, “The what? Do you mean the Common Core? Nope haven’t paid much attention to it.”

A second noticeable similarity was the distinct lack of sharing with colleagues about the possibilities of using the Inquiry Arc to structure historical inquiry practice. During the PLE, collaborating was encouraged and deemed necessary to build ambitious historical inquiry. However, all three teachers reported that planning instruction with others in their schools was rare and almost non-existent. In fact, Stacey, Mariah and Ryan all indicated sharing very little of the NMHIP experience—including the *C3 Framework*—with their colleagues. One exception to this was when I attended a department meeting with Mariah. As she introduced me to her colleagues, she alluded to the PLE and the use of the *C3 Framework*—as a context to how we met, but mostly she explained the work I was doing to obtain my Ph.D.

Third, although Stacey and Mariah did not collaborate with others inside their buildings, they were willing to collaborate outside of their history departments—in systematically using the *C3 Framework*. Mariah was empowered to use the framework only when co-planning the Vietnam War inquiry project with me. In fact, she told her students it only happened because of our collaborative work. Stacey, too, was willing to collaborate with educators outside of her colleagues. For instance, she willingly coordinated with the fourth grade teachers in her district to implement the framework in her Michigan History class when creating the traveling trunks. On another occasion, she participated with two members of the NMHIP project team in a presentation at the Michigan Council for Social Studies annual conference. Stacey shared the work she had done on the traveling trunks, the Israeli/Palestinian Project, her book club reading

of the graphic novel, *Persepolis*, as well as a list of websites she used as resources to find multiple texts for students to investigate. Later in the year she applied to present at the annual National Council of Social Studies Conference (NCSS).

Differences in Systematic use of the *C3 Framework*

On the other hand, the three teachers displayed stark differences in the degree in which each took up the *C3 Framework* to systematically implement historical inquiry. Ryan reported no instructional shifts in practice. His comment, “there’s more than one way to skin a cat,” attests to his deliberate choice of not using the *C3 Framework* to engage students in historical inquiry. The work of the PLE reaffirmed his existing practices, as evident in the exemplar and daily lesson previously described. Other than a renewed commitment to enacting his understanding of historical inquiry through intimate dialogues with his small group of students, Ryan “felt no need or desire” to make any intentional instructional changes using the *C3 Framework* during or after the time of the PLE.

In contrast, Stacey and Mariah’s exemplar lessons portrayed deliberate, systematic work using the *C3 Framework* systematically to plan and implement inquiry projects. Although analysis of these projects showed some dimensions of the Inquiry Arc more prevalent than others, both described their projects as a shift from previous practice. All dimensions of the *C3 Framework* were embedded in Stacey’s Israeli/Palestinian inquiry project. The four dimensions were visible in Mariah’s Vietnam War inquiry project, however, some more prominent than others. Noticeably absent in Mariah’s project was the lack of a compelling question to drive the inquiry.

The most observable difference between Stacey and Mariah’s systematic implementation of the *C3 Framework* was in their daily rhythm of practice. Stacey’s comment of this being her

“best year ever,” indicated her commitment to transforming her practice. Through her work during and following the PLE, inquiry was shaping her way of knowing and being in the classroom. For example, during the PLE, she made intentional moves, such as the total remaking of her Michigan History class to include the creation of traveling trunks. Additionally, she intentionally worked to build a mindset toward inquiry within her students. One way she did this was through an activity connected to the television show, *Crime Scene Investigation* (CSI). The activity was used not only specifically to teach the students the Inquiry Arc, but also to invite them into a semester of inquiry into the “complexities and messiness of life.”

During the school year following the PLE, Stacey reported the intentional use of the Inquiry Arc to “freshen up lessons, recreate projects, and implement tons of new things.” I was witness to some of the transformational changes of her practice to be more inquiry-driven. For example, I observed her replacing the daily learning target, “I can” statements with a compelling question that stayed on the board throughout the unit. Also, I observed her creating new packets of student resources, specifically, to bring in multiple perspectives on a given topic. Some of these new resources included: chunking information with open-ended questions to guide the reading; providing photo-packets to better grasp complex histories; graphic organizers for document or video analysis; and instituting book club.

In contrast, Mariah’s everyday practice revealed historical inquiry as something to “pull of the shelf and dust off periodically.” During the time of the PLE, Mariah reported two instances of intentional, systematic use of the *C3 Framework*. First, she spoke of a day where the students were invited to “act like historians.” They experimented in thinking and talking about, but not actually doing, an inquiry project. On another occasion, Mariah reported intentional use

of the Inquiry Arc to engage her students in a debate on the legacies of American presidents. The debate was an “extra” project completed after the unit test and was not assessed in any way.

Following the PLE, Mariah’s classroom practices revealed a similar pattern. Other than the change in practice to include reflection and bell ringer questions on the board each day, Mariah’s everyday practice did not reveal systematic use of the *C3 Framework*. In fact, Mariah expressed a sense of relief after we planned and implemented the Vietnam War project. The statement, “whew, got one done for the year,” clearly portrayed her sentiment of viewing inquiry as an extra project, not as a way of daily, inquiry-driven instruction. Once the project was completed, she expressed relief in getting back to business as usual—textbook-centered instruction.

In sum, the three teachers showed commonalities and differences in how they took up not the *C3 Framework*—its common language and structure—to structure and implement historical inquiry. Next, I turn to commonalities and differences at the level of instruction. The following analysis describes historical inquiry instructional practices—as defined above—in utilizing questions, tasks, and sources, and creating opportunities for students to communicate conclusions and take informed action

Commonalities in Instruction in Historical Inquiry

On the one hand, there were commonalities across the three teacher’s intentions to make changes in practice to incorporate historical inquiry. First, the three teachers indicated a heightened awareness on the importance of asking questions that matter. Ryan reported being more conscious of bringing in counter-narratives to ask more complex questions and to elicit better questions from students. Stacey was rewriting units to include compelling and supporting questions to help students make connections across units and lessons. Mariah commented,

“Compelling questions are probing and messy. I know I too often teach the cut-and-dried, dead-and-gone, history of the textbook. I need to get better at asking questions and getting my students to ask good questions.”

However, in my observations of the daily lessons in their classrooms, the questions asked followed the teacher-initiate response-evaluate (IRE) model. In other words, the questions were not engaging students in meaningful tasks in order to develop the knowledge and skills needed for evidence-based claims. For example, Stacey began her interactive lecture by posing a question about the impact oil, imperialism, decolonization and the Cold War had on Iran. Then, as she led students through the complex content, her questions were used to clarify understanding of the presented information. This was in stark contrast to the student-driven Israeli/Palestinian project where students were provided the space and time to grapple with controversy, complexity, and opposing perspectives.

Similarly, Mariah questions were teacher-directed to review content, not spawn student inquiry. Often, I witnessed her asking questions to review the textbook homework from the day. On another occasion, the students had analyzed political cartoons depicting the relationship of the United Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) and the United States during the Cold War Era. As she reviewed, she did ask some open-ended, probing questions. However, she, not the students answered the majority of the questions.

Lastly, in Ryan’s class routine—quite masterful in rhythm and style—questions were for the purpose of “dinner time” conversational discussions, not to launch robust student-inquiry. Although it could be argued that some of the questions in each teacher’s daily routine were thought provoking, overall, the majority of the questions remained teacher-initiated. Additionally, it seemed less likely—or in Ryan’s situation, not at all—that on a daily basis

students were given space to investigate, interrogate, and evaluate information from various sources in order to make claims, defend beliefs, or come to new understandings of real life issues.

Another noticeable commonality across the experiences was the individual nature of student tasks. All three teachers reported a lack of enthusiasm for group work. Although Stacey and Mariah did successfully implement group work in their exemplar lessons, they both reacted negatively to using collaborative student work. “It’s a nightmare,” said Stacey, “one person does all the work and the others are slackers. Plus, it just takes too long, and we have way too much to cover in a short amount of time.” Similarly Mariah indicated, “I teach five classes during the day. There is no way I can manage that many groups without going crazy. I find students just don’t take the work seriously when they work in groups. We need to cover the content to be ready for the common assessments required by our department. I need to keep it moving.” Whereas Ryan, with his group of twelve, said, “Technically, this is a small group—so yea, we do collaborative work.”

Additionally, all three of the teachers did not embrace using technology for students to access or evaluate sources. Ryan’s school had a one-to-one laptop program, but he adhered strongly to his personal policy of no phones and no computers. He told the students that laptops were only for use outside of the classroom to access the online textbook, complete homework, take online tests, and conduct research for their papers. Mariah’s school had two computer labs and three Chrome book carts for the history department. However, she reported never using the lab or the carts, and admitted to “being way behind the times in using technology—it scares me.” In fact, during our co-planning of the Vietnam War inquiry, I located the online websites, set up the lab use, and facilitated the students’ inquiry in the lab.

Stacey's department also shared Chrome book carts, but she reported, "They were more work than they were worth. Trying to find a cart to use for an entire day is almost impossible." She specified it being more efficient for her to locate and print student resources. Additionally, all three reported not using the NHMIP Google site containing multiple resources for teachers—created and used during the PLE.

A final noticeable commonality in the daily/routine was lack of engaging and meaningful assessment tasks allowing students to take informed action. Ryan's students were assessed through online textbook tests, a mid-term and a final semester paper. Mariah's mini-lectures, short video-clips, and prepared textbook questions covered the content mandated by her district and were evaluated through common assessments. Indeed, Stacey, was making intentionally changes to design new summative performance tasks. She was discovering new resources, developing new ways for students to analyze, evaluate and make evidence-base claims to share with others. However, she too, focused more often on students' knowledge of the content within a particular lesson or unit than on the relevance of the content to enable students to take informed action.

Differences in Instruction in Historical Inquiry

On the other hand, there were noticeable differences in how each teacher incorporated historical inquiry into classroom practice. The most prominent difference was taking up the work or the PLE to make historical inquiry a regular practice. Stacey was making visible intentional shifts to transform daily practice using the Inquiry Arc to implement historical inquiry. Additionally, she was the only one that strongly communicated her desire to continue in this endeavor in the future.

She told me she would continue to implement:

- compelling questions to drive units and involve students in doing more investigative work;
- hard scaffolding—planned in advance—such as chunking information, graphic organizers, and supporting questions to guide students in analyzing and evaluating sources through an economic, geographical, civic, and historical lens (e.g. the packet created for the Israeli/Palestinian project);
- new sources such as: books, movie clips, and sources she had diligently tracked down that provided multiple perspectives (e.g. the graphic novel);
- activities to move students beyond knowing history—memorizing facts and taking test—to doing history that was messy, complex, and grappling with questions that don’t always have answers; and
- more performance tasks (e.g. Michigan History traveling trunks, stating evidence-based claim on the four topics in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict).

In contrast, Mariah and Ryan were not as committed to transforming daily practice to include more historical inquiry. On three different occasions I recorded Mariah explaining to her students the nature of the course. “This class is to be seen as a survey of U.S. history” which, she declared, “means we go a mile long and only an inch deep to cruise through the timeline of our history.” Other than reading the textbook, Mariah devoted very little time using additional sources or in scaffolding tasks to guide students in analyzing, evaluating, and making evidence-based claims. On occasion, Mariah mentioned these things as “what historians do,” but allowing students time to do this was an extra—done only after content was delivered to the students. Mariah communicated that in the future, she would continue to think of how to ask better questions.

Ryan loved history, loved his job, and loved his students, but communicated that he did not have future plans to make any intentional instructional shifts to his practice. “Hey, if I can hype them up with my enthusiasm for history for fifty minutes and engage them in an intelligent conversation, I’ve done my job. Then I send them on their merry way to their first love—the fine arts—which by the way, is why they are at this school in the first place.”

In sum, the teachers displayed commonalities and differences regarding their involvement in developing historical inquiry that was systematic, rigorous, and public. Much of their daily routine included teacher-directed, individual tasks that lacked an authentic audience or social purpose. Additionally, questions were used more for the purposes of content coverage than for student-driven inquiry leading to informed action. Overall, Stacey showed the potential to rise to the vision offered by the PLE, but all three teachers remained grounded in a practice where the vision of powerful social studies learning—as represented by the PLE and the *C3 Framework*—remains a possibility.

Grounding this case study in teachers’ practices provided rich stories of how each particular teacher, within a particular context and with a particular understanding of historical inquiry took up the work following the duration of the PLE. In doing so, it provided rich insights into critiquing and analyzing how our efforts in a university-led, sustained PLE succeeded and faltered in promoting and encouraging sustainable teacher change. I turn next to present my interpretations of findings followed by the implications of my study through a letter of practice. The letter is written to a prospective colleague to share my insights—lessons learned—from my practical and scholarly participation in this sustained learning experience, and to offer suggestions for how to move forward in planning and implementing a PLE.

Interpreting the Findings

Over the last two decades there has been a paradigm shift occurring in teachers' professional learning. This shift is necessary to better equip teachers to not only engage in practices that help students learn the complex higher order thinking and analytical skills needed in the twenty-first century, but also to meet the increasing demands of high-stakes testing and school-wide accountability reform policies (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Hargreaves, 2014).

Traditional approaches, such as the “drive-by” workshops, where teachers passively receive knowledge constructed by others, are no longer sufficient for meeting the needs of students in the 21st century (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Lieberman & Miller, 2014; Stein, Smith, & Silver, 1999). Instead, research indicates, necessary shifts towards implementing elements of teacher learning that continue over a long period of time, that are situated within a community, and where teachers are seen as change agents actively involved in the learning process (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Garet et al., 2001; Webster-Wright, 2009).

This emerging approach requires, however, changes in the ways schools operate. For one, it would require greater teacher retention than many schools currently can sustain. Secondly, it would require either increased release time from teaching duties, or creative scheduling approaches. The question of how to support high-quality professional learning within existing context is therefore unclear.

In addition, research on how to create consensus about the content, context, and design of high-quality professional learning is in its infancy. Many core features have been identified to be promising for improving student achievement (Garret, 2003; Guskey, 2003; Kennedy, 2016) yet,

defining and measuring how these supporting elements work toward effective teacher learning is complex and messy (Guskey, 2003).

The PLE that Stacey, Mariah, and Ryan participated in exemplifies some aspects of the paradigm shift. The PLE was designed with some of the emerging core features in mind. The findings—as described and in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 through representations of practice and looking across experiences in this chapter—highlighted the complex nature of seeking to identify key influences of how the work done in the context of the PLE was taken up in each of their individual classrooms.

The PLE incorporated the core feature of being sustained over time. Building on the presupposition that learning is not an event, but a process, we developed several different modes of implementing instructional practices over the duration of the project. Summer institutes allowed teachers to actively participate in historical inquiry projects in the local community. Saturday workshops held during the school year gave them opportunities to hone specific skills such as developing compelling questions, evaluating and analyzing primary documents, and writing historical inquiry lessons for their own students. Additionally, teachers also worked in small groups during the school year to write, implement, and reflect on a historical inquiry lesson (the PLCs).

The PLE also incorporated situating the teacher learning in a community. Throughout the 103-hours the teachers worked on several inquiry projects in small groups, but also had time to work individually on developing specific inquiry lessons or projects for their particular classroom. The lesson study component also opened up space for collaborative work.

Lastly, the PLE incorporated the core feature of acknowledging teachers as active change agents. The PLE was done with teachers, not on teachers. As mentioned above, the project team

walked along side the teachers to guide, facilitate, and collaborate with them as as co-learners. At the end of each session teachers wrote reflections so that we, as a team could address concerns and problems of practice as needed. Additionally, each teacher was given a stipend to spend on resources that they best felt would help him/her as they moved forward in developing historical inquiry lessons for their students.

Nevertheless, even though many core features of professional learning were incorporated, the findings highlight the complex nature of seeking to identify how the elements worked together as the three teachers did, or did not, take up the work as supported by the PLE.

First, although all three teachers were committed to participating in the PLE, they were not as committed to taking up the work in their particular context. Stacey showed a high level of commitment and was making changes to her practice over time. Ryan, on the other hand, did not show a commitment to making any changes. Research shows that teacher commitment has been identified as one of the most critical factors in the progress and the progress and achievement of students (Day & Gu, 2010, Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990)). Commitment in the workplace is crucial to change efforts—especially “those which are initiated from outside o the school or organization—will be limited in their success” (Day & Gu, 2010, p. 127).

Second, the PLE supported teachers’ learning during the duration of the project, but abruptly ended once it was over. Stacey showed deep domain knowledge and was able to organize and apply the key elements of the *C3 Framework* without additional support. Whereas, Mariah, a different learner in a different setting, was not able to organize and plan a historical inquiry on her own and desired my outside help. PLE participants were not required to master either the basic elements of historical inquiry or the ability to facilitate such inquiries for others. Given that Mariah left the project without these skills in place, it is not surprising that she

continued to require high levels of support from grant facilitators. As a novice, Mariah, was still growing in her ability to connect the domain knowledge and metacognitive knowledge needed to engage effectively in disciplined historical inquiry (Chi, Feltovich, P., & Glaser, R. 1981; Wineburg, 1991; Saye, 2017).

Lastly, during the PLE teachers were encouraged and supported as change agents to incorporate historical inquiry into their classroom practices. However, once the PLE was over all three teacher chose—for various reasons—not to share their work in historical inquiry with their colleagues and indicated that collaborative work focusing on instructional practices did not exist at their schools. This latter finding is a particular shortcoming, as absent support from fellow teachers and administrators within a school culture, instructional advances made by individual teachers do not spread.

Lieberman & Miller (2007) have identified the “growing and powerful” research base about how learning communities can transform classroom practice, and ultimately enhance student learning (p. 4). For example, McLaughlin and Talbert (2001, 2006) did a large-scale study of 22 high schools in California and Michigan. They discovered that when school environments support learning communities, teachers supported each other in the belief that all students can learn, and in building classroom practices to enhance that learning. In contrast, schools where teachers worked in isolation and had very few opportunities to engage with each other, instruction was highly teacher-directed, text-focused, and instruction emphasized accountability to tests.

These shortcomings are not the whole story, of course. All teachers, overwhelmingly, reportedly enjoying their time in the PLE. In addition, as professional growth is a life-long process, we do not know how each of their stories will turn out. The PLE produced case studies

of progress, such as Stacey. But there were also shortcomings. Therefore, as I conclude this dissertation study, I will reflect the broad implications of the study through a letter of practice. The letter is written to a prospective colleague to share my insights—lessons learned—from my practical and scholarly participation in this sustained learning experience, and to offer suggestions for how to move forward in planning and implementing a PLE.

CHAPTER 8: STUDY IMPLICATIONS AS SEEN THROUGH A LETTER OF PRACTICE

Dear Melissa,

Congratulations! I just got the news that you received a federal *Improving Teacher Quality Grant*! Having just recently participated in such a grant, I can only imagine how your head is now spinning with questions! We got the grant, but now what? How should our project team move forward in developing an effective professional learning experience (PLE)? How will we guide and support teachers' learning so that they in turn guide and support all learners? How can a sustained PLE lead to sustainable teacher growth-in-practice?

Through our own grant, 23 teachers participated in 103-hour PLE focused on historical inquiry. I had the wonderful privilege of spending time in three secondary history teachers' classrooms to research how they took up the work in their practice, and what key influences hindered or supported them to do so, after the PLE was over.

My study findings align with what many researchers have confirmed—supporting teachers' learning can be complicated and messy. I am writing to you to share three insights—lessons learned—from my practical and scholarly participation in a sustained professional learning project, and offer suggestions for you to consider as you move forward in planning and implementing your PLE.

First, my study validated how much teacher motivation matters. In other words, I realized that the participants' goals for attending a PLE must match the purpose of the PLE. Not only do they need to be interested in the content, but they also need to be motivated and willing to make changes to their practice. For example, one of our participants loved the project and had a great time hanging out with other "history geeks." However, he had no intention of making changes in his practice, and therefore did not take up the work.

On the other hand, another participant came in desiring change. She knew history content, but had a deep desire to make changes in her practice to help students see history differently. After the PLE, she continued to make changes and spoke of future plans to continue doing so. Sustainable changes to practice will only occur if teachers are motivated and committed to growing in their professional lives.

As you plan and implement your program I have two important things for you to consider regarding participant motivation:

1. Streamline the goals of your project. The goals of your PLE must be clear, concise and concentrated. Remember, your PLE is sustained over a period of time, but is still an episodic event with a beginning and an end. Adhere wisely to the stipulations of your grant, but be careful about adding to it. Our grant funders simply asked that we pack in too much—Historical Inquiry using the *C3 Framework*, Universal Design for Learning,

argumentative writing, communities of practice, lesson study, and culturally relevant pedagogy.

1. Screen your participants ahead of time. Choose participants that match your goals—those who desire to learn more about the content, but also who are willing to analyze, critique, and make changes to practice. That is, we need to match them at the point of their development trajectory. For instance, include on the application form a place where perspective participants write out how their goals for the PLE align with your intended goals. We all know how precious and limited grants are so (especially in the social studies), so participants who indicate a desire to enjoy camaraderie with others who share a love for the content, but who show no desire to challenge current practices, should not be accepted. Additionally, as we discovered, the stipulations of the grant may make it difficult to recruit enough participants, so be sure your planning involves addresses a recruitment plan. If at all possible require that at least two teachers come from the same school building so that they can support each other in future growth.

Second, my study brought to the forefront key factors that influence whether participants feel comfortable and secure in questioning and critiquing their practice. Transformational growth-in-practice happens within a situated community, and teacher's ability to make changes is intertwined within the schools norms, values, and behaviors. Collaborative inquiry into practice needs to be supported, encouraged, and embedded into the norms of a school for sustainable growth-in-practice.

For example, one of our participants felt she did not measure up to others at her school. She expressed the constant tension of having enough time and energy to be a good mom and a good teacher. Additionally, her school's high-stakes testing environment, where she felt her worth was evaluated on how well her students did on common assessments, left her feeling vulnerable and insecure in making any changes to practice. In fact, it was only with outside help—from me—that she took on planning a historical inquiry project. And, interestingly, the project took place only after first teaching the textbook content—needed for the test.

By way of contrast, another teacher came into the PLE confident, capable, and willing to make changes to her practice. Her school context supported freedom for individual teacher pursuits to improve practice. However, she seemed to not trust her colleagues to take up the work with her, and therefore kept the work of the PLE to herself. Sustainable growth-in-practice is a complex affair, therefore, the social, cultural and organizational arrangement of school and communities of practice have to be considered.

As you plan your project I have four things for you to consider regarding participants' ability and willingness to critique and question their practice:

2. Limit the number of school districts and grade levels represented in your PLE. We failed to do this in our project. We had 23, grades 1-12 teachers, representing sixteen different school districts—making it almost impossible for us to support our participants in situating the desired practice within their context.

3. Create a safe and supportive environment of learning. Support the teachers in reflecting on their practice as it is situated in *their* context. Build in time to deal deeply with the difficult and messy issues of life in *their* school.
4. Invite teachers and administrators from the same school to participate. Devote specific activities in your PLE to address how leaders can support and sustain teachers as activist with control over the direction of their own work.
5. Encourage and support teams of teachers and leaders to be change agents in their schools. During the PLE encourage and support the teams of teachers in critiquing, questioning, and making action plans for sustainable school-wide changes to practice. (i.e. applying for their own grants to further the work of the PLE, partner with the local ISD, or a nearby university, share the work of the PLE with their peers)

Lastly, my study highlighted the importance of visioning for sustainable teacher change. A grant funded PLE has a definite beginning and end. Therefore, by very nature, it is not set up to support lasting change. That is, it can “open the door” to a longer and more arduous journey. We need to make sure that those in the PLE are both willing and able to undertake the journey once we part company.

I do believe that if a PLE is designed and planned within a broader vision of sustainability, it can lead to transformational learning. Change is a difficult process, one that happens over time, and whose ultimate goal must always be connecting teacher learning to student learning. In this sense, our project did not have success.

During the PLE, our project team set up many such supports for teachers. For example, we modeled the *C3 Framework*, and teachers actively participate in historical inquiry projects throughout the PLE. We also set up a Google site with access to multiple resources to assist teachers in, often the difficult and time consuming, process of locating primary and secondary resources was time consuming and difficult, so we set up a Google site with multiple resources. Additionally, each teacher received a stipend to purchase resources to match their particular goals and subject areas.

However, we missed opportunities to ensure sustainability. We did not properly provide scaffolded supports that were slowly released over time. First, we did not assist teachers in creating targeted goals. Second, we did not provide expertise on how to connect their learning to student learning. Although we collected multiple sources of data, the data was used for future research purposes, not for supporting teachers’ practice in the present. We collected lesson plans, we observed lessons in teachers’ classrooms, and we obtained teachers reflections through numerous exit tickets. However, we failed to use the data to coach, mentor, or facilitate the supports necessary to connect teacher learning to student learning. Scaffolded support for changes in practice must be in place to guide and support teachers’ learning so that they in turn guide and support all learners. Sustainable changes to practice need to be planned with a broad vision of sustainability.

I have three things for you to consider in planning and implementing your PLE within a vision for sustainability:

1. Have teachers set reasonable goals and write action plans to meet the goals—both within the time frame of the PLE, and after—when the supports are no longer available. Walk alongside them to provide support as they put the plans into action.
2. Use data to inform practice. Collect data from teachers during your project and model how you are using that data to inform the activities of the PLE. Provide feedback to teachers on how this data reflects on their particular goals. Scaffold activities so that teachers gain experience in collecting student data and using that data to inform instructional practices.
3. Encourage teacher ownership for change. Change is not an event. Ultimately, teachers have to take ownership for their own learning and continue to be seek out ways to be supported in taking up the practice as envisioned by your PLE.

I wish you the best as you plan and implement your project. I know it will be a rich experience where teacher educators and teachers come together to support each other in learning, reflect on and examine instructional practices, and set goals for their own and their students' learning.

I am confident and excited that your work will be a wonderful contribution to our field. I look forward to hearing all about it, and working with you on research into the complexity, messiness and wonder of human growth and transformation.

Sincerely,

Linda Doornbos

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LESSON OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Teacher _____

Observation date: _____

Time start: _____ Time end: _____ Observer: _____

Course: _____

A. Teacher Descriptive Information

1. Teacher gender ____ Male (M), Female (F)
2. Teacher ethnicity ____ Caucasian (C), African-American (A), Latino (L), Other (O)
3. Grade level(s) observed _____
4. Subject/Course observed _____
5. Highest degree _____
6. Number of years experience: _____
7. Number of years teaching this content _____

B. Student/Class Descriptive Information

1. Number of students in class: _____
2. Gender distribution: ____ Males ____ Females
3. Ethnicity distribution ____ Caucasian (C) ____ African-American (A) ____
Latino (L) ____ Other

C. Lesson Descriptive Information

1. Working title for lesson:
2. Objectives/Purpose of lesson:
3. Compelling Questions:
4. Resources for lesson:
5. Standards addressed (GLCE, HSCE, CCSS, C3F, etc...):

Historical Inquiry
Lesson addresses specific historical inquiry elements of federal, state, or district standards
Teacher focused student attention on questions of historical significance and/or compelling questions in history
Teacher provides a framework and/or strategy for collecting and organizing historical information

Teacher provides a variety of resources for students to collect and organize historical information
Teacher provides a framework for and assists students in interpreting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions based on historical data
Teacher provides opportunities for students to create authentic historical presentations involving writing and speaking for an audience beyond that of the teacher

Summary: (evidence of professional development elements of historical inquiry embedded in the lesson)

APPENDIX B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Teacher _____
Grade level/position _____
Location _____
Date of Interview _____
Length of Interview _____
Start time _____ Stop time _____

Thank you very much for allowing me to interview you. Your responses will help me better understand teacher learning through professional development. With your permission I would like to record the interview so that I can concentrate on what you are saying rather than note-taking

As with any part of this study, you can withdraw your consent to participate at any time and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. Please be aware that we want you to be honest in these interviews, even if it means saying things you think we might not want to hear.

The first set of questions will be about your educational background, your school setting, the current plan of professional development required by your school and/or district, and the current system in place for teacher evaluation.

The second set of question general questions will be about your participation in the Northern Michigan Historical Inquiry Project, historical inquiry instructional practices learned or enhanced through the project and how you understand taking up these practices after the support of the professional development has ended.

Educational Background

1. How long have you been teaching and what subjects and grade levels have you taught?
2. How long have you been in your present position?
3. What subjects are you currently teaching?
4. Describe how you grow and learn as a teacher.

School Setting

1. What is your school's current population?
2. How would you describe your student population (ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status)?
3. What percentage of your student population receives free and/or reduced lunch?
4. What is your average class size?
5. How are you evaluated?
6. What types of standardized assessments do your students take?
7. What types of support do you get from your colleagues, your department, your administration, your district, your parents?

Current Plan of Professional Development

1. Does your school/district have a set plan for professional development? If so, please describe the plan.
2. Does your school encourage and support teacher's exploring other forms of professional development? If so, how?

3. How often do you participate in professional development that goes above and beyond what is required by your school? What types of professional development are you drawn to?

Participation in Northern Michigan Historical Inquiry Project (NMHIP)

1. How would you describe your approach to teaching history before the NMHIP?
2. How would you describe your approach to teaching history after 103 hours of professional development from the NMHIP?
3. Describe any changes in your *motivation* to teach historical inquiry as a result of participating in the NMHIP.
4. Describe any changes in your *thinking* about historical inquiry as a result of participating in the NMHIP.
5. Describe any changes in your instructional practices as a result of participating in the NMHIP.
6. Are you able to enact the type of historical inquiry encouraged by the NMHIP in your classroom?
If so, explain how and perhaps provide some concrete examples.
If not, explain what factors you feel hinder you from practicing the type of historical inquiry encouraged and practiced in the NMHIP
7. What resources or support during the NMHIP were helpful in enacting historical inquiry instruction in your classroom?
8. Has the fact that support from NMHIP has ended made any difference on your instructional practices of historical inquiry? If so, describe these differences.
9. Do you wish more long-term support was put into place by the Northern Michigan Team? If so, describe what type of support you feel would be beneficial.
10. Have you been able to share the instructional practices you engaged in with the NMHIP with your colleagues? If so, explain how. If not, explain why.
11. Do teacher evaluations affect your opportunities to use historical inquiry as an instructional practice?
12. Does the type of standardized assessments your students take affect your opportunities to use historical inquiry as an instructional practice?
13. Any other comments you'd wish to share with me regarding how you feel the NMHIP did or did not change your teaching practices.

Possible Additional questions:

How often do you get to talk to others in your building about instructional strategies, historical inquiry?

Describe the value you see in using historical inquiry in the secondary classroom?

How are you defining historical inquiry?

How much influence (freedom) do you have in your setting to influence change? To vary your content, your instructional strategies?

If NMHIP could have a follow up support system what would you like that to look like?

APPENDIX C: OPEN-ENDED GROUP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Teachers Present _____
Location _____
Date of Interview _____
Length of Interview _____
Start time _____ Stop time _____

Questions for this interview will stem from previous one-on-one interviews, field notes taken during classroom observations, and teacher reflections.

Possible Starter Questions:

1. How well did the professional development institutes and workshop prepare you teaching historical inquiry, change your thinking about historical inquiry, and/or support the work you are already doing in this area?
2. Were there particular supports of the NMHIP that were more influential than others for you in your work? (summer institutes, Saturday workshops, PLC meetings, resources online and resources bought, hands on inquiry projects)
3. What specific changes have occurred in the way you **plan** units and/or lesson because of your participation in the NMHIP?
4. What specific changes have occurred in your instruction?
5. What specific challenges do you face when implementing historical inquiry? (internal, external)
6. What would you say is your most used instructional strategy?
7. Do you recommend additional support or any kind? If so, describe?
8. What additional resources do you wish you had?
9. If we were to offer the professional development for another set of teachers what would you recommend we do the same? different?

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