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CRITICAL LITERACY: STRUGGLES OVER MEANING

By

Gina Nicolé Cervetti

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ABSTRACT

CRITICAL LITERACY: STRUGGLES OVER MEANING

By

Gina Nicolé Cervetti

There is growing interest among teachers in critical approaches to instruction, particularly in the areas of reading and social studies education. This study is an examination of critical literacy in the context of one classroom, focusing on the challenges confronted by the classroom teacher, Christine Miller, in adopting a critical approach to history instruction. While many critical teachers have published reports of their practice, this study was designed to meet the need for more systematic research that examines teacher decision-making around critical curricula, explores in-depth the challenges that critical teachers confront, takes an institutional, as well as instructional, perspective, and includes the voices of the students.

Christine's experience as a critical teacher, documented in this study, points to the many challenges—personal, pedagogical, and institutional—associated with critical teaching. Although Christine was exposed to theoretical literature on critical teaching in her teacher education program, she was left largely on her own to work out ways to apply these ideas and her personal concerns with issues of power and justice to her classroom practice. As such, while Christine was philosophically committed to critical teaching, she was, by her own account, struggling with implementation.

Christine experienced particular difficulty situating her critical practice within the culture of her school and community. She struggled to make her approach transparent and valued to many of her students and colleagues. As such, she faced

persistent resistance, both overt and covert. Christine hoped to use her role as a teacher to address her lifelong concerns about inequity and discrimination. She believed that taking a critical and thematic approach to history was the best way to nurture students' empathy, self-awareness, ability to see the world from multiple perspectives, and awareness of social justice. Christine's students had an understanding of history that differed in important ways from hers. While some students were moved by Christine's approach and found themselves unusually interested in learning history, most resisted her approach. The students' expectations for this class were consistent with their experiences in past history classes, which were characterized by chronology, textbooks, and an emphasis on factual recall. These students believed that history was a set of facts and events to be learned, and Ms. Miller's class violated their expectation that these facts would serve as the primary content for the course.

Christine also experienced more overt resistance from parents, colleagues, and the larger educational community as she attempted to teach history thematically and critically. From each of these sources, she received messages that her teaching should be standards- and test-aligned. Christine felt constant disapproval directed toward her. Moreover, she felt that this disapproval could ultimately have important consequences for her teaching. She worried, for example, that she might eventually lose control over her curriculum to departmental standards or state mandates.

All of this resistance contributed to Christine's feelings of vulnerability and marginality. While Christine worked to improve her critical teaching, to find support in the school community, and to connect with students, she ultimately came to believe that truly critical teaching was not possible within the constraints of her school.

For my mother: This, like everything I have and do, I owe to you.

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Introduction

This study was designed to examine critical literacy in the context of one classroom, focusing on the challenges confronted by the classroom teacher, Ms. Miller, in adopting a critical approach to history instruction. The study provides an account of Ms. Miller's attempts to enact this critical approach and an analysis of the ways in which she and her students responded to those attempts. It is not so much an ethnography of the events that transpired as it is an analysis of the ways in which the key players made sense of Ms. Miller's approach to the critical teaching of history.

There is growing interest among teachers in adopting, or at least considering, critical approaches to instruction, particularly in the areas of reading and social studies education. Based in the writings of the Frankfurt School Critical Theorists, Paulo Freire, and critical postmodernists, critical literacy concerns itself with understanding the ways that texts and discourses operate in social institutions to represent the world, construct identities, and position readers (Luke, 1999). Critical literacy is also concerned with devising ways of reconstructing these texts and, hence, the world. O'Brien (2001), a classroom teacher, wrote of her critical perspective:

> Texts do not provide a sort of window into the world or a reflection of the world as it is; they are more than sources of information. Instead they create versions of what the social world is like and of

> the complex, shifting unequal power relationships between girls and boys and women and men. I intended therefore to view texts we used in the classroom not as fixed and complete objects but as places for discussion, argument, and challenge as well as for enjoyment, information, and pleasure.

While much has been written about the application of critical theory and Freirean pedagogy to education in the United States, there are still very few rich portraits of critical classrooms.

This is a study of one teacher's attempt to make critical teaching a reality in her classroom. This study is not designed to evaluate this teacher's practice or her students' learning. What matters in this study are the ways that this teacher—an urban high school teacher of U.S. history—construed her role as critical educator and her students' responses to her approach. It is largely a story of struggle, particularly struggle over the meaning and purpose of teaching and learning history in high school.

To set the context for this study, I begin by exploring challenges confronted by other critical teachers who have attempted to promote critical literacy in their classrooms. Then I turn to the struggles over the meaning of history evident in the history education literature and in public conversations about history teaching and texts. With those backdrops established as a context, I turn to the heart of this study—an examination of the tensions over the meaning of history that existed in the classroom under study here and at the personal and

institutional challenges confronted by this teacher. Finally, I attempt to recontextualize the findings from this study in the broader literature on critical teaching.

The Existing Literature on Critical Teaching

In the last two decades, a great deal has been written about critical literacy–about its grounding in critical theory (e.g., Kellner, 1989), Marxism (e.g., McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2001) and postmodernism (e.g., Peters & Lankshear, 1996); about its critique of current social problems and school practices (e.g., Lankshear & McLaren, 1993); and, increasingly, about its application to classroom practice (e.g., Comber & Simpson, 2001).

Critical literacy is difficult to define, because it represents a set of understandings about language and literacy more than a specific set of practices, and because the elements of a critical approach are contested. There are an increasing number of factions within the critical literacy community, including the critical feminists (e.g., C. Luke & Gore, 1992), the critical postmodernists (see Best & Kellner, 1991; Gee, 1993), and the Freireans/Marxists (e.g., McLaren, 1999), each offering a somewhat different version of critical theory and teaching. While proposing any single definition of critical literacy is problematic, it is possible to identify some commonalities across approaches.

In general, critical literacy involves the examination of the relationship between texts, readers, writers, and the world. Critical approaches treat the writing and reading of texts (broadly conceived as written, visual, and oral) as

non-neutral cultural practices that always provide selective and ideologically motivated accounts of the world (A. Luke & Freebody, 1997; Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000; Flint, 2000). From critical perspectives, all texts and readings are embedded "within normative fields of power, value, and exchange" and reflect the cultural positions and ideologies of the writer and reader (A. Luke, 2000). Texts are told from particular points of view and for particular purposes. Authors use the manipulable features of text (lexical, syntactic, discourse, structural, etc.) to foreground certain meanings, to position readers, and to support particular social relations (A. Luke, 2000).Critical literacy practices encourage students to analyze texts with attention to the contexts and features of their construction and the ideologies that underlie them.

Readers, like writers, are influenced in their responses to text by their experiences and their social positionality (e.g., gender, race, age, and social class) (Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000). Critical literacy practices encourage students to see texts as open to a number of possible readings, including personal, critical, and resistant readings. Once students recognize that texts are representations of reality and that these representations are social constructions, they have a greater opportunity to take a more powerful position with respect to these texts—to reject them or reconstruct them in ways that are more consistent with their own experiences in the world.

Through interrogations of power in text, critical literacy raises issues of social justice and equity, particularly related to the marginalization,

disenfranchisement, disadvantage of individuals, groups, or communities (Vasquez, 2000). From a critical perspective, it is vital to include marginalized perspectives in the school curriculum and to examine the ways that language and literacy function in powerful ways to produce and reproduce race, ethnicity, social class, and gender positions (Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000).

The goal of critical literacy is to develop students' agency to address inequities they experience in their own lives, to talk back to texts, and to become decision-makers in the classroom and in their communities outside of school. For many critical educators, the goal is to teach students to use literacy to work for social justice and equity in their lives and the lives of others (Heffernan & Lewison, 2000; Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000).

Reports of Critical Practice

Critical literacy has often been criticized for its largely theoretical orientation (e.g., Anderson, 1989), but there is also a growing body of work about critical teaching as it is implemented in classrooms. Much of this work takes the form of teachers' research and reflection on their own critical practice.

Because critical literacy is more an orientation toward education than a specific set of practices, it has been written about in a wide variety of educational settings—from early childhood (e.g., Vasquez, 2001) through college (e.g., Herideen, 1998) and adulthood (Foley, 2001), workplace (e.g., Hull, 2000), and teacher education (e.g., Lesley, 2001; Moss, 2001)—and it has been applied to a wide variety of school subject matter, including art (e.g., Yokley, 1999), college

composition (e.g., Lesley, 1997), environmental education (e.g., Singh, 1998), foreign language education (e.g., Elissondo, 2000), and particularly in reading and literacy education (e.g., Morgan, 1997; Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000).

Critical teachers use a variety of approaches to encourage students to take a critical stance toward text, but critical practice is typically characterized by textual analysis, dialogue, and questioning or problem posing. Simpson (1996) documented one teacher's attempt to nurture an understanding among her 7th grade students that characters are not real but are constructed by authors, and that stories are not reflections of reality but selective versions of it. This teacher continually foregrounded the author's role in constructing the text, posing questions such as, "What does the author want you, the reader, to think and feel about particular characters or events? How does he or she achieve this?" Students compared their readings of these texts and examined the ways that the authors positioned them to respond to the texts in particular ways through choices about language, point of view, and other textual features.

Critical practice is also typically connected to the lives that students lead outside of school and to current issues in society. Often critical practitioners make real-life issues, dilemmas, and texts the heart of the curriculum (Flint, 2000). Paul (2000) used rap music as a literature to privilege her students' voices and to create culturally relevant pedagogical practices. She worked to use rap as a site for critical inquiry by, for example, using it to explore the ways texts work

in everyday life and by looking at the relationship between rap music and canonical poetry from Emily Dickinson, William Shakespeare, and Gwendolyn Brooks.

Much of the teacher research and reflection literature describes successful or model examples of critical teaching. For example, Powell, Cantrell, and Adams (2001) described an inquiry-based project undertaken by a group of fourth-graders as an example of critical literacy. The authors described the student's efforts to investigate and ultimately prevent strip mining on Kentucky's Black Mountain. Though the project was not undertaken within an explicitly critical framework, the authors use the project to "illustrate the transformative potential of critical literacy." In another example, Sweeney (1997) described a set of activities undertaken by her fourth-grade class around the South African elections of 1994, including the culmination of their work in a play about apartheid written by the students and performed for the other classes in their school building.

These and other accounts of teachers' critical practice provide much needed images of critical pedagogy in the trenches of educational practice, and they provide important windows into the challenges, as well as the potential, of critical teaching. Three key challenges emerge from a review of this literature: students' responses to critical dialogue; teachers' discomfort with their new critical role; and the disapproval of colleagues.

Students' responses to critical dialogue. A number of reports from teachers describe students' resistance to critical readings of text. Mellor and Patterson (2001) described the implementation of a critical, countersexist curriculum in a split class of 8-10 year olds in Australia. The authors hoped to use a "multiple readings" approach, teaching students to read text for their multiple, and often competing, meanings in order to raise critical issues around children's stories. They found, however, that their students were often unwilling to construct alternative, nonsexist readings:

> We realized we had assumed that an adjustment of their initial reading would follow given their access to alternatives. The way students would do this, we thought, was by becoming conscious of sexism; once seeing the sexism of a particular reading [of Hansel and Gretel] they would choose another. Newly conscious and thus empowered to produce a resistant or critical reading, they then would be able to overcome both the potential for deception of the text and the power of dominant (sexist) readings....This did not seem to be the case. (p. 122)

Mellor and Patterson believed that students benefited from the analytical activity of multiple readings, but did not "adjust their initial readings in favor of an alternative construction" (p. 122). The teachers concluded that the students were unaccustomed to reading beyond a text's obvious meaning. In this

classroom, access to more critical readings did not alone provoke students to modify their well-established readings of the texts.

Smith (2001) reflected on her attempts to take a critical approach in her teacher education classes. She described her students' discomfort as she encouraged them to move from personal to critical responses. Her students were reluctant, for example, to critique children's stories for racism and sexism. Smith found that "creating habitable spaces for and maintaining critical conversations is very hard work" (p. 161):

> I found that when these conversations worked, they required us to speak honestly and truthfully from our own position in the world, and they demanded that we learn to listen with more open minds and to push ourselves into places most of use would rather not go. The students and I all recognized moments of quiet discomfort whenever we moved from our personal responses to critical responses that closely examined the cultural and ideological values that were embedded in the stories we read. (p. 162)

Smith also described her struggle with her own role; while she wanted to be an equal participant in the class, she questioned what her role was in "positioning students toward reading in a particular [critical] way" (p. 161). And, she worried about "missed opportunities" and about allowing "naïve or hurtful" responses to dominate in class discussions.

In a dialogue with Paulo Freire, Ira Shor talked about his struggle to reform himself as a teacher (Shor & Freire, 1987). Shor reported that, while some of his students appreciated his critical approach, others were "actively hostile, challenging [him] in ways to stop the critical thrust of the class" (p. 25). Shor believed these students saw the class as a threat to the traditional values that the students embraced.

Other teachers describe their students as disinterested in critical dialogue. Simpson (1996) discussed her experiences working with a teacher in an Australian middle school class to plan a curriculum that would encourage students to adopt a critical perspective. Simpson and the teacher, Mrs. Willson, focused their teaching on promoting particular critical understandings related to children's literature (e.g., characters are not real, but are constructed by authors). They began by trying to encourage students to use critical questions in their discussions of literature, but found that these questions were not engaging to students and hence did not provoke critical analyses. The teachers revised their approach to allow students to develop their own questions. Although few of these questions were critical in the ways the teachers had hoped—"standing back from the story as it was presented to question how and why it had been constructed the way it was"—the questions "provoked interested responses from the other children and stimulated discussion that reflected the kinds of insights [the teachers] were trying to encourage."

Many critical teachers report also that their students are unprepared for critical dialogue. For example, Thesen (2001) described her use of "multimodal communication" in a South African critical literacy course. Multimodal activities in the class included analysis of images, such as photographs and drawings. Thesen described the struggles confronted in the class, particularly students' difficulty with visual and textual analysis. Thesen concluded that the students were unprepared by previous courses to engage in critical activities and were confronting visual texts for the first time. The students struggled to identify salient features of the texts; they lacked familiarity with theories required for critique; and they struggled with the theoretical language of the course. Looking across these efforts, all of which experienced at least some failure or roadblocks, one insight seems pervasive—the essential role played by students' prior classroom experiences, which, in general, are not supportive of the development of a critical stance toward text.

Teachers' discomfort with their new critical role. In addition to confronting unprepared and resistant students, many critical teachers report that they struggle with their own roles in the critical dialogue in their classrooms and in their school communities.

In reflecting on his critical teaching in a high-school literature classroom, Gaughan (1999) discussed the challenge that he confronted as he worked to overcome students' resistance to examining cultural and linguistic differences

and to encourage students to confront their own prejudices without imposing his own views. Of particular concern was the asymmetrical student-teacher power relationship and its potential to provoke students to veil their own views in publicly expressing views more consistent with his own.

O'Brien (2001), in addition to describing her critical stance and examples of that stance in action in her classroom, described some of the struggles she experienced trying to adopt a critical stance toward literacy. In particular, she described her difficulty responding to students in meaningful ways and extending their contributions in order to draw her 5-8 year old students into critical dialogue: "I struggled to invent in the classroom context a critical discourse through which I could share my own explorations of textuality and also make space for children's readings" (p. 46). She also described her discomfort with creating a curriculum that likely runs contrary to expectations and community norms:

> Although my history could be construed as giving me a more-or-less straightforward passage into critical classroom practices—no one ever challenged my agenda—it became apparent to me that what I was up to was risky if not dangerous in a number of ways. It was at times disruptive to the usual classroom order, interrupting parent, child and teacher expectations about what school reading, writing, and talk were for; it encouraged discordant points of view to be expressed; from time to time it involved children in

questioning the rules by which they and their families and communities lived their lives. (p. 52)

Lesley (1997), a college composition teacher, discussed her efforts to introduce critical issues about the function of literacy into her classes:

> In the hope that I could not teach literacy merely as a series of subskills but rather as an 'emerging act of consciousness and resistance' (Giroux, 1993, p. 367), I decided to try to implement a critical approach to literacy in my class.

While discussing her experience teaching a continuing education class with mostly African American female students, Lesley (1993) reflected upon issues of teacher authority and her own discomfort with and awareness of her own gender and race (female, white) in this class. In describing a class discussion of a novel during which she fell silent because her reading of the novel was very different from her students' readings, she recognized her failure to achieve her goal as a critical teacher:

> Based on their interpretation, I was afraid they would see me as aligned with the oppressor as a sympathetic White woman. At least suspecting that by virtue of my race and gender I would be perceived more as oppressor than emancipator, I decided to keep my reading of the text to myself. I wasn't prepared to deal with my undeserving place of privilege. Thus, my class fell short of being truly critical.

This situation provoked other questions for her: "How could I stand in front of this class as a benefactor of White privilege and attempt to teach emancipation? But that's what I grappled with as I watched dominant and subordinate groups struggle over cultural representation and meaning through textual exegesis."

Disapproval of colleagues. Several teachers report confronting disapproval from colleagues as they implemented a critical curriculum. Vasquez (2001) described a critical incident from her Canadian kindergarten classroom when she and the children in her classroom "seized on one particular school event—the annual 'French Café'—to construct a critical curriculum." The students took action to protest the exclusion of kindergarten classes from the school event. As a result of the students' efforts, the school administration agreed to include kindergarten students in the French Café event in the future and, according to Vasquez, the students moved toward an alternate form of participation in schools by "not only envisaging, but actualizing a different school world" (p. 64). She reported that, although parents and colleagues were generally supportive of the episode, she encountered resistance from other classroom teachers "who worried that a curriculum addressing social issues and leading to social action could create students who are radical, rude, and disrespectful" (p. 59).

Many of these teachers were unprepared for the challenges they confronted in attempting to teach from a critical perspective. They were surprised to discover their own discomfort and surprised at their students' resistance to, disinterest in, and lack preparedness for critical dialogue. These teachers' accounts point to struggles not often addressed in the theoretical literature on critical teaching. This study was designed to look more closely at the challenges confronted in this transition from theory to practice.

Description of the Study

This study was inspired by the existing theoretical research and, especially, by the reports of teachers from the trenches of critical practice. It was designed to meet the need for more systematic research that examines teacher decision-making around critical curricula, explores in-depth the challenges that critical teachers confront, takes an institutional, as well as instructional, perspective, and includes the voices of the students.

Although I conceptualized this as an emergent study, I began with some framing questions: What does critical teaching look like in this classroom? What challenges does this teacher encounter as she attempts to take a critical approach to instruction? How does she understand and negotiate the personal and intellectual challenges, curricular constraints and affordances, and resistances and support from students?

In many ways, the struggles encountered by the teacher described in this study, Christine Miller[1], mirror those experienced by other critical teachers. This study centers not only on these struggles, but also on the challenges that emerge from the particular relationship between a history curriculum and critical teaching in this classroom. In addition to my critical questions, I found it important to examine the ways that the various student participants in this classroom were making sense of what it means to learn history and what their understandings about history suggested about the struggles that Ms. Miller confronted. I also reconsidered the extant literature reviewed above and addressed my findings to similar struggles of other teachers.

Setting for this Study and Participants

The School

This research was conducted in two U.S. History classes at Wilton High, an urban high school in northern California. During the 2000-2001 school year, the student enrollment at Wilton High was over 3,000. In 1999-2000, the average class size was reported to be 26 in the social sciences, but Ms. Miller had 32 students in each class during the 2000-2001 school year. Ethnically, the student body was about 9% Asian, 12% Hispanic, 39% White, and 38% African American. Nearly 75% of the teachers were white, and about 85% were fully accredited.

[1] All of the names of people and places used in this study are pseudonyms.

Though there were problems with theft, assault, and arson at the school, Wilton High was generally considered a high-quality public high school within the surrounding area. The school performed in the top 20% on statewide academic assessments in 1999-2000, and the graduating class of 2000 had SAT scores above the state and national averages. The achievement gap between African American and white students was dramatic, with white students achieving average scores near the 85th percentile on nationally normed state exams and African American students scoring below the 40th percentile.

The school was diverse economically, as well as racially. Twelve percent of the students qualified for the federal Free and Reduced Price Meal Program. Unlike many urban centers, where public schools are populated by the poorest residents, many local families who could afford to enroll their students in highly-regarded private schools chose Wilton High. The school's reputation for regularly sending scores of its graduates to the nation's top universities made it attractive to affluent families. In addition, Ms. Miller and her students reported that Wilton parents tended to value public education and to value experiences of diversity that often could not be found in the local private schools.

Ms. Miller taught three different classes for five periods in a row each day, including the two U.S. History classes that I studied. The history classes were part of a special small school program, which students joined through an application process. The students enrolled in the program (about 60 per grade in grades nine through twelve) were required to take three program classes each

semester during their four years at Wilton High. All of these core classes were focused on the humanities, social sciences, media, and technology. The program was intended to provide a rich education in these areas and to provide a sense of community to the students within the large and often impersonal high school. Generally, the students applied for the program in eighth grade and were selected on the basis of their commitment to the focus areas and other program pillars, such as community service.

Participation in the small school program provided the teachers some unusual flexibility. For example, Ms. Miller arranged with the English teacher to schedule block periods two days per week. On these days, students would remain in English or history for two periods. Therefore, Ms. Miller met with both classes on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays; with the second period only on Wednesdays; and with third period only on Thursdays.

The Classroom

Ms. Miller's classroom was crowded—with 32 student desks, the teacher's desk, filing cabinets, shelves and assorted chairs. The walls in the classroom were bright blue—Ms. Miller painted them herself—and the floor was an orange-tan colored linoleum. The ceiling in the classroom was high, and the walls were covered with posters and student work. On the south wall, there were built-in wooden bookshelves and cabinets and posters of Gandhi, Langston Hughes, Frida Kahlo, Albert Einstein, the Mexican Revolution of 1910, Chief Joseph, and Black History Month. There were several windows on the north wall alongside

posters of Emma Goldman, Malcolm X, General Zapata, and Vincent Van Gogh paintings. The chalk board took up most of the east wall, and the south wall was covered with student work from Christine's five classes. Christine wrote a brief agenda for each class on the board every morning that included the topic for the day (e.g., "Voting") and the homework (generally readings or questions for students to write about in their notebooks). On my first day in the classroom, the U.S. History agenda read:

U.S. History
I. Good Morning
II. Introduce Ms. Cervetti
III. VOTING
IV. Homework: Read role play on political membership
    1) Which in your opinion is most important?
    2) Which do you think should be the political priority?

The student desks were arranged in rows of three or four on the north, south, and west ends of the classroom. The desks faced the center of the room. Christine's wooden desk was in the northeast corner of the room. Behind her desk sat a computer table with a newly acquired computer.

The building, which was devoted to humanities and social sciences classrooms, showed signs of age and wear—chipping paint, worn out linoleum floors—especially compared to its remodeled neighboring building devoted to math and science classes.

The Teacher

Ms. Miller was entering her fourth-year of teaching in the summer of 2000 when we met at a conference for the National Coalition of Education Activists. Ms. Miller, who turned 30 during the 2000-2001 school year, had moved from the

Midwest to California about five years before this study commenced. She completed her master's in northern California before taking a job in the social studies department at Wilton High School. She taught two sections of U.S. History as part of her five-course teaching load. She had learned about critical literacy in her undergraduate and master's program and was working to take an increasingly critical approach to instruction in all of her classes.

The Class

Ms. Miller generally started the day by greeting the students, reviewing the agenda for the day (written on the board), and walking around the room to stamp the notebooks of students who completed the homework. What would follow was a mixture of lectures and discussions related to a series of broad historical themes and sub-topics within those themes. For example, within the broader theme of political membership, sub-topics included citizenship, economic independence, and voting. Ms. Miller would generally lead with a brief lecture on a topic while students took notes. Ms. Miller often supplied a template for students' note taking, such as a blank flow chart or diagram, and she would often take notes on the overhead as she spoke. Ms. Miller frequently supplemented the lecture with videos or photographs. And, she often asked brief (known-answer and review) questions in the course of the lectures. Following the lecture, Ms. Miller would engage students in a whole class or small group discussion or activity around the topic. This entire cycle might take one or several days. When it was included, small group work typically involved

problem solving or role playing in groups of 4-6 students, with each member of the group taking a different position on a question (Should the United Stated intervene in communism? What are potential solutions to a weakness in the United States economic system?).

A brief description of a class period is included in Figure 1, below.

Figure 1. **Description of a class period.**

October 16, Period Three

As the third period students enters the room, the teacher talks with individual students. She tells one students that it is important for to submit her notebook so she (Ms. Miller) can get to know her (the student) better.

The teacher greets the students and previews the week's agenda: "Good morning. I hope you guys had a lovely weekend. I had a great weekend because I knew I'd get a chance to see you on Monday. Today, we're gonna discuss the questions that you pondered over the weekend. [Later in the week] we're gonna look at the other pieces of political membership."

Ms. Miller walks around the room, stamping students' homework notebooks (a stamp indicating that the work was done) while the intern, Miss Logan, times her. Miss Logan announces that it took two minutes and twenty-five seconds.

Ms. Miller reminds the students that they need to finish the notes from Friday. She reviews the last thing she talked about on Friday, the Supreme Court case of Miner vs. Happersett. Ms. Miller tells the students that the suffragists adopted a new strategy after their loss in this court case—they decided that suffrage would require a constitutional amendment, which would require the cooperation of the state legislatures. Ms. Miller pulls down a map on the front board and points to the states that were first in granting women the vote—all western states. She asks, "Why do you think that the western states were leading in the women's suffrage movement?" Students respond (e.g., "They were more open-minded." "Because women were working already."), and Ms. Miller elaborates, suggesting that women had to work as a matter of survival on the western frontier. She describes the increasing militancy of the suffrage movement and the movement's relationship to World War I. She also tells the story of a young senator from Tennessee, the last state needed to pass the constitutional amendment for women's suffrage, who supported the amendment after receiving a letter from his mother telling him to "do the right thing." The

students applaud loudly.

Ms. Miller tells the students that they will only have time to discuss a couple of the homework questions. She asks the students to vote for the questions they want to address. Ms. Miller reads the first of the chosen questions: "What's behind women...begging to be left in their chains. Why would women not support their own right to vote?" The students respond to the question, one at a time, without being called on by the teacher. The students talk about social pressure, socialization, fear of the unknown, and the influence of religion. Ms. Miller interjects some supportive comments (e.g., "Okay, people fear the unknown." "It takes a lot to question our faith.") After about five minutes, Ms. Miller announces that they need to move on to the next question, "What does it take for people to give up and share power?" "What are the qualities, what does it take for someone to do that?" Students talk about "trust and respect," "trust and confidence," the "maturity...to accept that other people might have different ideas from you," the importance of "looking at each other as human beings, not men or women," courage and compassion. One student, Jasmine, says that she "disagree[s] with everyone." She says that "people must be forced to give up power; They get pushed so much and have to give in." Other students follow-up with comments about the role of force and fear in bringing about equality.

The teacher sets up the next question about the Susan B. Anthony's decision to separate from black women in order to get the support of the southern senators for a constitutional amendment granting women the vote. Ms. Miller asks, "What do you think of that political decision that was made?"

One student says that it was a good move strategically, but, morally, "it undermined the principles they wanted to get out about social justice." Ms. Miller asks how these strategic and moral considerations should be prioritized. The student says that moral decisions are harder, but more important. They continue to discuss this. Some students believe that the decision to split the movement was "courageous" and acceptable as long as the white women supported the black women's fight for suffrage afterward. Others disagree, saying that such a separation fundamentally undermined the suffragists' fight for equality.

The bell rings, and the students leave.

Methods

Data Collection Procedures

Methodologically, this study is qualitative, borrowing from ethnographic and critical traditions of research. As it was my intention to study critical

pedagogy in this classroom and the contextual factors that influence it, the research procedures were designed to help me get close to one teacher's practice.

Site Selection. When I met Ms. Miller in 2000, I was looking for a classroom in which to conduct my research. I had one principal criterion for the classroom in which I would conduct the research: the classroom teacher needed to be committed to critical pedagogy. In conversations at the conference, Christine expressed such a commitment and a willingness to be involved in the project.

Procedure. I visited Ms. Miller's classroom three times over the course of the 2000-2001 school year. In total, I spent nine weeks in the classroom (three weeks in October, three weeks in January, and three weeks in April and May). During these visits, I observed the classroom instruction during two periods of U.S History, I took field notes based on the observations, and I audio taped the classes. I also interviewed Ms. Miller and some of her students regarding their experiences in the class.

Between each of my visits to Ms. Miller's classroom, I organized the data and conducted some preliminary analyses in order to refocus my investigation during subsequent visits.

Teacher interviews. I conducted eight semi-structured interviews/dialogues with Ms. Miller over the course of the school year. Each dialogue lasted 60 to 120 minutes and revolved around particular themes selected by myself and Ms. Miller. Themes included planning, critical practice,

assessment, and standards. Before we met, I generated a series of questions or points-of-discussion based on the theme. Occasionally, Ms. Miller also contributed topics for discussion. At the beginning of each dialogue, I encouraged Ms. Miller to respond generally to the theme. I attempted to follow her lead, encouraging her to provide explanations, details, and examples. As the interviews proceeded, I asked increasingly specific questions. I also attempted to select interesting episodes from my observations for joint discussion and reflection.

All of the dialogues with Ms. Miller focused generally on her understanding of critical teaching, her instructional decision-making, and the struggles that she confronted in planning and implementing critical approaches. For outlines of the original protocols (loosely followed in the interviews), see Appendix B of this report.

Originally, I had intended to use the dialogues as an opportunity for collaborative discussions about the research process and analysis and as an opportunity to provide Ms. Miller with professional colleagueship. I began to do this during my first visit, but was advised against it by my dissertation committee and modified my stance thereafter. My committee was concerned that I would unduly influence the very dynamics that I hoped to study naturalistically. I was still committed to being a constructive presence in the classroom in the least obtrusive way possible, so I continued to make small contributions in class—making photocopies when needed, correcting multiple

choice exams, hanging student work on the classroom walls, and sharing news items and personal experiences related to the class discussions—and through my discussions with Christine—for example, helping her design a class evaluation and helping her think about and conduct a separate action research project.

Student interviews. I originally intended to interview a sub-set (approximately 5) of Ms. Miller's U.S. History students three times over the course of the school year. However, my plans changed because I encountered difficulty gaining permission and scheduling these interviews and because I realized that I would benefit from talking to more students. I selected the students from among the 30 (out of 64) who returned permission slips. I used my observations and consultations with Ms. Miller in order to select a relatively diverse sample of students, particularly with respect to their performance in the class and levels of participation. The students selected were also representative of the racial diversity in Ms. Miller's class: two were Africa-American, one was biracial, one was Asian American, three were White, and one was Mexican. In the end, I interviewed eight students one, two, or three times over the course of the school year. A schedule of these interviews is included in Figure 2.

In the end, I did not include reference to one student's interviews in the research report. This student, Maria, was visiting for the year from Mexico. The uniqueness of her experience made it impossible to conceal her identity, an important condition of her participation in the study.

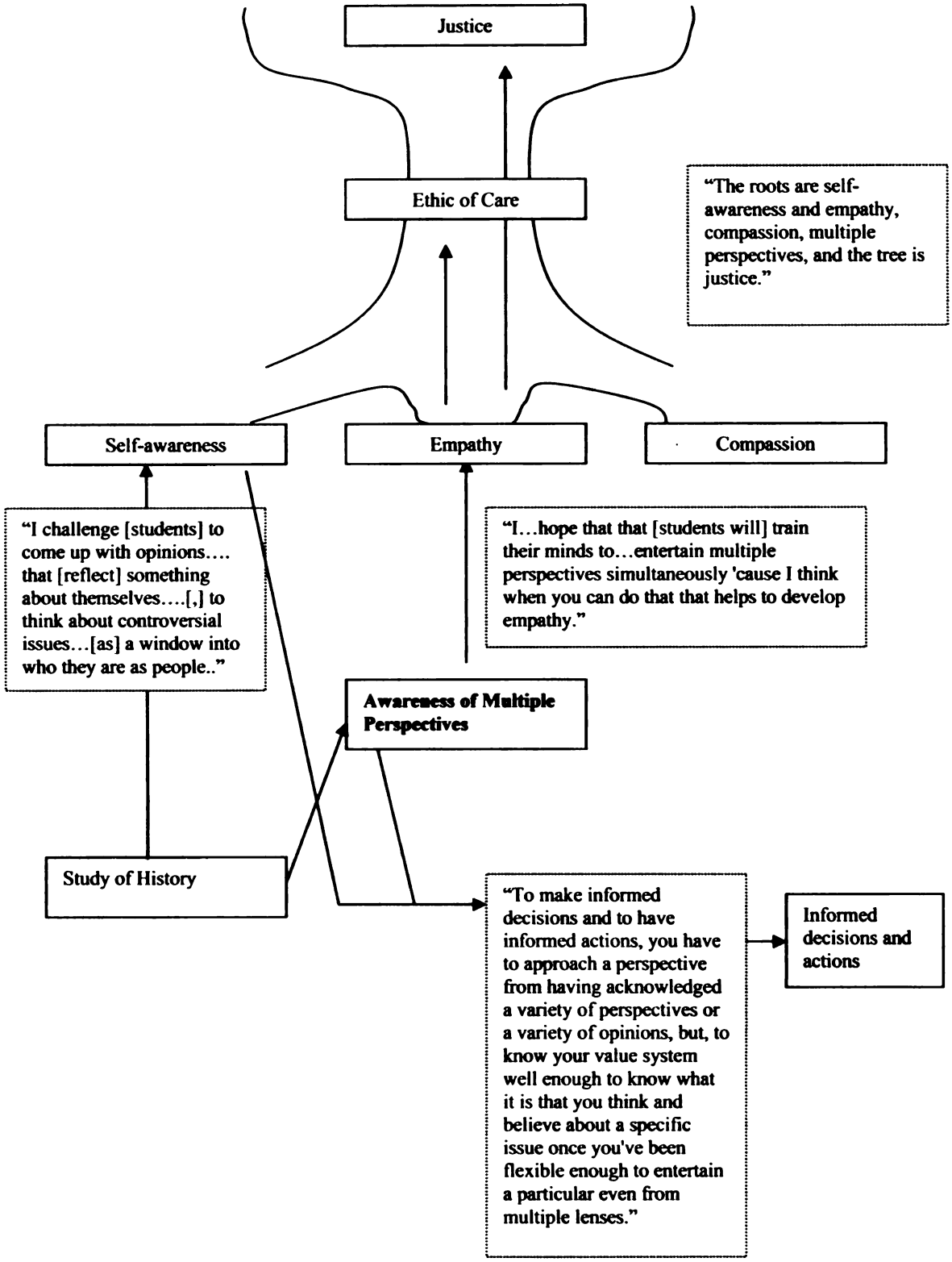
Figure 2. **Student interview schedule.**

	October	January	April/May
Tamika	X	X	
Destiny		X	
Joel		X	X
Ruth			X
Scott		X	X
Maria	X	X	X
Kristen			X
Alan	X	X	X

During these interviews, we discussed the students' impressions of and responses to the class. I asked a series of semi-structured questions about the class relative to others that they have taken, their experiences with the material in and out of school, and their understandings about the nature and purpose of history instruction (the interview questions are included in Appendix C).

Member checking. Over the course of the year, I regularly checked with the participants to make sure that my reading of their perspectives was consistent with their understandings. I frequently repeated back things that they had said in previous interviews and posed follow-up questions. In some cases, I used illustrations, such as the visual representation of her learning goals for U.S. History presented in Figure 3. I showed this to Christine and asked her whether it fairly represented her understanding of the relationship between her various goals for U.S. History. She believed that it did.

Figure 3. **Christine's goals for U.S. History.**



Observations. In October, 2000, and January and April/May, 2001, I visited Ms. Miller's U.S. History Classroom for 3 weeks (a total of 42 days of observation). The observation schedule was designed to provide a view of critical teaching over the course of the year, to allow opportunities for interim analyses away from the classroom, and to sustain a long-term connection with Ms. Miller and her students. Observation dates are listed in Figure 4.

***Figure 4.* Observations dates.**

Observation Dates: First Visit	Observation Dates: Second Visit	Observation Dates: Third Visit
October 11, 2000	January 8, 2001	April 23, 2001
October 12, 2000	January 9, 2001	April 24, 2001
October 13, 2000	January 10, 2001	April 25, 2001
October 16, 2000	January 11, 2001	April 26, 2001
October 17, 2000	January 12, 2001	April 27, 2001
October 18, 2000	January 16, 2001	April 30, 2001
October 19, 2000	January 17, 2001	May 1, 2001
October 23, 2000	January 18, 2001	May 2, 2001
October 24, 2000	January 19, 2001	May 3, 2001
October 25, 2000	January 22, 2001	May 4, 2001
October 26, 2000	January 23, 2001	May 7, 2001
October 30, 2000	January 24, 2001	May 8, 2001
October 31, 2000	January 25, 2001	May 9, 2001
November 1, 2000	January 26, 2001	May 10, 2001

During the observational visits, I took field notes to render descriptions of activities, materials, activities, and dialogue. I focused my observations primarily on the classroom instruction/activities as enacted by Ms. Miller, though I also attempted to capture students' responses to the activities.

Artifacts. I collected artifacts, such as instructional materials, newspapers, readings, student work, codified policies, and related materials.

Reflection Journals and Interim Analyses. After each observation, I reviewed my field notes for clarity and completeness. I also kept a journal where I recorded impressions of the data and plans for subsequent data collection. The journal entries served as documentation of my sense-making over time and helped me to focus my research more narrowly as the project proceeded.

Data Analysis

I began the process of data analysis immediately after returning from my first visit to Ms. Miller's classroom. I transcribed the interviews and catalogued the field notes, reviewing audio tapes, as needed, to supplement my notes (for example, to reconstruct missing dialogue). I then developed and applied an initial coding scheme to the interview data, using a process of open coding (Neuman, 1991, p. 422). The purpose of open coding is to make an initial pass through the data, which organizes the mass of data and directs the researcher's subsequent analysis. In this study, the open coding was also intended to direct my subsequent data collection. To create the initial coding scheme, I first developed codes that corresponded to each of my research questions. For example, the codes resistance, supports, and curricular struggles were initial codes developed based on the research question, "How does she understand and negotiate the personal and intellectual challenges, curricular constraints and affordances, and resistances and support from students?"

I then read through the field notes, interviews, and reflection journal in order to identify recurring terms, events, and themes. I created additional codes

based on these readings. For example, the codes history—definitions and history—purposes were added before the second coding as students' ways of defining history and its purposes emerged as important to their interpretations of the class. I organized the codes into clusters and used them to create a coding tree in the qualitative analysis software NUD*IST. The codes were divided into three general categories:

- Data codes: Indicated the type of data (e.g., student interview, teacher interview, classroom observation field notes)
- Time codes: Indicated whether the data was associated with the first, second, or third data collection trip.
- Content codes: Indicated the topic (or key aspect) of the textual unit.

I assigned each text unit at least three codes—one for each category—though most units were coded with more than one content code. I modified the coding scheme—reorganizing and adding codes—as I applied the scheme to the data. Through the application of the codes, I was able to identify themes and keywords that recurred frequently in the data (A copy of this initial coding scheme and subsequent revisions is included in Appendix D).

I used the interviews, and particularly the teacher interviews, as the initial entry point into the data analysis, because my principal purpose was to get close to critical teaching as it is understood and practiced by the individuals in this setting. I was primarily concerned with the teacher's sense-making around critical teaching and with the students' response to the class. Using observations

or standards or even student work in the initial analyses, I reasoned, would have drawn me away from this approach.

I used these initial analyses to focus the investigation. For example, I noticed that facts were mentioned by many of the student interviewees as an important dimension of history. As I continued to analyze the data, what became most interesting were the ways that the teacher and students were making sense out of their experiences with history, in this class and in the world. The teacher and students seemed to have different understandings about the nature and purpose of history learning. This initial impression provided some insight into my initial research question about challenges confronted by teachers in adopting a critical approach. These analyses prompted the development of some new research questions, which I was able to use on subsequent visits in order to sharpen this focus: What is history according to the participants in this classroom and according to the documents and definitions that circulate in the classroom through them? Why do they believe we learn about history? How do these understandings function in the classroom? How do they support or limit critical approaches?

I used a process called axial coding (Neuman, 1991, p. 423) to apply the initial coding scheme to new data following my two remaining visits to Ms. Miller's classroom. In axial coding, the researcher applies an initial set of codes to data, reviewing and modifying the codes. The purpose of axial coding is to move closer to an organizing set of themes and key concepts. According to Neuman

(1991), "axial coding not only stimulates thinking about linkages between concepts or themes but it also raises new questions. It can suggest dropping some themes or examining others in more depth" (p. 423). I applied the initial codes to the data, and I used the qualitative analysis software's search features to explore the data by code. I looked carefully at the codes that were applied most frequently and developed some hypotheses about the data. For example, I hypothesized that the students and the teacher were operating in the class on the basis of different definitions of history and different understandings of the purpose of learning history in high school, that facts were an important issue in this distinction, and that these differences had become a terrain for tension in the class.

After I had coded all of the data as described, I revised the coding scheme to reflect significant emerging themes, especially participants' perspectives on the meaning and purpose of history learning. I recoded all of the interview data using the modified scheme. I poured through the data for evidence related to these themes, for illustrative cases, and for disconfirming evidence.

After the final coding, I transferred the data from NUD*IST to a word processing program, where I began to construct cases based on the themes.

Once I had constructed the cases, I used other data and literature to make sense of and to complicate and refine my hypotheses.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative methodology inspired by ethnographic and critical traditions in research. It is a descriptive study, reliant mainly upon observation (indwelling) and interviews.

Ethnography

This study is ethnographic in the sense that it is field-based (the data were largely gathered on site and in person), and in that my primary concern was with the meanings and meaning-based practices of the participants, meanings that I have attempted to understand through indwelling and dialoguing with the participants (Huspek, 1994). It is ethnographic, also, in its attention to context. And, like traditional ethnographies, it is characterized by careful and detailed description (Wolcott, 1992).

Finally, this study is consistent with ethnographic approaches in that it is a study of culture. Ethnography traditionally entails an attempt to describe culture and the cultural practices and meanings that are required for participation in a given community. My purpose was to understand critical teaching from the inside and to identify aspects of the culture of schooling that shape critical practice in this setting.

Critical research

> It seems to me that the real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the working of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticize them in such a manner that

> the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them. (Foucault, 1974, p. 171)

The study borrows also from critical methodologies, particularly critical ethnography. Critical ethnography comes from two trends in epistemology and social theory (Anderson, 1989). Epistemologically, it is related to a move away from quantitative methods and toward ethnographic and interpretive movements in anthropology and sociology in the 1960's and 1970's. It is also related to critical philosophies, including neo-Marxism and feminism. According to Quantz (1992),

> "Critical ethnography" refers to studies which use a basically anthropological, qualitative, participant-observer methodology but which rely for their theoretical formulation on a body of theory deriving from critical sociology and philosophy. (p. 448)

Like other ethnographers, critical ethnographers "aim to generate insights, to explain events, and to seek understandings" (Anderson, 1989, p. 253). Critical ethnographers use many of the same data collection techniques as their more traditional counterparts, and, although critical ethnographers are unreservedly skeptical of "value-free" or "objective" research, they tend to concern themselves with similar issues related to the "trustworthiness" of data (e.g., member checking, triangulation of data sources and methods).

Nevertheless, critical ethnography does differ from more traditional ethnography in some important ways. Unlike traditional ethnography, critical research necessarily involves an agenda of social critique and social change. Critical researchers view schools, not as "a neutral instrumentality somehow above the ideological conflicts of the society," but as sites where social inequities are produced and reinforced (by internal practices within educational institutions, the content and form of the curriculum, the evaluative mechanisms, and so on) (Carspecken & Apple, 1992, p. 509; LeCompte & Preissle, 1992). The agenda of critical researchers, then, is often to expose class, gender, and ethnic biases, to make them transparent to the participants, and, in doing so, to empower the participants to participate in the construction of a new reality (LeCompte & Preissle, 1992).

My research is, in a sense, more exploratory and less specifically driven by the goal of exposing class, race, and gender-related structures in schools. However, I do share with critical researchers fundamental assumptions about the nature of schooling and the ultimate goal of social change. Like other critical researchers, I begin with a belief that critical pedagogy is worth studying, in part, because it aims to act against the tendency of education to reproduce unequal cultural, economic, and political relations. Also like other critical researchers, I am ultimately concerned with issues of equity and access in education (Pignatelli, 1998, p. 403). I hope that my research contributes to the creation of critical practices that, in turn, make education more "transformative and

democratic, rather than reproductive and oppressive" (LeCompte & Preissle, 1992, p. 852). And, in attempting to uncover obstacles to the creation of a critical practice, I have tried to make visible ideological aspects of schooling culture.

Fundamentally, I believe that, while different methodological traditions are better suited to investigating particular questions, all research is inherently interpretive, contextual, and value-laden and ultimately reflects the reality of the researcher and the research process. This study is no exception. As true as I have tried to be in representing the perspectives of my participants, I am fully aware that this dissertation reflects as much of me as it does of them. I believe that, regardless of methodology, it is important to maintain a disposition of openness throughout (willingness to be surprised), to be planful and thorough in data collection, and to be humble and systematic in analysis and reporting. I have worked hard to do these things herein.

Chapter 2

History and Critical Teaching

History Classroom as Fertile Ground for Critical Teaching

The high school history classroom is at once the most and least fertile ground for critical education. Although most history teachers do not take a critical approach to the subject matter, history has the potential to invite students into critical conversations. The study of history provides opportunities for the study of current issues and practices in light of the past, for examining issues of naming and representation, for examining ideology, for considering issues of personal significance, and for considering issues of equity and justice.

Opportunities for the Study of Current Issues and Practices in Light of the Past

Critical teaching should help students read the world around them by examining socially relevant issues and current social practices (e.g., McLaren, 1998). Critical teaching urges students to critique current conditions, asking why we do things in the way that we do (Leland & Harste, 2000), what the consequences are for doing things in these ways, and how things might be done differently. The study of history provides the opportunity for student to gain a richer understanding of current social conditions through an examination of past conditions and to recognize the forces that shape and sustain social practices. From a critical perspective, history can help students to recognize the ways that political, social, and cultural contexts shape people's ideologies and how these ideologies, in turn, shape the way "that people think and speak and write and

are" (Morgan, 1997, p. 46). In this way, critical theorists suggest that students may come to understand how ideological positions, including their own, are embodied—felt, acted and lived out by the people who adhere to them.

History also invites students to encounter cultures and ideologies different from their own and to use the "angles" provided by these alternate perspectives to view events and institutions. In doing so, history has the potential to expand students' imagining about the ways that things might be. Constantly immersed in our own cultures, it can be difficult to believe that things can be done differently (Hinchey, 1998)—but the study of history can expose us to other cultures, other eras, and other possibilities. Through the study of history, students should come to recognize that things were not always as they are now, that the world is ever-changing and changeable.

Opportunities for Examining Issues of Historical Interpretation, Representation, and Ideology in Text

Historians have long advocated teaching students about the historical interpretation so they will be able to distinguish between the past and history and make better judgments about the material they study (Hertzberg, 1985). While some critical theorists might not make the same distinction between past-as-it-actually-was and past-as-interpretation, most probably would agree that the history classroom is an ideal place to examine issues of interpretation and representation in text.

Issues of representation—"how things are named [and represented], who gets to do the naming, what motives are involved, what consequences follow, what possibilities for alternative naming have been forgotten, or gone unrecognized, or been ignored, hidden or suppressed"—are central to critical analysis (Knoblauch & Brannon, 1994, p. 3). Critical teaching involves helping students to understand that texts are both "reflective of cultural practices, positions, and ideologies" and open to a variety of readings, given the histories and experiences of the reader (Flint, 2000; Leland & Harste, 2000). Critical perspectives highlight the struggle between these competing meanings and how this struggle is related to the distribution of power and resources in society (Knoblauch & Brannon, 1994).

Critical teaching is designed to draw students into critical dialogue about texts, dialogue that calls of students to examine the ideological nature of these texts. The study of history provides opportunities for students to come to better understand perspective, ideology, and the constructed nature of texts through the examination of historical representation. Students can study the many forces that shape the ways that history comes to be documented, including the political and historical context of the material (Shor & Freire, 1987; Christensen, 1999). They can compare multiple, conflicting accounts of historical events and periods, they can examine the ideologies that underlie these various accounts, and they can assess the consequences of the various representations.

Critical approaches suggest that we are positioned by texts in relation to each other, our communities, and the world and that it is possible to resist these positionings (Flint, 2000). Critical treatment of text opens up the possibility of dialogue, talking back to texts, and rewritings of text:

> Critical reading recalls that [texts] are also profoundly fictitious, fraught with internal instability and contradiction, open (at least theoretically) to creative 'rewriting' in pursuit of even freer, more 'dialogical' compositions. The critical practice of deconstruction examines texts, exploring the conditions and tactics that enable them to constitute themselves, the claims by which they entitle themselves to speak, the discursive continuities and disruptions in terms of which they assert their identity. It reveals ideology: the strategies by which texts deny the contingencies of their production or the plurality of their readings...It reopens signification by reading texts beyond the boundaries they imagine they have set for themselves in the pursuit of their own interests....it makes the critical agent aware of the foundations of discursive practices. (Knoblauch & Brannon, 1994, p. 168)

In this sense, critical literacy is intended to change students' understandings of the world and the relationship between texts/ideas and the world. From a Freirean perspective, these understandings are transformative and

hence engaging. For Freire, "the ultimate text to be read and written is the world itself" (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993, p. 43).

Opportunities for Students to Read Texts for Their Personal and Social Significance

History is a natural context in which to examine issues of personal significance. While history as it is taught in schools is often seen by students as having little connection to their lives (e.g., Rosenzweig, 2000), the study of history can be used to bring historical perspective to bear on current issues in the classroom and society. Respondents in the Rosenzweig survey study reported feelings of deep connectedness to the past in their own lives—seeing themselves as products of the past, bringing the past to bear on current situations, and using the past to "answer basic questions about identity, morality, and agency"—but they reported feeling alienated from history learning in school.

From a Freirean perspective, school learning should always start with the needs and experiences of the students. Historical study can and should cultivate connections between study of the past and understandings about current issues, problems, and possibilities. Barton and Levstik (1997) call on history teachers to focus on enduring human dilemmas, to use history (personal, familial, national) to learn something about who we are and might become, to consider groups or individuals who had agency in the past as models for the future, to see history as connected to daily life and the "puzzles of culture and change" that confront us (p. 2). Hvolbek (1991) contends that the primary purpose of teaching history is to

"make students more aware of how their lives connect to past human experience" (p. 4).

History as Infertile Ground for Critical Teaching

While its potential for critical teaching is great, history's track record as a site for critical teaching is mixed, at best. History, particularly U.S. History, has traditionally been treated in American elementary and secondary education as a fixed body of factual information to be learned. This approach is inconsistent, even incompatible, with the goals of critical education. The constraints of this more traditional approach impacted the classroom under study in this dissertation, making it difficult for the classroom teacher, Ms. Miller, to pursue her critical agenda.

Factual and Critical History

When viewed through a critical lens, historians always tell their stories from particular times, places, and perspectives, and they "story the past in ways that promote certain understandings and interpretations over others" (Segall, 1999, p. 364). Historical accounts are constructed as ways of making meaning from the past, and it is these constructions—not the "real" events of the past—that are under study. Because these accounts are always partial, perspectival, ideological, and political, an important objective of critical education is helping students to take a questioning stance toward the texts and, particularly, toward claims of truth. In viewing all historical accounts as constructed, critical approaches blur the distinction between facts and interpretations. While texts are

useful for helping us see the world in a new light (Leland and Harste, 2000), they are never treated as ends in themselves—definitive accounts of real events—but instead as a windows into reading the world. According to Berkhofer (1988), when educators fail to show students the constructed side of history through critical analysis of historical texts, students can develop a false impression of the way historians convert the past into history. This leads to a historical fundamentalism in which students see history as divinely inspired and, therefore, see their role as memorizing the facts. Berkhofer continued:

> These students need to learn, in my opinion, how to treat textbooks and assigned readings as textual constructions subject to the same kinds of analysis as any other piece of argument or literature and, therefore, that the construction of history as an overall narrative is subject to the same biases and problems as any other intellectual production. (p. 21)

In contrast, history has traditionally been treated in American schools as a fixed body of factual information to be learned. History as it is typically studied in the schools "is still, more often than not, engaged as objective, neutral, and authorless—a disinterested site making unbiased choices and judgments about the past 'as it was'" (Segall, 1999, p. 367). As a result, accounts of historical events (i.e., texts) are often presented as true or factual, rather than as one possible interpretation (Armento, 1991). Although historians have long recognized the importance of some form of analysis in history education, it has never been clear

what form that analysis might take, what place it should hold in the curriculum, at what point students should begin to engage in this analysis, or how it relates to the larger purposes of history instruction in the schools.

Palmer (1989) reported that "for sixty years prominent social studies educators have recognized the importance of the critical analysis of the society in the education of future citizens, but today the content of social education as practiced in the schools is apparently devoid of this approach" (p. 62). An examination of the development of social studies instruction shows that the divide between history instruction-as-theorized (with some role for analysis) and history instruction-as-practiced (with little role for analysis) reaches even further back.

A brief history of history education. By the time university historians began to turn their attention to elementary and secondary social studies curricula in the late 1800s, history had broken with its traditional association with philosophy, literature and literary theory in order to align itself more closely with science (Segall, 1999). Segall explained:

> This latter version of history worked to separate theory from story, fact from fiction, and divorce writers from the world they inscribed....Facts became a priority, serving the double role of evidence and guarantor. Historians no longer stood between the text and the past but, rather, employing an unbiased historical method, illuminated the past and represented it 'as it was' (p. 361).

The development of this scientifically based history was is its early stages when the first texts about social studies instruction were being written. Saxe (1991) traced the traditional history curriculum to a group of historians at Johns Hopkins, Harvard, Michigan, and the University of Chicago who, in the 1890s, "began the quest for historical truths" (p. 30).

> These men believed in the value of historical knowledge to strengthen the individual, sharpen the mind, broaden the horizon, and give depth to the soul....These historians and those like-minded sought to emphasize history's values to education not only for its mental discipline but also as a source of useful facts. (p. 30)

At about the same time, G. Stanley Hall edited one of the first textbooks for history instructors. Hall and the authors of the other essays in the text advised high school teachers of history to pass on to their students the central concept of historicism:

> Teaching about this idea involved inculcating students with the essence of history – that is, the movement or sweep of time, or in a word, chronology...secondary students were to learn *about* history, not write history. The task was to read, recite, review and remember the personages, events, and dates that composed the history of humankind. In addition, the mighty empires and their monarchs, the annals of their exploits, and all the details in between were to be learned. (Saxe, 1991, p. 32)

Despite the early and pervasive focus on a factual and scientific history, there has—for the last hundred years—been a secondary emphasis on analysis. Nash, Crabtree, and Dunn (1998) described the traditional approach in the following way:

> A certain amount of analytical thinking might be allowed...but students must absorb a rich fund of 'basic facts' before starting to think about them. Pour in the facts and, when the brain is brimming over, students might then use their heads to consider what the facts signify. (p. 175).

This "facts-first" approach is evident as early as 1892 in the resolutions of the Madison Conference on history education held that year. The National Education Association gathered a group of prominent historians at the University of Wisconsin-Madison "to discuss the nature and scope of history in American schools" (Saxe, 1991, p. 39). The participants offered thirty-five resolutions which were guided by two basic principles: (1) historical study is principally for the acquisition of facts, and (2) historical study is secondarily intended to train students' judgment, including the ability to "select, accumulate, construct, generalize, estimate, apply, assimilate, and accommodate historical knowledge" (Saxe, 1991, p. 45).

History in texts: Facts first. It is this "facts first" orientation that seems to have most influenced history texts and history instruction in schools. A review of

history education texts throughout the 20th century shows a factual orientation, but a surprisingly consistent secondary focus on reasoning and analysis.

In his textbook for history educators published in 1914, Wayland lamented that "we spend so much time and energy on the 'What' and the 'Where' and the 'When' of history, as well as of other things, that we often forget or neglect the 'How' and the 'Why'" (p. 1). Although he recommended a chronological approach to history teaching and considered the accumulation of factual knowledge centrally important, his insisted that "history is not merely a collection of dates," that the student who treats history as a series of dates to be memorized "is mistaken" (p. 10, p. 235). Instead, Wayland argued, history should be studied because it is pleasurable to do so and" because it aids "appreciation of other things," makes us more "efficient citizens," provides a means for us to better understand ourselves, and "broaden[s] and quicken[s] our sympathies with others" (pp. 3-4). To those ends, he recommended that history be made "vital and concrete" through the use of stories, biographies, and drama (p. 147). And, he recommended that teachers use questions designed to provoke reasoning, as well as factual recall. In discussing how teachers should formulate questions for their students, Wayland recommended the following:

> Some questions should call for facts—make a demand upon the stores of memory; some should call for a process of thought—make a demand upon reasoning powers; some should stimulate the imagination, and hence all the powers of mind and heart; some

should call, as it were, for the pupil himself: demand an act of choice and volition, thus requiring a subjective response rather than an objective possession. (p. 221)

In his 1928 text for middle grade teachers of history, Kelty outlined eight objectives for learning history in the middle grades. While most of the objectives call for students to learn the facts of history—e.g., to learn "information as to the most important persons, places, and dates in history to be developed by presentation in a meaningful setting, by drill, and by testing"—and emphasize chronology, the final objective calls for students to be learn to reason about history (p. 7). Kelty recommended that these reasoning skills be developed through "exercises in descriptive and constructive imagination, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, evaluation, synthesis and analysis, drawing inferences, and making and applying generalizations" (p. 8).

Kelty suggested that reasoning and problem solving have been underemphasized in schooling: "Many children have been so repressed because of the faculty training they have received, and so habituated to merely reproducing what they have read, that they make no attempt to think or reason about it" (p. 93). The following questions, designed to provoke students' reasoning, were included for a unit about the Declaration of Independence (p. 266):

Is *setting off* firecrackers the best way to celebrate the Fourth of July?

Why did the colonists ask the king for their rights before they commenced fighting?

Why did it require great courage for the representatives to sign the Declaration of Independence? What would probably have happened to them if the war had failed?

Do you think that *declaring* themselves independent really *made* the colonies independent?

In their 1964 text on teaching American history in high school, Baxter, Ferrell, and Wiltz lamented that, despite all of the talk about "new history" over the preceding half century, little had filtered into classrooms: "few courses push beyond the traditional horizons to explore the character of the people, industrial conditions, social patterns, or literature and ideas" (p. 53). While, they, too, advocated a chronological approach to American history "from the colonial beginnings to the present day," they recommended that history be broadened from a focus on events, such as "dry-crusted elections and battles" to "genuine" topics, such as "immigration, industrialization, finance, labor, civil liberties, transcendentalism, social reform, pragmatism, and military-civil relations" (p. 58). Baxter, Ferrell, and Wiltz suggested that, having been exposed to a "veritable maze of information," students in many schools had come to think of the history of the United States "at identical with their textbooks...they never comprehend the fascinating, controversial nature of the big questions of history...that demand thought as well as memory" (p. 59). The authors did not make specific

recommendations, but did suggest that teachers lecture less and work to "involve...students in the absorbing intellectual process of historical study" (p. 68).

The representations of history found in these texts are significant, because, as Apple (1993) points out, these texts "signify through their content and form...particular ways of selecting and organizing [the] vast universe of possible knowledge" (p. 198). These are powerful representations—"they participate in creating what a society has recognized as legitimate and truthful" (p. 198). And, they embody a particular vision of legitimate knowledge and pedagogy—a vision that permeates history classrooms, including the classroom described in this study.

History in the schools: Chronology and factual recall. In a study of the history of social studies teaching, Cuban (1991) reported that, while there is little data about the nature of classroom social studies instruction in the early to middle part of the last century, the data that do exist point to an emphasis on factual recall. The earliest classroom observations of social studies teaching that Cuban could locate were from a study published in 1912 based upon observations in 100 classrooms recorded between 1907 and 1911. The instruction in the observed classrooms was "heavily tilted toward students' answering rapid-fire questions from a teacher on the content of a textbook chapter" (Cuban, 1991, p. 200).

Accounts since the middle of the 20th century have reported a similar focus on factual content:

- Wood (1966) surveyed 420 social studies teachers in Missouri, and found that the most commonly used instructional methods were teacher-centered approaches such as "question-answer recitation, teacher-led class discussion, and lecture" (Downey & Levstik, 1991, p. 404).
- Cuban (1991) examined social studies assessments from the 1970s and found that "teacher-made tests in social studies stress factual recall, with multiple choice items used rather than essays (p. 201). Cuban infers from these assessment tools that coverage of content was highly valued and that instructional methods emphasizing the use of textbooks and teacher presentation were probably used frequently, because these approaches "bear the burden of making that content available to students" (Cuban, 1991, p. 203).
- Stake & Easley (1978) investigated eleven high schools across the country and their feeder schools. Thornton (1991) reported findings from the Stake and Easley study that are relevant to how teachers think about social studies: Teachers tended to equate social studies curricula with the content of the textbook and they tended to treat the textbook as an authoritative source of knowledge" (p. 238). Further, teachers reported that factual information and basic reading and writing skills were the most important goals of social studies education.

- Goodlad (1983) found that social studies in school was characterized by a focus on memorization of a myriad of dates and places. Goodlad reported that topics that should have generated interest were turned into a set of facts to be memorized, and the preponderance of classroom activity involved listening to teachers give information, reading from textbooks, completing worksheets, and taking tests.
- Vansledright (1997) interviewed students in the 5th grade, 8th grade, and high school about the purposes for studying American history. He found that students "appeared to hold a `stabilized', consensus view of history, meaning that they thought of history as a collection of putative facts and that their task was to learn them" (p. 529).
- Rosenzweig (2000) surveyed 808 Americans ages 18-91 about, among other things, their experiences with history in school. Most of the respondents associated school history classes with the memorization and regurgitation of names, dates, and other information that had no connection to them. Rosenzweig concluded that, "although fashions in teaching history have seemingly changed over the course of the century, our respondents offer a relatively unchanging portrait of fact- and textbook-driven instruction" (p. 276).

White (1999) concluded that social studies curricula have remained basically the same for at least the last five decades: "social studies has been and continues to focus on tradition, transmission, and perpetuation of the status

quo....Social studies education in the United States is content driven, product oriented, and teacher-directed" (p. 6). Husbands' (1986) concurred, noting that, although the transmission approach to history education, with its emphasis on "hard" or factual understandings, has been under sustained attack for decades, it continues to "[exert] a powerful cultural hold on teachers and on classrooms" (p. 75, 90). Husbands noted that the transmission models continue to neglect "the place of interpretive understandings which lie at the core of the development of historical knowledge" (p. 90).

Even though analysis and interpretation continue to be touted as important parts of history learning, the sheer amount of material to be covered in the typical history curriculum and the focus on testing are pushing history classrooms further and further in the direction of factual coverage. White (1999) recently described a school where:

> Rarely was a list of facts merely an introduction to, or final summary of, a more complicated treatment of a topic. Too often, the list was the study of the topic. The names of New Deal agencies, Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates, causes and 'effects' of war all lent themselves to presentation in list form. (p. 6).

History Education for Citizenship

A second complication confronting critical approaches to U.S. History is related to the goals of history education in schools. Hertzberg (1985) noted that "history came into the high school to serve a public purpose: education for

citizenship" (p. 26). While history education "was and is bound to a commitment to the idea of the public good and to the education of citizens who will further it," defining public good and how to educate citizens who will further it continues to be controversial.

Many historians and educators, critical and not, suggest that a principal goal of U.S. history instruction in schools is to educate a democratic and patriotic citizenry (e.g., National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools, 1989), but what it means to do so is contested ground. The question, as Levstik (1997) poses it, is "What kind of collective memory does a democracy require?" (p. 48). The question, as phrased by a Newsweek reporter shortly after the release of the controversial National Standards for United States History is, "should children learn about the often ugly struggles between groups to forge America? Or should they be taught about Great Individuals and triumphant events? Which approach will generate hardened cynics, which one better-educated patriots?" (Hancock & Biddle, 1994, p. 54).

Many states' educational codes require the teaching of patriotism and citizenship in public schools. The California Education Code (section 233.5) requires that teachers "impress upon the minds of the pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice, [and] patriotism" and "a true comprehension of the rights, duties, dignity of American citizenship." The Kansas code goes further, requiring that each school "shall develop a plan to encourage and foster a love of

country, a sense of patriotism, and an appreciation of the democratic ideals that Americans believe" (Board of Education Policy 4535.2; italics added).

Particularly in public debates over history curricula and texts, this goal of engendering patriotism is often set in opposition to a more critical approach to U.S. History – one that calls for the inclusion of less dominant perspectives, recognition of the nation's failings, and skepticism of the way history has traditionally been told. To many Americans, the goal of U.S. history is to teach students about America's triumphs in order to create loyal, proud, and conversant citizens.

Two recent debates are illustrative of these tensions. The first erupted over the publication of the National Standards for United States History; the second over the Smithsonian Institutions exhibit for the 50th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

History wars: National standards. The tension between patriotic history and critical history became part of a national conversation during the battle that ensued around the release of the National Standards for United States History (Crabtree & Nash, 1994).

The development of the Standards was a federal initiative led by National Endowment for the Humanities. A development committee was formed and asked to use a process of national consensus-building to create a set of voluntary national standards for the study of U.S. history in grades 5-12 Taking part in the development of the standards were some thirty organizations representing the

nation's parents, history teachers, school administrators, curriculum specialists, librarians, independent schools, professional historians, and educational groups. The resulting document was published in 1994 amidst a storm of controversy.

The debate commenced even before the standards were published, as critics began to use popular media to accuse the developers of the standards of politically motivated selection of material and pessimism about America. Most notably, shortly before the release of the Standards, Lynne Cheney, the former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, wrote an editorial for the Wall Street Journal, attacking the standards for political correctness—leaving out key (White, male) historical figures in order to include obscure people of color (Cheney, 1994)

The framers of the standards responded to these attacks by describing their approach as one that encourages students to possess a knowledge base of information, but to go beyond the memorization of facts to examine history, raise questions about it, reflect on the nature of history, and compare competing views (Nash, Crabtree, & Dunn, 1998).

Following Cheney's indictment, a public conversation ensued in newspaper editorials, on television and radio news shows, and in letters to the nation's newspapers and magazines. Teachers, historians, and political commentators weighed in on both sides. The standards were called "sour and negative," "riddled with propaganda" in the popular press (Leo, 1994, p. 36). In his nationally syndicated newspaper column, Charles Krauthammer lamented

that, "In the new history, there are no facts independent of ideology and power, no history that is not political" (Krauthammer, 1994, p. A25). Radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh told his listeners:

> History is real simple. You know what history is? It's what happened...The problem you get into is when guys like this try to skew history by [saying], 'Well, let's interpret what happened because maybe we can't find the truth in the facts, or at least we don't like the truth as it's presented. So, let's change the interpretation a little bit so that it will be the way we wished it were.' Well, that's not what history is. History is what happened, and history ought to be nothing more than the quest to find out what happened. (Nash, Crabtree, & Dunn, 1998, p. 6)

The editors of several major newspapers, including the Boston Herald, suggested that the document be thrown out, while the editors of the Los Angeles Times came out in support of the standards, lauding their "inclusiveness." News headlines included the following:

> Plan to Teach U.S. History is Said to Slight White Males (*New York Times*)
>
> Hatred for the American Story Pervades Wacky History Standards (*The Tampa Tribune*)
>
> The War to Control the Past; The Right Wants to Portray America's History Without the Blemishes (*Los Angeles Times*)

Fake History Gets in the Way of Dull Facts (*The Tampa Tribune*)

Learn History, Not Junk. (*The Boston Herald*)

History Hijacked (Krauthammer in *The Washington Post*)

Now a History for the Rest of Us; New Standards Look to Common People's Roles (*Los Angeles Times*)

The United States Congress also weighed in. Senator Slade Gorton led the effort to denounce the Standards, which resulted in the Senate passing by a vote of 99-1 a resolution rejecting the Standards (Wineburg, 1999, p. 2). To Gorton, the Standards were biased against American ideas and institutions, an "'ideologically driven, anti-Western monument to politically correct caricature'" (Wineburg, 1999, p. 1)

In response to the uproar, the developers of the standards, including Gary Nash, Charlotte Crabtree, and Ross Dunn, issued a 318-page rebuttal:

> To Cheney's claim that Americans such as Robert W. Lee or the Wright Brothers were expunged because they had the misfortune of being dead, white, and male, Nash and colleagues responded by adding up the names of people fitting this description—700 plus in all—and announcing that this number was 'many times the grand total of all women, African Americans, Latinos, and Indians individually named.' (Wineburg, 1999, p. 1)

The standards are available in print and online, but they include the following disclaimer: "This publication does not necessarily represent positions

or policies of the United States government, and no official endorsement should be inferred" (National Center for History in the Schools, 2003).

A second war over history: Hiroshima. A Smithsonian exhibit planned for the 50th anniversary of the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima ignited intense controversy between historians and their critics "over how the tale of the past should be told" (Flint, 1995, p. 1). The curators intended to provoke national conversation about why the United States dropped the bomb, and were accused of "blame-America-first revisionism." In turn, the exhibit's critics were "charged with trying to sanitize history" (p. 1). Lynne Cheney called the exhibits script "outlandish" and "disdainful of facts, as if there are no such things as facts, only interpretation" (Flint, 1995, p. 1). Cheney and other critics complained that the exhibit was overly critical of the United States. Cheney was quoted by the Boston Globe as saying that "there's reason to look on the US as one of the most successful societies ever on the face of the earth...If we don't tell the positive side, we're doing our children a disservice" (Flint, 1995, p. 1). As a result of the controversy, the script was revised five times and scaled back considerably before opening in 1995 (Schmid, 1995).

Critical history for a democratic citizenry. On the other side of these debates are those who believe, as do Levstik and Barton (1997) that, historical controversy is central to education for democratic participation:

> If schools are to prepare students for active citizenship in a democracy they can neither ignore controversy nor teach students to accept passively someone else's historical interpretations.

Levstik (1997) suggests that educators in a democracy have a vested interest in promoting "a pluralist or perspectival history in which students participate in meaningful discussion with 'an evergrowing chorus of voices'" (p. 48).

This tradition, like the tradition of history for patriotism, reaches far back. Nash (1997) wrote that Thomas Jefferson prescribed the study history for democratic citizens because it would "enable every man to judge for himself what will secure or endanger his freedom." (p. 8). Jefferson believed that, by reflecting on the past, citizens would be better able to judge the future and make decisions about the 'actions and designs of men' (Jefferson quoted in Nash, 1997, p. 8).

For critical historians, and many others, this kind of judgment requires a critical look back. Loewen (1995) rejected the desire to present a faultless view of the country's past as deceptive and unproductive; it provides a misleading basis for understanding ourselves and making decisions about our future. Foster and Padgett (1999) also insisted that the primary purpose of introducing historical inquiry into classrooms is to help them "reach informed decisions" by, among other things, learning to "make sense of competing perspectives" (Foster & Padgett, 1999).

A critical look at the past is especially important to educators who work in the critical or social justice tradition, because critique is the basis for the social action and change that are necessary and ongoing aspects of democratic societies. Wade (2001) insisted that,

> Critique is a vital part of social justice education. Students are invited to question the status quo, examine underlying values and assumptions, and explore their own role in relation to social problems. This focus on analyzing the roots of inequality in the curriculum, the school, and the society is seen as the first important step in creating social change (Wade, 2001, p. 25)

During the public controversy over the release of the National History Standards of 1994, much of the popular debate concerned whether a critical view of U.S. history presented in schools might engender a lack of patriotism. Critical or social justice education is potentially even more controversial, because it calls not only for a sometimes unflattering look America's past and present, but also for social change. Palmer (1989) has asked:

> Will any society for long tolerate a critique of the status quo as a part of the schooling of the young? Can any society tolerate the dissonance that would result from most citizens being actively involved in changing the society? In the tension between continuity and change is there a disposition to seek stability even though it carries with it a good deal of undesirable baggage? Is it possible to

> maintain an island of criticism, analysis and problem identification in an institution that is basically at odds with these processes? (p. 63)

Seixas (2000) agreed that "there is a lot at stake" in conversations about interpretation of the past in history education: "quite simply, it is the power of the story of the past to define who we are in the present, our relations with others, relations in civil society—nation and state, right and wrong, good and bad—and broad parameters for action in the future" (p. 21).

This study looks at struggles over the meaning of history in one classroom (two classes). In many ways, the struggles in this classroom are reflective of the tensions over the meaning of history manifest in the history education literature and public conversations about history. The students in Christine's class, having been exposed to textbook and fact-oriented history instruction, hold a factual view of history that often conflicts with Christine's more critical view. The unexpected and largely unspoken resistance from students presents a significant obstacle to Christine's critical approach.

Chapter 3

Struggles over the Meaning of History

Evans (1988) studied teachers' and students' conceptions about the meaning of history. He found, not surprisingly, that teachers' understandings about the meaning and purpose of history learning were strongly influenced by their experiences with their own teachers, in their home lives, with books they had read and college courses they had taken. Evans found these conceptions of history to be a major determinant in teachers' choices about curriculum and pedagogy. Further, Evans found consistency between the elementary-age students' conceptions of history and those of their teachers, concluding that the students, whose understandings about history were still poorly formed, were influenced by their teachers.

In this chapter, I will describe elements of Christine's life experience, education, and teacher preparation that have influenced her conceptions of history and, consequently, her pedagogy. I will then describe her students' understandings about history, the important ways that they differ from Christine's, and the possible sources of influence that shaped their views. These differences highlight and help to explain the struggles Christine experienced as a critical teacher.

Christine's Decision to Become a Teacher

Christine's decision to become a teacher and her approach to teaching were born of her childhood experiences of poverty and powerlessness in an abusive family. Christine was provoked by the socioeconomic discrepancies and de facto racial segregation in her home town and by her own experiences of poverty and abuse to seek out understanding about "the distribution of power."

Christine grew up poor in a mid-western town. She recalled being aware very early that her family's poverty had consequences for her in school: "I thought I was treated differently because I was poor and that there were many teachers who favored rich kids and who saw rich kids as the smart ones." Christine noticed early that wealthier students had very different lives inside school and outside, and, although Christine is White, she noted that wealth in her home town seemed to be distributed mainly by race.

By the time Christine graduated from high school, both of her parents had died, and she was living on her own. Christine was offered athletic scholarships by several universities, and she selected a small private college in Minnesota that would privilege learning over athletics and would allow her to explore power issues by creating a customized undergraduate degree. In her sophomore year, she took a class on education and social change. She was inspired by the instructor who "lived and breathed progressive pedagogy." It was in this class that Christine concluded that:

> If people were taught in elementary school, in public school...about issues of power and issues of domination, then they would be less apt to reproduce those isms of domination, if they had the chance to make a decision whether they would support it or not support it. A lot of people support issues of domination unconsciously, because they're not aware.

Christine also encountered the writing of Paulo Freire and Ira Shor in her class on education and social change: "And, when I was done reading that I knew for sure that my vision was right on, that I wanted to be a teacher."

Christine had "always imagined [herself] being an advocate, like an activist," but she decided that teaching might be a way to address her concerns about inequity and discrimination: "the way that I thought I could best implement my vision of humanity and help improve this world was through education." She described her motives as having more to do with advocacy than youth or education:

> I went in [to teaching] explicitly with a political agenda. And, since I've been teaching, I really do like the youth. I appreciate their life space, and I think they hold...the most hope for improving society. I've really come to appreciate their life space, but that's not why I got into teaching.

Christine graduated from college with an interdisciplinary social sciences degree and spent a few years away from school before moving to California and

beginning a master's program in education. She returned to school because she wanted to acquire the "specialized knowledge and specific training" that she believes are required to be a good teacher:

> I wanted to take my education very seriously, and I looked informally and then more formally for a couple of years for a program that I though would train me to develop the cognitive structures that I would need to look...at teaching.

In her master's program, Christine learned "how to think about a lesson" – the objectives, goals, materials, timelines, and procedures. She also learned to think about her philosophy of education and its connection to her pedagogy: "I feel like my education helped me think more about applying my philosophy to life and to teaching and what tools would help me...or what teaching would look like."

Christine also encountered the work of John Dewey, Nel Noddings, Lisa Delpit, and Jeannie Oakes in her master's program. These reading and the focus of her master's program on "urban education in a diverse environment," including "issues of race, class, and gender [and] issues of power within the educational environment" helped her to think about her belief system and experiences in terms of education.

Learning Goals in U.S. History

Christine's goals for her students' learning in U.S. History were closely connected to her reasons for choosing teaching as a profession. Above all, she

hoped to use instruction in history to shape students' sense of social responsibility, to foster students' self awareness, their empathy and compassion, and their development of complex understandings of reality. Christine believed these things—self-awareness, empathy, compassion, and social responsibility—to be the roots of social justice.

Self-awareness: Historical Interpretation as Personal/Experiential

Christine's "biggest goal" as a teacher in U.S. History and in all of her classes was to foster students' self-awareness: "I want to teach the kids to be self-aware, to really get to know themselves because I think when people are rooted in self-knowledge that they are more likely to live their lives with integrity and compassion for others." To this end, Christine tried to "challenge [the students] to come up with opinions...about what they're studying and then [to recognize that], when they're developing their opinions, that reflects something about themselves." And she tried "to get them to think about controversial issues, and to try to be decisive about how they feel about it" as "a window into who they are as people." Christine hoped that, as a corollary to self-awareness, her students would come to see historical interpretation as rooted in the experience of the interpreter. Christine hoped that students' understandings about the ways "their experiences lead to their interpretations of other people's stories" would lead them to a broader understanding about the interpretive nature of historical understanding.

Christine shared with critical educators an interest in representing history as interpretive and dynamic, "where interpretations are always provisional and often contested" (Levstik, 1997, p. 48). From a critical perspective, meaning-making—textual and historical—is a process of construction. Historical meaning is not given, but must be understood in the context of social, historic, and power relations.

In order to help students develop and understanding of the constructed, situated, and contested nature of historical interpretation, Christine asked students to both consider their own interpretations of historical events and to interpret historical events in the social and political context of the time. Christine also frequently asked the students to take a position on controversial historical issues as a way of developing self-awareness and experiencing the contested nature of historical interpretation. When discussing Susan B. Anthony's decision to sever connection with black suffragists in order to gain the support of southern senators, Christine asked the students to form an opinion of Anthony's move and discuss what they would have done in her situation. Christine also asked the students to form opinions on current issues and to consider how they might participate in our democracy in the future.

Empathy: History as Human Intention and Struggle

Christine was also committed to "teaching empathy," which enables students to "to step outside of their experience and their shoes and try to understand the lives and stories of other people." Christine worked to make

history personal for her students by encouraging them to see history in the light of human intention and struggle. She often depicted historical events from the perspective of particular historical actors or groups. She hoped that students would recognize the centrality of human action in history and would come to understand the ways that social movements are built and the strategies that have been used by people and groups to gain civil liberties. For Christine, the most powerful stories of history involve the role of human agency in acting against injustice and shaping society.

Critical teaching is based, in part, on critical social theory and its concern with the formation of a more just world through the critique of existing social and political problems and the posing of alternatives (Cervetti et al., 2000). Christine was devoted to using history to provide students with models of critique and action that expanded our democracy by granting rights to disenfranchised groups. Hvolbek (1991) contends that "the primary purpose of teaching history...is to make students more aware of how their lives connect to past human experience" (p. 4). Christine hoped that her students might make these connections and come to see themselves as potential agents of social change.

Early in the school year, during a unit about voting as it relates to political participation, Christine showed her classes a video about the lives of suffragists Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. She chose a video focusing on the lives of these women, she said, because she:

> Wanted [the students] to visualize the struggle [for suffrage] and to put an image to the idea to make it more humane and to have them connect to the movement through the people and just to make it more personal and to appreciate the 72 year struggle that I think can be seen through photographs and heard through people's first person account of the struggle....You know, bottom line, I hope that they have appreciation—I mean the males and the females—for people's struggle.

Christine hoped that the video would help students personalize the commitment of the suffragists to "having their voice heard and to see social structures reflect them and to be a part of shaping their social environment." She also hoped that students would, by extension, recognize their role in creating social change.

Christine often asked students to devise solutions for current social problems. After the students had spent several days reading, taking notes, and watching videos about the relationship between the public, the government, and big business, and the laws that have governed this relationship over the last 100 years, Christine asked her students to first write about and then discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the current system. Christine asked first for strengths. The students discussed the freedom of the market, the ability to make as much money as you want, the centrality of hard work, the better living conditions overall in the U.S. than many other nations, the vote as a powerful

source of influence for the public, and access to choices as consumers and voters. Christine mostly let the students respond to one another, but she challenged some of their assertions. For example, in response to the suggestion that our system rewards hard work, Christine asked, "Does everyone who works hard get rewarded equally?" Next, Christine asked for weaknesses. The students suggested that public offices can effectively be bought, that we tolerate poverty and the gap between rich and poor, that we exploit other countries to get cheap goods, that we have virtual media and product monopolies, that we don't put our money in the right places, that they system generates greed, that voters are apathetic, that our lack of oversight of government spending leads to mismanagement and waste. The teacher and students condensed the list of weaknesses, and Christine asked the students to get into small groups and choose one weakness to problem-solve. She told them, "We have a responsibility to the world to make sure that we are improving our democracy, since the U.S. is a model of democracy." After meeting in small groups, the teacher and students discuss possible solutions to their chosen weaknesses, including campaign reform (e.g., public funding of campaigns, spending limits, matching funds) to address the problem of business having too much influence in elections and lawmaking.

Christine believed that these first two goals—the development of self-awareness and empathy—are important foundations for the awareness of issues of social justice. She believed that "when [the students are] self-aware, when

they're rooted in an ethic of care, and when they can develop empathy toward others, then that creates justice."

Multiple Perspectives: History as Reflective of a Complex (Multiple) Reality

Christine was also committed to teaching "from multiple perspectives." Although Christine sometimes found it difficult to give legitimacy to alternative positions, for example the belief that women and African Americans did not deserve the vote, she attempted to provoke the students to consider historical issues and controversies from multiple points-of-view—including their own and those of various historical figures and groups—in hopes that her students would "develop a more complex story of reality." Christine believed that the ability to think from multiple perspectives was another foundational disposition for awareness of justice, "because oftentimes, when you don't have multiple perspectives, you usually have the dominant story being told. So, if you train [students] to think that there are multiple stories within this context, then they'll be more apt to look for [the less dominant perspectives]." Christine's commitment to multiple perspectives was reflective of a critical orientation. Multiple perspectives is an important feature of many progressive or radical pedagogies, including critical pedagogy and multicultural education, which Bigelow (1999) calls "a search...to discover silenced perspectives."

Christine's commitment to multiple perspectives was also connected to her commitment to empathy. Christine believed that understanding the lives and perspectives of others was an important pathway to empathy. Banks (2000)

explains that teaching history in this way can "help students to develop higher-level thinking skills and empathy for the peoples who have been victimized by the expansion and growth of the United States....They are also able to develop an empathy and an understanding of each group's perspective and point of view" (p. 213).

Lewison et al. (2002) describe the multiple perspectives approach to critical literacy as asking us "to imagine standing in the shoes of others—to understand experience and texts from our own perspectives and the viewpoints of others and to consider these various perspectives concurrently" (p. 383). Critical educators commonly ask students to reflect on multiple, competing perspectives and examine competing narratives. In Christine's class, this commitment to multiple perspectives was evident in Christine's treatment of historical topics and texts. The students often read from source materials that presented different versions of the same material. During a unit on the Cold War, Christine asked her students to read and compare several versions of the history of U.S.-Cuba relations, including the account from their textbook, from their reader, and from a tour book. In addition, Christine often challenged her students by offering opposing views and asking them to view historical events from multiple points-of-view. The following are examples of questions Christine used to provoke consideration of alternative perspectives during class discussion:

Why would women not support their own right to vote?

Let's say your great grandchildren... look back in a hundred years.

What do you think they might say about our democracy?

How do you think the government employees felt about the

Pendleton Act?

How do you think the lives of Native Americans were affected by

the building of the railroad?

Christine also used role plays to encourage her students to take on new points-of-view. For example, during a discussion of the history of U.S. intervention in communism abroad, Christine asked her students to work in small groups with each person taking a different role—representing U.S. economic interests, the principle of national sovereignty, advocacy of individual rights, etc.—to discuss the extent to which the U.S. should intervene in communism.

In addition, Christine often introduced lesser known historical figures and less dominant groups into the conversation. For example, Christine illustrated four pillars of political participation through the experiences of different groups: voting through the story of women's suffrage and the enfranchisement of African Americans; economic independence through the experiences of Mexican Americans and the Pawnee tribe of Native Americans; citizenship through the Japanese American immigration experience; and jury participation through its impact on Chinese Americans.

Academic Goals

When I asked whether Christine had any more traditional academic goals for the class, she talked about "reading, writing, and thinking." She wanted them to be able to read across and make sense of multiple sources on a given topic. She also wanted her students to develop communication skills, to become better writers and better at expressing their opinions. She was particularly interested in developing their ability to "communicate with institutions" through writing. Students in her classes wrote faxes, memos, business letters, press releases, and editorials, "because those are ways that you have your voice heard in an institutional level."

Christine wanted her students to develop "higher order and critical thinking skills." She invited her students to be "detectives of history." She wanted them "to be able to look at a source of information and remember their five detective questions: Who is the author? What is the author's perspective? Is the source credible? Is there any information that's omitted, inaccurate, or distorted? Why? And, then whose interest does the information serve?" She also encouraged the students to synthesize ideas from various sources in order to generate new ideas about the events and issues that they discussed in class. It is important to Christine that the students "be original in their thinking."

Through humanizing history and encouraging this kind of reading, writing, and critical synthesis, Christine hoped to "demystify the social

environment" and help students "realize that [they] can be a part of shaping [the social] environment."

History Content Goals

When I asked specifically about her goals with respect to historical content, Christine described her thematic perspective on history. Christine said that she thought of history "as themes," and she wanted the students to understand some historical themes "by studying content:"

> I want them to understand those themes through content and to be able to reference particular events within a conceptual framework....that's what I really want them to get out of content.

For Christine, content was a vehicle for understanding themes, such as labor, democracy, and political participation, which "illuminate how power is distributed and maintained and created in this county." By foregrounding themes, rather than chronology or factual content, Christine believed that she was better able to focus the course on the issues of power and justice that inspired her teaching.

It was important to Christine that students connect these themes of history to current social issues and dilemmas. Christine and her students often brought up current issues in the context of historical discussion. Christine nurtured these connections by, for example, arranging to discuss voting near the time of the 2000 elections and relating their discussion of the relationship between government and business to the Pacific Gas and Electric power crisis in

California. Christine's approach to learning historical content or facts in the context of analyzing current social issues was consistent with Freirean critical literacy. For Freire (1985), teaching the skills of literacy was important as long as "the person learning words be concomitantly engaged in a critical analysis of the social framework in which men exist" (p. 56). Christine wanted students to learn facts about history, but in the context of addressing broader historical themes and considering current social issues.

The overall theme for the year was participatory democracy. The first semester focused on "understanding democracy" and the second semester focused on "applying democracy." The driving question for the course was, "How do social structures and responsibility to oneself and one's community shape participatory democracy?"

The Students' Reading of U.S. History

The story of this classroom can be viewed as Christine's attempts to confront the issue of meaning in history, but just as surely it can be viewed as the students' attempts to confront that same issue. In interviews with students, I posed many questions about their perspectives on this class, particularly in relation to their previous experiences with history, and about the nature and purpose of history learning. In this section, I will describe each student's perspective before looking across students and comparing their understandings with Ms. Miller's.

Tamika

When I talked to Tamika in October, she discussed the differences between Ms. Miller's approach to history ("so much different") and the "typical" history, in which "you learn dates, times, places, people." In Ms. Miller's class, "you're kinda...getting that, but in a whole different way."

Tamika was the only student to characterize history learning in the class as story-like. She believed that the class reader contributed to this sense of history as story: "I really like our reader because it's a whole different style of textbook, which you really grasp stories." Usually teachers use "average" textbooks in history classes, but with the reader "you're able to get collective stories that therefore allow for different thinking, and you hear different people's ideas about history." Tamika also considered this a more personal form of history in the sense that "it's kinda like you're taking what you want to learn out of it. Other histories, you have to just take everything that you're offered. With [Ms. Miller's], you're able to sift the stuff that you don't want and keep the stuff you do want."

While Tamika liked this style of history ("I think...it's nice") and recognized some limitations to traditional history learning ("People don't remember dates and times....But, because she doesn't focus on that, you kinda just happen to remember those dates right along with it just because you're not focusing on it. You kinda just know it as part of the whole story."), she also expressed some concerns about Ms. Miller's approach.

Despite Tamika's affinity for Ms. Miller's approach to history, she noted that this approach has "plusses and minuses." She liked that "it's not all time and dates 'cause that gets a little frustrating," but it was "also a minus because you do end up learning time and dates when you do have tests 'cause you're gonna sit there and learn those time and dates." Although Tamika "like[ed] [Ms. Miller's approach] in the sense that it's not as boring and as dull," she worried that she was not "learning as much information." Tamika was concerned that "with this history I might have to read supplemental material to kind of get the time and date stuff that I would be missing." When I asked Tamika why she thought she needed know dates and times, how she imagined herself using that information in the future, her response suggested that for her these historical facts are history:

> I think with times and dates, it's just important to know your history. History is like one of my least favorite subjects–I'm not a history buff–but I think it's just important to know history because...they say if you don't know your history, you don't know your future.

When I talked to Tamika in January, she again reported that "this is the most different curriculum, the way it's set up to the extent that it's not dates and places and times. It kinda takes a whole new way of thinking because you're so used to history placing dates with people and times." Tamika was still struggling with the question of whether or not this was a history class:

It's history because you are learning your history, but it's not history because you're not, I don't know, it's not the usual strict curriculum. But, I like it just because it's not dates and times. You know, we do have discussions and we do read articles and stuff like that, but we do learn history. I can tell you some dates and some times and some time periods.

While Tamika still associated history learning with dates and times, she was less concerned about learning those things. I reminded her that, when we talked about this in October, she had said that she was concerned that U.S. History was not covering the dates, times, and facts of history. I asked her if she still felt this way. Tamika said that she had since learned to better appreciate Ms. Miller's approach to teaching. She was enjoying the class and Ms. Miller's "upbeat" and "enthusiastic" style: "[Ms. Miller] really makes an effort to try to have us participate and be involved whereas other teachers kinda just give you the average, 'here's three pages. Read it. Answer the questions.'" In addition, Tamika said that, although she "[did not] really consider her class a history class," she appreciated that Ms. Miller was "telling us about stuff that happened in the past to make our judgments now." Tamika acknowledged that this was one kind of history:

That's what her history is: she'll give us background information. You know, she'll give us notes and stuff so that we can kinda get our own conclusions from it and take that and bring it into the

discussion, you know, so we have things to support what we're saying. So we're learning history like that.

Scott

Scott characterized the distinction between this class and others by discussing "conceptual" versus "factual" history learning. When, in January, I asked Scott to tell me in his own words what he was learning about in U.S. history, he responded:

> Mostly, I would say, concepts. Well, this year, she's teaching a lot about concepts like, you know, history, democracy, capitalism, stuff like that. Last year, we learned a lot of factual stuff, and this year we are learning a lot about concepts, you know, ideas behind stuff, the origins of that stuff.

In January, Scott reported that he liked Ms. Miller's approach, but he "[would] prefer if it was a mix, because last year, it was all facts, this year it's all concepts. It just seems like that to me. If it was a mix, I think I'd like it better." By May, Scott had become more frustrated with U.S. History. He described Ms. Miller's approach to U.S. history as thematic, rather than conceptual–"she just teaches themes," like "democracy, media, and labor"–and he talked a lot about the limitations of this approach: "we really haven't learned anything solid." Scott, like Tamika, equated history with historical facts, and noted that Ms. Miller's approach involved "almost no history...no actual facts."

When I asked Scott what kind of facts he thought he should be learning and why it was important to do so, he said that "it seems like she teaches history kind of from her perspective. I'd like it if we got taught from all different perspectives, rather than just one....I think facts are important because obviously they're facts." Ms. Miller, by contrast, was "really big on these concepts and ideas... like the door of democracy and...political membership and all that." When I asked again why facts are important, and how he envisioned himself using those facts in the future, he responded, "I guess just because it's a history class, I want to learn history. Concepts are nice, but you also need some factual data, just know, you know knowing what happened."

Scott suggested several times that Ms. Miller was overly influenced in her teaching by "her own perspective" on history. I asked what perspective he was referring to and Scott told me, "She's like, you know, gay and lesbian. So, some of it has to do with, you know, women's suffrage. I think that was from her perspective....It's not that I don't want to learn that, but I think that she should teach from all kinds of perspectives, too."

Scott also talked a lot in the May interview about Ms. Miller's "bias:" "her work is specifically designed to lead you in a particular direction." Scott said again that it was important to teach history from a variety of perspectives, but his definition of perspective seems to have changed. In the January interview, he suggested that Ms. Miller's personal life, and particularly her sexual orientation, played too much of a role in the curriculum. In May, he suggested that themes

and facts are the different perspectives: "Ms. Miller's only taught from one [perspective], which is themes, and she needs to teach from you know facts or just anything. She just teaches one thing."

Destiny

Destiny characterized the curriculum as more focused on "discussion and our opinions" as opposed to "reading history books and doing questions." For Destiny, this was largely a positive distinction ("I'm one of those people who really likes to discuss things"), but she, like Tamika and Scott, worried that the curriculum was missing something important: "sometimes I wanna learn a few more things that are concrete." She characterized these "things" slightly differently than Tamika: "I wouldn't say like dates or anything, but like events."

When I asked Destiny why she thought learning about these events was important, she responded:

> Maybe this isn't the best thing, but that's how the rest of everything is set up. That's how the rest of the school system and college and all that kind of stuff like is set up. You're supposed to, you have to know like dates and things that happened. I mean, *that is kinda what history is.*

Destiny suggested that discussion should be the focus of history in order to "learn what you did in the past [and] can not make the same mistakes that you did," she believed that that facts "are just what you're going to be expected to know later...that's just what you need to know."

Destiny characterized Ms. Miller's approach to teaching history as "alternative" or "progressive," which actually worked well for her because she considered herself progressive, as well. When I asked what she meant when she said that the class was progressive, Destiny seemed to have some difficulty responding, but she was the only student I interviewed who mentioned social justice in relation to the class. She said,

> Well, I mean, it seems like, I don't know, there's like, there seems like, it's not really-this is actually something that I don't know if I like-but it's like, like there's kind of, sort of like, it seems like there is a reason, you know, that we're learning about like, I don't know, democracy, or like what's happened, just in terms of all the stuff we learned so far-. I'm trying to think of an example, an example like um like um the stuff we've been talking about with the election and the stuff we've been talking about with like economic independence, just like how everything's set up like between big business and government like I believe all this stuff is true, but it's not, there hasn't been, there's sort of like *one way that you're supposed to think about it*, which is the progressive outlook. So, I think that, I mean I am like definitely into like social justice and stuff like that.

Destiny reported that, while she was largely comfortable with Ms. Miller's approach to history, there were students who "really don't like the class." Those students, she said, either felt like they were being asked to think in this

particular, progressive way, or were uncomfortable because they "don't want to discuss:" "One person's like, 'oh, I just want to just, you know, do book work."

Alan

In October, when I asked Alan to talk in his own words about what he was learning in U.S. History, he said that that "ideally" they would learn in U.S. History about the major events of the 19th and 20th centuries, "events that are crucial to know for...standardized tests and those purposed and just general knowledge of being educated and living in America." Alan said that, although he was learning about these things, "it's a little bit more of a like round about kind of approach than I would prefer." He said that, for him, too much emphasis was being placed on "things in the classroom that don't have that much relevance to actually learning the history." He believed, for example, that they were spending too much time in discussion without "a very sound understanding of what actually did happen regardless of, you know, perspective." Alan said that he would prefer to "just learn the hard facts." He said that he did not "need to hear a lot of interpretation of it."

Alan also suggested that certain perspectives were receiving an "odd" amount of emphasis in the class. When I asked him which perspectives were being overemphasized, he said

> Well, I wouldn't, I wouldn't say that certain perspectives are overemphasized. I just think there needs to be a point where we can just say well discussion is great and I'm totally for it–yeah, it's

very interesting to me, too–it's just there's a certain point when you need to say, "okay read such and such chapter in the standardized textbook. And, this is the common knowledge that you need to know."

Alan had come to recognize that historical textbooks have important omissions and that history teachers need to "enrich" history learning with "things that allow you to be a critical thinker and to see that maybe there's more to this." He realized that standard historical texts may not provide the most "in depth" or even the most "historically accurate account," but he believed these texts should be used more nevertheless, that there should be "a balance between the stuff that we learn that is of a standard nature" and "other viewpoints," between "[reading] between the lines" and "just reading the textbook, doing the textbook answers, that kind of thing." For him, Ms. Miller's class erred on the side of reading between the lines to the exclusion of standard historical texts and accounts.

When I talked to Alan in May, he reported that he felt like the events that they had studied in U.S. History—foreign policy, the Cold War, the labor movement, and women's suffrage—did not provide the kind of "stable foundation to look at other historical events" that he would have liked. Ms. Miller's class "doesn't provide the kind the kind of comprehensive look and the kind of objective look that I think that we need to have a good understanding of history and to perform well in more standardized environments...[like] tests and outside of Wilton High."

From Alan's perspective, the "choice of building blocks" in Ms. Miller's class was "very unorthodox....It may be a new way of doing things, but it's just not the way that's the best." He provided the example that in Ms. Miller's class, they learned about World Wars I and II through a unit on media: "It seems to me that it would be better to have media, studies on media as an extension of studies about World Wars I and II, rather than vice versa."

When I asked Alan how teachers should decide what to include in a high school course on U.S. History, he said that they should "look at a few traditional textbooks," because "they've definitely taken a lot of time to figure out exactly what makes the most sense." When I asked who "they" are, Alan responded, "I guess people who've published textbooks over the many years that textbooks have been published."

For Alan, the previous year's history class was exceptional. Whereas Ms. Miller seemed to "dumb down" the material, last year's teacher "was talking to us more on our level and more like the teacher knew what he was talking about."

Ruth

When I interviewed Ruth in May, she reported that the students have learned "a lot about democracy and stuff." She said that she did not know "anything about the government previously," and had "gotten a lot of information like that" in Ms. Miller's class. Ruth believed that they should learn about government in U.S. History class. She supposed that a lot of kids do not

know anything about government "besides that our president is Bush right now."

While it was important to learn about the past, Ruth was more interested in "what's happening now," in the U.S. and in other countries. She was surprised—and pleased—to find that Ms. Miller includes "a lot of stuff that's outside the U.S." She felt that Ms. Miller was "very flexible," and that she has a voice in the class.

Although Ruth had always liked history, she had not liked her previous history classes and did not trust textbooks—"I don't think that information is very accurate"—and she did not like classes that used textbooks as the primary source. Ruth said that she had always mistrusted textbooks, but it had become more obvious to her in U.S. History ways that textbooks are inaccurate. Ruth recognized that Ms. Miller was "one of those teachers" who does not believe in textbooks. Ruth liked the more "activity-based" nature of the class. She didn't like to "just read" in class. For Ruth, U.S. History was "fun, you know, so you want to learn." While freshman World History worked well for some of Ruth's classmates, it was, for Ruth, "really bad...Every day, we just, we had a textbook and everyday we'd just read, and the teacher was really just like 'this, today, we will like blah.'" She failed the history class during the previous year.

Ruth believed that U.S. History class had influenced her thinking in other classes and outside of school. The class had piqued her interest in government. Before, she wasn't really interested in government, but now, "like if Bush is

talking about something, I wanna hear what he's talking about." She said that she watched the news more often and paid closer attention, because she was more interested in it: "I think this class has made me mature a little." She reported that she talked regularly with her mom about what was going on in class, especially when they had emotional conversations that she was still thinking about when she went home.

In the past, Ruth had "hated" talking to her teachers—it made her "feel just really uncomfortable"—but she reported feeling comfortable talking to Ms. Miller, who "doesn't make you feel like, 'oh, no, what is she going to say?'"

Kristen

When I asked Kristen to tell me in her own words what she had been learning about in U.S. History this year, she said:

> Nothing. Pretty much, we haven't learned anything. We've done some pretty stupid, obscure activities that don't really have a point, that are pretty much busy work, that don't really take us anywhere... So, we haven't really been learning anything. We did a little on the women's suffrage and stuff like that, but she didn't really teach us anything.

Kristen said that "history in [her] mind is a series of events that happened. And, you can look at those events and you can find the themes within them." But, she believed that Ms. Miller was making up the themes and emphasizing the

question "what would you do?" For Kristen, this was not history: "I don't think I've actually learned about any event."

Kristen said that, while it's "kind of nice that [they] don't use the book as much," she did not feel like "there's anything I can learn" from the class in the absence of a text. Kristen thought that it would be helpful to use a textbook in U.S. History because the class would be more chronological and less thematic if guided by a textbook. Kristen said that a thematic approach can be useful, but that Ms. Miller used themes in the wrong way. Kristen's eighth grade teacher used themes "right"—he would use stories to illustrate historical situations, like using a soccer game to explain how the electoral college works.

When I asked Kristen what she should be learning in high school U.S. History, she said that she did not know: "I don't really know what I should be learning. I mean, they're supposed to teach us, and they're not, so I don't really know what I'm supposed to be learning. But, I would just assume that I'm supposed to be learning about the history of America, and how it came to be today."

I asked Kristen why she thought it was important that Ms. Miller include more facts. She explained that "you can't have themes without facts...You need to know...what those people did, not what we think we would do, which is a lot of what we do."

Kristen felt certain that Ms. Miller's approach is "not working for almost anyone in the class." "No one feels they're learning anything. I've talked to some people; almost everyone's really frustrated with her."

Kristen reported that this class had not influenced her thinking in other classes or in her life outside of school, although she conceded the education unit made her think. She realized that "there's a difference between equality and equity...[Ms. Miller] was talking about if you give each school the same thing, therefore, it's equal and it's not, because there's a difference between equity and making everything so that all the schools have the same advantage."

She conceded, also, that she might look at historical texts a little differently: "I guess I might look at them a little more objectively, wondering if they're actually true, because everyone has their own perspective. You can't just trust the news. I knew that before, but this class has just made me a little more aware."

And, she said that the class had made her more aware of issues of equity and poverty—"it has influenced me to think about the huge gap between rich and poor"-and it had made her less optimistic about America:

> I think it's unfair to people. It's unfair to people of different classes, and that there's no health care, and there's no housing for poor. Like there's so many homeless people in this country and it's not for like, I have so much more. And, I like wish it could just be like everyone has the same.

Joel

When I asked Joel to tell me in his own words what he was learning about this year in U.S. History, he said that they had been learning "a kind of feminist democracy type thing." He said that, while the class had "covered the History of the U.S.," it had not "gone too in depth on any special or certain events other than the women's right to vote, "capitalism and democracy," and "racial issues from way back when." Joel said that Ms. Miller's approach was "hard to describe....It's more of like finding out what you know and then improving on that." Joel said that, while he had enjoyed much of what they had learned in the class, "there could be more just factual information." Joel said that he believed he would be unable to pass the S.A.T. II in U.S. History "knowing what [he] know[s] now."

In Ms. Miller's class, Joel believed that he was getting a perspective that was consistent with the values of the local urban area, notorious for its liberalism. In that way, "it teaches what you would have expected," but Joel was more comfortable with the "more fact-based approach, using the textbook" that he was "used to getting." He noted that the class had really only "used the textbook once for a week, and that's when [Ms. Miller] was gone on personal matters."

Joel believed that some of the things they have covered–media and propaganda, for example–"don't make too much sense for a U.S. History class." Joel reported that, when he thinks about U.S. History, he "think[s], you know,

Civil War, the Revolution." Joel had not talked to Ms. Miller about his concerns, because he could not expect her to "change her whole curriculum." And, he reported, he did not know how his classmates felt: "For all I know other kids think this is exactly what they should be learning in U.S. History."

When I asked Joel if he thought about history any differently than he used to, he reported, "This class showed me that the history book's actually a pretty one-sided view of American society. And, I've more or less realized even more that there's another side to the, to each story."

While Joel did not feel like he personally had much influence over what gets taught in the class, he did feel that the students had a great deal of influence collectively:

> If there's something that we think should be said, it gets said, and there's no bone about it. I mean if we have an objection to something Ms. Miller would be teaching, then it would be said, and she would realize that we didn't think that was right, for example, or it should be taught a different way. So, I think we have a lot of freedom in that class to do so.

Looking Across Students

Not the Typical History Class

All of these students recognized that this class was different in significant ways from history classes they had taken in the past. They characterized these differences in variety of ways, but all of the characterizations relied on a

distinction between a factual, textbook-oriented approach to history and Ms. Miller's approach (termed by the students "thematic," "conceptual," "feminist," "progressive" and "personal"). For some of the students, Ms. Miller's approach was appealing. Tamika, for example, appreciated the focus on "stories" and "different people's ideas about history" created by the class reader. Ruth reported that the focus on government and current issues had piqued her interest in history class for the first time. She believed that Ms. Miller was interested in having students develop their own ideas about history, rather than memorizing from a textbook: "[Ms. Miller] just gives you all this information and then you can decide what you want to think." Other students seemed to believe that Ms. Miller's teaching was driven by personal "bias." Several students characterized Ms. Miller's approach as one-sided, or overly influenced by her personal history and perspective. Scott believed that U.S. History as taught by Ms. Miller was "specifically designed to lead you in a particular direction." Destiny and Joel both believed that the class was pushing a "progressive" or "feminist" agenda.

New View of Media and/or Text

All of the students I interviewed reported that they had come to see textbooks or other texts (media, newspapers) as more perspectival or partial sources of information. Joel reported that he had learned in the class that "the history book's actually a pretty one-sided view of American society." Similarly, Kristen reported that she had become less trusting of news sources and of historical texts, because she recognized now that "everyone has their own

perspective." These changes provide some evidence that students had developed a more critical perspective on text. They had come to see textbooks "not simply [as] 'delivery systems' of 'facts'" (Apple, 1993, p. 195). However, their understanding of perspective in text did not necessarily extend to their view of the class. The pervasive contention that Ms. Miller's version of history was biased suggested that it would have been possible to present and unbiased -or less biased—history.

History as Facts.

While many of the students expressed positive attitudes toward Ms. Miller's approach, particularly at the start of the year, all but two of the students, Ruth and Tamika, expressed increasing discontent as the year went on. Ms. Miller's approach was confusing and, often, frustrating for many of these students who believed that facts—dates, people, and places—are more than the typical content of history courses, they are history. Although Tamika reported having largely positive feelings about Ms. Miller's approach to history throughout the year, she repeatedly expressed concern that she was not learning the factual information ("time and date stuff") that she would need in the future. For Tamika, dates and times are history: "I think with times and dates, it's just important to know your history." At the beginning of the school year, Scott reported that he liked Ms. Miller's approach, but he became increasingly frustrated over the course of the year. In May, Scott complained that Ms. Miller's approach involved "almost no history...no actual facts." When I asked Scott why

facts are important, his response suggests that for him, like Tamika, facts are history: "I guess just because it's a history class, I want to learn history." Alan also believes that the class was too focused on "things in the classroom that don't have that much relevance to actually learning the history" and should be more focused on "what actually did happen regardless of, you know, perspective."

In spite of Christine's attempts to portray history as constructed and perspectival, the students maintained a view of history that resembles what Berkhofer (1988) called historical fundamentalism. In this view, history "is basically a matter of facts" wherein "all students need to do is memorize enough data by reading the assignments in the course" (p. 21). Berkhofer noted that historical fundamentalists have low tolerance for "ambiguous interpretations of data, let alone multiple perspectives upon the past" (p. 21). It seems the students in Christine's class were struggling with their entering beliefs about history. And since these beliefs were echoed in other places in their lives, it was a struggle to let them go.

Several of the students saw the approach to history taken in the class, not as a legitimate alternative to the facts-first canonical approach taken in their other history courses, but as reflecting Ms. Miller's biases. While the students certainly could provide a critical reading of the class (as interested and perspectival), they were less willing to accept critical readings of history. The students, like Christine, standards committees, textbook writers, and policy

makers, were making their own decisions about what counts as legitimate historical knowledge in their lives.

Focus on Evaluation

Five of the seven students talked about the importance of tests, and used tests, particularly the STAR test that they took in the spring, as a lens for evaluating the content of U.S. History. When I asked Joel (in January) to describe what they are learning about in U.S. History, he began by telling me, "If I were to take an S.A.T. II in U.S. History, I wouldn't be able to pass it...knowing what I know now." In May, as he was discussing the lack of factual learning in the class, Scott mentioned that he is "pretty sure that the entire class just failed [the STAR Social Sciences test]." While he acknowledges that the test was "pretty biased and stuff" and that it was "obviously...talking from the point of view of the United States," he found that he believed that he could have answered more questions "if perhaps we'd gone over more history this year." Alan talked a great deal about the role of history classes in preparing students for "more standardized environments... [like] tests." In May, Alan also reported that the STAR exam he took the previous week had influenced his view of the course. Alan called the exam "a turning point in how I look at the work we've done in history this year, because I really began to realize...we're not being prepared."

The Subterrain of Discontent

The students' expectations for this class are consistent with their experiences in past history classes. In their freshman year, all of the students had

taken a lecture-based world history class. Other classroom experiences described by the students were similarly characterized by chronology, textbooks, and an emphasis on factual recall. Given their history with history and the current climate of testing and accountability in California, it is not surprising that students worried about their ability to recall facts for future exams. While I was conducting my research at Wilton High, the San Francisco Chronicle published an article about the escalating testing demands—annual state tests, college entrance exams, and the upcoming California High School Exit Exam—placed on students at Wilton High and other area schools. In the article, students were quoted as saying that the testing pressure had left them beleaguered, confused, and buried in test preparation books and courses.

It is somewhat surprising, however, that the teacher and students were largely unaware of the other's goals and understandings about history. While all of the students except Ruth expressed significant reservations about the class, particularly its lack of factual content, the students were hesitant to discuss their reservations with Ms. Miller. I was told by Ms. Miller and many of her students about one interaction in which two students had told Ms. Miller that they were concerned about the lack of chronology and factual content. One of these two students told me that she had tried to communicate her difficulties with the class to Ms. Miller, but found it "hard to convince" Ms. Miller that anything was wrong. Nevertheless, she believed that Ms. Miller tried to accommodate her: "[My friend and I] went in and talked to her about maybe having some more

facts....And, then the next unit, she spewed off a bunch of facts for the first day or two and then expected us to memorize these facts and then went back to the themes. And, it didn't do anything."

This incident was legendary in the class; it was repeated back to me without prompting by five of the students I interviewed. The students who told me the story put it forth as evidence that Ms. Miller was aware of their concerns and unwilling or unable to change. Ms. Miller seemed to view it as an isolated incident, rather than evidence of wide-spread concern among the students.

Several of the students I interviewed reported that there was much talk among their classmates about their general dissatisfaction with the focus of the class, yet the students were hesitant to communicate their concerns to Ms. Miller. Joel said that he was not sure whether Ms. Miller was aware that he and some other students were discontent, but he had not personally talked with her about his concerns, because, even if she became aware, he could not expect her to "change her whole curriculum."

Alan, too, reported that, while "some people really like [Ms. Miller's teaching style]...for the majority probably, it's just a little bit off." Alan did not talk to Ms. Miller about the class because he, like Joel, believed that it was too difficult for Ms. Miller to change her style to meet the needs of a particular group of students: "I don't blame her for not [changing]. I mean, once you have a teaching style that's pretty set in, that you've been using for a number of years,

I'm sure it's very difficult to just turn around and start teaching stuff in a different way."

Kristen and Scott claimed that the students talked often to each other about their frustration with the class. Scott believed that Ms. Miller was aware that many students were unhappy: "I think she knows that her teaching style, many people consider it flawed...How can it escape her attention?" Scott reported that, although he had never expressed his concerns to Ms. Miller, other students had tried. According to Scott, Ms. Miller responded to his classmates' complaints about the lack of factual information with, "I'm sorry if you don't like what I do. This is how I teach history."

The students were not only reluctant to communicate their confusion and frustration to Ms. Miller, they were careful to guard this information from Ms. Miller. Several of the students sought constant reassurance from me that I would not share the results of my interviews with Ms. Miller until they graduated from Wilton High.

Despite the students' reports, Christine remained largely unaware of these conversations among students. And I observed very little open resistance to Christine's curriculum or pedagogy. While the students frequently tried to get out of class (to participate in on-campus protests or see on-campus performances) or to avoid work (pulling the class off topic, creating distractions, doing other school work in class), I documented only two instances when students expressed reservations about the curriculum. First, in mid-year written

evaluations of the democracy unit, two students requested more "history." Sandra wrote, "It was a lot of good in-depth discussions about our opinions and not enough in-depth discussions about history." Tim wrote, "The concepts we have been learning are good, but I would also enjoy some more detailed historical learning as well."

Second, during the Cold War unit, Christine asked the students to compare a series of accounts of the history of U.S.-Cuba relations, including an account from the textbook and one from a guide book. I hear one student tell his neighbor, rather loudly, that it would be better to read first from the textbook and then compare the other accounts to the textbook. I noted that Ms. Miller probably heard this comment, but did not respond.

While Christine did slowly become aware that some of her students were dissatisfied with her approach to history, much of their dissatisfaction was unavailable to her. I came to think of the class as having an unspoken subterrain of discontent involving a basic disagreement about nature of history. While Christine worked to promote a "perspectival history," one which according to Levstik (1997) "removed the protection of an 'official story' sanctioned by the school system and enshrined in a textbook," many of her students longed for a return to a textbook, "just the facts" history (p. 50).

Summary

Christine came to teaching as a form of activism. She hoped to use her role as a teacher to address the issues of inequity that had concerned her for much of

her life. Christine employed a critical and thematic approach to history, because it was, in her estimation, the best way to nurture students' empathy, self-awareness, and ability to see the world from multiple perspectives. Christine believed that these things, in combination with a set of academic skills, would give students an awareness of social justice and prepare them to be agents of change in the world, should they choose to be. Christine designed her curriculum to meet these goals.

Christine's students had an understanding of history that differed in important ways from hers. While some of the students were moved by Ms. Miller's approach and found themselves unusually interested in learning history, most resisted her approach. These students believed that history was a set of facts and events to be learned, and Ms. Miller's class violated their expectation that these facts would serve as the primary content for the course.

While teacher and students approached the class from different perspectives, their differences were rarely voiced. The students actively speculated about Ms. Miller's motives for teaching history in this unusual way, but very few communicated their concerns to her. Their discontent instead existed as part of a subculture in the class.

Chapter 4

Confronting Criticism and Chaos

By mid-year, Christine sensed that some students were displeased with the class. One of Christine's colleagues told her that she overheard a conversation among students in which the students said that they would prefer a more chronological approach to history. In addition, one student had approached Christine personally to ask that the class include more "context" and chronology.

Christine believed that some students were experiencing "discomfort" in her class "because it's not the standard....It's not mainstream." Christine suggested the students were struggling with the thematic and nonchronological approach to history because "it's a new way that they're learning history...Whenever you're in unfamiliar territory, there's always some discomfort in the learning process." Christine believed that she was pushing the students to think critically for the first time: "even though critical thinking has been—critical thinking, higher order thinking—those have been buzz words for a long time, I don't think that they're as accustomed to those type of thinking skills as one might think."

Christine also recognized that her curriculum was still under development. She suggested that, over time, she would get better at integrating the various themes of the course, and this would make it easier for her students to follow. In the mean time, she said that she was trying to accommodate

students who were uncomfortable with a critical and thematic (non-chronological) approach. At the end of the year, Christine imagined that in future classes she would hang on the wall "a chronological timeline of major events" to give students a "visual frame of reference."

Christine believed that, despite these struggles, her students would "kind of get turned on to this new framework for looking at history," but she avoided explicit discussions about her thematic and critical approach. At the beginning of the school year, Christine introduced the class to her students by talking about her expectations and her commitments to respect, curiosity, empowerment, multiple perspectives, and creative thinking. She also told them that she "[tries] to look at education in a holistic way," incorporating emotional, spiritual, physical, and mental elements. She did not, however, share with her students that she would approach the class from a critical or thematic perspective. To Christine, it seemed risky to do so:

> The risk of [having explicit discussions about her approach] is that [the students] could be like, 'oh, she sees that there are benefits to chronological order. She obviously knows that there's some value to that in that she's talking about it. Then, it may be negotiable'....It is non-negotiable.

Christine believed that her approach to teaching, particularly the critical dimensions, left her "exposed" to criticism from students who are uncomfortable with her approach:

> The more mainstream teachers, I think, are protected under the guise of neutrality because they don't really teach history as conflict. And, so, and because kids haven't been trained to be critical, they're less critical of standard establishmentarian delivery of history. I encourage them to be critical, so part of the by-product of us doing critical thinking in the class is they're going to be critical of the class.

Christine felt vulnerable to this criticism and at risk of losing control of the class:

> I've...always feared that when I did my education unit that [the students] were going to have a revolt. And, you know, third period class, in particular, during that unit; they felt very empowered by their voice. And, they felt empowered to negotiate with me. And, in a way, like that's what I want them to do—you know, to be negotiators, to have opinions, to let your voice be heard, to, you know, to work the system, and to know the system. So, they worked me a little. And I, you know, I knew that might happen.

Christine would have liked to be more open with her students about her aims and approaches. She acknowledged that her classroom was not consistent with her vision of a "truly critical classroom." In her view, the institutional constraints made it too risky to enact that vision. According to Christine, a truly critical classroom would include discussion of the power dynamics between

students and teacher, but she feared that, in the context of her classroom, a conversation like that would "blow up into revolt." With more than 160 students, she believed that would be "too much to manage."

Although Christine reported that such revolt "is good," that "it's good for [the students] to realize they have that kind of power," she also acknowledged that "there is a part of [her] that's kind of afraid" of this kind of revolt. She says, "I still have to let them know that I'm boss, and that given the situation that we're given that I can't go there with you, but I would like to."

Christine felt frustrated by this tension between analyzing, sharing, and maintaining power. She said that trusting children is a core part of her philosophy of education, but it was sometimes difficult to do so in her particular context. Christine reported that she wanted to share power in the classroom, and believed that students would "take responsibility given the opportunity, especially if you guide them well and you scaffold the ideas."

Stuck within this tension, Christine had attempted to find a compromise, one which allowed her to raise critical issues, like power, and still maintain control of the class. She reported, however that she sometimes found herself manipulating the class "to put out fires." For example, the students raised the issue of democracy to get out of doing a homework assignment, arguing that decisions about assignments should be made democratically. Christine responded by "[giving] them two options that still led to what I wanted them to do." This calmed the student down, according to Christine, and made them feel

"like they had a little bit more power and they were able to make a choice." But, to Christine, "that was manipulation."

Teaching to the Standards

While Christine acknowledged that her inability to create space for conversation about and critique of the class goals and curriculum undermined her ability to teach critically, she felt that "an ideal critical pedagogy cannot exist within the infrastructure" of her school. Christine's commitment to critical teaching involved the questioning of standard ways of knowing in history, standard historical content, and mainstream institutions, but she was at the same time an embodiment of these institutions and bound by traditional educational standards and expectations. This was a tension that she felt deeply.

For many educators concerned with issues of equity and social justice, educating students in ways that meet state standards is important, but insufficient. Banks (2000) suggested that, while it is important for all U.S. citizens to master a common body of knowledge, all students must develop "the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed not only to participate in, but also to help transform and reconstruct, society" (p. 211).

For Banks, this ability to help transform society is closely linked to understanding the perspectival and constructed nature of understanding, particularly in history. Banks wrote:

> To acquire the skills needed for effective citizenship in a multicultural society, students must be helped to view U.S. history

> and culture from new and different perspectives, must acquire new knowledge about U.S. society, and must be helped to understand knowledge as a social construction. Knowledge is neither neutral nor static but is culturally based, perspectival, dynamic, and changing (p. 211).

Christine, like Banks (2000) and other critical educators, cautiously supported the use of standards to guide teaching. But, she did feel that standards pulled her away from her more critical goals.

Christine was committed to her thematic and critical approach to teaching, but she felt considerable pressure—from her colleagues and her department chair, from the state (as conveyed through testing, standards, and media), and from parents—to teach in more traditional ways, and, particularly, in ways that were in line with the state standards for history.

For Christine, the standards were associated with a content- or fact-centered approach to teaching U.S. History. Christine believed that there was "some legitimacy in knowing part of what the standards wants you to know," but "the standards want you to teach way too much." She believed that, "if you're gonna have kids critically engage in the ideas, you have to cover the topics in a way that does not bombard them with too much information at one time." As such, she "[felt] completely validated at a personal level and at a reform level to disregard and dismiss many of the standards." Her solution had

been to narrow the material by asking herself, "What's the heart that we should know from [each time period covered by the standards]?" She explained,

> I try when I can to integrate some of the things [the standards] want me to talk about....They want me to go, you know, Reconstruction, Progressive Era, World War I, Depression, World War II, the Sixties and Seventies Movement and all that kinds of stuff. And...I do try to touch up on some of the main things that happen during those time periods.

Christine used the standards to guide her teaching in part because she felt "somewhat obligated to the mainstream expectation of what [she would] do in the classroom," and in part because she felt that they had some value. However, Christine's principal reason for teaching to the standards was that she felt "pressure to try to teach them."

Christine felt that working to create a critical classroom sometimes pulled her too far away from institutional goals, like mastery of the state standards. She lamented several times during our interviews about particular class discussions that were cut short because she was concerned about falling behind in her coverage of the course material. For example, the second period class was engaged in what Christine described as an "explosive," but "beneficial" discussion of immigration policy. She let the conversation run its course, but worried afterward that the class had not covered the 1790 Naturalization Act. In third period, which followed immediately after, she "switched the directions

around so that it wouldn't go down that pathway and so that we would stay on target."

Though standards limited her freedom to be "creative and critical," they were also protective in that they guarded her from social and institutional criticism. She reported, "I try to cover my butt with the standards."

A Note about the State Standards

The California state standards for history had a significant presence in this classroom (California Department of Education, n.d.). Christine associated the standards with a chronological and factual recall-oriented approach to history. The students, while less aware of the state standard per se, were strongly influenced by the state test that was designed to measure students' achievement in relation to these standards.

The standards chapter for California high school U.S. History opens with the following: "Students in grade eleven study the major turning points in American history in the twentieth century" (italics added). The standards identify as their objectives the acquisition of "core knowledge in history and social science" and the development of "critical thinking skills."

The language used to describe the approach of the standards is in some ways consistent with Christine's approach. For example:

- The standards state that students should understand themes of history, as well as facts: "Mastery of these standards will ensure that students not only know the facts, but also understand common and complex

themes throughout history, making connections among their own lives, the lives of people who came before them, and the lives of those to come."(p. vi).

- The standards call for students to think about the past in relation to the present, to "recognize vital connections between the present and the past, and to appreciate universal historical themes and dilemmas" (p. vi).
- The standards encourage the use of "biographies, original documents, diaries, letters, legends, speeches, and other narrative artifacts from our past" in order to "foster students' understanding of historical events by revealing the ideas, values, fears, and dreams of the people associated with them" (p. vi).

However, these introductory statements are somewhat inconsistent with the actual standards—the conceptual units and substatements outlined subsequently. While the standards ask students to "describe," "analyze," "understand," "examine," "list," "trace," "discuss," "know," and "explain" various historical events and trends, in nearly every case the verb "know" could easily be substituted. For example, conceptual unit 3 (one of eleven conceptual units) and its substatements ask the students to "describe," "discuss," "analyze" and "discuss," but each substatement seems to ask for students to commit to memory a series of events, historical figures, or trends (see Figure 5). Even substatement 2, which asks students to "analyze" religious movements and

leaders, seems to invite students to know something about each of these individuals and groups, not necessarily to examine them or to understand the relationships between them. The use of the term analyze is awkward—what would it mean to analyze religious leaders? In addition, with eighty-one substatements to cover in a 36 instructional weeks, it is difficult to imagine that sufficient time can be allotted to allow for the analysis of each of these religious movements and the relationships between them.

***Figure* 5. Excerpt from the California Standards.**

11.3 Students analyze the role religion played in the founding of America, its lasting moral, social, and political impacts, and issues regarding religious liberty.

1. Describe the contributions of various religious groups to American civic principles and social reform movements (e.g., civil and human rights, individual responsibility and the work ethic, antimonarchy and self-rule, worker protection, family-centered communities).

2. Analyze the great religious revivals and the leaders involved in them, including the First Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening, the Civil War revivals, the Social Gospel Movement, the rise of Christian liberal theology in the nineteenth century, the impact of the Second Vatican Council, and the rise of Christian fundamentalism in current times.

3. Cite incidences of religious intolerance in the United States (e.g., persecution of Mormons, anti-Catholic sentiment, anti-Semitism).

4. Discuss the expanding religious pluralism in the United States and California that resulted from large-scale immigration in the twentieth century.

5. Describe the principles of religious liberty found in the Establishment and Free Exercise clauses of the First Amendment, including the debate on the issue of separation of church and state.

Nowhere do these statements ask for students to make "connections among their own lives, the lives of people who came before them, and the lives of those to come;" to "recognize vital connections between the present and past;" or to consider the "ideas, values, fears, and dreams of the people associated with them." In a very real sense, when the standards emerge in their more detailed instantiation, they are inconsistent with the most general standards they are designed to exemplify.

Within the standards, there is little room for students' opinions or interpretations or for application to current personal or social dilemmas. There is no call for critique. Standard 11, substatement 6 comes closest to calling for genuine analysis. It asks students to "analyze the persistence of poverty and how different analyses of this issue influence welfare reform, health insurance reform, and other social policies." Students are asked to think about a current issue and to compare multiple accounts of a persistent social dilemma, poverty. However, this statement still asks students to consider existing analyses rather than offering their own or drawing on their own experiences to make connections between past and present.

These standards claim in their introduction to support an approach to history that is in many ways similar to Christine's approach, but the actual standards seem to support a view of history that is more consistent with that of Christine's students. And, it is the standards—the statement and

substatements—that, according to the California Department of Education, serve as the framework for the state exam. These standards lurked just behind Christine's shoulder and just over the horizon of her students' vision of their own futures in shaping the tensions that emerged from her classes.

Pressure to Teach Traditional History

Christine explained that the pressure to teach in more traditional—test-aligned, lecture-based, standards-based—ways came from a number of sources, including the state, her colleagues, and parents.

The State and Media

As a teacher, Christine felt like she was being surveilled by the state ("they're looking at my back") and censured by the media's negative portrayals of the state of education and professionalism of teachers. Christine talked about the pressure that she felt from the "frenzy with testing" at the state level, which she saw as part of the standards movement in California. Christine felt inundated by media messages from state legislators that schools are failing and that the solution is state surveillance and control of education. She believed that these messages "affect the way people think you should teach," and therefore "restrict the kind of creative teaching that you can do in your own particular context, in your own particular classroom."

Christine also expressed some fear of the movement in California toward district- and state-mandated curricula for "failing" schools:

> I think, oh my god, the stuff that's going on in L.A. and in Oakland public schools where in elementary school—what's it called?—it's like—oh god, what is it called?—it's frightening, where all public elementary teachers are required to teach this one particular way. It's robotic.

Colleagues

Christine expected to receive more support at Wilton High for "being a creative and critical teacher," but she found that there was a strong culture in the history department favoring traditional methods: "you teach to the textbook, you teach the standards, and you should lecture." Rather than suggesting that alternative approaches to history instruction are inappropriate, some of Christine's colleagues instead reinforced the idea that subject matter knowledge is paramount for teachers of history—the teacher with the most discrete knowledge is the most credible and the most authoritative—and the related assumption that acquisition of this knowledge is the goal of history learning. Christine believed that these messages made her more self-critical:

> I'm challenged with the way that I teach...even by some progressive teachers. You know, I certainly have a lot of teachers who support me and have my back, but there's some people who just completely think that I should be [teaching history] in chronological order. And, so, you know, because there's that hum of criticism...I'm a little bit more critical of myself.

Although Christine had some supportive critical colleagues, critical approaches to teaching were supported by the history department's leadership privately more than publicly. Christine believed that the department chair, Mr. Roberts, essentially approved of her practice, but he would not advocate for her approach publicly. While he had privately expressed his support for Christine's teaching, he expected that she would advocate for herself: "Mr. Roberts did say that that he wanted me to make sure that I kind of expressed myself and that, he thought that ...my voice was important and that I should make sure that I represent my perspective."

At the same time, however, Mr. Roberts had recently formed a committee to develop common standards for the history department. According to Christine, he did this because there was institutional power and prestige in such standards:

> Mr. Roberts' interest in implementing standards for history is politically situated within the school, because, even though I think some of the best teachers in the school are in the history department, politically speaking...we have the least amount of political leverage within the school.

According to Christine, other, more prestigious departments, like math and science, had standards that specified what was taught in each class, and Mr. Roberts hoped to mirror those.

Christine was not opposed to the development of departmental standards, but she had some concern that these standards would have a homogenizing effect. She acknowledged that the development of such standards would improve the status of the history department at Wilton High. She also believed that it was appropriate and important "to be able to say 'this is what we've tried to do, and this is the evaluation of that process, and this is how we're accountable for our ideas and our actions.'" She did not feel, however, that the development of such standards would improve her teaching practice, and she was concerned that the standards would curb the quality and creativity of the teaching within the department, particularly if these standards were not a community product: "[standards] shouldn't be imposed. They should be authentically created and organically created within [the] community." She worried that this would not be the process at Wilton High: "If [the standards] contradicts the reasons why I'm teaching, then I'd have to leave."

Parents

Christine felt supported by the majority of her students' parents, but she had received some pressure from parents to teach in ways that are more traditional or test-aligned. Christine reported that, at the beginning of the school year, she was "harassed" by one parent who wanted the class to prepare her daughter for the U.S. History supplemental exam for the S.A.T.: "She was damn determined that I was going to teach to the test." This parent brought up the matter at Parent Night and then sent Christine several U.S. History textbooks.

Two parents approached Christine separately later in the year to tell her that a more chronological approach to history would better suit their children.

Christine believed that the parents were influenced by the climate of educational standardization, accountability, and gatekeeping in California:

> I think [media representations of schooling and accountability measures implemented by the state] put pressure on the minds of the parents, on the minds of the kids. Because, if they're seeing this as a ticket...if you're gonna get through the gate, and you need that ticket, then there's going to be pressure on the teachers to give you the ticket. And, that...is depressing to me.

Responding to Vulnerability

In his work on teachers as transformative intellectuals, Giroux (1985) urged teachers to "take active responsibility for raising serious questions about what they teach, how they are to teach, and what the larger goals are for which they are striving" (p. 378). He urged teachers to educate students for active, critical citizenship. At the same time, Giroux acknowledged that teachers "have little influence over the ideological and economic conditions of their work" (p. 379). Christine was committed to the questioning, reflective stance that Giroux advocated, yet she, like other teachers, found herself in an institution that did not always support this stance. The conflicting messages that Christine received about her teaching practice from colleagues, parents, students, and administrators left her beleaguered and frustrated.

Christine, like other teachers described in the literature review for this dissertation, had believed that critical approaches would be embraced by her students and by the progressive Wilton community. Christine's growing realization that this was not the case, that the community was not supportive of critical teaching and that many of her students were discontent with her critical and thematic approach to history, was difficult for her to accept. To acknowledge the students' rejection of her approach would undermine the core reason that Christine chose teaching as a profession. She was determined to teach from her concern about equity and justice and to use the discourses of justice that had been missing from her own education. So, Christine held steadfastly to her belief that students would ultimately replace their existing understandings about history, which were supported by the institution of schooling and by their long-standing experiences in history education, with more critical understandings.

Christine seemed to vacillate between several readings of the situation. At one level, Christine seemed unwilling to acknowledge the extent of the students' discontent. While Christine recognized that some of her students were struggling with her approach to U.S. History, she considered their discomfort temporary and relatively minor. She believed that her students, who were being asked to think critically for the first time, would become more accustomed to and skilled at critical analysis over time. This interpretation did not diminish the value of critical teaching in general or her conceptualization of the pedagogy in particular.

Christine also acknowledged that her particular instantiation of the pedagogy could be improved. Christine saw her curriculum as a work-in-progress. She talked toward the end of the year about things that she could do differently to mitigate students' struggles with her approach.

Christine's primary explanation for the difficulties students encountered in her class implicated the institutional context of her teaching. Although she expressed some feelings of self-doubt, Christine talked extensively about the institutional constraints that bound her and made it impossible to enact a truly critical curriculum—one that students would likely take up. Christine believed that she needed only to create a better enactment of a critical curriculum, but the institutional context prevented her from doing so. Christine identified the primary obstacles to a critical approach as lack of time and low student contact due to her large number of students. She also blamed student discomfort on the fact that students had received so little exposure to critical ideas prior to entering her class. The students, in Christine's view, were victims of many of the same institutional constraints as she. By situating her struggles at the institutional level, Christine diminished her own agency to address them. And, she freed herself from responsibility for the struggles she encountered.

Christine wanted to create a pedagogy that valued democratic decision-making, but she was coming to see that her entire approach, from her goals to her teaching methods, stood in contradiction to the established values and routines of the institution in which she worked. She was less aware of the ways

her students embodied many of the institutional values that constrained her teaching. Unfortunately for Christine, because students were so reluctant to share their views and concerns openly, she had limited access to their perspectives on the class and, therefore, had limited information on which to base her analysis of the situation and her response to it. Christine did not recognize the extent to which her students were purveyors of the institutions values, the extent to which they had bought into the canonical view of history as a set of received facts. Further, she had difficulty expressing her intentions to her students, and she had few strategies for dealing with student resistance and institutional constraints.

In her discussion of learning to teach, Britzman (2003) advances a view of teaching as dialogic—as "situated in relationship to relationship to one's biography, present circumstances, deep commitments, affective investments, social context," and conflicting discourses about what it means to be a teacher (p. 31). Within this dialogic view, Britzman reconceptualizes teaching as "a struggle for voice and discursive practices amid a cacophony of past and present voices, lived experiences and available practices" (p. 31). Britzman argues that while teaching requires coming to terms with one's own intentions and values, it also requires learning to act "in a setting characterized by contradictory realities, negotiation, dependency and struggle" (p. 31). While teaching is viewed as an individualistic endeavor, it is deeply socially negotiated.

Britzman explains this negotiation in terms of Bakhtin's distinction between the authoritative (external) and internally persuasive discourses, which are always in a power struggle and together determine one's ideological orientations, investments, beliefs, and dispositions. Authoritative discourse is the a priori discourse that operates within social contexts: "It is 'received' and static knowledge, dispensed in a style that eludes the knower, but dictates, in some ways, the knower's frames of reference and the discursive practices that sustain them" (p. 42). This discourse "sets the conditions for discursive practices" (p. 42). In Christine's classroom, the authoritative discourse was the discourse of standards and historical fundamentalism—the understandings about history that are deeply embedded in our school standards, textbooks, tests and culture—described in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

The internally persuasive discourse "pulls one away from norms and admits a variety of contradictory social discourses" (p. 42). This discourse has "no institutional privilege, because its practices are in opposition to socially sanctioned views and normative meanings. It is the discourse of subversion" (p. 42). For Christine, the internally persuasive discourse is the discourse of equity and justice that drives her commitment to critical teaching. It is this discourse that opposes the taken-for-granted ways of knowing of the authoritative discourse.

Britzman argues that the tensions between these discourses—"the problem of acting in an inherited context, while at the same time trying to

establish one's authority in a situation charged by power struggles" – often creates a situation where teachers embody the very traditions they hoped to change (p. 41). Christine found herself in this position and unable to enact a pedagogy consistent with her own values and beliefs.

While critical pedagogy is committed to the inclusion (rather than regulation) of student voice (Giroux, 1997), the authoritative discourse can act against this inclusion and provoke teachers to act in ways that silence students. The institutional setting in which Christine worked prevented students from speaking freely and prevented Christine from gaining access to students' perspectives on history – perspectives that presented obstacles to her critical teaching.

The students also recognized, or at least enacted, the operation of competing discourses in this classroom, and they capitalized on their understanding that Christine's approach departed from the values and routines of the institution. Even when they had difficulty articulating the values or the rationale behind them, they knew that they had powerful ground from which to critique Christine's approach.

Gore (1992) critiques critical pedagogy for its conceptualization of power "as property, something that the teacher has and can give to students" and "attribute[s] extraordinary abilities to the teacher, and hold a view of the agency which risks ignoring the context(s) of teachers' work" (p. 57).

In line with this tradition, Christine was focused on the location of power in her classroom and school. Power was a commodity that the institution had relative to her and she had relative to her students. In Christine's view, she was powerless to share her power to the students as long as the institution held power over her. According to Gore, this is a limiting view of power, which "suggests that there's only so much power and that if teachers 'give' some of it to students, they must 'give up' some of their own power" (p. 58).

Gore prefers an understanding of power more in line with Foucault's notion—power as something which circulates and is enacted. From this perspective, power wasn't Christine's to give away. The students readily exercised power as part of their alliance with the goals and values of the institution.

Christine came to critical literacy as a way to enact her personal and political commitments through education. She was not familiar with the literature that might have provided alternative readings of her situation, and she did not have the kind of social support that might have allowed her to negotiate all of these struggles. It is not surprising, given her day to day experiences in the classroom and among her colleagues that Christine came to see the institution as an oppressive force acting against her ability to be critical in her teaching.

Summary

Christine felt vulnerable as a critical teacher at a number of levels. She believed that implementing a curriculum that examines issues of power opened

up the possibility of student revolt in her classroom. While she valued power-sharing and wanted to experience their agency to make change, she recognized that her classroom could become a testing ground for their resistance and revolt, and she felt responsible for maintaining control in the classroom and keeping students on task and at pace with the curriculum.

Christine also felt at risk of censure for her non-traditional approach to teaching history: "when you exist on the margins, you are impacted by criticism." Christine believed that she was meeting both overt and covert resistance from students, parents, colleagues, and the larger educational community as she attempted to teach history thematically and critically. From each of these sources, she received messages that her teaching should be standards- and test-aligned. Although she had "the utmost faith" in what she taught ("I have no doubt that it's good teaching and learning and that the questions that I'm helping the kids develop and ask are fundamentally powerful and strong, sound questions."), she felt constant disapproval directed toward her. Moreover, she felt that this disapproval could ultimately have important consequences for her teaching. She worried, for example, that she might eventually lose control over her curriculum to departmental standards or state mandates.

All of this vulnerability worked to silence Christine. It was difficult for her to assert her perspective within the department because there was an unspoken understanding that the most valued teaching was that which focused on the facts

and the most authoritative teachers were those who possessed the most historical knowledge. While Christine felt that she had sufficient knowledge of U.S. history, she told me several times that she wished she had more time to study history herself.

It was also difficult for Christine to talk with her students about her approach to history. Even before becoming aware of resistance from students, Christine felt that naming her approach to her students could open her up to more criticism, or even chaos.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Implications

Cochran-Smith (1991) describes teachers who teach against the grain as those who work to meet the expectations of their schools even as they challenge inequitable and unproductive practices and implement alternative approaches to instruction:

> Teachers who work against the grain are in the minority. Often they must raise their voices against teaching and testing practices that have been 'proven' effective by large-scale educational research and delivered to the doorsteps of their schools in slick packages. Often they must demonstrate that they are competent at widely practiced modes of teaching and assessing in children's learning, despite the fact that they are battling to develop and use alternative modes. Often they must provide evidence that their students are making sufficient progress according to standard measures of learning, despite the fact that they place little stock in those measures and believe, on the contrary, that they work against the best interests of their children. (p. 284)

Cochran-Smith calls for educating teachers who "know from the start that they are part of a larger struggle and that they have a responsibility to reform, not just replicate, standard school practices" (p. 280).

Christine is such a teacher and her experience, documented in this study, points to the many challenges—personal, pedagogical, and institutional—associated with teaching against the grain.

Translating Theory into Practice

Cochran-Smith suggests that teaching against the grain "is not a generic skill that can be learned at the university and then 'applied' at the school" because this teaching is "deeply embedded in the culture and history of teaching at individual schools and in the biographies of particular teachers and their individual or collaborative efforts to alter the curricula, raise questions about common practices, and resist inappropriate decisions" (p. 280). Teaching against the grain involves "critical perspectives on the macro-level relationships of power, labor, and ideology," and the relationship between these perspectives and classroom teaching must be explored "in schools in the company of experienced teachers who are themselves engaged in complex, situation-specific, and sometimes losing struggles to work against the grain" (p. 2).

Critical teaching is one type of teaching against the grain and involves many of these same kinds of complications in translation to practice. Although Christine was exposed to theoretical literature on critical teaching in her teacher education program, she was left largely on her own to work out ways to apply these ideas and her personal concerns with issues of power and justice to her classroom practice. As such, while Christine was philosophically committed to critical teaching, she was, by her own account, struggling with implementation.

Christine experienced particular difficulty situating her critical practice within the culture of her school and community. Christine's approach to history was consistent in many ways with the literature on critical teaching: she emphasized critical issues, including power, diversity, justice, political membership and participation, and social organization and struggle; she discussed and demonstrated a commitment to preparing her students to navigate social institutions, participate in democracy, and strategize social action if they so choose; she encouraged her students to take a critical perspective on text. Christine struggled, however, with making this approach fit within the culture of this school. She was not successful at making her approach transparent and valued to many of her students and colleagues. As such, she faced persistent resistance, both overt and covert.

Clashing with the Culture of Schooling

At one level, Christine struggled with the practical constraints of schooling, like limited instructional time and the difficulty of maintaining meaningful contact with her more than 160 students. She tried to work around these limitations by, for example, arranging with another teacher to create longer class sessions two days each week. Nevertheless, Christine came to believe that truly critical teaching was not possible within these constraints.

More significant than these practical limitations, however, seemed to be the contrast between Christine's approach and the ideas about history teaching

and learning that circulated through students, colleagues, and parents within the school.

Climate: Assessment & Accountability

The story of Christine's classroom points to some of the challenges associated with critical teaching in the context of the climate of testing and accountability that has evolved in the U.S., and particularly in California, over the last several years. This study demonstrates how deeply embedded in schools our assessment traditions have become and the extent to which these assessments may be influencing students' perceptions of and attitudes toward instruction. The threat of external evaluation permeates these classrooms and seems to shape students' views of subject matter and curricula. Recall Alan who called the STAR exam a turning point in how he viewed U.S. History. The students in Ms. Miller's class seem to equate history with historical facts, in part, because they are asked to recall these facts on exams, such as the STAR tests.

In addition, Christine's feelings of vulnerability as a critical teacher are rooted, in part, in an awareness of the increasing importance of test scores in California. The consequences for schools and school personnel who fail to show growth on the state tests are daunting. Schools that have failed to meet state-mandated targets on standards-aligned exams for two years become part of an underperforming schools program. As of 2003, schools that have been designated as underperforming have three more years—with state intervention—to improve before they face shutdown or state takeover (May,

2003; Asimov, 2002). Meanwhile, dozens of high schools that fail to meet growth targets on state tests are currently being subjected to state audits. Very recently, five administrators at Antelope Valley High School in Lancaster, California, were replaced when a state audit "cited the school leaders' inability to improve student academic performance on statewide standardized tests" (Haynes, 2003, p. 3). Until the recent budget crisis, individual teachers who showed large test score gains received sizable bonuses (up to $25,000). The incentives to teach to the test are substantial.

In 2001, Cochran-Smith wrote a follow-up to her 1991 discussion of teaching against the grain. By 2001, she believed that educating teachers to teach against the grain had been complicated by the growing atmosphere of testing:

> And in K-12 schools, where–regardless of political affiliation–raising students' scores on standardized tests has become the major and sometimes the only goal, teachers who work against the grain are hardly in demand....Illustrations are plentiful on listservs, in the popular media, and in the political rhetoric of debates. Chicago's completely scripted lesson plans for each subject, each grade level, and each day of the school year, for example, are touted in Time Magazine as especially effective and appropriate for beginning teachers. A teacher in a Midwestern state is reprimanded by her principal because she has actual books in her first-grade classroom. The books, deemed inconsistent with the required and

> heavily prescribed phonics-based initial reading program, are taken as de facto evidence that the teacher is not following the program. In another state, a teacher is fired for publicly criticizing her school system's standardized testing program. (p. 3)

The popular notion that schools are failing, but the imposition of standards can save them makes it difficult for even skilled and creative teachers to deviate from expectations.

Giroux (1997) critiqued "radical" educators for their "failure to develop an educational theory that posits real alternatives within schools" (p. 120). Giroux suggested that this failure has left radical educators "politically powerless to combat the conservative forces which have adroitly exploited and appropriated popular concerns over public education" (p. 120). Giroux offered recommendations for constructing a "language of possibility," one that "acknowledges the spaces, tensions, and possibilities for struggle within the day-to-day workings of schools" (p. 121). Giroux suggested that a pedagogy that attends to student voice and engages the views and problems that concern students in their everyday lives may help create this language of possibility. Giroux explained that schools must also cultivate a spirit of critique "capable of linking personal and social issues around the pedagogical project of helping students become active citizens" (p. 143). While critical pedagogy may have the potential to offer such an alternative, this potential was not realized in Christine's classroom. Christine found it difficult to attend to student voice in a school

climate that did not cultivate this spirit of critique. Her students, in turn, did not value the role of their own voices in learning about history.

Students' Deeply Held Beliefs about the What and Why of History

For Christine, the study of history provides the opportunity to develop critical literacy skills, self-awareness, and empathy by understanding the stories—the circumstances, perspectives, and challenges—of others and by forming opinions about key historical issues. While she hopes students will retain some historical facts or "content," she wants these facts to support an understanding of key historical themes, such as democracy and labor, not to stand alone as information-to-be-memorized. Many of Christine's students, however, enter and leave the class with an understanding of history that is inconsistent with hers. The students believe that history is factual information, and that the failure of this class to focus on the accumulation of these historical facts will create problems for them later in life.

This research demonstrates the difficulty of adopting approaches to instruction that depart from students' previous experiences within a domain. Teacher educators think a lot about teachers' uptake of new ideas, but students also carry with them powerful ideas about teaching, learning, reading, text, subject-matter domains, and so on. This research suggests that it is necessary to address students' deeply held beliefs about and prior experiences with the as we work to teach critically. Christine's students had strong ideas about what it meant to learn history, and what they were doing in Ms. Miller's class was

something else. Their understandings of history are consistent with other classes they had taken—all of these students had participated in a lecture-based history course in their freshman year—and this class, by contrast, was very different.

The students were conflicted in their views of history by the end of the year. While they seemed, at one level, to develop a more critical view of history and text, their views about what they should learn in a history classroom did not change. Several of Christine's students reported that they accept that text is biased, that authors present a one-sided view of historical events. But the students seemed to believe simultaneously that texts present real history—at least for all practical purposes, and they complained that they were being denied access to that real history because of Ms. Miller's approach. There were many compelling reasons (i.e., the consequences of low test scores) for these students to maintain a factual view of history and text and few reasons for them to take seriously the versions of history and text being offered by Ms. Miller. Only Tamika seemed to become more comfortable with Ms. Miller's approach over the course of the year. Most of the students maintained what Berkhofer (1995) describes as the view of "normal historians," that while interpretation shapes historical texts, these interpretations are always influenced by the facts, and always represent actual past realities.

This tension between Christine's views and those of her students mirror the tensions between traditional and critical approaches to history outlined in Chapter 2. The students' orientation is consistent with the facts-first approach

that has permeated much of the literature and public conversation about history education. It is interesting also that several of the students viewed Christine's more critical approach as engendering a negative view of U.S. History. Christine's students reported that her curriculum presented a negative view of U.S. history. Alan, for example, reported that "some of the attitudes that are kind of fostered in the class are of a more pessimistic nature about the state of America and U.S. History and you know the bad and the ugly." Christine overheard Lisa telling another student that the class material is always "about depressing things." Lisa asked, "Can't we do something patriotic." Christine said in response that, while Lisa's comment was not unexpected, she had tried to infuse the curriculum with hope:

> I don't want it to just be like, 'see how bad the United States is?' Because to me that doesn't help with agency. So, I've tried to take the approach that we have reasons to be hopeful, and look at some positive things that people have done in this country. And, that the country has the structure to allow for it to happen.

Confronting Marginality, Criticism, Vulnerability, Isolation

From a critical perspective, one of the most interesting aspect of the tensions over the meaning and purpose of history in this classroom is that it remained unspoken. Christine's unwillingness to discuss these tensions openly in class, to examine them as part of the work of the course, taps into one of the

central struggles that Christine had confronted in becoming a critical teacher: the vulnerability that is associated adopting a marginal approach to instruction.

Christine felt constantly at risk of criticism and censure. In discussing teaching against the grain, Cochran-Smith (1991) writes that is it not surprising that such teachers "are sometimes at odds with their administrators and evaluators" (p. 284). Christine found herself at odds with parents, students, and fellow teachers, as well. While she had a few colleagues who taught critically and provided moral support and friendship, those relationships were only loosely supportive of her day-to-day decision-making and problem-solving in the class.

Christine also felt at risk of losing control of the class if the students came to feel too empowered by her teachings about democracy, power, and justice. Christine was caught in an important contradiction of critical teaching—she wanted to maintain power, or at least a modicum of control, while teaching her students to investigate and problematize power. She wanted students to be critical of traditional approaches to history and traditional texts, but was not prepared to have students question her approach.

A Note about Standards and Power

Foucault described power as "manifested as relationships in a social network," and "produced in social transactions" (Foucault, 1979, p. 194). The power of factual historical knowledge is produced and reproduced in numerous social transactions in and around Christine's classroom—in discussions between Christine and her colleagues, in covert conversations between students, in

policies handed down to teachers from the state education governance, in public debates about history education. It is important to note that both Christine and her students see factual historical knowledge as powerful. For the students, the facts of history (names, dates, events, and so on) provide access to institutions, such as colleges and universities. For Christine, this type of knowledge, embodied in textbooks and in the state standards, provides protection from censure and a means to acquire social and collegial standing. While she is constrained in her freedom as a teacher by the state standards, she also uses them for protection and authority. Even as Christine rejects the power of the standards to maintain the status quo, she uses their power to maintain her status as a capable and responsible teacher and, as such, ultimately to support her critical teaching. At the same time, the students use the prominence of history-as-factual-knowledge (as conveyed in texts, textbooks, standards) as a platform from which to have some authoritative critique of the class. I had the sense also that the students used their discontent with Christine's approach as a mechanism for connecting with one another.

Power, as Britzman (2003) describes it, is "not an abstract thing" (p. 40). It works through persons, such that a person's ability to exercise power over others is related to this ability to draw upon "modes of domination" that are structured into the social systems. In this classroom, Christine's and her students aligned themselves with the institution in ways that allowed them to exercise power in particular ways.

Worth the Struggle?

> Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imaginations so they can create the world of the future. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read will be crucial. Continual instruction beyond the early grades is needed (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, p. 99).

Educating Students to be Critical Consumers of Text in an Information Culture

In a society where we are increasingly bombarded with information, it is necessary to prepare students to critically evaluate the array of complex (and frequently unfiltered) written, visual, and sound media that they confront daily. It is irresponsible not to prepare student to deal with the onslaught of messages about who they are, what they should value, what the world looks like and should look like. Beyond distinguishing information that is incorrect, out-of-date, and intentionally misleading, we should also encourage students to "question the social, political, and ideological elements in what they hear, say, read, and write" (Van Duzer & Florez, 1999). Critical literacy can help students learn to evaluate texts, to question the applicability to their own lives, and to assess

broader messages about society being conveyed through the texts. It can also nurture students' ability to respond to these texts through the production of new texts and through social action.

Preparing Students to Become Active Members of our Democratic Society

Schools are responsible for creating an educated and active citizenry. If we teach students that the world is as it should be, that it is devoid of controversy, that they are powerless to make change, we are promoting political and social apathy. Currently, schools focus on the acquisition of academic and vocational skills, "rather than focusing on ways youth might participate through democratic institutions to foster a better society" (Van Duzer & Florez, 1999). Providing an education that considers the nature of social problems and their relationship to past problems, ways that people have addressed and overcome social problems in the past, and ways that students might respond is more likely to prepare students to respond to tomorrow's dilemmas. Critical literacy began as a means for envisioning and realizing social change. Freire worked with Brazilian peasants to participate in the democratization of the culture by encouraging the peasants to view their lives through a critical lens. Freire created a pedagogy of generative themes based on students' lives and designed to help students recognize that they could participate in the struggle to transform society (Shor, 1997). Critical approaches can similarly inspire and prepare students to view themselves as agents of social change.

Looking Ahead: Implications for Critical Teaching

Christine faced many of the same challenges in enacting a critical curriculum that other teachers detailed in the reports described in Chapter 1. Like these teachers, Christine confronted resistant students and disapproving colleagues. And like these teachers, Christine struggled with her own role in the class—working to balance her power as the teacher with the need to control the students with the pressure to meet state mandates with her desire to encourage free thought and social agency. However, Christine also confronted particular challenges associated with the specific educational climate that she confronted in California and at Wilton High. She also faced challenges that related specifically to the domain in which she taught. Many of the tensions that are evident in the literature on history education and public conversations about history are also evident in this classroom. It is difficult to imagine that the students having the same expectations and making the same demands for factual information in, for example, a literature class.

Critical pedagogy lacks a theory of enactment that would account for the difficulties that Christine confronted. If critical practice is to become truly viable, critical teacher educators and researchers will need to find ways to mitigate some of the challenges currently confronted by critical teachers. These challenges are not easily overcome, but this research and other reports from critical teachers point to some potential openings.

Working to Create a More Practice-oriented Critical Literacy

While Paulo Freire developed and documented a specific pedagogical strategy as part of his work with adult Brazilian students, discussions of critical teaching in the U.S. have so far been more philosophical than curricular or pedagogical. The work of developing pedagogical structures to support the implementation of critical approaches in K-12 settings is just beginning in the U.S. We should continue this work and glean insights from abroad whenever possible. For example, Luke & Freebody's (1997) Four Resources Model is one conceptual model widely used by teachers in Australia to plan their instruction to prepare students to take on a range of roles as readers from decoder to critical analyst. While it would be unwise to delimit or prescribe critical practice, it may be productive to develop heuristics like the Four Resources Model that help teachers move from theory to practice.

In the context of teacher preparation, we should use these heuristics and examples of instructional practice to develop a more practical orientation in courses that advance critical approaches. Further, we should develop networks of cooperating teachers who are committed to critical teaching and have been successful at navigating some of the challenges.

Developing Strategies for Managing Controversy, Resistance, and Uncertainty

Critical practice necessarily involves the introduction of controversy into the classroom. Loewen (1995) suggests that many teachers avoid controversy in their classrooms because they have not experienced it themselves in an academic

setting and do not know how to manage it. The culture of schooling requires that teachers project certainty. Inviting dissensus, uncertainty, and controversy into the classroom has the potential to violate students' expectations as it undermines the rhetoric of authority, certainty, and consensus that typically characterizes classroom discourse and textbooks.

If we want teachers to take a critical approach in their classrooms, we need to nurture a disposition of risk-taking in teaching and develop strategies for managing students' confusion and resistance, which may result from the introduction of critical approaches.

Building Structures for Colleagueship and Community around Critical Teaching

Critical teachers, like all teachers, need to feel supported in their work. In the absence of school-based support for critical teaching, it may be necessary to create alternative community structures within (and outside of) sometimes hostile institutions. These communities can provide moral support and opportunities to discuss, develop, share, and problem-solve critical practice with like-minded colleagues. Lewison et al. (2000) describe a promising example of such a community. Critical teachers participating in a workshop described the following components as instrumental to their growth as critical teachers: "hearing other teachers' stories of implementing critical practices, getting new information on different aspects of critical literacy, participating in literature circles using social issues books, and reflecting on troublesome issues with peers" (p. 390).

Supporting Critical Teaching through Research

Researchers and teachers should continue to gather rich and detailed images of critical teaching, to develop heuristics to help teachers conceptualize and develop their critical practice, and to examine student outcomes. The examination of student outcomes is the least advanced line of critical work, and it is potentially the most important. Documenting the outcomes of critical teaching will certainly be challenging, but it is necessary if we hope to widen the credibility and appeal of critical teaching and to assist teachers in making instructional decisions. We need to provide teachers with lenses to answer the question, "How do I know if this is working?" We need careful analyses of classroom discourse that demonstrate the development of critical understanding in the context of critical dialogue.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consent Forms

Gina Cervetti
Michigan State University
511 Erickson Hall
East Lansing, Michigan 48824

October 10, 2000

Dear Parents,

I am a doctoral student from Michigan State University. During the 2000-2001 school year, I will be collecting the data for my dissertation research in [Teacher's] U.S. History classroom. I am writing to ask permission for your child to be part of this study.

In roughly September, January, and April of this school year, I will visit [Teacher's] classroom for a period of approximately three weeks. During these visits, I will observe the classroom instruction, take field notes based on my observations, and audiotape the class. I will also interview [Teacher] and some of her students, possibly including your child, regarding their experiences in the class. The student interviews will take no more than two hours over the course of the school year, and will not be conducted during class time. Finally, I may view samples of student work.

The information that I collect will be shared with the students' classroom teacher in order to improve their instruction, but no student will be identified by name when I write down or discuss the information that I collect. Your privacy and that of your child will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. If you choose not to allow your child to participate in the study, any data inadvertently collected (through classroom observations and/or audio tapes) will be eliminated from all analyses and destroyed, if possible. I hope to use the information that I gather to inform the teaching of history in other classrooms.

If you will allow your child to participate, please sign the permission on the next page. Please also ask your son or daughter to sign the form and return the letter to [Teacher] as soon as possible. In addition to written consent, I will request your child's verbal consent to participate in any interviews. Keep in mind that you can to withdraw your child from the study at any time. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (517) 332-8362 or (517) 432-2309, or my supervising faculty member, Dr. David Pearson

at (517) 432-0132. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as research participants, please contact Dr. David E. Wright, UCRIHS Chair, at (517) 355-2180. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gina Cervetti

Yes, I give permission for my child to participate in the study.

Child's name_____ **Date**

_____

Parent or guardian'signature_____

Child's signature_____

Appendix B: Teacher Interview Protocols

October, 2000

The class

- How would you describe the context and pedagogy of this course?
- Tell me about your students: Where do they come from? What are their needs?
- What is the school stratification, and how are these students situated within it?

Critical practice/ Critical theory

- How would you describe your own teaching practice?
- What are your goals as a teacher generally and in this particular class? (I.e., to what end do you teach?)
  - What does it mean for a curriculum to be "critical"? What are, from your perspective, the central ideas of critical pedagogy?
  - What makes your class different from other, non-critical U.S. History classes? What would I see that is different if I went to the classroom of a non-critical U.S. History teacher?
  - How do you describe your curriculum and your educational goals to your students during the first few days of the school year?
  - What is the purpose of learning about history in high school?
  - What do you tell your students about the nature of history, historical representation, historical texts?
  - How is your critical stance reflected in your:
  - Pedagogical style?
  - Selection of materials?
  - Creation of materials and assignments for students?

- Style of classroom management?

- What role do students' out-of-school lives play in the curriculum?

- Why did you choose to show a video on women's suffrage? What did you want students to learn from the video? Why did you choose a video to accomplish these things?

Planning

- How do you decide what to teach?

- What is your planning process? What kinds of decisions does this involve?

- What is the focus of your planning (e.g., student needs, etc.)? I.e., what do you think about when you are planning?

- What planning did you do before school started?

- What role do published curricular materials play in your planning for this course?

- How aware/attuned are you to curricular constraints (e.g., state standards)?

- How does your teaching meet each of the CAS pillars?

- Does someone from CAS review your syllabus or visit your classroom? I.e., is there oversight?

- How do you teach about diversity in your classroom?

- What would you like to be doing that you are not? What would be gained by doing these things?

Learning about critical teaching

- Why did you decide to become a teacher? Why did you want to become a history teacher?

- How would you characterize your teacher training? In what ways does it support your practice?

- How much attention was paid to critical perspectives in your teacher education program?

- How did you first become aware of critical pedagogy? Since that time, what resources have been available to you to help you learn more about critical theory and practice? What people, ideas, or texts have influenced you the most?
- How do critical ideas support your practice?
- How has your approach to teaching changed over the last 4 years?

Goals

- What processes/practices do you use to achieve these goals?
- How do you measure your success in achieving these goals?
- Can you tell me about a student who really achieved these goals?
- What is your role as teacher in your students' learning?
- What role do academic skills play in your class?

Materials

- What materials are included in the course pack?
- You said that you have used the hard cover text only once. Where did it come from? Who chose it and why? Why aren't you using it?

Struggles and supports

- What struggles do you confront as a teacher? Are any of these struggles specifically related to your critical practice/goals?
- Talk about your collegial relationships. In what ways do they support your critical practice? In what ways do they inhibit your practice?
- What kinds of resistance have you encountered in critical teaching? From students? From administrators? From parents?
- How do you deal with this resistance?
- To what extent is your curriculum prescribed by the district and/or state? How do these requirements support or impede your critical practice?

- Does the school and/or district provide any professional development opportunities? Are any of these opportunities supportive of your critical practice?

- How is being involved in CAS helpful for critical teaching?

January, 2001

Catching up

- Since I have arrived, you have mentioned several times your frustration with your work at the moment. What's going on?

- You also mentioned that there are some exciting things happening with CAS. What is happening there?

- I wanted to ask for your reaction to the discussion in class yesterday. You said that you were excited about what had happened. Can you talk about what was exciting to you and why?

- I wanted also to talk a little about the democracy unit. Based on the final evaluation, how well are students meeting the goals that you set for the unit and for the class? Can you tell me about a student who really achieved these goals?

Struggles and supports

- Reflecting back on the first semester, what were your big struggles and successes?

- What struggles do you confront as a teacher? Are any of these struggles specifically related to your critical practice/goals?

- Talk about your collegial relationships. In what ways do they support your critical practice? In what ways do they inhibit your practice?

- What kinds of resistance have you encountered in critical teaching? From students? From administrators? From parents?

- How do you deal with this resistance?

- To what extent is your curriculum prescribed by the district and/or state? How do these requirements support or impede your critical practice?

- Does the school and/or district provide any professional development opportunities? Are any of these opportunities supportive of your critical practice?

- How is being involved in CAS helpful for critical teaching?

- When I last visited, you said that you were struggling with relevance and application—i.e., how to start with students' stories and how to "bring it home" to them. How are you feeling about that now?

- When I visited in October, you were struggling to make your classroom more critical by making your pedagogy more democratic. You said that you thought a democratic and, hence, truly critical classroom was not possible under your current circumstances. Do you feel like you've made any progress in this direction?

Evaluation

You are about to implement a second evaluation—a mid-year final? So, I thought that this might be a good time to talk about evaluation. What are you planning to evaluate and how?

- In general, how do you evaluate your curriculum?

- Are there any evaluations required by your school or district? [Are these evaluations helpful to you? How or why not?] What do you report to them?

- How do you feel things are going so far this year?

Research

How is your action research going? Where are you at with that?

Critical teaching

- What does it mean for a curriculum to be "critical"? What are, from your perspective, the central ideas of critical pedagogy?

- What makes your class different from other, non-critical U.S. History classes? What would I see that is different if I went to the classroom of a non-critical U.S. History teacher?

- How do you describe your curriculum and your educational goals to your students during the first few days of the school year?

- What is the purpose of learning about history in high school?
- What do you tell your students about the nature of history, historical representation, historical texts?
- Look back over the goals: have they changed? How does this representation look to you now?
- What processes/practices do you use to achieve these goals?
- How do you measure your success in achieving these goals?
- How is your critical stance reflected in your:
- Pedagogical style?
- Selection of materials?
- Creation of materials and assignments for students?
- Style of classroom management?

- What role do students' out-of-school lives play in the curriculum?
- To what extent do you examine issues of power in education with your students?

April/May 2001

Cuba

- How was the trip? What kinds of things did you do?
- How did you prepare your students for the Cuba trip, and how do you plan to incorporate the experience in the upcoming units?
- How was Cuba selected as a destination?
- Who went and who did not go?

The New Job

- What is your job title? What does it entail?
- How did it come about?

- Why did you decide to take this position?
- What will you teach next year?
- Is this job a sufficient incentive to make you stay at Wilton High?
- How are you feeling about teaching as you move away from it?
- What have been the biggest struggles and successes this semester?
- I asked this last time, but do you feel you now have a better sense of what you would do differently next time around?
- What about your conceptions of critical teaching? Have they changed throughout the course of the year?

Naming

- When I first entered the classroom, you suggested that I not tell the students that I am there to study critical teaching or social justice teaching. I should have asked you this at the time, but why was it important to you that I not mention these things? What do you tell students about the way in which this class is different from others?
- What would it do/mean to name critical teaching in your classroom?
- What happened to Graeme?
- Where are you at in the curriculum?

Critical teaching (reprise)

- In October, I asked you what it means for a curriculum to be "critical." You said...Has your understanding about critical teaching changed?
- When I visited in October, you were struggling to make your classroom more critical by making your pedagogy more democratic. You said that you thought a democratic and, hence, truly critical classroom was not possible under your current circumstances. Do you feel like you've made any progress in this direction?

- Why did you not want me to tell the students that I am studying critical pedagogy? Do you not tell them that you are taking a critical, or other alternative (i.e., social justice) approach to history? If not, why not?

- When I last visited, you said that you were struggling with relevance and application—i.e., how to start with students' stories and how to "bring it home" to them. How successful have you been at this?

Assessment (reprise)

- What kinds of assessments have you used this year to evaluate your curriculum and make instructional decisions?

- What should a student know or be able to do now (at the end of the year)?

- How is your teaching monitored and/or evaluated by others?

Standards

- What official and unofficial standards are in place to guide your teaching? How do these actually influence what and how you teach?

- What value do the standards have? You have said before that they threaten to compromise the integrity of your teaching? How so?

- Did Mr. Roberts's effort to develop a new set of standards for the history department ever get off the ground?

  What do you know about the standards in other departments?

- What are the building-level expectations about what you will do? How are these communicated to you? What are the state expectations? How are these communicated? What would the state standards have you do?

- Is there-in the way you frame your practice-some tension between these standards and expectations and what you are doing?

- What kinds of history-related standardized tests do your students take during the year?

  To what extent do you think about these tests as you plan your teaching?

  As far as you know, is there any alignment between these tests and any of the standards?

Do you know how the results of these tests are used by the school, district, or state?

In what ways does your class prepare students for these tests?

What sense do you suppose your students make of these tests?

- Is there a required textbook? If so, in what sense it is required? How did you acquire the textbook that you have in the classroom? How do you use it?

- What kinds of accountability systems exist within the state, district, school? How do these influence your teaching?

- I want to talk about the relationship between content and pedagogy: An important theme in many of our conversations is the distinction between factual or chronological and thematic or critical history. In a conversation that we had in January, you seemed to associate the former with a lecture-style pedagogy (particularly when you talked about a colleague who has a great deal of credibility because he lectures facts). Can you talk about the relationship between content and pedagogy? Is it an either/or: must teaching factual/chronological history be didactic? If there is a distinct pedagogy related to thematic history, what is it?

- How do the activities that you have done so far with respect to the Cold War unit relate to this distinction between standard or factual information and thematic or critical approaches?

- What factors inhibit your ability to teach critically?

- From your perspective, in what ways are the content and pedagogy of your U.S. History classes critical (consistent with critical pedagogy)? In what ways are they not critical?

<u>Other</u>

- Can you tell me about the labor timeline assignment that the students turned in? What was the assignment? Tell me about the students' work.

Appendix C: Student Interview Protocols

October, 2000

- How did you learn about CAS, and why did you decide to apply?
- What are you learning in U.S. History?
- How is this class different from others that you have taken?
- Can you tell me about another class that you are taking (have taken) that you especially liked or disliked?
- Has this class had an influence on your thinking in your other classes?
- Have you thought about any ideas from class outside of school?
- Do you talk to family or friends about the class? If so, what do you say?
- Are you ever troubled by the class discussions, readings, or activities?
- When you were asked to write a constitutional amendment to expand democracy, what did your amendment dictate?
- Do you think about historical texts differently since you've been in this class?

January, 2001

Students who were not interviewed in October were asked both set one and set two questions. Students who were interviewed in October were asked a set of follow-up questions in addition to the set two questions. See below for an example set of follow-up questions.

- How has your thinking about democracy changed over the course of the year?
- How do you think about your relationship to democracy and/or political participation?
- Do you read political and/or media texts differently?
- Do you think about the history of this country differently? Can you provide a specific example?

- Can you recall a specific reading that provoked you in some way?
- What assignment most provoked you?
- Has your attitude toward social activism changed? What responsibility do you feel for shaping your social environment?
- Has your attitude toward [a particular social or political issue] changed?

Example Set of Follow-up Questions for Students Interviewed in October

Alan

- I asked you this question last time, but I would like to ask again for you to tell me in your own words what you are learning about in U.S. History this year.
- How are you feeling about the curriculum?
- When we talked last, you said that you had some frustration with the class, particularly ways in which Ms. Miller's version of U.S History differs from your expectations—e.g., not learning times and dates, or factual information as much; not using the standard textbook; .
    - It bothered you that you weren't using the textbook much. Does that still bother you?
- You said before that U.S. History should involve learning information for standardized tests and learning things you need to know to be an educated American. Is this still your vision of U.S History, and how well is this class meeting these goals?
- How are you feeling about the class discussions? You said before that the discussions were good, but that there was maybe too much discussion. What do you think now? How have you felt about the class discussions this week? You also felt like the discussions were a bit of a power struggle. Do you still feel this way?
- When I asked you before if you ever talk to family or friends outside of class about what you are learning in U.S. History, you said that you hadn't been compelled to do so. Has that changed, i.e., has anything from U.S. History since compelled you to take the material out of class?
- Have you felt excited or moved or outraged about something in U.S. History?

- How are you feeling about the final?

- Have the things you have learned about in U.S. History had any influence on your outlook on the future? Do you think you feel more optimistic or more pessimistic than you did before?

May, 2001

- Ideally, what should you be learning about in U.S. History? Examples? Would you have answered this question differently at the beginning of the school year?

- What should taking a high school U.S. History class enable you to do in your life outside of school? In your future?

    - To what extent have you learned about/learned to do these things this year in Ms. Miller's class?

- Do you think Ms. Miller knows that you feel this way? What have you reported to Ms. Miller about your feelings about the class—your preferences & dissatisfactions?[2]

- Can you imagine a situation in which this kind of history would be useful? Why do you think this might be important? [Do the students talk about the context in which these different versions of history might be useful?]

- How did you feel about the history exam that you took last week? What kinds of things were asked on the history exam that you took last week? Did you feel prepared to respond to these items?

- How much influence do you feel you have over what gets taught and how it gets taught in this class?

- Have you discussed the class with other students? If so, what do you talk about? What is your sense of these conversations?

- Now that you've spent a year in U.S. History, do you feel more or less hopeful about the future? Why?

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[2] I want to know why the students seem not to make their feelings about the class evident to Christine: Do they fear censure? Are they indifferent? Are they guided by the ethos of this particular classroom? Are they guided by particular understandings about the relationship between students and teachers?
It is ironic that they critique education, yet there is little public critique of this classroom, which is so experience-near.

- Is the relationship with Ms. Miller any different that your relationship with teachers in other classes that you have had?

- Thinking about the two activities that I observed last week: the tea party with the cards and the cold war sheet that you worked on with partners...I'm wondering what you thought about those activities and how they fit into your conception of the class.

- Did you go on the trip to Cuba? How was it? What did you learn? How does it relate to the things you have learned this year in History? Do you think your learning there was enhanced by your experiences in History class?

End-of-year Only Interviews

Questions asked of students who were interviewed in May only.

- What have you learned about this year in U.S. History?

- How is this class different from others that you have taken?

- Can you tell me about another class that you are taking (have taken) that you especially liked or disliked?

- Ideally, what should you be learning about in U.S. History? Examples? Would you have answered this question differently at the beginning of the school year?

- What should taking a high school U.S. History class enable you to do in your life outside of school? In your future?

    - To what extent have you learned about/learned to do these things this year in Ms. Miller's class?

- Do you think Ms. Miller knows that you feel this way? What have you reported to Ms. Miller about your feelings about the class—your preferences & dissatisfactions?[3]

- Can you imagine a situation in which this kind of history would be useful? Why do you think this might be important? [Do the students talk about the context in which these different versions of history might be useful?]

[3] I wanted to know why the students seem not to make their feelings about the class evident to Christine: Do they fear censure? Are they indifferent? Are they guided by the ethos of this particular classroom? Are they guided by particular understandings about the relationship between students and teachers?

- How did you feel about the history exam that you took last week? What kinds of things were asked on the history exam that you took last week? Did you feel prepared to respond to these items?
- How much influence do you feel you have over what gets taught and how it gets taught in this class?
- Has this class had an influence on your thinking in your other classes?
- Have you thought about any ideas from class outside of school?
- Do you talk to family or friends about the class? If so, what do you say?
- Do you think about historical texts differently since you've been in this class?
- Do you read political and/or media texts differently?
- Now that you've spent a year in U.S. History, do you feel more or less hopeful about the future? Why?
- Is the relationship with Ms. Miller any different that your relationship with teachers in other classes that you have had?
- How has your thinking about democracy changed over the course of the year?
- How do you think about your relationship to democracy and/or political participation?
- Do you think about the history of this country differently? Can you provide a specific example?
- Can you recall a specific reading that provoked you in some way?
- What assignment most provoked you?
- Are you ever troubled by the class discussions, readings, or activities?
- Has your attitude toward social activism changed? What responsibility do you feel for shaping your social environment?
- Has your attitude toward [a particular social or political issue] changed?
- Thinking about the two activities that I observed last week: the tea party with the cards and the cold war sheet that you worked on with partners...I'm

wondering what you thought about those activities and how they fit into your conception of the class.

- Did you go on the trip to Cuba? How was it? What did you learn? How does it relate to the things you have learned this year in History? Do you think your learning there was enhanced by your experiences in History class?

- In class this week, you were asked to write about whether or not the U.S should intervene in communism. What do you think?

- Have you discussed the class with other students? If so, what do you talk about? What is your sense of these conversations?

Appendix D: Coding Schemes for Field Notes and Interviews

Code Number	Code Type Level I	Code Level II	Code Level III	Code Definition	Added, Modified, or Moved Before Second Coding
(1)	Content Codes				
(1 1)		Setting Codes			
(1 1 1)			Classroom physical setting		
(1 1 2)			School physical setting		
(1 1 3)			School history (BHS)		
(1 1 4)			Student body demographics		
(1 1 5)			CAS program	Philosophy, requirements, application process, strengths & weaknesses	X
(1 1 6)			School programs, structures, and policies	General, unrelated to history	X
(1 2)		Activity Codes			
(1 2 1)			Discussion		
(1 2 2)			Partner work		
(1 2 3)			Writing		
(1 2 4)			Lecture		
(1 2 5)			Classroom management		
(1 3)		Curricula			
(1 3 1)			Curricular content	Content as described by students and teacher	
(1 3 2)			Official-school	Official documents, or as described by teacher or students	
(1 3 3)			Standards (official-state)	Official documents, or as described by teacher or students	
(1 3 4)			Classroom syllabus	Official document, or as described by teacher or students	

(1 3 5)			Classroom materials & assignments	Documents, or as described by teacher or students (textbook, course pack, syllabus, classroom assignments, homework)	
Code Number	**Code Type Level I**	**Code Level II**	**Code Level III**	**Code Definition**	**Added, Modified, or Moved Before Second Coding**
(1 3 6)			Relationship to students' lives & needs	Comments on role of students' lives in curriculum	X
(1 3 7)			& Emotion	Comments on role of emotion in curriculum	X
(1 4)		Curricular decision-making		General processes, planning, specific decisions, role of various factors in decision-making (e.g., student needs, published materials, standards, etc.)	X
(1 4 1)			Student influence over	Teacher or students comments about student role in curricular decision making	
(1 5)		Classroom pedagogy		Teaching approaches/ teaching style	
(1 6)		Classroom management		Teacher's and students' comments about	
(1 7)		Goals		Teacher's and students' comments about	
(1 7 1)			General teaching-educational	Teacher's and students' comments about	
(1 7 2)			U.S. History	Teacher's and students' comments about	
(1 8)		Assessment		Teacher's approaches to and philosophy of	

(1 9)		History-definitions		The nature of history, historical representation, historical texts	X
(1 10)		History-purposes		Purpose of learning about history	X
(1 11)		Critical pedagogy		Definitions, learning about, role in teaching, resources	
(1 12)		Constraints, struggles, resistances		Oversight, standards, schedule & time limitations, etc.	

Code Number	Code Type Level I	Code Level II	Code Level III	Code Definition	Added, Modified, or Moved Before Second Coding
(1 12 1)			Curricular struggles	Teacher's comments about difficulties encountered in planning or enacting curriculum.	X
(1 12 3)			Race-related tension	Teacher's or students' comments about race-related tensions in class	X
(1 13)		Supports		Supports for critical teaching (e.g., colleagues, professional development , etc.)	
(1 14)		Successes		Teacher's comments about successes in the class	X
(1 15)		Resistance		Teacher's comments about internal (to classroom) and/or external resistance to her curriculum and/or pedagogy	X
(1 16)		CAS		Teacher's & students' comments about (e.g., decision to become involved)	
(1 17)		Colleagues & collegial relationships		Teacher's comments about	
(1 18)		Students		Teacher's comments about individual students or collective group	
(1 19)		Parents		Teacher's comments about communication with, relationship to, supports and resistance from parents	
(1 20)		School administration		Teacher's comments about	
(1 21)		Educational		Teacher's comments	X

		policy		about	
(1 22)		Society-media		Pressure from, images of teaching	X
(1 23)		Teacher			

Code Number	Code Type Level I	Code Level II	Code Level III	Code Definition	Added, Modified, or Moved Before Second Coding
(1 23 1)			Teacher biography	Decision to become a teacher, teacher training, childhood, education, development of critical awareness, personal concerns and commitments	
(1 23 2)			Teacher training	Christine's teacher education, including professional development	
(1 23 3)			Teacher's role	Perceptions of role and relationship to students	
(1 23 4)			Commitments and activities	Christine's commitments and activities other than teaching	
(1 22 5)			Action research	Philosophy of, goals, activities related to	
(1 23 6)			Rebound Job	Comments about new position at school	X
(1 24)		Teacher research		About Christine's teacher research work	X
(1 25)		Teaching		Comments about the nature, purpose, responsibilities of teaching	X
(1 26)		Poststructuralism			X
(1 27)		Teacher-student relationship			X
(2)	Data Codes Type				
(2 1)		Student interviews			
(2 2)		Field Notes			
(2 3)		Teacher interviews			

(2 4)		Student work			
(2 5)		Curricular materials			
(2 6)		Official curricular documents			
(3)	Time Codes				
(3 1)		Time One		September-December, 2000	
(3 2)		Time Two		January-March, 2001	
(3 3)		Time Three		April-June, 2001	
(4)	Changing Perspectives				X

Code Number	Code Type Level I	Code Level II	Code Level III	Code Definition	Added, Modified, or Moved Before Second Coding
(4 1)		Text		Students' comments about changes in their own perspective on text.	X
(4 2)		Self		Students' comments about changes in their own perspective on themselves, their lives and futures.	X
(4 3)		Politics-World-Issues		Students' comments about changes in their own perspective on political, the world, political or social issues.	X
(4 4)		History		Students' comments about changes in their own perspective on history.	X
(4 5)		Class		Students' comments about changes in their own perspective on the class.	X
(5)	Standards & Testing				X
(5 1)		Standardized Exams		Comments by teacher or students	X
		Standards		Comments by teacher or students	X

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